



**BUCKS CAN'T ESCAPE COUGARS**  
SPORTS/1B



WEEKEND EDITION  
**VOLUNTEER MENTORS**  
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**CROW'S SHADOW EARNS HIGH PRAISE** REGION/3A

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## BOARDMAN

### Students test fit of blue collar port jobs

Morrow County students get glimpse of local opportunities on Manufacturing Day

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
*East Oregonian*

There are a number of ways to work in manufacturing. On Friday, some Morrow County students got to see just a few of them up close.

For National Manufacturing Day, the Port of Morrow hosted 15 students from Heppner, Lone, Irrigon and Riverside high schools, talking to them about certification programs at Blue Mountain Community College, working in data centers, and job opportunities in and around Morrow County.

"Morrow County ranks third in Oregon on the highest annual-wage jobs," said Kalie Davis, the Port of Morrow's workforce development coordinator. "We want (students) to know what's available and what the needs are."

Before heading off to Lamb Weston for a tour, students spent time talking to Jerry McMichael, the department chair of the Industrial Systems Technology program, about the different skills they can learn. He walked students through a lab with several stations, each set up with equipment they'd learn to use in different jobs.

He walked them through the pneumatics system, or air powered pistons and air motors, hydraulics, and mechanical drive systems, which includes chains, belts and pulleys. He showed them examples of rigging and lifting systems, and pump systems.

He encouraged students to keep an open mind as they look for a career.

"I bet you money that the guys who work with pumps, they didn't start out saying, 'I want to be a pump tech,'" he said. "But when they look at these systems, their eyes light up. Sometimes that passion comes later."

While the college doesn't teach electrical systems,

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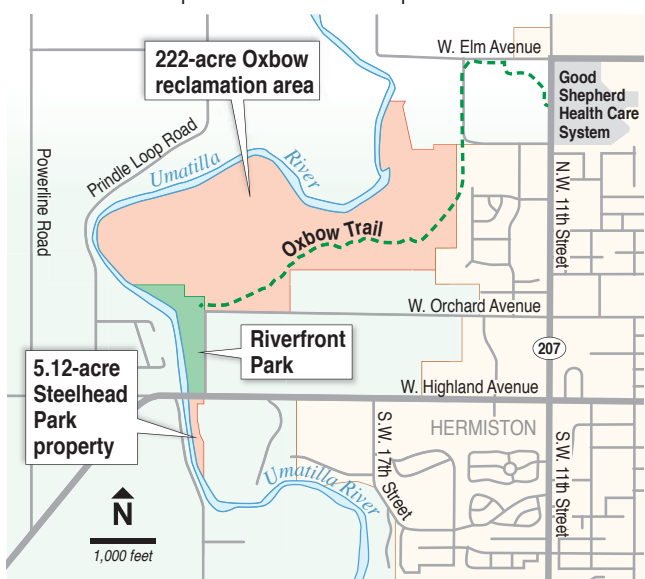
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

ABOVE: A group of walkers use the trail during a Walk Hermiston event on Wednesday at Riverfront Park in Hermiston. BELOW: An old rope swing hangs from a tree over the Umatilla River at Steelhead Park outside of Hermiston.



### Riverfront View

Development of parks, trails and wildlife habitats along the western Umatilla River help more members of the public access the river.



Sources: Bureau of Reclamation; City of Hermiston Alan Kenaga/EO Media Group

## Parks and reclamation

### Government agencies balance priorities on western stretch of Umatilla River

By JADE MCDOWELL  
*East Oregonian*

As the Umatilla River winds its way from the Blue Mountains to the Columbia River, the caretakers of its banks are working to strike a balance between restoration and recreation.

Near Hermiston, a 220-acre former ranch known as the Oxbow site was purchased by the Bureau of Reclamation with habitat restoration in mind. Three years ago volunteers planted 7,000 trees on the land to restore the natural floodplain and establish more wildlife habitat. About 56 percent of those trees have survived.

"We'll see how they continue to do out here, but I think it was a pretty successful planting," Bureau of Reclamation natural resources specialist Chet Sater said.

After problems ranging from a hungry beaver to a particularly hot summer, Sater said the bureau expected more like 50

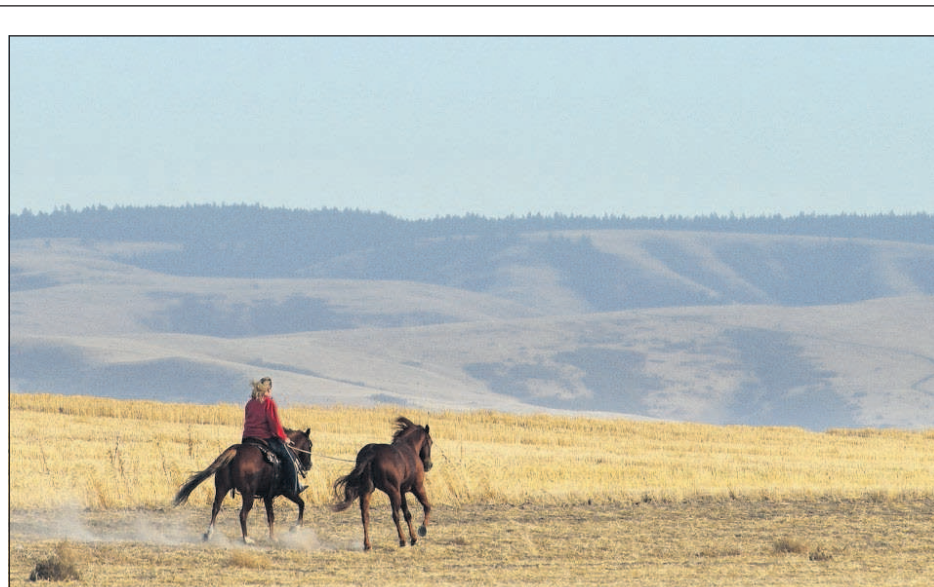
percent to survive. Some species did not fare so well, but hundreds of ponderosa pines and cottonwoods are still standing. As the trees continue to grow they will provide cooling shade, attract wildlife and send clearer water back into the river.

Not all trees are good news. Sater said the biggest thing the property needs is removal of the invasive Russian olive trees and other non-native vegetation, something he said would be a "massive undertaking."

"About every other plant out here is some kind of invasive species," he said.

Invasive species like Russian olives proliferate quickly, choking out other plant life that is more suited to the ecosystem. Full removal and replacement with native species could run into the millions of dollars, but every little bit can help. Sater said the volunteer group Tour of Knowledge has been dedicated about removing

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

### Running for the hills

A woman takes a pair of horses out for a run through a stubble field under the foothills of the Blue Mountains on Friday near Adams.

## Governor renews push to close gun ownership loopholes in 2018

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE  
*Capital Bureau*

35-day legislative session, which is due to begin Feb. 1, 2018.

SALEM — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown renewed a push to tighten state laws restricting gun ownership Friday.

Days after a deadly shooting in Las Vegas that took 58 lives and injured hundreds, Brown called on Oregon lawmakers to "put politics aside" and pass two proposals that failed in the 2017 legislative session.

But it's not apparent what will change lawmakers' minds in the upcoming

One proposal, according to the Governor's Office, would prevent a person from purchasing a firearm "unless and until" Oregon State Police verify they are eligible to do so. As it stands, people in Oregon can still purchase a gun without background check if 72 hours. This often called the "Charleston loophole," after the shooter in the Charleston church killings was able to purchase his gun

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