

# FOREST: Access a common concern among crowd

Continued from 1A

John Day; Eric Quaempts, natural resources director for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; and James Nash, a fly fishing outfitter and fifth-generation rancher from Enterprise.

The Blue Mountains Forest Plan comprises 4.9 million acres of public lands on the Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur national forests in Eastern Oregon. Each forest gets its own individual plan, with the documents adding up to thousands of pages of desired conditions for the landscape.

Beverlin described the forests like a quilt, patched together in various shades of green, brown and black. It's up to the Forest Service to make sure tree stands are healthy, that access is maintained and habitat preserved. The challenge, Beverlin said, is striking an appropriate balance.

"I think some people believe that every acre can provide every use for everyone. It can't," Beverlin said. "It's going to take compromise from everyone."

Finding that compromise has been an ongoing effort. When the Forest Service released its draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Forest Plan in 2014, the reaction was "less than stellar," as Beverlin put it. That prompted another round of public meetings in 2015, which has led to two new alternatives that will be included in the final EIS later this fall.

Former Joseph mayor Peggy Kite-Martin spoke during the show, saying that the forests are part of Eastern Oregon's culture. She said the politics of the debate have left forest users in a difficult situation as the pendulum swings back and forth between industry and conservation.



Steve Beverlin, supervisor of the Malheur National Forest, gestures to the audience while answering a question and sitting on a panel of experts during a taping of OPB's 'Think Out Loud' on Wednesday at BMCC in Pendleton. The topic of the show was the controversial Blue Mountains Forest Plan.

**"Our culture is in danger of dying because people can't get out into the woods."**

— Peggy Kite-Martin, former Joseph mayor

"Our culture is in danger of dying because people can't get out into the woods," Kite-Martin said.

Public access was a common concern among members of the crowd, who vented their frustrations over road closures. However, environmental issues were also brought to the forefront by Brown, who directs the Hells Canyon Preservation Council. She said the forests already have too many roads, which has caused heavy erosion in wild habitat.

"I do believe there is a place for ATV riding on our public lands. I really do," Brown said. "They have to be at the right place, at the right time."

Williams, who owns his

own consulting company, said a lack of active management — such as tree thinning and cattle grazing — is causing a whole other set of concerns, leaving the forests to become overstocked and prone to disease or fire. Meanwhile, the region's timber industry has shriveled. Williams said the forests grow about 800 million board feet of wood every year, of which 500 million board feet is left to waste.

Beverlin said the two new forest plan alternatives take that feedback into account, and will focus on increasing both the pace and scale of restoration. That could help provide more logs to the mill, he said, while lowering the risk of destructive wildfires.

Quaempts said the tribes are working where they can with the Forest Service on restoration projects to protect traditional First Foods. The key, Quaempts said, is to be mindful of what the forests are capable of providing. He believes the forests are big enough to accommodate

everyone's interests.

Others, like Nash, were less optimistic. Nash said he is not happy with the current state of the forests, and worries that even after a plan is finalized, lawsuits will inevitably keep the whole thing tangled up in court.

"There will be groups that file lawsuits that stop any progress of using the forests," Nash said. "There are a lot of people out there who don't think people should use the woods."

A majority of the crowd raised their hands when asked if they felt the Forest Service just planned to do whatever it wanted, regardless of the outcome. Beverlin sharply disagreed.

"I don't believe that's true," he said. "Otherwise, why are we here listening again?"

Full audio from the show can be found at [www.opb.org/radio/programs/thinkoutloud/segment/blue-mountains-forest-plan](http://www.opb.org/radio/programs/thinkoutloud/segment/blue-mountains-forest-plan).

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# APARTMENTS: Only two objections to the project

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handle," he said.

Circosta said the apartments would rent at a lower rate than the townhouses. But the exact rental rates, configuration and unit sizes have yet to be determined. When the first phase of Pendleton Heights opened in December 2014, the townhouses' rental rates ranged from \$895-\$1,045 per month.

There were only two objections to the project, only one of whom lives near the property.

Permit technician Julie Chase said a neighbor to Pendleton Heights complained that the development was causing stormwater to drain onto his property, but Community Development Director Tim Simons said the drainage issue was the result of the man's driveway and not Pendleton Heights.

Rex Morehouse, a North Hill resident and a city council candidate, was concerned the streets weren't large enough to fit a fire engine during an emergency.

Interim city planner George Clough said the fire marshal would review the

site plan before the project moved forward.

Additionally, the planning commission is requiring the developers to install sight-obscuring foliage along some of the property's borders, a minimum of three play areas, a minimum of 150 off-street parking spaces and several other conditions.

Pendleton city intern Haley Meisenholder, a non-voting member of the commission, asked staff if a traffic study of the Southwest 18th Street-Tuilla Road intersection was necessary because it was the only outflow point for Pendleton Heights residents.

Simons said 18th Street drivers may have to wait a few minutes at the intersection while traffic clears, but otherwise, it shouldn't be an issue.

The commission voted 5-0 to approve the new plan, with commissioners Ryan DeGroff and Don Butcher absent. If the planning commission's ruling is appealed, the newly-proposed apartment complex would go before city council.

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# MARKET: May bring portable toilets during height of the season

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business owners and the needs of the market."

Farmers Market board member Amy Freeman said she went door-to-door on Main Street, talking to business owners of all stripes. She said a majority were supportive and wanted the market to stay and succeed. But she realized the market was "tough on some businesses," and that even those that were supportive had to deal with some annoyances — a lack of parking, market shoppers using their restrooms without buying anything, and dealing with garbage left behind from the festivities.

Freeman said the market will look at ways to lessen those disruptions

— including bringing in portable toilets during the height of the market season.

Corbett said market vendors will still park big trucks on Main Street, but not in front of businesses who do not want them there. This was not a perfect solution, Corbett said, but he appreciated the market board was willing to work to improve the situation.

Freeman said the possibility the market would move off Main Street, and the vocal response from the community who wanted it to remain, did some good.

"It was a good reminder that people really like (the market)," Freeman said. "The community supports this and wants to see it grow, like it has for the last 13 years."

# HEALTH: Number of smokers in county down to 17 percent

Continued from 1A

joined the health department on implementing a Plan4Health grant meant to bring agencies together to plan for a healthier community. The second was InterMountain Education Service District, which regularly works with the health department to spread messages, such as anti-tobacco information, while students are still forming the health habits that will affect them for a lifetime.

"Educators are such a strong partner," DeBolt said.

At the start of the evening, Umatilla County commissioner George Murdock said at a time when most counties are divesting themselves of their public health departments, "Umatilla County is clearly intent on going the other direction and becoming a lighthouse to Oregon."

The county took that a step further this week, he said, when they officially voted to combine the departments of public health and human services into one streamlined department under DeBolt's leadership.

Hitzman shared that in some areas Umatilla County is making strong strides. In the last three years the number of smokers in Umatilla County went from 22 percent to 17 percent, and the number of uninsured people in the county has gone down from 23 percent to 20 percent.

In other areas, however, the county still has work to do. Thirty two percent of Umatilla County adults are obese, compared to 26 percent statewide. The county also has one primary care provider per 1,970 people compared to one per 1,070 statewide.

"It's a long, hard road to get there," he said of attracting more physicians, dentists and mental health providers to the region.

The specific health focus of the night was on creating better access to nutritional food. The money raised through ticket sales, raffles and a silent auction will all go toward grants for starting community gardens.



Umatilla County Public Health director Meghan DeBolt speaks at Wednesday's Public Health Fundraiser and Awareness Dinner in Hermiston.

Attendees also listened to presentations about community programs that are already helping people eat healthier.

Diana Quezada of CAPECO shared information

about the nonprofit's food pantry services, which provide a 3-5 day emergency supply of food to help food-insecure families get through the end of the month.

Angie Treadwell shared information about the SNAP Ed program through Oregon State University's extension office. The federally funded program strives to help low-income families leverage their food stamps into healthy meals. Treadwell said in addition to hosting activities like the Family Fitness Night she also spends a lot of time in the schools, distributing recipes and introducing children to fun but highly nutritious foods like the Popeye smoothie with fresh spinach.

Tamra Mabbott, Umatilla County planning director, shared more information about the Plan4Health grant. She said she had never realized before how much land use planning was connected to public health. Departments can contribute to a healthy community by planning communities in a way that encourages exercise and discouraging "food deserts" where nutritious foods are hard to come by.

"It didn't ring a bell immediately but the more I dig into it the more it makes sense," she said.

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# Man accused of torture killing escapes Washington psychiatric hospital

SEATTLE (AP) — A man accused of torturing a woman to death but found too mentally ill for trial was on the loose Thursday after crawling out a window in a locked, lower-security unit of a Washington state psychiatric hospital already facing federal scrutiny over safety problems.

Anthony Garver, 28, escaped Wednesday night with Mark Alexander Adams, 58, a patient who had been accused of domestic assault in 2014 and was captured Thursday

morning, officials said. Authorities believe Garver bought a bus ticket from Seattle across the state to Spokane.

Spokane Sheriff's Capt. Dave Ellis told the *Spokesman-Review* that Garver was spotted in an area in the city's East Valley and authorities were searching Thursday evening with police dogs, a SWAT team and helicopters.

Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich described the search as "a pretty intense situation."

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice of Availability of the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility (NWSTF) Boardman Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Record of Decision

The U.S. Navy, in cooperation with the National Guard Bureau and Oregon National Guard, has announced its decision to implement its Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2) to increase the types and number of certain training activities at NWSTF Boardman; develop and enhance training facilities at NWSTF Boardman; and create additional special use airspace to support existing aircraft training. The Navy made its decision after carefully considering the potential impacts training and testing activities may have on the human, natural and cultural environment and comments from the public on the proposal and environmental analysis. The Proposed Action is needed to provide a training environment at NWSTF Boardman — including ranges, training areas and instrumentation — to better support current and future unit and personnel training requirements.

The Navy's Record of Decision and Final EIS are available online at [www.NWSTFBoardmanEIS.com](http://www.NWSTFBoardmanEIS.com), and at the following public libraries: Multnomah County Central, Salem Central, West Salem, Oregon Trail Heppner, Oregon Trail Boardman and the Stafford Hansell Government Center.

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