



# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



Enterprise, Oregon

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## Ranchers get more latitude to kill wolves

### Annual survey shows population milestone met

By Eric Mortenson  
EO Media Group

An annual wolf population survey shows seven breeding pairs in Oregon, enough to meet the state's conservation objective in Eastern Oregon and to give ranchers more leeway to protect livestock.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which regulates the state's wolf recovery plan, said the survey

count is a milestone.

"In the past seven years, Oregon has gone from no known wolves, to resident and reproducing wolves, and now to meeting our conservation objective for the eastern part of the state," ODFW wolf program coordinator Russ Morgan said in prepared statement.

The count moves Oregon's wolf plan, at least in Eastern Oregon, to Phase 2. Livestock owners are still encouraged to use non-lethal means to

protect livestock, but now may shoot wolves that are chasing livestock. Previously, producers could shoot wolves only if they were "biting, wounding or killing" livestock or working dogs, and then only if other conditions were met.

Todd Nash, a Wallowa County rancher and chairman of the Oregon Cattlemen Association wolf committee, told the East Oregonian it is highly unlikely for producers to actually catch a wolf causing trouble in the pasture.

The rule does, however, make them feel a little more empowered than they were before.

"We didn't want wolves to begin with," Nash said. "We're trying to get along as best we can in the political climate we live in."

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Rocky Wilson/Chieftain

Wallowa County Vegetation Manager Allen Schnetzky, left, and Julia Lakes, vice chairman of the Wallowa County Weed Control Board, concur that the biggest weed eradication push currently underway in Wallowa County is for meadow hawkweed.

## Fight against meadow hawkweed intensifies

By Rocky Wilson  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Picking weed enemy No. 1 for Wallowa County is a subjective matter for landowners here, where the geographic area is large and there's much diversity in habitats, climates, and elevations. There's no debating which single weed is receiving the most money for treatment at this point in time, however.

As pointed out by Wallowa County Vegetation Manager Allen Schnetzky and Wallowa County Weed Board Vice Chairman Julia Lakes, more grant money is being secured locally to combat the invader meadow hawkweed than for any other single weed.

And the competition isn't even close, says Schnetzky.

A major meadow hawkweed problem spreading

from the Bear Creek area near Wallowa "is working its way up the valley," Schnetzky says. Lakes says efforts are underway to target the weed near Wallowa this year, target its spread from Wallowa to the Lostine River next year, and possibly concentrate on the quick-spreading weed beyond the Lostine River thereafter.

Chemical treatments control hawkweed the best, says Schnetzky, but such treatments are expensive and often prove to be less than effective against the wayward weed. Like strawberries, meadow hawkweed spreads by sending out near-surface roots called "stolons" that produce mono cultures, and also disperses by emitting dandelion-like seeds into the wind.

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S.F. Tool/Chieftain

Along the route of the proposed bike path, which would run on the other side of the guardrail on the same strip of land where these trees grow.

## Proposed lakeside bike path in spotlight

### Planned route runs through grazing zones

By S.F. Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

The proposed bike/pedestrian path that would connect the county park at the foot of Wallowa Lake to the state park at the head of the lake continued to inch forward at a Jan. 20 meeting at the Wallowa County Courthouse.

County commissioners, the county

planning department, various state departments and interested citizens took part. The project is subject to county approval.

John Bosket, senior project manager for DKS, the engineering firm the state hired to design the project, gave a brief history of the bike path and several alternative routes that were considered before tentatively

settling on route proposal 3A. The 3A route skirts the east side of the lake between the highway and the water's edge and gained preferred status for several reasons, including relatively flat topography, no moraine constraints, and substantial public support.

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## FIRST BRAND-NEW PERSON IN '15



Courtesy photo

Steven Joseph Butterfield earned the distinction as Wallowa County's first baby of 2015 when he saw fit to arrive Jan. 13 at Wallowa Memorial Hospital. This third child of Joseph couple Robert and Julie Butterfield tipped the scales at 8 pounds 8 ounces and was 20 inches long. Grandparents are Kathy and Joe Ithi, of Caldwell, Idaho, and Lori and Dan Butterfield, of Joseph. At home young Steven joins a brother, Kolton, 5, and a sister, Makayla, who is nearly 3.

## County again has its own watermaster

By Rocky Wilson  
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — For the first time since the early 1990s, Wallowa County now has its own Watermaster.

Although traffic to his office hasn't yet reached flood stage, an increasing number of people are dropping by to tap the services of Watermaster David Bates, sparing themselves the former drive to La Grande to find answers to their water questions.

Bates, a graduate of the University of Idaho in Physical Geography and GIS, had eight years of experience working on water issues as the Oregon Water Resources Department Assistant Watermaster in Sisters before being transferred to Wallowa County. He's moving into a local

role served for many years by Watermaster Shad Hattan who doubled as the Watermaster for both Union and Wallowa counties. Bates says Hattan is continuing to work as Watermaster for Union County.

According to Bates, much of his current work out of his Enterprise office deals with research and education and, as his presence in the Wallowa Resources building becomes more generally known, every day people are visiting his office to introduce themselves and ask questions.

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Bates



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