

TV BUTTE QUARRY FIGHT SENT BACK TO THE COUNTY COMMISSION

Mine opponents celebrate decision by the Land Use Board of Appeals

A small group of citizens fighting a proposed gravel mine on the edge of Oakridge say they have won a victory in their battle against the Old Hazeldell Quarry. On Jan. 8, the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) handed down its final opinion on Save TV Butte's appeal of a mine that had been approved by the Lane County Commission's board majority. LUBA remanded the mine decision to the county.

The decision on Old Hazeldell, a mine backed by Ed King of King Estate Winery, had been noted as an "opinion of interest" by the Land Conservation and Development Commission in July because it is a "major, controversial mining operation," according to an LCDC director's report.

Kathy Pokorny of Save TV Butte, whose name appeared on the appeal, says, "We are just so shocked that we actually succeeded." She adds, "It may not be the final word on saving TV Butte, but we're going to take a moment to celebrate this success!"

Pokorny stresses her concern about the silica dust she says the mine could generate "blowing over the whole town, and there's already a problem with PM 2.5."

PM 2.5 refers to bits of particulate matter so small they are easily inhaled. They can cause respiratory health problems. According to the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency, since the Environmental Protection Agency changed the federal standards for PM 2.5 levels in the air in 2006, Oakridge has been unable to meet the standards.

The LUBA decision supported Save TV Butte's contention that emissions of the fine particulate dust were not properly addressed or mitigated in the quarry's application, nor were some other potential offsite impacts, according to Kevin Matthews.

Matthews is a community and land use advocate who is running for a seat on the Lane County Commission. He has been working with Save TV Butte to stop the quarry. "We won on most of the points," Matthews says, adding of LUBA, "the judges kind of like to find something on both sides."

In addition to the PM 2.5 issue, Matthews says LUBA agreed with Save TV Butte that Lane County's conditions of approval would have failed to prevent groundwater runoff into an old municipal dumpsite that could spread contamination.

LUBA also agreed that the actual area of rock removal, known as the "inventoried resource area for the mine," must be shrunk from 107 to 46 acres, he says, and that the county's approval of 61 acres outside the gravel resource for mine operations was done improperly, and would have to be redone.

"County staff didn't ever clearly define their terms," Matthews says, "and as a result they took the complicated very logically strict Goal 5 resources rules and applied those rules in a sloppy way to the entire mine application area."

Mining and natural resources fall under Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines, and Goal 5 covers more than a dozen "resources," including wildlife habitats, historic places and aggregate (gravel), according to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. The goal lumps together natural resources to be preserved, such as waterways and wildlife habitat, with natural resources to be exploited, such as gravel.

The biggest LUBA finding with potential implications for protecting other Lane County wild areas from development, Matthews says, is that the proposed mine area on TV Butte is in fact "significant big game habitat" under Goal 5.

"Two competing resources is a discretionary decision," Matthews says. "The County Commission cannot say 'That's the way the rules are.'"

Save TV Butte has called the Lane County Commission's vote to approve the quarry a "rubber-stamp" decision.

With LUBA's decision, the issue now goes back to the county, though both sides have the option for judicial review of the opinion and have 21 days to file an appeal with the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Quarry spokesman Phil Donovan takes a different view than Save TV Butte on the LUBA decision. He tells *EW* in a statement, "We are pleased with LUBA's findings on the substantive legal issues."

Donovan writes, "Lane County was affirmed on the key points and has clear direction from LUBA as to the necessary corrections. As most people know, Oregon's land use laws are very thorough, and a remand of this kind is pretty par for the course."

"Some of the issues are as simple as fixing typos," Donovan says. "In others, more evidence is required."

He says the quarry will work with the county to make the fixes, and that "we're comfortable that the board will find the basis for re-adoption on remand."

Pokorney says the grassroots Save TV Butte is still fundraising for its legal fight. Those wishing to donate can contact zkpokorny@gmail.com. ■

Cooking Technology

THE CASE FOR CAST IRON

While our landfills continue to fill with useless plastic lifespan products, some consumers are considering sustainable, long term lifestyle products. Cast iron cookware falls into the latter category and is often handed down from one generation to the next. It is durable and offers merits that other cookware lacks. Cast iron simply has soul — it provides even heat distribution and retains heat more uniformly than any other cookware. Folks with iron deficiencies appreciate increased iron absorption cooking with cast iron.

A well-seasoned cast iron skillet means no nonstick coatings, no dead birds and superior taste. Yes, pans treated with non-stick polytetrafluorethylene (PTFE) coatings are associated with aviary deaths caused by fumes generated from over-heated Teflon™, Innovex 75T, ThermoSpot T, as well as other non-stick coatings. Degradation of PTFE has been shown to be toxic to humans too, documented in *The Lancet* as early as 1951. A well-seasoned cast iron pan means less oil required for healthy heart recipes.

Consumer cast iron cookware seems to be morphing into four categories: Utilitarian, artisan, collectible and scrounged. Utilitarian cast iron can be found at big box retailers, sporting goods and hardware stores. All of these are good places to locate imported and domestic quality cast iron at economy pricing. China is the world leader in economical priced, thin cast iron casting. Lodge Manufacturing Company has been churning U.S. pig iron into reliable cookware for over 100 years.

Borough Furnace, Finex and Field are examples of the new artisan cast iron cookware movement. Their missions are to develop heirloom cookware, meant to pass down to our next generations. Finex is based in Portland, Oregon. These new cast iron firms were inspired by the high quality of early American cast iron cookware (Erie, Griswold, Wagner and others). Finex handcrafted cookware carries a good forever guarantee.

Collectable cast iron is for deep-pocketed zealots. Rare or high-end Griswold single piece can cost as much as the price of a quality used car. Unfortunately, many of these collectors are compulsive hoarders, that don't cook or enjoy their cookware, rather are speculators. Chuck Wafford authored *The Book of Griswold and Wagner* right here in Lane County and has been an important national and local cast iron authority and icon of area collectors for decades. Antique shops, collectible shows, Craigslist and eBay are good resources for collector cookware.

Frugal cast iron cookware enthusiasts typically frequent garage sales, junk shops, pawn shops, thrift stores, Craigslist's and other haunts to scrounge bargain iron. There can be great satisfaction in restoring old iron. It is tedious and messy, and akin to dental work, but rewarding. There are numerous methods that range from vinegar baths, scrape, grind and polish methods, traditional heated oven cleaning techniques, electrolysis baths and other cleaning methods. After the cast iron is cleaned and hopefully the patina is still intact, the next step is to season the cookware for years of use and enjoyment.

SilverFire is a local off grid stove and cookware retailer, and carries a variety of vintage, collectable and Finex artisan cast iron cookware.



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