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Bull Run proposals face opposition

by CHRISTINE BIERMAN
for The Post

The Portland Water Bureau plans to oppose all U.S. Forest Service proposals for logging the Bull Run Watershed blowdown near Sandy.

Bureau officials with speak out against the plan when the Portland City Council convenes hearings on the plan next week, a staff member said.

The bureau will recommend instead its own alternative of logging 1,400 to 1,500 acres of the timber fallen in a 1983 wind storm, said Bruce Niss, watershed resource adviser to the department.

The City Council hearings on the

Forest Service's Draft Environmental Impact Statement are set for 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Aug. 12, and for 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, in the council chambers at Portland City Hall, 1120 S.W. Fifth Ave., Portland. Members of the public will each have three minutes to speak both days.

The council will devote the first day to presentations and public testimony about the effect on water quality standards and water quality monitoring.

The second day will be set aside for presentations and comment on the blowdown salvage plan itself.

The Forest Service's preferred alternative calls for removing 2,400

acres of the 6,000 acres of blowdown in Bull Run.

That plan "... presents too great a threat to water quality," Niss said. More than 650,000 residents of the Portland metropolitan area rely on the Bull Run Watershed for their drinking water.

The number of acres involved poses less of a danger than the yarding methods, according to Niss.

"Clearcutting in itself is not a threat" to the water supply, he said. The Forest Service proposes to let 1,968 acres be clear cut and the remainder be selectively cut.

The Water Bureau's proposed acreage is negotiable if the Forest Service agrees to yarding methods

less likely to cause erosion and consequent pollution of Bull Run water, Niss said. The city may raise the acreage, for example, if the Forest Service requires yarding by cable rather than rubber skidders, or helicopters rather than cable.

A 1977 federal law lets the council request binding arbitration if the two agencies cannot reach a compromise.

They could well resolve their disagreement before the final Environmental Impact Statement is released this fall, Niss added. The Water Bureau and Forest Service have discussed their differences informally to date, he said Tuesday.

"Keep in mind that this is only a

draft," he said.

Public comment on the EIS is being accepted by the Forest Service until Sept. 2, Niss says. Copies may be checked out at the Columbia Gorge Ranger District office, 31520 S.E. Woodard Road, Troutdale.

Niss and Water Bureau Director Ed Tenny will contend next Thursday that the their plan includes the area posing the greatest fire hazard while doing the least harm to water purity.

The Forest Service fears that the blowdown, left untouched, could fuel a wild fire that could strip the ground cover, causing water pollution and inviting undesirable vegetation to take root.

The hearing opens Wednesday with

a presentation to the council by Tenny and Water Quality Section Supervising Engineer Joe Glicker.

The council is expected to form its formal opinion on the matter next Thursday.

"All it has to do is decide whether it wants to arbitrate," he said.

Should it reach that stage, three arbitrators would make the final decision based on scientific evidence alone.

The Water Bureau and Forest Service each would name one arbitrator, and those two would pick a third. Failing that, the presiding judge of the U.S. District Court of Oregon would select the third arbitrator.

'Fun Day' slated at Oral Hull

Everyone can look over The Oral Hull Park for the blind when the Sandy facility hosts its annual "Fun Day" open house Sunday.

The event starts at noon with a barbecued chicken dinner, followed at about 1:30 p.m. by games, contests and live music, said Marie Webb from The Oral Hull Foundation for the Blind board.

All activities but the dinner are free.

Oral Hull Park is at 43233 S.E. Oral Hull Road and is reached by turning north at the park's sign on U.S. Highway 26 and following signs for 2.4 miles.

The dinner, which will be served by the Sandy Lions club until 3 or 4 p.m., costs \$4 for adults and \$2 for children younger than age 12. Proceeds benefit the Oral Hull Foundation, Webb said.

Visitors also can compete for prizes in basketball, log sawing, nail pounding and other contests.

The Twilights band will provide live music. The youthful group performs throughout the state, Webb said.

Visitors also may tour the park's Gardens of Enchantment, which features markers in Braille and areas for each of the five senses, including sight. That section of colorful flowers is suited for "lots of blind people (who) have partial sight," Webb said.

Her personal favorite is the low-



Carol Kuzmeski of the Sandy Lion's Club Auxiliary stops at the wishing well, one of the newer attractions in Oral Hull Park's garden near Sandy. The Lions Club will sell chicken dinners at the park's Fun Day Aug. 9 that also includes live music, games and tours of the garden.

growing, green Lamb's Ear found in the touching area. "It's real velvety feeling. It's unusual."

More than a fund-raiser, Fun Day began in the 1970s as a way to in-

roduce the 22-acre Oral Hull facility to the public, she said.

Money raised by the dinner may help buy playground equipment for young visitors, and someday young

campers, Webb said. The Oral Hull board also hopes to have a swimming pool and larger recreation hall built in the future.

A summer camp for teen-agers

and possibly younger children will "require a lot of supervision and planning," she said. Oral Hull has offered summer camps for adults in Sandy for three years.

City leases telephones from GTE

A bidder's typographical error forced the Sandy City Council on Monday to switch its telephone lease purchase contract from PacTel to General Telephone Co. of the Northwest.

The council voted unanimously to rescind its July 20th award of the bid to PacTel and to offer it to the lowest bidder, GTE.

That action came after PacTel realized it had bid \$132.30 a year instead of \$132.30 a month for maintenance in the last four years of a five-year lease period.

GTE will charge \$732 a year for four years of maintenance after its one-year warranty expires.

The system and maintenance from GTE will total \$11,312 a year. The council also voted unanimously to borrow the money from Clackamas County Bank at 8.5 percent interest for a total cost of \$16,668.

Total costs would have been \$20,757 for PacTel and \$19,691 for American Business Communications, according to the city's administrative assistant, Ken Reinke.

The city would pay \$24,840 over the next five years if it continued to lease telephones from the General Telephone Co. of the Northwest, Reinke said.

City Councilor Jim Duff voted in favor of awarding the contract to GTE but then cautioned the city staff to make sure that the city gets the system promised it.

Withdrawal from transit district considered

Bus riders split on Tri-Met service

Commuters riding Tri-Met's Sandy-Boring bus are split on whether Tri-Met bus service should be discontinued here.

A half-dozen riders taking the last westbound bus from Sandy on Tuesday morning either sympathize with several Sandy community leaders who want out of the Tri-Met district or said that they lack other means of transportation.

Sandy civic and business leaders have expressed interest in having Sandy removed from the transit district now that a new state boundary law is in effect.

The petition required to initiate the boundary change process has yet to surface here, but Marge Green of Sandy is in no hurry to see it anyway.

Asked if she would sign it, Green shook her head. "No way. No, because I don't have a car. Without the bus, I'm stuck."

Green was the most adamant about the bus service, although she uses it the least of the passengers interviewed during the 24-minute-long ride into Gresham's Transit Station. Tri-Met is her escape from the rooming house on Pioneer Boulevard where she lives and the only way she can visit her daughter in Gresham, she said.

"The bus is very important to me," said Green, who was going to the Social Security office in Portland on this trip.

Kelly Miller of 19920 Victory Lane would be lost without the bus unless his girlfriend's car is repaired or he moves back to Gresham or Portland, he said.



Passenger boarding Tri-Met bus is one of few who use Sandy service.

He often rides the bus and then MAX to his job at Maaco Auto Painting since moving here in April.

Discontinuing the bus "would put a lot of us out," he said, adding later that, "There's never really that many people on the bus." Lacking a driver's license, Miller said he would be forced to hitchhike.

He empathizes with complaints about poor service, saying that there are too few buses at times.

Charity Harper of 37607 S.E. Marie St. shares Miller's observations on service and ridership.

A student at Phagans' School of Hair Design in the Gateway district, Harper says she wishes the Sandy bus would travel eastbound

later than 7 p.m. "I gotta catch it when I can," she shrugged.

As for usage, she pointed to the low number of riders, saying "This is it," give or take a few persons.

All in all, she called the Sandy-Boring bus "convenient", but "If it weren't for light rail, I'd probably hate it."

Harper plans to move near school next week, but still will rely on Tri-Met to visit her parents here.

Another two riders see both sides of the issue, liking the convenience of the bus but sympathizing with the backlash by business owners over payroll taxes to Tri-Met. (See related story.)

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Dropping district a lengthy process

by CHRISTINE BIERMAN
for The Post

SANDY — December 1988 is probably the earliest that Sandy could be dropped from Tri-Met should talk about leaving the transit district lead to a successful campaign for withdrawal, according to Tri-Met spokesman Phill Colombo.

The process for withdrawal outlined in the new state boundary law concerning Tri-Met could take at least six months or as much as a year to complete, Colombo said.

And the Tri-Met board approves boundary changes just once a year, on Dec. 31, he said.

"We would end up with the whole thing placed in December of next year, if indeed it does take place," Colombo said.

The mayor and Chamber of Commerce president are among community leaders who support leaving the district, a move that would end bus service here. It also save Sandy businesses about \$139,000 in annual payroll taxes being paid to Tri-Met.

Sandy is the first town to give serious thought to leaving the district since the law went into effect this year, Colombo said. Estacada has dropped a similar notion after a study revealed it received more service than it paid for in taxes, interim City Manager Lowell Breunig said.

The campaign here is waiting until the Sandy City Council and the chamber decide who should take the first step. The chamber's board will discuss the issue Aug. 13, said officer Kimberley Nelson. Chamber President Diane Tiller was unavailable for comment.

Although the council has gone on

record in favor of legislation allowing cities to leave Tri-Met, Sandy residents should head this campaign, Mayor Deane Wesselink said. The consensus of the council probably remains supportive of the idea now that the new law has passed, Wesselink added.

The law allows towns of fewer than 10,000 residents on the fringes of the district to withdraw from the Tri-Met if they meet four conditions or if the action is approved by the transit district board.

It requires the Tri-Met board to consider an application for removal if requested by 15 percent of the voters in the affected area through petitions validated by the county clerk, Colombo said.

The board then commissions a study to be done within 90 days and schedules a hearing.

The final steps — the public notice and the two readings required for ordinance changes — would take three months alone, according to Colombo. The Tri-Met board meets once a month.

Colombo said he approves the lengthy procedure. "This should be a very well thought-out process if a community is going to disenfranchise itself from a community service which public transportation is."

"The law is good in that respect," he said.

In Sandy's case, the Tri-Met board would consider whether the average number of rides per day fall below its minimum standard, whether business owners are hurt by the payroll tax and whether a petition demanding continuation of Tri-Met service has been filed.

In areas such as Damascus where

there is no service, the board also considers if Tri-Met plans service there within five years.

The study required by the new law would examine ridership, revenue from the area during the last three years, history of bus service there, previous petitions, and the effect of a tax increase in the remainder of the district, Colombo said. The new law lets Tri-Met raise taxes to offset revenue lost when areas succeed in withdrawing.

The payroll tax levied by Tri-Met represents six-tenths of 1 percent of the gross payroll of a business. That amounts to about \$139,000 a year in what is called the Sandy Census Tract used by the state Department of Revenue, Colombo said.

The Sandy-Boring bus that travels through Sandy nine times daily costs \$41,000 a year to operate, he said.

But Colombo cautions against looking at the Sandy bus alone, since it is tied to a far-reaching transportation system in the Portland area. The Sandy bus starts and ends at the Gresham Transit Center.

"It is \$139,000 to pay for a \$41,000 bus that connects with an \$80 million system," he says.

The Tri-Met board would redraw the boundaries that could exclude the entire Sandy-Boring route or include the five stops outside of Sandy, Colombo says. State law requires the Tri-Met district border to fall within 2½ miles of transit service, he says.

A few Sandy residents favoring withdrawal have suggested that a shuttle bus replace the Tri-Met bus, which carries an average of 37 riders a day, according to Colombo.

The city of Sandy lacks money to fund such a service, Wesselink said.