

Fireworks and fury in the Columbia River Gorge

The fire in early fall that barreled down the Columbia River Gorge along Oregon's border with Washington — reportedly sparked by a 15-year-old's irresponsible use of fireworks — was notable for its heart-wrenching pointlessness as well as the resulting scenes of apocalyptic terror in one of the Northwest's most beloved natural settings. Flames nearly engulfed Multnomah Falls, the tallest waterfall in Oregon, and forced hundreds of people from their homes as Portland, 30 miles downwind, woke to a rain of ash from parched skies.

From afar, I joined astonished friends and family in mourning this cherished stretch of my native home. "Next time you're thinking about shooting off some fireworks — don't," is how my Portland-based friend Ryan Oliver captioned a shared photo of flames racing up a timbered ridge.

The *Oregonian* sampled the wider outpouring of grief on social media. "This is so incredibly unreal. My heart is on the ground," wrote BJ Thomas of Bend, Oregon. "I am sickened by what is happening in what I believe is the most beautiful 20 miles of landscape in the Pacific Northwest," wrote Rich Cower.

There have been — and currently are — bigger fires across the West, but the damage sustained along the nation's fourth-largest



GRIFFIN HAGLE
Comment

watercourse will haunt memories for a long time to come. No, global warming didn't commit the arson in Oregon, just as it didn't single-handedly swamp Houston, push San Francisco into a record 106-degree high, or blanket much of the West Coast under smoky haze. But it did — and continues to — feed the conditions in which such events are likely to occur.

The writer David Roberts offers a useful thought experiment. Suppose the planet's gravity was slightly increased. People would trip and fall more. Could any particular accident be attributed to gravity? Of course not. But it would be, in words the Pentagon has used to describe the imprecise risks of climate change, a "threat multiplier."

For three years in a row, millennials surveyed by the World Economic Forum have called climate change the most serious issue affecting today's world. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis considers it a "driver of instability." On the growing "eco-right," groups like RepublicEn urge conservatives to tackle climate change; some even see President Donald Trump as a potential dark-horse climate champion, à la Nixon going to China. Earlier this year, a group of respected Republican statesmen laid out an earnest proposal for a carbon tax.

In fact, despite a loud chorus of know-nothings, a cross-section of concerned,

reasonable citizens has clearly concluded that America's disengagement from crafting solutions is like fooling around with fireworks in a tinderbox of global dimensions.

This is where Oregon's sorrow and wrath are both prophetic and instructive. They hint at the losses our children will bear if we fail to arrest an administration now careening toward ecological disaster. It's the exact response each of us, no matter our politics, ought to muster every time our leaders shirk their duty to confront this existential threat with the utmost resolve.

To be sure, the divisions between ordinary people can make self-destruction seem more probable in the short term than meaningful action. But as legions of rescuers have shown us again and again, there's no time for dogma when staring down certain death.

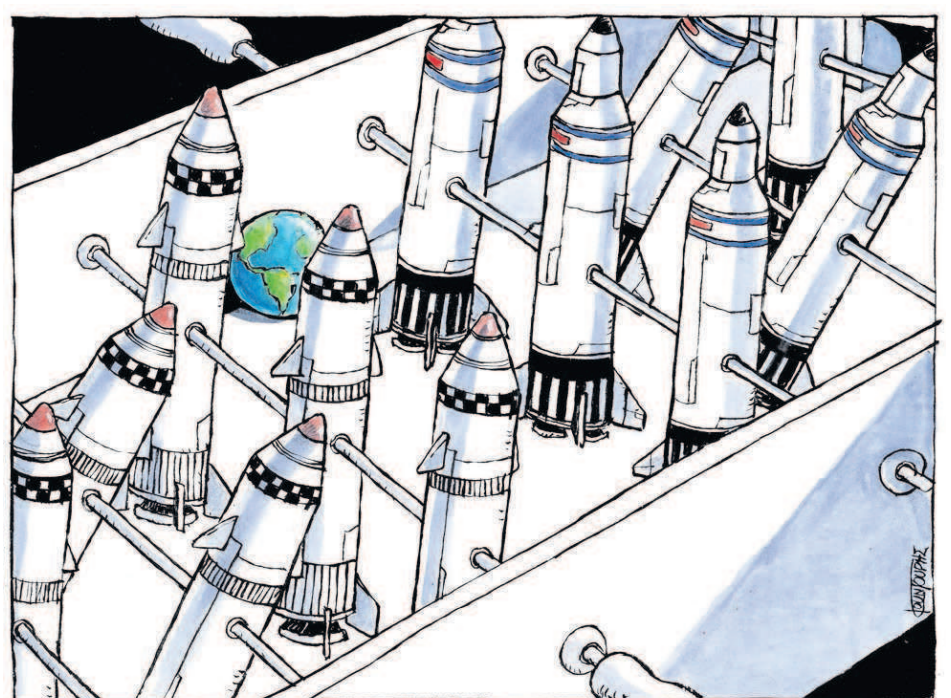
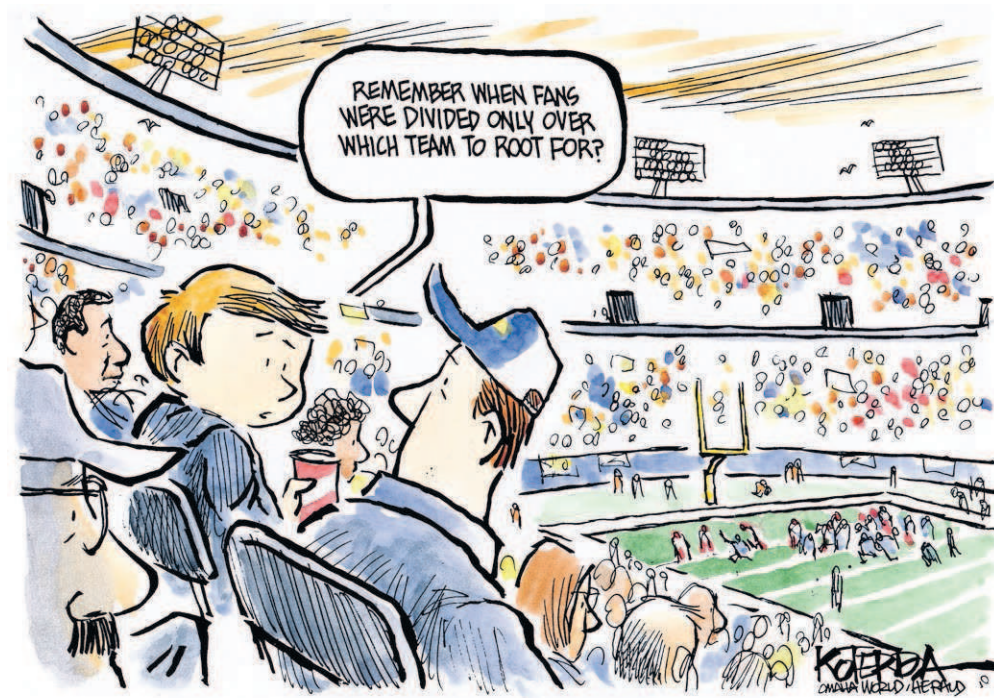
The response to climate change is a similar all-hands effort. It demands grit and imagination beyond what any singular individual, method, scheme or ideology can contain. There's room for citizens and scientists, industrialists and activists, globalists and nationalists — and yes, even a certain bombastic head of state. Imagine,

for a moment, that the energy we saw in the president's response to North Korea was used to rally a worldwide partnership to tackle the climate crisis — that would be, truly, a deal for the ages. (I'm afraid we already have enough "fire and fury" raining down on the West right now.) As this response would amount to the largest army ever marshaled, it would also be the closest thing to a just war ever fought: a chance to manage a transition from the fuels that launched modern civilization to those that will sustain it as equitably and peaceably as possible.

Oregon's sorrow and wrath are both prophetic and instructive.

Forfeiting this chance to act, on the other hand, is unforgivable. It would strip the world of untold beauty and value. The best way to memorialize the losses in Oregon and beyond, and the still greater losses to come, is to channel our outrage until the call for climate action is heard and acted upon at the highest levels of power.

Griffin Hagle is a contributor to *Writers on the Range*, the opinion service of *High Country News*. A writer and energy professional, he grew up in southwestern Oregon and now writes from Utqiagvik, Alaska.



Collaboration is still the best approach for helping wolves

A gray wolf looking for a home can't do better than the state of Washington. That statement might surprise people, as Washington has made headlines for killing wolves, most recently on Sept. 1 as well as earlier in the summer, when two wolves from the Smackout pack were killed following livestock attacks.

To some, the names of the Wedge, Huckleberry, Profanity and now Smackout and Sherman wolf packs are a requiem, symbols of pain and a controversial policy. But when you dig deeper, wolf recovery in Washington is a success story worth repeating.

Our state's first pack was documented in 2008, and 20 packs have since been officially confirmed — and that's a lowball number. Given at least 120 wolves and a growth rate greater than 25 percent annually, the range of wolves in the state is spreading west and south from its original concentration in the northeast counties. Because wolves are prolific breeders and able to adapt to a range of habitats, they do fine, so long as they're not poisoned, trapped or profusely shot. The key to a future for wolves is retaining public support by minimizing conflict. That means finding ways for wolves and ranchers to coexist.

Washington has forged a model for building coexistence based on bringing stakeholders together through respect, dialogue and a search for common ground. This year, nearly 100 Washington ranchers and farmers signed agreements to employ deterrence measures, from range riding to guard dogs, to prevent or reduce conflicts with wolves. While some conservation groups cling to the idea that firing off press releases and lawsuits will win the day for wolves, the progress in Washington demonstrates that cooperation and compromise offer a better path to the long-term future of wolves.

This transformation through collaboration does more than protect wolves; it shows respect for rural communities. It demonstrates that cooperation rather than culture war can lead to practical solutions in some of the reddest counties in the West.

Not that collaboration and deterrence methods always succeed. Since 2012, Washington has had five conflicts bad enough that wolves have had to be killed. Yes, I, a wolf-loving lifelong conservationist, think that wolves sometimes have to be killed.

Thanks to a well-facilitated Wolf Advisory Group composed of a wide range of stakeholding interests, we have a clear policy on that in our state. Importantly, the certainty this agreement provides gives those living and working in wolf country incentive to participate without fear of the goalposts being



MITCH FRIEDMAN
Comment

constantly moved. Accepting lethal removal of wolves as a last resort is a sad but integral part of coexistence. Government action is essential in the infrequent instances where livestock depredations have become chronic.

The alternative approach is seen in Montana, Idaho and especially Wyoming, where more than 20 percent of the population — literally hundreds of wolves — is killed annually. You don't hear about these deaths because they're so common.

In Washington, wolf kills are rare enough that some activists name each dead animal.

Yet Washington's success story seldom makes the headlines. Some have piggy-backed on the whole wolf controversy to raise other issues, such as whether livestock even belongs on public land. But if good wolf policy had to wait until Congress resolved the debate over public-lands grazing, few packs would be safe. And while publicizing the deaths of wolves is good for headlines and fundraising, the resulting polarization leaves wolves even more vulnerable to rural anger, poaching and legislative repercussions.

Here in Washington, key conservation groups, ranchers, hunters and other interests have enough integrity to stand together and oversee the implementation of policies they helped craft. That's something special in today's divided West.

The return of the wolf is just one of many budding wildlife success stories in the American West today. But without buy-in from the people who live with and around wolves, that success remains tenuous. Reasonable compromise on all sides will always be necessary. Around the world, working together and building understanding across stakeholder groups, indeed across cultures, has been shown to create more enduring conservation solutions than when people go off to their corners to fight through words, lawsuits and personal threats.

It takes respect, listening and a willingness to collaborate and compromise, but many folks in our state are working with their neighbors to create a future of healthy wolf packs that can coexist with vibrant rural communities. For all the sound and fury everywhere else, Washington is where wolf recovery is being done right. It's a wildlife conservation model that others ought to follow.

Mitch Friedman is a contributor to *Writers on the Range*, the opinion service of *High Country News*. He is the founder and executive director of *Conservation Northwest*, a Washington-based wildlife and wildlands conservation organization.

Washington has forged a model for building coexistence based on respect, dialogue and a search for common ground.

Trump blocks sale of Oregon semiconductor firm

President Trump recently decided to block the sale of Lattice, a Portland-semiconductor manufacturer, to an American investment firm backed by Chinese government funds. Lattice produces Field Programmable Gate Arrays or semiconductors that can be programmed after they have left the plant.

President Trump saw U.S. national security interests at stake. Earlier President Obama had blocked Ralls, a Chinese company, from buying a wind farm near the U.S. Naval Weapons Training Facility in Boardman, which was conducting experiments with drones and electronic warfare planes.

Both decisions reflect the growing concern about Chinese investment and, in the Lattice case, a focus on semiconductors that are critical for economic as well as national security. One question for Eastern Oregonians is whether or not the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States will also focus on agriculture and food security.

The recent decisions are based on recommendations of the committee that scrutinizes foreign acquisitions of American companies. President Ford created CFIUS in the 1970s in response to a flood of oil money (then referred to as petrodollars) entering the United States. In part, President Ford and others feared that the inflow of foreign investment would raise the price of land beyond what the next generation of farmers could afford.

Reforms made in the post-9/11 era broadened the committee's focus on national security to include elements of economic security including critical infrastructure, key technologies, and other aspects of economic security. In addition, it now has statutory basis — meaning it will take an act of Congress to limit or eliminate the committee.

The CFIUS process has evolved to include some informal consultations after it is notified of a potential acquisition. A formal preliminary review may be followed by somewhat lengthier national security reviews and can lead to a recommendation to the President to ban the purchase by a foreign firm.

The concern about the state of the U.S. semiconductor industry has been growing for several years as more of the industry has moved to Asia. In early 2017, a presidential advisory committee released a report raising a warning flag about



KENT HUGHES
Comment

the industry. In July, President Trump took an even broader approach in issuing an Executive Order mandating the study of manufacturing and the defense industrial base, including the supporting supply chains.

Press interpretations suggest that the President's decision on Lattice was focused on the importance of semiconductors to national security and as a response to China, which has already announced a budget of \$150 billion to accelerate the growth of their semiconductor industry.

Leading members of Congress have suggested strengthening CFIUS. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) has proposed expanding the powers of CFIUS to review joint ventures, specific countries of concern, and acquisitions that, while short of full control, still bring access to critical technology.

Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-New York) has proposed barring all acquisitions by Chinese companies as leverage in dealing with North Korea.

Recent Chinese purchases include the agricultural sector. In 2013 a Chinese firm bought Smithfield Foods for \$7.1 billion. More recently, a Chinese company purchased Swiss-based Syngenta, a major producer of seeds and fertilizer, for \$43 billion. Syngenta has extensive operations in the United States.

The purchase was cleared by CFIUS and by the Federal Trade Commission on anti-trust grounds. Both the sale of Smithfield Foods and Syngenta raised some congressional eyebrows.

In response to recent Chinese purchases, Senators Grassley (R-Iowa) and Stabenow (D-Michigan) have introduced legislation that would add the Secretary of Agriculture to the membership of CFIUS. The senators argue that food security is also part of national security.

The action of presidents Trump and Obama in blocking foreign acquisitions is a reminder that Oregon is not immune to policies focused on key industries and an expanding view of what constitutes national security. The more recent focus on the field of agriculture suggests that Pendleton and Umatilla County, major forces in wheat and other crops, need to pay attention as well.

Kent Hughes is a public policy fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. He is a 1958 graduate of Pendleton High School.

Obama had blocked Ralls, a Chinese company, from buying a wind farm near Boardman.