

For sale: 'There's an impact to the historic social fabric'

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conversion is a concern especially in areas with "amenity values." Daggett's scenic Willowa County is an example, "Where the primary reason to live out there is to be there, and the secondary reason is to farm," Johnson said.

Ag property purchased to be a recreational site, he said, inflates land values and makes it more expensive for farmers and ranchers to buy or rent.

New owners who aren't interested in farming themselves might gain more revenue by enrolling land in the federal Conservation Reserve Program, in which they receive payments for taking it out of production, rather than leasing crop land to other farmers, said Walter Powell, a Condon wheat farmer. In that case, there's a reduction to the farming infrastructure: the seed and fertilizer dealer, the equipment store, local employment and more, Powell said.

Jim Wood, a cattle rancher near Post, in central Oregon, said the biggest threat to high-desert cattle ranching is the fragmentation of grazing ground. Ranching in his area requires big acreage to be ecologically and economically sustainable, and segmentation or development for other uses cuts into that and increases land prices, Wood said.

"If you overgraze, this landscape is quick to be unforgiving, and you're going to be out of business," he said.

Oregon's land-use laws — adopted to preserve farm and forest land from urban sprawl — generally preclude rapid, wholesale development of agricultural land.

Statewide, counties approved 473 houses on farmland in 2014 and 522 in 2015, the most current figures provided by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

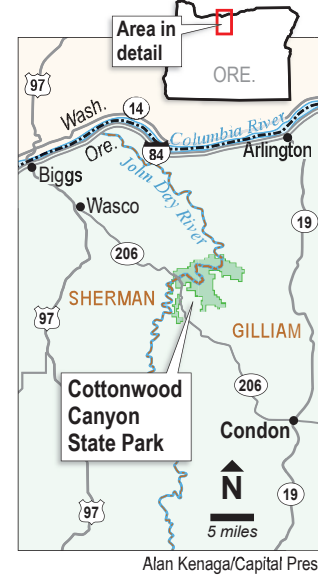
Daggett acknowledges an argument could be made that the "highest and best use" of her family land could be as a "view property."

But ownership changes can ripple deep in rural communities.

"This is very personal for me," said Daggett, who was Willowa County's planning director in the late 1990s and



Cattle graze along Highway 97 south of Biggs Junction. Observers say sales of Oregon farm and ranch land, sometimes involving thousands of acres at once, can change the social fabric of rural communities by shutting off traditional uses of the land. With the average age of producers now 60, a study estimated 64 percent of Oregon farm and ranch land could change hands in the next 20 years.



Eric Mortenson/EO Media Group
Megan Horst, a land-use professor at Portland State University, is assembling data on all farmland sales in the state from 2010-2015. More than 360,000 acres was sold in northeast Oregon counties alone, and nearly 170,000 acres in the Willamette Valley during that time.

ironically, now sells real estate. She said her son had hoped to run cattle on the family land, but now leases land from others. "Like a sharecropper," Daggett said.

The giddy buyer who called her husband in the Caymans has yet to build a dream home on the property. It appears someone is leasing the pastures. "There's an impact to the historic social fabric, there's this disruption socially," Daggett said.

"It's more than a question of who's buying," she said. "It's who's buying, and then what?"

Big properties

Some of the listings carried by Whitney Land Co. are breathtaking. The Pendleton-based real estate company specializes in farm and ranch properties, especially big ones.

Until the owner took it off the market this spring, one of Whitney Land's offerings was called the Kinzua Ranch in Wheeler County: More than 39,000 acres with a \$28 million asking price.

The property included much of what used to be the timber holdings and former community of Kinzua, a company mill town that ceased operation in 1978. Timber industry reps have expressed interest, but the property hasn't sold yet.

Whitney Land Co. has other big properties to sell, including the Maurer Ranch at Clarno, along the John Day River, which is listed for \$19.7 million. It includes more than 29,000 deeded acres plus 18,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service grazing leases, which

hold significant value.

The property has been in the same family for more than 90 years, has been used for cattle, grain and hay production, and includes nine fenced pastures and eight miles of river frontage. The owners may break it into smaller parcels and sell it that way, said Todd Longgood, a Whitney broker.

While cautious about characterizing possible clients, Longgood said Oregon farms and ranches catch the attention of what he called "corporate ag" or "intense ag" buyers. Some potential buyers are looking for "longterm holds," figuring the land will increase in value and they can resell later; others pursue crop land "knowing there will always be a market for food." Some buyers bring with them the resources to develop or expand irrigation systems, critical for high-value crops.

"In the corporate ag world, there is more money available for ag land than there is supply," he said.

Sales add up

At Portland State University, land-use and urban planning professor Megan Horst is assembling ground-breaking data on Oregon farm and ranch sales. Working with a graduate research assistant, she asked county clerks for information on sales from 2010 to the end of 2015 of land zoned exclusive farm use.

Horst is compiling land sales in the eight agricultural regions defined by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. In northeast Oregon, 360,265 acres of exclusive farm use

land sold during the 2010-15 time period. In the Willamette Valley, 169,572 acres sold, and along the coast, 13,397 acres sold.

Oregon has slightly more than 17 million acres of farmland. Over the six-year study period, the acreage sold in the three ag regions analyzed so far amounts to only 3.2 percent of the state's total farmland.

In some cases, however, significant money was involved. According to Horst's figures, the median sales price per acre of Willamette Valley farm use land was \$21,909. On the coast, it was \$10,299, while in Northeast Oregon the median price per acre dipped to \$2,451. The values include permanent crops such as orchards and vineyards and other infrastructure.

Horst said the sales figures compiled so far raise issues Oregonians ought to be discussing. Among them: Who has access to agricultural land, and what happens if food production is concentrated in the hands of the few who can afford to buy large swaths of land?

The research follows a study Horst co-authored with five others: "The Future of Oregon's Agricultural Land."

The report, produced by Oregon State University, PSU and Rogue Farm Corps, an advocacy group, noted that the average age of Oregon farmers is now 60.

"As older farmers retire over the next two decades, over 10 million acres, or 64 percent of Oregon's agricultural

land, will pass to new owners. How that land changes hands, who acquires it, and what they do with the land will impact Oregon for generations," the authors wrote.

Creating a park

In Portland, Sue Doroff nods in understanding at some of the concerns expressed over Oregon farm and ranch land sales. People "go to their fearful place" pretty quickly when they hear of big acreages listed for big money, she said.

Doroff is a co-founder and president of Western Rivers Conservancy, which

has had a very public role in significant farmland transitions.

In 2008, Western Rivers bought the 8,000-acre Murtha Ranch, along the John Day River 25 miles north of Condon, for \$7.9 million. The purchase included an 8,000-acre BLM grazing lease. The organization then began selling the ranch in stages to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for the same price, completing the process in 2011.

Cottonwood Canyon State Park, one of the largest in the state, opened two years later. The ranch's barn, corrals and other infrastructure are incorporated into the park. Hunting and fishing are allowed in the park, and a grazing management plan is in the works.

The sale cost Gilliam County some property tax revenue as the land went from private ranch to tax-exempt public park. County Assessor Chet Wilkins said the property was



Sue Doroff

mostly low-value range ground that was specially assessed. The approximate total yearly tax loss to Gilliam County is \$2,080, Wilkins said in an email.

In 2014, Western Rivers again bought John Day River property, this time the 14,148-acre Rattray Ranch, and its 10,530-acre BLM grazing lease.

Western Rivers is primarily concerned with improving water quality and river habitat for salmon and steelhead runs, but Doroff said there are "lots of opportunities" for compatible conservation work, crops and livestock grazing.

"When we take sensitive lands and make them better, it takes some of the stress off the ecosystem," she said. The Rattray Ranch purchase will provide public river access, hopefully reducing trespassing problems that bothered other landowners. That and the park opening also bring more economic activity to nearby Condon, as visitors choose places to stay and eat.

Even though there is some "parsing of the landscape" through sales, Doroff said big buyers are likely to continue traditional uses such as grazing cattle and growing wheat.

"Who is going to spend that much and not generate some revenue from it?" she asked. "The adjustments are smaller than the fear."

Seaside: Additional \$112 million capital budget for construction was presented

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students, staff, parents and the community at both elementary schools. An elementary teacher will also be added to reduce class size, allow more time to focus on student achievement and narrow the achievement gap, Roley said in her budget message.

A full-time social studies teacher will be added at Broad-

way Middle School, among other personnel additions.

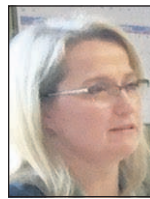
School bond

An additional \$112 million capital budget for construction of the new K-12 campus was also presented for review Tuesday night. That number grew from the original \$99.7 million bond approved by voters in November with the addition of \$4 million from

the state, along with favorable bond sales and rates.

The district anticipates paying out \$22.5 million next year toward the project, endorsed by voters in November, Business Manager Justine Hill said in April.

Representatives of Day CPM and Dull Olson Weekes



Justine Hill

— IBI Architects provided an update on the construction project's progress. The district is soliciting comment while interviewing contractor candidates to work with architects to design the building.

During construction, facilities repair and maintenance will continue to be addressed

at all buildings. The average useful life of the buildings is 45 years, yet the average age of the high school, middle school and Gearhart Elementary School is about 65 years, Roley said.

The budget calls for new flooring at Gearhart Elementary School; a new roof pack at Broadway Middle School; playground safety measures at Seaside Heights Elementary

School and improvements at the high school.

The budget was approved unanimously without additional comment from the public, members of the board or the budget committee.

A public hearing on the budget will be conducted at the school district's June 20 meeting. The budget must be adopted prior to the end of the fiscal year in June.

TV LISTINGS

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Evening listings THURSDAY

THURSDAY EVENING												MAY 18	
A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
2	KATU	(2) KATU News at 6		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	Grey's Anatomy "Ring of Fire" (SF) (N)	Scandal "Tick, Tock" (N)	Scandal "Transfer of Power" (SF) (N)	KATU News at 11	(35) Jimmy Kimmel			
3	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	Grey's Anatomy "Ring of Fire" (SF) (N)	Scandal "Tick, Tock" (N)	Scandal "Transfer of Power" (SF) (N)	KOMO 4 News	(35) Jimmy Kimmel			
4	KING	(5) NBC Nightly News	KING 5 News	KING 5 News	Evening	Law & Order: S.V.U. "Net Worth"	The Blacklist "Mr. Kaplan: Conclusion" Pt. 1 of 2 (N)	Blacklist "Mr. Kaplan: Conclusion" (N)	KING 5 News	(35) Tonight Show			
6	KOIN	(7) KOIN 6 News at 6	CBS Evening News	Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	The Great Indoors	The Amazing Race (N)	KOIN 6 News @ 11	(35) Colbert			
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News	CBS Evening News	The Insider	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	The Great Indoors	The Amazing Race (N)	KIRO News	(35) Colbert			
8	KGW	(7) KGW News at 6:00 p.m.	Live at 7	Inside Edition	Law & Order: S.V.U. "Net Worth"	The Blacklist "Mr. Kaplan: Conclusion" Pt. 1 of 2 (N)	Blacklist "Mr. Kaplan: Conclusion" (N)	KGW News at 10	Two and a Half	(35) Tonight Show			
9	KRCW	(3) Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Supernatural "Who We Are" (N)	Super. "All Along the Watchtower" (N)	KGW News at 10	Two and a Half	Met Your Mother			
10	KOPB	(10) Born to Explore	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour	Modern Family	Art Beat (N)	Oregon Guide	The Inspector Lynley Mysteries "For the Sake of Elena" (35) Hinterland (N)	(20) Hinterland Pt. 2 of 2 (N)				
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News		Family Feud	Family Feud	MasterChef "The Semi Finals" (N)	MasterChef Junior "Finale" (SF) (N)	10 O'Clock News	11 O'Clock News	2 Broke Girls			
13	KPDJ	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	FOX 12's 8 O'Clock News on PDX-TV	FOX 12's 9 O'Clock News on PDX-TV	Family Guy	Family Guy	Cleveland Show			
14	KCPQ	(14) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	MasterChef "The Semi Finals" (N)	MasterChef Junior "Finale" (SF) (N)	Q13 News at 10	Q13 News	The Simpsons			
20	TBS	(20) Seinfeld Pt. 1 of 2	Seinfeld Pt. 2 of 2	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Conan				
22	KZJQ	(22) Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Friends			
29	ESPN	(29) NBA Basketball Playoffs (L)					SportsCenter With Scott Van Pelt	Scott Van Pelt presents the day in sports.	SportsCenter	Friends			
30	ESPN2	(30) We the Fans/ Soldier		Boxing Golden Boy Diego de la Hoya vs. Erik Ruiz (L)			30 for 30 "Muhammad and Larry"	Jalen & Jacoby (N)	30 for 30 Shorts	NFL Live			
31	NICK	(31) Henry Danger	Henry Danger	Henry Danger	The Thundermans	*** Shrek Forever After ("10, Ani) Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Mike Myers.	Full House	Full House	Friends	Friends			
32	DISN	(32) Andi Mack	Bizaardvark	Tangled-Series	Good Luck Charlie	Stuck in Middle	Good Luck Charlie	K.C. Undercover	Liv Maddie Cali	Bunk'd			
34	FAM	(34) (5:30) *** Coming to America ("88) Arsenio Hall, James Earl Jones, Eddie Murphy.				*** Mrs. Doubtfire (1993, Comedy) Sally Field, Pierce Brosnan, Robin Williams.							
35	FMC	(35) (5:55) *** I Think I Love My Wife ("07) Chris Rock.				*** This Means War ("12) Chris Pine, Reese Witherspoon. (55) FXM Presents							
36	LIFE	(36) Grey's A. "Love the One You're With"	Married/ First Sight "Honeymoons" 1/2	Married1stSight	(45) Married (N)	Married at First Sight "Move-Ins" (N)	(15) Married Sight Second "Soft Lips, Hard Choices" (N)	(45) Married					
38	ROOT	(38) In Depth (N)	[Mariners-Pre-game] MLB Baseball Chicago White Sox at Seattle Mariners Site: Safeco Field -- Seattle, Wash. (L)	Mariners Site: Safeco Field -- Seattle, Wash. (L)			Post-game	MLB Baseball Chicago White Sox at Seattle Mariners					
39	FS1	(39) (5:00) MLB Baseball New York Yankees at Kansas City Royals (L)		MLB Whiparound (L)			Speak for Yourself	Skip and Shannon: Undisputed Opinions on the biggest sports topics of the day.					
43	SPICE	(43) *** The Blind Side (2009, Sport) Tim McGraw, Quinton Aaron, Sandra Bullock.					Lip Sync Battle 1/2	Lip Sync Battle 2/2	Lip Sync Battle (N)	Lip Sync Battle			
44	COM4	(44) (15) Futurama	(50) South Park	McGraw, Quinton Aaron, Sandra Bullock.			Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Jeff Dunham: Unhinged in Hollywood	The Daily Show (N) Pres. Show (N)			
45	HIST	(45) Swamp People "Time's Running Out"	Swamp People "Racing Sundown"	Swamp: Blood "The Hunt Ends" (N)	Swamp: Blood "The Other Wife"	60 Days In "Aftermath" (N)	Swamp People "Monster in the Dark/ Savage Pursuit" (N)	First48/ First 48	(05) Swamp "Monster in the Dark"	(05) The First 48 "Mother of Two"			
46	A&E	(46) First 48 "Trust No One/ Risky Business"	The First 48 "Old Wounds"	Naked/Afraid	My 600-lb Life "Milla's Story"	My 600-lb Life "Milla and Charity" Charity is struggling help her daughter. (N)	Skin "Where Are They Now? Part 1" (N)	Skin "Where Are They Now? Part 2" (N)	My 600-lb Life "Milla and Charity"	(05) Naked and Afraid "Ashes to Ashes"			
47	TLC	(47) Nate Jeremiah Design "Happy Hour"	My 600-lb Life "Milla's Story"	Naked/Afraid XL "Shattered"	The Forbidden River "Khan's Kingdom"	Forbidden River "The Black Dragon"	Forbidden River "Into the Shadowlands"	The Last Shangri-la					
48	NGEO	(48) Wild Thailand	The Himalayas	Bones "The He in the She"	*** Get Hard (2015, Comedy) Kevin Hart, Alison Brie, Will Ferrell.	*** Lethal Weapon 3 (1992, Action) Danny Glover, Rene Russo, Mel Gibson.	*** Lethal Weapon 4 (98, Act) Danny Glover, Mel Gibson.						
50	TNT	(50) Bones "The Crank in the Shaft"	Bones "The He in the She"	Law&Order: SVU "Fashionable Crimes"	Law&Order: SVU "Assaulting Reality"	Beat Bobby Play	Beat Bobby Play	House Hunters	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters			
51	AMT	(51) (5:30) *** Twister (1996, Action) Bill Paxton, Jami Gertz, Helen Hunt.		Law&Order: SVU "Unholy Alliance"	Chopped "There Will Be Bloody Marys"	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	House Hunters	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters			
52	USA	(52) Law & Order: S.V.U. "Strange Beauty"	Law&Order: SVU "Unholy Alliance"	Chopped "There Will Be Bloody Marys"	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	House Hunters	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	House Hunters			
53	FOOD	(53) Chopped "Grandma vs. Grandma"	Chopped "There Will Be Bloody Marys"	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	House Hunters	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	House Hunters			
54	HGTV	(54) House Hunters	House Hunters	House Hunters	House Hunters	House Hunters	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	House Hunters	House Hunters			
55	FX	(55) *** Prometheus ("12) Logan Marshall-Green, Nomi Rapace.		*** Thor (2011, Action) Anthony Hopkins, Natalie Portman, Chris Hemsworth.	*** Thor (2011, Action) Anthony Hopkins, Natalie Portman, Chris Hemsworth.								
57	CNN	(57) Anderson Cooper 360	Soundtracks "Hurricane Katrina" (N)	CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	Soundtracks "Hurricane Katrina"	Anderson Cooper 360						
58	FNC	(58) The Five	Hannity	Tucker Carlson Tonight	The Profit "Tea2Go"	The Profit "Vision Quest Lighting"	Paid Program	Paid Program					
61	CNBC	(61) Shark Tank	Shark Tank	The Profit "Tea2Go"	Housewives Atl. "Reunion Part 3" 3/4	Housewives Atl. "Reunion Part 4" 4/4	Housewives Atlanta "Secrets Revealed"	WatchWhat (N)	Southern Charm				
63	BRV	(63) Million Dollar "Don't Touch Me, Bro"	The Real Housewives	Housewives Atl. "Reunion Part 3" 3/4	Housewives Atl. "Reunion Part 4" 4/4	Housewives Atl. "Reunion Part 4" 4/4	Housewives Atlanta "Secrets Revealed"	WatchWhat (N)	Southern Charm				
64	TCM	(64) (5:00) Them! ("54)	(45) *** Godzilla, King of the Monsters ("56) Takashi Shimura, Raymond Burr.	*** It Came From Beneath the Sea ("55) Kenneth Tobey.	*** John Wick ("14, Action) Adriane Palicki, Bridget Moynahan, Keanu Reeves.	Snakes on a Plane	Juliana Margulies.						
65	SYFY	(65) (4:30) Pompeii ("14)	*** 300 (2006, Epic) Lena Headey, Dominic West, Gerard Butler.										
69	RFD	(69) SF Machinery (N)	Small Town (N)	Rural America 'Live'	Steve Lantvit	Rural Eve. News	Market Journal	GA Farm Monitor	SF Machinery	Small Town	Time Life Library		