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news Briefs

Oregon and headed out to Oregon's east side to check out a proposed forest restoration plan on the Malheur National Forest.

Susan Jane Brown of the Western Environmental Law Center says CEQ Chair Nancy Sutley headed out to John Day to check out the Soda Bear Project on the Malheur National Forest and meet with a collaborative group called the Blue Mountains Forest Partners that Brown says "is working on community-based solutions." Brown says she has been working with the collaborative for about six years and says the diverse group of stakeholders includes environmentalists, loggers and county officials.

The group has proposed restoration-based logging on the 20,000 acre Soda Bear Project that Brown says is based on the science of forestry professors Norm Johnson of Oregon State and Jerry Franklin of the University of Washington, two of the authors of the Northwest Forest Plan, which has managed logging on much of Oregon's federal forests since 1994. The Soda Bear Project would draw on the scientists' "dry forest restoration principles."

Restoration work on Oregon's dry east side has been made trickier by what Brown calls the "21-inch rule" that retains trees over 21-inch dbh in order to preserve old-growth values. But Brown says that rule "can get in the way of some restoration that needs to be done." The 21-inch rule was intended to be temporary until a new ecosystem

management plan could be created for the non-Northwest Forest Plan lands, like the Malheur, in the Pacific Northwest.

The Soda Bear plan, whose environmental analysis is in the midst of its 30-day objection period under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, would allow for logging of trees greater than 21-inch dbh under a "regional forester's eastside forest plan amendment" that would retain all trees that are older than 150 years, as opposed to trees greater than 21 inches.

Brown says this is also based on the research of Robert Van Pelt (aka Big Tree Bob) and the need to look at more than just diameter in terms of a tree's old-growth characteristics. She says that after years of fire suppression a fast-growing white fir can crowd out the ponderosa pine, but the 21-inch rule can keep those trees from being cut. According to the Soda Bear Project legal notice, "Diameter limits can deter the harvest of young, relatively large trees that crowd older trees, greatly increasing the risk that the old trees would die as a result of either wildfire or insect attack."

The legal notice, available at <http://wkly.ws/13g> says the age of the trees will be determined by Van Pelt's guidelines "Identifying Old Trees and Forest" and through coring some of the trees.

Brown says of the plan "It's a little bit risky, but we feel very strongly that this is based in science." — *Camilla Mortensen*

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

In our New Briefs last week ("A Search for Solutions") we wrote that all are welcome to attend the Downtown Neighborhood Association Steering Committee meeting at 6 pm Aug. 25 at the Eugene Library, but we heard from David Mandelblatt of DNA that "If everyone in Eugene comes to the Steering Committee meeting we'll have chaos, and nothing will get done. I don't remember exactly what I said, but assuming that IS what I said, it's a really bad idea!" Mandelblatt suggests interested community members send comments to dna.eugene@gmail.com or post to the forum at www.eugenedna.org/forum

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ACTIVIST ALERT

• A town hall meeting on state and national Alzheimer's plans will be from 4 to 6 pm Thursday, Aug. 11, at the Campbell Senior Center at 155 High St. The recommendations and comments expressed at this town hall event will inform the creation of an Oregon state plan for Alzheimer's and will be shared with officials from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A panel of local experts will include Adele Ismert, Donna Peterson and Liz von Wellsheim. For more information, email jon.bartholomew@alz.org

• Oregon's Fish Passage Task Force will meet from 8 am to 5 pm Friday, Aug. 12, at the Hilton in Eugene to consider current statewide fish passage issues. Members of the public are welcome to attend. The nine-member group meets quarterly to advise ODFW on fish passage policies and issues. For more information, call (503) 947-6224.

• The Eugene Solutions Team has free events coming up, starting with an Amazon Creek work party from 4 to 6 pm Friday, Aug. 12, at West 16th and Polk, to help build pet waste receptacles along the Fern Ridge Bike Path. Next is the Jefferson Westside Garden Tour from 10 am to 2 pm Saturday, Aug. 13. Meet at Charnel-Mulligan Park. Next is a "Growing a Healthy Neighborhood" workshop on improving local water quality by making small changes in our own yards, from 2 to 4 pm Sunday, Aug. 14, at Charnel-Mulligan Park. Aimee Code will lead. A free "End of Summer Celebration" and community meal will be at 6:30 pm Sunday, Aug. 14, at Charnel-Mulligan Park. For more info visit eugenesolutions.org or call (503) 480-9278.

• The third annual Pollinator Party is coming up in early September and the deadline for discounted tickets is Aug. 12. The dinner and auction in support of the Eugene-based Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) will be Sept. 9 at the Downtown Athletic Club. Buy tickets online at www.pesticide.org and for more information email info@pesticide.org or call 344-5044.



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