

# EAST OREGONIAN

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### OUR VIEW

# Research helps better understand grazing near streams

Environmental groups say cattle grazing on public rangeland trample and erode streambanks and pollute water.

But a five-year study of cattle grazing conducted by Oregon State University shows cattle spend only 1 to 2.5 percent of their time in streams or buffer areas. And rather than ranging up and down the length of streams in allotments, cattle used only 10 to 25 percent of the available stream area.

The cows typically did not rest or graze near streams. Instead, they spent most of their time grazing on higher ground or resting in dry areas away from streams.

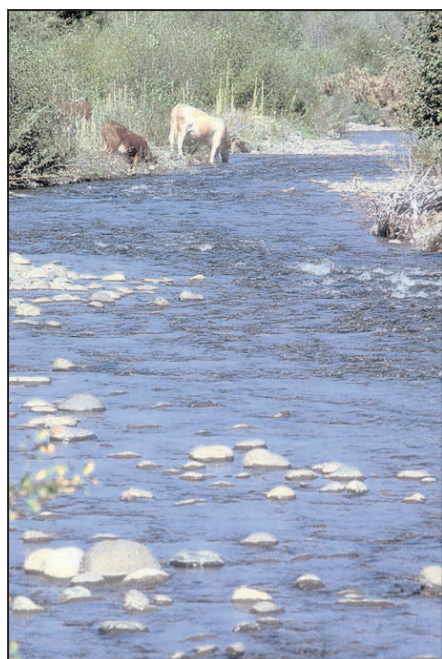
John Williams, an OSU Extension rangeland expert in Wallowa County, said cows enter riparian areas for two reasons: "One is to drink, the other is to cross."

The study was done on a tight budget. Researchers built their own GPS collars, which generated location data every five minutes. They attached the collars to 10 cows in three different herds.

Over the course of five years they collected 3.75 million data points. That data show that animals behave differently at different points in the grazing season. And that, Williams says, suggests that producers could use such data to increase the efficiency of their operations.

The findings are potentially significant.

Now we know that cattle



Courtesy of Oregon State University  
**A cow and calf drink from Catherine Creek in Northeast Oregon. Using GPS tracking collars over five grazing seasons on federal land, researchers determined cows spend 1 percent to 2.5 percent of their time in streams.**

probably don't cause as much damage to streams and riparian areas as popularly thought, and it's possible to use real data to reduce damage further by better management.

The study shows the value of testing assumptions, and using what's learned to make things better. We encourage OSU to continue this line of inquiry, and for all parties to take note.

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.

### YOUR VIEWS

#### Pendleton needs a plow to clear snowy streets

I just got back from a walk to the bread store and was not impressed with what I saw on the streets. I understand that it costs money to have things like snow plows sit unused, but when it comes to keeping the streets clear, having a snow plow and using it is the only way I know to make them passable — which they aren't right now.

When I walked across Southeast Byers I didn't see a speck of sand on it and when I got to the intersection of Southeast Court and the viaduct there wasn't anything there either. Why is it that we can't get a grant and get a snow plow that we can put on the front of a sand truck to at least plow the streets around the schools, to and from the schools and on the priority streets in Pendleton?

**Barbara A. Wright**  
Pendleton

#### Republicans plan to ax Medicare, Medicaid

I'd best warn Eastern Oregonians that many Willamette Valley liberals are migrating to Representative Greg Walden's district. You see, now that the GOP has complete control of government they have declared their intent to scuttle most of those programs that provide a "safety net" for seniors, workers, handicapped persons and almost all other classes of Americans. Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, aid to pregnant women and children, etc., are on the block.

But it appears that folks in Walden's district have nothing to fear. They apparently have secret programs to alleviate the impact of these gross cutbacks. Hence, no worries about

Social Security, which will become a program only available to the abjectly poor. Don't worry folks. All you others will still be allowed to pay into the program. You just won't get anything out. The excess funds will pay for more tax cuts for the super-wealthy. Hence, the secret Social Security program will allow elderly citizens of District 1 to continue to live out their lives in a modicum of comfort.

The same with Medicare and Medicaid. These will become underfunded voucher programs. So you will have to try to purchase health care with vouchers that will quickly become not enough to cover your needs. Hence, more of your income will be required to buy health care or you will simply go without. Again, District 1 citizens will have that secret program to help them, unlike all other Americans.

Job safety? When federal safety standards are abolished I'm sure the local governments of District 1 will step in and insure workers do not needlessly die on the job. You can use money out of the secret fund to cover costs.

The reason I believe you folks have secret programs and funds is that your often re-elected representative, Greg Walden, will vote to scuttle all these helpful to the average American programs.

He has done so many times before so I suspect you are protected somehow. There must be some backup. If you don't have back-ups then I guess your elderly will have to live out their retirement years in poverty and ill health. I suppose without health care many of them will die earlier, thereby saving the government and charitable organization even more money. That's more money for the super-wealthy.

**Fred Brown**  
Dallas, Ore.

### LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to managing editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

### OTHER VIEWS



## Six questions about the Russia hacking report

Julia Ioffe, a writer for The Atlantic who watches Russia carefully, tweeted this about the intelligence community's unclassified report on Russian hacking released Friday: "It's hard to tell if the thinness of the #hacking report is because the proof is classified, or because the proof doesn't exist."

"Thin" is right. The report is brief — the heart of it is just five broadly spaced pages. It is all conclusions and no evidence. In the introduction, the IC — the collective voice of the CIA, the FBI, and the NSA — explains that it cannot supply evidence to the public, because doing so "would reveal sensitive sources or methods and imperil the ability to collect critical foreign intelligence in the future."

The problem is, without evidence, it's hard for the public to determine just what happened in the hacking affair. So here are six questions the IC might consider answering in the days ahead:

1) When did the Russian hacking campaign begin? The report says Vladimir Putin "ordered an influence campaign in 2016." It also says Russia's intelligence services gained access to the Democratic National Committee's computer system in July 2015 as part of an effort targeting both Democrats and Republicans, as well as individual campaigns, think tanks, and lobbyists. The IC also notes that some of Russia's "professional trolls ... started to advocate for President-elect Trump as early as December 2015." This could be a simple writing problem, or it could be something more significant. Is the report saying Putin ordered the 2016 campaign in 2015? Is it saying Russian activities in 2015 were routine operations to mess with U.S. institutions and then became part of the Putin-ordered campaign in 2016? Is it saying something else?

2) Was the Russian campaign intended more to help candidate Donald Trump or to undermine President Hillary Clinton? The report says Putin ordered the 2016 campaign "to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency." The report goes on to say that at some point Putin "developed a clear preference" for Trump. But it also says that "Moscow's approach evolved over the course of the campaign based on Russia's understanding of the electoral prospects of the two main candidates. When it appeared to Moscow that Secretary Clinton was likely to win the election, the Russian influence campaign then focused on undermining her expected presidency." That suggests some sort of shift in the Russian campaign. But when?

3) How much of the Russian campaign was garden-variety propaganda? The IC report says, "Russia's state-run propaganda machine — comprised of its domestic media apparatus, outlets targeting global audiences such as RT and Sputnik, and a network of quasi-government trolls — contributed to the



**BYRON YORK**  
Comment

influence campaign by serving as a platform for Kremlin messaging to Russian and international audiences." Indeed, the report devotes more space to analyzing RT, the Russian TV network, than it does to hacking. It's hard to know how much of the alleged Russian influence the IC attributes to hacking and how much to propaganda.

4) How and when did Russia transmit the hacked information to WikiLeaks? "We assess with high confidence that the GRU used the Guccifer 2.0 persona, DCLeaks.com, and WikiLeaks to release US victim data obtained in cyber operations publicly and in exclusives to media outlets," the IC report says. "We assess with high confidence that the GRU relayed material it acquired from the DNC and senior Democratic officials to WikiLeaks." But

**Without evidence, it's hard for the public to determine just what happened in the hacking affair.**

when did that happen? Was it during the period when Putin supposedly thought the U.S. presidential race was anyone's game? Or during the time he thought Clinton was likely to win? And if it was the latter, did Russia transmit the information to WikiLeaks as part of an effort to undermine Clinton's "expected presidency"?

5) Just what did the Russians do to target Republicans? The IC report has one sentence devoted to Russian cyber efforts against the GOP: "Russia collected on some Republican-affiliated targets but did not conduct a comparable disclosure campaign." There have been reports that the Russians attempted to hack the Republican National Committee, but that those efforts were unsuccessful. The word "collected" in the IC report suggests some effort against GOP-related targets might have been successful, but what happened is not clear. And the report does not elaborate on the IC assessment that there was a big disparity between efforts targeting Democrats and Republicans.

6) Why can't the IC release more? Intelligence officials have already leaked classified parts of the report. For example, *The Washington Post* recently reported that U.S. intelligence agencies "intercepted communications in the aftermath of the election in which Russian officials congratulated themselves on the outcome." *The Post* also reported the intercepted messages "revealed that top officials in Russia anticipated that Clinton would win." There will likely be many more leaks to come. Why not at least release the information that has already been leaked?

To the degree that there are partisan differences in assessing the Russia hacking affair, it's important that Republicans with access to the classified IC report leak as much as Democrats. A confused public will be trying to get a picture of what the full report says. Better to get both views of what's in there.

*Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.*

### OTHER VIEWS

#### Concerns about tightened antibiotic restrictions

*The Bend Bulletin, Jan. 7*

Starting Jan. 1, the federal Food and Drug Administration tightened the rules about using antibiotics on feed animals. When the Oregon Legislature convenes Feb. 1, it will consider a state measure that would further tighten rules governing antibiotic use.

The changes could help combat the growing problem of antibiotic-resistant bugs, but there are legitimate concerns from ranchers.

The FDA rules prohibit the use of "medically important antibiotics" except under limited conditions. They do so in part by eliminating the right of retailers to sell over the counter to ranchers some antibiotics that would require prescriptions for human use. Now, ranchers, feed-lot operators and others may use those drugs only under the supervision of a veterinarian. That may be an expensive proposition for backyard farmers with only a handful of cattle or for an operator whose ranch is far from the nearest veterinarian.

The state law would not change that requirement. It would specifically limit nontherapeutic use (an animal is not yet sick)

to times when the risk of disease is present — during times of high stress, for example. In addition, the proposal says such drugs must be given to the fewest animals possible and for the shortest period of time necessary to prevent the spread of disease.

The House Committee on Health Care's Legislative Concept 2410 — the precursor of a bill — also includes a state reporting requirement that would apply only to ranchers and others who operate confined animal feeding operations, generally those with larger numbers of animals. Those reports would become a matter of public record under the proposal. Lawmakers should think long and hard about asking for the specific number of animals thus treated, which could give unnecessary insight into a producer's finances.

The regulatory changes will require some producers to alter their ways, clearly, though with major fast-food companies' newfound love of antibiotic-free meat, they may have done so anyway. Even without a push from retailers, however, both the FDA rules and the Oregon law make sense. Antibiotic-resistant bugs are an increasingly dangerous health problem.