

# Unearthed fuel tank a reminder of '70s landslide

## ODOT removes long-buried steel cylinder from Silver Point beach

By Erick Bengel  
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Oregon Department of Transportation recently unearthed a rusted remnant of North Coast history: an empty 1,000-gallon fuel tank buried during the legendary landslide of Feb. 3, 1974, at Silver Point.

First reported by a man walking along the beach last month, the tank could be seen jutting up from the soil, having resurfaced just above the high tide line, according to Kevin Werst, the department's transportation maintenance manager for the Warrenton Section of District 1.

At first, the ODOT personnel sent to inspect the large steel cylinder thought it was a septic tank. But when the four-man crew went to dig it out the morning of April 21, they could smell the residual oil, according to Felix Martinez, the coordinator for the Warrenton section who led the operation.

"Once we got in there and realized what it really was, we were worried about spillage," Martinez said. But after he and his team took a peek inside the tank, they reckoned it was safe to move, he said.

Jim Crowell, a part-time Cannon Beach resident since 1962 who lives about three-quarters of a mile north of the site where the tank was found, took photos as the men wrapped the artifact in a chain sling, pulled it from the earth with a backhoe, loaded it onto a trailer bed and hauled it away.

The tank currently resides in ODOT's maintenance yard in Warrenton,



JIM CROWELL PHOTO

An Oregon Department of Transportation crew pulls a 1,000-gallon fuel tank from the earth near the vegetation line at the Silver Point beach. The tank was buried during the landslide of 1974.

where it is waiting to be recycled, Martinez said.

### 'Nature of the beast'

The Silver Point landslide, which occurred roughly at milepost 32, involved more than 1.5 million cubic meters of material that slushed across the highway down to the beach and "damaged or destroyed at least four houses," according to the book "Volcanoes to Vineyards: Geologic Field Trips Through the Dynamic Landscape of the Pacific Northwest."

The slide "closed the highway for several days" and resulted in reconstruction costs of more than \$1 million, the books reads.

Crowell said that the slide knocked two beachfront houses off of their foundations. The structures

were removed and never rebuilt.

Since then, "there have been no dwellings built on that entire stretch along the beach," he said.

But leftover debris from the houses, has, over the years, "periodically kind of squirted out down near the edge of the vegetation line," including pieces of a river rock fireplace, he said.

After the landslide — and after the massive mound of mud and clay was cleared from the highway — the state installed drain pipes to collect water accumulation. But sections of pipe have apparently become disconnected, and some have emerged from the ground "in a kind of haphazard appearance," Crowell said.

Local historian Peter Lindsey noted that devel-



JIM CROWELL PHOTO

The empty fuel tank is placed atop a trailer bed after being pulled from the Silver Point Beach in the early morning hours of April 21. The Oregon Department of Transportation crew could still smell the residual oil, even after all these years.

opers have had trouble building on the "somewhat mobile ground" from Silver Point to Hug Point.

"We have a long history

of slides in that area south of Cannon Beach," though most are small slides, said Lou Torres, a public information officer with ODOT.

Every winter, "we're always dealing with some mud or dirt that comes down. That's just the nature of the beast there."

# MUNICIPAL MEMO

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163 E. Gower Street • P.O. Box 368 • Cannon Beach, OR 97110  
(503) 436-1581 • Fax: (503) 436-2050 • TTY (503) 436-8097

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**  
MAYOR: Sam Steidel  
COUNCILORS: Wendy Higgins, Melissa Cadwallader, Mike Benefield & George Vetter  
CITY MANAGER: Brant Kucera

## MEETINGS JUNE 2015

2	City Council Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.
9	City Council Work Session	5:30 p.m.
18	Design Review Board	6:00 p.m.
25	Planning Commission	6:00 p.m.

### CITY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION, May 5, 2015

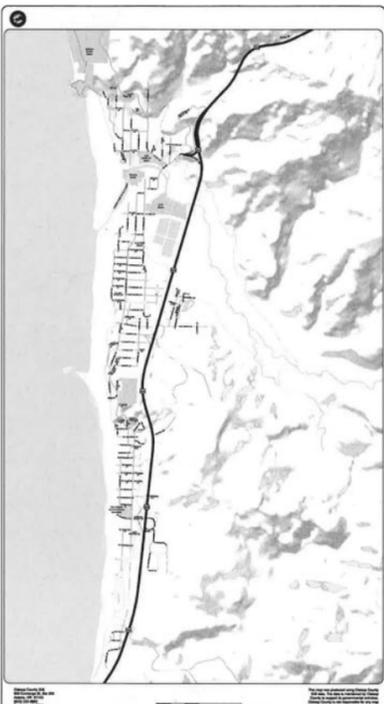
City Council met to discuss the six-month evaluation of the new City Manager. The meeting was held in accordance with ORS 192.660(2)(i).

improve the storm drainage and construct a sidewalk for environmental and ADA purposes on the Little Pompey side of Spruce Street;

- Discussed the Tourism and Arts Commission (TAC) grant process and scheduled a meeting with TAC members in late July (date tbd);

### CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, May 5, 2015

- Approved Proclamation 15-02; for the purpose of designating the week of May 17-23, 2015 as Emergency Medical Services Week;
- Approved Resolution 15-04; for the purpose of authorizing the city of Cannon Beach to apply for an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) grant to partially fund the acquisition of a 28 acre addition to the Ecola Creek Forest Reserve;
- Appointed Todd Rowley to the Parks and Community Services Committee and Julie Walker to the Tourism and Arts Commission;
- Discussed a letter from the Oregon Coast Alliance (ORCA) regarding a dune grading moratorium.



- Discussed the possibility of increasing the Transient Room Tax.

### EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

- Budget Committee meetings were held April 22, April 29, May 6 and May 13, 2015 to develop the FY 2015-16 City of Cannon Beach budget; the approved budget goes before the City Council in June for adoption.
- Interviews were held for the IT Director and Finance Director positions; Russell Barrett will start June 1st as the IT Director and Laurie Sawrey will start June 8th as the new Finance Director.
- Les Wierson of the Cannon Beach Emergency Preparedness (EPREP) Committee gave a presentation at the "Tsunami Evacuation Route Wayfinding Charrette" held at Camp Rilea on May 14th.

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD** - scheduled for May 21, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

**PLANNING COMMISSION** - At their April 23, 2015 meeting, the Planning Commission discussed:  
SV 15-01, Sign variance requested by the City of Cannon Beach to permit the placement of two interpretive signs along an existing pedestrian trail located in NeCus' Park. Approved  
Scheduled to meet May 28, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

### HAYSTACK ROCK AWARENESS PROGRAM

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program invites you to their photo exhibit at the Cannon Beach History Center (1387 Spruce Street). Open now through the end of September. The program will also be hosting their annual summer training on Saturday, June 13th from 9am to 2pm at Cannon Beach City Hall (163 E. Gower Street). Email [volunteerrhap@ci.cannonbeach.or.us](mailto:volunteerrhap@ci.cannonbeach.or.us) to RSVP.

To view our Beach Program schedule, please visit our website: [www.ci.cannonbeach.or.us](http://www.ci.cannonbeach.or.us)

### CANNON BEACH FARMERS MARKET

The Cannon Beach Farmers Market is almost here! Our first market begins Tuesday, June 16th and runs every Tuesday through September 29th. Music and prepared food are from 1pm - 5pm. Vendors are open 2pm - 5pm. The market features produce, Cheese, Meats, Salmon, Eggs, Baked Goods, Honey, Sea Salt, Flowers, Mushrooms, Sweet Treats, Wine and more! This season we will have our children's program during the months of July and August, every Tuesday from 3pm - 4pm. The children's program will be led by Jason Schermerhorn and his two children Jasmine and Jackson. The location of the market is on the corner of E. Gower and Hemlock (midtown/City Hall parking lot). Belinda Underwood will be our opening musical act. For more info call 503-440-0054. See you at the market!

### NOTICE OF VACANCIES CITY COMMISSIONS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

The City of Cannon Beach is seeking applications for the following vacancies:

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE:** ONE (1) vacancy to fill a four-year term.

The primary responsibility of the Emergency Preparedness Committee is to plan emergency response on a city-wide basis and make recommendations to the City Council. The Emergency Preparedness Committee holds its regular

meetings on the last Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and schedules work sessions as needed.

To be eligible to serve on a City committee, applicants must have resided within the city or its urban growth boundary during the one year immediately preceding appointment; or at the time of appointment, shall have owned real property located within the city or its urban growth boundary for at least one year immediately preceding appointment.

Applications are available at City Hall, 163 E. Gower Street, Cannon Beach, by email addressed to [riggs@ci.cannonbeach.or.us](mailto:riggs@ci.cannonbeach.or.us) or on-line at [www.ci.cannonbeach.or.us](http://www.ci.cannonbeach.or.us). Applications should be returned to Colleen Riggs, City Recorder, Cannon Beach City Hall, P.O. Box 368, Cannon Beach, OR 97110. For more information, please contact Colleen Riggs by email or phone at (503) 436-8052.

### COMMUNITY GRANTS

Presentations for Community Grants Applications are scheduled for May 28, 2015 at City Hall beginning at 9:00am. The Parks and Community Services Committee will meet Thursday, June 18, 2015 to review the grant applications and prepare recommendations. The City Council will review the grant award recommendations at their work session scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2015 and final consideration of the awards is scheduled for the City Council meeting on Tuesday August 4, 2015.

### TOURISM & ARTS FUND GRANTS

Interviews for Tourism and Arts Fund (TAF) Grant Applications were held Tuesday, May 19 and Wednesday, May 20th at Cannon Beach City Hall. The Tourism & Arts Commission will meet on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at 1:00pm at City Hall to discuss the TAF award recommendations. The City Council will review the grant award recommendations at their work session scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2015 and final consideration of the awards is scheduled for the City Council meeting on Tuesday, July 7, 2015.