

LOGGING SCHEME

The Aufderheide National Scenic Byway out of Oakridge, one of the nation's most scenic drives, has been severely degraded by Willamette National Forest logging. For miles all one will notice is logged-out stands along both sides. The Middle Fork District staff will tell you that it's a fire fuels thinning that is supposed to protect the community of Westfir and Oakridge. However, in actuality the Willamette National Lumber Service has destroyed naturally generated stands that were very fire resistant. Opening up these south-facing stands allows them to be taken over by fire prone understory plants and invasive scotch broom. Every 5-7 years they will need to hire crews to thin out the fire prone understory and scotch broom at a cost of \$1,000-\$2,000 per acre. They will pay for this with additional logging of big trees.

Why aren't forest protection groups attempting to stop this type of ecosystem and tourism destroying logging perpetrated in

our national forests and Bureau of Land Management lands? Most forest groups have seemingly drunk the "thinning" and "fire fuels reduction" scheme Kool-Aid. This new logging scheme is just the latest reincarnation to convert our national forests and BLM forests into one giant tree plantation.

Shannon Wilson
Eugene

MCCORNACK IS DIVERSE

I was upset about parts of your article "4J Students Face Racial Discrimination." I am not a 4J employee and have no knowledge of the events reported.

You completely glossed over what is one of the most culturally, racially and economically diverse elementary schools in all of 4J. We have teachers and a counselor who are fluent in Spanish — many of our staff are from diverse racial backgrounds. We have interpreters at all PTO meetings, school events, parent teacher conferences, Title 1 Family Nights and Latino Family Nights.

McCornack has core values that every student learns that are reinforced all year long: principles of inclusion, cultural diversity and dignity. Every year, the students work on the school dignity creed, which reads: "We the people of McCornack pledge to help create a Human Dignity Zone free of discrimination. We believe that people should judge others by their heart and actions, not by their appearance, religion, disabilities or abilities. All people are created equally and are worthy of respect. We should live together in peace and harmony and love the world and everyone in it because our differences make us special. We are all the same in different ways so we will treat others with dignity, kindness and respect, the way we would like to be treated."

I can say with sincerity that our McCornack staff are caring, inclusive and respectful professionals. I do not believe there is discrimination happening in those inclusive halls.

Ericka Thessen
Eugene

JERRY ROSIEK FOR 4J

Around a decade ago, things had become so bad for students of color and advocates for diversity at the University of Oregon's College of Education that a series of large protest marches by students, faculty and community members brought the issue to a crisis point.

This followed years of efforts to change things, including a 4J middle school refusing to take culturally uneducated student teachers, entreaties to 4J district administrators to pressure the UO, and an emotional, standing-room-only meeting in the Eugene Public Library in which the UO president, provost and dean were addressed by tearful students and angry community members. Still the UO would not change.

The protests led to the dean's replacement and a chance to make things right. This is where Jerry Rosiek came in. Newly hired by the new dean, Rosiek and his colleagues completely revamped the teacher education program and brought it

LET'S MAKE A DEAL BY BOB WARREN

Any-Town, USA

DON'T TURN FARMLAND INTO INDUSTRIAL PARKS

Take a drive out Highway 99 to Clear Lake Road and turn west. As soon as you leave the busy industrial highway you are in another world, instantly surrounded by green, open farmland. You experience a vista that stretches all the way to the Coast Range to the west.

That's what I see, and maybe that's what you see, but that's not what the city of Eugene sees. Instead of prime farmland and green open space, Eugene envisions a 924-acre industrial park.

The city claims it needs to pave over this prime farmland in order to create "large" industrial sites for job creation. It also throws parks and schools into the mix, just in case using the magic word "jobs" is not sufficient to bring people on board. This is a classic example of how economic development can, and often does, overpower land use planning to totally change the face and future of a community.

Why does Eugene need additional "large" industrial sites? Well, we don't. The claim is that these larger sites are needed to recruit large employers that allegedly pay higher than average wages, and, without these additional sites, Eugene would be create fewer high wage jobs. Hogwash.

It is unlikely this urban growth boundary (UGB) expansion will actually create any new jobs at all. Oh, there will be jobs there, jobs that would otherwise be somewhere else in Eugene or Springfield. A big part of our problem is that we plan for job creation as if Eugene and Springfield each existed by itself, isolated from the other. They do not. They are both part of one contiguous urban area, one community, and we would be better off to do our economic development planning that way.

The city "needs" large industrial sites because the

state of Oregon says we do. Why? Because those are the kinds of companies the state of Oregon recruits, mostly because, based on economy of scale, Business Oregon cannot afford the staff resources to go after smaller companies. And the culture of Business Oregon favors doing the "big deal," as they kowtow to the big site-selection consulting firms.

We need to pay attention to what we recruit for large sites, as well as the cost to do it. Business Oregon does not give a hoot about local communities and would put anyone and anything anywhere. And since the state relies on income taxes for revenue, and gets nothing out of property taxes, Business Oregon relentlessly pressures communities for bigger and bigger property tax giveaways for these large companies.

Prineville is a classic example. The Facebook data center there creates a few high-wage jobs that will likely go to people from somewhere else who will probably not even live in Prineville. They use up virtually all of the community's business support infrastructure like water and power, and they won't pay a nickle of property taxes for fifteen years. Does anyone think Facebook is still going to be there in fifteen years?

Small cities and local economic development agencies do not actually recruit businesses to locate here. That's a common myth, promoted by the agencies themselves. They mostly just wait while the state does the recruiting. However, local business recruitment does exist. It is being done by organizations like Tracktown USA, the Bach Festival, Travel Lane County and the McKenzie River Guides Association. It is being done by local industry associations like the Silicon Shire and the Oregon Brewers Guild, and business incubators like RAIN and Sprout.

These organizations and others put our commu-

nities in the national and international spotlight and bring visitors and jobs. They get the attention of small businesses — that's the first, and most difficult step in recruitment. Once here, the visitors find themselves in a community that is not just like everywhere else. Some will be motivated to explore the opportunity to move or expand their businesses here and create jobs, without demanding or expecting big tax breaks, and they likely will not need big sites. Based on our experience with the recessions of the 1980's and 2008, it would seem prudent to have a diversified economy based on smaller businesses, rather than relying on a few large employers.

The people that come here to listen to world-class music at the Bach Festival, or watch the Olympic Trials at Hayward Field, or fly fish the McKenzie River, find themselves in a place not like where they came from. They are in a place with its own distinct personality. Many of them are from places that look like everywhere else. From cities that have spread out into each other without end, losing their identity in the process.

I believe the UGB, something totally unique to Oregon, helps keep us unique, keeps us from not looking or feeling like everywhere else.

And I believe our uniqueness is our biggest economic development recruitment asset. Let's not squander that asset to create another industrial park that looks just like every other industrial park in the country. It's the UGB that helps to make us different, and every time we expand it, we edge just a little closer to being just another place that looks like every other place, Any-town, USA.

Bob Warren retired in 2012 as the regional business development officer for Business Oregon for Lane, Lincoln, Linn and Benton Counties. Prior to that, he worked in Gov. Barbara Roberts and Rep. Peter DeFazio's offices.