

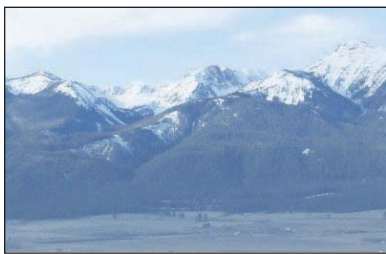
WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

Enterprise, Oregon

www.wallowa.com

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Snowpack low here, worse elsewhere



Rob Ruth/Chieftain

A view of some of the Wallowa Mountains bordering Alder Slope on Monday morning, March 9.

Nearly half of the monitoring sites in state show lowest levels on record

As Oregon's snowpack levels are generally measuring terribly low for a second straight year, the bad news locally is that, as of March 1, conditions here aren't as good as they were last March, when the local snowpack was the only bright spot in an otherwise bleak statewide report.

Oregon's mountains continue to

experience record low snowpack levels, according to snow survey data from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Statewide, warm February temperatures generally resulted in more rain than snow in the mountains. While February brought a few snow events across the state, the snow

accumulation was not enough to significantly improve conditions. Forty-five percent of Oregon's long-term snow monitoring sites are at or near the lowest snowpack levels on record.

"Without snowpack in the mountains to support spring runoff, many streams and rivers across Oregon will likely experience below normal flows this year," said Scott Oviatt, NRCS Oregon snow survey supervisor. "Low flowing rivers in the

summer have many implications affecting fish, wildlife, irrigation, livestock, city municipalities and hydropower operations. Reservoir operators have at least been able to take advantage of the rain by increasing reservoir storage in many locations."

The Wallowa Basin's snowpack was reported to be 73 percent of average in the March 1 report, as compared to 102 percent in March 2014.

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Commission OKs Hayes Ranch partition

Director received decision appeal

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

After years of contested attempts to subdivide the Hayes ranch near Joseph, the Wallowa County Planning Commission gave the green light to the estate of Mary Louise Hayes and Eastern Oregon Property Development LLC to create two two-acre parcels from the approximately 150-acre ranch.

Some interested parties promised fireworks at the Feb. 24 meeting of the planning commission, but although interested parties nearly packed the room, scarcely anyone raised a voice during the discussion.

Planning Department Director Harold Black opened the meeting saying the planning commission at its January meeting had asked him to answer two questions: first, whether an access road to a Measure 49 parcel can be allowed to pass through a non-Measure 49 parcel; and second, if there are any requirements for setbacks and/or easements to provide access and maintenance to the Cove (irrigation) ditch.

Black answered the first question by referencing a reply from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development that stated no regulations prohibit the access road.

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Planners apologize for input snafu

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County citizen Katherine Stickroth wanted to express her concerns on the Hayes Ranch partition by letter to the Wallowa County Planning Commission. According to the public notice, the commission planned to accept public input until 5 p.m. on Feb. 23.

Stickroth attempted to submit her letter to the planning department at approximately 2:30 p.m. on the end date, only to have someone in the office tell her the public comment period passed the month before. The person refused to accept the letter although Stickroth pointed out the notice on the planning commission door.

Stickroth attended the Feb. 24 planning commission hearing on the Hayes partition because of her interest in the matter, as well as to voice her concerns about public input.

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CHANGE IN DIRECTION



Rocky Wilson/Chieftain

Rocks and shoreline logs are subtle additions to this fish habitat restoration effort completed in 2009 under GRMW guidance. GRMW Project Manager Coby Menton, pictured, helped coordinate that effort and is preparing to do the same on \$450,000 worth of meander work soon to start, again on 6 Ranch land, just downstream from the earlier project about two miles northeast of Enterprise.

MODEL WATERSHED CUTTING BACK ON LOCAL PROJECTS

By Rocky Wilson

Wallowa County Chieftain

The La Grande-based Grande Ronde Model Watershed (GRMW), which has invested more than \$4.8 million in Wallowa County fish enhancement projects in the past 10 years, is redirecting its top priority to two watersheds in

Union County through 2018 where "populations of Chinook salmon are imperiled."

So says Jeff Oveson, a 1970 Wallowa High School graduate and executive director of nonprofit GRMW for the past 15 years.

Oveson estimates that at least \$600,000 in GRMW-related projects will be invested in Wallowa

County between now and 2018. This projected dollar amount would be well above the \$480,000 spent here on average through those previously mentioned 10 years, yet significantly below annual investments here in the past five years, when GRMW's budget expanded dramatically.

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PROFILE

Bob Jackson: Forester, conservationist

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

Bob Jackson uses a walker, wears a knee brace and resides at Wallowa Valley Senior Living, but he's one of those people you can tell spent a lifetime outdoors. He still wears the flannel shirts and jeans and speaks enthusiastically about his former professions.

Jackson, a former long-time forester and surveyor in the Wallowa Valley, said his birth took place 12 hours into 1926 on a farm on the edge Mason City, Iowa.

"From the fifth grade on, I grew up in Dunbar (Iowa) in Marshall County. It was in Dunbar that I had polio. That's why I'm in here now, the polio has grown," Jackson said.

Jackson contracted the disease just short of his 12th birthday. Unlike many of his era who suffered de-



Steve Tool/Chieftain

Wallowa Valley Senior Living resident Bob Jackson is the center's resident storyteller and prankster as well as a link to the county's past.

ilitating effects, Jackson made a nearly full recovery as his family utilized the "Sister Kenny" treatment of massaging and engaging paralyzed

muscles rather than immobilizing them as standard treatment of the time dictated. "The only time I ever knew of my father fainting was when

" I STILL HEAR PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT THE BATES MILL, AND IT DIDN'T HAVE AN S AT THE END.

- BOB JACKSON

Mother told him she thought I had polio," Jackson said.

He credits polio for giving him the idea to do something special, which for him meant forestry. He began by wandering the creek near his home and birdwatching. He said the experience helped him realize a life of desk work did not interest him.

After graduating from high school, Jackson attended Iowa State University, earning a forestry degree. He spent a summer at a college work program in the Priest River country of northern Idaho where he learned a logger's way of navigating rivers. "We lived at a summer forestry camp about 11 miles above

Priest River, and when we'd come down from Priest Lake to about a mile north of the camp, we'd get a log and roll it into the river and ride it down into the camp. I came closer to getting a good suntan that year than any year of my life," Jackson said.

After graduation Jackson made his way west. "I took the first job that was offered to me, in Heber, Arizona with the Forest Service. From there they promoted me to a permanent job in Flagstaff," Jackson said. He spent most of his time marking trees for cutting and handling timber sales.

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