

Inside: Ridgeview caps off first week of 'winter' season with a pair of wins »



THE REDMOND Spokesman

A special good morning to subscriber Trish Ober

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DESCHUTES COUNTY

Irrigators seek drought declaration

County is experiencing its driest spring in 127 years

BY MICHAEL KOHN
The Bulletin

Deschutes County is going through its driest spring since records started 127 years ago. That fact combined with low levels of water in the Central Oregon reservoirs has prompted irrigators to seek a drought declaration from the state.

On Wednesday the Deschutes Basin Board of Control sent a letter to

the Deschutes County Commission requesting the drought declaration. The commissioners will consider the request when they meet this Deschutes County declared a state of drought last year.

An official declaration of drought, recognized by the governor, allows farmers to tap into state and federal financial assistance programs. The financial assistance could help farmers who aren't able to plant on all their acres due to water restrictions.

The Deschutes Basin Board of Control comprises eight irrigation dis-

tricts, including Arnold, Central Oregon, Lone Pine, North Unit, Ochoco, Swalley, Three Sisters and Tumalo. Collectively they convey water to over 150,000 acres of farms and ranches, as well as local cities, parks, and schools.

The letter, written by basin board president Craig Horrell, requests that county commissioners declare a state of drought and they, in turn, ask Gov. Kate Brown to issue an executive order recognizing the severe drought.

"The DBBC believes County action and support from the state is needed," Horrell stated in the letter. "This may

include assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Department and other Oregon executive branch agencies, operating within their statutory authorities."

Horrell added that the dry conditions could cause "widespread and severe damage" to a number of sectors and industries, including agriculture and livestock and tourism.

For farmers, the tight water supply reduces the number of acres on which they can plant crops, leaving them less revenue at the end of the year. A drought declaration allows farmers to

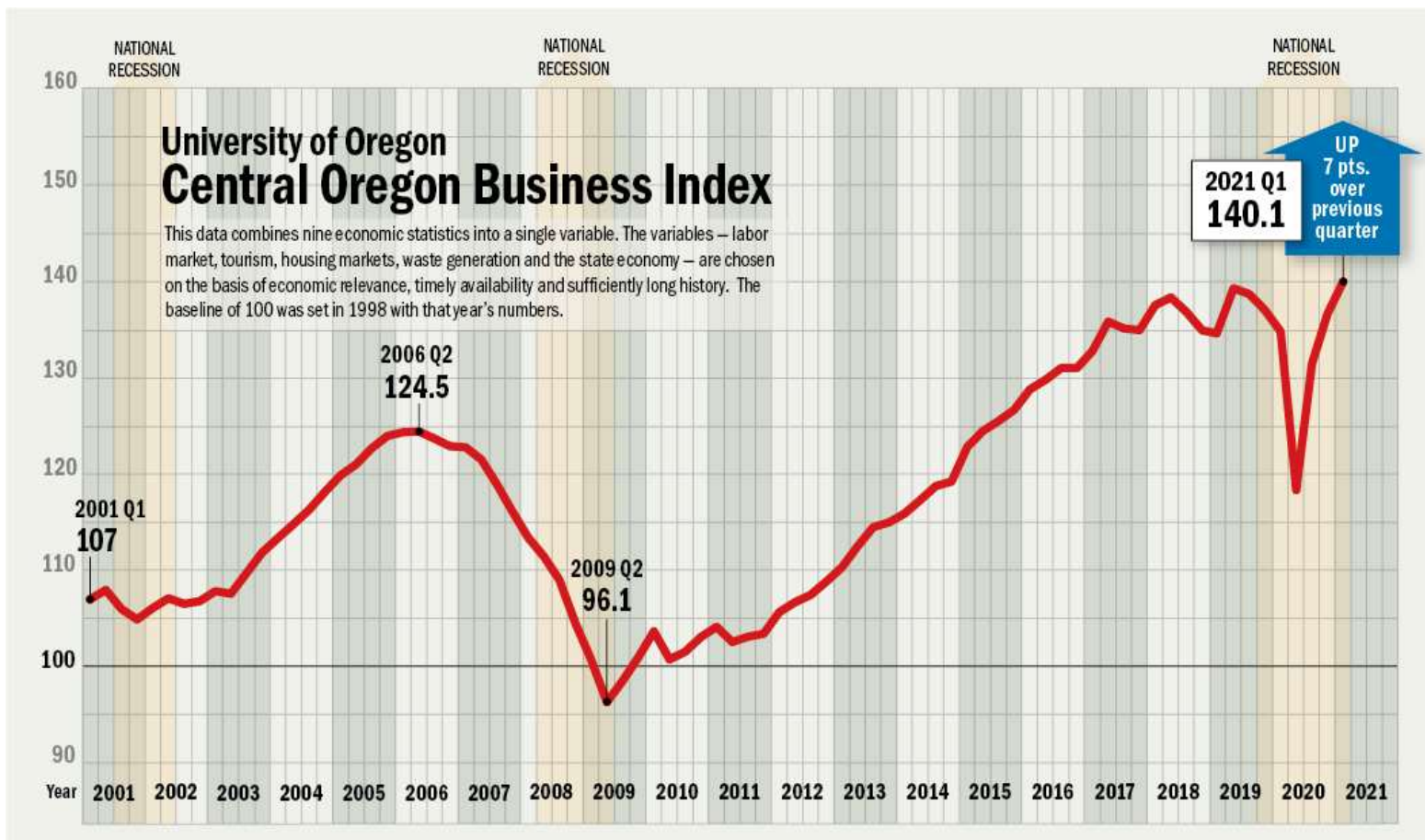
receive funds through their crop insurance plans.

Precisely how much is available varies based on the farmer and his or her situation, said Rob Rastovich, a Deschutes County rancher. Rastovich said he attempted to apply for government assistance last year but did not qualify. But the amount of money wasn't much, he added — less than \$5,000. That sum was a fraction of the amount he had to spend to buy hay for his cows. Rastovich said he doesn't have crop insurance.

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CENTRAL OREGON BUSINESS INDEX

'The shock ... is behind us'



Central Oregon's economy shows more signs of recovery, index shows

BY SUZANNE ROIG • The Bulletin

Central Oregon's economy has firmly put the shock of the COVID-19 restrictions behind it, according to the quarterly business index. Lodging revenues are up. The housing market is growing, despite a low level of inventory. Even initial unemployment claims are near pre-pandemic levels.

But plane travel is lagging and job recovery still has not recovered all that was lost due to shutdowns designed to control the spread of the virus.

Those are the conclusions of the quarterly Central Oregon Business

Index, which provides a snapshot of business activity by examining nine variables, which are adjusted seasonally.

The index rose 5.3% in the first quarter of the year over the fourth quarter of 2020 and now stands

6.8% above the same time the year before, said Tim Duy, author of the index and a University of Oregon professor of practice in economics.

The index was at 136.7, compared to the fourth quarter of 2020

when it was 131.5, which has been adjusted downward from what was previously reported.

The number of jobs climbed by 1,200 in Central Oregon during the first quarter, Duy said.

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Redmond School Board races close in initial results

BY JACKSON HOGAN
The Bulletin

Most of the four races for Redmond School Board were extremely close in early, unofficial results last Tuesday, with only one leader, Jill Cummings, having a margin greater than 750 votes over the next candidate.

Final results are:

- Shawn Hartfield 55.72% for a total 4,632
- Stephanie Hunter 43.97% for a total 3,655
- Write-in 0.31% for a total 26



Salinas

• Total: 8,31

- Michelle Salinas 40.02% for a total 3,314
- Michael Summers 39.49% for a total 3,270
- Lacey J Butts 11.26% for a total 932



Hartfield

• Rachel M Visinoni 8.90% for a total 737

- Write-in 0.33% for a total 27
- Total: 8,280
- Jill Cummings 46.54% for a total 3,923
- Lavon Medlock 31.38% for a total 2,645
- Ron Osmondson 21.84% for a total 1,841
- Write-in 0.24% for a total 20
- Total: 8,429



Lopez

• Keri Lopez 34.26% for a total 2,838

- Carmen Lawson 21.89% for a total 1,813
- Oscar Gonzalez 21.87% for a total 1,812
- Bob Perry 21.64% for a total 1,793
- Write-in 0.34% for a total 28
- Total: 8,284



Cummings

■ Reporter: 541-617-7854, jhogan@bendbulletin.com

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 5/26

Darlingside: The indie-folk quartet will perform via livestream; 5-8 p.m.; \$15; online; go.evnt.com/785165-1 or 541-317-0700.

Native American Virtual Salmon Bake — 'Salmon is Everything': Central Oregon Community College students of the First Nations Student Union will present a reading of the play "Salmon is Everything" based on the Klamath people and the loss of salmon; 5:30-7:30 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/785237-0 or 541-318-3782.

Rediscovered Reads Book Club: Discussing "Empire of the Summer Moon" by S.C. Gwynne; 6-7 p.m.; online; go.evnt.com/769993-0 or 541-306-6564.

Know Islands — Islands in Time: Learn about the geologically young volcanic islands we live amongst; 6-7 p.m.; registration required; online; go.evnt.com/769145-1 or 541-312-1029.

THURSDAY 5/27

Native American Virtual Salmon Bake — 'Smoke Signals': The 1998 Chris Eyre film will be available to screen online. Email Michelle Cary mcary@cooc.edu with "Smoke Signals" as the subject line to receive a passcode to view the film; registration required; online; go.evnt.com/785238-0 or 541-318-3782.

Chimney Rock Wildflower Hike: This hike will focus on native plants, including wildflowers, and we will hike slowly and

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The Spokesman uses recycled newsprint

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