

# Water rights, environmental studies and survey work holding up depot transfer

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

The U.S. Army keeps moving the line on when it will be ready to transfer the former Umatilla Chemical Depot land back to local control, but the Columbia Development Authority is doing what it can to be ready.

The authority met Thursday and discussed the current timeline the Army has set, which would see final conveyance of the land to the authority on Nov. 1, 2016. The authority had originally planned to receive the land in early 2015.

Executive director Greg Smith told the board that there are three outstanding issues holding up the Economic Development Conveyance. The necessary water rights to develop the land must be transferred to the authority, survey work must be wrapped up and cultural and environmental studies must be completed.

He said he recently traveled to Washington, D.C., for an Association of Defense Communities conference and emphasized to Army officials that the delays were negatively impacting the Columbia Development Authority.

"I shared that we had several economic development oppor-



Smith

tunities out there and that those are being hamstrung," Smith said.

He said the people he spoke with were concerned about the potential loss of economic development opportunities and told him that they wanted to do what they could to help get things moving.

The most recent timeline Smith was given by the Army would have water rights negotiations finished by Oct. 1 and the cultural survey complete by Feb. 10, 2016. The Army would commence a 30-day public comment period on the required Finding of Suitability to Transfer on May 18, 2016, and final drafts of the land deed, memorandum of understanding and Economic Development Conveyance would be ready for a signature on Nov. 1, 2016.

Board member Gary Neal, who represents the Port of Morrow, said putting political pressure on the situation may help some, but what will be most helpful in trying to move the timeline up is to make sure nothing is standing in the way of completing

the cultural and environmental studies as quickly as possible.

"Those are going to be the key factors on this thing," he said. "We have to make sure they don't slide."

In the meantime, the local reuse authority is doing what it can to move things along, including hiring Smith to replace former director Don Chance, who retired this summer. Smith said Army officials couldn't say enough good things about Chance and told Smith that an application he submitted was so well written that it was going to be used as a template for other communities around the country.

Moving forward, Smith told the authority it was time to start revving up the marketing and outreach arm of the project in preparation for next year when the depot land will officially belong to the Columbia Development Authority. To start he suggested creating a more user-friendly website, joining area chambers of commerce and creating an email database to send updates and newsletters to.

The board supported his ideas, and also voted to approve the grant narrative and budget summary the CDA staff had put together. Smith said the good news is the authority can continue to receive grant money for completing the transition to

ownership of the depot land even though it was originally supposed to have the land by now.

On Thursday the Columbia Development Authority also listened to a presentation from J.R. Cook and Craig Reeder of the Northeast Oregon Water Association about an opportunity to boost the amount of water available for use in the area by placing an aquifer recharge basin on the depot land.

The project would take up about 10 acres of space somewhere on the depot land. Reeder said the basin would make it less cost-prohibitive to pump Columbia River water back into distressed basalt aquifers, making more groundwater available for use by Westland Irrigation's approximately 250 users.

"This is going to impact and extend the season for a majority of Westland Irrigation users," he said.

Cook said the project would also improve the water picture for the depot land.

The authority board voted unanimously (with an abstention by Gary Neal) to submit an application for a grant to cover the costs of a feasibility study for the recharge basin.

Contact Jade McDowell at [jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4536.

## HERMISTON Treasure Clue No. 3

With several clues at your disposal, you're getting close. Follow the words of the familiar Horace Greeley quote

Take a short drive and park your car. Then take a stroll, but not too far.

The rules and first clue were printed in Wednesday's *East Oregonian*. Clues are published each day until the treasure is found.

When you find the medalion, you must immediately turn it in to the Hermiston Police Department. If it's after 6 p.m., call 541-567-5519 and ask dispatch to notify Erica Sandoval.

### BRIEFLY

#### Name of crash victim released

PENDLETON — Oregon State Police identified the 79-year-old man who died in single vehicle crash Tuesday in Umatilla County as Roland Elmonte Thompson.

No place of residence was given, but police reported earlier that the victim was from out of state.

State police reported another driver saw the Chevrolet pickup Thompson was driving leave the southbound lane of Highway 395 near Ukiah and head down a draw. Thompson was the lone occupant and died in the crash.

#### Girl Scouts gauge interest in Morrow County

BOARDMAN — Girls and volunteers interested in getting involved in Girl Scouts in the Boardman area or Morrow County are encouraged to contact the organization's local membership and community engagement representative.

For more information, contact Addie L. Bower at 541-389-8146 or [abower@girlscoutsw.org](mailto:abower@girlscoutsw.org).

### PENDLETON

## New historical marker to be dedicated next week

East Oregonian

The public is invited to the dedication of a new historical marker on Pendleton's east end Thursday August 6 at 11 a.m.

The new Pendleton Historic Trail marker has already been installed in the place of its rundown predecessor, where Southeast Court Avenue becomes Highway 30.

Recreating the sign was a project of the 2015 Leadership Pendleton Class, according to a news release from Oregon Travel Experience. Over the course of an eight-month session, class participants look at the city's history, agriculture and business. They also complete a community service project as part of their course.

"We looked at a few entrances and signs coming into town," said

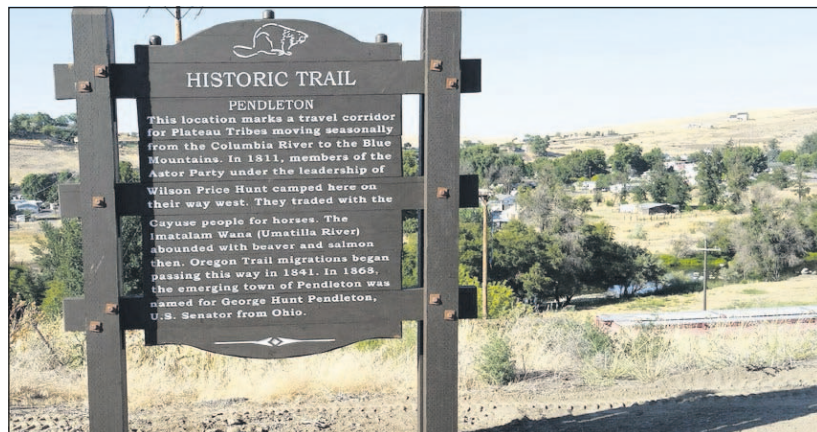


Photo contributed by Oregon Travel Experience

The newly installed historic trail marker on SE Court Ave. will be dedicated Thursday at 11 a.m.

Buffy Farber, the class member and spokesperson. "We chose the historic trail marker as our project after seeing the extremely poor condition it was in."

There are 111 historical markers throughout Oregon, which are overseen by Oregon Travel Experience, according to the news release. Annie von Domitz with OTE said the class

secured wood and donations, plus money for the routing and installation of the new cedar sign.

"The original historic trail marker was very old," said von Domitz. "Perhaps dating back to the 1950s or '60s — and the cedar was rotting away."

Farber said the Pendleton team worked with local businesses and organizations to gather financial and in-kind contributions for the project.

Bobbie Conner of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation will speak at the new marker dedication, as will Leadership Pendleton class members, local dignitaries and representatives from OTE.

Leadership Pendleton application information may be obtained by contacting the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce at 541-276-7411.

## Hermiston School District picks registration times, dates

East Oregonian

Hermiston School District student registration will take place Aug. 3-7.

Previously enrolled elementary and middle school students returning to the district are not required to register at the school unless the family has moved over the summer. Parents or guardians whose contact information has changed should contact the school's front office with updates.

Elementary students new to the district, or new to a building, should register at the individual buildings. Front office staff will be available from 8-11:30 a.m.

Registration for new middle school students will take place from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the respective middle school buildings.

Registration for Hermiston High School students takes place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or 4-7 p.m. each day of the week depending on grade level: freshmen, Aug. 3; seniors, Aug. 4; juniors,

Aug. 5; and sophomores, Aug. 6. High school students new to the district should register between 8 a.m. and noon Aug. 7.

Parents or guardians enrolling new students should provide a record of the student's birth (birth certificate, baptismal certificate or passport), proof of residence and physical address, health records and previous report cards or transcripts.

Fees for middle and high school students can be paid during registration by credit card, check or cash. The payments can also be made online.

For more information, contact the schools: Hermiston High School, 541-667-6100; Armand Larive Middle School, 541-667-6200; Sandstone Middle School, 541-667-6300; Desert View Elementary, 541-667-6900; Highland Hills Elementary, 541-667-6500; Rocky Heights Elementary, 541-667-6600; Sunset Elementary, 541-667-6700; West Park Elementary, 541-667-6800.

**Collectorswest.com**  
**GUN & KNIFE Shows**  
You Never Know What You'll Find At A Collectors West Gun & Knife Show!  
**PENDLETON - AUG. 1-2**  
**Pendleton Conv. Center**  
1601 Westgate • I-84 to exit #207  
\$6 • Sat: 9a-5p, Sun: 10a-3p • Info: [collectorswest.com](http://collectorswest.com)

**Shelby Journot**  
Auto Health Home Life  
**ISU One Responsible Source**  
Shelby Journot Family Insurance Agent  
541/276-2302 • 800/225-2521  
**The Stratton Agency**  
Pendleton / Hermiston • [stratton-insurance.com](http://stratton-insurance.com)  
Nationwide is on your side

**CHRISTMAS in July!**

**PENDLETON FARMERS MARKET**

**FRIDAY JULY 31**

WWW.PENDLETONFARMERSMARKET.NET

ONE-OF-A-KIND GIFTS FROM MARKET ARTISTS AND CRAFTS BOOTHS  
CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATION COMPETITION  
RAFFLES / MUSIC / CHRISTMAS SPECIALS  
KIDS CHRISTMAS CRAFT ACTIVITY