

Bonamici: 'It's a win-win for the community'

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said Conservancy Associate Director Jon Wickersham.

An analysis after the first year of the project showed that the floodplain restoration prevented the road from having to close at least three times that winter, Reich said. When the highway was closed elsewhere during last winter's big rainstorm, it was passable by Circle Creek, she said.

Since the summer 2013 project, the land conservancy has planted 10,000 trees each winter, Reich said.

"It's a win-win for the community because it not only addressed the flooding, but also provided the restoration and recreation opportunities," said Bonamici, adding that the project was an example of finding "smarter, better ways to do things."

The habitat

The land conservancy acquired the 364-acre Circle Creek property in 2004. The site now includes the Circle Creek Conservation Center event venue and two walking trails that are publicly accessible daily.

Circle Creek is home to native wildlife such as coho salmon, red-legged frogs, salamanders, beaver, coyote, waterfowl, nesting bald eagles and an elk herd. The



Lyra Fontaine/The Daily Astorian
U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici visited Circle Creek and Boneyard Ridge to see the floodplain restoration project Monday.

winter floods encourage more wildlife to come onto the land, according to the organization.

In July, the land conservancy purchased the 340-acre Boneyard Ridge property, just west of Circle Creek. The acquisition connects 3,500 acres of conserved land.

Wickersham told Bonamici about the conservancy's plan to acquire 3,300 acres of timberland at Onion Peak within the next five years and informed her of the organization's 30th year anniversary.

"We've seen our base of supporters grow tremendously, even in the last five to 10 years," Wickersham said. "We really started taking our message out to the community."

Monument: 'We hope to make this happen, but we also have to be fiscally responsible'

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Mathews said he's willing to work with the city on a corporate sponsor. "It's going to delay us a little bit, and I think we were anxious to move forward," he said of a city decision.

Some on the City Council have asked whether the city is being too restrictive toward a project that would honor Astoria's rich

Scandinavian heritage.

"We seem to be getting our back up over an issue that we should be supporting," City Councilor Russ Warr said.

Mayor Arline LaMear said a Scandinavian monument is important for the city, but so is following the parks master plan. "We hope to make this happen, but we also have to be fiscally responsible," she said. "So let's figure out a way where we can do both."

Author's hearing is postponed until 2017

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
For The Daily Astorian



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian
Matt Love appears in court with his lawyer for an arraignment on the charges of luring a minor and official misconduct in August at Clatsop Circuit Court in Astoria.

A final hearing for author and former Astoria teacher Matt Love accused of luring a minor has been reset for Jan. 13.

At a hearing Tuesday, Love's attorney Jack Green said the state prosecutors handling the case had requested more time to prepare.

Love, 52, is accused of allegedly sending explicit messages to a former student in an attempt to convince the student to engage in sex with him. The victim was 18 at the time, was not a former Astoria High School student and does not live in the area.

The charge of "luring a minor" is a Class C felony. He also faces a charge of official

misconduct, a class A misdemeanor.

Love pleaded not guilty to the charges against him in August following his arrest and an indictment by grand jury in July. He had been placed on administrative leave by his employer, the Astoria School District, in May and later resigned.

As a condition of his release from jail this summer, he is to have no contact with minors or with the victim in this case and her family.

Love, who lives in Astoria, has written and published a number of books about Oregon.

After a period of silence on social media following his arrest, Love has started to again advertise writing workshops on his Facebook page.

Roden: Jurors relieved the trial is all over

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The two boys have physical and emotional scars from the abuse and their sister's death that they will carry their entire lives, said prosecutors and family members.

Over the objections of Roden's attorney, state prosecutors had several witnesses sworn in to testify about Roden's character. A former girlfriend told the judge how Roden abused her when they dated in high school; another former girlfriend talked about how Roden mistreated her puppy. And family members, including Evangelina's grandmother and father, spoke about their loss. They urged Judge Brownhill to put Roden in prison for as long as possible.

In a prepared statement she read over the phone, Melissa Smith, Evangelina's aunt, talked about the photos of Evangelina's battered body.

"I will never be able to burn these things from my mind," she said. "... My family has forever been changed."

Roden was given a chance to make a final statement, but chose to say nothing.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian
Evangelina Wing's grandmother, Teresa Thorsen, reacts as she listens to Randy Roden's sentencing on Monday. Evangelina was murdered by her mother's boyfriend, Randy Roden.

After Judge Brownhill read his sentence, however, he had plenty to say as he was escorted from the court house, all of it unprintable.

Difficult trial

Nine jurors watched the sentencing. Afterward, they said they were glad they had come, but they were even more relieved that it was all over. The verdict had been a hard-fought decision, one juror said, and everyone was feeling the effects of a long trial with brutal

evidence and a tragic subject.

Those involved in the investigation and trial say it was one of the worst cases of child abuse in Clatsop County they had ever seen. Evangelina and her two brothers had multiple injuries, with Evangelina bearing the most extreme of the injuries. An autopsy determined she died from blunt force trauma.

Following the jury's verdict, Brownhill told the jurors they would be offered counseling services if they felt they

needed to talk through what they had heard, seen and felt during the trial. Several jurors present at the sentencing said they attended these counseling sessions and that they did help, a little.

Deputy District Attorney Ron Brown who prosecuted the case for the state said there was another layer, too.

One of the chief investigators of the case was Seaside Police Sgt. Jason Gooding, who was shot and killed outside a restaurant in Seaside earlier this year while attempting to take a man into custody. Throughout the trial, the court heard Gooding's voice on recorded interviews he conducted with Roden.

"Every day was a reminder of Jason Gooding," Brown said in October following the jury's verdict. "His absence was very present."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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