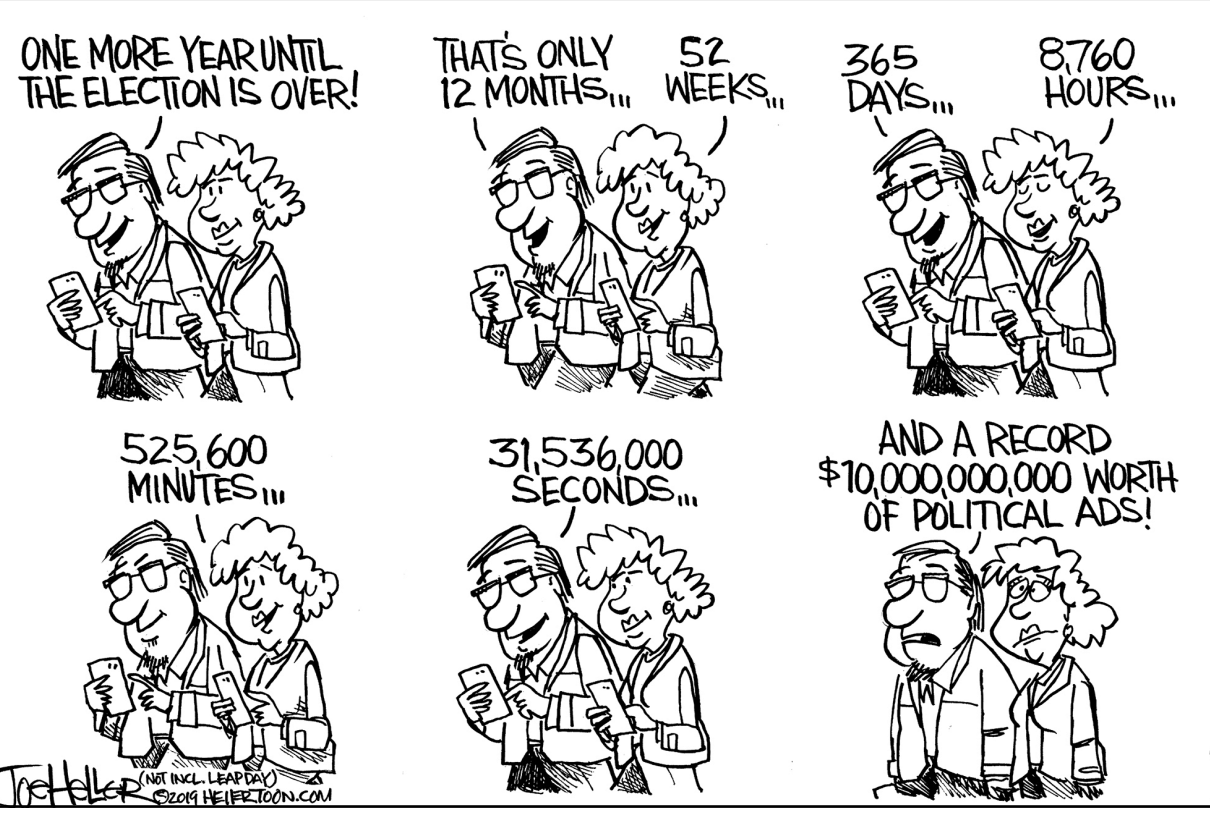


Cottage Grove Sentinel
 116 N. Sixth St.
 Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

Opinion

The First Amendment
 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



Giesy Plan is alternative to current Elliott State Forest management

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

through the Elliott. The purpose was to begin active management of the developing second-growth; most of the remaining older trees were then logged at

money for the first time in more than 50 years. The Land Board tried to rid itself of these problems by hastily appraising the Elliott at a fraction of its

ed slopes would be used either for older forest habitat or for intensive harvest. Animal populations would be closely monitored to see how different species responded to each condition — all while maintaining Phillips' 50 mmbf per year harvest schedule for schools and local jobs.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Dr. Bob Zybach Cottage Grove

that time and the proposed roads built.

Recent History:

Then, in 1962, the Columbus Day Storm blew down 100 mmbf of 70-year-old trees on the Elliott, causing an immediate need to accelerate harvest schedules — and finally begin providing regular jobs and incomes to local communities and Oregon schools, as originally planned.

Jerry Phillips, long-time Coos Bay resident, began working on the Elliott in the 1950s and continued there until his retirement as its manager in 1989. He is the Elliott's historian and his 1996, 414-page history, "Caulked Boots and Cheese Sandwiches," includes detailed accounts of the 1962 hurricane and the subsequent management challenges and accomplishments that resulted.

During his career, Phillips added several thousand acres to the Elliott by way of statewide and local land trades and sales. He was also able to sell 50 mmbf of timber a year the entire time, adding greatly to local jobs, government treasuries and the Common School Fund.

Despite the continued harvest, when Phillips retired there was a far greater volume of older trees than when he began — mostly because the Elliott grows 60 to 80 mmbf of new timber a year, whether it is logged or not.

Almost immediately after Phillips' retirement, harvest levels, employment and income from the Elliott plummeted dramatically. Federal regulations, environmental lawsuits and political decisions based on "critical habitat" designations for marbled murrelets and spotted owls were the stated causes.

Problems only became worse in following years and a new plan was written in 2008 to stabilize jobs and income and to meet perceived federal regulations.

Another lawsuit was filed and the plan was not adopted. More lawsuits were filed and the Elliott began losing

former value and attempting to sell it for \$220.8 million — no more and no less. There was a single bidder at this fixed rate and the curious transaction approved. Under public pressure the Land Board then reversed itself and negated the sale.

The Giesy Alternative:

As these latter events were unfolding in 2016, then-Oregon State Senator Ted Ferrioli was meeting regularly with long-time associate and forest industry supporter, Wayne Giesy.

Meetings often included a continued discussion of many years regarding Giesy's theories on ending the costly "timber wars" that had become imbedded between proponents and opponents of active forest management.

Giesy's thought was that if public forestlands could be divided into three zones — riparian, habitat and product — that would help resolve the legal disputes of previous decades without unfairly punishing rural families and businesses, and while making certain desired wildlife habitat conditions were maintained.

Ferrioli suggested that a "Giesy Plan Alternative" to management of the Elliott as a test for application on federal forestlands might be a good idea. At that point Giesy and I began to develop this proposal and continued to work on it almost daily until his passing last August at age 99.

The plan would only last 20 years and rigorously research land use patterns of key Elliott bird, fish and animal species by using the successful Oregon State University (OSU) "paired watersheds" design employed for many years on the North Umpqua River.

By that time, taxpayers and scientists would have far better information for making a new set of long-term plans for the property.

Basic elements of the proposal were to divide the Elliott into about 25 sub-basins, similar to the 2008 plan. Fish-bearing riparian areas would be managed separately and upper forest-

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Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

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Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must: 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

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Periodicals postage paid at Cottage Grove, Oregon.
 Postmaster: Send address changes to P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

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