

DRAGONS

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women setting a team record of 2:34.91 in the 500-meter race.

In the end, they swaggered away weighed down with three silver medals: Women’s 500-meter, Women’s Slalom, and Women’s cumulative time (adding best run from the 250-meter, best run from the slalom and the total of all three 500-meter runs).

Great steering by Slalom Tiller Max Linn and an amazing “competition kick” in the very last race of the event shaved six seconds off the Wallowa County women’s team’s earlier best slalom time — not only giving them the silver in the slalom, but pushing them into the combined time medals. Top combined times for the Women’s Division were 9:53 for Wasabi Women, 10:33 for the Dragons in the Wallowas and 10:58 for the Sirens.

The gold medals in the women’s division went to Wasabi Women of Portland for combined times, 500-meter time and Slalom.

Third place bronze in the women’s division went to the Portland Sirens.

The Dragons in the Wallowas mixed team finished just out of the medals in fourth with a top time in the 500-meter race of 2:31:33. The fastest mixed team, arguably one of the best teams in Portland, the Wasabi Fury finished



Members of the Dragons in the Wallowas Paddling Club celebrate after two days of competition on Wallowa Lake this past week. Not pictured: Kathleen Ellyn.



Caller Amy Gulzow had an extremely busy weekend as the team leader for the Wallowa Dragons dragonboat racing team. Here she takes out the womens team during the second annual Seven Wonders Cup Dragon Boat Races on Wallowa Lake on Aug. 19.

the 500 with a time of 2:12:66. The top three mixed team awards went to Wasabi Fury, the Castaways, and the Fire Breathing Blowfish (all of Portland).



The Dragons in the Wallowas mixed team gets off to a fast start against archrival The Wasabi Grand Masters at the second annual Seven Wonders Cup Dragon Boat Races on Wallowa Lake on Aug. 19.

Two Masters teams from Portland were welcomed to the county for the event: Wasabi Grand Masters and the Golden Dragon Masters. All team members on these teams are

55 years and older — something some team members from The Dragons in the Wallowas look at with interest, given that many on the team are more than 55 and two are



Paul Wahl/Chieftain
Julia Zeise high fives a competitor as the Dragons in the Wallowas mixed team exits the water during the second annual Seven Wonders Cup Dragon Boat Races on Wallowa Lake on Aug. 19.

more than 70 years old.

Special awards went to Satina Smith of Wasabi Fury as Best Tiller, Corky Lai of Wasabi Grand Masters for Best Coaching, and Most Improved Team went to the Portland Misfits — who, like the Dragons in their first year on Wallowa Lake, improved their times nearly every out.

The Dragons on the Wallowas enjoyed the cheers of an enthusiastic fan section and received a gift of a big plushy dragon mascot from one avid fan.

“I want to thank everybody who made this thing grow to what it is now,” said organizer Mike Lockhart. “There were at least four people from every team who came to me with compliments on how our race was run. The word ‘fun’ came up many times.”

PROJECT

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opportunity for employment and revenue for the county and its citizens.

The project generally stretches from near the Pole Bridge Campground and up to the Two Pan Campground at the end of the Lostine River

Road. The project is divided into 23 sections of varying forest treatments on nearly 2,100 acres along the 11 miles of corridor road.

The treatment area is a thin ribbon of projects as the river road is virtually surrounded by wilderness, and the river itself received Wild and Scenic designation in the 90s, which influenced

some of the project treatments.

Because of the lawsuit, the USFS, the Oregon Department of Forestry and the Nez Perce tribe can’t or won’t comment.

“I’ve seen and heard a lot of misconceptions about the project,” said Paul Survis, who is retired from the Forest Service and is the project’s initiator. “Someone told me they thought there would be 20 clear cut corridors that would go from the river up to the ridge. It’s not true.”

Survis noted that of the 450 acres selected for treatment near campgrounds and trailheads, only 18 acres are subject to heavy treatments such as patch cuts and group selects. The remainder of the work is understory thinning. He also noted that historical photos of the area and ecological research indicate the

LOSTINE CORRIDOR PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECT

SCOPE OF WORK

- Removal of hazard/danger trees that pose a risk to people traveling within the corridor, historical sites, and infrastructure.
- Creation (through removal of vegetation) of defensible space around identified historical areas (ex. Lostine Guard Station).
- Remove fuels to increase canopy spacing and decrease both ground and ladder fuels and to decrease the risk of potential high intensity wildfires.
- Thin dense forest stands to improve forest health and resilience to insects, disease and wildfire.

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area once had more meadows and was not nearly as dense as today’s stands, which he attributed to fire suppression and a lack of timber harvest.

Ultimately, the most controversial area of the project will leave anywhere from 120-160 square-feet of basal residual area in place after treatment. Basal area is land that is occupied by the cross-section of tree trunks and stems at the base.

“This is a small, selective harvest operation — very different from a large scale industrial approach,” he said.

Nils Christoffersen, executive director of Wallowa Resources, notes that until recently, data was uncertain as to the efficacy of fire mitigation treatment such as resiliency and fuel reduction thinning. However, he maintains, the latest scientific analysis shows that in many cases, the treatments can reduce the severity as well as the speed with which wildfires cover ground. He added that fire is a great danger both to humans, animals and the landscape itself.

He added that the corridor has been designated at extreme fire risk by Westside Risk Assessment Data as well as the community wildfire plan.

“There’s an ecological need to address that risk; more importantly, there is a public safety risk should wildfire break out in primary fire season,” he said. “This project is

an important step forward in that regard.”

Noting concerns about salmon habitat in the river, Christoffersen noted that the project is being handled by the guidelines of the river’s Wild and Scenic River Plan and also went under thorough examination by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife and also National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries. He also mentioned that the Nez Perce tribe, which has both fishery and cultural interests in the corridor, have not filed a suit against the project and remain in communication with the agency over the project.

In the end, Christoffersen said he believes the Forest Service was doing what it could to try to placate the people and entities involved.

“The forest service is trying to balance the sensitivities or social trade-offs between achieving the public safety goal but recognizing that a lot of the public today finds that the landscape has aesthetic, recreational or spiritual values. It’s a difficult balance to strike.”

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