

# FOREST

Continued from Page A1

density” would also be removed from the plan, except in wildlife corridors.

Southworth asked the audience, including about 10 Forest Service employees, for their questions and concerns regarding the Malheur; they were asked to include solutions to the problems.

Larry Blasing suggested the Forest Service stop “making the same mistakes and expecting a different result.”

“Start working on this a piece at a time, and go back and get rid of the eastside screens — that will start relieving a bunch of the problems,” he said.

Eastside screens, originally meant to be temporary, were adopted in 1994 as a screening process to see that proposed timber sales complied with new environmental rules.

Mark Webb said timber salvage should be treated the same way as timber produc-



Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

**Taking turns speaking around the circle at the public meeting on the revision plan are, from left, Larry Blasing, Mark Webb, Irene Jerome and Jim Sproul.**

tion, taking into account local and site-specific concerns.

He said that whatever ASQ — or volume of board feet — the Forest Service decides on, it “shouldn’t limit what we need to do on the ground.”

Jim Sproul said the plan is not going far enough.

“That is not near enough timber to be cut,” he said, adding the plan would be a

“train wreck.”

“We burned a bunch of homes, we damned near burned a town, and that isn’t because of good management, that isn’t because of good decisions,” he said.

His answer: “Coordination, where local plans have equal footing,” he said. “Local knowledge is what’s needed to straighten this thing out. You can’t come out from the East Coast and say, ‘I can come out here and fix Oregon’ — it doesn’t work.”

Elaine Eisenbraun lauded the Forest Service for working hard and taking comments from people with a different perspective.

Grant County Commissioner Chris Labhart asked Malheur Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin about a possible new biomass plant for the



**Malheur National Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin answers questions at last Friday’s public meeting in John Day.**

county and said he would support the idea.

Beverlin said there is a high chance such a plant would be built, and it would supply biomass to the Boardman power plant as they transition to more green energy.

Tad Houpt said the solutions are in the math.

“We’re going to have to harvest more than it’s growing each year,” he said. “If you took the 55 million (board) feet a year and you times it by 10, you still wouldn’t catch the problem in 20 years — that’s how behind we are on harvest.”

He said he’s seen parts of the forest which have burned, then burned again.

“We open Pandora’s box when we have these big fires like this,” he said. “They’re preventable.”

Revision team leader Sabrina Stadler said she could relate, as the area she’s from in California also has a lot of dead trees.

“I feel for you all, how it must feel to see your place burn,” she said.

Dave Traylor said, in the past, it was loggers protecting their livelihood (not big fire apparatus).

“They went out and fought fire immediately, aggressively and relentlessly until the fire was out — not contained and walk away from it,” he said. “Just like Smokey the Bear says: ‘Put your campfire out.’”

He complained the Forest Service is answering to special interest groups.

“We have to demand that things are responsible,” he said. “Look at the shape we’re in.”

Beverlin said they are limited by rules, laws and screens.

“We have to balance it,” he said. “We’re trying to manage the forest within the constraints we have.”

Grant County Commissioner Boyd Britton asked, “Can’t we get rid of screens the same way we got them?”

Beverlin replied it would not be an easy task.

The question was asked if

the Canyon Creek Complex fire is affecting revision plans.

Carnwath said, “I think the general tone after this summer with these large fires is a real sense of urgency, reflecting a lot of what people have said here — we’ve got to do something.”

He added the revision offers a wider discretion to the districts to accomplish what needs to be done on the ground.

Beverlin said they are looking at how they can adapt plans to be more flexible.

He said 9.4 million acres burned across the West this year.

Jim Boethin said he wants environmentalists to see what the burned areas in Grant County look like.

“They have made fire big business, huge business, and unnecessarily,” he said. “I look at Canyon Creek, the place I grew up. It’s gone forever — for my generation, for my kids’ generation and generations after that. It’s gone.”

His solution: “Harvest what is necessary and make it balanced. Make some buffers so that we can have a chance to fight some of these fires.”

Peter Fargo, a Forest Service public information officer, said he’s concerned about climate change.

He said Carnwath recently presented a slide show revealing how the landscape could change over the next 20 years with the risk of severe wildfire due to the changing climate.

“I hope we’ll have the ability to be nimble and responsive in terms of management,” he said.

Frances Preston challenged the County Court, Beverlin and deputy Forest Service Supervisor Ryan Nehl to “sit down with Baker County, identifying with your local natural resource plans through coordination, which is government to government.”

To Labhart and Britton, she said, “You’ve heard what these people have had to say. I challenge you to go forward and, through coordination, bring a new forest plan to this area.”

Near the end of the meeting, Beverlin acknowledged local residents’ wishes.

“It’s our responsibility to find that balance, and it’s not just who’s around this circle, it’s how many people enjoy our national forest,” he said. “That’s our challenge. Obviously, there’s a weight in your comments because you live here, you know it and you live it, and it personally affects you — versus somebody that isn’t here. We take that into account.”

“To do what we’ve done in the past three years, and to increase the pace and scale, and three times the number of decisions in half the time — nobody else is doing that in the nation,” he added. “In addition to ecological desired conditions, I think we need social and economic conditions in the plan, and that will help with that balance.”

**DARK HORSE GROUP**

Wonderful Booths  
Chock-full of treasures!

- Collectibles: Linens, Glassware, Silverware
- The Boutique Furniture
- Jewelry Pictures, Prints

Major Credit Cards accepted

Open 10 am - 4 pm • Closed Sunday & Wednesday

600 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day • (541) 575-2404

**Anthony Lakes**  
MOUNTAIN RESORT

Holiday Break: Open daily Dec. 19 - Jan. 3.  
Closed Christmas Day.

For updated conditions, events and operating info, visit <http://www.anthonylakes.com/>

PEACE ON EARTH

Wishing the people of Grant County a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season!

Blue Mountain Surgery

**Balance Today with Retiring Tomorrow**

No matter where you're starting from, COUNTRY can help you achieve financial security in retirement. It starts with listening to your situation. Then we help you build a straightforward plan with step-by-step guidance. Call me to get started today.

**Debbie Ausmus**  
245 South Canyon Blvd.  
John Day, OR 97845  
OPEN WED. & THUR.  
9 am - 5 pm  
541-575-1113  
24 hrs/7 days wk

debbie.ausmus@countryfinancial.com

**COUNTRY FINANCIAL**

**Happy Holidays!**

to you and yours, from Raschio Law

541-575-5750  
www.rrlaw.biz

206 South Humbolt Street, Canyon City

**RR LAW**

**Find just what you need for all the men on your list**

**ACE**  
The helpful place.

652 W Main St.  
John Day  
541-575-0549

**Happy Holidays**

to you and yours, from Old West Federal Credit Union.