

NEWS

GOSHEN DEEMED SIGNIFICANT?

Transforming Goshen, a small, unincorporated town south of Eugene off I-5 and Hwy 58, was designated as a specific goal for 2012 by the Lane County Board of Commissioners in this year's State of the County Address, and now Goshen has been declared a "Regionally Significant Industrial Area" (RSI) by the Oregon Economic Revitalization and Review Council.

Lane County has been pushing hard and fast to have Goshen rezoned and revamped into an industrial park. The county is calling it the GREAT Plan — Goshen Region Employment and Transition Plan — but its greatness is in dispute by those concerned about land use issues and the use of public funds.

According to Commissioner Faye Stewart in a press release, "For me, the designation is a big leap forward in seeing Goshen redeveloped and being able to offer new job opportunities for our citizens." But according to Mia Nelson of 1000 Friends of Oregon, Goshen may not be developable at all. The site includes nationally inventoried wetlands, which have restrictions on what can be built on them, but the county plans to wait until the point when development would actually occur for on-site wetland delineation, which would determine the exact boundaries.

Nelson says the county is doing it backwards — it should first check the wetlands designation and the infrastructure to see if Goshen is even developable, then go for the land use code change that it has been seeking along with the RSI designation. She questions, what if "ODOT [Oregon Department of Transportation] spends millions for infrastructure upgrades and then finds out Goshen is all



wetlands and it won't work?"

Nelson says that the RSI designation could help the county secure public funding for infrastructure for Goshen, such as improving the freeway access. She says when it comes to allocating federal transportation dollars, the county could argue the money should be spent on Goshen because it's a regionally significant site, rather than a different project.

She points to a comment that Stewart made in the *R-G*

in June: "He also said the county is determined not to use public money to pay for the redevelopment, requiring those who want to build on the site to add infrastructure as they make improvements." Nelson points out that federal and state funds are still public money. A similar issue of public funding has arisen in the EmX bus rapid transit debate, in which opponents have questioned using public money — federal transportation dollars — for the project.

According to a Lane County spokesperson, "The citi-

ACTIVIST ALERT

- A new **Organizing for America** (OFA) field office for Oregon opened Sept. 30 at 115 W. 6th Ave. Eugene. "The office will allow supporters to come together with their friends and neighbors to discuss the critical issues at stake in this election and work together to reelect President Obama and other Democrats," reads a statement from the national OFA offices. Call 525-9387 for information on voter outreach and canvassing.

- The Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides **Healthy Harvest** fundraiser event will begin at 6 pm Saturday, Oct. 6, at the Vet's Club, 1626 Willamette St., featuring a gourmet organic dinner, locally crafted beer and wine, games and live music by Laura Kemp and the Liaisons. Tickets are \$35 in advance or \$40 at the door. Buy online at <http://wkly.ws/1cr>

- The **Great Willamette Cleanup** is Saturday morning, Oct. 6, at 14 stretches along the river from Eugene to Portland. Bring your own boat or reserve a seat in a canoe or kayak for \$12. See <http://wkly.ws/1cx> for a list of locations and to register. The local put-in will be at 8:30 am at Island Park in Springfield. After-party celebrations will be held at 12:30 pm at Calapooia Brewing in Corvallis, and at 1 pm at Maurie Jacobs Park in Eugene. Call (503) 726-8801 for more information.

- A resolution opposing **coal trains through Eugene** will be on the City Council work session agenda at 5:30 pm Monday, Oct. 8, followed by an evening session at 7:30 dealing with the Downtown Public Safety Zone, the West Eugene Enterprise Zone and an ordinance concerning bikes on sidewalks downtown.

- **Canvassing for Betty Taylor** is now happening Saturdays with an 11 am gathering time at the Democratic Party of Lane County Office, 228 E. 11th Ave. Call 484-5099 or 914-5603.

AREA SCHOOLS TEST POSITIVE FOR PESTICIDES

Well water that students were drinking at Triangle Lake Charter School, located outside of Eugene, contained the pesticide imazapyr, according to a sample sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for testing in April 2011. Now a study by the USDA in the spring of 2012 of 22 Oregon rural schools using wells shows that one other Eugene-area school and two Corvallis-area schools had pesticides in their water. The Triangle Lake school was also tested and had imazapyr in the water again.

The Triangle Lake/Highway 36 area has been the subject of controversy over pesticide sprays for years and the issue has gained national attention through a story on PBS's *NewsHour*. Residents, including children, in the Triangle Lake area have tested positive for the chemicals atrazine and 2,4-D in their urine.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) gathered the school water samples, which were analyzed by the USDA. Day Owen of the Pitchfork Rebellion, one of the groups protesting the chemicals that private forest owners aerially spray or otherwise apply to the land, says that state agencies did not know about the USDA program testing school water for free "until they found out about it through us; they then used it to not only confirm our Triangle Lake result but to test the other schools."

The Corvallis schools — Dixie Elementary and Fairplay Elementary — had the most chemicals in their water at 12 each. Applegate Elementary, south of Veneta, had seven: atrazine, bromacil, desethyl atrazine, desisopropyl atrazine, diuron, prometon and propazine. Crow High School was the other Eugene-area school tested and had no

chemicals, nor did Corvallis' Mountain View Elementary. The full study is available the Oregon Health Authority website at wkly.ws/1d1 and the OHA report says, "None of the pesticides or their breakdown products were found at levels of concern for public health (based on the comparison of health screening levels for individual pesticide concentrations)."

The OHA recommends schools with multiple pesticides detected in their drinking water contact OHA or other experts to investigate and learn more about the connection between surface and groundwater supplying their wells and contact the drinking water protection staff at DEQ if they wish to initiate voluntary pesticide reduction efforts in their recharge area.

Owen says parents should "ask your school to take the OHA advice and work with them on discovering how the herbicides got into the drinking water. Then demand that your government pass strong chemical drift laws."

He adds, "Right now, industry prevents that and school kids drink weed-killer cocktails. We need to ask: What's more important, Monsanto profits or pesticide-free school drinking water?"

Owen questions whether the effects of being exposed to multiple pesticides, even in small doses, could adversely affect children, and he points to a report published by Beyond Pesticides that notes, "Synergistic effects between multiple pesticides and/or other chemicals represent one of the greatest gaps in EPA's [Environmental Protection Agency] ability to protect the public from the adverse health effects associated with pesticide use and exposure."

The Pitchfork Rebellion will caravan to and rally in front of several of the schools in the study Friday, Oct. 5. They will meet at noon in the Triangle Lake school parking lot, 20264 Blachly Grange Rd., and caravan to Applegate Elementary School in Crow. — *Camilla Mortensen*