



# RECLAIMING

# WATER



Contributed photo

A photo from Sustainable Water of Richmond, Virginia, of the wastewater reclamation facility at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Wastewater is treated as it passes from one reactor with plants to the next in a greenhouse structure.

## Engineers present treatment plant concepts

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day personnel met with representatives from the Anderson-Perry engineering firm and Sustainable Water last week and brainstormed for two days in the fire hall over concepts and goals for a new wastewater treatment plant.

The goal is not only to replace an aging treatment plant but to produce reclaimed water with economic value, Brett Moore of Anderson-Perry told the city council Nov. 14. Treated water that currently is dumped in four percolation ponds where it seeps into the ground could instead be used to grow hay or pasture, or irrigate the city's golf course, parks or baseball fields.

It could also be used to grow produce in greenhouses for local consumption, be sold to Malheur Lumber for industrial uses or used to flush toilets at a hotel. A 100-room hotel uses about the same amount of water to flush toilets as 60 single-family homes, Moore said.

### The state's role

The city and consultants also met with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Business Oregon and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to learn about regulations and standards as well as financing opportunities.

To help small rural cities meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act and navigate complex financial arrangements, the DEQ developed the First Stop planning assistance program. The idea is to open discussion on "potentially approvable" alternatives, discuss funding sources, identify a specific interagency team to serve the city, set up a communications strategy between the agencies and follow up commitment assignments.

Daniel Allison and Eric Lohan traveled from Richmond, Virginia, to represent Sustainable Water. Established in 2010, the company develops, builds and operates wastewater reclamation plants across the United States, including plants in the colder climates of northern Wisconsin and Burlington, Vermont.

Allison told the Eagle that the DEQ and the other agencies were excited and supportive of John Day's proposed project — at the technical and permitting levels. He said Scott Fairley,

See WATER, Page A7

## Forest patrol position sparks debate

Forest Service surprised by proposal

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

A proposal by Grant County Undersheriff Zach Mobley to create a part-time position for a forest patrol deputy under the sheriff's office came as a surprise to some local officials — especially Malheur National Forest Supervisor Steven Beverlin.

"The first I heard about this was when I saw it on the Grant County Court agenda," Beverlin told the court during its Nov. 22 meeting.

Beverlin read excerpts from letters sent by Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer to the Forest Service in 2011 and 2014 indicating the sheriff's office was unwilling to enforce certain Forest Service regulations.

"What's changed?" Beverlin asked the court.

Grant County Judge Scott Myers told the Eagle that for many years the county had an agreement with the Forest Service to patrol campgrounds on National Forest lands during busy holiday weekends, such as Magone Lake on Memorial Day and Fourth of July weekends. But beginning in 2011, Sheriff Palmer refused to sign the agreements until the Rainbow Gathering in 2017, Myers said.

Beverlin later told the Eagle he wasn't entirely opposed to Mobley's proposal, but he wanted to sit down face to face with Palmer to discuss the idea.

"I have to put my signature on any agreement," he said.

Beverlin told the Eagle he wasn't concerned about a county deputy enforcing laws that weren't on the books but whether the deputy would enforce laws that are on the books — such as illegal motorized vehicle use on closed Forest Service roads and illegal firewood cutting.

"I want assurance that the sheriff will comply with the agreement," Beverlin told the court.

### Funding the position

Whereas the sheriff's office has some latitude in deciding how to spend its budget, the creation of a new job position in any department must be approved by the county court, Myers told the Eagle.

According to Mobley's request, the part-time forest patrol deputy position would be 20 hours per week and funded

See PATROL, Page A7

## Interactive kiosk benefits tourists and residents

Weather, road conditions, fire danger and closures displayed

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

It looks like a giant smartphone hanging on the wall of the Grant County Chamber of Commerce office on Main

Street in John Day. The recently installed interactive kiosk provides news releases, current weather, road conditions, fire danger ratings, active wildfires or prescribed fires and temporary road, trail

or campground closures in the Malheur National Forest — information visitors to the area need for their travel plans.

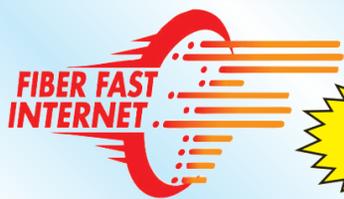
The 24-hour kiosk also provides an interactive map to help visitors find areas of interest, along with live feeds providing current information from several

See KIOSK, Page A7



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From left, Grant County Chamber of Commerce President Bruce Ward, Office Manager Tammy Bremner, former president Jerry Franklin and Malheur National Forest Public Information Officer Mike Stearly with the new interactive kiosk outside the chamber office on Main Street in John Day.



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See Page A3



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