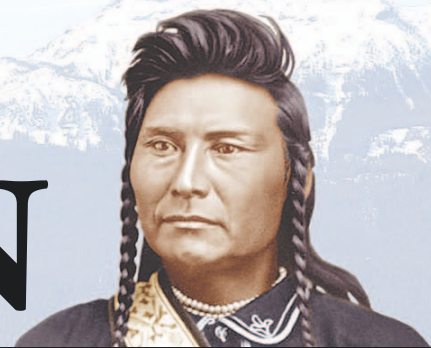




WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



Enterprise, Oregon

www.wallowa.com

February 18, 2015 \$1

Joseph gov't to try scaled-down street bond

By Stephen Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Joseph City Council forged ahead with its latest effort to fund street repair. The council hammered out a resolution to place a \$1.2 million bond levy on the May ballot.

The new levy is a scaled-down version of a more comprehensive \$2.55 million street repair levy that met defeat at the ballot box in November of 2014.

Previous town hall meetings on the subject failed to bring citizens into majority support for any of the three proposals the council set before the public.

Mayor Dennis Sands opened the council's Feb. 5 meeting telling the council it must quickly reach a decision on a proposal in order to place it on the May ballot.

Sands repeated a previous proposal to raise street repair funds by placing a monthly surcharge on city sewer/wa-

ter bills. He emphasized the surcharge would not be funding anything related to sewer/water. The city would merely be utilizing those bills as a means of collecting fees for the streets.

The debt service on the \$1.2 million plan amounts to \$100,000 per year for 20 years. Divided among the town's 600 billable meters, the monthly bill addition amounts to approximately \$13.90.

Sands added that further investigation showed the city carried an additional 146 tax lots with no permanent structures attached. The mayor speculated that at least some of the lots possessed water/sewer connections. He added the addition of the 146 tax lots to the billable mix could lower the monthly rate to \$10.65. "To me, it seems feasible; it's a reasonable figure," Sands said.

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Dr. Grandi decides to take a year off

By S.F. Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

After more than 12 years of service, Dr. Renee Grandi of Winding Waters Clinic in Enterprise announced her decision to take a year-long sabbatical.

Grandi came to the area after a serious recruiting effort by the Enterprise community, which included a dinner at Fishtrap house with about 20 attendees. "They sat around the table and they told their stories, and it was like people you felt you'd known forever. The community is what sold us on the job," Grandi said.

However, long hours and a changing medical climate take their toll. "I'm kind of at a tipping point here. One of the reasons I'm taking a year off is the tremendous hours and the neglect of my family. I have a teenage daughter I'd like to spend the summer with before she takes off to France for a year as an exchange

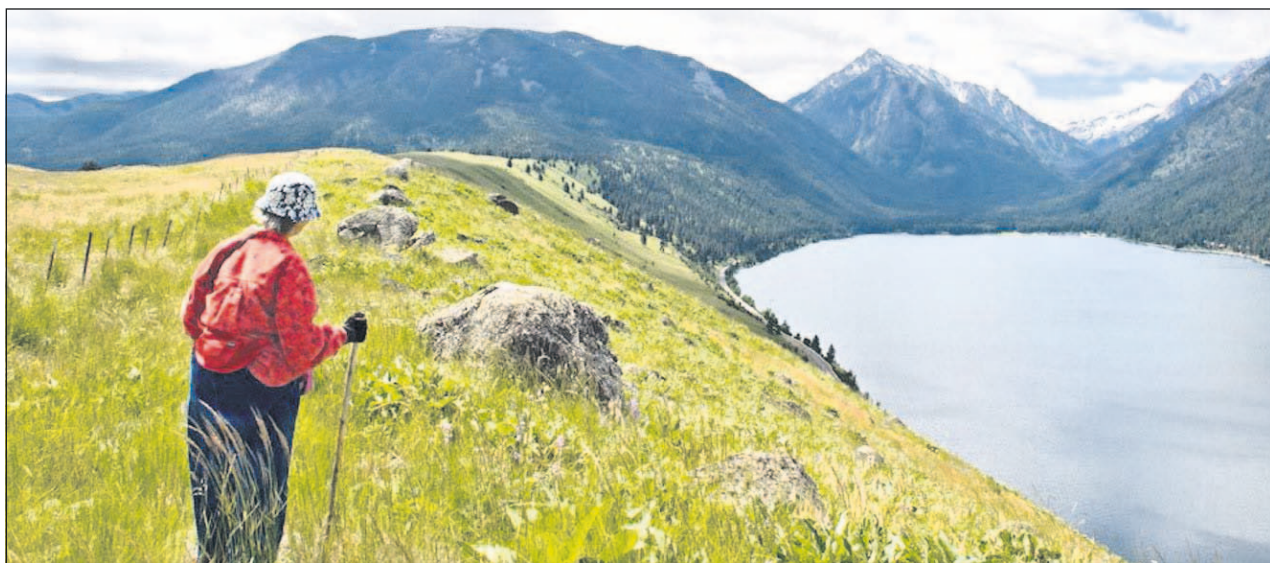


Dr. Grandi

student," Grandi said. She added that her husband of 22 years desires more time with her and that her friends in the community feel neglected as well.

Grandi also cited difficulties with changes in the medical field. "Medicine has gone to a much more computerized world since I've been here. I'm not good at the

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Courtesy photo/Dolores Bridges

A hiker on the East Moraine gazes southward, toward the head of Wallowa Lake.

Coalition closer to purchase on moraine

By Rocky Wilson
Wallowa County Chieftain

An effort to permanently protect the East Moraine of Wallowa Lake from development, an undertaking in its second major foray with new players, appears closer to success than ever before.

A \$3 million award request through the federal Forest Legacy grant program has been designated No. 10 priority status among 19 successful requests nationwide. Collectively, the requestors are targeted to receive \$61 million to implement onshore conservation projects ranging in cost as high as \$6.5 million.

And yet the good news for the five-pronged coalition called the Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership that submitted the grant application is tempered somewhat by an unfinished piece of congressional business.

Wallowa Land Trust Executive Director Kathleen Ackley, a primary writer of that grant, admits the \$3 million might not be forthcoming.

The coalition currently includes Wallowa Land Trust, Wallowa Resources, The Trust for Public Land, Wallowa County, and the Oregon State Parks & Recreation Department.

One reason the funding could fall through, points out Wallowa County Commissioner Mike Hayward, is that the 50-year-old federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, from which Forest Legacy draws its grant

money, is set to expire in September 2015.

And, according to last week's press release from Wallowa Land Trust, a recent vote in the U.S. Senate to reauthorize the program fell one vote shy of passage.

But all is not lost. In recent weeks, both U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon Democrat, and U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, Oregon Republican, have expressed strong commitments to have the bill reauthorized. Ackley is convinced the reauthorization will happen. She says, "It's a popular program across the country with strong bipartisan support."

And regardless of the reauthorization effort's outcome, Ackley declares, the East Moraine — which she describes as "one of North America's most perfectly formed and

best-preserved glacial landscapes" — will be preserved.

Hayward, highly involved with the first major effort to preserve the East Moraine that evolved through an appraisal effort before falling short of its goal, hopes the purchase of more than half of the East Moraine with the help of Forest Legacy funding materializes. He says that Forest Legacy's overriding purpose of maintaining forestry, grazing, and public access to select areas is consistent with the county's longstanding desires for the East Moraine.

Ackley points out that gaining the \$3 million, even if it does happen, only would be the start.

At best, Forest Legacy will not pay beyond 75 percent of the total cost of a project and Hayward says additional monies likely would need to come

from state agencies, such as the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, or from private foundations or contributors.

The 10th-rated grant application was submitted to purchase 1,533 acres of the East Moraine from one willing seller, the Ronald C. Yanke Family Trust. That family trust owns about 250 additional acres there that it's also willing to sell, but the lack of tree cover on so much of the East Moraine, matched with specific grant-writing criteria, led to the 1,533-acre figure.

But even the 1,533 acres is a far cry from the overall moraine protective aspirations of the Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership.

Fully aware that Forest Legacy operates by purchasing easement rights as well as assisting in outright purchases of private land, the Moraines Partnership is negotiating with all landowners of the East Moraine to buy additional lands or easements.

In regard to the 1,533 acres, Ackley says, "Probably one of the most comprehensive appraisals in Wallowa County for some time should be ready soon." Once that's available, she says, an Option Agreement between Ronald C. Yanke Family Trust and the Moraines Partnership will be signed with set dollar amounts and time limits, and the Partnership's work can begin in earnest.

Actually realizing the \$3 million grant award would spur others to also give to the project, suggests Ackley.



Courtesy photo/Anette Christoffersen

Horseback riders on the East Moraine. If Congress reauthorizes the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, preservationists are positioned for grant funding that would purchase more than half of the moraine.

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN
Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884
Volume 132 Issue No. 44
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LAKE SUNRISE IMAGE PEOPLE'S FAVORITE



Photo by Mike Despot

Boise resident Mike Despot, who likes to vacation at Wallowa Lake, produced this People's Choice 1st Place photograph, "Golden Sunrise," in the recently concluded 2015 Wallowa County Digital Photo Contest, sponsored by the Wallowa Valley Photo Club and the Wallowa County Chieftain. For complete lists of People's Choice and Judges' Choice winners, along with some of the winning photos, turn to Page A5.

Coming soon: free historic tour by phone

By Rob Ruth
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Members of the city's Historic Landmarks Commission can anticipate a decided uptick this year in visits to historic buildings, the result of a new program of free and convenient audio tours that's launching over the next several months.

For visitors or anyone else, reaching a friendly voice that narrates a given structure's history will be as simple as placing a phone call, then punching in the short number identifying the building the caller wants to hear about. That identifier will be visible on the building's exterior, making this "audio tour" an all-hours service. "The business doesn't have to be open," explains Nancy Ruderger, one of the city's five landmarks commissioners. The audio recording can include some information about the building's currently housed business in addition to the structure's older history, Ruderger adds.

Michele Young, city administrator, says the audio tour program is getting its launch courtesy of a two-year, \$3,500 grant through Oregon government's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

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