

Wilderness designation opposition strengthens

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County Commissioners have added their protest to that of State Representative Greg Walden and county courts from 13 other Oregon counties — protesting the move by the Oregon Natural Desert Association to carve off 2.5 million acres of Malheur County as a wilderness area. That area, Walden said, is “larger than the states of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.”

The county encompasses 6.5 million acres.

The Owyhee Canyonlands Conservation Proposal would set aside both lands and hundreds of miles of wild and scenic rivers in a county that already has 4.5 million acres (73 percent of the land in the county) under federal management.

Malheur County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager Linda Rowe, who opposes the monument proposal, said that 2.5 million acres would equal 43 percent of the county. Once federal lands are converted to special use lands, such as National Monument, Wilderness Area, National Conservation Area, they permanently lose multiple-use provisions – including grazing rights.

Malheur County is Oregon’s No. 1 cattle producing county. According to Oregon State University, agriculture generates over \$370 million annually in the county, of which \$134 million comes from cattle.

According to Sergio Arispe, a livestock and rangeland agent at Oregon State University’s Malheur County Extension office, locking up that much land would eliminate about 33 percent of the county’s total grazing land.

If the county’s economically vital cattle industry was devastated by such a conversion, a lot of hay, corn and other grains wouldn’t be grown here (either), Rowe said.

Malheur County Cattlemen’s Association President Chris Christensen was blunt: a monument designation “would destroy the community and the business of agriculture as it’s being done in this area right now,” Christensen said. “If this thing comes to pass, it would have a devastating effect on the ranching community and agriculture in Malheur County. Anybody involved in agriculture in Malheur County isn’t going to be in favor of this thing.”

Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA), which is leading the monument effort, says the proposal would “al-

low working farms and ranches to continue to operate.”

But Jordan Valley rancher Bob Skinner, former president of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association, said area residents believe the opposite would happen.

“There are cattle everywhere out there,” Skinner said. “If you take cattle out of (this) economy, you have decimated the economy. It would change our way of life. Not only farmers and ranchers, but everybody around here is up in arms about it.”

ONDA and other regional and national conservation groups and businesses are gathering signatures to back their effort. According to ONDA’s web site, “a variety of legislative and administrative options (are) being considered to permanently protect this place.”

According to a news release from Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, it is anticipated the groups are planning to ask President Barack Obama to use his power under the Antiquities Act to designate the land as a national monument, wilderness area or national conservation area.

Wallowa County Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution in opposition to the proposal in September, joining Lake, Marion, Grant, Lincoln, Wheeler, Columbia, Harney, Deschutes, Tillamook, Baker, Union, Linn and Yamhill counties in opposition.

The Malheur County Court had already spent two years developing an alternative Wilderness Area in the southern part of Malheur County consisting of 45,414 acres. Affected ranchers and the Malheur County Court endorsed that proposal

Sean Ellis of Capital Press contributed to this story.

MCCOLGAN: Pope Francis breaks mold

Continued from Page A4

When asked whether a public official had the right to disobey a law she believed to be unethical, Pope Francis answered yes, although he chose not to address the particular circumstances related to Davis. To dampen the brouhaha that surrounded the controversy, the Vatican noted that Pope Francis -- who once famously replied, “Who am I to judge?” when asked a question regarding homosexuality -- had personally invited a gay, Catholic, Argentinean friend to one of his American papal audiences.

Perhaps more relevant to the pope’s current undertakings is opposition from conservatives within the Catholic hierarchy. Two years ago, he asked Catholic parishioners throughout the world to fill out surveys stating their opinions on such wide-ranging issues as divorce, gay marriage, abortion and birth control. Now in Rome, Pope Francis has gathered with Catholic bishops, archbishops and cardinals for a Synod on the Family, during which he has asked his fellow bishops to be open to the Holy Spirit and to speak with candor and courage. Even as some of his colleagues might be gritting their teeth as they try to comply with his request, Pope Francis persists on the path that he believes Jesus would walk in the modern world.

John McColgan resides in Joseph.

BIGHORN GOES TO TOWN



Courtesy photo
Former Enterprise resident Celeste Bauck snapped this shot of a bighorn sheep last week along Highway 82 headed for Joseph, less than half a mile east of Enterprise.

FFA teams hone leadership skills at Camp Elkanah

By Annie Story
For The Chieftain

The Greenhand and Advanced Joseph FFA officer teams took a bus to Camp Elkanah for the annual two-day District Leadership Camp on Oct. 11-12.

The event was a chance for officers from the Eastern Oregon FFA District to meet with state officers to participate in workshops and develop leadership skills.

There were about 150 students in all from Joseph, Enterprise, Cove, Imbler, Wallowa, North Powder, Pine Eagle, Baker, La Grande, Elgin and Union.

During the camp officers were asked to limit the activity within their chapters to help develop communication and teamwork skills.

Among the many workshops offered by the camp was one focusing on the power of positive thinking, in which four people attempted to lift up another person, each using only two fingers. After this they

conducted a simple exercise while thinking positive thoughts. Then they tried again to lift the person, continuing to think positive thoughts. The groups often found that employing positive thinking made it easier the second time around.

Former state FFA officer Keith Nantz, a rancher out of Maupin, served as keynote speaker.

After the camp, FFA State President Luis Mendoza and Treasurer Alyssa Smith came to Joseph to teach workshops to all the Joseph agriculture students on Oct. 15. During their visit they

also had the opportunity to watch homecoming activities, explore the town, hike at Wallowa Lake and drive the scenic route through Pine Eagle to Nyssa.

Time for a Computer Tuneup?

J's PLACE

Spyware Removal & More
541-426-0108
110 W. Main Enterprise

Lalou Salon

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP!

541-432-HAIR

Anita, 541-398-1335 • Panky, 503-799-5973

102 W McCully St. Joseph

NEW LOCATION! Up Town Art-



Welcome to the new location
of Uptown Art!
13 S. Main Street next to Copper Creek.

- Featuring New images by Western photographer Robert Dawson
- New cards and Windchimes
- 15% off framing in Nov.

Reopening Friday Nov. 6th.

13 S. Main St., Joseph
541-432-0203

Gambling Problem?

Signs & Symptoms

- Deterioration of work performance
- Problems in concentration
- Missing deadlines and important activities
- Frequently borrowing money
- Gambling to escape boredom, pain or loneliness
- Lying to loved ones about gambling
- Trying to win back money lost

If you or someone you care about is experiencing a gambling problem,
HELP IS AVAILABLE It's Free – It's Confidential – It Works.

Call today: Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness
541-426-4524 • Or 1-877-My-Limit (24 hour Helpline)
207 SW 1st, Enterprise, OR 97828