

# Dam will not eliminate Heppner flood plain

A sizeable portion of Heppner will remain within flood plain and floodway designated areas even if the proposed Willow Creek Dam is built, according to a preliminary map revealed Tuesday by Army Corps of Engineers officials meeting in lone.

The dam would reduce the amount of property included in the area that would theoretically be inundated in the event of a "100 year flood." But much of the lower elevation land downstream from the confluence of Shobe Canyon with Willow Creek would remain in flood zones.

Willow Creek would remain within its banks below the proposed dam, until it reaches its junction with Shobe Can-

yon. From that point downstream through Heppner, the map shows Willow Creek out of its channel, flooding portions of the downtown business district and residential areas adjacent to the creek. More water from the theoretical 100 year flood would widen the Willow Creek floodplain below the point where Hinton Creek joins the stream.

The preliminary flood plain map for Heppner did not show what areas along Hinton Creek and Shobe Canyon upstream from their confluences with Willow Creek would be designated flood zones.

Flood plain and floodway designations are determined on the basis of the amount of

water expected to sweep into the city in the event of a catastrophic flood—the worst that could reasonably be anticipated to occur within a century. The Army Corps of Engineers was commissioned to determine the 100 year flood levels and flood zone areas for Heppner, Lexington and lone by the Federal Insurance Administration—the agency which handles the federal flood insurance program.

The three cities—like thousands of other municipalities throughout the nation—entered into the flood insurance program when federal laws were created requiring the insurance in flood-prone areas in order for citizens to secure home loans from government

agencies or from banks participating in the FDIC program.

Representatives from the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Insurance Administration came to lone Tuesday to explain the processes they went through in making the controversial flood zone designations, and outline how the designations would affect the cities. They met in an afternoon session with the Morrow County Intergovernmental Council, then gave a presentation and answered questions during a Tuesday night public meeting at lone High School, attended by about 25 persons.

lone has been hardest hit of the three communities, with nearly all the city's land in the Willow Creek Valley—where future development is most feasible—designated as either flood plain or floodway zones. The average depth which the 100 year flood would cover the flood-zoned area of lone is

roughly four feet. Since its establishment, lone has never experienced a flood close to that magnitude—even during the 1903 downpour that devastated Heppner.

But, FIA officials stated, that doesn't mean that such a flood could not occur. At the urging of Sen. Mark Hatfield,

lone Mayor Linda LaRue and Heppner Mayor Jerry Sweeney, the FIA assigned two specialists to recheck methods and calculations used by the Corps in making the flood zone designations. With the review nearly three-fourths

Cont. on page 4

## ★★★ Heppner City Council

### First phase of construction near, Corps tells city

The recently approved first phase of funding for the proposed Willow Creek Dam could mean that light construction could begin as early as within the next 90 days, Heppner Mayor Jerry Sweeney told a Monday night meeting of Heppner City Council.

Sweeney told the council that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials in town last week told him that the preliminary \$500,000 grant "definitely includes construction money" which could be implemented within a three-month period. Any construction to be funded through the \$500,000 grant would likely involve work towards relocating a city water reservoir and water line.

The initial funding has also been earmarked for various studies and plans, including an economic analysis of the project, a value engineering study, a Heppner water supply study and an update on the cost-to-benefit ratio for the project.

Sweeney noted that the \$500,000 initial funding is targeted for fiscal year 1979-80, which would apparently mean that money could not be spent until the start of the next fiscal year, in July. Thus, the 90-day construction time frame outlined by the visiting

Corps official appears cloudy.

The Corps representative, in town to discuss the planned water tank and pipeline relocation with city officials, pledged that the Corps "wouldn't shove the project down the throats" of the people of Heppner, Sweeney said. "Public hearings would be held before any construction starts," stated the mayor. "Before a shovel of dirt is moved, the people of Heppner will have their say-so."

Sweeney expressed concern over the fact that the city has still not received flood plain and flood way designations for Heppner, leaving it questionable as to how much of the town would remain in flood zones with the construction of the dam. If a significant amount of land in the city would turn out to remain in flood plain designated areas, "then there's no point in building the dam," he said. Both Sweeney and Councilman Cliff Green stressed that the city would not allow ground to be broken without receiving the final flood plain data.

The mayor and council discussed the possibility of holding a citywide election on whether or not to build the dam, once the flood plain information is available.

In any event, Sweeney pointed out, "with only

\$500,000 available so far, it's not likely we'll see a lot of dust flying around this summer."

A Corps of engineers representative is expected to attend the next council meeting to discuss plans for the project. Sweeney told the council that in his opinion, an updated cost-to-benefit ratio for the project "would kill the dam" due to the inflation of construction costs. He noted that during the last go-around with the long-proposed dam, federal officials found the cost-to-benefit ratio barely acceptable.

In other developments, city attorney Bill Kuhn reported that funding for the first phase of the city's sewer plant renovation program may not take place as hoped during the coming fiscal year, following discussions with State Department of Environmental Quality officials.

The DEQ reportedly indicated to city officials that funding could be more likely if Heppner pledged to explore the possibility of designing a system that would eliminate any direct discharge into Willow Creek. Such a move would likely require that the city pipe sewage plant effluent to a holding lagoon, from which it could be used for

Cont. on page 4

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### Santa opens hot line to area kids



The Heppner Lions Club has made contact with Santa Claus again this year and youngsters writing letters to Santa can expect a personal phone call from him sometime the week before Christmas.

From his home at the North Pole, Santa told a Lions Club member this week that if boys and girls want to hear from Santa they should write their Christmas "wish list" and deposit the letter in one of the specially marked boxes at the Heppner, Lexington and lone post offices.

Santa Claus reminds letter writers to include their name and phone number so he can call on Monday or Tuesday evening, Dec. 18-19.

### Posse finds Rill's body; victim of heart attack

Leonard Rill, 81, of Heppner was found dead late Tuesday evening of an apparent heart attack by Morrow County Search and Rescue Posse members along Hale Ridge in the Eightmile area southwest of Heppner.

Rill was last seen Tuesday afternoon near the Jim Farley ranch near Hale Ridge. The elderly man was to have driven around the ridge to

pick up a companion who was making a cattle check. He failed to make the rendezvous, and at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, a search was requested.

The pickup which Rill had been driving was found vacant. Shortly before midnight, searchers reported they had found Rill's body.

Further details were not immediately available.

### Postmaster urges early Yule mailing

Heppner Postmaster Hubert C. Wilson says the U.S. Postal Service is happy to play Santa with the delivery of packages and letters during the holiday season, but urges early mailing to make delivery before Christmas.

Cards and letters should go in the mail no later than Dec. 15 and parcels for West Coast delivery should be sent by Dec. 9. If you're mailing to the East Coast, the package should be on its way.

### Public forum on youth drug abuse

A public forum on drug and alcohol abuse among local youth has been scheduled for Thursday evening, Dec. 28, 1978, by the newly organized Concerned Parents and Teachers group of Heppner. The meeting had been originally set for December 19.

The event will feature a panel discussion by various school administrators, juvenile officers and law-enforcement officials who are actively involved in the drug-abuse problems in the southern Morrow County area. Persons participating in the panel discussion are to include Matt Doherty and John Edmundson, Morrow County school administrators; Jim Bier and Don Cole, principals at the Heppner schools; Caro-

lyn Hoff, Morrow County juvenile officer; Morrow County Judge D.O. Nelson; Tom Dixon, Oregon State Police; local attorney Bob Abrams; and Dr. Janice Green, Morrow County Mental Health.

The panel presentations are to be followed by a question-response session.

The parent-teacher group plans to hold similar meetings over the next several months in response to citizen inquiries about school problems facing teachers, parents, administrators and students.

The Dec. 28 meeting has been tentatively scheduled for the Heppner Grade School multi-purpose room at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited.

### Weather

by Don Gilliam

Date	High	Low	Precip.
Wed., Nov. 29	44	35	.52
Thu., Nov. 30	47	34	.30
Fri., Dec. 1	43	36	.02
Sat., Dec. 2	42	33	.04
Sun., Dec. 3	54	32	
Mon., Dec. 4	54	30	.92 2" snow
Tue., Dec. 5	33	21	.03

Nov Precip.—1.90  
Normal—1.44  
1977—2.40

## Annual fete brings farm-city neighbors together

### Livestock Growers, CowBelles meet in afternoon sessions

A dinner, a fashion show, an "attitude adjustment" hour, and talks on estate planning and government controls in agriculture will be among events featured during the annual meeting of the Morrow County Livestock Growers Association, set for Saturday in Heppner.

The meeting will get underway at noon, with a luncheon session of the association's board of directors at the West of willow, followed at 1 p.m. by a talk by newly elected District 55 Rep. Bill Bellamy. An FFA convention report is scheduled for 1:45 p.m., followed at 2 p.m. by a report on the Environmental Protection Agency's Section 208 nonpoint source pollution program by Dick McElligott.

At 2:20 p.m., Jim Allen is scheduled to give a talk on group health insurance, fol-

lowed at 2:30 p.m. by a coffee break sponsored by the Bank of Eastern Oregon. At 3 p.m., Mike Hefner of Portland will speak on estate planning, and at 4 p.m., Bill Ross and Don Ostensoe will report on developments with the Oregon Cattleman's Association. Next, at 4:15, Bill Johns will give an Oregon Beef Council report, followed at 4:30 p.m. with the Morrow County Livestock Growers' annual business meeting and election of officers.

The Morrow County CowBelles will hold their annual meeting starting at 1 p.m. in the Catholic Parish Hall. A joint meeting between the CowBelles and the Morrow County Livestock Growers is scheduled for 3 p.m.

The "attitude adjustment" cocktail hour will follow, from 6 to 7 p.m.

### Charlie Daly

1978 Morrow County Cattleman of the Year



Story and Photos on page 3

### Farm-City Banquet features speaker, style show, awards

St. Patrick's Parish Hall will be the scene for the annual Farm-City banquet, starting at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, with Gene Pierce serving as master of ceremonies.

Featured speaker at the banquet will be Arleigh Isley, Jackson County Extension Agent, whose topic will be "Government Controls." Those who know Isley say his talk should prove both informative and entertaining for rural folk and city neighbors alike.

Special entertainment for the banquet will be a style show entitled "Have we come a long way baby?" with piano selections by Jojean Stevens. Fashions from Cole's House of Fashion, The LeBush Shoppe, Gardner's Men's Wear and Kroll's Department Store will be highlighted with fashions

from past years.

Following dinner awards will be presented to persons deserving of special recognition for agriculture and community involvement, given by sponsoring organizations. Included in the awards presentation will be the Morrow County Cattleman of the Year, Morrow County Conservation Man of the Year, 4-H and FFA carcass of merit winners and the best county grain exhibit at the Oregon State Fair. The Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce will also present special awards.

The Farm-City Banquet caps a day of annual meetings for the Livestock Growers and CowBelles, who co-sponsor the event with the Chamber of Commerce. Cost of the banquet is \$4 per person.