

IN BRIEF

Seaside planner to step down

SEASIDE — After 23 years with the city, Kevin Cupples, the planning director, announced his retirement Tuesday night.

After welcoming a new planning commissioner, Brandon Kraft, Cupples said his last day will be Feb. 15. “I’m going to remain here in Seaside, but I’ve got some other pressing things that need to be taken care of in my life,” he said.

Cupples grew up in Scappoose and graduated from Southern Oregon University. He worked in planning for Coos County and then the city of Coos Bay before coming to Seaside in August 1998.

Waterfront bridge replacement project recognized

Astoria’s waterfront bridge replacement was awarded first place in the Daily Journal of Commerce’s Top Projects.

The Portland newspaper covers building and construction in the Pacific Northwest and recognized projects completed in the region in 2020.

The \$10.4 million project won in the category of infrastructure.

— *The Astorian*

Pacific County limits fireworks use

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — After meetings and public hearings that spanned several months, the Pacific County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt new restrictions on the sale and use of consumer fireworks in the unincorporated areas of the county.

The new restrictions were voted on at the commissioners’ Dec. 14 meeting, and will limit the sale and use of fireworks over the Fourth of July holiday once the amended ordinance goes into effect in time for the summer of 2023.

Under the updated fireworks ordinance, the sale and purchase of fireworks will be permitted on July 1 to July 4, and the use and discharge of fireworks will be allowed from July 2 to July 4.

Under existing rules, both the sale and use of fireworks are allowed from June 28 through July 5.

The ordinance also allows for an emergency ban to be implemented on fireworks in any given year if certain conditions have been met, including if the fire danger is set to “high” by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources or if the state has issued a burn ban.

“There is only one year left of Wild West celebrations. In 2023, the reductions will be in place for the unincorporated as well as some municipalities,” Bonnie Lou Cozby, the president of the Ocean Park Area Chamber of Commerce, wrote in an email to the Chinook Observer. “It is not the same across-the-board requirement we were initially told was the only way in 2015. It is a good compromise.”

— *Chinook Observer*

DEATHS

Jan. 3, 2022

PULLEN, Robert, 63, of Knappa, died in Knappa. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

REHNERT, Eric, 66, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Jan. 1, 2022

BENSON, Viola, 93, of Nehalem, died in Nehalem. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

CONDRA, Kevin, 68, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Dec. 31, 2021

MORROW, Lavonne, 85, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Dec. 28, 2021

DREESZEN, Raymond, 92, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

CORRECTION

Incorrect quote — Clatsop County District Attorney Ron Brown has indicated he misspoke when he said “none of the tests that were done captured any kind of controlled substance” in an A2 story Tuesday about the decision not to charge a driver responsible for a fatal crash south of Warrenton in 2020.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY

Clatsop Care Health District Board, 5 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Lewis & Clark Fire Department Board, 6 p.m., main fire station, 34571 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

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

Clatsop Community College Board, 6:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

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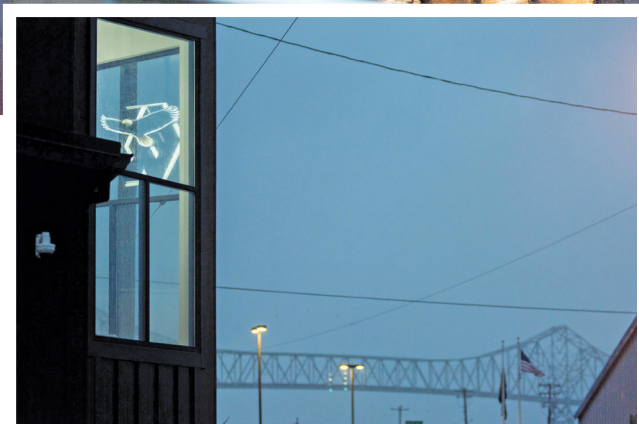
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A NEW WAUNA

Workers are putting the finishing touches on a new Wauna Credit Union off Marine Drive in Astoria.

Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Research examines carbon storage potential of grass seed crops

Prospect of healthier soils and more revenue

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

FOREST GROVE. — New U.S. Department of Agriculture research is digging into the carbon storage capacity of grass seed crops grown in the Willamette Valley that could benefit farms by providing healthier soils and potential revenue from emissions trading programs such as cap and trade.

Kristin Trippe, a microbiologist at the Agricultural Research Service in Corvallis, shared the results of a study examining carbon stocks in 24 fields growing tall fescue.

While carbon measurements between fields did vary, the average total was 76 tons per acre going down to a depth of 40 inches, Trippe told grass seed producers at Oregon State University’s winter seed and cereal crop production meeting Thursday in Forest Grove.

That was higher compared to soil samples collected from fields growing annually tilled crops.

Whether grass straw was baled or left in the field made little difference in the overall amount of soil carbon, Trippe said.

“Even though it’s thousands of pounds per acre, it’s not enough to compete with this incredible pool of deeper soil carbon,” she said.

Interest in gauging soil carbon has been on the rise in recent years as a means to combat climate change and trap harmful greenhouse gases.

Gov. Kate Brown signed an executive order in 2020 requiring state agencies to adopt policies that will cut greenhouse gas emissions at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

In response, the Oregon Global Warming Commission developed a statewide natural and working lands proposal last year that calls for increasing carbon sequestration by 5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2030, and 9 million metric tons per year by 2050, in order to meet those climate objectives.

Planting grass is one of



Capital Press

U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers are digging into the carbon budget of grass seed crops grown in the Willamette Valley, with farms standing to benefit from healthier soils and potential revenue from emissions trading.

INTEREST IN GAUGING SOIL CARBON HAS BEEN ON THE RISE IN RECENT YEARS AS A MEANS TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND TRAP HARMFUL GREENHOUSE GASES.

the fastest proven ways to increase soil carbon, Trippe said, since it provides continuous soil cover, allows farmers to till their fields less and returns carbon-rich residue to the ground.

“It makes sense that planting grasses increases carbon,” Trippe said.

Oregon ranks No. 1 in the country in production of several grass seed varieties, including orchardgrass, fescue, ryegrass, red and white clover.

For her project analyzing carbon stocks in grass seed systems, Trippe said she received funding from the Oregon Seed Council. Researchers collected 216 soil samples during the spring, ranging in depth from zero to 40 inches.

Trippe said they chose tall fescue because it represents a large percentage of production in the Willamette Valley — roughly 154,000 acres — with root systems reaching 16 inches deep

and stands typically kept for four to seven years.

Earlier studies had produced mixed results whether baling straw made an impact on the amount of soil organic matter in grass seed fields. Organic matter makes up about 3% of soil, and carbon makes up about 58%.

The project’s findings found that carbon stocks were marginally higher in fields where straw was left on the ground, versus baled.

In older, more established fescue fields, the total was 84.5 tons of carbon when straw was left on the

ground, and 72.6 tons per acre when baled. In younger fields, the totals were 70.5 tons of carbon per acre when straw was left on the ground, and 69.8 tons per acre when baled.

“I would caution the numbers are incredibly variable,” Trippe said. “It’s very difficult to aggregate the data, and it’s very difficult to know what’s happening.”

Trippe said their work is far from done. In the future, she hopes to receive funding for more long-term studies at several locations, and work with growers to better understand which management practices result in the most carbon stored.

Those numbers are necessary for grass seed growers to participate in carbon markets and inform regulatory policies, Trippe said.

“You’re working toward that (carbon) potential,” she said. “I think we can do a little better.”

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