

Willow Creek Dam clears hurdles

Initial funding, authorization gets congressional OK

Decades after it was first proposed, the Willow Creek Dam is a reality.

An aide to Senator Mark Hatfield told the Gazette-Times in a phone conversation early Wednesday morning, "We got it," referring to initial funding and a change in authorization approved by Congress this week.

"The House has accepted the Senate version of the public works bill that will allow construction of Willow

Creek Dam based on the 1974 Corps of Engineers report," said Steve Hickok, field representative for Senator Hatfield.

Hatfield made the Willow Creek Dam the centerpiece of his message to Congress this year, citing it as an example of poor water resource planning at the federal level.

In order to fund the dam—originally authorized by Congress in 1965—a change in wording of that authorization updating it to the 1974 report

had to be accepted by both the House and Senate.

Physical characteristics of the 1965 and 1974 dam are essentially the same—the difference being in the allocation of waters and prime purpose of the dam. In the 1965 version, irrigation, municipal water supply for Heppner, recreation as well as flood protection were specified uses. In the 1974 report and plan, the prime use of the dam is for flood protection although the

dam still has multiple-use capabilities.

A conference committee of senators and representatives met this week to hammer out differences in the public works appropriation bill which included the Willow Creek Dam.

The bill's language specifies that \$500,000 be made available to Corps this year for initial engineering and right-of-way acquisition.

"At this point the bill goes back to the Senate and the

House for a quick vote and then on to the president for his signature," said Hickok. The House of Representatives is taking a recess through Labor Day so the bill may not be sent to President Carter until after the first of September.

By inclusion in the massive public works appropriation bill the Willow Creek Dam is safe from presidential veto unless Carter would veto the entire bill, which is unlikely.

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Corps plan told

The initial \$500,000 that has been approved for the Willow Creek dam project will be used mainly for final design planning, expected to be completed in time for a construction contract to be let in September of 1979.

Actual construction could begin on the dam as soon as

the contract is let, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office in Walla Walla.

In addition to drafting the final specifications of the dam, the initial funding will be used to update the 1973 report on the economics of the structure.

The funding will also go to building a new Willow Creek Bridge just above the backwaters of the impoundment.

The new bridge will be needed at a highway crossing where a diverted Willow Creek will flow.

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County contracts for study of health care requirements

With passage of the Pioneer Memorial Hospital levy last week, the search for doctors and hospital planning has gained a new momentum.

Members of the County Court, Doctor Search Committee and hospital board met with M.J. Blair, president of NorthWest Medical Foundation and contracted with that firm for a study of health care requirements for Morrow County.

NorthWest Medical Foundation is a Seventh-Day Adventist health care corporation.

"We want to make it perfectly clear that we have only contracted with NorthWest Medical Foundation for a study of health care needs in the county and have not entered into any contracts or even serious discussion of possible management of the hospital by the Foundation," said Judge D.O. Nelson.

The contract calls for a comprehensive study to be completed in four to six weeks at a cost of \$3,500—about \$2,500 less than the normal fee for a like study.

In addition, the Hyatt Hotel Corporation has offered to do a study at no charge, which was accepted by the joint committee. A public service of the corporation, the study would not be as complete as the NMF study, but it will provide some comparison between the two.

The NMF study will gather data on hospital utilization, medical staff, economic data on the county, historical financial data on the hospital, future financial outlook for the hospital based on past experience and it would also provide a potential relationship for a hospital management concept.

Included in the study will be public opinion and wishes for health care in Morrow County. The foundation will seek community medical needs as seen by a randomly selected group of 250 individuals in Morrow County; community medical needs as seen by the same number of people in Fossil and Condon and needs as seen by 25-35 civic, industrial and community leaders. A questionnaire will be used to obtain comment from individuals and personal interviews will be conducted with the last group.

In addition hospital personnel and the medical staff will be asked their opinions.

With these studies the hospital board and administration along with the County Court will determine the direction of health care at Pioneer Memorial after taking the information and alternatives to the public for comment.

One area at the hospital that has already been funded

through passage of the levy is remodeling and updating of surgical and emergency facilities. Some action on planned renovation of emergency and surgical facilities may be forthcoming before the NMF study is completed.

"With this information available we will be able to go to the residents of Morrow County with facts and ask them what direction they

would like to see the hospital move in with the monies available," said Nelson.

Kent Goodyear, chairman of the Doctor Search Committee, also praised the study.

"We can show prospective doctors that positive action is taking place in regards to health care and it will provide much needed patient information that doctors desire before locating in a community,"

said Goodyear.

"In addition, NorthWest Medical Foundation through its Verticare program (the business side of NMF) has made a request for funds to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which will be very helpful since money is in short supply in the county and hospital budgets," said Goodyear.

Doctor Gifford contemplates return to Heppner practice

Dr. Joe Gifford who left Heppner last March for a residency program at the University of New Mexico, may be interested in coming back to a family practice here.

Meeting with members of the County Court, Doctor Search Committee and the hospital board, Gifford and his wife Linda laid out their views on returning to Heppner.

Gifford said he was interested in opening a family practice on his own—at least for the present time—at the county-owned clinic in Heppner.

Gifford told the group he didn't feel the clinic was big enough for two doctors to properly treat patients. He added that when and if he

found the right doctor for a partner or employee he would recommend enlarging the clinic.

The doctor also said that if he comes back to Heppner he doesn't want to be obligated financially or "any other way" to the Doctor Search Committee or the county.

Citing health care needs and direction of Pioneer Memorial, Gifford reiterated comments he and Dr. Richard Carpenter have made to health care officials over the past three years.

Upgrading of emergency care facilities—both ambulance and emergency room—are number one priorities in Gifford's opinion. He said an emergency room at the hospi-

tal with adequate x-ray equipment was a must if emergency care was to be provided in Heppner. Ambulance facilities and equipment both for transfer and emergency use also needed upgrading, according to Gifford.

The Giffords are looking into practices in several other communities seeking physicians. The doctor did not wish to speculate on when a decision might be forthcoming.

Heptachlor use will be discussed at Dept. of Ag. hearing Aug. 25

Continued use of heptachlor for treating seed grain will be discussed at an August 25 meeting called by the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

The meeting, set for 10 a.m. in the conference room of the Oregon Department of Agriculture Building, Salem, is in response to a recommendation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the departments of agriculture of Oregon, Washington and Idaho assume a leadership role in bringing about early discontinuance of the chemical's use for seed treatment.

Heptachlor is used by grain growers for the control of wire worms, a serious pest that can greatly reduce grain yields.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has voiced concern over the wild bird die-offs in areas where heptachlor-treated seeds have been planted. Center of the die-off area is Umatilla and Morrow counties, the Fish and Wildlife Service said.

Represented at the August

25 meeting will be the Oregon Wheat Growers League, Oregon State University's Extension Service and Fish and Wildlife Department, the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Results of the survey taken in Morrow County by Harold

Kerr, County Extension Agent were forwarded to Oregon Wheat League office to be included in the testimony presented on September 25. Only 20 growers responded to

the survey in Morrow County, Kerr reported. Kerr commented that he felt the growers are under-estimating the benefits they receive from heptachlor in controlling wire worms.

Pioneer Memorial gets emergency radio

Pioneer Memorial Hospital has received a remote radio transmitter receiver for the emergency room, as a gift from the Kinzua Corporation.


This remote station is an extension to the emergency room from the present radio transmitter receiver located at the nursing station, improving and making more flexible the hospital's radio communication system.

Hospital personnel can now be in radio communication from the emergency room as well as the nursing station, with the ambulance; and,

when necessary, in radio contact with physician specialists and others at St. Anthony's Hospital in Pendleton.

St. Anthony's Hospital has been designated as the Med-Com Control hospital for our area, which means they have available emergency medical services on a 24 hour-per-day basis to be disseminated via radio to health care providers.

The hospital's radio communication system, as well as being used on a day-to-day basis, is an integral part of the hospital's disaster plan.



Special Fair & Rodeo Section
is included in this issue
of the Gazette-Times.

World class table tennis championships coming to Heppner

World class table tennis coming to Heppner?

It's true. Regional wire services and news media last week began reporting on the city's being selected as the site for the seventh annual World Professional Table Tennis Table Title Match. News releases issued by the International Table Tennis League, Inc. in Seattle stated that Heppner was an ideal location for the title match, since "there is no terrorism in

Heppner, no statistical crimes of any kind, and...political unrest in Heppner is unknown.

The match, to be held Nov. 18 in the Heppner High School gymnasium, will see the current world champion pro team from Haiti defend its crown against the challenging team from Thailand.

Needless to say, the arrival of the team members, trainers, and newsmen in Heppner could result in a number of logistical problems in terms of

food, lodging and transportation.

To iron out these problems, Jackie Jensen, Heppner Elks Club manager and executive director of the Heppner table

tennis match, has scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, Aug. 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the Elks club. The public is invited to attend and get involved with making the match a success.

Weather by Don Gilliam

	Hi	Low	Pre
Wed., Aug. 9	99	65	
Thurs., Aug. 10	93	56	
Fri., Aug. 11	84	53	
Sat., Aug. 12	73	59	.20
Sun., Aug. 13	73	51	.23
Mon., Aug. 14	81	50	
Tues., Aug. 15	72	53	.60