

FOREST PLANS IN CONGRESS

Congressman Peter DeFazio is hoping that when it comes to Oregon's contentious debates over logging on its 2.4 million acres of Bureau of Land Management O&C lands, conservationists and the timber industry can both have their cake and eat it too.

DeFazio has been working on a plan that he hopes will preserve old-growth forests, get counties more funding as county payments draw to an end and make logging a little more predictable for the timber industry. He says, "The bottom line is: How can we get counties adequate funding for essential public services?"

"The second point," he says, is "how can we resolve this ongoing dispute over the public lands, which really revolves around preserving the last of the old growth and treating the lands more responsibly from a conservation perspective and from an industry perspective more predictability coming off those lands."

Drawing from a proposal by Andy Stahl of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, DeFazio says the plan would be to split the lands between conservation and logging and have each of the two sections managed by a board of trustees creating a conservation trust and a timber trust.

Josh Laughlin of local conservation group Cascadia Wildlands is a little skeptical of the plan. "We recognize the predicament our counties are in and support innovative ideas to generate revenue for them," he says, "but turning over a million acres of our public forestlands to Wall

Street, cut-and-run types will not result in clean air, clean water and habitat hospitable to iconic species like salmon — rather just the opposite."

DeFazio says so far this plan has not been written up into legislation, and exactly what percentage of land would go into each trust has not been decided. "We're not even certain legislation would set exact percentages," he says, and adds that much of that sort of decision-making can't be done until a detailed inventory of the land in question is finished.

DeFazio says support for the idea has come from Gov. John Kitzhaber, who is "very interested," and Sen. Jeff Merkley. He says Sen. Ron Wyden and Rep. Kurt Schrader have expressed interest and Republican Rep. Greg Walden "agreed to sit down and talk about it."

DeFazio says the conservation trust part of the plan would provide "permanent protection to old growth, which right now doesn't exist, and it's all being decided in the courts." He says, "Someday it's all going to go to the Supreme Court, and I don't want the Supreme Court deciding much of anything that I care about."

He says while this might seem like a county issue to others in Washington, D.C., when it gets down to finances, "the BLM is spending \$110 million a year to manage these plans, and there's not much management going on."

On Thursday, Sept. 22, the House Natural Resources Committee will discuss a separate Republican-led draft proposal to address the expiration of the Secure Rural Schools Act. That proposal doesn't address the O&C lands, though a press release says the legislation "provides for future inclusion of proposals to address other federal forest lands affected by declining timber production," and references those lands.

DeFazio says, "They call it a trust, but it has nothing to do with a trust. It's not a trust like what we're looking at." He says the draft legislation raises "just an awful lot of questions. The bill has a lot of blanks." He adds, "We have real problems, and we need something we can work with the Senate and the administration on."

Laughlin says of this Doc Hastings/Walden plan: "There is a reason old-growth logging timber sale receipts were decoupled from essentially county services in the past — because species extinction was looming and the American public couldn't stand losing any more of its iconic rainforest." He says, "No one in their right mind should be thinking that this is a workable solution."

— Camilla Mortensen

BETTER ACCESS TO COUNTY RECORDS?

Lane County will put a discussion of making public records more accessible and affordable on an upcoming agenda, according to Board of County Commissioners Chairman Faye Stewart.

Lane County was going to charge \$200 per computer searched for a recent public records request by *EW* for emails related to the decision to give Rick Dancer Media Services a contract for \$40,800 versus a similar proposal by Lane Metro Television's Robert Lewis for \$14,640. The \$200 public records charge was later revised down to \$140-\$150, but a request for a fee waiver because the records request was in the public's interest was not addressed.

The UO recently announced that it would waive the first \$200 in fees for public records requests. Bill Harbaugh, UO economics professor and chair of the UO Senate Transparency Committee wrote in an announcement of the waiver: "The media will get this \$200 waiver automatically, because of their long established role in helping make democracy work, by getting public information to the public."

Former Commissioner Bill Fleenor says County Administrator Liane Richardson supplied *The Register-*

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Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

LAURA HINRICHS

"I've always made jam," says Laura Hinrichs, raised in Missouri on her mother's family farm until age 6 when her parents moved to Seattle. "My mother canned during the war." After high school, she married and divorced twice, graduated from UC Berkeley, and taught kindergarten and ESL for five years in the San Francisco Bay Area. She married Karl Hinrichs, taught for five years more in LA, then earned a law degree in 1979 and practiced law for 15 years. "I did a lot of work before the probate bar, protective proceedings for people who lacked capacity," she says. "It's an area where adversarial proceedings are not the best answer."



In 2001, the Hinrichs relocated to the McKenzie River Valley east of Springfield. "I took the OSU Extension Master Food Preservers Program in 2004," she says. "In 2008, we were told that our program would be suspended." Hinrichs has taken an active role among local MFPs, who have maintained ties with OSU by raising enough cash to support a one-day-a-week extension agent. "Food preservation is the poor stepchild of the sustainable food movement," she says. "I want to focus on the esthetic side to make it available to the public. Our next event is a cheese-tasting at Newman's Fish Market on Friday, Sept. 30. We'll follow up with a Saturday class on cheese-making."



SUNDAY STREETS

Thousands of Eugeneans took back the streets from cars last weekend for the city's first Sunday Streets event promoting active, healthy and green transportation, community and fun. The Sept. 18 event closed a three-mile route downtown including 5th Avenue to cars, giving the public space to everyone from kids with training wheels to strollers to bicyclists to hula hoopers to dancing seniors. Go to EugeneCycles.com for more pictures.

LIGHTEN UP

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

A recent poll shows that playing nice with Republicans has cost Obama support from his base while making independents wonder if he shouldn't instead be running for the school board. It's time for Michelle to buy boxer shorts for her husband and show him how to use them.