



THE WEEK
IN PHOTOS
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WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



136th Year, No. 30

WINNER OF THE 2020 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

Wallowa County Voices



Lynne
Gross
Lostine

Hopes for peace after election

LOSTINE — Lynne Gross occasionally moves away from Wallowa County, but keeps coming back, largely because it's home.

"I have been in the county since 1983. I come; I go for work. I just came back in March."

Gross has taught at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario and also at Olympic College in Bremerton, Washington. She teaches computer drafting and geographic information systems.

"I've retired three times, but it doesn't stick," she said. "So, this is home."

She's raised four sons in the county, who all graduated from Enterprise High School. She also has two granddaughters and her youngest grandchild, a grandson, is due to graduate this year from Joseph Charter School.

She recently shared her thoughts on living in Wallowa County.

What's your favorite thing about Wallowa County?

It's family, it's home. I've lived a lot of places in the country and this is home. I don't know if I would be here if my family wasn't here — the cold sure gets to me.

Are you concerned about catching COVID-19?

No. I think a lot of it's hype. I don't think it's a lot worse than a lot of other things that have gone around. They're using it politically.

Are you glad to see a return of winter?

I'm not too fond of tourists and I like the fact that it's mainly local people in the winter. But the cold winters kind of get to me anymore.

What are you hoping for after Election Day?

What I really hope for is for the violence in the cities to end, one way or another, either be stopped or voluntarily stop. It's more than protests; it's rioting and destruction.

What have you learned from living in Wallowa County?

Be prepared. I lived in Imnaha for over five years, so make sure you have alternative heat sources, food stocked up and hobbies and things to do to keep yourself busy in the winter months.

What's your advice for people who are thinking about moving here?

Don't move here unless you respect rural values. Too many, from say California and Portland, come and try to change the county into what they just came from. Just like any relationship, if you are expecting the other person to change to accommodate you, it doesn't work.

—Bill Bradshaw,
Wallowa County Chieftain



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

The new conservation easement will preserve the Wallowa River's eastern channel and wetland areas from future development.

Closer to reality

Nez Perce Tribe investment critical for the reintroduction of sockeye

By ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA LAKE — A long-held dream of reintroducing sockeye salmon to Wallowa Lake is one step closer for the Nez Perce Tribe.

On Thursday, Oct. 22, the tribe secured a conservation easement on the 9.22 acres at the head of the lake and along the Wallowa River owned by Wallowa Lake Lodge, LLC. The move guarantees that sockeye spawning and rearing habitat will be ensured for posterity.

"The main reason we have wanted this easement is for protection of the inlet for sockeye salmon and protecting the waters and the habitat around that area expressly for sockeye reintroduction and for the fisheries," said Shannon Wheeler, Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee chairman. "The other reason — it's a place that's very meaningful to the tribe."

The area is known to the Nez Perce as Waakak'amkt, or "where the braided stream disappears into the water," Wheeler said.

The conservation easement covers all 9.22 acres of the lodge grounds. It maps out three conservation zones, each of which occupy about one-third of the property. One, around the lodge and cabins, allows for expansion of the lodge and cabins in areas that will not impact habitat or old-growth trees.



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa Lake Lodge, LLC, managing partner James Monteith and conservationist Rob Peterson discuss the kinds of activities permitted on the lawn area according to the new conservation easement.

The second zone includes the lodge's renowned lawn, shaded by old-growth trees, and a small wetland to the east. This is designated open ground/habitat. Here, the easement allows weddings, parties and general access that will not negatively impact the habitat values of the site.

The third zone is the wild and wet west side of the property. It includes the river, springs and wetlands that provide spawning habitat. This zone is designated as an aquatic habitat, and will remain undeveloped.

The specifics will be spelled out in a management plan that is under development, Wheeler said.

"For me, the easement's everything

because it cements together both the reality of buying the lodge and everybody's hope that the tribe would be able to protect the head of the lake," the lodge's managing partner, James Monteith, said.

The Nez Perce Tribe purchased the conservation easement for about \$686,000, which was less than the original appraisal of \$941,300. The funds will allow Wallowa Lake Lodge, LLC, to retire most of the bridge-loans from Craft3 Bank and the Bank of Eastern Oregon that helped acquire the property in 2016.

"That turned out to be the right amount for

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Feds announce final rule to delist wolves in Lower 48 states

Move won't have an impact in Wallowa County, where the animal is already delisted

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

The Trump administration is moving forward with a controversial decision to lift endangered species protections for gray wolves across the Lower 48 states.

Interior Secretary David Bernhardt made the announcement Thursday, Oct. 29, at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Bloomington, Minnesota.

"After more than 45 years as a listed species, the gray wolf has exceeded all conservation goals for recovery," Bernhardt said. "Today's announcement simply reflects the determination that this species is neither a threatened nor endangered

species based on the specific factors Congress has laid out in law."

Western ranchers and agricultural groups supported removing wolves from the list of federally endangered species.

Don Schiefelbein, vice president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, said the decision was the culmination of decades of work by cattle producers and landowners nationwide to protect habitat and ensure wolf recovery was successful — despite facing impacts to their own livelihoods from wolves preying on livestock.

"The recovery and delisting of the gray wolf is an outstanding vic-



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Photo

A collared gray wolf is shown. The federal government on Thursday, Oct. 29, 2020, announced it is moving forward with a decision to lift endangered species protections for the animal in the Lower 48, though the move won't impact Wallowa County as the gray wolf has been delisted for years.

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