

Test drilling OK'd for proposed lithium mine

By **JORDAN RANE**
Columbia Insight

McDERMITT, Nevada — A lithium-mining boom could be in the works in Southeastern Oregon. That's according to an Australian mineral exploration company targeting a site in Malheur County for the coveted battery metal that fuels cell-phones, laptops and electric vehicles.

Perth-based Jindalee Resources Ltd. announced this month it will test drill for lithium deposits on the edge of a volcanic caldera near the community of McDermitt (population 126 or so), which occupies both sides of the Oregon-Nevada border.

The area is known to be naturally

rich in sediments of the soft, silver-white element.

Lithium — the world's lightest pure metal, No. 3 on the periodic table — is famous for being able to float on water and stabilize human moods. But even more so these days as a vital global commodity for powering electronic devices, renewable energy storage and recent federal mandates to increase domestic production of it and reduce foreign dependence.

Approval for Jindalee's McDermitt Lithium Project test drilling — 39 planned holes in all — was granted by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries.

According to an Oregon Public Broadcasting report, this is the first known application received by the Mineral Land Regulation and Reclamation office to explore for lithium in the state.

Just how much lithium could be hiding beneath this largely unpopulated part of the country?

Over 10 million tons, notes a Jindalee press release after a preliminary scoping study. This would make it one of the largest lithium deposits in the United States, according to the company.

"An absolute monster," is how Jindalee executive director Lindsay Dudfield described the area (as it

pertains to untapped lithium) on the financial media network Proactive.

Global market surging

Currently, a single lithium mine operates in the United States (in Nevada). It produces just over 1% of the world's lithium supply, according to Forbes.

Australia, the world's top lithium supplier, produces nearly 53%, followed (distantly) by Chile, China (by far the world's top lithium consumer) and Argentina.

But this needle could shift over the next five years with global lithium production expected to almost triple due especially to a surging electric-vehicle market.

U.S. production is expected to grow following an executive order issued by the Biden administration for an in-depth analysis geared toward strengthening the domestic lithium supply — including mining raw materials for lithium-battery production.

"With the global lithium-battery market expected to grow by a factor of five to 10 by 2030, it is imperative that the United States invests immediately in scaling up a secure, diversified supply chain for high-capacity batteries here at home," stated a Department of Energy report in February, following Biden's "100-Day Battery Supply Chain Review."

League of Oregon Cities boss resigns after profane messages

Beaverton Mayor Lacey Beaty calls out Mike Cully for 'tone-deaf comment about service workers'

By **KELCIE GREGA**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — The executive director of the League of Oregon Cities resigned Monday night, Dec. 20, after he sent private messages on Twitter to Beaverton Mayor Lacey Beaty calling her "weak" and saying she has "no soul."

The exchange between Beaty and Mike Cully began Dec. 17 after Cully announced on his now-deleted Twitter account that he doesn't tip fast food workers.

"That's what your paycheck is for," Cully added. "Dissatisfied? Get an education and a better job."

Beaty took a screenshot of Cully's tweet, which he subsequently deleted, likening his sentiment to the famous phrase often, perhaps apocryphally, attributed to Marie Antoinette.

"If you don't want to tip during a

global pandemic," Beaty concluded, "you should make your food at home."

Cully then sent Beaty a slew of profane private messages over a span of at least two hours, according to a complaint Beaty filed with the League of Oregon Cities the night of Dec. 18. That complaint was first reported on by The Oregonian.

A screenshot of Cully's messages also was shared with Pamplin Media Group.

- 6:36 p.m.: "Hey Lacey — instead of putting me on (expletive) BLAST you bully. Talk to me." "You have NO SOUL."

- 6:58 p.m.: "Talk to ME. A white male who has NO agenda with YOU"

- 7:31 p.m.: "I (expletive) HATE weak people Lacey."

- 9 p.m.: "You are WEAK"

In her complaint, Beaty expressed her dismay over how Cully conducted himself not only toward her, but toward service workers.

"I was alarmed that the leader of Oregon cities, which are desperately working on economic recovery during a global pandemic, would post such a tone-deaf comment about service workers. Our cities are our people. When Mr. Cully shared his tweet and his disdain for workers, he was insulting our community members across the state," she wrote.

She continued: "Further, I am concerned that a state leader regularly called upon to address economic recovery in Oregon, is promoting a false narrative that the only difference between those who work in fast food and those with good paying jobs is education. As we all know, there are myriad reasons why economic disparity exists. All of us who care about our state, are working to dismantle these classist and elitist falsehoods."

In a tweet on Dec. 19 from his since-deleted account, Cully apologized for his remarks, a day after Beaty filed her complaint.

"I am not above recognizing and acknowledging when I am wrong. Nor do I feel exempt from issuing an apology for posting insensitive and disrespectful remarks. I own that I did this to" Beaty, he wrote, tagging another account with a name similar to the Beaverton mayor, as first reported in The Oregonian's article.

The League of Oregon Cities' board of directors unanimously voted Dec. 20 to accept Cully's resignation.

The board also named the league's general counsel, Patty Mulvihill, as acting executive director. Mulvihill joined the LOC in 2016 as assistant general counsel and was promoted to general counsel in 2017.

Cully will be placed on paid administrative leave until March 20.



Cully



Beaty

Brown extends state of emergency declaration due to omicron variant

The Oregonian

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown on Tuesday, Dec. 21, extended Oregon's declaration of a state of emergency until June 2022, citing the emergence of the omicron variant to the coronavirus.

"As Oregon prepares for what could be our worst surge in hospitalizations during this pandemic, I know that this is not the beginning of the new year any of us had hoped for," Brown said. "Time and again over the last two years, Oregonians have proven that we will stand with each other in our most difficult times. Your actions have saved lives, and it is because we have worked together to keep each other safe that Oregon still has

some of the lowest infection and mortality rates in the nation. Please, do your part again — get vaccinated, get your booster shot, and wear a mask."

Extending the state of emergency declaration maintains Oregon's ability to access federal relief funds, such as enhanced SNAP benefits, Brown's announcement said.

The governor noted she had moved away from managing the COVID-19 pandemic mainly through executive orders and mandates toward more standard regulatory tools as it became clear the pandemic needed long-term management, such as using existing state powers to implement masking and vaccination rules.

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