

FOSSIL

Radar upgrade eases wind farm conflict

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Another software upgrade is coming to the Air Force radar station in Fossil to lessen interference from nearby wind farms.

The announcement Wednesday comes three weeks after U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, sent a letter to top officials at the Pentagon and Federal Aviation Administration, saying the outdated radar was holding back nearly 4,000 megawatts of new wind energy development in Eastern Oregon and Washington.

Located on a remote mountaintop, the Fossil radar is a long-range surveillance system jointly managed by the Department of Defense and Homeland Security, and

used by the FAA for air traffic control. However, the FAA has tagged numerous wind turbines as potential hazards for the way they generate false alarms, or “clutter,” on the radar screen.

That has posed a significant hurdle to growing Oregon’s clean energy portfolio — identified as a top priority of the Obama administration — and small, rural counties where wind energy has taken over as a leading industry.

The radar was last given a software upgrade in 2010 to allow for construction of the enormous Shepherds Flat Wind Farm in Gilliam and Morrow counties. Wyden had asked the government to replace the system entirely, but calls this most recent advancement a step in the

right direction.

“I fully intend to make sure the federal government stays on this course until it reaches a comprehensive solution that maintains defense capabilities and air safety while preserving every opportunity to develop wind energy to its complete potential,” Wyden said in a statement.

Developed by the FAA National Airspace Systems Defense Program over the course of three years, the upgrade should actually improve detection of aircraft while simultaneously reducing clutter from wind turbines, according to the agency.

Mark Carmouche, lead engineer for the FAA’s long-range radar team, said the technology is based on

a “novel computer software solution” and the results have been verified with multiple flight campaigns.

“The results have proven successful by any measure, and it is truly an exciting time to be part of the long-range radar team,” Carmouche said.

The FAA, Department of Defense and Homeland Security say they will continue to look at ways of mitigating radar impacts on wind turbines, and evaluate proposed wind farm projects on a case-by-case basis.

According to the Renewable Northwest Project based in Portland, there are 12 wind energy projects either proposed or in the permitting process in Oregon. All would be located in Eastern Oregon, except for a 30-watt offshore development in Coos County.

PENDLETON

Patterson to give presentation at sustainability fair

Public works director to discuss city projects

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Pendleton Public Works Director Bob Patterson will talk about the city’s strides in solar, hydro power and water storage, among other investments, at the annual SolWest Renewable Energy and Sustainability Fair in La Grande.

Patterson will speak during the event’s Sociability Supper at 6 p.m. Saturday, June 27 at the Union County Fairgrounds. His presentation will focus on a number of successful city-wide initiatives, including Solarize Pendleton, which offers zero-percent interest loans on solar installations up to \$9,000 at homes and businesses.

The program launched in 2010, with 56 homes participating in Phase I. Pendleton is now recognized as having the most solar installations per capita in the Pacific Northwest.

“As a community, it just takes a vision, and things start falling into place,” Patterson said.

Other projects include Weatherize Pendleton in coordination with the Energy Trust of Oregon, and a zero interest loan program for replacing



Patterson

wood burning stoves with a newer, more energy-efficient heating system.

Patterson will also give an update on plans to build a 10-megawatt solar farm at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport, which has already leased land to a Portland-based developer.

With Umatilla County in a state-declared drought emergency, Patterson will spend part of his presentation reviewing the city’s Aquifer Storage and Recovery plan that, since a feasibility study was done in 2002, has slowed native groundwater decline from an average of 3.4 feet per year to 1.2 feet per year over 10 years.

In 2013, the groundwater level actually increased by a half-foot, according to Patterson’s presentation.

Tickets for the dinner are \$25, and \$30 for the dinner and a weekend pass to the SolWest Fair. It is the fair’s second year in La Grande after 15 years in John Day, when Oregon Rural Action took over sponsorship from the Eastern Oregon Renewable Energies Nonprofit.

The SolWest Fair runs June 26-28 at the Union County Fairgrounds, with workshops and demonstrations focused on sustainability. For more information, a schedule of events or to purchase tickets, visit www.oregonrural.org/solwest.

HERMISTON

Three agencies bring free summer meals to children

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The number of hungry children in America increases during the summer months, but Hermiston youngsters have plenty of options for free meals while school is out.

Umatilla-Morrow Head Start is joining the ranks of participants in the federally funded Summer Food Service Program, adding a free meal site behind its WIC center at 110 N.E. Fourth St.

The site is serving free lunches for children, along with educational programs and games, between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday until Aug. 14.

Angie Treadwell, UMCHS’s registered dietitian, said the staff felt the community could use another meal site on the east side of town.

“We looked at other areas and thought this little pocket was under-served,” she said.

Treadwell said UMCHS is trying to incorporate as much fresh, locally-sourced produce as possible into its meals. Thursday’s lunch included fresh cherries from the area.

When children are done eating they can play games, blow bubbles, do puzzles or listen to Head Start staff read stories.

On Thursday Skylee Soper and her son Deegan, who turns three next week, were the first family to show up. Skylee said she is taking a parenting class called The Incredible Years and learned that if she brought Deegan early he would get a free meal.

“I think it’s neat,” she said. “I like that they have this for kids to come and eat.”

The WIC site isn’t the only place for children to get a free meal through the Summer Food Service Program. Hermiston School District is offering free lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and breakfast from 7:30-8:30 a.m. at West Park Elementary, Armand Larive Middle School and Hermiston High School.

The city of Hermiston is offering meals at city parks. Diana Picard, who runs the meal program, said the parks and recreation department originally started out feeding just the children from its summer programs but decided to expand to serving the whole community.

She said the free sack lunches are a hit. Last year her department served 10,000 meals.

“It starts off a little slow, but once they get the schedule down of when lunch is served they’re usually there waiting for us,” she said.

The program was started by the federal government to fill in the gap for low-income students who receive free meals during the school year. But now all of the meal sites serve any child under 18.

Picard said most of the students she sees are in the



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Katheryn Long feeds her son Aiden Long, 1, while Elizabeth Long, 3, looks on at Umatilla-Morrow Head Start’s free summer meal site.

Pendleton summer meal schedule

PENDLETON — Free summer meals are also being provided to all children and youths through the Pendleton School District.

The Summer Food Program runs from Monday, June 22 through Thursday, Aug. 20, although some sites end sooner. The days, times and places are:

- **June 22-Aug. 20, Monday through Fridays, breakfast from 8-9 a.m. and lunch from 11 a.m. to noon at Lincoln Elementary, 107 N.W. 10th St.**
- **June 22-Aug. 13, Monday and Wednesdays, lunch from 11:30-11:45 a.m. at Community Park, 1000 S.W. 37th St.**
- **June 22-Aug. 13 Monday and Wednesdays, lunch from 12:15-12:30 p.m. at Pioneer Park, 400 N.W. Despain Ave.**
- **June 22-Aug. 6, Monday through Fridays, lunch from noon to 12:30 p.m. at Nixyaawii, 73300 July Grounds Lane.**

The meals are open to everyone 18 and younger. There’s no charge or registration — those who would like to eat may just show up.

For more information, call 541-966-3266.

“We looked at other areas and thought this little pocket was under-served”

— **Angie Treadwell,**
Umatilla Morrow County Head Start dietician on meals served on Fourth Street

Elementary.

Contact Jade at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.

BRIEFLY

Stuffed animals turn into heroes

PENDLETON — Kids are encouraged to dress their stuffed animal as its own hero and participate in an event at the Pendleton Public Library.

Children can get help filling out the hero’s application. The should bring their stuffed animal to the library to be photographed in the children’s area Thursday, June 18 at 4 p.m. at 502 S.W. Dorion Ave.

The photos will be displayed on the library’s Facebook page. Library patrons will vote on the top three heroes via Facebook and an inner library display. The top three picks will receive a gift card to the Children’s Museum of Eastern Oregon.

For more information, call 541-966-0380.

Cheese Days adds BBQ pork

BOARDMAN — This month’s Tillamook Cheese Days features barbecued pork sandwiches.

The SAGE Center is showcasing Tillamook products made in Boardman during the event that features a grilled cheese and barbecued pork sandwich, a side, dessert and a drink for \$5. Also included is admission to the SAGE Center, which features an interactive visitor center showcasing the region’s industries and resources.

Tillamook Cheese Days are Friday, June 19 and Saturday, June 20 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 101 Olson Road, Boardman.

NATIONAL FLAG WEEK

Exchange your old flag for a new American Flag!

June 15th through June 19th

We celebrate Flag Week in honor of our American flag and our heritage

In honor of National Flag Week, we will be handing out free American Flags.

Flags may be exchanged Monday, June 15 thru Friday, June 19 between 9:00am and 5:00pm.

Limited supply, reserve yours today! There will be a ceremonial disposal of the retired flags that are collected.

You're a grand old flag, you're a high flying flag, and forever in peace may you wave.

~George M. Cohan

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middle range, between age nine and 15, because they’re old enough to go to the park themselves and young enough to not have a summer job yet.

This year the city is serving sack lunches on a first-come, first-served basis from June 15 to Aug. 14 from 11:30 a.m. to noon at Sunset Park, 12:45-1:15 p.m. at Victory Square Park and 12:15 to 12:45 at Butte Park, the Hermiston Aquatic Center and Rocky Heights

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