

## OPINION

### OTHER VIEWS

# Worries about the River Act

Oregon's U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, cleverly included the word "Democracy" in their bill, introduced a year ago and pending in Congress, that would nearly triple the mileage of waterways in the state under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

That august word, so beloved in America, tends to burnish whatever it's applied to.

But although the senators used the democratic tactic of soliciting suggestions from the public about which streams to include in their River Democracy Act, that's not the most appropriate method when it comes to potentially imposing federal protection, and the associated potential restrictions, on an estimated 3 million acres (based on the proposed mile-wide corridor along the included streams). That includes about 104,000 acres in Baker County along segments of 31 waterways.

The 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is intended to protect rivers that have "outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values in a free-flowing condition."

"Flowing" obviously requires water.

And although another key word in the 1968 Act — "outstanding" — is decidedly subjective, the senators should use more informed criteria in crafting their bill than the preferences of a minuscule percentage of the state's population. Wyden and Merkley said they received nominations from about 2,500 Oregonians.

Protecting streams is a worthwhile goal, to be sure.

And designating streams under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not restrict activities on adjacent public land (private land isn't affected) nearly as stringently as another federal law, the Wilderness Act.

Yet the bill would prohibit new mining permits on public land in the corridors along designated streams (existing permits would be grandfathered in, according to Wyden's spokesman, Hank Stern).

The bill also could thwart efforts to thin overcrowded forests. That's a problem rife in the Blue Mountains and one that increases the risk of catastrophic wildfires which would sully any values, outstanding or otherwise, that a stream has.

Wyden points out that the River Democracy Act would not prohibit logging in stream corridors to reduce the risk of wildfires. He also notes that reducing fire risk, with a focus on using prescribed fire to curb fuel loads, is among his chief goals for public lands. The bill also would require agencies that manage designated corridors — primarily the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management — to assess wildfire risks in each corridor.

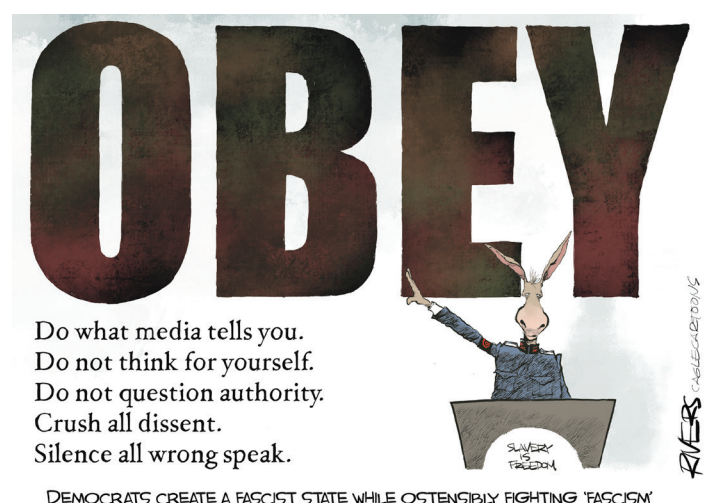
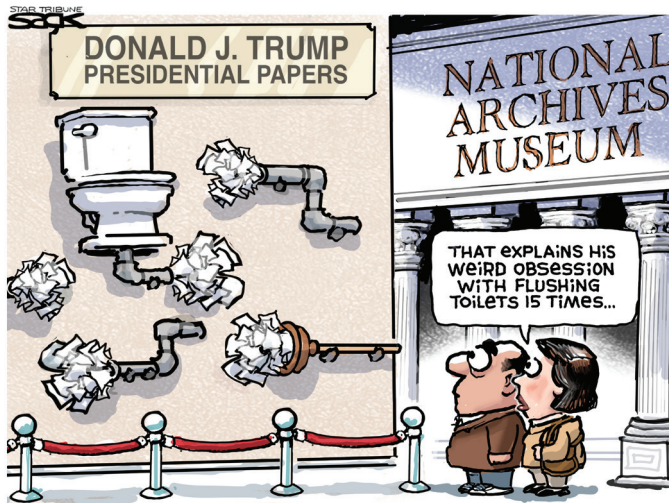
That all sounds promising.

But it's hardly far fetched to fret that a wild and scenic river designation would embolden environmental groups to legally challenge reasonable thinning projects under the guise that such work would harm the corridor's "outstanding" values.

And prescribed fire, though a valuable tool whose use should be expanded on public land, in many places must be preceded by tree-cutting, lest the "managed" fire do more harm than good.

Ultimately, the River Democracy Act is a bit premature. Rather than giving federal protection to 4,700 miles of streams in one fell swoop, and then figuring out later not only how to manage them but whether they actually met the standards of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Wyden and Merkley should call for a more thorough study of the nominated segments and present a refined list in future legislation.

— Baker City Herald



### LETTERS to the EDITOR

#### Judgment of God is coming to America

Donald Trump was the strongest supporter of Bible believers of any president, and what he's done for evangelicals, as it relates to Israel. My question to you is what was the cause of Donald Trump losing the election? And what was the cause of the plague and riots and natural disasters? You might say Twitter and Facebook and their lies. You might say it's godless media, but I can tell you the cause.

The cause of Donald Trump losing the election was the judgment of God on America. It's the same reason the plague came. Floods came, fires came and cities' monuments were torn down. The judgment of God brought the COVID on our nation. It is the same reason we were humiliated in such a terrible way in Afghanistan, and the same reason Biden won.

The spirit of the Antichrist will try to convince you that it wasn't the judgment of God, so you will fight with flesh and blood rather than battling with principalities and powers and repent. The Antichrist

has, in fact, impacted the church. Not all of them, but many of them. Instead of revivals, prayer meetings, Sunday night services and people crying out to God, now preaching on judgment of fear of hell.

If you truly want to save America, we should all come together, have revivals and prayer meetings. We can only do it on our knees and by allowing the Holy Spirit to save America from an Antichrist spirit. Do you hear sermons on suffering for Christ, or hell or judgment? If not, why not?

Roger Weishoff  
Enterprise

#### Questions need to be asked of the OHA

Editor, your questioning of the Oregon Health Authority about the assignment of "COVID-19" death of our friend Terri Malec is greatly appreciated. Bringing these questions to light is important: They implicate the OHA as merely another tool of those who wish to impose an authoritarian tyranny upon us. C.S. Lewis noted

that of all tyrannies, one imposed for the "greater good" would be the worst; anyone questioning authority becomes a pariah in the fearful mob. The evils done to our people and their livelihoods over the last two years are too numerous to list.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has revealed that far fewer people actually died from COVID as opposed to the numbers of those who were counted as such. Uglier truths are yet to reach the general public regarding the deadly adverse effects the so-called COVID vaccines are creating in our population. Why are these vaccine manufacturers not liable for harm done? This so-called "pandemic" was spun up for the benefit of corporations such as Pfizer and inside-traders of their stocks, many of whom are sitting in Congress.

A wise epigram: An agent from the Bureau of Indian Affairs went to a reservation and said to the chief, "I am from the government and I am here to help you." The chief replied, "Make up your mind."

Stuart Vencil  
Joseph

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