



## The Blue Mountain EAGLE

Grant County's newspaper since 1868

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter  
Fans dance at the front during  
Lonestar's concert in John Day.

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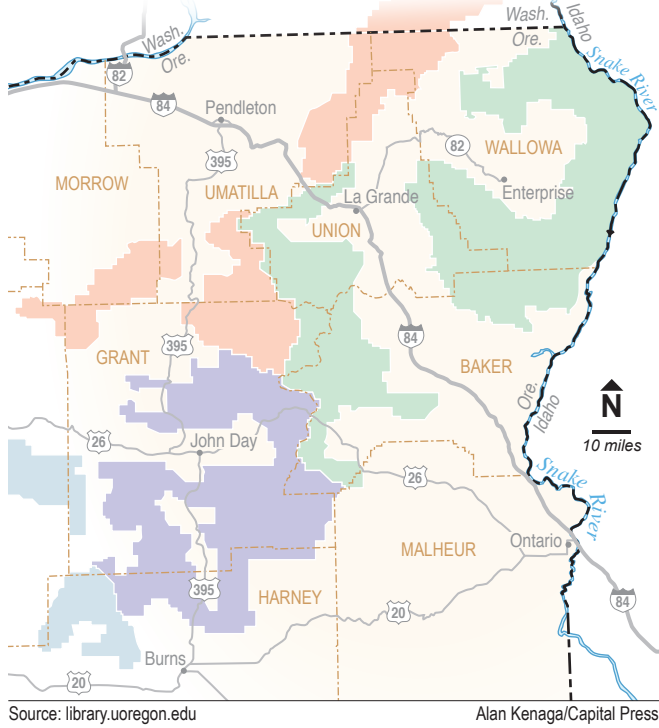
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# County finalizes objections to forest plan

## Blue Mountains forests

National forest  
Wallowa-Whitman Umatilla Malheur Ochoco



Source: library.uoregon.edu

Alan Kenaga/Capitol Press

## Court adopts Forest Access For All's objections

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Using a letter written by an Eastern Oregon group, the Grant County Court formalized its objections to the Blue Mountains Forest Plan revision during a special meeting Aug. 15.

The court's official four-page objection letter originated with a letter from Forest Access For All, a volunteer group founded in April 2012 that advocates for motorized access on public lands and provides online guidance for people who want to participate in the public process related to public lands management.

Commissioner Rob Raschio told the court many of the group's objections made sense.

He also noted that the Canyon Creek Complex fire occurred one year after the court submitted its initial comments to the plan revision, and science shows that built-up forest fuels create a public safety problem, which the court is obligated to address.



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Grant County Judge Scott Myers, center, called the Aug. 15 special meeting back in session to sign a document listing the county court's objections to the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision. Commissioners Rob Raschio, left, and Jim Hamscher, right, joined Myers in signing the letter to the Forest Service.

Commissioner Jim Hamscher said he'd like the court to continue accepting public input. The objection deadline is Aug. 28, so the court would need to hold another emergency meeting to adopt public input, Raschio noted.

### Court's objections

In editing the letter, the county court replaced the group's name and added

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# Grant County experiencing suicide cluster

## Four people committed suicide in last seven months

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Suicide statistics for Grant County are sobering, if not alarming, but two visiting crisis line professionals emphasized personal communication and focusing on positive things during an Aug. 15 suicide forum.

Four people completed suicides in Grant County over the past seven months when the average has been one per year, Community Counseling Solutions Executive Director Kimberly Lindsay told the Eagle. "There have been more suicides in Grant County this year than homicides," she said. "It is not a stretch to state that

Grant County has experienced, or is experiencing, a suicide cluster."

A suicide cluster is defined as multiple suicidal behaviors or suicides falling within an accelerated time frame or within a geographical area. In the case of Grant County, it could be called a point cluster, Lindsay said, something that typically occurs within institutional settings such as hospitals, prisons or schools.

"These are more common in smaller, family-like communities," she said. "Gilliam county experienced this from 2006 to 2011 when they had one youth suicide per year for five years. They were off the charts."



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Dave Dalton of Lines For Life addresses a comment during a suicide forum at the John Day Senior Center on Aug. 15 while coworker Emily Moser listens.

### Staggering numbers

The suicide rate in Grant County is double the national average, CCS clinical director Thad Labhart said at the forum.

Finding an explanation for Grant County's high suicide rate is not simple — Grant County ranks 23rd out of 36 counties for health factors, 15th for health behaviors and 31st for social and economic factors,

but it also ranked ninth for clinical care, sixth for health outcomes and length of life, 12th for quality of life and ninth for physical environment.

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### Leading suicide counties in Oregon, 2003-12

... by suicide rate per 100,000 residents

Rank/county	Rate	Deaths
1. Curry	36	77
2. Harney	32.7	22
3. Grant	32.1	22
4. Wheeler	29.1	4

... by suicide deaths

Rank/county	Rate	Deaths
1. Multnomah	15.4	1,084
2. Washington	12.2	639
3. Lane	17.7	612
4. Clackamas	13.8	523
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>6,145</b>

Source: Oregon Health Authority

EO Media Group graphic

# Rapp reaches plea deal in Dixie Campground shooting

## Sentencing will take place Aug. 23

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

The 33-year-old John Day man accused of shooting a Eugene man at the Dixie Campground on Oct. 16, 2017, has agreed to a plea deal.

Kevin J. Rapp was initially charged with attempted murder, first-degree assault and unlawful use of a weapon.

He was also charged with misdemeanor possession of methamphetamine.

In the plea petition accepted by Malheur County Circuit Court Judge Lung Hung Aug. 13, Rapp pleaded guilty to first-degree at-



Kevin Rapp

tempted assault, a Class B felony with a stipulated sentence of 85 months, and unlawful possession of methamphetamine, a Class A misdemeanor. The victim, Kyler Weisenback, was the lone camper at the campground east of Prairie City and was shot twice in the head with a .22 rifle, according to a statement from Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter. One shot grazed the back of his head, and the other entered near his right ear and lodged in the occipital area, damaging Weisenback's eyesight, Carpenter said. The two men had never met.

In accordance with Carpenter's

recommendation in the plea agreement, Rapp's credit for good time in prison would be limited to 20 percent, meaning he would have to serve at least 68 months in prison along with three years of post-prison supervision.

Rapp would also be required to pay restitution to Weisenback. The state agreed to waive other financial obligations, forgo prosecution for domestic violence crimes against Rapp's wife, Mallory Rapp, and return property to Rapp's family, including a vehicle and firearms.

The agreement is conditional — Rapp reserves the right to appeal a judge's denial of motions to suppress evidence — and the judge is not obligated to honor it. If Rapp prevails in the appeal, he could

withdraw his guilty plea.

Sentencing is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 23, in the Grant County Courthouse.

During a change of plea hearing on Aug. 14, in which Weisenback participated by telephone, the victim agreed to go along with whatever the state recommended, but said he believed the sentence was light.

Weisenback was awoken in the early morning hours while camping last October and was shot.

He was flown to Bend and then Portland for treatment.

Rapp was arrested four days later. In the plea agreement, Rapp stated that he "intentionally attempted to cause serious physical injury to Kyler Weisenback by means of a deadly weapon, to wit a .22 rifle."

