



Wednesday, May 19, 2021

153rd Year • No. 20 • 16 Pages • \$1.50

MyEagleNews.com

# Residents voice opinions against COVID-19 mandates



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

Athena Moline tells John Day Mayor Ron Lundbom to read the Constitution at a town hall event May 12 in John Day.

200 people attended and voted almost unanimously to declare a crisis due to lockdowns

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Two hundred people attended a town hall at the Grant County Fairgrounds April 12 to express their frustrations with statewide lockdown measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Dubbed a “non-partisan effort,” the event organizers stated in a mailer their goal was to let the county’s elected officials know where the community stood on Gov. Kate Brown’s COVID-19 mandates.

Of particular concern were orders to wear masks in most settings. However, Brown announced Thursday after this event that the state no longer requires fully vaccinated Oregonians to wear masks in public.

Almost unanimously, the crowd voted for Grant County’s commissioners to adopt Baker City’s Resolution No. 3881, which calls for the declaration of an economic, mental health and crime crisis due to the governor’s COVID-19-related lockdowns and state of emergency.

Organizer Bill Newman said the resolution, in his view, does not have enough teeth, but will carry more weight as an official position.

“From the bottom of my heart,” he said. “I think it’s the right thing to do.”



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

John Day Mayor Ron Lundbom, left, listens as Monument resident Bill Newman addresses the crowd May 12 at the Grant County Fairgrounds.

## Frustrations

According to a mailer that went out to all of Grant County, it is unfair to expect the county’s elected officials to deal with the COVID-19 mandates without the county’s citizens taking a stand and voicing their opinions.

Those in attendance voiced their concerns about the mask mandates and what, in their view, was “tyrannical overreach” from the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health

Administration and by people who have turned in small businesses to the regulatory agency for not enforcing the state’s masking mandates.

Newman said there is nothing worse than turning in small businesses for not making their customers wear masks.

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# First wolf kill of livestock confirmed in Grant County

ODFW: One kill confirmed, one probable

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Fox Valley rancher became the first rancher in Grant County to lose livestock to a confirmed wolf depredation this month.

An Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife report confirmed Thursday that wolves killed a cow in the early morning hours of May 8 within the Northside area of known wolf activity.

“The location of injuries and severity of trauma was similar to other confirmed wolf attack injuries on cattle,” the report states. The report noted that multiple bite marks and severe muscle trauma were present on the upper thighs of both hind legs, groin and left elbow.

ODFW investigated five cow carcasses at a ranch in Fox Valley. While the report confirmed that one of the cows had been killed by wolves, ODFW officials deemed another death as a “probable” wolf attack and two as “possible” wolf attacks. The cause of the fifth death “is unknown, but was not wolf-related,” the report states.

In the killing that was determined as “probable,” the report stated that trauma to the hind legs and elbows was similar to other confirmed wolf attacks. However, the report said the “severity and size” of the wounds did not have significant bite marks and scrapes like those of a wolf.

“The scrape marks and associated trauma to the front right elbow indicate a predator attack but lack evidence to conclude wolf,” the report reads. The report notes that, because wolves killed livestock in the same pasture, they determined that wolves could have killed that one.

The report stated the “possible”

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Contributed photo

A dead cow found Saturday, May 8, on Roy Vardenaga’s Fox Valley ranch.

# Anti-animal ag initiative raises alarm among farm groups

Initiative Petition 13 would strip away most protections for livestock producers under state’s animal abuse laws

By George Plaven  
EO Media Group

Animal agriculture could soon be considered animal cruelty under a proposed ballot measure in Oregon.

Farm groups are pushing back against Initiative Petition 13, which would strip away most protections for livestock producers under the state’s animal abuse laws.

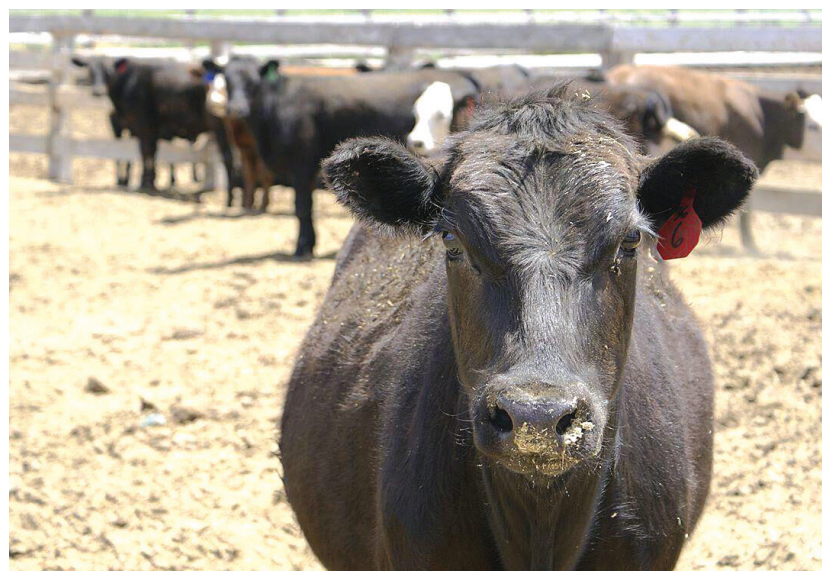
The result would effectively criminalize everything from slaughtering livestock to basic animal husbandry, including branding and dehorning cattle, castrating bulls and docking horses, sheep and pigs, said Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of public policy for the Oregon Farm Bureau.

The initiative also seeks to re-classify livestock breeding and artificial insemination as sexual assault of an animal — a Class C felony.

“It’s a very different tack than we have ever seen before,” Cooper said. “Basically, they’re looking to ban anything with animals that is not doctoring.”

Initiative Petition 13 was filed Nov. 2, 2020, with the Oregon Secretary of State’s office. The chief petitioner is David Michelson, a Portland animal rights activist.

A similar proposal, called the Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation, or PAUSE, Act is also being pursued in Colorado.



EOMG file photo

An initiative being circulated targets animal agriculture, hunting, rodeos and wildlife management, among other activities.

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