

it blocked judicial review of the decision to withdraw the federal protections. The fact that the delisting was a congressional decision superseding the Endangered Species Act is a constitutional issue, says Dan Kruse, attorney for Cascadia Wildlands. “By Congress saying this is what the law will be they have violated the separation of powers doctrine,” he says.

Josh Laughlin, also of Cascadia Wildlands, says on the state level, the group has “ongoing concerns with the way they’re handling wolf recovery in Oregon.”

SLANT

• What’s going on with **EWEB board member** Rich Cunningham and his issue with fellow commissioner Joann Ernst? Ernst made headlines in 2009 for a misdemeanor marijuana violation, then suing the city for what she calls a “bungled” military-style, early morning SWAT raid on her house, complete with percussion grenades. She more recently protested Seneca’s Trapper sale outside the dedication of Seneca’s new biomass incinerator. All this has offended Cunningham and he tells us Ernst “continues to use her office to pursue her own agenda,” her “antics are taking away from the discussion that needs to happen,” elected officials should be “held to a high set of standards as children look up to us.” He calls her an embarrassment to EWEB, and says maybe all EWEB board members should be drug-tested before serving.

All Ernst is able to say for herself at this point is, “I try and show respect for my fellow commissioners, listen to their concerns and questions and stay focused on EWEB issues.” We’ll take her side in this little dispute, and we’re happy to hear Cunningham’s attempt to publicly censure Ernst went nowhere this week. She has a perfect right to be politically active in any area that does not conflict with her EWEB responsibilities, and the clear-cutting of old-growth trees in our city’s watershed is not an EWEB decision (maybe it should be). We applaud anyone who has the guts to stand up to the Eugene Police Department’s infamous gung-ho excesses, whether guilty of possessing medicinal house plants or not. And if having inhaled pot makes people unfit for elected office, well, that would eliminate many of the best and brightest people in government today.

Cunningham’s playing a politically risky game here poking at a competent and dedicated progressive public servant. Makes him look petty. Once again the left eats its own while the right stands back and chuckles.

• **Thumbs up to 4J School Board** members Jim Torrey, Jennifer Gellings, Mary Walston and Craig Smith for voting to give our community a chance to

Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild and a coalition of other wolf advocates wrote a letter to ODFW asking the agency to suspend wolf killing and prioritize the animals’ recovery.

Rob Klavins of Oregon Wild says, “ODFW seems more concerned with local political pressure than following its obligations under the state Endangered Species Act.”

Klavins and Laughlin agree that they thought the original wolf plan was weak, but they recognized the need to

compromise. But Klavins says, “We never contemplated a time when 20 percent of the population would be slated for removal in a two week period.”

In addition to the two wolves killed by the state and the third member of the Imnaha pack slated for “lethal removal” for livestock predation, ODFW has issued 24 private landowner permits to kill wolves. With only 20 wolves in Oregon, Laughlin points out that “there are more kill permits than there are wolves.”

He says, “If wolves are going to

genuinely recover, then ODFW must exercise utmost caution when it comes to lethal control.”

— Camilla Mortensen

CHANGE A FOOT IN FARMERS MARKETS

The fresh produce at Southtowne Market will not be happening this summer,

put together a better proposal for 10.2 acres in the middle of town. More thumbs up to all the volunteers for the YMCA and Save Civic who have worked endless hours and spent plenty to further their community causes, and, of course, to Rick Wright who is willing to step up. Next, hold on to your seatbelts and hope that this often dysfunctional town can put together a public-private plan to build the Y’s community center and extend its reach, renovate an historic stadium built during a recession worse than this one, bring pro soccer, both men and women, here part of the year and provide playing fields the rest. What other benefits can be derived? The possibilities are many as we look ahead.

• Eugene Councilor **Mike Clark** wants the council to recite the Pledge of Allegiance before meetings? The pledge is hardly a unifying ritual; instead the pledge is a reminder for many of us of the idiocy of blind patriotism throughout U.S. history. As schoolchildren we were compelled to stand and salute an inanimate object and chant reverently about “one nation under God,” regardless of our personal beliefs. True patriots don’t need a quaint religious ceremony to remind them of their civic duty to pursue liberty and justice for all. What does Clark want next, and why? Loyalty oaths? Mandatory flag pins for councilors? A cross on top of City Hall?

• **Forty percent of the energy** used by Oregonians is from fossil fuels, much if it from out of state. The world’s largest wind farm is being built in Eastern Oregon, but all of that renewable energy is going to California. In fact (according to OPB’s environment website Ecotrope), thanks to Oregon’s renewable energy incentives Oregon is positioned to attract new renewable energy developments like wind farms, but less than a quarter of the wind energy already produced in the state gets used here. Thirty percent of that renewable wind energy is sold to California. Despite Oregon’s glut of hydropower and wind energy – so much water was going through the Columbia River this spring that wind farms were

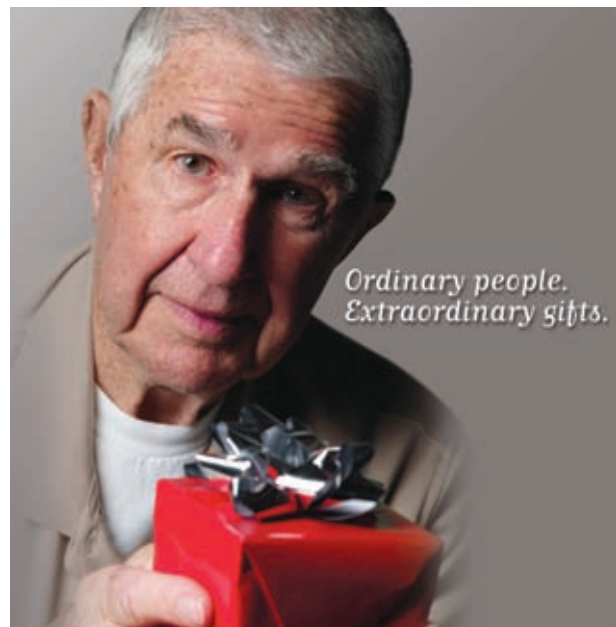
told to shut down their turbines – and despite plans to shut down Oregon’s Boardman coal-fired power plant by 2020, Oregon is still using coal power brought in from Wyoming and Montana.

Oregon’s giving up millions in tax credits for wind power and other energy facilities such as Seneca’s west Eugene biomass burning plant, but just what benefit are we getting from that investment? As consumers we need to use less power and make sure our energy is truly green. When you flip on that light switch, think about where that energy is coming from and at what cost to the environment.

• **School districts** throughout Lane County are facing cutbacks in teachers, programs and instruction days, but residents who want to help and perhaps even voted unsuccessfully to tax themselves have options. As we continue to fight for a permanent solution, the Eugene Education Fund (www.eeflane.org) makes it easy to make donations online, and the Lane Education Foundation (LaneEducationFoundation.org) is raising money to help fill the gaps in smaller school districts. Want to support Springfield schools? Visit www.SpringfieldEducationFoundation.org

• Why are we still **waging war in Afghanistan**? Getting less attention is the question of why the Afghans are still fighting us. Insurgency leaders and ordinary fighters have been interviewed and they consistently say they fight, kill and die because Americans are there to steal their oil, support their corrupt leaders and protect the Afghan drug trade. We are trespassers and they want us out, just as they wanted the British and the Soviets out. It’s more complicated than that, of course, but this bloody mess has little to do with suppressing a terrorist threat against our nation – other than the fact that our continued occupation incites more Afghans to plot against us.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com



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