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OUR VIEW

Keep following the wolf plan

For years, everyone has played by the rules of the Oregon Wolf Plan — including ranchers and hunters, environmental groups and impartial observers. So it makes sense that the plan itself would decide when to play by a new set.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted 4-2 earlier this week to remove wolves from the state's endangered species list.

Animals west of highways 395, 20 and 97 remain under federal protection, but the vote opens the door to future controlled wolf hunts in Eastern Oregon. That's because of a 2011 federal delisting for our neck of the woods, as well as across state lines in Idaho.

Yet as fascinating as it is to focus on the future of wolves in Oregon and what delisting could mean moving forward, we should take this moment to look back. Plain and simple, the Oregon Wolf Plan has worked. There are now 81 animals in the state, and they are slowly expanding their territory and population to the south and west.

Although 81 is not a number that strongly suggests to biologists that wolves are completely safe from extirpation again, it crosses the threshold set by the plan: Multiple wolves having multiple offspring over multiple years. If the population

graph continues in that direction, wolf numbers will clearly grow exponentially.

It won't always, of course. Predator and prey numbers move up and down in relation to each other. Bad winters are a debilitating factor, as are wildfires. So too, are human-controlled effects: hunting, and the much more devastating loss of habitat.

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Oregon is a great place to live. Its population centers are expanding, and its climate means that humans and wolves are both thriving within its borders. Yet we know humans are ill-suited to sharing space with other species.

But it is

Oregonians who welcomed the wolf back, and ODFW biologists who protected it for years and then recommended delisting once the science — and the wolf plan — supported that conclusion. Each step denotes progress. It was admirable for us to try to allow a native species to regain a foothold in Oregon. And now that it's here in sustainable numbers, we have to let wildlife managers do their job.

Certainly environmental groups will sue, and the OFWC's decision will be argued in court. But decisions on wildlife should be made by research and compromise and results — not judges.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

OTHER VIEWS

How can we prevent school shootings?

By (Medford) Mail Tribune

As Oregon and the nation debate the best way to respond to mass shootings in schools and other places, most of the disagreement stems from disputes between those who focus on gun restrictions and those who see those restrictions as an infringement on their rights that wouldn't prevent future violence. But there is another approach that everyone ought to be able to agree on: early intervention with individuals who show warning signs associated with mass shootings.

Many people fit the profile, but will never commit an act of violence.

The FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit works aggressively to head off potential shootings, often by getting high-risk individuals into treatment. In 2013, a year after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Conn., the FBI's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center estimated it had prevented 148 potential mass shootings that year alone.

In Oregon, the Salem/Keizer School District has a nationally recognized, interagency program called the Mid Valley Threat Assessment System. The program combines a Student Threat Assessment System with a Threat Advisory Team focused on adults.

While there is no foolproof profile of mass shooters, there are recurring characteristics: most are male; most are white, between 20 and 40 years old. Many are loners from troubled families who may exhibit a fascination with guns, nurse grievances and have a mental illness.

The difficulty is that many people fit that profile who will never commit an act of violence. But in many cases when a mass shooting has occurred, those close to the shooter saw warning signs they either did not recognize or did not report. When reports are made, trained threat assessment specialists can respond and get the troubled individual they help

they need.

The Salem/Keizer team had one early success that ultimately ended in tragedy. A story in Mother Jones magazine described the team's efforts to provide support for Erik Ayala, a McNary High School student who threatened to shoot classmates in 2000 and then

was hospitalized after a suicide attempt. The newly formed threat assessment team gave Ayala counseling, tutoring and support from friends. That worked, until Ayala moved to Portland in 2009, where his support system lost track of him. He became increasingly depressed, bought a gun and opened fire outside The Zone, an underage nightclub, killing two and injuring seven.

In the successful part of that case, as in many others, the key was a classmate who reported Ayala's threat of violence, setting the intervention in motion.

Last month, two Josephine County high school students were arrested in separate cases after each issued threats of violence. In each case, someone reported the teenagers to authorities. One was released to his parents; the other, who had amassed an arsenal of firearms and stockpiled body armor and talked of shooting police, remained in custody at last report, charged with weapons-related crimes.

Even before a crime is committed, however, threats or other troubling behavior can surface, and friends, family members or others should not hesitate to notify authorities. At that point, a trained team can respond and prevent a tragedy.

Local school districts should explore creating a team like the one in Salem. State legislators could facilitate that by offering grants to offset the costs.

And all of us should be ready to speak up if a loved one or an acquaintance exhibits troubling behavior or makes statements about harming others. It may save more than one life.



OTHER VIEWS

Voters, you can have everything!

I confess, as much as I am troubled by Donald Trump's anti-immigrant, anti-free-trade tirades, I do find The Donald's campaign strategy truly interesting. He's not, as people say, an "anti-politician." He's actually caricaturing politicians. And like any great caricaturist, Trump identifies his subject's most salient features and then exaggerates them.

In Trump's case, the feature he's identifying is the ease with which career politicians look right into a camera and lie or embellish. Since so many politicians had come to Trump's office seeking his money or endorsement when he was just a businessman, and told him whatever they thought he wanted to hear, he's obviously an expert in their shtick. And so Trump has just taken the joke to the next level.

Indeed, if I were writing a book about this campaign, it would open with Trump's Sept. 27 CBS "60 Minutes" interview. Trump touts his plan for universal health care, telling Scott Pelley, "I am going to take care of everybody." And when Pelley asks how, Trump gives the greatest quote so far of the 2015 campaign: "The government's gonna pay for it. But we're going to save so much money on the other side. But for the most [part] it's going to be a private plan and people are going to be able to go out and negotiate great plans with lots of different competition with lots of competitors, with great companies — and they can have their doctors, they can have plans, they can have everything."

I just love that last line: "They can have their doctors, they can have plans, they can have everything!" And the best part is that it was not said on "Saturday Night Live." It was on "60 Minutes." Poor Jeb Bush, he just can't go that far. He's just a standard-issue political exaggerator. (See his economic plan.) Trump is the caricature, the industrial version. That's why you can't tell the difference when he's on "SNL" or on "60 Minutes."

Mario Cuomo famously said: "You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose." Trump says, in effect: That's for normal hack politicians. I will campaign in fantasy and govern in prose. Why not? Given how ludicrous some of the GOP presidential tax plans are, Trump seems to have started a you-can-have-everything arms race. Even Bernie Sanders is promising free tuition at public colleges, more Social Security benefits and free child care to be paid mostly by taxing the top 1 percent — no trade-offs necessary for the middle class.

And the new House speaker, Paul Ryan, who isn't even running, has joined in. Ryan described Obama's decision to kill the Keystone XL pipeline project as "sickening," adding: "If the president wants to spend the rest of his time in office catering to special



THOMAS FRIEDMAN
Comment

interests, that's his choice to make. But it's just wrong."

That is truly Orwellian: At a time when the GOP has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the oil and gas industry, Ryan accuses Obama of catering to special interests; he calls the president's decision to block a pipeline to transport tar sands oil, one of the dirtiest fuels in the world, "sickening" and labels combating climate change a "special interest." This guy belongs in the Republican debates.

Alas, though, the next president will not be governing in fantasy — but with some cruel math. So the gap between this campaign and the morning after is likely to make for one really cold shower.

Start with geopolitics. The size of the governance hole that would have to be filled to simultaneously destroy the Islamic State, or ISIS, defeat Syria's dictator, Bashar Assad, and rebuild Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya into self-sustaining governments is staggering. And yet the cost of doing too little — endlessly bleeding refugees into our allies Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and the European Union — is also astronomical. When the cost of action and the cost of inaction both feel

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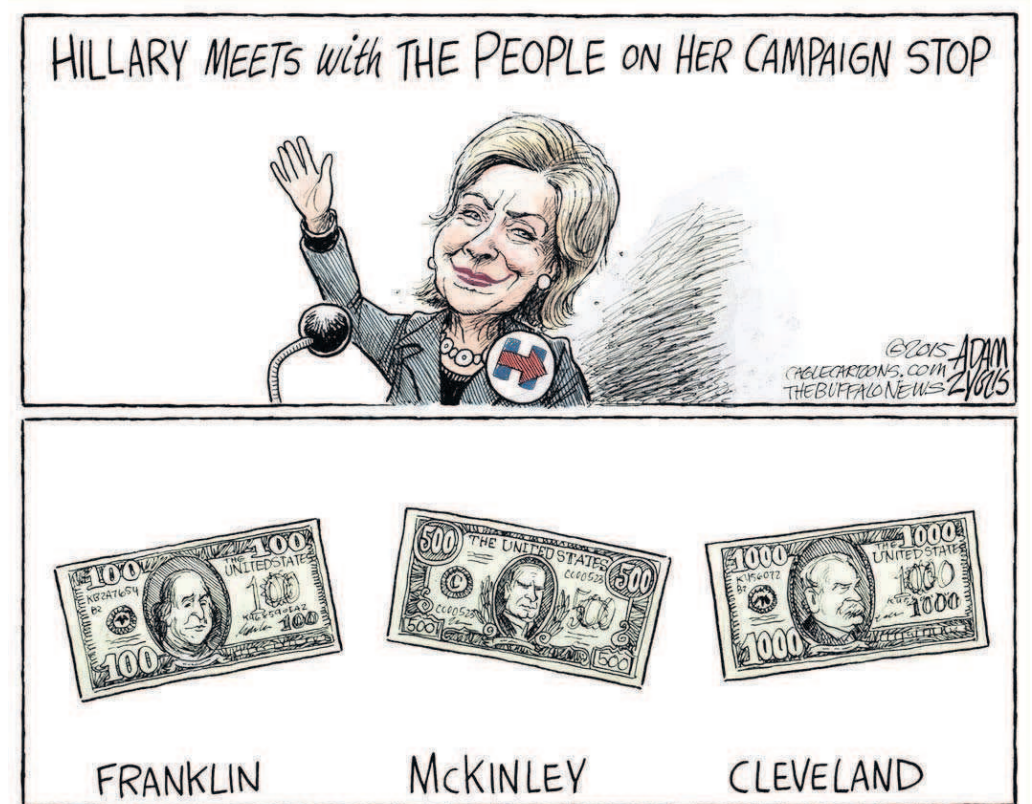
unaffordable, you have a wicked problem. Not only do the tax-cutting plans offered by the leading Republican candidates create eye-popping deficits, but some Democratic tax hike proposals don't quite add up, either. As the *Washington Post* economics columnist Robert Samuelson reported last week, a Brookings Institution study found that even if the top income tax rate were increased to 50 percent from 39.6 percent, it would cover less than a quarter of the deficit for the 2015 fiscal year, let alone generate funds for increased investment.

If we want to invest now in more infrastructure — as we should do — and make sure we don't overburden the next generation to pay for all the retiring baby boomers, something will have to give, or as Samuelson put it: "If middle-class Americans need or want bigger government, they will have to pay for it. Sooner or later, a tax increase is coming their way. There is no tooth fairy."

And finally, with carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere having just reached heights not seen in millennia, if we want to "manage the unavoidable" effects of climate change and "avoid the unmanageable" ones, it will surely require a price on carbon — soon.

So enjoy the fun of this campaign while it lasts, because the next president will not be governing in poetry or prose or fantasy — but with excruciating trade-offs. The joke is on us.

Thomas L. Friedman won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, his third Pulitzer for *The New York Times*. He became the paper's foreign-affairs Op-Ed columnist in 1995.



LETTERS POLICY

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