

WATERSHED from page 1A

The largest project to be undertaken will be restoring Cleveland Creek, which is located by the small town of Tide up Highway 36.

“In the past, there were a lot of land management practices used that we don’t follow anymore, including a lot of stream cleaning,” Tome said. Stream cleaning is when early loggers would use streams as the easiest way to access areas before roads were built. “They would straighten the stream channels, making it easier for equipment to use, which was to simplify the landscape. Before that would have happened, it would have been a complex landscape. There would be more channels, more vegetation — just a more complex area. We are going in to try and restore those areas.”

There has been a lot of work done to restore the creek over the years to combat much of the stream simplification; however, the culvert feeding the creek from the Siuslaw River has multiple issues.

“That culvert is misaligned and undersized, so the stream makes a hard-right-hand turn there when it comes off the hill,” Tome said. The culvert is perched, meaning there’s a drop at the bottom. “So, fish species have a hard time accessing Cleveland Creek because they are not able to get up into that culvert in some flows because velocity may be too high, or the drop is too big.”

The watershed plans to take out the undersized culvert and replace it with a bridge, allowing better access for aquatic species, along with better connections for sediment, wood and other components of the hydrologic system to reconnect with the Siuslaw River.

“This is kind of the last project over the last couple of decades of working in the Cleveland Creek Basin,” Tome said.

The project is in its final design phase and is expected to begin construction in 2020.

As with Cleveland Creek, upper Indian Creek also suffered from stream sim-

plification. However, there was also a lot of clearcutting over the past decades.

“When it regrew, it regrew with a monocrop of Douglas fir. It’s mostly

that illustrates past restoration projects.

“It’ll be a way we can engage with people to tell them more about the story of why we’re restoring

were really proud of how much money we were able to spend on restoration.”

However, Tome warned that future funding is in danger of being cut.

“Some of the funding we got from OWEB is originally from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) from their Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF),” he said. “That’s a fund that’s designated by congress every year, and it appears in the congressional budget.”

However, the federal administration’s proposed 2020 budget zeros out funding for PCSRF, along with other initiatives such as the Sea Grant program and the Coastal Zone Management Grants.

“It’s a really important fund,” Tome said. “In Oregon alone, they invested \$237 million last year, and that’s matched by OWEB with lottery dollars and other sources to equal \$603 million that was invested in salmon restoration and watershed programs throughout the state. We believe that created around 16,500 jobs in Oregon.”

PCSRF funding can act as a catalyst for major projects. For example, the Cleveland Creek OWEB donation of \$295,483 was matched with an additional \$800,000 from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

PCSRF gave \$236,455 for the Indian Creek project, which was matched with \$600,000 additional dollars from the Siuslaw National Forest, from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and NOAA.

“It’s still early on in the process for it, but ... folks who care about salmon should be really following that fund. I know it’s not always fun to keep up on political news, but this is one that actually does affect our local community,” said Tome.

SWC’s next event will be on May 29 at the Big Bear Camp Retreat in Walton, where beavers and climate change will be discussed.

For more information on the Siuslaw Watershed Council and its projects, visit siuslaw.org or call 541-268-3044.

“We have quite a bit of research that shows about 15 to 24 jobs are created for every million dollars invested in watershed restoration, and more than 90 cents of every dollar invested stays within rural communities in Oregon. We were really proud of how much money we were able to spend on restoration.”

— Eli Tome,
Executive Director, Siuslaw Watershed Council

just once species, and that doesn’t make for a healthy forest,” Tome said.

The plan is to take out multiple firs and fly them down to the bottom of the stream, where they’ll be used to create habitat for salmon and other species.

“When you put wood in a stream, it slows down stream velocity and the river will deposit cobbles that are really important for salmon spawning,” said Tome. “When there’s high velocity flows, the salmon needs somewhere to have a calm water refuge. If you have one single stream channel without much roughness in it, there’s not that many places for the salmon to find refuge in those flows. When we put in wood, it allows those calm water areas and more off-water channel habitats for them to retreat to.”

The trees can also help decrease downstream flooding.

“It also creates more flood plain interaction, so it can actually store flood flows,” Tome said. “When we have a big rain storm, lots of wood in the channel allows more volume in the streams to be stored.”

The project will begin in either October or November, and it will be a sight to see, according to Tome. The trees are not cut, but excavated from their roots to ensure they don’t spread.

“It’s fun listening on the radio, because you can hear how much each tree weighs,” Tome said. “Some of them would weigh 20,000 pounds. That’s a big tree coming in. It’s exciting when it’s going on.”

Finally, OWEB funding will foster a creative project with Siuslaw Coho Partnership to create a story map

the watershed, and how we came up with our projects,” Tome said.

The interactive map will allow users to zoom into certain areas of the watershed and learn about present and future projects, what restoration has been done in the area and general information on why each project is being done. The map will be located on the watershed’s website, siuslaw.org, which itself has received a recent overhaul with a redesigned look and multiple videos and photographs telling the story of the watershed.

“It’s really awesome when you can better communicate with people about why we’re restoring the river. This is what it used to be like,” Tome added.

The upcoming projects come after what he called “a big year” for the watershed.

“We did another helicopter wood place project in the North Fork Siuslaw. We’re working on Five-mile Bell, which is off of Tahkenitch Lake. We’ve replaced a culvert on Walker Creek by Walton. And we did a stream restoration project on Fish Creek, which is over by Triangle Lake,” Tome said.

In addition, more than 30,000 native plants were planted last year, and 10,000 native plants were given to local property owners.

\$1.3 million went into the projects, which Tome points out is a boom for the local economy.

“We have quite a bit of research that shows about 15 to 24 jobs are created for every million dollars invested in watershed restoration, and more than 90 cents of every dollar invested stays within rural communities in Oregon,” he said. “So, we

mended allowing haulers to pass on the increased fees to customers.

Council members had few questions regarding the resolution; all were familiar with the specifics of the issues involved as they had worked on the subject during a previous work session and the resolution was adopted with unanimous support.

The second request for action was from Public Works Director Mike Miller, who asked councilors to accept a bid from Steve’s Masonry in the amount of \$75,733 for construction of the Miller Park concession stand masonry wall.

Miller recapped the rationale for the change in approach to funding the project and the request was approved with minimal discussion.

City Manager Erin Reynolds next gave a brief report, which included a reminder of the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Siuslaw River Beach Access Park at 612 Rhododendron Drive. The grand opening will be Tuesday, May 14, beginning at 4 p.m.

Reynolds also pointed out new bike racks have been installed at Florence City Hall, 250 Highway 101, in time for bike month, and

that the City Budget has been published and is available for viewing online.

In addition, Reynolds also wanted residents to know that an opportunity to get an early start on spring yard cleaning was coming up.

“On May 11, you can bring the yard debris that you have cleaned up doing your yard work. We do not allow burning in the city limits of Florence and there is limited burning outside the city limits — mostly for safety reasons,” Reynolds said. “This is a good opportunity, if you have a lot of yard clippings, to bring them down to the end of 27th Street, right past the Public Works Facility, starting at 9 a.m. on May 11. For about \$11 a load, you can drop off your yard debris.”

Councilor reports were the last item on the agenda.

Councilor Joshua Greene pointed out the opening of the Siuslaw River Access Park was the culmination of several years of work by many individuals and he encouraged residents to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony next week.

The meeting ended on a positive note, with Port of Siuslaw staff and Port Manager David Huntington being applauded by councilors for the doing the work

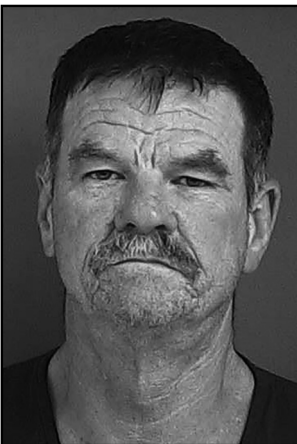
ARREST from page 1A

The charges against Spalione include:

- Sexual Penetration 1st Degree — two counts
- Kidnapping 1st Degree — two counts
- Assault 2nd Degree — two counts
- Sexual Abuse 1st Degree — two counts
- Menacing — two counts

Spalione was arrested in connection to the assault which took place April 28, while a woman was walking her dog.

Spalione was also arrested in connection to another assault at Carter Lake on Aug. 16, 2018, when an adult female who had been sleeping in her vehicle along Sparrow Park Road awoke to an adult male



Edward Owen Spalione

sexually assaulting her. Douglas County Sheriff’s Office is currently working to determine if Spalione has any connection to similar assaults. Additional details or comments have not been released to avoid jeopardizing the integrity of the investigation.

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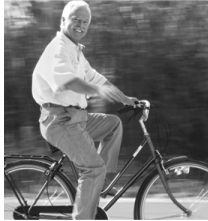
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