

# Torrefaction plant could be operating by next June

\$15.5 million project and 15-18 jobs

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle



**Matt Krumenauer**

A \$15.5 million torrefaction plant could be in operation at the Malheur Lumber Co. mill in John Day as soon as June.

As the plant ramps up toward full capacity by the end of 2019, Restoration Fuels LLC could hire 15-18 employees, including local management, Matt Krumenauer told the Grant County Court on Dec. 12.

Krumenauer represents

the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, which developed the local project. Restoration Fuels is a subsidiary of the endowment.

Joe Koerner will be the plant's operations manager. The plan is to rely on Malheur Lumber for maintenance staff and Iron Triangle for trucking. Krumenauer said the endowment has a strong relationship with the Forest Service, which could consider the torrefaction plant as a tool for for-



**Joe Koerner**

est management.

The U.S. spends billions fighting wildfires, but spending millions to manage forests to prevent wildfires is not sustainable without a revenue stream. The question has been what to do with low-value biomass and non-saw wood material from stewardship projects on the Malheur National Forest.

One solution is to chip and roast this biomass to produce a torrefied wood product to burn in coal-fired plants. Up to now, the

endowment's focus has been on refining a torrefaction process for the John Day area and developing markets, Krumenauer said.

Japan — which has imposed tariffs on power produced by nuclear and coal, making torrefied wood competitive — has shown interest in torrefied wood mass, he said.

The endowment is willing to take on the initial investment risk with hopes the private sector will eventually take over the enterprise. The torrefaction process has been successfully tested at a large scale in Mississippi, Canada and the Boardman plant, Krumenauer said.

The endowment had considered locating the new plant at the Prairie Wood Products property and other sites in Grant County but chose Malheur Lumber because of its existing infrastructure, wood handling and processing facilities, state air quality permit and experienced on-site staff, Krumenauer said.

The plan calls for replacing the existing boilers with a larger and more efficient one, replacing the existing belt dryer and rotary kiln used for making pellets with larger units, and adding a briquetting system while keeping the existing pelletizer.

The replacement equip-

ment is commonly found in timber plants around the world, Krumenauer said. The plan is to avoid disrupting ongoing mill operations, but the pellet plant will shut down temporarily while key equipment is replaced.

Krumenauer said the plant will start operations using log chips and not slash from stewardship projects. As the plant proves itself and ramps up production, it will turn to slash material and even trucking in chips produced off-site.

A town hall meeting to present the project will take place at the Canyon City Community Hall on Jan. 10.

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

## Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of Dec. 12:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 0
- Average inmates: 16
- Bookings: 10
- Releases: 10
- Arrests: 1
- Citations: 0
- Fingerprints: 6
- Civil papers: 17
- Warrants processed: 1
- Asst./welfare check: 1
- Search and rescue: 0

## Oregon State Police

Dec. 10: Responded to a noninjury crash on Highway 395 near Starr Ridge summit. During a search of the driver and the vehicle, the trooper found cocaine, LSD, methamphetamine, Valium, nitrous oxide charges and a dispenser. Daniel J. Heuston, 39, Richland, Washington, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving and possession of cocaine, LSD, methamphetamine and a Schedule IV controlled substance.

Dec. 10: Responded to a crash on Highway 395 south of Canyon City. The northbound vehicle slid on black ice across the southbound lane and rolled onto its top in Canyon Creek. The 28-year-old female driver from Burns pulled her 3-year-old son from the vehicle and called 911. They were transported to the hospital in John Day and released.

Dec. 14: Investigated a fire-

arms denial complaint at a store in John Day.

Dec. 15: Assisted the Grant County Sheriff's Office and Forest Service in the search and rescue of a bird hunter in a remote part of the South Fork area 16 miles south of Dayville. The hunter had dislodged a large boulder in steep rocky terrain and was injured when the boulder rolled over him. A helicopter was used to transport rescue personnel to the site and to transport the hunter to a hospital in Bend.

## Justice Court

- Violation of basic rule: David W. Aimone, 58, Washougal, Washington, Nov. 17, 69/55 zone, fined \$165; Sydnee R. Bybee, 21, Bend, Nov. 17, 75/55 zone, fined \$100; Kevin L. Clemens, 44, Portland, Nov. 10, 73/55 zone, fined \$140.
- Exceeding speed limit: Trevor M. Widder, 21, La Grande, Nov. 30, 79/65 zone, fined \$265; Beau J. Carlson, 19, Hines, Nov. 30, 75/65 zone, fined \$165; Santos Cortes Valle, 31, Medford, Oct. 1, 76/65 zone, fined \$265; Michael R. Lighter, 71, Seneca, Nov. 28, 48/35 zone, fined \$165.
- Violation speed limit: Audrey R. Johnson, 40, John Day, July 20, 59/35 zone, fined \$225; Angela J. Smith, 36, John Day, Nov. 26, 73/65 zone, fined \$115.
- Driving uninsured: Serena O. Pace, 18, John Day, April 27, fined \$265, May 1, fined \$265; Steven M. Warrington, 29, John Day, Nov. 17, fined \$300.
- Driving while suspended: Steven M. Warrington, 29, John Day, Nov. 17, fined \$500.
- No Oregon operator's license: Scott L. Drinnon, 51, John Day, Nov. 14, fined \$135.
- Expired registration sticker: Steven M. Warrington, 29, John Day, Oct. 16, fined \$115, Nov. 17, fined \$150; Audrey R. Johnson, 40, Clackamas, July 20,

## COPS AND COURTS

Dec. 16: Responded to

- Open container of alcohol: Lars A. Johnson, 45, Eagle, Idaho, Oct. 13, fined \$225.
- Hunting outside a controlled hunting area: Austin B. Collins, 25, Molalla, Oct. 24, fined \$115.
- Katie Watt, 32, John Day, was convicted Dec. 5 of keeping a dog as a public nuisance. She was sentenced to \$5,609 in fines, fees and restitution.

## Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 152 calls during the week of Dec. 10-16, including:

- **John Day Police Department**
  - Dec. 10: John W. Grant, 40, John Day, was arrested at a mobile home park on West Main Street in John Day and charged with domestic assault.
  - Dec. 13: Received a call about a possible burglary at an apartment on Southwest Brent Drive in John Day.
  - Dec. 13: Responded with state police to a report of domestic menacing on Northwest Bridge Street in John Day.
  - Dec. 14: Following a traffic stop at South Canyon Boulevard and Fifth Street, Tiffany N. Davis was cited for speeding, 38/20, in a school zone.
  - Dec. 16: Advised of a hit-and-run crash on West Main Street in John Day.
  - Dec. 16: Following a traffic stop on Highway 26 in east John Day, Paul Roark, 22, Mt. Vernon, was cited for speeding, 46/35 zone.
  - Dec. 16: Following a traffic stop on North Canyon Boulevard in John Day, Tylor J. Gifford, 24, John Day, was cited for driving with a suspended license, no insurance and displaying license plates improperly.

Dec. 16: Responded to Main Street in John Day for a report of an intoxicated person falling into the street.

- **Oregon State Police**
  - Dec. 10: Dispatched to Highway 395 near the Paulina Road junction for a noninjury vehicle crash.
  - Dec. 10: Advised of an unauthorized use of a motor vehicle on South Ingle Street in John Day.

• **Grant County Sheriff's Office**

- Dec. 10: Advised of a non-injury crash on Highway 395 near Magone Lake Road.
- Dec. 10: Responded with state police and John Day ambulance to Highway 395 south of Canyon City for a crash resulting in a vehicle in Canyon Creek.
- Dec. 11: Advised of a theft on North Washington Street in Prairie City.
- Dec. 11: Advised of phone harassment on Victorian Lane in John Day.
- Dec. 13: Advised of criminal mischief on Izee Highway.
- Dec. 15: Received a theft report from Mt. Vernon.
- Dec. 15: Responded with state police, Forest Service law enforcement and John Day ambulance to a search and rescue incident on Forest Road 26 near Bates.
- **John Day ambulance**
  - Dec. 10: Dispatched with Long Creek ambulance to East Main Street in Long Creek for an elderly woman.
  - Dec. 10: Responded to South Canyon Boulevard in John Day for a woman who had fallen.
  - Dec. 10: Dispatched to Northwest Fourth Avenue in John Day for a 76-year-old woman with diabetic issues.
  - Dec. 11: Transported a patient to the airport in

John Day.

Dec. 13: Dispatched with Dayville fire to Franklin Street in Dayville for a man with difficulty breathing.

Dec. 14: Responded to a mobile home park on West Main Street in John Day for a woman with difficulty breathing.

Dec. 14: Dispatched with Long Creek ambulance to the post office in Long Creek for a 90-year-old woman.

Dec. 15: Responded with John Day police to Screech Alley in John Day for a 70-year-old woman who had fallen.

Dec. 15: Dispatched with Monument fire and ambulance

and sheriff's deputies to Cottonwood Road in Monument for a 40-year-old man with chest pains.

Dec. 16: Dispatched to South Humbolt Street in Canyon City for a 28-year-old man with difficulty breathing.

• **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Dec. 11: Advised of a cougar sighting at Highway 26 and La Costa Road west of John Day.

• **John Day fire**

Dec. 12: Responded to a flue fire on Southeast Frank Lane in John Day.

Dec. 14: Received a report of smoke inside a business on East Main Street in John Day.

PEACE ON EARTH

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

**Keith Thomas**  
MD, FACS  
Board-Certified General Surgeon

Blue Mountain Surgery

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Thank you to the wonderful people who came out Oct. 26 and Nov. 30 to support the GIST Cancer Research (Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor) Dinners. Also, a huge thank you to my wonderful helpers Sally Knowles, Kathlyn Kight, Andy & Maxine Day and Melody Jackson. Thanks, Jerry & Linda McClellan

**Restoration Fuels, LLC Open House**

On Thursday, January 10, 2019 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm, representatives from Restoration Fuels and Oregon Torrefaction invites the community to an informal open house.

The opportunity will be held at the Canyon City Community Hall at 104 S. Humbolt St, Canyon City, OR 97820. The meeting will have information stations on Restoration Fuels installation of a 12 ton/hour torrefaction facility at the Malheur Lumber Company mill in John Day.

Please join us for some light refreshments and an informative evening to answer any questions you may have about this first, U.S. large-scale, commercial effort to help restore forests and create economic opportunity in the region.

Torrefied Wood Pellets

96063

**The Grant County Chamber of Commerce reminds you to shop these local chamber members!**

- Advantage Dental
- Airlink Critical Care Transport
- America's Best Motel
- Bank of Eastern Oregon
- Benchmark Land Surveying
- Berry Creek Ranch
- Bisnett Insurance
- Blue Mountain Care Center
- Blue Mountain Chiropractic
- Blue Mountain Custom Homes
- Blue Mountain Eagle
- Blue Mountain Hospital
- Canyon Mountain Center
- Chester's Thriftway
- City of John Day
- City of Long Creek
- City of Mt. Vernon
- City of Prairie City
- City of Seneca
- Claws & Paws Pet Sitting
- Columbia Power Co-op
- Community Counseling Solutions
- Costco Wholesale of Bend
- Country Preferred Realtors
- Debbie Ausmus Insurance Agency, Inc.
- Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair
- Driskill Memorial Chapel
- Duke Warner Realty
- Eastern Oregon Realty
- Ed Staub & Sons
- ER Printing and Graphics
- Families First of Grant County
- Ferguson Surveying & Engineering, Inc.
- Field's Tree Service
- Fossil Shift Bike Shop
- Grant County Farm Bureau
- Grant County Geneological Society
- Grant County Historical Museum
- Grant County People Mover
- Grant County Snowballers
- Grant/Harney County CASA
- Heart of Grant County
- John Day Farmer's Market
- John and Linda Shelk Foundation
- John Day Elks Lodge
- John Day Golf Club
- John Day Senior Center
- Juniper Press
- KJDY
- Land Title of Grant County, Inc.
- Madden Brothers
- Malheur National Forest
- Malheur Employees Association
- MD Enterprizes
- Mossy Oak/Copper Creek Land Company
- Nomad Sign Art
- North River Electric
- Northfork John Day River Watershed Council
- Old West Federal Credit Union
- Oregon Telephone Company
- Oregon Trail Electric
- Oregon Trial Well Service LLC
- OSU Extension Service Solutions, Inc.
- Portrait Connection
- Prairie Springs Fish Farm
- Robert Bagett PLS, CWRE
- Silvies Valley Ranch
- State Farm Insurance
- Sunrise Construction Specialties
- TEC Copier Systems
- Town of Canyon City
- Valley View Retirement Center
- Virginia McMillan D.D.S.

**Grant County Chamber of Commerce**  
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