

Local

Operator sought for Spout Springs ski area

BY ISABELLA CROWLEY

The Observer

TOLLGATE — For the last six winters, the slopes at Spout Springs have been empty — but that could change in the near future.

The Umatilla National Forest is seeking proposals from interested entities to operate and manage the Spout Springs Ski Area, near Tollgate.

“Spout Springs has been a cornerstone of the local ski scene on the Umatilla National Forest since the 1950s. This is a special place and the Forest Service wants to see the site operating and once again providing recreation opportunities for our communities,” said Darcy Weseman, public affairs officer for the Umatilla National Forest.

The site, which had its first public ski season in 1956, is in the Blue Mountains of Northeastern Oregon within the Umatilla National Forest at milepost 22 along Oregon Highway 204.

An Olympic history

Created by the Blue Mountain Ski Club, Spout Springs served as the Nordic training center for the United States Olympic team and the Norwegian jump team in preparation for the 1955 and 1964 Winter Olympics. The U.S. Olympic Committee recognized Spout Springs’ connection to the Winter Olympic Games and granted the ski area permission to fly the Olympic flag.

The ski area covers 1,413 acres and has a vertical drop of 530 feet, according to the Forest Service. Spout Springs is at an elevation of 4,920 feet and on average receives 130 inches of snow per year. The recreation area includes two large chalet-style buildings, which have been used as the main lodge and rental shop.

Skiers and snowboarders are taken up the mountain via two double chairlifts, where they have access to 13 downhill runs. Previous owners of Spout Springs said the ski area



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

Spout Springs Ski Area’s large chalet-style buildings offer opportunities for year-round recreation near Tollgate. The Umatilla National Forest is looking for qualified parties to run the ski area, which has been closed since 2016.

More Information

Submission guidelines for interested parties are available on the U.S. Forest Service’s website.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to visit Spout Springs and inspect the infrastructure in person prior to submitting a proposal. To schedule a site visit, contact Andy Steele at andrew.steele@usda.gov with “Spout Springs Site Visit” as the subject line.

The proposals are due by Sept. 1 and are being used to gauge competitive interest. They will be reviewed by Walla Walla District Manager Aaron Gagnon, with support provided by the staff at the Umatilla National Forest Headquarters.

is an ideal place for alpine skiers of all skill levels to hone their skills, in part due to the varied terrain.

Some of the downhill runs can be illuminated for night skiing, and there are also more

than 20 miles of nordic ski trails with varied levels of difficulties.

Change in ownership

The ski area has been closed since 2016, Weseman said. That left the previous owners in a “state of noncompliance” she said. John and Nancy Murray — who had owned and operated Spout Springs since 1999 — had safety concerns for skiers due to snowmobilers using the north parking area. According to Weseman, the Forest Service worked with the Murrays and tried to resolve the conflict, but no resolution was ever reached. In November 2021, their permit was revoked and the infrastructure became property of the U.S. government.

“The Forest Service is committed to providing for public safety while maintaining a balance of public access to the Forest surrounding Spout Springs Ski Area,” Weseman said.

Spout Springs’ future

The list of required duties to operate Spout Springs is long.

Weseman said the new operators will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and equipment, physical site management, staffing, food and beverage, planning and development.

Interested parties are encouraged to include ways the recreation area could be used year-round in their proposals. Weseman said candidates should consider four-season operations in order to make the opportunity more lucrative and successful. Previous owners have promoted summer recreational activities, such as mountain biking and hiking, and the Umatilla Forest Service is open to allowing activities aligned with the intended use of the land, like camping.

The ultimate goal is to sell the existing infrastructure and issue a new Ski Area Term Permit to a qualified applicant. According to Weseman, the ski area could be operated under a special use permit for government-owned facilities until the sale of the infrastructure is finalized.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

July 16, 1972

The showdown for the District III crown may come early in the eight-team Babe Ruth tournament that begins here today, according to at least some veteran observers.

25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

July 16, 1997

HAINES — School board members from Baker City and North Powder directed their administrators Tuesday about future inter-district attendance decisions.

The two boards met for more than an hour in the Haines School gymnasium, with about 15 parents observing. The boards agreed that an enrollment of 270 students in the North Powder School District would trigger a closer look at transfers of Baker 5J students into North Powder schools.

10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

July 16, 2012

A pair of hail storms Saturday afternoon severely damaged crops in the Baker and North Powder valleys and left a couple in southern Baker County stranded overnight when their mile-long driveway was inundated.

The separate storms, which also spawned dozens of lightning strikes, torrential rains and powerful wind gusts, both hit around mid-afternoon.

ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

July 17, 2021

Wolves from the Lookout Mountain pack killed a five-month-old calf on a public land grazing allotment in eastern Baker County this week.

Biologists from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) examined the carcass on Wednesday, July 14 in the Manning Creek area northeast of Durkee.

The rancher who owns the calf found the carcass while checking cattle that evening, and biologists estimate the calf died about 36 hours earlier.

Most of the carcass had been consumed.

The carcass had numerous parallel pre-mortem tooth scrapes up to five inches long and one-quarter inch wide on the rear of both back legs above the hock, injuries consistent with wolf attacks on calves, according to an ODFW report.

A wolf from the Lookout Mountain pack that’s fitted with a GPS tracking collar was at the location where the carcass was found at about the approximate time of death, according to an ODFW report.

Biologists also investigated a second dead calf on Tuesday, July 13. That calf was found in the First Creek area near Virtue Flat, east of Baker City.

They determined that the calf at First Creek, which was mostly intact, was not killed by wolves or any other predator.

Brian Ratliff, district wildlife biologist at ODFW’s Baker City office, said the Lookout Mountain pack consists of an adult male and female, the breeding pair, two yearlings that were born in the spring of 2020, and an unknown number of pups born in May 2021.

Ratliff said photos from a remote camera showed five pups this spring, but he can’t be sure how many of those pups are alive now. Although the calf at First Creek was not killed by wolves, ODFW employees did find wolf tracks near the carcass, Ratliff said.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, JULY 13

10 – 22 – 29 – 31 – 38 – 39

Next jackpot: \$3.4 million

POWERBALL, JULY 13

22 – 23 – 36 – 47 – 63 PB 2

Next jackpot: \$82 million

MEGA MILLIONS, JULY 12

4 – 7 – 10 – 45 – 64 Mega 12

Next jackpot: \$480 million

WIN FOR LIFE, JULY 13

3 – 19 – 21 – 32

PICK 4, JULY 14

• 1 p.m.: 4 – 6 – 4 – 8

• 4 p.m.: 8 – 8 – 4 – 3

• 7 p.m.: 0 – 0 – 8 – 2

• 10 p.m.: 0 – 1 – 9 – 9

LUCKY LINES, JULY 14

4-7-9-13-17-23-28-29

Next jackpot: \$13,000

SENIOR MENUS

MONDAY (July 18): Sweet and sour chicken, rice, Oriental veggies, rolls, green salad, cookies

TUESDAY (July 19): Pork roast, scalloped potatoes, peas, rolls, applesauce, lemon squares

WEDNESDAY (July 20): Chef salad, breadsticks, fruit, peach crisp

THURSDAY (July 21): Orange-glazed chicken, rice, vegetables, rolls, cottage cheese and fruit, sherbet

FRIDAY (July 22): Beef pot roast, red potatoes, baby carrots, rolls, green salad, cheesecake

MONDAY (July 25): Hot turkey sandwiches, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed veggies, 3-bean salad, lemon squares

Public Luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$5 donation (60 and older), \$7.50 for those under 60.

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Democrat seeking to oust Bentz makes Pendleton stop

BY ANTONIO ARREDONDO

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Joe Yetter, the Democratic nominee for Oregon’s 2nd Congressional District, stopped by Pendleton on Tuesday, July 12, during his Eastern Oregon tour.

Yetter is running against incumbent Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, and plans to use his trip as a “listening tour,” learning from the residents of Eastern Oregon and asking questions about their needs.

“It’s my belief that Americans, Oregonians and East Oregonians all share a common body of hopes and dreams and aspirations,” Yetter said, “Even though the politics of the mo-

ment are so toxic, we can understand our shared values and act on them.”

Yetter plans to be available in the Democratic Party booth in Baker City’s Geiser-Pollman Park on Saturday, July 16.

Oregon’s 2nd Congressional District, the seventh-largest district in the nation, stretches from Medford to Ontario. With such a large area to cover, Yetter embarked on a 1,100-mile trip across the region. July 12 marked the second day of the trip, following a stop in The Dalles where the candidate met with supporters and visited the local community center.



Yetter

The son of a World War II veteran and the grandson of a World War I vet, Yetter himself served in the military for more than 35 years as a physician.

After teaching other aspiring military physicians, Yetter lives on his farm in Azalea. “The Army, the U.S. military, and the U.S. taxpayer have basically helped with everything for me in my whole life,” Yetter said, “and so it’s my duty to give back as much as possible.”

Yetter touted several proposed policies, including universal health care and Veteran Affairs assistance. As a gun owner, he said he also supports background checks for firearms. He bills himself as

the “pro-choice” candidate and said he hopes he can bring together a diverse congressional district.

Yetter also touched on economic development in the region and said he hopes to improve infrastructure to attract larger businesses to Pendleton.

Most of all, Yetter recognizes the campaign road is tough. The district has not elected a Democrat since Al Ullman in 1981, and Bentz serves as the sixth consecutive Republican representative. But that doesn’t mean Yetter will go down easily.

“Two years from now, whether I’ll be running for re-election or running to defeat whoever the incumbent is, I’ll be back,” he vowed.

News of Record

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police

Arrests, citations

PAROLE VIOLATION (Oregon State Parole Board warrant): Scott Michael Tugman, 33, Baker City, 4:41 p.m. Thursday, July 14 in the 1000 block of Walnut Street; jailed.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICANTS, REFUSAL TO TAKE BREATH TEST (Baker County Circuit Court warrant): Brandi Louise Stevens, 35, Baker City, 11:25 a.m. Thursday, July 14 in the 600 block of Campbell Street; cited and released.

Baker County Sheriff’s Office

Arrests, citations

CONTEMPT OF COURT (2 Baker County Justice Court warrants): Markus Damian Dethloff, 22, Baker City, 5:25 p.m. Thursday, July 14 at the Baker County Jail, where he was in custody on other charges.

BAKER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
JULY 26, 27, 28
5:30PM - 7:30PM
AT ST. LUKE’S CLINIC
3950 17TH STREET
BAKER CITY, OR 97814

FOR AGES 12-21

APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED!

PLEASE CALL THE BAKER
COUNTY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT TO SCHEDULE
(541) 523-8211

PLEASE BRING
INSURANCE CARDS WITH
YOU TO THE EVENT.

PRIZES & FUN GALORE!!

PICK UP YOUR REGISTRATION PACKET AT THE BAKER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR VISIT:
[HTTPS://WWW.BAKERCOUNTY.ORG/HEALTH/REGFORMS.HTML](https://www.bakercounty.org/health/regforms.html)

ADOLESCENTS UNDER 15
MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY
A PARENT/GUARDIAN

GET YOUR:

YEARLY COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL
(INCLUDING SPORTS PHYSICAL)

CHAT WITH:

PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS
MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS
PHYSICAL THERAPISTS
PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS

