

Affordable Housing Director David Zupan in a press release. "Our organization is prepared to pursue legal remedies to demonstrate that the UO's proposed action does not comply with Oregon law." — *Kera Abraham*



A NEST volunteer climbs a tree in Trapper unit 22.

JOSH SCHLOSSBERG

N.E.S.T. TO THE RESCUE

When you're at the end of your rope trying to protect old growth forests, what should you do? Strap on a harness, say participants in a new group called the Northwest Ecosystem Survey Team (NEST).

NEST volunteers have been scaling trees in the "Trapper" timber sale in the McKenzie Watershed, scouting for red tree voles (a small rodent that is the threatened spotted owl's main food source) and rare lichen. And they've found both, the group says.

Under the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP), the Forest Service must leave 10 acre protective buffers around red tree vole nests. The Trapper sale is in old-growth forest surrounding Wolf Rock, Oregon's biggest rock monolith, in the McKenzie River watershed, the source of Eugene's drinking water.

A little history: In 2004, the Bush administration attempted to circumvent the "survey and manage" part of the NWFP that requires on-the-ground inspections for protected plant and animal species before logging can begin.

But in January, a U.S. District Court judge upheld NWFP rules, concluding that the Forest Service had allowed the cuts to proceed without checking for sensitive species. The ruling postponed or stymied more than 140 logging projects on public lands in the Northwest, about three quarters of them in Oregon.

"After 2000 acres of old growth and mature forests cut on the McKenzie last year, despite the outcry and action of several environmental groups, NEST may be the last hope in protecting any of these forests in our drinking water supply," says Josh Schlossberg, an activist involved with the group.

For more info or to volunteer for NEST, contact Josh at thombanjo@riseup.net or 688-2600.

TAKE A HIKE

Yeah, yeah, we know the deal — you're a nature-lover who spends too much time in the Great Indoors. You sign online petitions against the destruction of our last wild places, but you haven't gone hiking in months. You're too busy. Gas is too expensive. You're out of fresh ideas about where to go.

Well, no more excuses. The Oregon Natural Resources Council is bound and determined to get you off your butt and into the wilds, at least during the sixth annual "Wilderness Week," a festival of 39 outdoor events throughout Oregon. They offer hikes through old growth forest, wildflower fields and waterfalls; family friendly outings, fishing trips, trail restoration projects and white-water rafting. They'll introduce you to the fishy richness of the Oregon Coast, the stark beauty of the Klamath-Siskiyou region and the spectacular wildlands surrounding Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge.

"Wilderness Week is a chance for the public to join knowledgeable experts on outings to the pristine, yet unprotected wildlands that make Oregon a special place to live, work and play," remarked Christine Caurant, Northwest Field Organizer for ONRC.

All events are free, guided by experts and require RSVPs. For more information, visit www.oregonwild.org or www.onrc.org; to make reservations, call Chandra LeGue at 344-0675.

ONRC will lead a hike past this Three Pyramids meadow on July 2.



COURTESY ONRC

- This week's cover story Q&A with Don Woolley offers a rare look inside the mind of a successful urban developer. *EW* readers might find his way of looking at things refreshing, outrageous or something in between. Regardless, it's a view of Eugene we don't hear every week, and it shows the disconnect between the business and environmental activist communities in town. Can we learn from each other? Certainly. Everyone has a role to play in building a livable city.

- Regarding the recent arrest of Spc. Suzanne Swift on federal desertion charges, she's one of many. First Lt. Ehren Watada, the first commissioned officer to publicly refuse to deploy to the war in Iraq, said last week: "I am wholeheartedly opposed to the continued war in Iraq, the deception used to wage this war, and the lawlessness that has pervaded every aspect of our civilian leadership." He also said at a news conference June 7: "My oath of office is to serve and protect America's laws and its people. By refusing an unlawful order for an illegal war, I fulfill that oath today." Video from that news conference is available at: www.ThankYouLt.org



- A butterfly crossing sign on a freeway? It sounds absurd, but the Federal Highway Administration recently proposed creating one for protecting endangered Fender's Blue Butterflies crossing the West Eugene Parkway. Maybe the feds will have to do an environmental impact study of what speed a car can safely impact a butterfly, using crash test butterfly dummies. To get drivers to actually slow down, the feds could build huge speed humps on the freeway to give speeding drivers' stomachs a flutter reminder.

- Springfield city government and developers are working in lockstep trying to push the city of Eugene to expand the metropolitan urban growth boundary. While urban sprawl will allow a few land speculators who bought up cheap farmland to cash in, it will create more ugly, polluting traffic snarl and cost taxpayers millions in stretched infrastructure. If the homebuilders and Springfield officials are so desperate for residential land, why didn't they oppose the recent huge rezoning of housing land for PeaceHealth's hospital sprawl?

- Eugene recently made the Kryptonite top 10 list for the worst cities for bicycle theft. Eugene police brushed off the #6 rating as related to the large number of local bike riders. But other college towns with lots of riders didn't make the list. Maybe they have police who prioritize catching bike thieves above harassing Critical Mass riders trying to promote sustainable transportation.

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

Ruby Larson

When he moved to Eugene in 1984, Ruby Larson lived in his car for five months, picked berries and fruit and made wine in the back seat. "I've been brewing since I was 16," says Larson, who distributes beer and wine-making supplies doing business as Ruby Brew. He works out of his auto repair shop, Avant Carb. Ruby's Real Root Beer is a favorite at the Get Fried Rice booth at the Oregon Country Fair. "One of the founders asked me to help," Larson says. "I started running the booth in '89." Get Fried Rice runs on 100 percent volunteer labor and donates all proceeds to non-profit groups chosen by booth workers. Larson also takes GFR on tour to nine or 10 summer events from California to Washington. A leader in recycling at the fair, GFR will serve all its entrees this year in reusable plastic bowls. "We feed the people who volunteer to wash dishes," Larson notes. "The response is amazing." A graduate of the Master Recyclers program, Larson has initiated several local recycling projects. "I've been making drinking glasses out of wine bottles," he demonstrates. "I'll distribute these when I get polishing equipment."

