

REVIEW from page 9A

"We are tremendously relieved and grateful to have the Senate address the disparity that has burdened our forest for so long. We have managed these forests since time began," Meade said. "We are excited to once again be in control of a small piece of our homeland."

The legislation has several goals. One element is the restoration of ancestral lands to indigenous people that were victimized by unethical government officials and civilians' intent on cashing in on the gold fever of the 1800's.

Additionally, the bills' sponsors said they see the need to expand the control native peoples have over the resources they own, such as timber and minerals.

"While there is still much work to be done to correct our nation's injustices towards Native Americans, the passage of the Western Oregon Tribal Fairness Act is an encouraging move towards progress," DeFazio said. "This legislation will finally grant the Coos, Cow Creek and Coquille Tribes the long-deserved opportunity to manage their own economic development and exercise their own authority over tribal lands."

The bill's co-sponsors also endorse the idea of increased sovereignty of federally controlled land for Oregon's tribal confederations.

"While more can and must be done to rectify the injustices that tribes have long faced, passing this bill into law marks an important step forward in recognizing the sovereignty of western Oregon tribes," Wyden said. "With the Western Oregon Tribal Fairness Act, we will enable tribes to enhance their self-determination and ability to restore ancestral lands, while creating greater economic opportunity," he said. "It's long overdue, and I am thrilled this bill is heading to the president's desk to be signed into law."

The bill also requires the Department of the Interior to locate a similar amount of land in the public domain and reclassify that land as Oregon and California grant land.

Additional 2018 Highlights:

- **Healthcare:** This was a big year for healthcare changes, as Western Lane Ambulance partnered with PeaceHealth Peace Harbor to create Mobile Integrated Healthcare, which provides in-home services to three types of patients: 30-day readmissions, ER high utilizers and Emergency Medical Services high users. The Florence area also now benefits from concierge healthcare through both Northwest Reflections and the Siuslaw Medical Clinic. In the January Special Election, Measure 101, which upheld health care taxes to fund the Oregon Health Plan through 2019, passed overwhelmingly.

- **New Cellphone Towers:** Residents to the north of Florence now have better reception thanks to two new cell towers in the neighborhoods of Mercer and Sutton lakes.

- **Performing Arts:** Florence's

theater groups performed several shows on the mainstage and flat floor of the Florence Events Center, including CROW's "Disney's Tarzan: The Musical" and the annual Holly Jolly Follies and Last Resort Players' "A Nice Family Gathering," "Grey Gardens" and "A Christmas Story." Plus, rising young star Nyah Vollmar chose her hometown to film the music video for her first single, "Empty Spaces," produced by InRage Entertainment, based out of LA. SEACOAST Entertainment also began its 2018/19 season.

- **Plastics:** Plastic waste, and the best way to dispose of the material, continued to be a major concern for many Florence residents during 2018, as the options for recycling and re-using plastic items remained limited. The formation of a group created specifically to address the topic, Precious Plastics Florence, has taken a lead role in assisting individuals that want to do something to reduce the amount of plastic that they are throwing away. These efforts have included collecting plastic waste from Florence residents and transporting a large load to the Lane County Glenwood Transfer site in Eugene. Local waste companies continue to severely limit the types of plastic they will accept during weekly pick-ups as the international situation regarding the acceptance of America's plastic waste remains unchanged.

- **Public Art:** In 2018, Florence's years-long effort to increase the area's public art blossomed with several new installations, including the Art Exposed — Dynamic Public Art Gallery in Historic Old Town Florence. The Public Art Committee also awarded bids for the Siuslaw River Bridge Steps project and the Gateway to Florence Mural at the Central Lincoln PUD building at the intersection of Highways 101 and 126. For more info, visit www.ci.florence.or.us/bc-pac.

- **Siuslaw Vision 2025:** In addition to the popular Florence Boardwalk Market, which runs on weekends from spring to fall, Siuslaw Vision 2025 opened the Florence Farmers Market from May to October 2018. The market will continue. For more info, visit RiverCal.org.

- **Volunteers:** According to the Florence Area Community Coalition, 1,079 volunteers donated a total of 73,984 hours to 14 groups in the Siuslaw region last year, including area museums, mentorship programs, invasive species removal in the dunes and much more. At the City of Florence alone, individual volunteers provided 3,966 hours at the FEC, 3,623 in the Florence Police Auxiliary, 2,932 at the Florence Municipal Airport and 506 in city parks.

Siuslaw News will continue its review of 2018 this Saturday with a look back at its special series coverage.

ReVision Florence Streetscape Project set to begin February 2019

Continuing the vision of what Florence can be, the ReVision Florence streetscape project and associated ODOT paving project have combined, with a schedule to begin construction in February. The end result will be a welcoming gateway for visitors and community members to experience Florence and all it has to offer.

Alex Hodge Construction, Inc. of Bend is the contractor for the \$6.4 million project. ODOT will manage the construction process. The Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA), the City of Florence, project engineering consultant Murraysmith, and ODOT will continue coordination throughout construction.

The initial bidding period in June 2018 resulted in bids that exceeded the \$7.4 million project budget. Since

then, the FURA (represented by the City of Florence) and ODOT worked with the project's engineering consultant, Murraysmith, to revise several components of the project before rebidding in October. Changes included revising the timeline, lane restriction changes, and design modifications.

FURA and ODOT combined the streetscape project and the ODOT paving project into one comprehensive project with a single construction bidding process and contractor. This allowed savings in mobilization and construction costs, as well as reducing some of the work needed for temporary features that would have been needed between two separate projects.

The FURA Board was committed to keeping the ReVision Florence streetscape project within the

\$7.4 million budget, which includes design engineering, right of way acquisition and administration, design review, construction, construction engineering, fixtures, and contingencies.

On Nov. 15, 2018, the combined ReVision Florence and paving project bids were opened. Alex Hodge Construction, Inc. of Bend, Oregon, was the low bidder and was awarded the contract.

The construction costs for the streetscape portion of the total project are within FURA's ReVision Florence construction budget.

Construction updates will be provided after a mid-January pre-construction meeting is held and the contractor's schedule is developed. To sign up for updates on this project and other City items, visit ci.florence.or.us/newsletter/

subscriptions.

FURA, the City of Florence and ODOT have been working on ReVision Florence since 2015. ReVision Florence's goal is to improve the streetscape along the Highway 101 and 126 corridors.

Improvements will include the addition of gateways, public art, plazas, wider sidewalks, ADA accessibility, bicycle lanes, and other traffic calming techniques. It will enhance multi-modal transportation options along Highway 101, while simultaneously creating a more inviting, livable, and vibrant community. Funding for ReVision Florence consists of FURA, State, Federal, and Lane County funds.

To find out more about ReVision Florence, visit ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/revision-florence.

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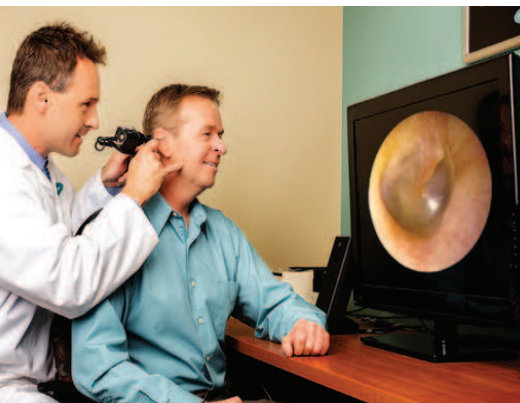
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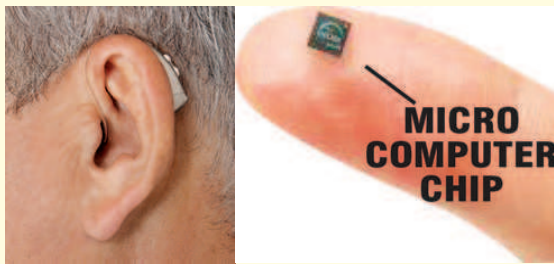
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