

# Motel:

Continued from Page A1

Reopening the motel isn't exactly a turnkey project. Mogg said there are a number of things that will need to be replaced and repaired for a building that hasn't operated as a hotel in years and was even briefly rented out as low income apartments by the former owners.

When the project is finished, Mogg said the MotoLodge will be themed around the mid-20th century era of auto travel, although not in a "kitschy" way that evokes "Happy Days." He said Cascadia intends to offer higher quality rooms than the average budget motel but won't be seeking luxury clientele who might patronize chains like Radisson.

Mogg said the project will be reliant on obtaining a grant from the city's urban renewal district. Charles Denight, the associate director of the Pendleton Development Commission, said the district already has received an application through the district's rejuvenation grant program, which provides funding for full-scale renovations.

Mogg said Cascadia expects to open the MotoLodge by Memorial Day, ahead of the summer



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Workers install roofing materials Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022, at the former Knights Inn at 310 S.W. Dorion Ave. in Pendleton

event season.

In an interview, Chrisman said Cascadia's project was proof that Pendleton was an "international tourist destination waiting to happen."

He added the MotoLodge should be a good compliment to Moto Stuff, a different business that is in the process

of turning the old fire station at 911 S.W. Court Ave. into a multi-use stop for motorcycle enthusiasts.

Chrisman said downtown hotels rely more heavily on local tourism than lodging near Interstate 84, which can draw potential customers from motorists just looking

for a quick stop on their way to somewhere else.

It's been a tumultuous two-year period for the hospitality industry, and not every hotel has made it to this stage of the pandemic operating in the same way they used to. The owners of the Whiskey Inn sold their property

to the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon, which now uses the building as transitional housing and an emergency shelter for unhoused residents. The Pendleton City Council recently revoked the business license for The Marigold Hotel, 105 S.E. Court

Ave., after a string of calls for service from police that culminated in a shooting on the property. At a city council hearing, The Marigold's owner said many of the problems with staff and customers formed while he was away from the property and focused on his family's health.

But overall, hotel owners and operators see opportunity in Pendleton. Besides MotoLodge, Parley Pearce, a former co-owner of Hamley & Co., still is planning to turn the historic Oak Hotel, 327 S.E. First St., into a boutique hotel. Outside the downtown core, a 78-room Radisson Hotel location is expected to open in the spring, the owner of the Pendleton Holiday Inn is planning on building a new motel for the franchise while retaining the building under a different name, and the city continues to pursue a hotel at the Pendleton Convention Center. All of these developments are happening on top of a growing vacation rental industry through services such as Airbnb.

Chrisman said Pendleton over-relied on the Round-Up as its main tourist attraction for many years. If the city is able to keep up its trend of starting and maintaining new tourism events each year, he's confident the city will be able to accommodate the boomlet of new lodging options.

# Elk:

Continued from Page A1

going on, that we have staff kind of running frantic on, is we have a lot of elk damage," McCanna said on a recent wildlife management Zoom. "Elk getting into hay stacks is one of the big ones."

McCanna is an expert on resolving wildlife conflicts with humans for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He teaches farmers how to set up automatic propane cannons to haze them with noise. But elk are smart and sometimes it doesn't always work.

This year, drought has upped the stakes — hay prices are up across the West.

"This summer was very hot and dry. And alfalfa and grass hay is at a premium right now," McCanna said.

## Floods and fires

Meade Krosby is a senior scientist at the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group in Seattle.

"So, one of the primary ways that wildlife respond to changing climate is by moving," Krosby said. "They shift their ranges — they want to track the change in climate as it happens."

She said now more than ever before, animals will need to move quickly. Climate induced floods and fires in the Northwest are dramatically pushing animals around on the landscape. She said wildlife will need safe corridors to run for it.

"They have to move so fast, but they have all this stuff in the way," Krosby said. "They have roads and highways in the way, they



Rajah Bose/Contributed Photo

A deer in this undated photo forages through a neighborhood on the outskirts of Spokane at sunset. Deep snow in many parts of the Northwest have driven animals out of higher elevation range toward farms and haystacks.

have cities in the way, agricultural areas. And all of these form these barriers to wildlife getting to where they need to go to shift their ranges to adapt to climate change."

## Starving with a belly full of hay

Making things worse, elk can starve on hay.

Elk have four chambered guts that change their bacte-

ria with the season and what's available to eat. In the spring and summer, bacteria colonies adjust to digest green shoots and high-protein feed. But, in the fall and winter gut bacteria are essentially



Peter Nilsson/Contributed Photo

Elk in this undated photo gather at Peter Nilsson's farm outside La Grande. He says he loves watching the bald eagles and moose that show up on his farm by the river. And he thinks elk are cool, too. But not when an entire herd parties all winter at his spread, eating his hay.

programmed to eat big quantities of dried twigs and grasses with a lower energy.

"The bug is Clostridium perfringens," Colin Gillin explained. He's the state veterinarian for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"It's a bacteria that all ruminants carry in their guts, it's just you don't want that Clostridium to get out of control," Gillin said. "And it's when you throw corn in there, it starts to have a party."

In this case, the corn is hay. The bacteria break down the walls of the stomach and intestines, so an elk can starve to death with a belly full of alfalfa.

## 'Elk curtains'

At the Northwest Hay Expo in Kennewick, mostly men, mostly unmasked, roam around the great hall, slapping hands and checking out the latest in twine, balers and tarping technology. Pamphlets, ball caps and squishy stress-balls shaped like little tractors litter vendor's tables.

A vendor motions to a

passing farmer, "Hi, ya, how you? Enjoying your day so far?"

Clint Vieu is from Walla Walla. He's with a major tarping services company called ITC Services out of Moses Lake. He said one solution for growers is to install "elk curtains" that are tarps covering the sides of big stacks. Left unprotected, Vieu said, "Stacks have fallen on elk 'cause they'll eat into it so much that it will actually destabilize the stack and it will collapse and fall in on the animals."

## 'It's life'

Every year, elk bust up Anthony Leggett's fences to get to his hay and crops. And every year, he fixes them again.

"You know if I chase them off my property, they just go to the neighbor's property and get into their haystack," Leggett said.

Still, Leggett has made his peace with the elk.

"We just happen to live in a spot where there's a trail that they come down on," he said. "For us, it's life."

# POM:

Continued from Page A1

monitoring and DEQ did not provide an agency-approved method until 2021.

Measuring nitrogen in plant tissue is "neither an accurate nor a useful measure of the amount of nitrogen removed from fields by crops, and the information does not measure compliance with any permit requirement or serve any other purpose under the permit," the appeal states.

Groundwater nitrates are a serious concern in the Lower Umatilla Basin, which was designated a Groundwater Management Area in 1990 to curb contamination from non-point sources like farms and municipal wastewater facilities.

Drinking groundwater

with elevated nitrates can be harmful in infants, causing a condition known as methemoglobinemia, or "Blue Baby Syndrome."

The management area encompasses parts of northern Umatilla and Morrow counties, including the cities of Hermiston, Echo, Stanfield, Umatilla, Boardman and Irrigon, with a combined population of 33,534.

Irrigated agriculture contributes most of the leached nitrogen into the groundwater in the area, estimated at 70%. About 12% comes from confined animal feeding operations, such as dairies; 8% from livestock pastures and 4.6% from food processing land application.

The port acknowledged that most, but not all, of the sites for wastewater application are in the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area.



EO Media Group, File

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued a \$1.3 million fine against the Port of Morrow for applying excessive amounts of nitrate-containing water to some area farmland. The port has appealed the fine.