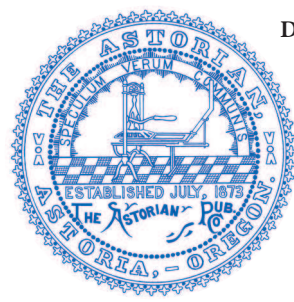


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



DAVID F. PERO, Publisher & Editor

LAURA SELLERS, Managing Editor

BETTY SMITH, Advertising Manager

JEREMY FELDMAN, Circulation Manager

DEBRA BLOOM, Business Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN, Production Manager

CARL EARL, Systems Manager



EO Media Group

President Donald Trump has moved to impose a tariff on softwood lumber imported from Canada, which could benefit U.S. timber interests.

Trump right on tariffs for Canadian lumber

It isn't often that an international argument has a direct impact on a local industry, but such may be the case with President Donald Trump's move to impose a tariff of between 3 and 24.1 percent on softwood lumber imported from Canada.

In effect a tax, tariffs are intended to provide a competitive advantage for U.S. goods or to counteract an unfair disadvantage such as might result from a foreign government subsidizing its own industries. Efforts to level the playing field in this way are common but hazardous, in the sense that they can incite foreign governments to retaliate against U.S. products.

Canada currently controls about one-third of the U.S. market share for softwood lumber, which is used for framing houses and some other purposes, such as building mattress box springs.

This particular fight has gone on since at least the early 1980s, and even farther back in other forms. U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, the Oregon Democrat, recently called it the "longest-running battle since the Trojan War."

As explained by the business journal BloombergPolitics, "Most of the softwood in Canada is owned by provincial governments, which set prices to cut trees on their land, while in the U.S. it's generally harvested from private property. The fees charged by Canadian governments are below market rates, creating an unfair advantage, U.S. producers say. Canada disputes that." The U.S. Department of Commerce alleges the Canadian government provides up to 32 additional types of subsidies to keep its lumber artificially cheap.

Logging and lumber production represent a significant economic sector in our region, most notably on the part of Hampton Lumber Mills in Warrenton and Weyerhaeuser in Raymond, Washington. Along with smaller outfits, they generate payrolls in the millions, plus additional benefits in the form of payments to contractors, suppliers and others. Though nowhere near as dominant as they were a century ago, forestry-related firms remain key to rural economies such as ours, and most in the industry will be grateful for federal help in this fight, so long as it is effective and long-lasting.

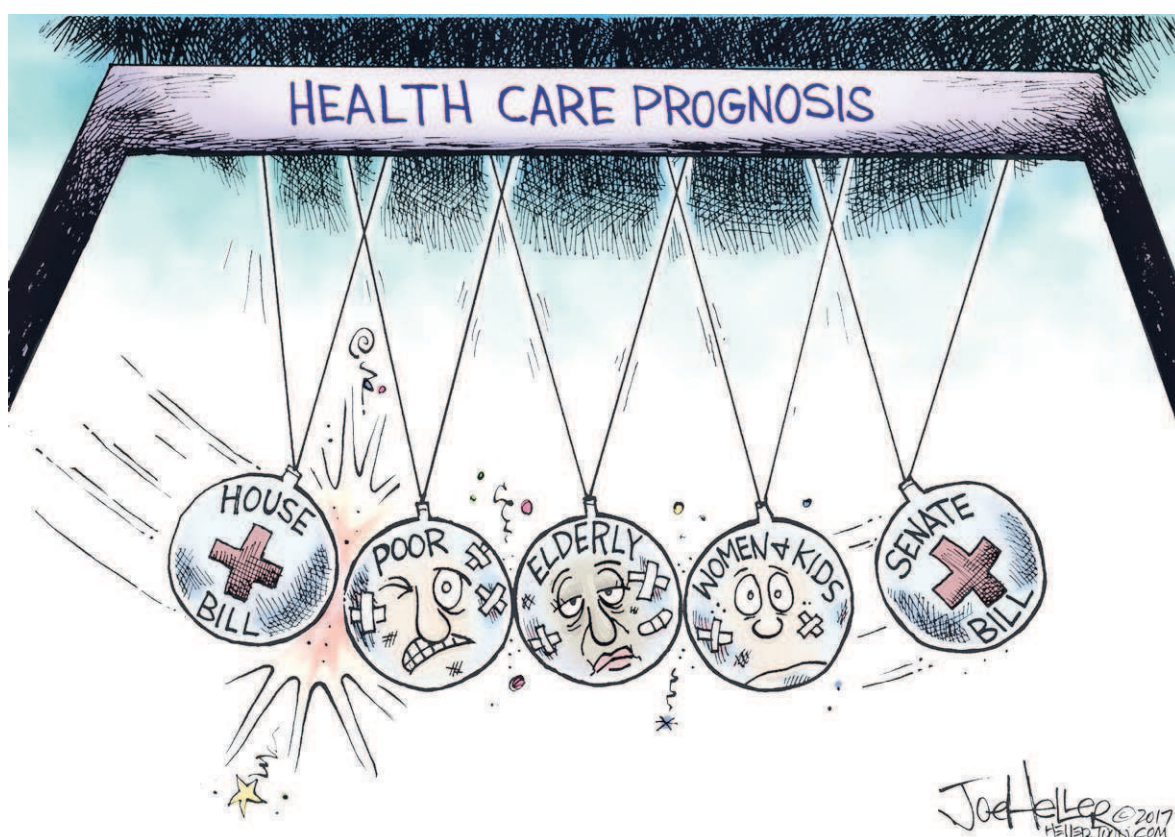
Andrew Miller, CEO for Oregon-based Stimson Lumber Co., told National Public Radio last week that particularly when homebuilding is on a down cycle, the Canadian subsidies in effect act like a grocer holding his thumb on the scale as produce is being weighed. Over time, this inequity has discouraged investment and made it harder for U.S. companies to compete.

"People are less inclined to hire, and meanwhile the Canadian mills are humming away at full employment," Miller said. He and others in the U.S. industry say that increasing their share of the domestic market will directly translate into more American jobs at mills like those in our area.

The Trump tariffs were actually a good deal less than some expected — not wildly out of line with those the two governments have agreed to in the past. Miller said he estimates they would only add about \$200 to the cost of a new \$250,000 house, though U.S. homebuilders — who oppose the tariff — have a higher figure.

Long experience with tariffs suggests they are usually not the best way to achieve goals that instead require careful and rational negotiations. However, in this case the Trump administration may have chosen the right tool for the right job.

In this case the Trump administration may have chosen the right tool for the right job.



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Outside the path of totality

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

On the morning of Aug. 21, parts of Oregon will witness a total eclipse of the sun, the first since Feb. 26, 1979. While Cannon Beach residents are close to the 70-mile wide "path of totality," we're still slightly outside its veil. So if you absolutely, positively want to see a total solar eclipse, start planning now.

Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Court Carrier says purists will find it "really tough" to get down to Newport, Depoe Bay or Lincoln City the day of the eclipse.



To get down there and have any chance of seeing it, visitors are going to need to leave at 2 or 3 a.m. in the morning, before people even wake up, he said. "Even then, it will probably be cloudy and have morning fog."

During a total solar eclipse, the sun, the moon and the earth align in such a way that the moon completely blocks out the sun, briefly turning daytime into twilight for nearly two minutes.

Touching down just north of Depoe Bay at 10:15 a.m., the moon's shadow will race east at 2,955 mph passing through cities in the Willamette Valley, central Oregon and Eastern Oregon in just nine minutes. It then traverses the country 1 hour, 33 minutes and 16.8 seconds later. The eclipse will spend two minutes and 40 seconds in St. Clair, Missouri. Portland, Tennessee, will receive two minutes and 37 seconds of totality. McClellanville, South Carolina, will be the last U.S. city to see the eclipse, at 2:49 p.m. EDT.

Dark sky

How far will sky-watchers go for totality?

In Newport, the Hallmark Resort, Travelodge and Inn at Nye Beach are all sold out, however Trip Advisor shows rooms from \$499 a night at the Best Western Agate Inn and \$599 and \$699 a night at the Holiday Inn Express and La Quinta Inn.

Expedia lists three rooms left at \$800 a night in Lincoln City, and 60 vacation rentals are no longer available between Aug. 19 and Aug. 21. Rooms in Salem, McMinnville, Newberg and other locations along the "totality path" are also completely booked.

According to Jay Anderson and Jennifer West of eclipsophile.com, a site "dedicated to the global traveler who appreciates and seeks out the spectacles that nature offers to aficionados of the day and night sky," the Willamette Valley offers a very good chance of sunshine on eclipse day and an even better forecast for sunshine in the Deschutes River Valley in the vicinity of Madras.

All 28 hotels and motels in the Madras vicinity listed on Expedia were booked by mid-April.

An extra 1,018 state park campsites made available by the state's Parks and Recreation department offer South Jetty at South Beach, Fogarty Creek, Driftwood Beach and Governor Patterson Memorial, all in the path of totality. They were available online at 8 a.m., April 19 and reserved one hour later.

Cannon Beach is definitely a second choice for those seeking this astronomical wonder — outside of the veil of totality, problematic weather-wise and subject to long travel delays.



AP Photo/Ben Margot

The annular solar eclipse produces flare through a lens in Alameda, Calif., in 2012. Destinations are hosting festivals, hotels are selling out and travelers are planning trips for the total solar eclipse that will be visible coast-to-coast on Aug. 21, 2017. A narrow path of the United States 60 to 70 miles wide from Oregon to South Carolina will experience total darkness, also known as totality.

Our latitude is 45 degrees 89 minutes north; Lincoln City, within the path, is charted at 44 degrees 96 minutes north. Close, but no cigar. Getting from here to there, close as it may be, could be a difficult feat. Motorists are discouraged.

"Transportation planners predict unprecedented traffic and crowds during the eclipse weekend, and we are planning accordingly," Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Chris Havel said in an April statement. "We ask that campers plan to stay off the roads on the morning of Aug. 21 and respect any fire restrictions."

There's the added difficulty of weather.

"The coast-hugging regions of Oregon are not especially favored for eclipse watching," Anderson and West advise.

Meteorologist Michael Zeiler advises eclipse-watchers to avoid the Oregon Coast and its summer marine layer "unless the short-term weather forecast confidently predicts the absence of morning fog or cloud cover."

The outlook through June tells that there is a one-third chance of "above-normal," "one-third chance of normal" and "one-third chance of below-normal" precipitation in our region. The National Weather Service says there is a "50 percent chance" of El Nino developing in the July, August and September timeline, which could add to the change of precipitation later in the summer.

The weather on the North Coast on Feb. 26, 1979, the date of the last total eclipse? Rain.

Once in a lifetime

The Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center have received only sporadic eclipse inquiries, Carrier said.

"I had one call this last week," he

said in mid-April. "A lady had made reservation for a family reunion, she wanted to bring them down and have a chance to see the eclipse."

"I don't think she really realized we're 2 1/2 hours or so away in being able to get down there — and that's in normal traffic," Carrier said. "The three days that's going on, I'm expecting there's going to be insane traffic."

Carrier said visitors should avoid major roads to Depoe Bay or Lincoln Beach. "You go around a little bit and catch it from the back side," he said.

For Cannon Beach, the impact will probably be "minimal," Carrier said. "If people are doing their homework, they understand and realize they have to be in the 20-mile totality area for them to be able to get that perfect view. Though there will be bits of view from other locations, I don't think people are coming for that."

Why does it matter? "The total solar eclipse is a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence," Carrier said. "Some people feel insanely passionate about it and they want to get a peek of it."

Is anything planned in Cannon Beach? Souvenir glasses, parade, group gatherings, howling at the moon?

"No we don't plan anything then," Carrier said. "I do believe it will be quite the spectacle and a lot of folks will enjoy it," Carrier said.

Between high costs, chance of clouds, high crowds, you might just want to shelter in place and satisfy yourself with 90 percent totality.

And there's always the next total solar eclipse — July 2, 2019. You'll have to go to South America for that one.

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian's South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.