



Columbia Basin Electric Co-op crews have been forced to use cats to pull equipment through the fields as line repairs are made. Damage to CBEC's lines from last week's frost storm is expected to total more than \$1.4-million.

# CBEC crews move through mud repairing frost damaged lines

As skies cleared somewhat this past week underground cable crews continued to work on the job of restoring electricity to some areas of the Columbia Basin Electric Co-op service area near Condon.

In contrast to last week's dense fog, rain and freezing temperatures that destroyed miles of line and over 600 poles, the warmer weather has brought bad mud conditions that have hampered crews plowing in the underground cable through fields in

the area. CBEC Manager Dave Harrison said in many areas the mud is so deep that two caterpillar-type tractors must be used to pull the plow laying cable. Most areas where pole setting has been underway have required the use of a dozer to pull the truck to pole locations.

While electrical service has been restored to all but a few isolated areas, Harrison said much work remains to repair the damage which is expected to total more than a quarter of

a million dollars. On Sunday, an underground contractor was finally able to complete a major line to the Condon City well, while another contractor was completing the line to the Gwendolen elevator area on Tuesday. Yet to come is plowing in of cable throughout the Condon rural area.

The decision to lay underground cable was a major one, said Harrison, because underground cable has a somewhat shorter life than above ground wires.

"The annual fog conditions in the Condon rural area seem to leave underground as a desirable alternative to the continual frost battle," said Harrison.

The CBEC manager expressed thanks to area volunteers and for the utilities who sent in crews from Redmond, Monument, Milton-Freewater and Prosser, Davenport, and Dayton in Washington. In addition CBEC contracted for service with an additional line crew and three underground cable firms.

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### \$195,000 serial road levy placed before voters

Morrow County voters will be asked to approve a \$195,000 three-year serial road levy at the polls on Tuesday, Feb. 28, Morrow County Court decided last week.

This figure represents a \$50,000 increase over the \$145,000 levy approved in 1973. Slightly less than 50 cents per thousand evaluation is now paid by taxpayers for maintenance and improvement of the county road system, with a

15 cents per thousand increase estimated if the levy is approved.

The levy was changed from five to three years because of new legislation enacted by the 1977 Oregon State Legislature limiting such serial levies to a three year period.

The Morrow County Road Improvement Association, an organization of concerned citizens formed before each road levy election to support its

passage, emphasizes that the levy is not a new tax, that the County has had a serial road levy since 1948.

Increased costs for oil, freight, labor, repairs and other expenses was the reason given for the levy hike. There has been no road levy increase in 10 years.

A percentage of the county road levy is returned to the cities of Heppner, Lone, Lexington, Irrigon and Boardman

for the operation of the cities' street departments.

The rest of the levy goes to continue the county's existing program of road improvement, widening, surfacing, sanding and maintenance, including sterilization for noxious weed control.

There are approximately 1200 miles of roads included in the Morrow County road system.

### Hatfield says Willow Creek Dam 'could be'

The Willow Creek Dam project is alive and well and could become a reality if citizens of the area want to go ahead with the multi-use project, city and county officials were told Tuesday.

Steven G. Hickok, field representative for Senator Mark Hatfield, said the Willow Creek Dam could be constructed without going through the public hearings, studies and reports required by the Corp of Engineers during the last go-around which ended when President Gerald R. Ford vetoed the project.

"We want to make it clear that we are not coming to Heppner as advocates of the dam," said Hickok, "but we want to let the citizenry know that if the project is desirable to them, it can be constructed."

The Willow Creek Dam project received authorization from congress in 1965 which is still good. Holding back the project is appropriation of the monies which Hickok indicated would be no problem in this session of congress.

In order to proceed with funding of the Willow Creek Dam, Senator Hatfield would have to know the community's wishes before the end of March so the project could be included in the massive Public Works Appropriation Bill passed each year by congress. Hatfield's office would require assurances of support from the county and the cities of Heppner, Lone and Lexington in regards to right-of-way acquisition.

By including the project in

the Public Works Bill there is no chance for veto by President Carter since the bill includes appropriation of money for all public works projects in the nation.

According to Hickok, the project would be funded without having the Corp of Engineers come back to the area for surveys, environmental impact studies or public hearings.

"The project could go as it was originally planned and authorized in 1965," said Hickok, "which should make the project more attractive if you people want it."

If the local citizenry wanted to go ahead with the dam the project would be constructed in its original form, that is, as a multi-use dam. In addition to providing flood protection, water could also be used for

recreational and irrigation purposes.

County Judge D.O. Nelson said he would feel uneasy about supporting the project because of the opposition to the dam in 1974-75.

"I think the people that should decide would be residents of the cities located in the flood plain," said Nelson.

Continued on page 3...

### Cutting of school budget requests starts

A request by Heppner Elementary Principal Don Cole for two additional teaching positions to help alleviate overcrowded conditions in elementary and junior high classrooms was shot down Monday by the Morrow County School District budget committee.

Cole's request for the teachers had been approved earlier in the month by the School Board for budget consideration, but the committee, already faced with a 14.5 per cent hike in the proposed budget, voted against the action.

At the regular monthly meeting of the School Board, Cole said he needed the two extra teachers, "to allow us to bring classloads within the state requirements". Cole said all but one of the classrooms at the junior high

are in an overload situation, with some classes designed to accommodate 15 students now jammed with as many as 30.

"We've had the crowded situation here for the last three to four years and the two teachers would have helped," Cole said. "Part of the problem is the fact that the building is old and the classrooms are smaller than present day standards."

Cole said he had hoped to use one of the additional teachers at the fifth and sixth grade levels and the other at the seventh and eighth grade levels.

"It's not a good situation that we have here now," Cole said, adding that the school is on the list for a standardization visit from the State Board of Education within the next year and they "probably won't like what they see".

In other action, the budget committee:

—Cut \$5,830 from a 1/2 teacher position proposed to provide additional shop and vocational education electives at Heppner and Lone high schools.

—Revised resource figures after estimates for this year's District share of federal forest receipts was reduced from \$80,024 to \$68,586. The actual amount received by the District won't be known until later in the year.

—Agreed not to approve the receipts section of the proposed budget until Basic School Support figures are known. Recently passed legislation is expected to increase the District's 1977 share of \$730,630 by some \$50,000. The actual amount should be

Continued on page 3...



### Parking meters; to be or not to be is the question

Parking meters in downtown Heppner and a decision on what to do with them will be the purpose of a meeting at City Hall Monday, Jan. 30.

Many of the parking meters in Heppner are in need of repair or replacement that will cost in excess of \$7,500. Meters from side streets have been "robbed" to repair those on Main Street already.

Councilman Larry Mills, chairman of the city's Parks and Streets Committee, said the time has come to make a decision on the meters.

"We want to know if the

downtown businesses and people of Heppner want us to spend the money to repair the meters," said Mills.

Last year the meters brought about \$2,270 into the city's coffers including violations. Maintenance for last year cost the city \$1,056.

The Heppner Police Department has been forced to virtually discontinue the patrolling of meters for violations because so many of the fixtures are not operating properly.

The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m.

### Kinzua Corporation to close town of Kinzua mill

Kinzua Corporation announced today that it will permanently close its facilities located at the Town of Kinzua and in doing so will make "every reasonable effort" to place the 160 terminated employees in jobs at the firm's operations at Heppner.

Officials of the wood products manufacturing firm declined comment on the reason for closing the facility at Kinzua and when the closure will take place, as details

concerning employees termination pay, moving expenses, etc., are being finalized. Kinzua Corporation has bargained the decision to close the mill in three meetings with Local Union 2916 of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers over the past two months period.

The decision to close the Kinzua mill comes as construction on a new \$4.5 million sawmill in Heppner moves toward a June 1 completion date. The new sawmill will

nearly double the firm's production capacity and is innovative in much of the electronic and automated machinery being installed.

Kinzua officials said "everything possible is being done to minimize the economic impact on employees living and working at Kinzua."

#### News Briefs

#### School Board gives final OK for bond

At a special meeting of the Morrow County School Board, held Monday at Riverside High School, board members approved a resolution calling for a \$4.8 million bond issue to finance district construction and improvements. March 14 was set as the election date for the 15-year bond.

Included in the bond are funds for: construction of an elementary school in Boardman, construction of a junior high in Irrigon, construction of a multi-purpose room at A.C. Houghton Elementary, construction of a new shop facility at Riverside and remodeling of the present shop for home ec facilities, remodeling of shop and home ec facilities at Heppner Junior High, remodeling of library facilities at Heppner High and renovation of the boiler system at Lone.

#### County planners to air draft comp. plans

The Morrow Planning Commission will conduct three public hearings Monday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the Courthouse.

Included in the hearings will be an informational session for review and comment on the draft comprehensive plans for the cities of Heppner, Lexington, Lone and Irrigon. Representatives of each city will be present to explain the plans and answer questions.

The other hearings will consider a variance request for construction of a garage on lot 7 of the Wells Addition located on the Spray-Heppner Highway and a proposed amendment to the Morrow County Comprehensive Plan. The amendment would adopt the recently completed Boardman Comprehensive Plan as a portion of the County Comprehensive Plan.

### 'Navy move' moves to front burner

Removal of the Navy from the Boardman Bombing Range will once again become an "active" project in the office of Senator Mark Hatfield the Gazette-Times was told Tuesday.

Steven G. Hickok, field representative for the Senator, said Hatfield and other congressmen have left the Bombing Range issue on the back burner "while private enterprise has attempted to resolve the move."

Hickok was referring to efforts Portland General Electric made at one time to "buy out" farmers in Douglas County, Washington, an area the Navy has said would be a suitable alternative to the Boardman range.

"I can say that moving the Navy from the Bombing Range will again be put on the front burner," said Hickok.

Hickok was in the area Tuesday to talk to city and county officials about resurrecting the Willow Creek Dam Project. (Please see separate story this page.) Senator Hatfield faces re-election this year.

#### Weather

	HI	Low	Prec
Wed., Jan. 18	41	29	.02
Thurs., Jan. 19	40	35	.06
Fri., Jan. 20	51	37	.01
Sat., Jan. 21	50	35	.03
Sun., Jan. 22	43	32	
Mon., Jan. 23	41	25	
Tues., Jan. 24	49	30	