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Blue Mountain EAGLE

CANYON CREEK COMPLEX FIRE

1 YEAR LATER

Illustration/Thinkstock.com

Post-fire rehab a 'community effort'

By Sean Ellis
For the Blue Mountain Eagle

The bulk of the post-Canyon Creek Complex fire rehabilitation work has been accomplished, and federal, state and local officials say it has been a successful effort.

The work includes projects to rehabilitate parts of the Malheur National Forest that were scorched by the 110,000-acre fire, repair parts of Highway 395 damaged by the blaze and help Canyon Creek withstand the possibility of major flooding.

"It was a really successful project," engineer Doug Ferguson said about a \$350,000 Grant County project to place berms, dikes and sandbags in key areas along Canyon Creek to mitigate flood risks. "We actually accomplished a lot more than we set out to."

Ferguson, who was hired by the county to act as a liaison for the various post-fire restoration efforts, estimates the improvements will protect against a major flood event that would result in Canyon Creek flows reaching 1,000 cubic feet per second in certain areas.

As a comparison, during the 2011 flood that damaged part of the local high school, flows in Canyon Creek reached 856 cfs.

A specialized U.S. Forest Service team that studied the impacts of the Canyon Creek Complex blaze projected that because of the loss of vegetation, a major storm could result in catastrophic flooding.

A 10-year storm could result in creek flows peaking at 1,997 cfs, the team estimated, which would have devastating effects on Canyon City and John Day. Before the fire, that same type of storm event would have caused flows to reach 661 cfs.

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Contributed photo/U.S. Forest Service

To prevent stream blowouts and protect fish habitat, this log jam was one of 14 that were placed in streams affected by the Canyon Creek Complex fire to store sediment. Some damaged trees that still had their root balls attached were placed in streams to slow the velocity of the water and help catch debris and sediment and improve stream banks.

RISING FROM THE ASHES

Families rebuild, relocate after fire destroys their homes

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Memories of the Aug. 14, 2015, Canyon Creek Complex fire are still fresh, especially for residents whose homes went up in flames.

A total of 43 homes were lost in the fire that roared through the canyon south of Canyon City and later swept through

the Strawberry Wilderness area, threatening the town of Prairie City.

One year later, families are finding their own way of moving on from the devastation.

On the morning of that fateful day, business owners Dean and Courtney Fox went to work at Pioneer Feed in John Day, as usual.

"When we left for town that morn-

ing, it was blue skies and not a worry in the world," Courtney said.

She said what followed was chaos — "a nightmare."

They made an effort to protect their home, but nothing, at that point, could save it from the unrelenting fire that rushed down the hill into their back yard.

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Courtney and Dean Fox, along with daughter Brooke, stand outside their newly built home, one year after the devastating Canyon Creek Complex fire. Brooke is holding the family's puppy Dusty, and Spendy and Deuce are also in the photo.

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Judge orders Sheriff Palmer not to delete emails

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A judge granted a temporary restraining order against Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer Aug. 3, preventing him from deleting emails.

Grant County Circuit Court Judge William D. Cramer Jr. ruled in favor of Oregonian Publishing Company and reporter Les Zaitz, who filed a motion July 22 requesting the temporary restraining order against Grant County Sheriff's Office, employee Sally DeFord and Palmer, while awaiting the court's action on a May complaint seeking an injunction requir-



Sheriff Glenn Palmer

ing Palmer to disclose certain emails.

Cramer said there is a "strong likelihood" Palmer will eventually be ordered by the court to turn over a number of emails to satisfy the plaintiffs' public records request and that requiring the preservation of all emails related to the case did not seem overly burdensome on the sheriff's office.

He said, however, there was a clear possibility of irreparable injury to the plain-

tiffs if emails that should have been disclosed were already deleted. He ordered the sheriff's office to temporarily preserve all emails in whatever form they currently exist, whether electronic or printed copies, until a future court action on the matter.

Attorney Brad Daniels, on behalf of the plaintiffs, claimed in the request for the restraining order that it is the sheriff's office's "pattern and practice to delete all electronic copies of emails from the email accounts that they use to conduct the public's business."

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Grant County Fair: 10 things not to miss

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Visitors at this year's Grant County Fair can anticipate a fun event with a few new twists in entertainment.

"Kids at the Fair — Everywhere" is the theme, but whether young or young at heart, all should find plenty to do and see at the fair, which runs Wednesday through Saturday, Aug. 10-13.

Admission is free on Wednesday, and tickets for the remainder of the week are \$6 daily and \$13 weekly.

Seniors 65 and older and children 5 and under enter the gates for free.

Fair tickets can be purchased at the fairgrounds, Len's Drug and Radio Shack in John Day; Bar W-B in Prairie City; Boyer's Store in Monument; and Duke Warner Realty in Dayville.

The following are top 10 things at the Fair, but don't forget about the Grant County Fair Parade at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 13 — it travels north from Grant Union Junior-Senior High School on South Canyon Boulevard, with a small detour onto Southeast Dayton Street, and then west on Main Street. For more events, check out the

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