

Parks program offers hands-on outdoor education

This summer, high school students from northeastern Oregon have the opportunity to participate in a free weeklong, hands-on outdoor education program at Cottonwood Canyon State Park.

Cottonwood Crossing Summer Institute — June 18-23 — is presented through a partnership between Oregon State Parks Foundation, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Eastern Oregon University, Eastern Oregon GO-STEM and the Department of Environmental Quality, according to an Oregon Parks and Rec press release.

The program supports 20-25 students and their teachers from high schools in Grant, Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler, Morrow, Wasco, Jefferson, Umatilla and Crook counties. There is no cost to the teachers or students for attendance, and they are eligible for continuing education or college credit from EOU for their participation.

“Oregon State Parks Foundation is pleased to be able to offer this program

for a third year,” said foundation Executive Director Seth Miller. “Students will experience a wide range of alternative careers, and many return to their communities to build connection and interest in rural sustainability and natural resource stewardship.”

Educational curriculum for the week includes watershed management, restoration of riparian zones, photography, writing, astronomy and the nocturnal lives of animals. Faculty include a professional hydrologist, botanist, a specialist in watershed management and other natural resource experts.

EOU faculty will attend as shadows to learn about teaching methodologies in an outdoor environment. High school teachers will also attend with their students and will have separate seminars about outdoor education.

More information is posted on the “News & Updates” tab at oregonstateparksfoundation.org. To learn more or register to attend, contact Tim Pfau at oregonstateparksfoundation.org.



Grant Union senior James Mabe explains his science fair project to judge Amy Stiner last Thursday at the Grant Union Junior-Senior High School library.

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

FAIR

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“I found there’s more fish in the burned stream reach than in unburned stream reach,” she said. “We used an electroshocker to collect the data on the fish. It was a lot of fun.”

McKrola searched out “Can Nanosilver in Consumer Products Affect Pond Life?” “There is nanosilver in

clothes and toothpaste ...,” she said. “(I wanted to) test the toxicity of it to see if it’s harmful to humans. I tested on micro-organisms, and the more nanosilver in the water, the faster they died. It was fun to learn about. It was really interesting.”

Mabe said he spent most of his time with the judges explaining his project, “Are EM Drives a Realistic Mode of Extraterrestrial Transport.”

Putting it in the simplest of terms, Mabe said, “Basically the thing in your microwave that cooks your food, put it in a tin can, and see if it moves.”

“My hypothesis was that it was going to move ... that was pretty neat,” he said.

Judges were Amy Stiner, executive director of the South Fork John Day Watershed Council; Anthony Tovar, a professor of phys-

ics at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande; and Neil Bauer, a retired science teacher.

“Science is a lot more than just a mountain of facts,” Hennen said. “Hopefully, when they see information on research findings in advertisements or political statements they’ll be able to evaluate them a little more critically in terms of credibility.”

INVEST

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problems, including a floor that is coming up, water stains on the ceiling and a bathroom that is a “disaster,” Brown said. She said having a more appealing storefront would have a positive impact for the community.

“You notice this building so much because it’s right at the stoplight,” Brown said. “When you come to the stoplight, that’s when you decide if you’re going to

stop in John Day or not.”

Etc. owner Sherry Rininger’s husband, Dale Rininger, said their space in the building was out of date and had a variety of electrical problems. Rininger said they were just trying to stay afloat and supported the city’s investment in the building.

The building is over 100 years old and is in bad shape. Green gave a presentation to the city council March 13 that illustrated the condition of the structure. Water damage, asbestos insulation and outdated appliances are all issues.

A proposed design would result in four 1,200-square foot commercial spaces with improved storage, restrooms and energy efficiency as well as a mountain chic look. The second floor would be converted into condos with improved lighting, energy efficiency and affordable prices for landlords and renters.

If it invested in the property, the city could see benefits from an increased population and property tax base, investment in other Main Street properties and a boost in the economy through use

of local contractors and materials. On the flip side, the structural repairs may exceed the project budget, local resources could become overextended and the city would become the landlord if the units did not sell.

The city has access to outside funds, such as the Main Street Revitalization Grant, which private investors do not. This makes city investment more feasible than private.

Green said the next step after submitting the grant would be to conduct a feasibility assessment in April.

FLOOD

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There has been some erosion of the banks below the Inland Street Bridge, but they are holding. Williams is most concerned about the area between the bridges and high school and anticipates high water levels throughout the week. He reported, because of the raised water table, water was leaking into the high school’s basement.

Driskill Memorial Chapel staff also reported having 4-6 inches of water in the business basement. An employee said it was not affecting operations, and they were pumping the water out.

“We’re just waiting for mother nature to make its next move so we know what to do,” Williams said.

County and city officials are ready with sand bags and heavy equipment in the event of increased flows or a log jam, which

“We have no control. We just have to take it as it comes.”



Les Percy, Canyon City Public Works Director

could cause the creek to flood its banks. They are setting up eco block barriers to contain water should it rise, according to Williams.

Flooding has become a prominent concern for Canyon City and John Day residents following the Canyon Creek Complex fire in 2015. A lack of vegetation in the burned area allows rain and snow-melt to quickly descend into populated areas.

“We have no control,” Canyon City Public Works Director Les Percy said. “We just have to take it as it comes.”

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Grant SWCD Weed Control Dept. Working for You in 2017

Thanks to the Grant County Court and Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee, Grant Weed Control is able to offer **Noxious Weed Control on Private Grazing Lands**, through a Title II funded Grant Project. This program will provide a maximum \$5,000 of noxious weed control services to qualifying landowners. To be eligible for participation, the treatment property must not be irrigated and be primarily managed for livestock grazing, minimum of 20 acres in size, located within Grant County, and must contain priority noxious weed species. Applications for this limited weed control assistance opportunity will be ranked and funded according to a priority noxious weed list. **Contact the Grant Soil and Water Conservation District office at 541-575-1554 or visit 721 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845 for applications and additional information.**

The application deadline for this program is April 7, 2017.

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RANCH AND FARM SUCCESSION PRESENTATION

Thursday, April 6, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
 Grant County Regional Airport Meeting Room in John Day
As part of the 2017 Grant Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Meeting

Two-thirds of Oregon’s agricultural land will be changing hands in the next 20 years, but the vast majority of Oregon’s farmers and ranchers don’t have succession plans.

- Want to hear about the trends in farm/ranch succession, access to land, and land use in Oregon?
- Want to learn the steps for preparing a succession plan for your ranch or farm?
- Want to hear the stories of local ranchers and farmers who have gone through the process?

Please join us for this free event on this important topic. Complimentary refreshments will be served.
 Contact Jason Kehrberg at 541-575-0135 ext. 110 or jkehrberg@ortelco.net for more information.