



'THIS PROPERTY WAS OUR PARENTS' DREAM; THEY POURED THEIR HEART AND SOUL INTO IT'

DREAM REALIZED



Steve Tool/Chieftain

Wallowa Land Trust Conservation Director Julia Lakes stands along the trust's recently donated 1,500 feet of Wallowa Lake shoreline. The shoreline is just part of a nine-acre parcel donated to the trust by the Kimball family, who have owned the property for more than 50 years.

Family donates 9 acres of Wallowa Lake shoreline property to land trust

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa Land Trust just took another step in protecting the moraines of Wallowa Lake from development with a recent donation of 9 acres of prime lakefront property that includes 1,500 feet of shoreline. Brothers Fred, Frank and Steve Kimball of Washington donated the property, and the land trust took possession of the land Nov. 23.

The Kimball brothers inherited the property from their parents and didn't want to see the land divided up or developed.

"This property was our parents' dream; they poured their heart and soul into it, and we're proud to honor them by keeping it the way it is," Frank Kimball said.

Kathleen Ackley, executive director of the trust, lauded the family's decision.

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Joseph addresses vacation rental loopholes

Many argue short-term renters helping make town unaffordable

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The unregulated renting out of residentially-zoned Joseph homes to tourists is joining street repair as a hot-button topic at the Joseph City Council. During a Dec. 3 meeting held at the Joseph Library, about a dozen interested parties testified both for and against the practice.

Mayor Dennis Sands opened discussion, saying it had been on the council's radar since spring. The council thought it had banned such rentals and turned the matter over to its attorney Wyatt Baum, who discovered the only applicable ordinance was written before the advent of Internet residential home rental websites, such as Airbnb, which left exploitable loopholes in the ordinance.

Sands said residential rentals create a lack of affordable rentals for full-time residents.

"I talked to a local property management person, and they said the market's as tight as it's ever been," he said.

Of the dozen or so people who testified, only three said they were in favor of continuing the practice, although one of them thought it should be regulated. Two of the three people owned registered vacation rental properties.

Heather Tyreman, co-owner of the Bronze Antler Bed and Breakfast, said the problem was too prevalent to restrict entirely.

"They're already out there, so it's a matter of controlling what's there," she said, adding that many homeowners can make more money from short-term rather than long-term rentals and that an owner's residential presence (she used a duplex as an example) on the rental property should be taken into account.

Jeff Whittaker of La Grande owns two Wallowa County residential properties. He occasionally resides at one of the properties, but also rents it out from time to time.

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Wildfire solutions fizzling out in Congress

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of upcoming articles about forest management and dealing with wildfires in the West. Today we look at the state of wildfire management and three federal bills that attempt to address these issues but are mired in political gridlock.

Western forests are desert dry and deadly, with nearly 9.8 million acres in the West scorched by wildfires this year.

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Steve Tool/Chieftain

In spite of dangerously increasing forest fires, Congress is dragging its feet in implementing meaningful fire suppression and forest management legislation. Here, the Grizzly Bear Complex fire nearly razed the town of Troy on Aug. 20 of this year.

ODF committee to tackle wildfire issues

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

It's time to analyze firefighting strategies. As another year of catastrophic fires wraps up, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has initiated a Fire Program Review Committee to address issues raised by multiple agencies.

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Enterprise Winterfest Celebration

Friday & Saturday, December 11-12

See full schedule of events on A11

