

LOGGING NEAR CRATER LAKE?

Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park, faces logging near the boundaries of the forest that surrounds the deep blue volcanic lake, according to the environmental group Oregon Wild.

The 42,000-acre area the U.S. Forest Service seeks to log is bordered on the south by Crater Lake National Park, Lemolo Lake Recreation Area to the north, Mount Thielsen Wilderness and Oregon Cascades Recreation Area to the east and the Mount Bailey Inventoried Roadless Area to the west.

Sean Stevens of Oregon Wild calls the logging plan "a really nasty sale." He says if the D-Bug timber sale goes through it would result in more logging in Oregon's roadless areas under President Obama than happened across the entire U.S. during the eight-year George W. Bush administration.

Under Bush, seven miles of roads were built in roadless areas, Stevens says, and 400 acres of roadless forest were logged.

The D-Bug timber sale calls for "building eight miles of roads in inventoried roadless areas; 25 miles total, including some non-inventoried roadless areas," says Stevens. A non-inventoried roadless area is one that was not inventoried when the roadless areas were established in the 1970s. Stevens says that more areas that fit the criteria to be roadless areas were found later, after the inventory, with better mapping techniques. The D-Bug timber sale would also involve 900 acres of roadless area logging, Stevens says. That's over twice as many roadless acres than were logged under Bush.

Also at issue with the logging project is the current uncertainty over the fate of roadless areas, areas that meet the minimum criteria for official wilderness designation. The Clinton 2001 roadless rule was eliminated in 2005 when then-President Bush issued the Roadless Area Conservation Rule allowing state governors to petition for individual, state-specific rules to log in roadless areas. This rule soon went to court, and since then a number of contradictory legal rulings have been made on the roadless issue. "The Obama administration is not exactly clear on what their policy is," says Stevens.

According to Forest Service documents on the sale, the D-Bug project is a "hazard reduction timber sale project" designed for "reducing fuels, improving forest stand conditions, salvaging present and future bark beetle mortality, and creating fuel breaks around the Diamond Lake and Lemolo Lake Wildland Urban Interface areas, and along evacuation routes that lead to and from these areas."

Stevens says the logging "might make sense in the urban interface areas, but not in a roadless area."

He says, "Beetles are part of the natural life cycle of this forest. Fires too." The forest is mainly made up of lodgepole pine and mixed conifer, according to the USFS's draft environmental impact statement, which says fires in the lodgepole pine stands were "historically common," occurring every 60 to 80 years.

Stevens says, "Cutting down a forest to save it is like chopping off both your arms to prevent gangrene."

For information on the D-Bug timber sale and Oregon Wild's efforts to save it, go to www.oregonwild.org. — *Camilla Mortensen*



news Briefs

CITY CLOSES AMAZON PATH

The City of Eugene plans to close one of the most popular bike commuter routes in Eugene this summer for repairs.

The city will close sections of the Amazon Park off-street bike and pedestrian path from 19th to 31st avenues starting July 6 with work scheduled to be completed by the end of August.

Unlike most road repairs, the sections of the bike path under construction will be entirely closed in both directions with bikers and pedestrians forced to take more dangerous alternative routes.

One pedestrian detour suggested by the city includes south Willamette Street, where citizens have complained of hazardous narrow sidewalks and no bike lanes for decades without the city taking action to solve the pressing problem.

The city will phase construction of the project with the first closure starting July 6 from 24th Avenue to the Amazon Pool. The city said it needs to reconstruct the cracked concrete path now because it did a poor job of building the foundation of the path in the 1970s.

Closing the path has generated controversy online. Cyclist and local environmental activist Josh Schlossberg commented on *EW's* blog (blogs.eugeneweekly.com) that the city too often entirely closes bike routes whereas it would almost never entirely close a street for cars to repair it. "Eugene government considers cyclist commuters second class citizens," Schlossberg wrote.

But Shane Rhodes, manager of the successful Safe Routes to Schools program, praised the city for consulting with local cyclists on the project and scheduling it in the summer when school is out. "Criticizing something that is overall a positive for Eugene cyclists just seems out of touch," he wrote on the *EW* blog.

Schlossberg also argues that fixing dangerous Willamette Street for pedestrians and cyclists is a higher priority than Amazon cracks. "I'd be OK with a few ruts on the bike path in exchange for a non-suicidal route down south Willamette any day."

It's unclear how the city prioritized the Amazon project over the many other needed cycling and pedestrian improvements in Eugene. Funding for the project was included in the five-year property tax increase passed in November 2008. According to the city, about 9 percent of local commuting is by bike, but bike paths got only about 1 percent of the funding in the \$36 million bond measure. — *Alan Pittman*

RALLY FOR A FREE IRAN

Lane County residents gathered in Eugene in support of Iran's freedom Friday, June 26, in alliance with scores of simulta-

neous multinational demonstrations. Attendees advocated for awareness and opposition towards Iran's recently disputed elections and related brutality.

The organizing group, Eugene Iranians and Friends, an unofficial association with no single executive leader, put together the event solely with posted flyers and Facebook advertising. More than 50 people attended the rally that began on the UO campus and marched to the Free Speech Plaza at Eugene's City Hall.

Armed with peace signs, Iranian colors and handmade posters, participants shouted in unison for democracy and the end of the relentless violence in Iran. Last week, video footage showed the murder of Neda Agha-Soltan, an innocent bystander near an Iranian demonstration. Since then, Neda has become an iconic image for peace. At the Eugene rally, Neda was frequently mentioned and shown on signs.

At the Eugene rally, a minute of silence was observed for victims and loved ones. Following that, members of Eugene Iranians and Friends sang the national anthem of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as additional patriotic songs.

Onlookers applauded the protesters with encouraging comments and sounds. No future events have been scheduled at press time. — *Sachie Yorck*

BILINGUAL SERVICES LIST NOW ONLINE

A new online resource lists social service providers who have the capacity to communicate with Spanish-speaking clients with limited English skills. The "Directory of Bilingual Social Services" for the Eugene-Springfield community can be located on the website of the UO's Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS) at csws.uoregon.edu

The directory is primarily intended for providers; the entries have not been translated to Spanish. By phoning local providers, members of the CSWS Research Interest Group "Becoming Bicultural: Latino Immigrant Mothers Raising American Children" found that 123 agencies and organizations currently have the capacity to communicate with Spanish-speaking clients with social service needs.

"This shows a substantive improvement during the decade," co-coordinator Marcela Mendoza said. "However, Centro Latino Americano in Eugene is still the only organization with culturally competent, fully bilingual staff. ... All the social service agencies that we called in Springfield are bilingual, but not all the agencies that we called in Eugene have the same capacity."

The directory is one outcome of a series of three workshops for Latino parents that the research group organized and presented at Springfield High School in February 2009. At the end of the third workshop, the group distributed a list of bilingual social services in the county. Parents who participated expressed the need for a more comprehensive listing, and to make local service providers aware of the bilingual services available to help Spanish-speaking clients.

Following the workshops, the researchers gathered existing information, researched local availability of social services, and contacted providers in Eugene and

FIELD BURNING BILL PASSES

Senate Bill 528, the field burning bill, passed on June 29, the last day of Oregon's legislative session. It passed in the House with a vote of 31-29, and the Western Environmental Law Center, whose attorneys have advocated heavily for a field burning ban, expects the bill to be signed into law in the near future. Gov. Ted Kulongoski has expressed support for the bill in the past.

Charlie Tebbutt of WELC says, "The barbaric practice of field burning will come to a close after this season. People's lungs will not be assaulted by smoky air in much of the southern Willamette Valley."

This is the biggest phasedown in field burning in Oregon since 1998 and close to the outright ban that WELC and Rep. Paul Holvey originally sought. The bill will allow 20,000 acres of field burning on the Willamette Valley floor in 2009 — a reduction from the current 40,000 acres — with none allowed from 2010 onwards. Up to 15,000 acres of "identified species and steep terrain" grass fields may still be burned in the Silverton Hills region, where farmers claim that alternative methods to the smoky practice don't work. The "identified species and steep terrain" exception was a result of an amendment added to the bill during the legislative session, made in order to get the bill passed.

"Shame on the 29 legislators who voted against this bill and caused the compromise that will allow field burning to continue in the Silverton Hills," says Tebbutt. "The people of the Silverton Hills deserve the same relief."

In another legislative victory for environmentalists on the last day of the session, Oregon's AG John Kroger has succeeded in starting an environmental crimes enforcement unit. The new unit, which will start with one prosecutor and one investigator was created by Senate Bill 797. The bill allows the Department of Justice to use existing funds to begin an enforcement program focusing on illegal and intentional violation of Oregon's environmental laws. Previously the DOJ has not had a prosecutor dedicated only to going after violations of environmental laws. "Having one environmental crimes prosecutor is a tremendous improvement over nothing," says Tebbutt.

— *Camilla Mortensen*