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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

A young paradegoer carts away a Walchli watermelon after receiving it Saturday, Aug. 7, 2021, in Hermiston at the Umatilla County Fair Kick-Off Parade.

TRCI inmates get to make a splash

State corrections uses the Oregon Way to humanize inmates, break criminal cycles

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Ten inmates from the minimum security section of Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla are heading for a day in the sun outside prison walls.

The group gets to visit the Hermiston Splash Park for two hours the morning of Aug. 20, an event in partnership with the city of Hermiston, Hermiston Parks and Recreation and the Hermiston Police Department.

The outing is part of TRCI's continual implementation of the Oregon Way, the Oregon Department of Correction's program to help reintegrate inmates into society by having them spend time with their families beyond prison walls. The effort hopes to break what the state describes as a multi-generational criminal cycle.

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Streets fill for fair parade

After 18 months of being cooped up due to the pandemic, Umatilla County Fair parade goers were ready, excited to be doing things again in person

By **NICK ROSENBERGER**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — With the honk of a horn and a smattering of applause, the Umatilla County Fair Kick-Off Parade returned for 2021.

Veterans led the procession, which commenced rolling a little after 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 7, along Hermiston's Seventh Street, turning onto Hermiston Avenue, looping around city hall and finishing on First Street and Locust Avenue.

Thousands of attendees from all over the county lined the streets, clapping and cheering as participants passed. Some had come a day early to snag a spot for their folding chairs, and many already lined up downtown Hermiston well in advance of the official start on the other side of town.

After a year and a half of being cooped up inside due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many parade goers were ready and excited to be doing things in person again, despite increasing COVID-19 case numbers from the delta variant.

"It's a bigger turnout this year, I think because of COVID last year," said Linnea Grotz, who set up a chair outside of her friend Pam's house right on the

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

The sun sets over the crowd Saturday, Aug. 7, 2021, along East Main Street, Hermiston, during the annual Umatilla County Fair Kick-Off Parade.

'IT'S A BIGGER TURNOUT THIS YEAR, I THINK BECAUSE OF COVID LAST YEAR. THE ENERGY IS AWESOME.'

— Linnea Grotz on watching the parade

Bentz talks COVID-19, says 'get vaccinated'

Rep. also concerned with effects of big infrastructure bill

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — In the span of an hour Monday, Aug. 9, at the Pendleton Convention Center, U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz spoke about the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment, energy and the economy during an in-person town hall meeting.

The Ontario Republican didn't have too much more time beyond the hour: He was in the process of an 11-county tour of his district, which encompasses the entire state east of the Cascades plus a significant chunk of southern Oregon. Elected to replace longtime Rep. Greg Walden in 2020, Bentz said he plans to hold at least one town hall in each county in his district per year.

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Judge rejects challenge to B2H transmission line

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

PORTLAND — A federal judge has rejected arguments by opponents of a 300-mile transmission line in Eastern Oregon who sought to stop the project for allegedly violating environmental laws.

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon has determined the U.S. Bureau of Land Management approved a right-of-way across public land for the project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Federal Lands Policy Management Act.

The Stop B2H Coalition and other plaintiffs filed a complaint in 2019 claiming the transmission line between Boardman and the Hemingway substation in Idaho should have

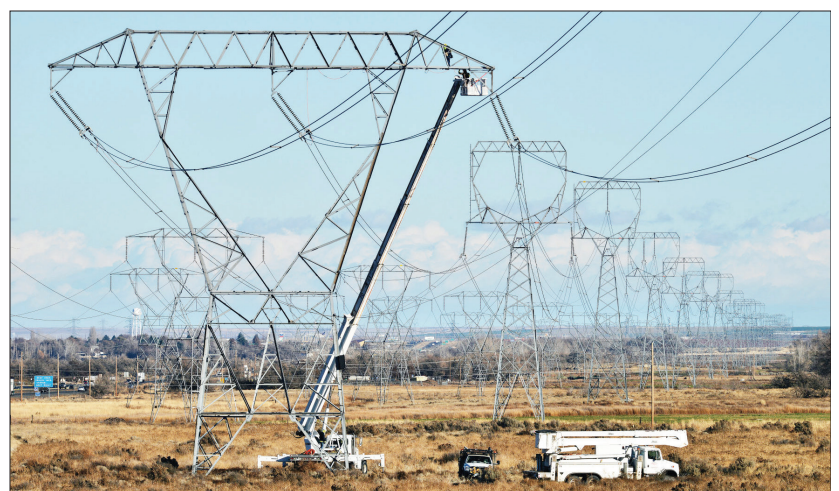
been more closely scrutinized for impacts to the greater sage grouse and other factors.

The proposal also stirred controversy for taking farmland out of production and disrupting agricultural practices, such as aerial pesticide spraying.

Jim Kreider of La Grande, co-chair of the Stop B2H Coalition, said his group is meeting with attorneys to consider what its next step will be in its effort to prevent the transmission line project from moving forward.

"Of course we don't agree with the judge's decision and the coalition is evaluating the opinion and assessing our next steps regarding an appeal," Kreider said.

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EO Media Group, File

A crew works on a transmission line tower outside Boardman. A federal judge has rejected a lawsuit seeking to invalidate the government's right-of-way for the Boardman-to-Hemingway transmission line across public land.



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