

Voters are trying to get Gov. Brown’s attention

The efforts to put a recall of Oregon Gov. Kate Brown on the ballot is a visible sign of the rural-urban divide.

There are two separate efforts underway — one sponsored by the Oregon Republican Party, the other by a self-proclaimed grass-roots organization that goes by the descriptive moniker “Flush down Kate Brown.”

To get a recall on the ballot, either group needs to collect 280,050 valid signatures from registered voters by Oct. 14. Realistically, either effort will need well over 300,000 signatures to survive challenges.

Our colleagues at the Oregon Capital Bureau talked with people signing the petitions at the Oregon State Fair.

The majority of those interviewed at the fair struggled to specify why they wanted to recall Brown, and seemed to be doing so based on a gut feeling. Most commonly, people brought up cap and trade — a failed effort by the Legislature that Brown backed to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

“My understanding is that a lot of people just don’t think Salem cares about them right now,” said Linn County GOP Chair Adam Keaton.

Indeed. Many Oregonians feel that political leaders such as Brown have not only abandoned them but are actively working against their interests.

Kate Brown is not a wildly popular governor. As secretary of state, she ascended to office when John Kitzhaber resigned in 2015. She barely won a majority of votes in the special election to fulfill Kitzhaber’s remaining term in 2016 and won just 50% of the vote in 2018 when she was elected for her own four-year term. A recent poll found her to be one of the least popular governors in the country.

Recall efforts are a long shot, even with officials of marginal popularity. In the absence of actual corruption or malfeasance, we question the wisdom of trying to overturn legitimate elections either by recall or impeachment. It’s a clumsy way to reconcile policy differences.

Still, we understand the frustration that farmers, ranchers, loggers, truckers, fishermen and other working Oregonians — rural and urban — are feeling. They think they have no other options left but to replace Kate Brown with the next officer in the line of succession — state Treasurer Tobias Read, a Democrat who is at least as liberal as Brown.

What they really want is for Brown and other urban leaders to hear their concerns and take them seriously.

Do they have her attention now? We can only hope.



SHOOTING THE BREEZE

Wolf sightings

Wolf sightings have become increasingly more common here in Oregon. Several years ago, a local resident mistakenly shot a wolf in Logan Valley. At the beginning of August, the Blue Mountain Eagle reported camera confirmation of wolves at Keeney Meadows. Love them or hate them, they are here and probably here to stay. While I am not a fan of the wolf introduction program, I have come to accept it as the reality we live in.



Rod Carpenter



Contributed photo
Rod Carpenter assists a wildlife control agent with wolf management on Brundage Mountain in Idaho in 2010. The female wolf was collared and released.

It hit closer to home when a friend told me about a local family that had a close encounter with an aggressive wolf while huckleberry picking. The very next day the news broke that a wolf had ripped into a tent and attacked a family in Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada. With the aid of another camper, they were able to beat the wolf off.

While those two experiences are a little unnerving, I’m not trying to sell fear here. Over 4 million people visit Banff every year. There have been fewer than 50 reported wolf attacks in the U.S. in the last 100 years. You have a greater chance of choking to death on a gummy bear than being attacked by a wolf. That being said, taking some precautions when you head into the woods is never a bad idea.

Every day you jump into your rig and drive to work, the store, your mother-in-law’s — without even realizing you are gambling with your life. More people are killed or injured in vehicle accidents each year than all outdoor activities combined. Hopefully when you drive you take some precautions: Wear a seat belt, carry a spare, pay attention to signs and be more alert in busy traffic.

You need to exercise some caution when you are outdoors with your dogs. Wolves are very territorial and have wiped out entire packs of hounds. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

recommends that if you are traveling with dogs in potential wolf country to keep the dog close, have a bell on its collar and make some noise.

In Oregon, wolves are still protected. You can kill a wolf in protection of your own life, but you are not allowed to kill a wolf attacking your dog, cattle, sheep or pet gerbil. (East of highways 395, 78 and 95, the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan does allow ranchers to kill wolves on private property if caught in the act of biting, wounding or chasing livestock and working dogs, but that’s a narrow exception.)

Fear of injury or attack should never keep you from enjoying the outdoors. Overall, it is a very safe place to be as long as you give it the respect it deserves.

Tell us what you do to stay safe in the woods at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

Rod Carpenter is a husband, father and hunting fool.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cow Fire response unacceptable

To the Editor:
This letter is written in reference to the article concerning the Cow Fire and the response by the Forest Service when questioned about the Cow Fire.

I have heard one upper echelon fire management individual say, and I quote, “Yes, we know about that fire; we’re monitoring it.” I believe this to mean we are observing and watching it.

The article in the Blue Mountain Eagle of Aug. 21 was titled “Fire Staff using new technology to manage fire.” Technology is defined as “to control and direct,

to render and keep submissive.” When I monitor, I observe or watch the clouds of smoke this fire is producing by the consumption of my public land. I think just maybe by the Forest Service’s new Remote Autonomous Observation System it may be seen they have allowed the escape of an unsubmitive monster.

Further in this article it is stated, “As long as conditions are favorable the Cow Fire will be allowed to continue function in its natural role on the landscape.”

The natural role of fire is destructive burning as of a house or forest. That is according to Webster.

Paraphrasing forester Gifford

Pinchot, the national forests are made for and owned by the people; they are not made to give the officers in charge of them a chance to work out theories; the officers are paid by the people to act as their agents; it is the users themselves who can be of chief assistance in doing away with bad methods.

The folks responsible who are in charge know who they are. It’s not the people on the line. Perhaps those in charge have forgotten their role, which is to “Care for the land and serve the people.” Prairie City, keep your nose in the wind and your eye on the skyline.

Michael R. Christensen
John Day

LETTERS POLICY: Letters to the Editor is a forum for Blue Mountain Eagle readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters will be asked to be contained to 350 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. No thank-you letters. Submissions to this page become property of the Eagle. The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. We must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday. Send letters to editor@bmeagle.com, or Blue Mountain Eagle, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845; or fax to 541-575-1244.

WHERE TO WRITE

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