

ACTIVIST ALERT

• **Joe Walacki and Borden Beck** will speak and show slides on “High Desert Wildlands” at the meeting of the Many Rivers Group of the Sierra Club from 5:30 to 7 pm Thursday, March 20, at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St. The club is currently working to protect the Owyhee Canyonlands and other endangered desert areas.

• Candidates for **East Lane County commissioner** have been invited to a community forum at 6:30 pm Thursday, March 20, at the McKenzie River Mountain Resort in Blue River. Faye Stewart is the incumbent and challengers are Joann Ernst, Kevin Matthews, Jose Ortal and Jack Schoolcraft.

• The first **Friends of Trees** planting event of the season will be at 9 am Saturday, March 22, at the northeast corner of Danebo and Roosevelt in west Eugene. Park at the LDS Church at 555 Danebo. Volunteers will plant and mulch 150 native trees and shrubs on ODOT land. FOT will provide tools and gloves and free refreshments. Contact Erik Burke at 632-3683.

• **Oregon Strong Voice**, a statewide collaboration between labor unions and community organizations, is holding its annual summit from 10 am to 4:30 pm Saturday, March 22, at the Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 hall (the old *Springfield News* building) at 1887 Laura St. in Springfield. Registration begins at 9 am. Speakers include Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, AFL-CIO Executive VP Tefere Gebre and PCUN President Ramon Ramirez. Register online at bit.ly/osvsummit.

• The annual **SOLVE beach cleanup** will be from 10 am to 1 pm Saturday, March 22, along the Oregon Coast. Last year, 4,000 volunteers removed about 28 tons of debris from beaches. Sign up at solveoregon.org or call (503) 844-9571.

• Lane County is gathering public input on **proposed rules for outdoor events** on county property. An informal “listening session” is planned for 3 to 7 pm Tuesday, March 25, at the Florence Events Center at 715 Quince St. The next such event will be from 3 to 7 pm Thursday, March 27, at the Lane County Customer Service Center, 3050 N. Delta Hwy. in Eugene. See wkly.ws/1pg for more information and to take an online survey.

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

• Giustina Land and Timber Co., 345-2301, plans to hire Western Helicopter Services Inc., (503) 538-9469, to aerially spray herbicides including Atrazine, 2,4-D, Clopyralid, Hexazinone, Sulfometuron Methyl and Triclopyr Amine on 69 acres near tributaries of **South Fork Ferguson Creek, Owens Creek** and the **Long Tom River**. See ODF notice 2014-781-00273, call State Forester Robin L. Biesecker at 935-2283 with questions.

• Brian Templeton Logging, 729-5111, plans to spray 30 acres near **Bear Creek, Jones Creek and Owens Creek** and a domestic water source with Roundup, which may not be approved for forestry use. See ODF notice 2014-781-00278, call State Forester Robin L. Biesecker at 935-2283 with questions.

• Weyerhaeuser, 988-7502, plans to hire Northwest Reforestation Services, 344-4991, to spray 123 acres with up to 14 different herbicides including Atrazine and 2,4-D near **Parsons Creek**. See ODF notice 2014-771-00268, call State Forester Tim Meehan at 726-3588 with questions.

Compiled by Jan Wroncy and Gary Hale, Forestland Dwellers: 342-8332, forestlanddwellers.org.

POLLUTION UPDATE

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) assessed a penalty of \$7,608 against **Michael Brown** of Oakland, Ore., on March 4 for **sewage-related violations** at **Saginaw Mobile Home Park** north of Cottage Grove. DEQ has expressed “particular concern” due to Brown’s “prior history of discharging partially treated sewage onto the ground” and noted that the treatment system at this site “may be causing harm to public health or the environment.” DEQ sent Brown a “warning letter with opportunity to correct” back in November following a DEQ visit to the site in late October. DEQ’s visit (at which Brown was present) revealed remnants of sewage on the ground and an improperly maintained and operated system. Brown also appears to have a history of failing to monitor the treatment system and operating the system without a permit.

— Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project

NEWS

INCREASE IN COUGAR KILLINGS IS PREVENTABLE

Last weekend a cougar was shot in the head and killed in Eugene after being captured and put in a cage. The 2-year-old cougar killed three chickens and two goats named Justin Timberlake and Rufio near Hendricks Park, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. ODFW reports that another young male cougar was trapped and killed March 17 and a trap has been set for a third cougar. These latest cougar captures mark the trend of increased cougar killings in Oregon, says Brooks Fahy of Predator Defense.

Numbers released from ODFW indicate the number of cougar killings has increased since the early 1990s; tags sold to hunt cougars have increased as well. In 1992, 517 tags were sold and that number rose to more than 55,000 in 2013. In 1992, 187 cougars were killed. In 2013 it was 530.

“You look at the kill numbers,” Fahy says. “I believe the numbers say it all.”

In the particular case of the cougar that was caught March 12 near Hendricks Park, Fahy says the deaths of all the animals could have been prevented with simple preemptive measures.

“Hey, you’ve got livestock, you’re responsible for protecting them yourself. It’s basic animal husbandry,” Fahy says.

ODFW said in a press release that “ODFW does not relocate cougars, as relocation would create territorial conflicts among existing cougar populations and could also spread disease. Further, ODFW would not relocate a cougar killing livestock, as the cougar is likely to repeat this behavior elsewhere.”

Fahy says that ODFW could have easily reintroduced the cougar in a different, more remote part of Eugene.

“They are an agency that is in the business of killing animals,” Fahy says. “There are built-in innate population control systems. We don’t need to do it for them.”

Fahy says that cougars have little to no legal protection under Oregon state law and that although cougars have expansive territories, they usually stay away from humans.

“The hype around [cougar sightings] goes far beyond the actual threat,” Fahy says. “In reality, there’s never been one cougar attack [on people] in Oregon. And I think that puts perspective into it.” — *Kevin Sullivan*

PUBLIC CITIZEN ON CITIZENS UNITED, KOCH BROTHERS AT PIELC

Representatives from Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer rights advocacy group, held a March 2 panel at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference. The pair of presenters focused on the history of big money in politics and the potential of even more dollars being spent to stop the climate change movement.

Scott Nelson from Public Citizen’s litigation group spoke first, discussing the U.S. Supreme Court rulings that paved the way for big money in politics. He talked about two particular cases in Arizona and Montana where groups used the argument that they wanted to “level the playing field” with Citizens United. However, Citizens United won because the courts didn’t like the level playing field argument, he said.

Corporations can give money to candidates without reporting it thanks to entities like 501(c)(4)s and super

PACs. This makes it so corporations can donate more than what the IRS regulates. “It’s like saying you’re in an exclusive relationship as long as you only cheat 49 percent of the time,” Nelson says.

Tyler Slocum, director of Public Citizen’s energy program, went more in-depth about the future of politics. The pair spoke about billionaires such as the Koch brothers who donate big money to political causes and candidates. The consensus of the panel was that people like the Koch brothers will continue to spend money like they have done in the past.

The panel also discussed the fact that liberal billionaire Tom Steyer plans to donate \$100 million in the 2014 elections to make climate change a top issue. According to Slocum, fighting big money with big money is not a long-term solution.

“It’s clear that \$407 million spent by the Koch brothers is a drop in the bucket,” Slocum says. “And it’s clear they’re willing to spend more.”

The panel closed by saying that Public Citizen is currently trying to pass a constitutional amendment that will explicitly say that corporations are not people. — *Kevin Sullivan*

ASSISTED MIGRATION HAS BENEFITS, COSTS

Oregon has its fair share of invasive species, such as nutria brought into the state for fur in the 1880s, and reared sliders, turtles that compete with our native western pond and painted turtles. Moving species from one place to another can wreak havoc on native ecosystems, but as climate change pushes species to extinction, conservationists have posed the idea of assisted migration, moving a species from its native range to a better-suited territory that more closely matches its ideal climate.

Panelists discussed assisted migration at a Public Interest Environmental Law Conference panel March 1 at the UO, weighing the benefits against the costs. The speakers said that assisted migration is an ecologically risky move, but as sea levels rise and temperatures flux faster than species can adapt, there may not be many other options.

“Not everyone agrees that assisted migration is a good idea,” said Josh Lawler, a professor in the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences at the University of Washington. “The main reason in favor of it is that if we don’t do it, a species will go extinct.”

Not all non-native species are invasive species, like European honeybees in Oregon, which aren’t native to the state but do not significantly harm ecosystem function. Lawler said that when it comes to assisted migration, there are varying degrees of interference, from connecting habitat so species can cross landscapes to actually transplanting species such as trees into a new environment.

Jaclyn Lopez, attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, used the example of loggerhead sea turtles and sea level rise to illustrate why assisted migration may be necessary to save a species. She said that 90 percent of loggerhead sea turtle nesting occurs in Florida, and when the turtles mature, they return to their birth site to nest. “Decades later when they’ve matured, they could come back to a beach that is no longer there,” she said.

Ultimately, the speakers said, the survival of many species and ecosystems depends on our ability to slow down the onset of climate change. “None of this matters without mitigation of greenhouse gases,” Lopez said. “We’re screwed if we don’t get a handle on it.” — *Amy Schneider*

lighten up
BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

Bank robbery photos are pretty bad.
You would never want to frame one.