

Cannon Beach wants a price tag on carbon

City Council takes action to address climate change

By DANI PALMER
EO Media Group

Cannon Beach has joined five other cities and Benton County in asking the Oregon Legislature to enact a price on carbon and pollution.

The Cannon Beach City Council passed a resolution earlier this month asking for a carbon cap or tax because “climate change is a threat to public health, national security, food security, business supply chains, wildlife and future generations.”

The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to pre-1990 levels. Page Atcheson, field director of Oregon Climate, a grassroots campaign that worked with Cannon Beach, said carbon pricing would discourage fossil fuel consumption and encourage renewable energy and conservation.

“The basic idea is that climate change is this large problem that we all know we have to address, and that by putting a price on carbon,” she said. “You essentially make polluters pay to pollute,” Atcheson said.

A 2013 Portland State University Northwest Economic Research Center study stated putting the right price on carbon would be effective in reducing emissions.

Oregon Climate is advocating for returning 100 percent of tax revenues to Oregon taxpayers as a dividend check.

Known as price and dividend, the



George Vetter



Page Atcheson

method would benefit the lower- and middle-classes, Atcheson said. Taxpayers could save more by choosing lower carbon options while high-energy users would be most impacted.

The resolution states that “climate change is a threat to public health, national security, food security, business supply chains, wildlife, and future generations” and asks the Legislature to “craft legislation to enact a carbon price, in the form of a fee or a cap, using the best available research to ensure a policy that significantly reduces emissions while mitigating impacts on low-income Oregonians.”

Higher costs ahead?

During a Transportation Vision Panel last week, Tom Potiowsky, director of the Northwest Economic Research Center, said a carbon tax could be more costly for rural Oregonians who must drive longer distances with fewer transportation options. He added, however, that policymakers could adjust the tax amount in those areas to reduce the financial burden.

During an October work session, councilors asked what the impacts would be lo-

cally and sought more information before their vote.

Cannon Beach Councilor George Vetter said there should be a better way to do it than collect taxes and hand the money right back. Councilor Mike Benefield countered that the public has to take some action to improve air quality.

Vetter added that energy companies could raise prices.

“The company that chooses to become more efficient, becomes more competitive,” Benefield said.

Atcheson called the carbon price a “free market solution” to addressing pollution, adding businesses can adjust accordingly. She noted that the method has proven effective in British Columbia and is “seen as an initiative more than a punishment.” California also has its own version and Washington has a carbon pricing ballot measure.

Most in the industry oppose the measure, according to Gregg Kantor, president and CEO of NW Natural Gas. He said Oregon’s current emission rates are lower than the rest of the country’s, making it harder for the state to compete nationally.

If passed, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality would likely administer the carbon pricing.

Cannon Beach councilors voted 3-2 for the measure, with Mayor Sam Steidel, Melissa Cadwallader and Mike Benefield in favor of the measure. Vetter and Wendy Higgins vote against it.

The city joins Hood River, Eugene, Milwaukie, Corvallis, Portland, and Benton County in calling on the Legislature to tax carbon.

Feds offer help creating community forests

The Daily Astorian

Applications are open for organizations interested in creating community forests.

The Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program, passed under the 2008 Farm Bill, provides assistance grants for acquisition of private forestlands threatened with conversion to non-forest use.

The only existing community forest in Oregon to receive funding through the program is the Thurston Hills Natural Area in Springfield.

Lands eligible for grants must be private forest at least 5 acres in size, at least 75 percent forested, suitable to sustain natural forest cover and not include conservation easements. The lands must not be held in trust by the U.S. on behalf of any tribe, although community forests can be owned by local governments, tribes and qualified nonprofits. The lands must be threatened by conversion to nonforest uses, allow public access and be offered for sale by a willing seller.

The program authorizes the U.S. Forest Service to pay up to 50 percent of the acquisition costs, to a maximum of \$400,000 and with at least a 50 percent nonfederal match.

Community benefits can include sustainable forestry, recreation, experiential educational opportunities, wildlife habitat and environmental benefits such as clean air and water.

All projects must complete a Community Forest Plan within 120 days after land acquisition, and a draft of the plan is due at the time of application. Qualified nonprofits and local governments apply through the Oregon Department of Forestry. Indian Tribes apply with the U.S. Forest Service.

Applications are due by Jan. 15. They can be delivered electronically to Jim.Cathcart@oregon.gov or in hard copy to: Jim Cathcart, Oregon Department of Forestry, 2600 State Street, Salem, OR97310. Call Cathcart at 503-945-7493 for more information.

Deer and elk act as buffer between wolves, livestock

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

SALEM — They weren’t on the agenda when the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission voted Nov. 9 to take wolves off the state’s endangered species list, but Oregon’s elk and deer population likely will be key factors in wolf management decisions in the years ahead.

Mark Henjum, a retired wildlife biologist who was ODFW’s original wolf program coordinator, said healthy deer and elk populations are a buffer between livestock and the state’s increasing number of predators.

Oregon has 25,000 to 30,000 black bears, an estimated 6,200 cougars and a minimum of 82 wolves, according to Fish and Wildlife.

Biologists fully expect the state’s wolf population to continue growing. Wolves occupy only 12 percent of their potential range in the state, and continued dispersal from Northeast Oregon will put them in contact with elk and deer and possibly in competition with other predators. Bear and cougar are much more widely dispersed in the state.

Sharp, localized drops in ungulate prey, as deer and elk are known, could drive predators to attack sheep, cattle or other domestic animals, Henjum and other biologists say.

Bears are primarily omnivorous but will take young deer and elk, especially in the spring. Cougars, meanwhile, are solitary ambush hunters and can take just about any animal at will, Henjum said. “They’re amazingly good at what they do,” he said.

Wolves travel in packs and chase down prey. They can kill solitary adult cougars, or females and kittens, and chase cougars off carcasses. Pressure from wolves can force cougars into steeper, brushier terrain. The competition for ungulate prey could produce a bad turn for livestock.

Biologists say wolves prefer elk, but attacks on livestock are what anger cattle and sheep producers and gain media attention. From 2009 through June 2015, Oregon’s confirmed losses to wolves stood at 79 sheep, 37 cattle, two goats and two herd protection dogs. Ranchers believe wolves are responsible for much more damage, saying livestock often disappear in wolf country. In addition, many livestock attacks are written off as



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/AP
A female wolf from the Minam pack outside La Grande, after it was fitted with a tracking collar in 2014.

“probable” or “possible” wolf depredations.

“This buffer thing is one of the main reasons we haven’t seen so high a rate of loss of livestock,” Henjum said. “I think down the road, trying to maintain the ungulate populations is something that’s going to be more important as we move on.”

Although wolves were taken off the state endangered species list, their existence in Oregon is still governed by a wolf management plan. Hunting and trapping are not allowed, and there’s no sport season for wolves. The plan does allow “controlled take” of wolves in cases of chronic livestock attacks or decreases in prey.

Phase 3 of the wolf plan, the next step after delisting, calls for wolves to be managed “in concert with its wild prey base,” a move strongly supported by groups such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. “Oregon’s wolf population is rapidly approaching the point where human tolerance and unacceptable impacts upon the wolf’s deer and elk prey base must be addressed,” the foundation said in a letter to the ODFW Commission.

Jerome Rosa, executive director of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association, said his organization’s members report seeing fewer deer and elk in some areas, and more in others.

What’s ahead for wolves might be found in Oregon’s cougar management plan, which allows for targeted killings to address problems.

In October, the ODFW Commission authorized killing 95 cougars in four wildlife management units during 2016. One area was chosen because of human, livestock and pet safety concerns, and three were selected to help mule deer recover. The kills, to be done by ODFW employees, federal wildlife ser-

vice agents, or contractors, are in addition to whatever other cougar deaths occur.



I Am Thankful

This is the time of year when we reflect on our lives and our blessings

There are many that list something they are thankful for each day in November on social media.

On Thanksgiving Day,
The Daily Astorian will dedicate a full page in our classified section to the community, allowing a time to share something you are thankful for.

There is a 20 word maximum for each submission. This allows more people to participate.

How to participate:
email your “I am thankful” to- hlarkins@dailyastorian.com or mail to- The Daily Astorian, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103, Attn: Holly Larkins
Deadline: November 20th at 5pm.

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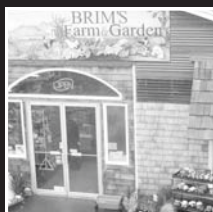
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