

Another threat to Oregon's timber industry

Some folks sure know how to start a conversation.

Take, for example, a bill in the Oregon House of Representatives that could lock up more than 1 million acres of Oregon forestland. House Bill 2656 would ban timber harvests, road-building and the use of pesticides and fertilizers in any forest watersheds that provide drinking water to cities and towns.

Such a "conversation starter" is more like a punch in the nose for the state's timber industry. State and federal timber regulations already protect water quality, yet this bill could virtually shut the industry down in some areas of the state. Hampton Lumber estimates more than half of its 89,000 acres would be impacted by the bill.

Under the bill, any activities would have to be approved by the state Board of Forestry. Because the plans would be made public ahead of time, one might also assume that environmental groups would insert themselves into the issue the same way they have in other timber management issues. In other words, the lawsuits would start flying.

The first question that comes to mind: Is there a problem with Oregon's drinking water quality? Interestingly enough, the Oregon Association of Water Utilities just awarded the city of Stayton an award for the best tasting drinking water in the state. It is the third straight year the city has been honored. Stayton gets all of its drinking water from the North Santiam River, whose watershed has been logged for decades.

It should be noted that municipal utilities are required to constantly monitor their water quality. If there was a problem, it would be found immediately.

During a recent hear-

ing, those who want to control and hamstring the timber industry tried to link the blue-green algae outbreak at Detroit Lake to logging. Just where, exactly, was that alleged logging taking place? Scientists say warm weather had as much to do with the bloom as anything else.

It's clear that this bill, like others making the rounds during the legislative session, is just another anti-logging, anti-jobs and anti-economy measure aimed at shutting down an industry that has been part of the state's backbone.

If logging is so terrible, why are we all surrounded by the green of public and private forests?

Well-managed forests have long been a large part of Oregon's history — and its future, if the legislature and environmentalists don't shut it down. The timber industry is in every sense the epitome of a renewable resource. Even those who don't like logging probably live in houses built using lumber from Oregon's forests.

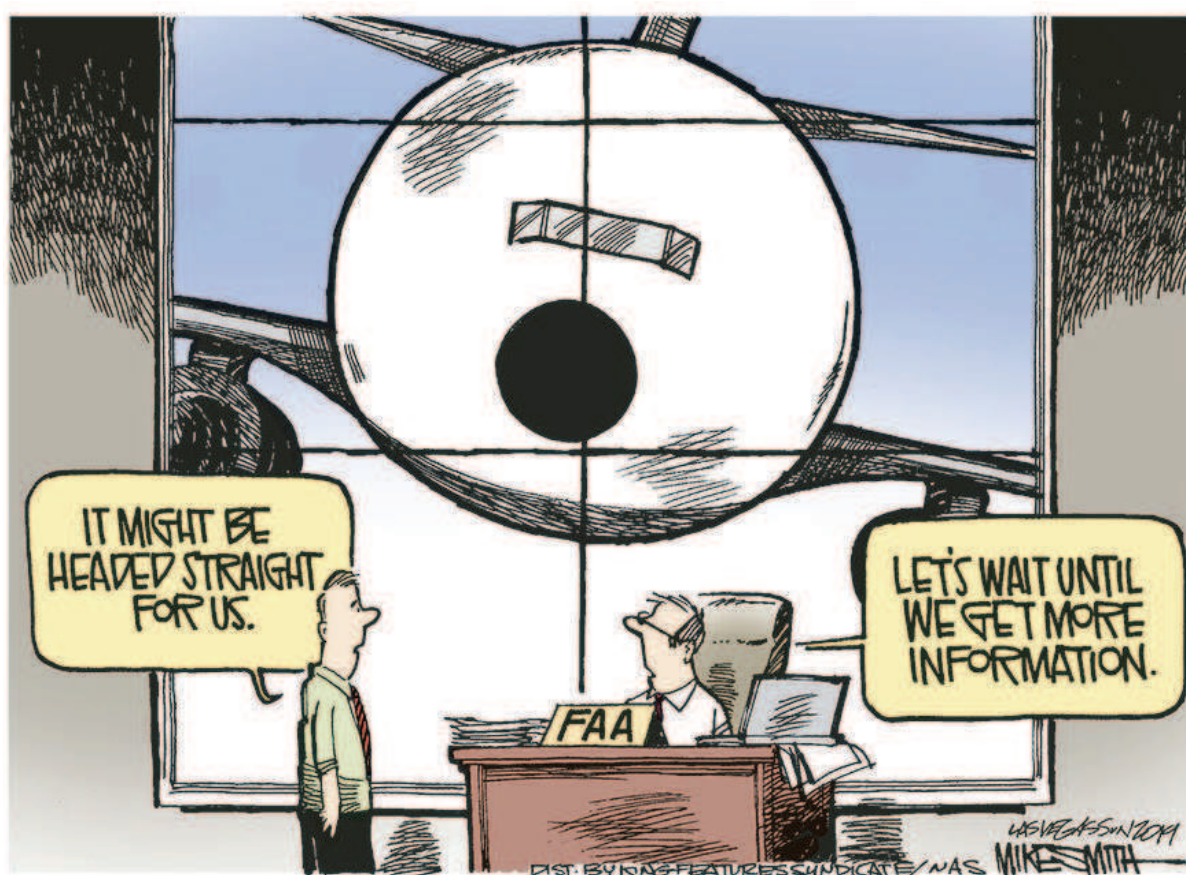
And there's more. New technology is allowing the state's timber industry to take part in a revolution in which mass plywood and cross laminated lumber will be become an important part of future construction projects around the world.

Yet some folks want to start a conversation about stopping that.

"House Bill 2656 is an unnecessary and extreme solution in search of a problem," said Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of public policy for the Oregon Farm Bureau.

That about sums it up.

If there are any problems, let's address them in a meaningful and targeted manner. If there aren't any problems, then maybe the conversation should end.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grant County wise to maintain local dispatch

To the Editor:

I recently had the opportunity to read some back issues of Condon's weekly (Globe) Times-Journal newspaper. Articles reported on Frontier Telenet's financial and managerial circumstances starting with the Dec. 27 edition and continuing in subsequent issues through Feb. 21. Frontier Telenet is an ORS 190 entity that has made infrastructure available for 911 emergency dispatch for Gilliam, Sherman and Wheeler counties. This caught my attention as this is the same entity that was suggested as an option for providing 911 dispatch when voters turned down a local option tax proposal intended to provide revenue for 911 dispatch.

The articles detail the revenue shortfalls, inadequate record keeping, inferior management and lack of oversight of Frontier Telenet. Their board of directors met multiple times in January 2019 to discuss a course of action for the financial, managerial and governance issues, hiring a consultant to assist in implementing recommendations made by the Association of Oregon Counties, updating inter-governmental agreements, processes, etc. Also discussed was the fact that it hadn't been determined who owes money and how much to Frontier Telenet. That task is further compromised as no written agreements or contracts were consummated, and no previous or historic knowledge is available. Gilliam and Sherman counties each were asked for \$100,000 to meet the entity's liabilities for December. Frontier Telenet accepted \$100,000 loans from both Sherman County and Wheeler County.

Additionally, the Frontier Telenet board of directors are the three elected county judges. A conflict of interest, whether potential, real or perceived?

I wonder if inquiries were made regarding the administration and management of Frontier Telenet to determine its solvency, operating policies and procedures. It appears to be a dysfunctional, corrupt, loosely organized and managed entity. I have no doubt Grant County would also have been asked for money to help bail Frontier Telenet out.

I'm certainly glad that Grant County decided to go its own way.

Charlene Morris
John Day

Definitions, rights and privileges

To the Editor:

Definition: "... a statement of

the meaning of a word or word group or sign or symbol ..." The definition is from Webster's Collegiate Dictionary!

Right: "... something to which one has a just claim: as a: the power or privilege to which one is justly entitled ... b (2): the property interest possessed under law or custom and agreement in an intangible thing ..." Again Webster's Collegiate Dictionary!

Privilege: "a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor: PREROGATIVE ..."

All meanings and definitions contained in this letter are from the above-mentioned dictionary.

Guarantee: "... 2: to engage for the existence, permanence, or nature of: undertake to do or secure ... 3: to give security to ..."

Our nation was established as a republic, and in a republic the electorate has the sovereign power to elect representatives that are responsible to them. (The people.)

The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land. We have elected officials and representatives in our state legislature that presume to place themselves above that law and to enforce on the people their own standards and unconstitutional laws. Some of these laws go directly against the rights and privileges guaranteed by our constitutional government. Senate Bill 501 is one of these erroneous pieces of legislation they want to force on all our law-abiding people by which many would become criminals unless they comply to probable buy-back or confiscation schemes that must assuredly follow.

The Second Amendment to our Constitution states, "A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

Infringe: "1: to encroach upon in a way that violates law or the rights of another ... 2 obs: DEFEAT, FRUSTRATE ..."

SB 501 would commit unlawfully all the above against we the people.

Michael Christensen
John Day

Courtesy and respect

To the Editor:

Is courtesy and respect dead? Maybe not, but it has one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel!

I had a disturbing experience on the way to work. As I drove past a couple of kids walking to school, I waved out the side window of the car and received a middle finger wave from the younger of the two. The student was probably a fourth-fifth-sixth grader. I turned around and went back to talk to the young man. When I

got next to him and rolled down the window, he said he waved with his first finger. I said that is not a very nice way to say good morning to someone. He repeated that it was his first finger a couple more times. Then I said you know what you did and drove off.

It really bothered me that a kid that young would be that disrespectful. Then I realized that much of our society acts the same way, so why should I expect better from a kid?

I recognize that not everyone likes or agrees with everyone else, and that is fine; it is what makes our society great. I just wish that people would choose to treat others with respect and courtesy. If people could let go of their disdain for others, many interactions would be more pleasant and likely more productive.

I hope for civility and courtesy — consider it during your next interaction with someone you may not be your favorite person.

Shannon Springer
Prairie City

Loan a better fit for dam project

To the Editor:

I am concerned about the Wallowa Lake dam improvement proposed by Gov. Brown and to be voted on soon.

I agree with rehabilitating the dam for several reasons such as safety for people and equitable water distribution for irrigators. It has the potential to help many irrigators and store more water. It also has the potential of making the newly formed irrigation district a lot more money.

My concern is that perhaps over \$16 million will be provided the irrigation district to get the dam to store more water, which the district will sell. I believe money from water sales would go to the district.

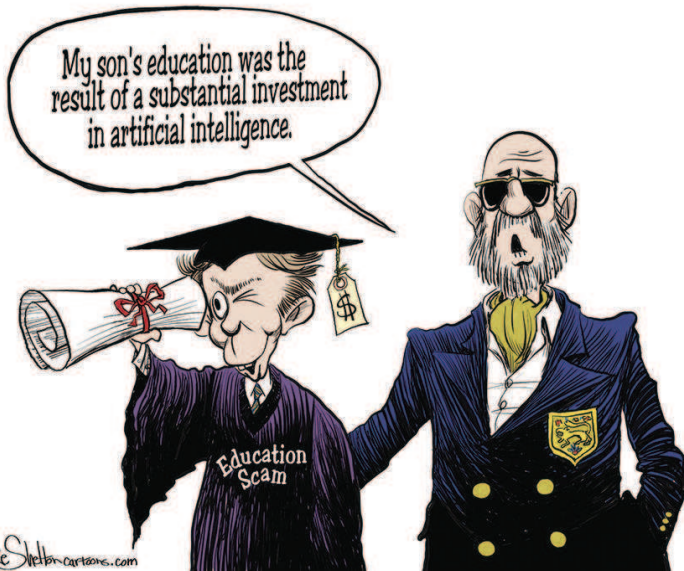
If this is good for the county as a whole, great. However, I don't think that Oregon taxpayers should have to pay money to help just a local few. If it is a good idea to fund the project, do it as a loan to be paid back with receipts from water sold.

I don't agree with funding west-side projects with my tax dollars. I also don't agree with asking the whole state to fund a project that only benefits a few and may provide a profit to a private entity.

Don't beg the legislature to fund your activities. Agree to a loan and pay it back.

I have contacted Bill Hansel, state senator, and Greg Barretto, state representative, on this and encourage any who agree to do the same. Do we want to help reduce or increase state debt problems?

Joseph T. Zinni
Joseph



WHERE TO WRITE

GRANT COUNTY
• **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.
• **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@

centurylink.net.
• **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net
• **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.



Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

Publisher.....Chris Rush, crush@eomediagroup.com
Editor & General Manager.....Sean Hart, editor@bmeagle.com
Reporter.....Richard Hanners, rick@bmeagle.com
Community News.....Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com
Sports.....Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com
Marketing Rep.....Kim Kell, ads@bmeagle.com
Administrative Assistant.....Makenna Adair, office@bmeagle.com
Office Assistant.....Alexandra Hand, office@bmeagle.com

1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including online access)

Grant County\$45
Everywhere else in U.S.....\$57

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER send address changes to: Blue Mountain Eagle 195 N. Canyon Blvd. John Day, OR 97845-1187
USPS 226-340

Copyright © 2019 Blue Mountain Eagle

All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.