

to the Legislature Thursday, Nov. 13. “September’s outlook does bring us close to the kicker threshold,” State Economist Mark McMullen says. “A considerable amount of uncertainty will remain until tax returns are processed in April and May.”

A decision on the kicker will be made in September 2015 at the close of the legislative session. The kicker has been embedded in the Oregon Constitution since 1999, but an emergency vote could cancel the kicker rebates this cycle, if the political will is there. Gov. John Kitzhaber is reportedly working on reforming or eliminating the kicker, but many anti-tax Republicans support it.

If the kicker is triggered, personal income taxpayers will see a credit carried over to their next year’s tax liabilities. So the impact won’t be felt until the next biennium when state revenues could be better — or worse.

“The kicker is wasteful,” Sheketoff says. “It makes no sense.” — *Ted Taylor*

CASCADIA WILDLANDS TO HOST FORUM ON ELLIOTT STATE FOREST

The fate of the Elliott State Forest, a sprawling, 93,000-acre forest northeast of Coos Bay and home to some of the oldest trees on the coast, is the topic of a Nov. 17 public forum hosted by Cascadia Wildlands. About half of the Elliott has already been logged, and for the remaining half, Cascadia Wildlands believes in preserving the land instead of privatizing and selling it.

The Oregon State Land Board will discuss the Elliott’s future next month.

“We’re trying to galvanize Oregonians,” says Josh Laughlin, campaign director at Cascadia Wildlands. He says he hopes this event will “educate the public and activate them around the issue.”

The event will feature a panel of experts familiar with the Elliott. “We would like the public to be more informed about what they have,” says Francis Eatherington, conservation director at Cascadia Wildlands and panel member at the event. For example, forests like the Elliott “have the potential to sequester more carbon per acre than any other place in the world, including tropical rain forests,” Eatherington says.

Kelsey Reavis, also on the panel, says she is “someone who spent much of their childhood there” and her family owns land in the area. She volunteers with Coast Range Forest Watch doing surveys in the Elliott for the marbled murrelet, an endangered seabird found in coastal forests. “It’s really amazing to be out in the forest that early in the morning,” Reavis says about the pre-dawn surveys.

The forum is 7 pm Monday, Nov. 17, at Cozmic, 199 W. 8th Ave, moderated by *EW*’s Camilla Mortensen. — *Daemion Lee*



REESE ERLICH

JOURNALIST REESE ERLICH TO SPEAK ON SYRIAN CIVIL WAR AND THE ISLAMIC STATE

As a peer of the journalists infamously executed in online videos recently distributed by ISIS, the horror of that footage felt particularly real to Reese Erlich. Erlich, a longtime Middle East correspondent for NPR, recently returned from Syria and will speak in Eugene Nov. 19 and 20 about his on-the-ground account of the ascendance of ISIS (the Islamic State) and the United States’ effort to halt it.

Erlich sees an illogical, destructive “third war” coming to a head in the U.S.’s escalating response to ISIS. “I feel personally quite upset — that could have been me as a freelancer,” Erlich tells *EW*. “There’s no excuse for carrying out that kind of activity.” But, he adds, “The U.S. claims that it’s trying to stop the Islamic State with this bombing and the new military offensive. In fact, it’s going to help them, because they’re now claiming to be the great fighters against U.S. imperialism and it’s actually helping their recruitment efforts.”

Though ISIS first came to the attention of American journalists in the wake of the execution videos, Erlich says that ISIS has been very well known in the region for several years — “a massive intelligence failure by the U.S.”

While American media waits to confirm reports that ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has been killed in Iraq, Erlich says that we have to re-examine the way we consume news about the conflict. The current flow of information, he says, which originates in the U.S. or Iraqi military, is practically impossible for media to confirm because of safety concerns.

“So you’re completely reliant on those in power,” Erlich says. “And in a day or two or three, if it turns out that he wasn’t killed, then there’s a small article written about that in the back pages. Whenever you see any accounts of heroic victories by the U.S. and its allies, you take it with a grain of salt.”

On Nov. 19, Erlich will speak at 12:30 pm at the UO Law School, Room 175, and at 7 pm at Tsunami Books. At 2 pm Nov. 20, he will speak at Lane Community College. Expect him to explain his position on the U.S.’s role in the region, which would include no intervention at all, and to talk about his conversation with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who Erlich describes as “a little stiff, but generally friendly.” — *Ben Stone*



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