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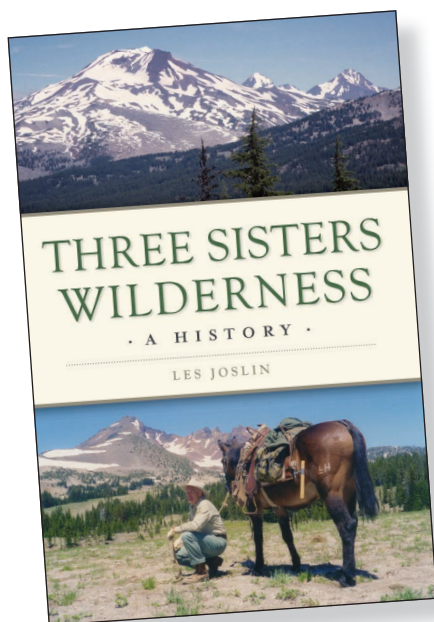
LOCAL LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS

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## Les Joslin tells wild history in 'Three Sisters Wilderness'

BY DAVID JASPER • The Bulletin

**B**end author and historian Les Joslin is back with “Three Sisters Wilderness: A History.” From the introduction’s first sentence, Joslin makes clear that the 175-page book you hold in your hands is a wilderness guide of a different stripe: “There are many excellent hiking and backpacking guides to the Three Sisters Wilderness, but this is not one of them,” he writes. “This book, instead, is a brief guide to a more profound wilderness experience.” It won’t give you the lowdown on how to hike from Moraine Lake to Doris Lake, per se, but if you want an in-depth history of Three Sisters Wilderness — the efforts of citizens from Bend and Eugene and the Wilderness Act of 1964 among them — this is the one for you.



“I was hoping to provide an understandable background history for the citizen-owners of the National Forest System, and this component of the National Forest System,” Joslin said. “There are lots of demands on people’s attention in our society. A lot of people, just think, ‘I’m going up to the wilderness,’ and they don’t know when they’re in congressionally designated Wilderness, which has specific standards that have to be maintained under the law, and when they’re just out in ‘the wilderness.’”

“There’s a difference between a *de facto* wilderness, which is anyplace that it not developed, and *de jure* wilderness, which is congressionally designated wilderness,” Joslin continued. “I wanted (readers) to understand the history of this particular unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System.”

If there’s anyone fit to write such a book, it’s Joslin, who spent the latter portion of his career working for the U.S. Forest Service in Three Sisters Wilderness.

“It was sort of a second or third career” explained Joslin, who can’t be blamed for losing count. His first stint working for the Forest Service was as a fire fighter in Toiyabe National Forest when he was in college.

After graduating, Joslin joined the Navy, where he was a commander. Somewhere in there, he earned two master’s degrees, from the University of Colorado and the University of London. He was still in his mid-40s

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— Les Joslin, Bend author and historian

when he retired and moved from Washington, D.C. to Central Oregon in 1988.

“I found a niche where I could serve in the Three Sisters Wilderness,” said Joslin, who celebrated his 78th birthday a week ago. “I worked 14 summers as a wilderness ranger.”

During that time, he developed an intimacy with the Three Sisters Wilderness as he spent the first couple of years study-

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by Madeline Magaña



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