

Land Board votes to keep Elliott State Forest

The State Land Board today voted to keep the Common School lands within the Elliott State Forest (about 82,500 acres) in public ownership.

The Land Board members voted unanimously to terminate the 'protocol' that was established in 2015 to seek alternative ownership of the forest.

The board directed the Department of State Lands to move forward with a new planning effort to keep the forest in public ownership.

At the meeting, each board member shared their ideas on possible public ownership plans for the Elliott.

Governor Brown's plan involves \$100 million in state bonding to buy out high-con-

servations in a "trust land transfer" process, and securing an updated Habitat Conservation Plan to protect threatened species in the forest.

Treasurer Read's plan builds on the governor's proposal, potentially transferring the entire forest at a future time to Oregon State University and the College of Forestry.

Secretary of State Richardson encouraged the Land Board and staff to investigate potential land exchanges with the federal government that would trade Elliott acreage for "commercial-grade" forest lands.

Several invited panelists provided information about the different plans, and the Board heard testimony from Jim

Green of the Oregon School Boards Association, representing Common School Fund beneficiaries, and Michael Rondo of the Cow Creek Tribe, a partner with Lone Rock Timber in the one plan received in response to the protocol.

About 35 people provided public testimony. After a presentation on the Common School Fund's investment performance and projected distributions, the Land Board voted to continue to follow the distribution policy in place since 2009, distributing 4 percent of the three-year rolling average of the value of the fund.

The State Land Board consists of Governor Kate Brown, Secretary of State Dennis Richardson and State Treasurer

Tobias Read.

The Department of State Lands administers diverse natural and fiscal resources.

Many of the resources generate revenue for the Common School Fund, such as state-owned rangelands and timberlands, waterway leases, estates for which no will or heirs exist, and unclaimed property.

Twice a year, the agency distributes fund investment earnings to support K-12 public schools.

The agency also administers Oregon's Removal-Fill Law, which requires people removing or filling certain amounts of material in waters of the state to obtain a permit. www.oregon.gov/dsl

Tickets now available for SportsTown Awards dinner

The second-annual SportsTown Awards, presented by the Eugene, Cascades and Coast Sports Commission will be held Thursday, June 1, with returning master of ceremonies Jordan Kent.

The dinner and recognition night will be at the Valley River Inn in Eugene. Awards categories include Male and Female Student Athlete of the Year, Athletic Trainer of the Year, Athlete with Heart, Sustainable Sports Event of the Year, Inspirational Coach of the Year, Sports Promotion of the Year, Fan of the Year, Mascot of the Year and the SportsTown Legacy Award.

The ceremony will intro-

ducing a new interactive Student Nominee Recognition Exhibit sponsored by FastSigns and Long's Meat Market.

Tickets are on sale now and are available for purchase at SportsTownAwards.com.

Tickets are \$35 per person and include admission to the event, complementary soft drinks and small plate appetizers.

For more information, contact Janis Ross, Executive Director Eugene, Cascades and Coast Sports Commission, 541-743-8753 or email her at Janis@EugeneCascadesCoast.org.

Oregon Coast Aquarium to host 'Migratory Bird' day

Birders of a feather will flock together when the Oregon Coast Aquarium celebrates International Migratory Bird Day today, May 13.

The theme this year is "Helping Birds Along the Way," a nod to the various habitat types birds need for food and rest as they make their way to and from breeding areas.

The aquarium's staff organizes the annual event to help guests appreciate the animals under their care and promote conservation for their counter-

parts in the wild.

"When most people think of bird migration, they assume birds fly north to south and back, but seabirds migrate to the open sea, and only return to land to nest. Once a juvenile puffin heads out to the ocean, it may not see land again for as long as three years," said CJ McCarty, the aquarium's Curator of Birds.

The aquarium, which is home to the largest outdoor seabird aviary in North America, will honor birds' remarkable migrations with

surprises for aquarium visitors and animals.

Guests will have an opportunity to meet brown pelicans and turkey vultures, and learn about seabirds' springtime courtship antics during chats with the aquarium's aviculturists.

The aquarium's feathered residents will be treated to enrichment activities and experiences that provide something new from their normal routine.

Keen-eyed visitors can win prizes by completing a bird-themed scavenger hunt, while

those with kind hearts may choose to add their personal pledge to help birds to the Migratory Bird Day tree.

International Migratory Bird Day activities are free with aquarium admission and advance registration is not required.

The aquarium is open every day this spring from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit aquarium.org or call 541-867-FISH for more information or to purchase advance tickets, or visit us at 2820 S.E. Ferry Slip Rd. in Newport.

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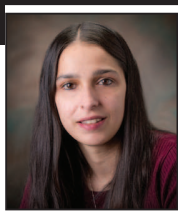


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