



THE REDMOND Spokesman

A special good morning to subscriber Gary Couch

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Massive housing project inches along

Skyline Village will bring 'desperately' needed units to northeast Redmond

BY JACKSON HOGAN
The Bulletin

It may take a while before new homes and apartments are standing, but the city of Redmond is still pushing forward with its 485-unit Skyline Village housing project.

The Redmond City Council approved several ma-

ior benchmarks at its meeting last week to get construction started in the city's northeast corner. And the potential for hundreds of new housing units — half of them affordable — in a region that badly needs them is exciting to local advocates.

"You can't keep a house on the market for more than a week," said state Rep. Jack Zika, R-Redmond. "We desperately need more housing in Central Oregon."

Skyline Village was made possible with the passage of Oregon House Bill 2336, signed by Gov. Kate

Brown in 2019. The bill, sponsored by Zika, is allowing Redmond to build Skyline Village without having to go through the state's strictest land-use rules.

The current plan for the development is a 40-acre neighborhood with 485 housing units of varying types, according to city documents. At least half of those units will be reserved for those who make 80% of the area median income or less — meaning about \$52,070 or less, according to U.S. Census data.

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Is another explosive fire season ahead?

Fuel moisture levels drop to seasonal lows, sparking early blazes

BY MICHAEL KOHN
The Bulletin

Seven months ago, Central Oregonians felt the impact of some of the worst wildfires in this state's history. Now there is growing concern that dry fuels across the region could ignite even bigger fires this year.

Tinderbox conditions have already ignited several fires around Central Oregon this year, even as higher elevations are still blanketed with snow. Part of that is due to a drying out of the forests at lower elevations, which are experiencing some of the lowest moisture levels recorded in years.

"The outlook is for an early fire season," said Kevin Stock, fire and aviation staff officer for Central Oregon Fire Management Service. "We are way behind in precipitation. It has been warm and dry through April, (causing) severe and exceptional drought!"

Fire officials categorize fuels by size and how long it takes atmospheric moisture to impact two-thirds of its material. Trees and brush can be 1,000-hour fuels while small fuels such as leaves and grass, fall into the 10-hour fuels category.

The 1,000-hour fuel moisture level, one of the main instruments scientists use to determine how dry a forest has become, was down to 15% on Friday when the average for this time of year is around 20%. Just a month ago the moisture level was 25%. The higher the percentage, the less likely there is a chance of extreme fire behavior.

Fuel moisture level, measured with electronic equipment, indicates how a wildfire will behave in a certain area. When available fuels are moist the combustion slows down, causing fires to burn most slowly and with less intensity. The opposite occurs when available fuels are dry.

The indexes used by fire officials to gauge moisture levels are well below average, said Boone Zimmerlee, who is responsible for facilitating the growth of a fire-adapted community strategy in Deschutes County through management of a wildfire preparedness program.

See *Wildfires* / P5

MAKING A BLUE MIDDLE DESCHUTES A LITTLE GREENER

Two trucks' worth of debris hauled away from scenic river area for Earth Day

BY MICHAEL KOHN
The Bulletin

On a stretch of canyon high above the Deschutes River near Crooked River Ranch, Marilynne Keyser stoops down, picks up someone's discarded belt, and drops it into a plastic bag. Moving along, the retired CPA scoops up more refuse — cans, shotgun shells, plastic bags and other bits of junk.

Keyser was doing her Earth Day duty of cleaning up the Steamboat Rock Recreation Area, located around 5 miles west of Terrebonne. She was leading a group of around 30 volunteers to restore an area that has been covered in waste left behind by weekend off-roaders and campers.

Keyser's group of volunteers — the Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area — focus their cleanup efforts around the Lower Crooked River, Lower Wy-chus Creek, and the Middle Deschutes River. Her group was one of many that spent Earth Day cleaning up parks, streets, and public spaces in Bend, Redmond and other communities in Central Oregon.

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RIGHT: Volunteers (from left) Jerry Garland, Linda Buttolph, Susie Garland and Wayne Buttolph offload trash they collected during an Earth Day cleanup on BLM land near Terrebonne on Thursday.
Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Spokesman Calendar

Events in and around Redmond

The Redmond Spokesman welcomes event information for its community calendar. Submissions are limited to nonprofit, free and live entertainment events. Deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday for the following Wednesday's paper. Items are published on a space-available basis and may be edited. Contact us at news@redmondspokesman.com or fax 541-548-3203.

WEDNESDAY 4/28

Foley Waters Hike: The guided hike will follow lesser-known paths with a bit of cross country travel, looking at spring plants, a fraudulent gold mine and local geology; 9 a.m.-Noon; registration required; Steelhead Falls Trailhead, River Road, Crooked River Ranch; eventbrite.com

Find your Zoom Zen: The Sunriver Area Chamber of Commerce invites you to take a deep breath, relax and how to zestfully find your Zoom zen; Noon-1 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/770774-0 or 971-282-3970.

Redmond School Board Budget

Committee and Board Meeting: The board will meet for a budget meeting followed by a full board meeting; 5:30-8:30 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/769782-0 or 541-923-5437.

Redmond Budget Committee Meeting and Public Hearing: The committee will meet to discuss possible uses of state revenue sharing funds; 6-7 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/773346-0 or 541-923-7710.

Rediscovered Reads Book Club: Discussing "The Story of Arthur Truluv" by Elizabeth Berg; 6-7 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/753635-0 or 541-306-6564.

Author Event — Rick McIntyre and Kira Cassidy in Conversation: The authors

will discuss their books on the wolves of Yellowstone National Park; 6:30-8 p.m.; registration required; online; go.evnt.com/770407-1 or 541-549-0866.

THURSDAY 4/29

Tam-A-Lau Trail Hike: This guided hike will offer spectacular views of Lake Billy Chinook and the entire Cascade range; 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; registration required; Tam-a-lau Loop Hike, Cove Palisades State Park, Culver; eventbrite.com

Take Back the Night Online: The event to bring awareness to sexual violence and

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