

Seeding the future

Forestry partners look to extend federal funding for Malheur restoration

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — A coalition of environmentalists, public land managers and timber industry professionals who found common ground on hot-button forestry issues a decade ago have applied for a 10-year extension of their federal funding at \$4 million per year to continue doing restoration projects on the Malheur National Forest.

According to Craig Trulock, Malheur National Forest supervisor, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has not yet approved a list of prioritized projects to be funded under the Collaborative Federal Landscape Restoration Program, which is intended to encourage ecological and economic sustainability and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

Money for CFLRP projects — including ongoing work on the Malheur by the Southern Blues Restoration Coalition — is supposed to be included in the infrastructure bill working its way through Congress.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding that measure, Trulock said he is confi-

dent the funding will come through.

“The proposed appropriations are \$80 (million) to \$100 million that are floating around in Washington,” Trulock said. That figure would more than double what the Southern Blues initiative has received in the past, he said.

The Southern Blues Restoration Coalition is a joint effort of Blue Mountains Forest Partners and the Harney County Restoration Collaborative. Both are forestry collaboratives, groups of diverse stakeholders formed to find solutions to stubborn forestry issues that satisfy environmental concerns while providing jobs in the woods and generating a steady and predictable timber supply to feed area lumber mills.

Backed by the two collaboratives, the Southern Blues Restoration Coalition has been supported by CFLRP money since 2012. The coalition was initially awarded \$2.5 million per year and received a bump to \$4 million per year in 2016.

According to the coalition’s application for a federal funding extension, it currently oversees nearly 900,000 acres on the Malheur and proposes to treat an additional 210,000 acres.

A record of success

The Southern Blues



Blue Mountain Eagle, File

The Southern Blues Restoration Coalition, a joint effort of the Blue Mountains Forest Partners and the Harney County Restoration Collaborative, has applied for 10 years of additional funding to continue restoration projects on the Malheur National Forest.

Restoration Coalition’s work has received praise at the national level, but its most dramatic success story might be Malheur Lumber, Grant County’s lone sawmill and largest private employer.

In 2012, the same year Southern Blues was formed, Malheur Lumber announced plans to close down, citing an inconsistent and unreliable timber supply. But the coalition was able to help broker a deal that kept the mill running.

Working with the coalition, the U.S. Forest Service was able to accelerate timber sales and increase the pace of restoration work on the Malheur by entering into a 10-year stewardship contract with Iron Triangle, a John Day-based logging company.

Stewardship contracts typically involve a mix of

timber sales and restoration work while supporting local jobs in the timber industry.

According to the coalition’s funding application, the long-term contract with Iron Triangle has enabled the logging company to add approximately 50 employees while creating a predictable supply of restoration byproducts to Malheur Lumber, thus allowing the mill to keep its doors open.

Funding streams

Forest Service program manager Roy Walker pointed out that stewardship contracting and CFLRP are different funding mechanisms.

He also said stewardship contracts are fundamentally different from traditional timber sales contracts.

The Forest Service awards timber contracts by identify-

ing an area with commercially marketable trees, marking the boundaries of the proposed timber sale and estimating the amount of merchantable wood in the sale area, Walker said. Then the agency evaluates the fair market value of the timber and opens up a bidding process to companies that can meet bonding and other requirements.

According to Walker, the Forest Service also can award service contracts for projects that do not include removing marketable timber. He said this could consist of pre-commercial thinning, trail maintenance or stream restoration.

As the Forest Service expanded its forest restoration, fuels reduction and thinning activities, Walker said, it melded forest management work, which often lacks

commercial value, with timber sales.

Stewardship brings the two together, allowing the Forest Service to award the commercial value that loggers ordinarily would bid on to finance restoration work on national forest land.

Webb said roughly 70 or 80% of the commercial timber harvested each year on the Malheur National Forest is through the 10-year stewardship contract.

Another 30%, Webb said, comes from traditional timber sales or other contract mechanisms that anyone can bid on.

In a traditional timber sale, Webb noted, the highest bidder gets the timber, logs it and pays the Forest Service, which then hands the money to Washington, D.C. One benefit of a stewardship contract, he said, is that the money stays in the county.

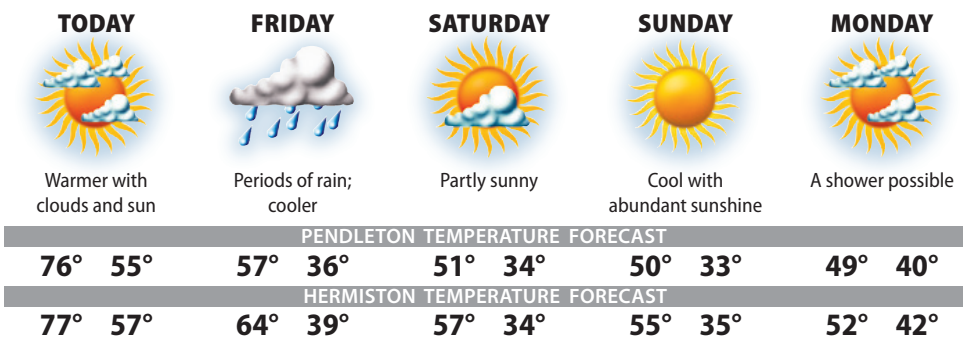
What’s next?

The Iron Triangle contract expires in 2023, and it’s not clear at this point what will happen then.

Trulock said he’ll be discussing that topic next month at the November meeting of Blue Mountains Forest Partners. While long-term stewardship contracts have certain advantages, he pointed out, there are lots of other approaches that can work as well.

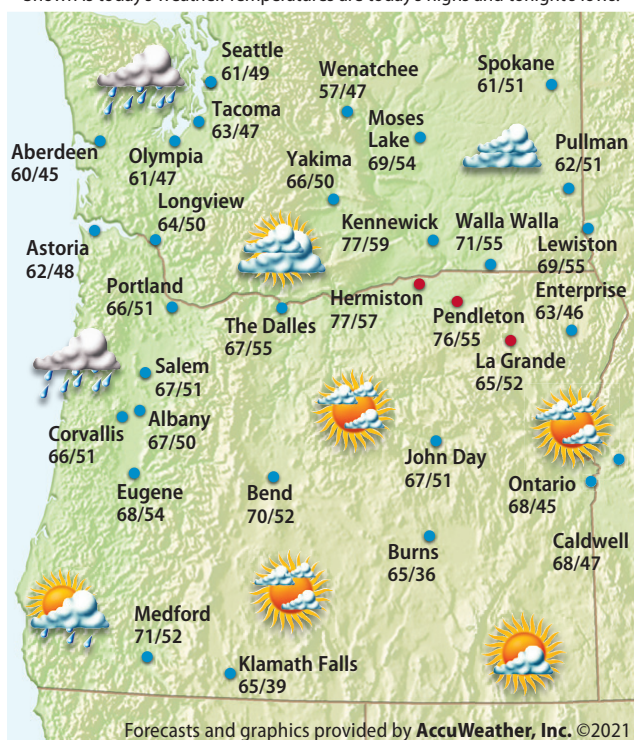
His talk to the Blue Mountains collaborative, Trulock said, will focus on the “suite of tools in the toolkit.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



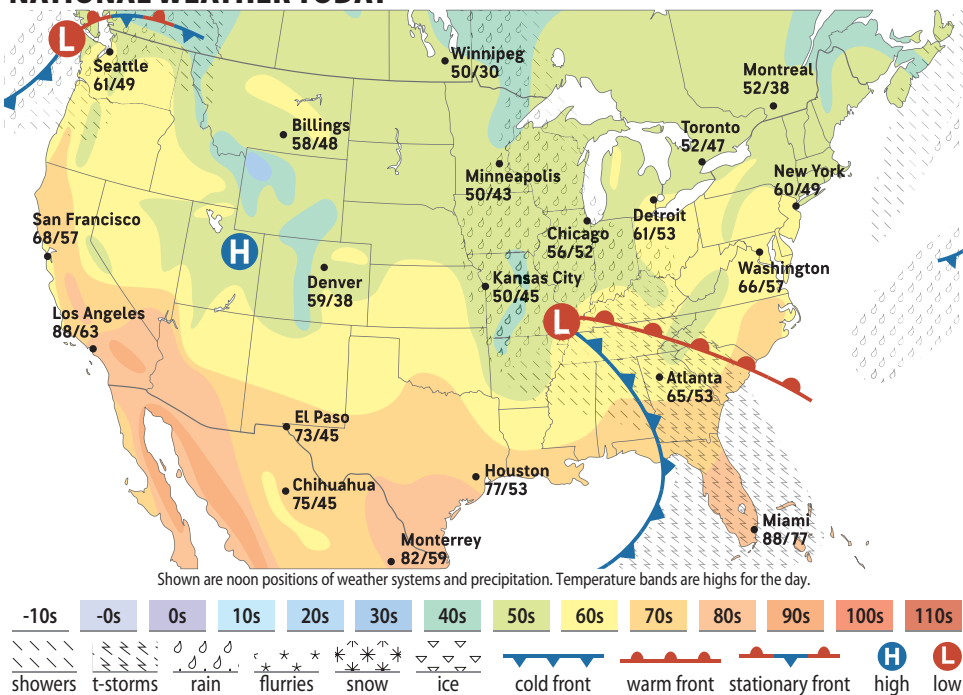
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	57°	48°		
Normals	59°	38°		
Records	77° (1906)	13° (1911)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.01"			
Month to date	0.84"			
Normal month to date	0.95"			
Year to date	5.84"			
Last year to date	9.83"			
Normal year to date	10.16"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	61°	51°		
Normals	61°	36°		
Records	77° (1935)	19° (2002)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace			
Month to date	0.92"			
Normal month to date	0.68"			
Year to date	3.59"			
Last year to date	2.29"			
Normal year to date	6.35"			
WINDS (in mph)				
	Today	Fri.		
Boardman	SW 6-12	WSW 6-12		
Pendleton	SSW 7-14	WSW 8-16		
SUN AND MOON				
Sunrise today	7:29 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	5:48 p.m.			
Moonrise today	11:45 p.m.			
Moonset today	2:49 p.m.			
	Last	New	First	Full
	Oct 28	Nov 4	Nov 11	Nov 19

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday’s National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 97° in McAllen, Texas Low 11° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Rescuers find man snowbound in Wallowas

By JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Crews from Baker and Union counties rescued a Baker County man in the snowbound Wallowa Mountains north of Halfway Monday, Oct. 25, the day after he was stranded by a blizzard while packing in supplies with horses for an elk-hunting trip.

Robert Derald Borders, 67, who lives near Baker City, did not need medical treatment, Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash said.

Borders, who had four horses, was able to use his satellite device, which works even when cell service is limited or nonexistent, as is the case in that remote part of the county, to send a text message to a friend late Oct. 24, McClay said.

The friend then called the Baker County Dispatch

Center around noon Oct. 24. The text message also included Borders’ precise location, which aided rescuers, McClay said.

Around 2:30 p.m. Oct. 25, McClay said rescuers reached Borders, who had sent text messages to rescuers with his satellite device while they were en route. Although Borders’ use of the device was a help to rescuers, the weather on Sunday was a major hindrance.

A group of Baker County Search and Rescue team members started traveling to the location, which is in the Eagle Cap Wilderness several miles north of Cornucopia, in the Soldier Lake and Sugarloaf Mountain area.

McClay said rain was falling, snow was on the ground and powerful winds were toppling trees as rescu-

ers traveled higher into the mountains.

They eventually had to retreat late Oct. 24, McClay said.

On Oct. 25, Baker County crews were joined by search and rescue members from Union County to resume the effort, McClay said. The Union County team members arrived at the Baker County Sheriff’s Office around 5 a.m., traveling from there to the mountains.

McClay said Borders apparently had left from the Cornucopia trailhead on Oct. 23.

The weather deteriorated on Oct. 24, and according to the text message the man sent to his friend, he was unable to get back to the trailhead and he needed help.

The first rifle elk season started Wednesday, Oct. 27.

IN BRIEF

Oregon Forestry declares end to 2021 wildfire season

SALEM — The Oregon Department of Forestry announced fire season has come to an end on the 16 million acres it protects.

The last three districts — Klamath-Lake, Northeast Oregon and the Walker Range Forest Patrol Association — ended their fire seasons Friday, Oct. 22, at 12:01 a.m.

The 2021 wildfire seasons in ODF’s districts and forest protective associations lasted an average of 131 days, tying it with 2018 for fifth longest average fire season since 2000. The longest fire season average was 147 days back in 2002. The shortest was 99 days in 2019.

Statewide more than 800,000 acres burned in wildfires this year — fewer than in 2020 but above the 10-year average.

River cruise ship beaches in Columbia Park near blue bridge in Kennewick

KENNEWICK — In an unusual sight, a Columbia River cruise ship was beached

near the blue bridge in Kennewick on Friday, Oct. 22.

Crew members of the American Song cruise ship called Kennewick firefighters a little after 6:30 p.m. about a passenger with a serious medical problem, according to Fire Chief Chad Michael.

The cruise ship captain nudged the five-deck ship up against the Columbia Park shoreline, just west of the bridge, Kennewick firefighters said on Facebook.

Firefighters were able to walk onboard using a gangplank through a hatch that opened at the ship’s bow.

A cruise line nurse helped the patient get to the Kennewick medics, who look the person to a Tri-Cities hospital.

The firefighters credited both the people onboard for noticing the medical emergency, and the captain for getting the ship close enough to shore to easily get the patient.

The American Song ship is part of the Columbia and Snake Rivers Cruise for USA River Cruises. The ship travels between Portland and Clarkston, stopping in Richland and offering tours in Pendleton.

— EO Media Group and Tri-City Herald

CORRECTIONS: 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.

EAST OREGONIAN
— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —
211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays
EastOregonian.com
In the App Store:
EO **EO**
East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.
Copyright © 2021, EO Media Group

Circulation Dept.
For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops or delivery concerns call 800-781-3214

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings (cover price)
EZPay	\$10.75/month	50 percent
52 weeks	\$135	42 percent
26 weeks	\$71	39 percent
13 weeks	\$37	36 percent

Single copy price:
\$1.50 Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

ADVERTISING
Regional Sales Director (Eastside) EO Media Group:
• Karrine Brogotti
541-963-3161 • kbrogotti@eomediagroup.com
Multimedia Consultants:
541-564-4531
• Melissa Barnes
541-966-0827 mbarnes@eastoregonina.com
• Audra Workman
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com
Business Office
• Dayle Stinson
541-966-0824 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

Classified & Legal Advertising
Classified advertising: 541-564-4538
Legal advertising: 541-966-0824
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legals@eastoregonian.com

NEWS
• To submit news tips and press releases: call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com
• To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News: email community@eastoregonian.com or call Rachael Plunkett at 541-966-0818.
• To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email rplunkett@eastoregonian.com or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements
• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips, email sports@eastoregonian.com.

COMMERCIAL PRINTING
Commercial Print Manager: Holly Rouska
541-617-7839 • hrouska@eomediagroup.com