

Preliminary route for B2H line pushed farther south

BLM still analyzing agency preferred route

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

A final Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Boardman to Hemingway transmission line won't be released until later this summer, but at least one potential route shows the Bureau of Land Management is heeding local concerns in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

The BLM updated its preliminary preferred alternative for the 300-mile line, which reflects two major changes sought by the counties: first, the line in Morrow County was shifted onto the west side of Bombing Range Road south of Boardman, onto Navy land as opposed to high-value farms across the road. Second, the alignment was pushed farther south through Umatilla County in order to avoid impacting additional farmland where growers worried the line could take acres of crops out of production.

Tamara Gertsch, national project manager for the BLM, said they are continuing to work with all agencies, including the counties, and haven't made any final decisions yet. But the preliminary preferred alternative does provide a glimpse into the route analysis so far.

"There's no such thing as a route without impacts. That's just the way it is," Gertsch said. "It's a balancing act to do the best thing that we can to eliminate most impacts with our cooperating agencies."

Boardman to Hemingway, proposed by Idaho Power, is a 500-kilovolt line that would run from just outside Boardman to Melba, Idaho, near Boise. It would allow the two regions to share electricity during times of peak demand. Estimates for the project have ranged between \$890-\$940 million.

A draft EIS was released in 2014, and the BLM continues to analyze comments that were submitted from the

public. The final EIS will include analysis of the agency preferred route and alternatives. Once it is issued the public will have 30 days to review and provide additional comments.

"We're looking at technical considerations, environmental considerations and economic considerations," Gertsch said.

Idaho Power estimates the project won't come online until 2022 or later. In a recent editorial, Mitch Colburn, who's in charge of 500-kilovolt projects for the company, said the need for Boardman to Hemingway is still strong.

"When finished, the project will help provide low-cost energy to Idaho Power's customers in southern Idaho and Eastern Oregon," Colburn said.

Project maps and a time line are available to view at www.boardmantohemingway.com.

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UMATILLA

Social campaign shows women in tech fields

By **JENNIFER COLTON**
East Oregonian

Students from Umatilla are working to change the face of engineering.

This week, Umatilla students launched the website www.facesofengineering.com, a joint effort between Umatilla's FIRST Robotics Competition team 4125 "Confidential" and FRC team 4980 "Canine Crusaders" of Kettle Falls, Wash. The website is a spin-off of the #looklikeanengineer campaign to show girls and young women they can become engineers.

The Canine Crusaders has 27 members on the team, including six female students from Kettle Falls; Team Confidential has 25 female students, almost half its total enrollment.

"We have 46 percent female representation on our team. That's pretty rare," website designer and UHS junior Cameron Sipe said. "Most of the (FRC) teams you see are primarily boys."

That observation isn't only limited to robotics competitions. When Sipe tried to search Google Images for "engineer," only

"So much of the media tells our young girls that they should be seen and not heard ... Our goal is to compete with that."

— Naomi Edwards, a computer science engineer and head mentor for the Kettle Falls team

four of the first 28 images showed women.

"When you search engineers, you should have a variety of people, and that's what this campaign is trying to do," Sipe said.

The Kettle Falls team had already joined the hashtag campaign, had a photo shoot and made posters showing its team as #looklikeanengineer. Naomi Edwards, a computer science engineer and head mentor for the Kettle Falls team, said the initiative shows what women are capable of.

"So much of the media tells our young girls that they should be seen and not heard or over-sexualized," she said. "Our goal is to compete with that, to put some images in front of our young girls to promote the good things these girls are doing and are capable of. My dream is to see this culture change."

Umatilla students saw the posters at a recent robotics

competition and formed a partnership with the Washington school. The teams have set up photo booths at events to take photos to post on Twitter and other social media.

With Oregon spring break this week, Sipe took the time to draft the website using the Crusaders' photos. The website launched on Tuesday and has already brought in contacts from as far as Illinois and attention from Gov. Kate Brown's office. Umatilla plans to host their own photo shoot in between upcoming competitions.

"We're just going to let it grow and see where it goes," Sipe said. "We're hoping to bring this into the engineering community and not just the robotics community. For now we're going to see where it goes and do our best to represent all the people who are changing the world."

HERMISTON

City to consider senior center designs

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The Hermiston City Council will look at designs for the new senior center on Monday night.

The council will listen to a presentation of the design concept for the Harkenrider Center during a 6 p.m. workshop, then be asked to vote on approval of the design during its regular 7 p.m. meeting.

The city has been gathering input from a senior center advisory committee, but final control of the design rests with the city council because the \$2 million being used to build the center came from a Community Development Block Grant

awarded to the city.

The advisory committee's first choice of location for the center was on the undeveloped lots on Southeast Fourth Street behind Wal-Mart, but the property owners declined the city's offer on the land. The city council then approved the committee's second choice, which stretches across the parking lot behind the Hermiston Public Library, Ridgeway Avenue and an acre of Hermiston School District property.

On Monday the council will also consider an inter-governmental agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation, allowing the department to install solar-powered lighted stop

signs on Highland Avenue and Orchard Avenue.

The lighted signs are designed to catch drivers' attention and alert them to the presence of pedestrians. They would be installed at Orchard Avenue and South First Street, Orchard Avenue and Southwest Seventh Street, Highland Avenue and Southwest Seventh Street, and Highland Avenue and South First Street. Other stop signs along both avenues would be replaced with larger signs that are not solar-powered.

ODOT would pay for the entire project.

The city council work session and regular meeting will be held at city hall, 180 N.E. Second Street.

PENDLETON

Swearingen unofficially drops from council race

East Oregonian

Jim Swearingen's name will still appear on the ballot, but the man himself is no longer seeking election to the open Pendleton City Council at-large seat.

Swearingen said Friday that he will not campaign for the seat but declined to give the reason for his unofficial withdrawal.

Swearingen said he would have filed to withdraw, but he didn't return from vacation until after the withdrawal deadline March 11.

That means Swearingen could still garner votes and win the four-way at-large race despite his desire to drop from the election entirely.

Since Swearingen's situation isn't common, election officials weren't ready with immediate answers as to what would happen if Swearingen won.

Pendleton City Recorder Andrea Denton referred the question to the Oregon Secretary of State's Office.

Office spokeswoman Molly Woon said there's nothing in state law barring

a candidate from declining election, but said more specific rules would be handled by the county election office.

Kathy Allen, an officer with the Umatilla County Elections Division, said the issue would require research and did not call back with a definitive answer by press time.

Swearingen said he hopes either Rick Rohde or Paul Chalmers wins the at-large race. The other candidate is Paul Rabitaile.

The municipal election is May 17.



The Great EAST OREGONIAN Easter Egg Hunt

We have hidden 15 different Easter eggs in today's East Oregonian newspaper. Find each Easter egg and enter to win a \$25 gift certificate to The Saddle Restaurant or the Rainbow Cafe.

Each egg is carefully hidden throughout the pages of news articles today. Can you find them all?

 Page # _____	 Page # _____	 Page # _____
 Page # _____	 Page # _____	 Page # _____
 Page # _____	 Page # _____	 Page # _____
 Page # _____	 Page # _____	 Page # _____
 Page # _____	 Page # _____	 Page # _____

Once you have found all 15 eggs ... Fill out this entry form

- Write the page you found each Easter egg on.
- Fill in your contact information (name, address, phone, email)
- Mail your entry or hop on over to the East Oregonian, 211 SE Byers, Pendleton, Oregon 97801.
- All entries must be received by April 1st.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Little Darlings!

This special section will be full of adorable little darlings that have arrived over the last 3 years to bless many families and our communities. Families will want to keep this special keepsake for their child and family for years to come.

Submit a photo of your Little Darling (Age 0 - 3) & be entered into a drawing for prizes by local sponsors!





Send in, or drop by, a full color high resolution photo, your child's name and a message to your child today!

Little Darlings
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Deadline for photos: April 4th
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