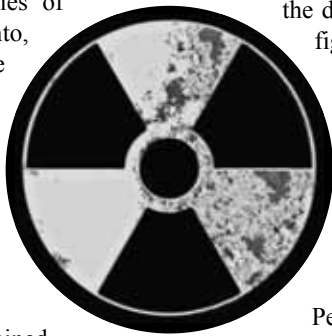


news Briefs

MELTDOWN LINKED TO INFANT DEATHS

Eight cities in the Pacific Northwest are experiencing a dramatic increase in baby deaths since the Japanese nuclear disaster, despite media reports that the fallout is “negligible” in the U.S. mainland.

A CounterPunch.org story June 10 by Janette D. Sherman, M.D., and Joseph Mangano documents an increase of about 35 percent in deaths of babies under 1 year old in Boise, Seattle, Portland and the northern California cities of Santa Cruz, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Jose and Berkeley. The Eugene/Springfield area was not mentioned. The statistics are based on reports from federal agencies and the National Center for Health Statistics.



Deaths in these combined cities averaged 9.25 per week in the month before the Fukushima meltdown and 12.5 per week in the months following the disaster, according to the authors.

“Spewing from the Fukushima reactor are radioactive isotopes including those of iodine (I-131), strontium (Sr-90) and cesium (Cs-134 and Cs-137) all of which are taken up in food and water,” reads the story. “Iodine is concentrated in the thyroid, Sr-90 in bones and teeth and Cs-134 and Cs-137 in soft tissues, including the heart. The unborn and babies are more vulnerable because the cells are rapidly dividing and the delivered dose is proportionally larger than that delivered to an adult.”

The authors cite research on the short- and long-term effects of the Chernobyl meltdown and say the biological findings of Chernobyl cannot be ignored: “Isotope incorporation will determine the future of all life on Earth — animal, fish, bird, plant and human. It is crucial to know this information if we are to avoid further catastrophic damage.”

The full story can be found at <http://wkly.ws/12l>

Meanwhile in Germany, following a strong public response to the Fukushima meltdown and years of warnings from Germany’s established Green Party, Chancellor Angela Merkel on May 31 called for her country to shut down its remaining nuclear plants over the next decade and replace nuclear power with solar, wind, geothermal and other renewable energy sources.

“We need to do the same thing in our country,” said Pacific Green Party spokesman Blair Bobier of Corvallis in his response last week to Merkel’s announcement. “Nuclear power is dangerous under the best of conditions and disastrous under the worst.” — *Ted Taylor*

BIKE LANES FOR SOUTH WILLAMETTE?

Bike advocates won a partial victory in getting the city of Eugene to install long-sought bike lanes on a three-block stretch of Willamette Street in south Eugene, but the decision could also mean a tough fight to install the safety measure on the rest of the busy arterial.

The city had planned to repave Willamette from 29th to 32nd avenues without adding bike lanes, even though the lanes have been in city plans as a top safety priority for decades. Members of the city’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and the local GEARS bike group voiced objections to the City Council that the city should include the safety lanes in the rare repaving project.

The city agreed to install the lanes on part of the stretch, but have them disappear about 200 feet before the intersection with 29th going north and 50 feet after the intersection going south.

The city and its consultant argued that removing one of the five traffic lanes near the intersection to improve human safety could cause too many seconds of delay for motorists during a half-hour, weekday morning peak traffic period.

The city’s position on elevating traffic speed over cyclist safety could make for a fight in trying to remove a lane on Willamette north of 29th to make room for bike lanes and wider sidewalks, a major goal of bike advocates for decades and a top priority in a new draft bike pedestrian plan for the city.

If the city wouldn’t install bike lanes on the three-block stretch, BPAC urged the city to at least install “sharrows” before

LANE COUNTY SPRAY SCHEDULE

• Western Lane County:

Roadside spray near Coyote Creek, Notice 201178100446. Ground spray near Rock Creek, Notice 201178100436. Aerial spray near Mati Creek, Notice 201177100425. Ground spray near Pheasant Creek, Coyote Creek, Camas Swale, Crow Creek, Siuslaw River, Notice 201178100457. Aerial and ground spray near Sturtevant Creek, Notice 201178100435. Aerial spray near Demming Creek, Pigeon Springs Notice 201178100447.

• If you have suffered any ill effects from ODOT spraying, please let Forestland Dwellers know. We are encouraging ODOT to mow or manually manage vegetation in lieu of spraying.

Compiled by Jan Wroncy, Forestland Dwellers: 342-8332, www.forestlanddwellers.org

29th to encourage cars to share the road with cyclists. But the city also refused to paint the sharrows bike marks in the car lanes, arguing that they shouldn’t be placed on busy streets. That’s contrary to other cities use of sharrows and the city’s own planned use of the markings on busy 13th near the UO.

Northbound cyclists can use an easement through an apartment complex to reach a parallel street, the city argued. But the easement requires a detour, is frequently used for parking and some apartment residents have objected to its use.

The stretch of Willamette before 29th is a major safety choke point for cyclists trying to reach the Woodfield Station shopping center’s Market of Choice and the many businesses north of 29th. To the east a lack of through streets provides no parallel alternative route and to the west lie steep hills. Willamette has the third highest number of bike accidents in Eugene, according to a recent city study. — *Alan Pittman*

A version of this story first appeared at EugeneCycles.com

WOPR: BACK FROM THE DEAD?

Conservationists and forest advocates rejoiced in July 2009 when Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced that the Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR), a plan to ramp up logging in Northwest forests by 400 percent, was

“legally indefensible and must be withdrawn.” But a federal judge in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., ruled in April 2011 that Salazar acted illegally when he did not ask for public comment when he withdrew the WOPR.

Salazar withdrew the WOPR, which was put into place by the Bush administration, because he concluded the plan was illegal — its implementation didn’t review the potential impacts on endangered species such as the northern spotted owl.

Ariel Hiller of the Bureau of Land Management’s public affairs says “the WOPR is back — however there are two important points.” She says due to transition language, since it takes about two years to plan a sale, current BLM sales must comply with both the WOPR and the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP). She says the BLM is offering timber sales that are “consistent with both 2008 resources management plan and the Northwest Forest Plan.”

Secondly, Hiller says, “We have other lawsuits that may change our status as we move forwards.”

She adds, “Right now we are kind of sitting back and digesting the challenges and opportunities.”

Oregon Wild, along with a number of other conservation groups, filed a motion on June 3 for an injunction on the WOPR because the plan was illegal to begin with, since there was no Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation. The conservation groups are represented by Susan Jane Brown of Eugene-based Western Environmental Law Center and by attorneys from Earthjustice. Brown says that along with the motion for summary judgment, the groups have re-filed a previous suit against the WOPR that dropped after Salazar withdrew the plan. She says the federal government has a few more weeks to respond.

Three pilot projects testing the work of OSU professor Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin of the University of Washington that are attempting to generate forest income while preserving the ecosystem are still going forward, according to Doug Heiken of Oregon Wild.

“The pilots are going on under the Northwest Forest Plan,” he says, “but they can continue with the pilots and re-kill the WOPR. It’s not mutually exclusive.”

The pilot projects range from a Ponderosa thinning project near Medford, which Heiken calls less controversial, to “regeneration harvests” in Roseburg and Coos Bay that he says are “kinder, gentler clearcuts.”

“They need to initiate the process in order to kill the WOPR correctly,” Heiken says. “Do it with public comments and do it correctly and be done with it,” he says. — *Camilla Mortensen*

ACTIVIST ALERT

• Local authors and photographers Pam Fitzpatrick and Paul Dix have visited Nicaragua many times and will be discussing and reading from their new photo book *Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy of U.S. Policy* at 6 pm Thursday, June 16, at the Eugene Public Library.

• The city of Eugene is holding a meeting about creating a space for small dogs in Amazon Park from 6:30 to 8 pm Thursday, June 16, at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St. More information at www.eugene-or.gov/smalldogs

• Community Alliance of Lane County’s Back to Back program will show two short films starting at 6:30 pm Thursday, June 16, at the CALC building, 458 Blair Blvd. *Chavez Ravine: A Los Angeles Story* tells of the city’s purchase of 350 acres and the corruption, lies, politics and baseball involved. *The Road to the Big Leagues* details the Dominican Republic’s influence on the U.S. national pastime. Popcorn will be served and discussion will follow. Contact Silver at CALCBack2Back@gmail.com or call 485-1755 ext. 206.

• The Lane County chapter of the Oregon League of Conservation Voters is planning its summer event, “Food

for Thought – Celebrating What’s In Our Backyard,” from noon to 3 pm Sunday, June 26, at a private home in the River Road area. Contact Ashley@olcv.org or call 968-8269 to RSVP.

• Public comment on the proposed 2011 Management Plan for the Elliott State Forest began June 1 and ends Aug. 29. The draft maps and plans are online at <http://wkly.ws/12j> and comments may be addressed to the State Forests Planning Specialist, ODF, 2600 State St., Salem 97310, or emailed to ODFStateForestsComments@odf.state.or.us