



WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



Governor's budget directs \$247M to rural projects

Wallowa Dam gets \$16 million earmark

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — On the campaign trail, Gov. Kate Brown was eager to tell voters she would represent all regions of the state.

"I'm the only candidate in this race with a track record of bringing Republicans and Democrats together, urban and rural Oregonians together, to tackle the problems facing Oregon," Brown said during one debate.

A month after her reelection, she is following through on that claim.

Brown's proposed budget, released last week, includes more than \$247 million for rural infrastructure projects and other increased spending to benefit rural residents.

"I also believe that the work we are doing to continue to grow the economy by investing in infrastructure, housing, broadband, water and of course, career and technical education will benefit communities large and small across Oregon," Brown told reporters as she released her budget proposal.

There's enthusiasm from observers about Brown's spending plans for rural Oregon, from dams to housing to high-speed internet.

But some advocates and lawmakers worry about other parts of her budget that cut fire protection on forestland, hold steady money for community colleges and increase taxes by \$2 billion.

Rural areas of the state face unique challenges. Despite the state's robust overall economic growth, rural Oregon has yet to fully bounce back from the Great Recession.

Rural unemployment has been declining since its peak in 2009, and the state's rural economy is less diverse, making it more vulnerable to shocks. And the populace and

See Budget, Page A9



Chieftain file photo

The lakeside face of the badly aging Wallowa Lake Dam.



WILD HORSES, WILD CANYONS

Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Dawn Medley-Fowler with her mustang mare "Smokin' Ghost." Medley-Fowler thinks she may have picked just the right kind of horse for the rugged Imnaha country and is enjoying training mustangs to prepare them for adoption.

New Imnaha residents train mustangs

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Dawn Medley Fowler and husband Ed Medley have long dreamed of working cattle in the rugged Imnaha country.

They've got a start on that dream. The couple bought the Jim Fields place about five miles down the Lower Imnaha Road. And Dawn has the right kind of horse for the Imnaha Canyon.

She's a mustang trainer with the federal Trainer Incentive Program,

which means she gets paid to break mustangs brought in from Bureau of Land Management herds across the west. Her horses have so far come from Beatys Butte near Lakeview, Cold Springs near Harper, and Black Mountain in Owyhee County, Idaho.

TIP trainers only have to put 10 days on a horse before the animal is safe enough to be adopted. During those 10 days, a trainer must teach specific skills. It's a high expectation list, given that some of the horses are completely wild and adult. If a trainer can get a younger horse, training not as hard as one might expect — though the trainer has to be a pretty good hand to meet the requirements.

Trainers don't have to have gone through a specific program, but must have letters of recommendation, and must use natural horsemanship methods. Dawn follows the Parelli method.

Her first big success came when she took her young mare, "Smokin' Ghost" to the Teens of Oregon Mustang Challenge in 2017. During that show and sales event, all the horses in the 100-days-of training competition are able to show off their training in trail, condition and handling, and maneuvers classes. The show in Albany also included a freestyle riding exposition, Dawn said.

See Mustangs, Page A8

Farm groups express relief as Trump signs farm bill

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS

Capital Press

The signing of a new farm bill by President Trump on Thursday delivers just what farmers and ranchers were wishing for this Christmas season.

Farm groups were quick to register their appreciation and relief in press statements thanking Trump, his administration and Congress for securing a bill before the clock ran out on 2018.

The American Farm Bureau Federation said enactment means risk-management tools, foreign market development and environmental stewardship programs continue to be available — and on terms that reflect a much tougher economy than when the last farm bill became law.

"The farm bill helps to ensure the food security and economic security of our nation. Directly or indirectly, it benefits everyone in towns large and small," Zippy Duvall, AFBF president, said.

National Farmers Union said the leaders and staff of House and Senate agriculture committees delivered on much-needed improvements to the previous farm bill and continued support for programs that aid family farm sustainability and emerging markets.

"Farmers Union members are relieved to have the support of the farm bill heading into an uncertain future for American agriculture," Roger Johnson, NFU president, said.

"We're entering a sixth year of devastatingly low farm prices, leading to substantial financial stress for farm families and forcing many out of business," he said.

USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue said Trump's signature is a Christmas present to American agriculture.

"Farmers take financial risks every year as a matter of doing business, so having a farm bill in place gives them peace of mind to make their decisions for the future," he said.

See TRUMP, Page A9

Wallowa County aids victims of California's Camp Fire

Local donations

By Ellen Morris Bishop
for the Chieftain

The Wallowa County Humane Society is working to help the pets and domestic animals still separated from their owners after California's disastrous, 153,000-acre Camp Fire last month.

About 1,300 animals, including cats, dogs, goats, sheep, pigs and chickens remain housed in animal shelters and the Oroville (Butte County) Fairgrounds, awaiting a reunion with their families, according to the Butte County Animal Control website.

Joseph resident Trudy Turner learned of the animals caught in the fire through friends

who lived in nearby Chico, California.

"I just had to do something to help," she said. "So I gathered up some things I had. Then I put out a call on Wallowa County Classifieds. It was like a firestorm. People brought in food and all kinds of supplies."

Then Turner contacted her friend, Michale Thibideau, a pilot who lived in Tracy, California.

See Fire, Page A8

Ellen Morris Bishop for the Chieftain

Wallowa County Humane Society Vice President Denise Clevenger tallies up the sheets and flannel blankets donated to victims of California's Camp Fire by Wallowa Memorial Hospital.

