

PANEL PROPOSED FOR 'FIXING' FORESTS

Gov. John Kitzhaber has entered the federal forests and county funding fray by proposing a forest panel made up of environmentalists, county officials and timber interests. The panel, which is based on the proposed DeFazio-Walden-Schrader forest legislation, is tasked with coming up with a plan for using federal Bureau of Land Management O&C forests to fund payments to cash-strapped Oregon counties.

Conservation group Oregon Wild was specifically "dis-invited" from being a member of the panel, says Steve Pedery, the group's conservation director. He says the enviro groups that were selected don't have a lot of history with working on the O&C lands issue.

The groups selected include the Wild Salmon Center, the Pew Foundation and Defenders of Wildlife. Among the timber interests are Allyn Ford of Roseburg Forest Products and Dale Riddle of Seneca Sawmills. No Lane County commissioners are on the panel.

Pedery says that fellow conservationist Andy Kerr, who refused to join the panel, summed it up when he said the effort is just "putting lipstick on a pig." Pedery says, "I can think of some other metaphors, but they are probably not fit to print." Oregon Wild and Kerr had vociferous objections to DeFazio's controversial forest plan, which called to basically split the forestlands in half, partly for logging (and some clearcutting) and partly for conservation.

Pedery wants to call attention to a list of O&C lands principles recently released by Sen. Ron Wyden, which

Pedery says are not perfect, but do draw some lines in the sand. He says given the present and expected post-election makeup of the Senate and the House "at the end of the day, if anything is going to happen to resolve county payments, Sen. Wyden is the only person who can do it." He says that before this Wyden had been quiet about the DeFazio bill.

Wyden's principles include stable funding for Oregon counties, sustainability, wilderness and permanent land conservation, following federal environmental laws and safeguarding old growth. Wyden also calls for "opportunities to finally honor unrealized treaty obligations to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, understanding that some lands consid-

ered for their reservations may not be O&C lands. Both tribes have treaties pre-dating the O&C Lands Act."

Walden and DeFazio want to not raise taxes and to log their way out of the county funding crunch, Pedery says, but "if the

governor just comes up just with a logging solution and doesn't have the support, it really can't go anywhere." He adds, "Wyden has to have something he can actually pass." — *Camilla Mortensen*

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- STEVE PEDERY, OREGON WILD

CITIZENS UNITED VERSUS DEFAZIO

Congressman Peter DeFazio's GOP challenger, Art Robinson, is back at it this election with some help from a few deep-pocketed, out-of-state friends. A spread of just under 11 percent kept DeFazio in Oregon's Fourth Congressional District in the 2010 election. Now the man behind *Citizens United* is putting money into the effort to beat the populist Democratic congressman.

Conservative litigator James Bopp Jr.'s Republican Super PAC Inc. (RSPAC) purchased \$139,985 in advertising on local television stations KVAL (CBS), KEZI (ABC), KMTR (NBC) and KLSR (Fox) between Oct. 3 and Oct. 12, according to Federal Election Commission (FEC) public data records. Bopp formed the PAC with Republican National Committee members Solomon Yue of Oregon and Roger Villere of Louisiana.

In the world of campaign finance, Bopp Jr.'s shadow stretches farther than most; he is the legal mind behind *Citizens United*, the 2010 Supreme Court decision that prohibited the government from restricting independent political expenditures by corporations and unions. Bopp is the treasurer and general counsel to RSPAC.

Art Robinson is thus far the only candidate anywhere to receive funds from RSPAC, which is 92 percent (about \$239,000) funded by a single donor — Bob Mercer — co-CEO of Renaissance Technologies and the same man who spent nearly \$600,000 with the Concerned Taxpayers of America (CTA) to fund Robinson's 2010 effort.

"Right now it's the Wild West of campaign finance," DeFazio said in a recent interview. "This is an attempt by the wealthiest, most powerful special interests in this country — individuals and major corporations, to buy our country — it's unprecedented."

DeFazio has received PAC money too, though from very different sources. According to FEC records, through June of this year 47 percent of his campaign funding came from PACs such as United Transportation Union PAC (\$5,000) and American Council of Engineering Companies PAC (\$5,000).

It remains to be seen whether the television ads will make a difference in the race for the House seat this November, but DeFazio says this issue is much bigger than any single race: "People need to get angry and send a message to Wall Street, send a message to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, send a message to the Supreme Court — that our country is not for sale. We're not going to let you have it. We're going to win this election and then we're going to start to fix the unbelievable damage you've done." — *Shelley Deadmond and Camilla Mortensen*

SAVE BUTTERFLIES AND HORNED BIRDS

You've probably never seen a streaked horned lark — a little bird with feather tufts on its head that call to mind the horns of a teeny-tiny buffalo — because they are only about 6 to 8 inches long and there are only about 1,600 of them left in the world. But some of the few little yellowish and brown birds that remain live in the Willamette Valley and they have a liking for airports. The streaked horned lark and a fellow prairie species, the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, have been proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as additions to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants this month.

To be precise, it's less that the birds, which once ranged from southern Oregon up into Canada, like hanging out with planes and helicopters and it's more that they like the grass around the airports, according to Noah Greenwald of the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD). "The lark likes short grass," he says. "All their habitat has been lost to agriculture, to development and to forest encroachment because there's no fire anymore. Airports turn out to be good habitat." The USFWS proposal also calls for designating 6,875 acres of protected critical habitat for the butterfly and 12,159 acres for the bird in Washington and Oregon.

The lark and butterfly became candidates for the endangered species list in 2001 and lingered there, while their numbers dwindled, for more than 10 years. Greenwald says a 2011 settlement between CBD and USFWS means the agency has to make decisions on endangered species listings for 757 species by 2018.

The streaked horned lark and the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly are now found only at a handful of scattered locations around the Puget Sound, Olympic Peninsula, Washington Coast, Columbia River and Willamette Valley, according to the CBD. Greenwald says the Willamette prairies are a highly endangered ecosystem, with "only 2 percent left of what they used to be." He adds, "Protecting these species will protect this really rare habitat."

Native American burning in the valley used to produce the kind of habitat the lark and checkerspot need — the same habitat needed for the already listed Willamette daisy, Kincaid's lupine and Fender's blue butterfly. The species depend on "disturbed" landscapes, according to the USFWS, which says that the largest known populations of streaked horned larks breed in the southern Willamette Valley at the Corvallis Municipal Airport and on the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Because the birds like airports and farms despite their use of heavy equipment and pesticides, USFWS is putting forth a "4(d) rule," a special type of rule that can increase or decrease a species' protections. In this case the agency would like to relax the "take" prohibitions related to airport and agriculture in the habitat area since things like airport maintenance actually seem to benefit the lark. When a species is "taken" it is harassed, captured or killed.

The USFWS is taking comments on the proposed endangered species listings through Dec. 10. For more information go to at.wkly.ws/1dd — *Camilla Mortensen*



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TAYLOR'S CHECKERSPOT BUTTERFLY