



The Columbia Press

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503-861-3331

March 4, 2022

Vol. 6, Issue 9

Saving the canopy, one troubled tree at a time

A juggernaut is on its way to Oregon, and federal and state government agencies are stepping in.

The Oregon Department of Forestry has been gathering the seeds of Oregon ash from throughout the state thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The goal is to preserve its gene pool before the arrival of a destructive pest that could wipe out the species.

“This is a first-of-its-kind effort in the long saga of invasive pests and diseases attacking North American trees,” said Wyatt Williams, ODF’s invasive species specialist. “By the time scientists are funded and able to start looking for resistance, a large part of the gene pool of the species being attacked has already been lost.”

Oregon is fortunate to be able to gather seeds representing the whole range of Oregon ash genes ahead of the arrival of emerald ash borer, he said. The borer will devastate ash trees here as it has done across the country.

The insect, originally from Asia, first was found in Michigan in 2002. It has since spread to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Everywhere it invades, the insect kills almost all of the ash trees.

Females lay their eggs on ash trees. The larvae then eat tunnels under the bark through the cambium layer. The tunnels make it im-

See ‘Canopy’ on Page 4



Above: A forestry worker collects seed from wild Oregon ash trees north of Salem as part of an effort to preserve the species’ genes before the emerald ash borer arrives.

Photo by ODF

Right: Workers walk through a grove of red alder in the Nehalem Watershed.

Courtesy Nehalem Watershed Council



Warrenton hires interim planner, makes progress on CM position

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Progress has been made on filling City Hall staffing positions that have led to a disruption in some services in the past year.

Mike Morgan, former interim city planner for Astoria and the former mayor of Cannon Beach, has been hired as interim city planner for the city of Warrenton. He’ll start March 14.



Morgan

Applications for city manager were due Thursday with screening and initial interviews beginning next week.

“Last I checked in with our consultant last week, they had received nine applications and expected more over the weekend,” current City Manager Linda Engbretson wrote in an email. “He said there were definitely some good candidates among the applications received.”

Engbretson announced her retirement last year and she has been filling in since September on a temporary basis. After interviews and background checks, a new city manager is expected to be announced April 4.

Engbretson also has moved forward in hiring a planning technician, a new post created by the city commission in its attempts to keep things moving in the Building and Planning Department, and with increasing the budget for a permanent city planner.

“The next city manager will need to move that forward how they see fit – keep complex projects with a consultant or hire the planner,” Engbretson

Oregonians appear ready for psilocybin, survey says

Ninety-four percent of Oregonians say they’d access psilocybin services once they become available in the next year, according to results of a survey issued by the Oregon Health Authority.

The survey was conducted during January and February with results released Wednesday.

Results of the survey show that of the 4,421 people who participated, 4,162, or 94 percent, were interested in accessing psilocybin services. The survey also found that about 15 percent were interested in getting approval for a fa-



Medicinal mushrooms grown at a farm in the Netherlands.

cilitator training program, 36 percent were interested in facilitator licensure,

22 percent were interested in manufacturer licensure, 20 percent were interested in service center licensure, and 5 percent were interested in testing lab licensure.

“We saw strong participation from the community,” said Angie Allbee, manager of Oregon Psilocybin Services at OHA. “The survey findings, while preliminary, help us to better understand community interest in accessing psilocybin services, in licensure, and

See ‘Psilocybin’ on Page 3

See ‘Staffing’ on Page 2