

# Bipartisan program merits full funding

The Land and Water Conservation Fund may be the most popular federal program you've never heard of. Relying on no taxes, it takes some of the proceeds from offshore oil and gas leases and reinvests those funds in outdoor recreation and conservation throughout America.

It is national self-improvement using assets that belong to all of us — a sort of savings account

in the form of better state and local parks, as well as enhancements in national parks, wilderness areas, forests and wildlife refuges. Started in 1964, it is key to the creation and maintenance of “thousands of local playgrounds, soccer fields and baseball diamonds,” according to the Trust for Public Land. It was the creation of Washington’s legendary Sen. Henry “Scoop” Jackson, at the request of President John Kennedy.

In a continuation of a tiresome pattern, last year Congress used only \$306 million for intended purposes, siphoning away the bulk of LWCF money. In all the years, \$17 billion from the LWCF has been frittered away. For the coming budget period, President Obama has asked that the entire \$900 million in current funds be used as federal law requires. This request is strongly supported by Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley.

The biggest project that may be funded in Oregon is the Pathways to the Pacific, which would receive \$14 million to stabilize fish runs and improve public access with acquisitions in the Oregon National Historic Trail, the John Day Wild and Scenic River, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. In the lower Columbia region, this package includes the Willapa and Ridgefield national wildlife refuges.

In Oregon, “Without full funding, some critical projects in Oregon like protecting the east moraine of Wallowa Lake, will never get completed and instead be lost to development or other threats,” said Kelley Beamer, executive director of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts.

The plan to protect the east moraine, championed locally by Wallowa Land Trust, was ranked number 10 among over 40 ranking applications nationwide, so chances of the plan actually going forward are excellent — if Congress renews the LWCF, that is.

In Willapa, \$4.2 million would pay willing sellers for a 1,458-acre Willapa refuge expansion. According to the Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition: “Funds would acquire three properties next to the main unit. They would help protect and improve the overall health and function of the Willapa Bay watershed and the aquatic species within it. This acquisition would also create an opportunity to enhance and restore western red cedar forests to eventually re-establish late successional old-growth function. These areas are important to Federal and State endangered/threatened species and most migratory bird species using the Pacific Flyway. The federally-listed marbled murrelet recovery plan identifies Southwest Washington as a significant gap in suitable nesting habitat along the Pacific Northwest Coast. Increasing available habitat in this area is critical to expanding the geographic distribution of the murrelet within its threatened range.”

This program clearly deserves continuing enthusiastic support by Congress. Generations of bipartisan support for this smart investment of national funds in local communities deserves to be honored and sustained.

**EDITORIAL**  
The voice of the Chieftain



## It rained breakage and pain

Julius Caesar was warned beware the Ides of March by a soothsayer and failed to listen. I wish a soothsayer had warned me to beware the Ides of April. Times have been tough up here on the Slope. I guess that into each life a little rain will fall. I am fine with that and I love April showers but this has been the most painful and expensive April I can remember.

As a “day working cowboy” I get to see a lot of beautiful sunrises and maybe some of the most beautiful country that is still around. I get to ride a good horse and have a hard time classifying the job as work. When I got the call from Krebs Livestock to help process a few hundred cows I viewed it as a paid vacation. Part of the job required a couple of trips to Cecil, Oregon and included a day sturgeon fishing on the Columbia with a guide. The fishing went fine. We hooked six and landed four sturgeon, two too small and two too big but at least we didn’t have to gut any.

My job was to gather and sort cattle for a technician to AI (artificially inseminate) a few hundred cows. There was no room for error as the job is very time-sensitive, down to a margin of less than an hour. I recruited Tio Simmons for the first Cecil trip and with help like Tio everything went better than smoothly.

It was the trip home when things started to go south. Climbing the grade out of Elgin my Ram Cummins with only 109,000 miles blew black smoke



### OPEN RANGE

Barrie Qualle

and engine parts out of the tailpipe. Had it towed to La Grande and Wendy Simmons rescued the trailer and horses. The quote to fix it there was \$15,200. I ended up having it done locally and saved about \$6,000. I got no less than six calls from rancher friends offering me a spare pickup to use while mine was fixed. Vicky and Rob Olson wouldn’t take no for an answer and delivered a pickup for my use as long as I needed it.

I headed back to Cecil to finish the AI procedure, again time-sensitive, but without Tio’s help. He needed to prepare for pasture cattle he had coming. Things were going fine till I forgot that Vicky’s pickup had a short box and as I backed up and turned my trailer, knocked out the back window and dented the roof, \$1,654.60.

We had two days of gathering and processing the same cows, again time-sensitive. The first day went great, but while gathering for the last day things deteriorated. Had the cattle to the corrals and they stalled. I went to start the lead and some calves started a run back. I was gaining on the lead calf and thought I would go by and turn around to bring them back. The calf was on the

fence and when the calf stopped, my new horse made a great move to turn it and I didn’t. I managed to hold onto the reins causing my horse to walk around on my arm and back for a while. Five broken ribs and an arm that looked broke but wasn’t. It really hurt getting back on and pushing the cattle into the corral. Found out about the ribs a couple of days later. Couldn’t have got the job done without the help of a 13 year truant. Eli really stepped up and saved the day.

Others in the area are also having their problems. Tyson McLaughlin lost round two with his horse and is moving real slow. Might have to sell that one to a good home out of state. Dan Warnock failed to mark out his bronc at a branding this week and received a no-score. He didn’t make the eight-second whistle anyway.

After my wreck I received many phone calls from rancher friends offering to help with anything while I convalesced. Not a single call from an environmentalist. I have never met more decent and caring people than the ranching community. They will give you whatever they have if you are in need. It is heartbreaking that there are those that would try to deprive these decent people of their livelihood. I can’t help thinking that if they knew these people like I do they might change their minds and not be so vindictive.

Barrie Qualle is a working cowboy in Wallowa County.

## Advocacy agency ‘into the Act’

“Get into the Act” is the national campaign slogan celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Older Americans Act, and Community Connection of Wallowa County is getting into the act!

More than 40 million people in the United States are 65 or older. By 2050, the U.S. Census Bureau projects this number will double, which makes improving the quality of life for older Americans even more important as we look to the future. Community Connection of Wallowa County is a vital part of that future, receiving Federal Older Americans Act funding to support and implement programs that encourage wellness, nutrition, activities and socialization for Wallowa County citizens.

Meal sites at both Enterprise and Wallowa centers not only provide nutritious meals three days per week, they host a variety of classes geared toward senior health and wellness. Tai Chi, Pilates and Powerful Tools for Caregivers are just a few of the activities that are offered locally and are a direct result of the Older Americans Act funding. Wallowa County has approximately 7,000 residents, with Community Connection

### GUEST COLUMN

Connie Guentert

assisting over 1,000 Wallowa County seniors with various programs with Older American Funds in fiscal year 2013/2014.

A program growing in popularity that Community Connection offers is the Family Caregiver Support Program, focusing on the caregiver by offering respite, training and connections that offer the best support for families in the community. If you know anyone who may need help with transportation, housework, meal preparation or everyday assistance, this program has proven popular and successful to individuals who require care and support.

Community Connection is also the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) for Eastern Oregon. The ADRC is a free service offering the public information and assistance affecting older people and people with disabilities — regardless of their income. Connection towards in-home

care, peer and Medicare counseling, transportation, home-delivered meals, legal services and medical equipment can all be accessed through ADRC. An ADRC can also provide options counseling to anyone who needs assistance in determining what care options best fit their needs and preferences — it is a personal, caring atmosphere that aims to benefit anyone that needs assistance. If you need information and assistance regarding health, safety, wellness, counseling or care, connecting with your local ADRC is easy!

This month marks the Older Americans Month in celebration of the Older Americans Act — put into place 50 years ago so every American is treated with care and respect regardless of age. In celebration, Community Connection will offer free transportation for people over the age of 60 to and from meals at the Enterprise and Wallowa Dining centers throughout the month of May.

For more information or to schedule a ride, please call 541-426-3840.

Connie Guentert is county manager for Community Connection of Wallowa County.

## No ‘out of bounds’ in our forest

To the Editor:

Do you want your access to public lands treated like a basketball game, where you have to worry about if you are “in bounds” or “out of bounds” and having to live with the penalties of not staying within the boundaries set forth by the Forest Service? That is exactly what your life will be if the proposed designation of routes language and travel management plan are put into place on our National Forest.

Currently you are allowed to openly and freely access the Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur National Forest via motorized means at your discretion unless otherwise noted by wilderness areas or areas specifically targeted as non-motorized.

Once roads areas are designated as use, all motorized use off those roads will be prohibited (within a given buffer along the road) going from an open forest system to a closed forest system. Much like the basketball court where you are not allowed to leave the court, motorized access will be disallowed from roughly

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

95% of your public lands. You may only play on the court the Forest Service allows, which will be along their selected roads, and if you play outside those lines you will be penalized up to \$5,000 and/or 1 year in jail.

When did you turn over your right of motorized access to the US Forest Service? Did any of you sign a document giving Mr. Montoya or Pena the authority to decide when and where you traveled?

Offenses that will get you penalized if you go outside the designated area are — Firewood cutting, retrieving big game, dispersed camping, accessing historic berry and mushroom picking areas, accessing historic hunting areas, or simply recreating in your favorite area, just to name a few.

If you do not agree that our motor-

ized access should be restricted, please contact Secretary Tom Vilsack (tom.vilsack@usda.gov) and Robert Bonnie (robert.bonnie@usda.gov) to let them know how their staff is failing our communities and families.

John D. George  
Bates

Letters to the Editor are subject to editing and should be limited to 275 words. Writers should also include a phone number with their signature so we can call to verify identity. The Chieftain does not run anonymous letters.

You can submit a letter to the Wallowa County Chieftain in person; by mail to P.O. Box 338, Enterprise, OR 97828; by email to editor@wallowa.com; or via the submission form at the newspaper’s website, located at wallowa.com. (Drop down the “Opinion” menu on the navigation bar to see the relevant link).

## WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

USPS No. 665-100

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Wallowa County’s Newspaper Since 1884  
Enterprise, Oregon

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PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY:  
EO Media Group

Periodical Postage Paid at Enterprise and additional mailing offices

Subscription rates (includes online access)	1 Year
Wallowa County	\$40.00
Out-of-County	\$57.00

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

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Wallowa County Chieftain  
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