

Wallowa Lake’s east moraine protected from development

By CASSANDRA PROFITA
Oregon Public Broadcasting

JOSEPH — A large portion of the moraine that frames Eastern Oregon’s iconic Wallowa Lake has been purchased and protected from development.

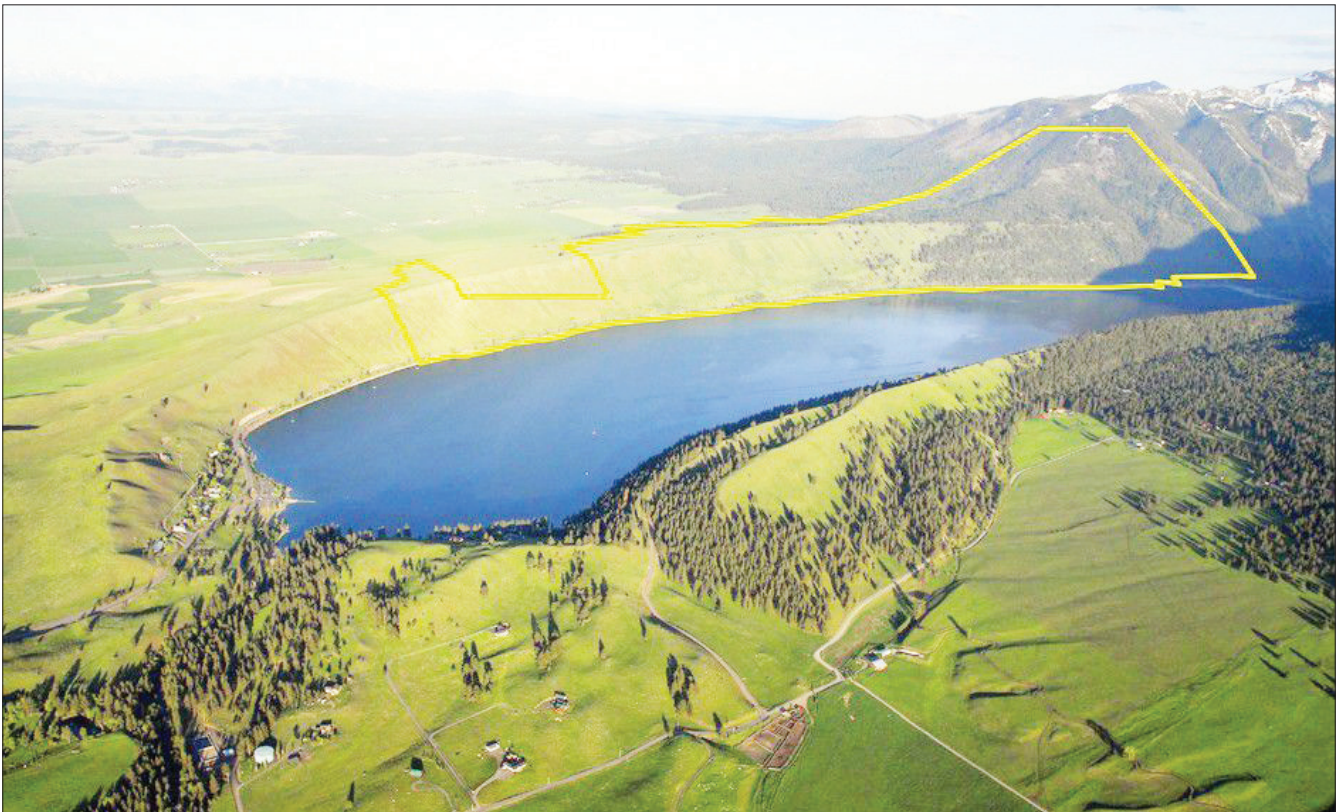
A public-private partnership that includes Wallowa County, two nonprofit organizations and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department spent more than a decade arranging the purchase.

This week, the group announced it finally raised the \$6.5 million needed to buy 1,791 acres of the glacier-formed rocky hill known as a moraine.

After signing a purchase agreement last year, they were up against a Jan. 31 deadline to raise the money.

The landowner, the Ronald C. Yanke Family Trust, had considered a proposal to develop the property with three houses and a conference center. Now, it will be owned by Wallowa County and managed for forestry, grazing, habitat and cultural uses.

Kathleen Ackley, executive director of the Wallowa Land Trust, one of the partners that arranged the purchase, said Wallowa Lake is a textbook example of a lake formed by the retreat



The 1,791 acres alongside Wallowa Lake, outlined in this photo in yellow, are now owned and managed by Wallowa County.

of glaciers.

“Even when you’re standing at the foot of the lake it almost looks fake — like it’s an artificially created landscape. It’s so perfect,” she said. “For many people, it’s been the last remaining unprotected iconic landscape in the state of Oregon.”

Ackley said it’s rare to be able to see most moraines because they’ve been developed or

they’re so remote.

“But this particular landscape you can actually see,” she said. “It’s just an emotional impact when people stand there and look at that it’s an incredible, scenic, beautiful view.”

The land is considered sacred by the Nez Perce Tribe, and it offers a valuable habitat connection between the Wallowa Valley floor, the

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area.

“This is a major wildlife habitat corridor,” Ackley said. “That kind of connectivity is absolutely crucial.”

Amy Singh, of the Oregon Department of Forestry, worked on two separate applications for federal Forest Legacy grant funds that provided \$3.5 million toward the

OPB Photo/Leon Werdinger

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY

Mostly cloudy and mild

SATURDAY

Considerable cloudiness and mild

SUNDAY

Decreasing clouds

MONDAY

An afternoon shower

TUESDAY

Cloudy with a passing shower

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
55°	37°	51°	44°	53°
37°	44°	38°	51°	41°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
58°	37°	51°	42°	56°
37°	42°	40°	52°	41°
41°	36°	37°	54°	37°

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OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

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ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	59°	45°
Normals	42°	28°
Records	63° (1935)	-20° (1930)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.25"
Month to date	1.31"
Normal month to date	1.11"
Year to date	1.31"
Last year to date	2.07"
Normal year to date	1.11"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	44°	38°
Normals	43°	29°
Records	60° (1947)	-26° (1930)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.07"
Month to date	0.21"
Normal month to date	0.96"
Year to date	0.21"
Last year to date	1.53"
Normal year to date	0.96"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Sat.
Boardman	WSW 7-14	ENE 4-8
Pendleton	WSW 7-14	SSE 6-12

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:26 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:49 p.m.
Moonrise today	7:35 a.m.
Moonset today	4:42 p.m.

New

First

Full

Last

Jan 24

Feb 1

Feb 8

Feb 15

Judge dismisses lawsuit over release of Montwheeler from state hospital

By PAT CALDWELL
Malheur Enterprise

VALE — A Malheur County woman and her children will not receive compensation from the state for a deadly 2017 crash in the wake of a decision last week by Malheur County Circuit Court Judge Erin Landis.

Landis dismissed a 2018 lawsuit filed by Vale resident Jessica Bates on behalf of her five children that asserted the state knew Anthony Montwheeler was dangerous and should not have been released from the Oregon State Hospital.

Montwheeler remains in jail pending criminal charges that he kidnapped and murdered an ex-wife in January 2017 and then fled police.

Prosecutors said the police pursuit ended when Montwheeler crashed into an oncoming vehicle outside of Ontario, killing David Bates and injuring his wife, Jessica. The suit was filed to hold the state account-

able for its actions involving Montwheeler, Jessica Bates has said.

Montwheeler was discharged from the state’s control after state doctors concluded he was not mentally ill and that he had claimed to fake an illness to avoid state prison.

In court filings, the state said its agencies can’t be held legally responsible for what happened in January 2017. The state asserts that the state Psychiatric Security Review Board — the agency with jurisdiction over Montwheeler because of an earlier insanity finding — had “absolute immunity” from being held liable for its decision to set Montwheeler free.

The state also said the Oregon State Hospital and the Oregon Health Authority, which oversees the hospital, can’t be held liable for a decision made by the state board and that the hospital followed legal orders to free Montwheeler.

Nampa, Idaho, lawyers

BRIEFLY

Man who helped kidnap storage warehouse manager gets 5 years

PORTLAND — One of two men who kidnapped a Public Storage warehouse manager at gunpoint, mistakenly thinking the manager had stolen their nearly 500 pounds of marijuana, was sentenced Wednesday to five years in federal prison.

U.S. District Judge Robert E. Jones issued the sentence for Trent Lamar Knight, 31, after he pleaded guilty in May to distributing marijuana and using a firearm in the course of drug trafficking, *The Oregonian*/OregonLive reported.

The judge decided to issue a shorter

sentence than he gave Knight’s co-defendant, Jody Tremayne Wafer, earlier this month, noting that Wafer was the ringleader. Wafer was sentenced to seven years in prison.

Knight and Wafer, both of Houston, were led to believe that their marijuana had been stolen when it actually had been seized in a secret raid by federal agents.

Both forced the warehouse manager into an empty unit, bound his wrists and held him at gunpoint on Dec. 2, 2017, demanding to know what happened to the drugs, according to court testimony and records.

Knight told the judge he thinks daily about what he did to the storage manager and apologized.

— Associated Press

CORRECTION: In the Page A5 story “Cattlemen’s association accepting scholarship applications,” published Thursday, Jan. 23, the story gave erroneous contact information. Applicants with questions should call Melinda Platt at 541-443-3232 for more information.

The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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