

# Who will be there to save us if the big one hits?

How scared are you? If “The Next Really Big One” in The New Yorker and “Unprepared” on Oregon Public Broadcasting, haven’t worked your nerves, please check your pulse. An overdue natural disaster could devastate our region — if the quake doesn’t get you, the tsunami will.

While we’ve been trying to decide whether we’re living with Chicken Little or the Boy Who Cried Wolf,” it really doesn’t matter. We need the answer to, “If the worst happens, where do we turn?”

That’s where, state officials say, the Cascadia Playbook comes in.

While it’s not exactly easy reading — the operational plan “doesn’t have any narrative, any context, a plan or format,” said Laurie Holein, deputy director of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management — the Playbook is touted as the state and federal government’s go-to document should the earth begin to move.

But how valuable is it really?

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, says it won’t make much of a difference if we’re not prepared at the local level.

“I think there’s more to meeting this threat than putting up little signs saying, ‘We’re tsunami ready,’” she said. “It’s OK in a high-level document to say we take care of our disabled, but what’s the practical reality for getting some person who weighs 300 pounds down from five stories?”

## The Playbook

In 2014, state’s Adjutant Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management had a very good idea: a tool to demystify “the very large mountain of things: that needed to

be coordinated,” as described by Holein. “Break it down with all the different players.”

The document would detail how state officials should respond in the first 14 days following a magnitude 9.0 Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami off the West Coast.

The Playbook is “a quick reference guide to what things need to be done,” Holein said. “It’s kind of like an aviator’s checklist before he fires up the engine: what things need to make sure they’re getting done, check the fuel, check, have you done that with that gauge, check.”

Hokanson proposed the Playbook to former Gov. Jon Kitzhaber and the first Cascadia Playbook was born in 2014.

Gov. Kate Brown liked the plan too and this summer the Office of Emergency Management hailed the release of the updated document. The new Playbook, released with some fanfare for an agency usually in the shadows, provides a checklist for state officials based on federal, state and local emergency response plans, which will also be carried out during the earthquake and tsunami.

This is not for the faint of heart. The Playbook considers the “worst disasters we would ever face in the state of Oregon,” she said.

A Cascadia Subduction earthquake — a full eruption of the 700-mile subduction zone — would be “absolutely the worst event we would face here,” Holein said. “We wrote it with that disaster in mind and tried to do a very comprehensive inventory of what kind of things are going to be required.”

There could be 25,000 fatalities, more than 10,000 buildings destroyed and damaged; 10,000 or

## CANNON SHOTS

By  
R.J.  
MARX



**Full disclosure: I don’t even own a go-bag. But I am purchasing flashlights, putting meds and tools in one place, and reviewing routes should the ground shake.**

more people in need of shelter and \$50 billion in economic losses.

Actions list how and when to trigger a federal disaster declaration, collect bodies, transport supplies, or provide help in areas destroyed by the quake. Shelter, feeding, medical care, animal care — all are critical elements.

### All that and a bag of chips?

But Oregon State Senator Betsy Johnson said this week she doesn’t quite see it as the be-all end-all of emergency preparedness.

“No, I’m not happy with the measures the state has taken,” she said. “We have too many agencies acting unilaterally. There is not a consistent coordination. It appears that the planning is episodic.”

Johnson added the Legislature

tried to rectify this in the last session, with a resilience person in Gov. Kate Brown’s office, responsible directly to the governor.

Many cities along the coast “have incredibly engaged constituents that have done a lot of forward-looking work,” Johnson said. “There are others that have done less so. While we have these silo-ed plans, we don’t have, in my view, a consistent expectation for what makes communities resilient.”

She said she’s seen the Cascadia Playbook. “I was up at Camp Rilea when Gov. Kitzhaber rolled it out,” Johnson said. “I don’t want to criticize somebody else’s work product, but I don’t know how a high level planning document translates into on-the-ground action.

“I think there’s a lot more to be done on the ground,” she added.

State money is available for state retrofits for public buildings she said, but in some cases these retrofits make no sense — for example, when a school of firehouse is in a tsunami zone. That’s going to be more complicated,” Johnson said. “If you take Seaside as an example, they didn’t have site control when they went out for their school bond.”

In order to get site control, Seaside needs to go outside the city’s urban growth boundary. “Expanding any Urban Growth Boundary is incredibly complicated,” Johnson said, evidenced by the long, well-attended and voluminous documented meetings held in Seaside over past months.

### Get your go-bag

All these tsunami pieces seem to have a common thread, sort of like the finales of “The Titanic” or “The Towering Inferno.”

Full disclosure: I don’t even own a go-bag. But I am purchas-

ing flashlights, putting meds and tools in one place, and reviewing routes should the ground shake.

“We’re really glad the public is playing attention to the topic right now,” Holein said. “We want them to know we are working very diligently in our field to make sure we are recognizing and addressing the needs of these type of event, and there’s a call to action for citizens as well. They need to realize this threat exists and they need to be prepared on their own to be resilient for at least two weeks.”

The only thing everyone seems to recognize now is the risk.

“If residents live close to the coastal area, they need to be very aware, and if they happen to be someone near the shoreline, if and when there is that quaking they need to get to higher ground as soon as possible. They may have 10 to 15 minutes to get to higher ground. Everything else can be replaced — but lives can’t.”

## The Playbook

*Initial response in the event of disasters.*

- PLAY 1:** Notification, activation and authorities
- PLAY 2:** Life safety
- PLAY 3:** Damage assessment
- PLAY 4:** Mass Care and Sheltering
- PLAY 5:** Logistics and Resource Management
- PLAY 6:** Planning and Prioritization
- PLAY 7:** Emergency Repairs
- PLAY 8:** Outside Assistance
- PLAY 9:** Begin Recovery

# Council rushed Nicholson project to fit own agenda

In the Gazette’s article “Cannon Beach property owner prevails in state land use board decision,” (Oct. 9), Will Rasmussen, attorney for the property owner Jeff Nicholson stated, “The decision was, frankly, a win for Cannon Beach.” We, the 66 members of Friends of Cannon Beach, a nonprofit corporation founded and funded to oppose and expose this decision, strongly disagree.

Nicholson bought his 1/2 acre parcel in 2014. It has steep slopes and had, therefore, been restricted to only the existing 100 year old “historic cottage.” Immediately, he asked to build “a couple of cottages.” The city denied him three times because it would violate our steep slope laws. Unfortunately, his lawyers found a loophole in our code. So Nicholson appealed and threatened a lawsuit.

Instead of standing firm, the city endeavored to circumvent our laws and agreed to allow Nicholson to re-apply to build FOUR FULL-SIZED homes on his steeply sloped parcel by simply calling it something different. That’s how the Planned Unit Development option came about. The city created this option and gave it to Nicholson in exchange for putting his lawsuit on hold. It’s that simple.

The relabel had to first get past the Planning Commission, which was not privy to the PUD-for-law-suit exchange. The Planning Commission decisively voted 6-1 to deny Nicholson a fourth time.

The City Council, however, rushed the project to its own agenda. Two days before the Planning Commission had even voted to deny, council had already called a “special meeting” solely to accommodate Nicholson and vote on the PUD scheme. The city sent out two flawed and confusing public notices.

On Feb. 10, council held its rushed hearing. Opposition was light. People felt the Planning Commission had again done its job by its denial and remained confused about the process. Council closed the record and tentatively approved the project.

At the March 3 council meeting, 36 angry citizens appeared ready to be heard. Mayor Steidel had already approved my speaking during the public comment section on behalf of our large group. However, city land use attorney Bill Kabeseman advised the mayor NOT to allow us to speak saying the record was closed (although they had the option to reopen). The mayor silenced the opposition, and the council voted 4-1 to approve. Only Councilor Benefield voted to deny.

Friends of Cannon Beach then formed. We grew to 66 members quickly, with members citywide and in four states. We raised over \$13,000 in donations ranging \$25-\$1,000. This was a grassroots effort by citizens who feel their local government let them down. This isn’t a local squabble or “not

## GUEST COLUMN

By  
JEFF HARRISON  
*President, Friends of Cannon Beach*

in my backyard” grouching. This diverse group is dismayed by the pro-development climate and timidity displayed by four of our councilors who bowed to a threat and assisted a single developer in circumventing our code. That’s not the Cannon Beach way; at least it didn’t used to be. Variances, rule bending or stretching, and favorable interpretations should benefit the good of the whole ... not a single developer.

The Cannon Beach Historical Society supported Nicholson’s original plan because he promised to save the 100 year old “historic cottage”, thereby “preserving a piece of Cannon Beach’s history.” Some members even signed boiler-plate letters of support. When they read in The Gazette that the project would “allow him to tear down and rebuild a decrepit 100-year-old home,” they quietly backed off their support.

Our code requires PUDs to be at least 3 acres, unless the Planning Commission finds the property “unique.” Rasmussen claimed

the 1/2-acre parcel’s steep slopes (the thing that prevented building under zoning code) was the very feature that made it unique. Our code also says this PUD should have 41 percent shared outdoor living space. Rasmussen argued that the 125-foot-long, 12-foot-tall, interlocking concrete driveway counted towards this percentage. When challenged, he stated the code says “should.” not “shall,” so he didn’t have to provide the space anyway.

The April 14 City Council agenda shows staff was directed to draft an amendment to “close the loophole” Nicholson used. A city official said, “the issue is relatively straight-forward: how do we make it unambiguously clear that the slope-density restrictions in [our code] apply to situations like Nicholson’s?” The amendment is on hold because Nicholson’s lawsuit hasn’t been dropped. His threat is still out there. The city says he’s unlikely to drop his appeal against them until his PUD is complete. After the amendment, other small property owners with steep slopes couldn’t use this loophole again.

During one hearing, Nicholson claimed Sierra Club membership, and said, “that says something that I like trees.” In May 2015, nineteen of his spruce trees were hacked (limbed and topped) for view enhancement. The results are proudly posted on “Lucie’s Cottages” Facebook page. Trees north of Ecola Creek and west of

Laurel are protected by code. Alert citizens notified the City and Nicholson initially faced a \$9,500 fine. In another letter from his lawyer, Nicholson took responsibility for only four trees and placed most of the blame on the previous property owner, David Ingalls. The City Manager cut the fine in half.

During deliberations, Councilor Cadwallader stated, “Change is always difficult, and people have gotten used to the property being empty.” This is just not the case. The concern of Friends of Cannon Beach is primarily the disconnect that exists between the values of the citizens as reflected in the code and comprehensive plan versus the apparent pro-development climate in city government. No one wins in this scenario, except of course, Nicholson and his lawyer. The 66 members of Friends of Cannon Beach certainly don’t consider this decision “a win for Cannon Beach.” Rather, we view it as dangerous precedent.

Thank you, planning commissioners, for correctly denying this project three times. Thank you, Councilor Benefield, for your courage to vote “no” and your common sense to see this project for what it is: a bypass of regular zoning provisions, solely to maximize density on a parcel of land that has unbuildable or unusable areas (see city code 17.40.010.C).

In Cannon Beach, steep slopes and slippery slopes are very closely related.

## Uncorked Ramblings STEVEN SINKLER

# Introducing one of Oregon’s most decorated wineries

You may not have heard the big news, but Reustle Prayer Rock’s 2012 “Masada Block” Syrah was named the Best Syrah at the 6 Nations Wine Competition, which was held last week in Australia. The Six Nations Wine Competition is one of the most prestigious wine competitions in the world as top-rated wines from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina and South America are evaluated by some of the most distinguished wine judges in the world. The other thing that’s unique about the Six Nations Wine Competition is that the wines are invited to compete by the judges, and then the wines are evaluated by the entire judging panel.

For Reustle Prayer Rock to win this competition is amazing for a number of reasons. First, being invited to compete is a great accom-

plishment considering Reustle Prayer Rock is a small and relatively unknown winery on the international scene. Second, Syrah (also known as Shiraz) is Australia’s signature wine. Imagine for a second if an Australian pinot noir came into a competition in Carlton and walked away with “Best of Class” pinot noir.

Reustle Prayer Rock is a small, family-owned winery in Roseburg, but they are quickly becoming one of Oregon’s most decorated wineries. With a total production of around 8,000 cases annually, all of Reustle Prayer Rock’s wines are made with estate fruit, which gives them strict quality control over the grapes that are used in the winemaking. Stephen doesn’t purchase fruit from any other source; he only uses fruit he grows. It is this dedication to excellence that sets Reustle



STEVEN SINKLER

Prayer Rock apart.

I first met Stephen Reustle, owner and winemaker, at the 2013 Savor Northwest Wine Competition, held here in Cannon Beach. Stephen was a wine judge on the panel that I was moderating. Reustle Prayer Rock wines have a great reputation and I was honored to be working with him for a couple of days. Stephen and I hit it off immediately. On the first day of the Savor Northwest event, his malbec was

named “Best of Class,” beating out my Puffin malbec. Yet when Stephen walked in to the room, he was talking about how good the Puffin wine was. We introduced ourselves and he asked me if I had any wines in the competition and I told him that “Yes I do, Puffin malbec.” We both had a good laugh and from that point on, we’ve been friends. It should also be known that during that competition, three other Reustle Prayer Rock wines; Syrah, Tempranillo and pinot noir, were named “best of class.” I had never seen a single winery earn four “Best of Class” titles in a single competition.

When the competition was finished, I asked Stephen if he would be willing to let me carry his wines at the Wine Shack. This was a big ask, as Reustle Prayer Rock wines were only sold at their winery and to their

club members. At first, Stephen was hesitant. He explained to me that their distribution strategy did not include wine stores. While I respect each winery’s sales and marketing strategy, I asked him to come into my store and look at the quality of wines that I carry at the Wine Shack. My thought was that if he saw the Wine Shack carried Oregon’s finest wines, he would deem our store worthy. Stephen agreed and came into the Wine Shack. He walked around the store, looking at each section carefully before saying “You, can carry my wines.” Since that day, the Wine Shack is one of the few places in Oregon you can find Reustle Prayer Rock wines.

Coincidentally, you can come into the Wine Shack’s tasting room and sample Reustle Prayer Rock wines on Saturday, Oct. 31, from

1 to 5 p.m. We’re pouring Reustle Prayer Rock Gruner-Veltliner, Syrah, Tempranillo and malbec that day. Four delicious wines from this amazing winery. As I’m writing this, I’m not sure if Stephen will be behind the counter pouring the wines. Since winning this prestigious competition, he schedule has been very busy. However, you can check our Facebook page “Cannon Beach Wine Shack” for updates.

One last thing about last week’s 6 Nations Wine Competition, in the Syrah division, not only did Reustle Prayer Rock earn “Best of Class” for their 2012 “Masada Block” Syrah, their 2012 Reserve Syrah took third place. Incredible.

Please remember to drink responsibly and if you do drink, please don’t drive. We’ll see you at the Wine Shack.