

Arch Cape appeal

Arch Cape from Page 1A

"I don't think it was right for the county to just dissolve the committee with very minimal notice and with hardly any public process," Jensvold said in an email. "That's not the way to build trust between the county and this community, which has a strong vision for its own future."

The county has filed a motion to dismiss the appeal. If the Land Use Board of Appeals does not dismiss the challenge, both Jensvold and the county would file briefs and a hearing would occur.

Oregon Coast Alliance Land Use Director Cameron La Follette did not join the appeal, but said it was a mistake for the county to disband a committee that had a role in local review for decades.

The committee worked to protect Arch Cape's wetlands, which are "essential" in preventing floods, she believes. "There are real reasons behind this appeal," she said.

'Inappropriate' and 'hostile'

At the county commission meeting in February, the Design Review Committee was accused of being an

unnecessary, expensive and time-consuming land-use authority.

The committee's ability to make quasi-judicial land-use decisions was "inappropriate," according to the staff report interim County Manager Rich Mays presented.

Commissioners heard complaints that the Design Review Committee was "hostile" and "not in line with what the folks were doing in Arch Cape."

"The committee really adds nothing of substance to the design review process ... and only adds unnecessary delay and expense for residents and the county," wrote Arch Cape resident Tim Crawford in a letter to commissioners.

Jensvold and others strongly disagree.

"That committee is an important part of what makes Arch Cape a good place to live," Jensvold said in an email. "I love the community spirit of Arch Cape — that's part of the reason I moved here. I want the community to be able to speak for itself, and have a voice in how it changes. The Design Review Committee gives us the means to do that."

School bond in the works

Bond from Page 1A

A 2013 poll was conducted by telephone, Dougherty said, but components of this year's polling have yet to be determined.

Feedback could determine the scope of the bond, he said.

Three community forums in 2013 were attended by parents, students and community members who brainstormed about what should be included in the campus, and other forums, involving district faculty and staff members and Seaside High School student leaders, also were held.

Dougherty said "there is no specific plan as yet," but the most important goal, discussed in a board subcommittee, is to get schools out of the tsunami zone.

Preliminary plans

Along with a plea for federal support, Dougherty shared preliminary plans to relocate at-risk schools.

The district intends to develop property east of Seaside Heights Elementary School owned by Weyerhaeuser, the same site proposed in 2013.

"We have had many geo-techs evaluating that

hillside," Dougherty said. "They strongly believe that is the very best piece of property to relocate the school district."

No new roads would need to be built, he said.

A major tsunami wave driven by a megathrust quake could reach 90 to 120 feet. Elevation at the proposed site rises from 80 feet at the bottom edge to several hundred feet.

The property would need to be purchased and placed within the urban growth boundary, Dougherty said.

Dougherty said the district is still in process of negotiating with Weyerhaeuser for the land and a purchase price has yet to be determined.

"I signed a nondisclosure agreement so I can't say where we are in the process," Dougherty added.

If the bond is approved by voters in November, Dougherty estimates it will take four years to move all students to safety.

The district has not determined the move would be phased in or done all at once. "It will likely take time to move kids from each school," Dougherty said.

New fire chief selected

Fire Chief from Page 1A

Stearns said he will remain at the "will of the board."

"Hopefully we'll get this fellow on board June 1," Stearns said. "Beyond that, I'll stay as long as need be."

The board is looking to replace former Fire Chief Mike Balzer, who was fired

in October.

Balzer has since filed a lawsuit against the fire district claiming wrongful dismissal. Three fire board members turned back a recall election in early April. The recall effort stemmed from frustration among some residents over the board's handling of Balzer's firing.

Cleaning up at Circle Creek

'A great turnout and a great day'

By Katherine Lacaze
EO Media Group

The North Coast Land Conservancy's Circle Creek Habitat Reserve hummed with activity Saturday, April 23, when a small army of volunteers helped clean up the property in time for public visits over the late spring and summer months.

The 35 volunteers were split into groups who undertook various tasks, such as building and maintaining trails, cleaning up and burning old wood debris and planting salal, a native plant species.

"It was a great turnout and a great day," Stewardship Director Melissa Reich said. "We got a lot done and the trail are looking in great shape for the season."

The annual project symbolically marks the time of year when the property gets used more by the public. Administrative and Outreach Assistant Lynette Villagomez said during late fall and winter, the property, which is part of an active floodplain, is not accessible to people because of precipitation. The trails usually are opened around Earth Day and closed in late fall, depending on weather.

"Every spring, we'll come out here and do cleanup and maintenance and make it more inviting for people to visit," Villagomez said.

Of all the conservancy's properties, Circle Creek is "one where we've chosen to welcome people," because of



KATHERINE LACAZE/EO MEDIA GROUP

About 35 volunteers showed up to the North Coast Land Conservancy's Circle Creek Trails Clean-up to prepare the habitat reserve for the summer hiking season and upcoming events.

its location, accessibility and composition, she said.

Reich agreed, saying the site has "been grazed for a long time," "has a history of human use" and is one where the conservancy is doing active restoration, making it a great spot to have seasonal trails open to the public.

"It is "a good example of the old forest and the swamp," she said. "You can see them side by side."

Tessa Scheller, a local volunteer and member of the conservancy's Conservation Committee, said she believes welcoming and encouraging the public to spend time on the habitat reserve is valuable as it leads to an increased sense of ownership and, subsequently, stewardship and support.

"I think being out here helps that," she said.

Some people may suffer from nature deficit disorders of varying degrees, she said. The conservancy wants to reconnect humans with the rest of nature so they become "aware of the rich diversity, even of plant life, in their backyard," said Scheller, who also sits on the board of the Northwest Coast Trails Coalition.

Reich added that numerous people have, at one point, done a project or some volunteer work on the property and they are watching it slowly transform over time because of their efforts.

"A lot of people are able to feel connected," she said.

The timing of the cleanup project also coincided with preparation for the conservan-

cy's annual event, "The Forest Remembers," held in late April.

The Circle Creek Trails Cleanup was put on in partnership with the North Coast Trails Coalition. Additionally, some volunteers came from out of town to participate in the project as part of the 2016 Yale Day of Service, where alumni of Yale University throughout the country take part in service projects in their various communities. The official Day of Service is May 7, but Judy Fairdig said she and her husband, Paul, participated early and came to Seaside from Portland because they wanted to volunteer for the conservancy's project.

For more information on "The Forest Remembers" program, call the conservancy at 503-738-9126 or visit www.ncltrust.org.

Assessing the impact of marine reserves

Join Lower Nehalem Watershed Council on Thursday, May 12, in an event featuring Dr. Tommy Swearingen, Human Dimensions research project leader for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife marine reserves program, for a presentation on the program's ongoing research to assess the socioeconomic impact of marine reserves.

Oregon has designated five marine reserve sites, located at Cascade Head (near Lincoln City), Otter Rock (near Newport), Cape Perpetua (near Yachats), Redfish Rocks (near Port Orford), and most recently Cape Falcon (near Manzanita).

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for managing and scientifically monitoring these five sites.

The goal of the Human Dimensions Project is to assess the socioeconomic impact of marine reserve implementation and to perform research that informs near-shore management.

The Lower Nehalem Watershed Council is excited to partner with the Friends of Cape Falcon Marine Reserve to bring this presentation on the social science side of marine reserves research to the North Coast.

Presenter Dr. Tommy Swearingen oversees the program's human dimensions research, working in conjunction with a multitude of research partners in academia and the

private sector. His research has focused on recreational visitor management, environmental ethics, tourism, and community development.

The presentation will be

held at the Pine Grove Community House, 225 Laneda Ave. in Manzanita. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for refreshments; council updates at 7:20 and presentations at 8:30.



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