

## IN BRIEF

## Fire destroys home in Brownsmead

Officials are investigating a fire that destroyed a home on Monday morning in Astoria.

Firefighters were able to keep the fire contained to the home off of Brownsmead Dike Lane.

Officials say the occupants were able to get out of the home and no injuries were reported.

— *The Astorian*

## Peninsula crabs low in meat

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Dungeness crab in Long Beach Peninsula waters have the lowest percentage of meat in at least six years of late October testing.

This is bad news for the traditional Dec. 1 opening date, which has often proved illusory in the past two decades.

Samples gathered Saturday in the south of Klipsan area had a pick-out rate of 18.7%. Last year, crab gathered in the local test area had a meat-recovery rate of 19.1%, which itself was considered very low. This compares to 20.9% in 2018, 19.9% in 2017, 23% in 2016 and 23.8% in 2015.

Samples from the Westport area collected Friday tested at 19.6%, compared to 21% last year, 19.7% in 2018, 20.2% in 2017, 22.9% in 2016 and 24% in 2015.

All areas must be at least 23% before a commercial crabbing season can commence under terms of the tri-state protocol that governs crabbing in the waters of Washington, Oregon and California.

Due to coronavirus restrictions and the limited number of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife crew who could be on board the test boats, the state did not collect any shell condition data. Most local Dungeness crab are still at a soft-shell stage in October after molting in the summer and early fall.

Dungeness crab is the most valuable fishery in Washington and Oregon.

— *Chinook Observer*

## DEATHS

Oct. 24, 2020

**BALKINS, Jean Elizabeth**, 76, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

Aug. 3, 2020

**KONECNY, Michael Anthony**, 32, of Astoria, died in Warrenton. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements. To leave condolences or messages, go to [hughesransom.com](http://hughesransom.com)

## MEMORIAL

Saturday, Oct. 31

**RANTA, Anja Hannele** — Visitation from 1 to 4 p.m., Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary, 1165 Franklin Ave. Ranta, 66, of Astoria, died Saturday, Oct. 24, 2020, in Astoria.

## ON THE RECORD

## Theft

• **Kathryn M. Jensen**, 38, of Eugene, was arrested Thursday at Fred Meyer in Warrenton for theft in the second degree.

## Menacing

• **Jimmy Seo Peterson**, 43, of Tonasket, Washington, was arrested Saturday behind Astoria Warehousing for menacing.

## Criminal trespass

• **Christopher Noelle Crone**, 51, of Astoria, was arrested Saturday on 16th Street and Marine Drive in Astoria for criminal trespass in the second degree.

• **Christine Delora Marcy**, 52, was arrested Saturday at Astoria Mini Mart East for criminal

trespass in the second degree. Marcy was arrested again at the location on Sunday for criminal trespass.

• **Suzanne K. Snodgrass**, 51, was arrested on Oct. 17 in Warrenton for criminal trespass in the first degree and theft in the third degree.

## Unlawful entry

• **Ashley Lukoszyk**, 36, of Warrenton, was arrested Sunday on U.S. Highway 101 Business for unlawful entry into a motor vehicle.

## DUII

• **Brian William Scott, Jr.**, 29, of Warrenton, was arrested Sunday on S.E. 19th Street and S.E. Ensign Lane in Warrenton for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

**Astoria Planning Commission**, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

**Warrenton City Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

WEDNESDAY

**Astoria Parks Board**, 6:45 a.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

**Clatsop County Board of Commissioners**, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

# Environmentalists, loggers collaborate in Eastern Oregon

By **AARON SCOTT**  
*Oregon Public Broadcasting*

So, a logger and an environmentalist walk into a forest together.

It sounds like a joke, because, at least historically speaking, loggers and environmentalists didn't go anywhere in Oregon together. If they crossed paths in the forest, it was because they were on opposite sides of a road blockade or logging protest.

But not in Eastern Oregon's Grant County. Here, loggers and environmentalists have been walking in the woods together for years.

"So did this pencil out?" environmental attorney Susan Jane Brown asked during a tour of different logging treatments in the Malheur National Forest in August 2019.

"Yeah, easy logging," responded Zach Williams, a forester for the company that cut the trees, Iron Triangle. "I don't hesitate to say this was the best sale we've had in years."

Brown and Williams are part of the forest collaborative group Blue Mountains Forest Partners. They've been so successful at finding common ground that environmentalists haven't filed a single anti-logging lawsuit on the Malheur National Forest since 2003.

It might not seem like a big deal to see environmentalists and loggers working together in the woods. But in the Northwest, it is.

In the 1980s, environmentalists protested timber sales across the region, sparking what was called the Timber Wars. By the late '90s, they had managed to severely limit logging in federal forests, which crushed timber-dependent areas like Grant County.

"I can't even name the amount of kids I grew up with that: families lost jobs; the mill lost, you know, lost whole logging companies; businesses started to close down," Williams said. "Slowly but surely, you start to wonder if you're going to be a ghost town at some point."

Williams' family goes back five generations in the area. He watched his father close their sawmill, and he said locals blamed environmentalists for locking up the trees.

"At that point in our lives, 'Susan Jane Brown' were extremely dirty words to say around here."

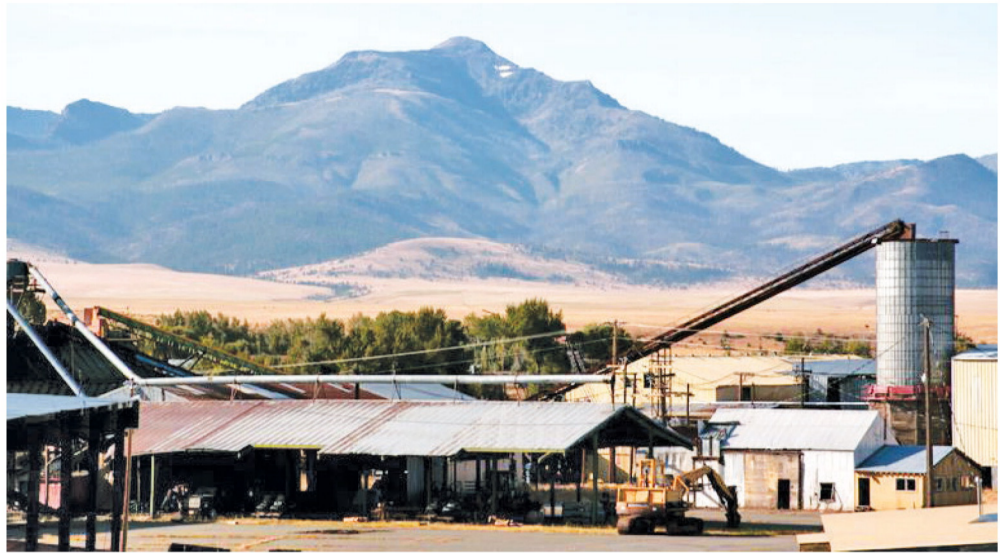
"I certainly was concerned about my safety at that time," said Brown, who, as a lawyer at the Western Environmental Law Center, regularly appealed timber sales on the Malheur National Forest. "I had been run out of town before — had been tailgated by pickup trucks. I've had air let out of my tires."

So how did these two groups go from enemies to tromping through the woods together?

What it took was a few locals realizing in 2003 that they couldn't beat Brown in the courtroom. So they invited her to Grant County to see if they could find some way to manage the forest that would meet both their goals. And Brown agreed, bringing along other environmentalists she worked with.

They started meeting informally every couple of months in the back room of a local restaurant. And about the only thing they could agree on was a name for the group, the Blue Mountains Forest Partners (and even that was contentious).

"I'll begin by describing some of those early meetings," said Mark Webb, who was the county judge during the early years of the collaborative, before losing reelection in part due to his participation with the group. "Industry and community members are on one side of it. Environmen-



Brandon Swanson/Oregon Public Broadcasting

**There were once dozens of sawmills in Eastern Oregon. Now there are only a handful. The Prairie Wood Products mill in Prairie City was one of the last to shut down, which it did in 2008 as a result of the housing market collapse and limited timber supplies.**



Brandon Swanson/Oregon Public Broadcasting

**The Malheur Lumber Co. in John Day almost closed for a lack of timber supply, until environmentalists and other members of the Blue Mountains Forest Partners stepped in to develop a 10-year stewardship contract that would ensure a sustained supply of timber from the surrounding forests.**

tal community's on the other. And we have a third party, a facilitator, that's walking back and forth between us, because we couldn't talk to one another. It was that bad — almost that poisonous."

Webb, who is now the group's executive director, said he considered it a multi-cultural conversation, because it was like the two sides spoke a different language. When they said something like "healthy forest," they meant two completely different things.

So to find common language and common ground, they made a fateful decision: they committed to follow the science. They invited ecologists, biologists, silviculturists and other scientists to tour the forests with them and talk about what exactly makes a forest healthy. And where there wasn't clear science, they commissioned their own.

Such was the case for this tour on a hot August day. One of the most contentious issues for the collaborative over the years has been salvage logging, or the logging of trees that are dead or damaged from fire.

Loggers historically rush to harvest burned timber because, to them, leaving wood to decay is like watching money rot on trees — to say nothing of providing fuel for future wildfires.

But to environmentalists and scientists salvage logging is anathema, because these burned forests provide essential habitat for many animals, especially woodpeckers.

So, when more than 110,000 acres burned in the 2013 Canyon Creek Complex fire, much of it on the Malheur National Forest, instead of seeing it as another thing to fight about, the Blue Mountains Forest Partners saw it as an opportunity. They invited Vicki Saab, a biologist with U.S. Forest Service, to create a study that would determine whether there was a level of salvage logging that could provide an economic benefit to the local community without compromising woodpecker habitat.

Saab's study involved logging different test sites at different levels, ranging from cutting no trees to cutting most of them, and then tracking how woodpeckers fared over four years.

As they toured the test sites at the end of the study, Saab said that the prelimi-

nary results suggested that selective logging had minimal negative impact on white-headed woodpeckers, but that it appeared to cause a slow decline in the nesting numbers of black-backed woodpeckers.

At the end of the tour, the group circled up around a charred, old-growth ponderosa pine that had housed one of the study's woodpeckers.

"I definitely agree this was a success," said Williams, whose company had logged in the study area. "Susan Jane detests salvage logging, and if I'm being honest, I look at this burn — 110,000 acres — and look at salvaging 5,000 of it and think: how is that really going to harm habitat? And I'm not going to say that I think any differently about that, but that's the point of collaboration. And if this is the kind of process we have to go through, then it worked."

"I agree," Brown said. "And I don't want this to be one off. And we can do salvage, and we can take logs to the mill, and people can earn a living wage, and we also don't have to kill a bunch of birds in the process."

Following the science gave them a shared language to talk about the forest. But it was also dangerous, because it meant both sides had to be willing to change their beliefs.

For environmentalists, that means not only accepting Saab's research that some level of salvage logging might be compatible with woodpecker habitat, but that logging itself can be an important tool in forest restoration.

That's because the scientists they've worked with argue that these dry, eastside forests, like many of the drier conifer forests in southern Oregon and throughout California, are now overgrown. The main cause is a century of putting out the low-intensity fires that historically burned through the forests on a regular basis, cleaning out the duff and small trees that now crowd the forest and make

it ripe for much larger catastrophic fires. But the scientists suggest that the way to restore them to their historic state is going to involve both fire and logging, because logging gives more control over what trees are preserved and which are removed (for instance, keeping the old-growth ponderosa pine trees while removing the smaller, faster-growing fir trees that now crowd it out).

"The more time you spend out looking at this stuff and the more the science can inform what we're seeing, the more willing many of us in the environmental community have been to having a conversation about, 'OK, chainsaws, I think we're going to need some chainsaws out here,'" Brown said. "And the other side of the equation, for the community, they're getting more comfortable talking fire — prescribed and wildfire. Because you look at these forests, and they're out of whack. And given climate change, it's not going to get any better on its own."

Perhaps the greatest test of this partnership came in 2012, when Grant County's last sawmill announced it was closing for a lack of timber.

"I was like, this is not OK," said Brown, who learned the news as she was returning home from a backpacking trip. "If the mill closes, this community just dries up and blows away. It's really the mainstay of what's keeping this community alive."

But it wasn't just the community. Brown realized the mill was also keeping the collaborative alive because it bought the timber they cut out of the forest during their restoration work, which in turn funded the work.

So she started making phone calls. She got U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden's office involved. She roped in other conservation groups like the Nature Conservancy and Sustainable Northwest. And she got the mill's president, Bruce Daucavage, and the county's biggest logging operations on board.

The result was what's called a 10-year stewardship contract. It guaranteed that the U.S. Forest Service would pay for a certain amount of restoration work for 10 years, ensuring a sustained level of logging.

"I think that's when I really looked at Susan Jane," Daucavage said. "She was putting her neck out on the line from her side, because she was actually being presented as more of a moderate. And I'm sure she had plenty of feedback from people that were winning the battle."

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