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HEPPNER, OREGON

So dam construction can begin

## City council discusses where to move water tank

Three possible sites to move the city water tank were talked about at the special city council meeting last week in Heppner.

The councilmen present at the meeting heard Scott Kvandall and Frank Barrett of Barrett and Associates engineering firm talk about the three alternatives and then met with Dick Patton of the Army Corps of Engineers.

The council verbally agreed unanimously for alternative three but the final decision will not be made until a cost comparison is made by Barrett and Associates.

Alternative three would move the city water tank from its present location on the side hill above the Balm Fork Road to the top of the hill above the cemetery.

The council agreed that it is best to move the tank as little

as possible and still have the best system.

The tank has to be moved before the Army Corps of Engineers can begin work on the Willow Creek Dam.

Alternative one would be paid for completely by the Corps. It would relocate reservoir one, which is the reservoir in the Corps' way, just around the corner of the side hill. This would put it underwater in a cement casing, which would make it hard to get to for repairs.

With this system, the Corps would use 10-inch instead of the eight-inch pipe that is in use now. There would be some low pressure areas in some sections, Kvandall warned.

Alternative two would relocate the tank to the other side of the valley. Wells would flow into the reservoir and it would supply 750 to 1,000 gallons of

water each minute with 10-inch pipe. This proposal would probably cost the most because of the additional pipeline and the distance to move the tank.

The third proposal made by Barrett and Associates is to move the reservoir above the cemetery to the 2,300 foot level. The reservoir would flow to town by gravity so there would be no need for a pump. With this proposal homes on Rock Street would have better water pressure and therefore would receive better fire protection.

Since that is a city planning potential growth area, the council said that would be a good site even though another reservoir and a high pressure line will be needed.

One problem the council is looking into is how to get the money to pay for the move-

ment of the tank and setting up a new water system.

The Corps will pay for alternative one because it is no better than the system Heppner now has. But, if the city wants a better system, it will have to a "betterment cost" which is the difference of what that will cost and what the Corps will pay.

To get a loan or grant, Kvandall said the city will have its best chance if Heppner tries for the best system so the community will get the most out of it.

Kvandall said the present system supplies 375 gallons a day to commercial and residential users which is a "pretty high figure," he said.

He added that 20 to 30 percent of the water is being lost somewhere in the present system—probably on the old line built in 1936 from reservoir one to well three.

"Well number three is not contributing much to the system," Kvandall said. "It is producing but its not reaching the community."

Patton said the Corps is anxious to get started and an agreement is already in draft form but a contract cannot be signed until Heppner has the money to pay the betterment cost.

The council may have to wait until a bond levy can be passed by the voters and that may cause a delay, Patton said.

In the meeting with Patton, Kvandall explained the three alternative plans.

The council asked Patton, "What is meant by betterment costs?"

The council wants to know if the corps will pay the same amount no matter which alternative is chosen.

Patton said the city has to stay in the same general area in which the Corps was planning to move the water

tank because the Corps does not want to disturb other areas in town.

The councilmen wanted to get a commitment from the Corps for a certain amount of money so Heppner could apply for grants and loans. Patton said he will have to get back to the council about that.

The city decided to have Barrett and Associates work out the system instead of having the Corps do it. The Corps wants the water tank moved in July of 1980. Kvandall said they should be able to have a new site and

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## Rep. Bellamy speaks on rural problems

Representative Billy Bellamy spoke about the last legislative session at a meeting of the Morrow County Livestock Growers Association Dec. 7 at the Catholic Parish Hall.

He said the cattlemen had a fair session with a few bills introduced and endorsed.

"The bill on trespassing got through," he said, "but it was a moral victory more than anything else. By the time we took care of the criminal difficulties and the lawyers in the House and Senate rewrote it the bill was not what we wanted but it may help sometimes."

Bellamy said the coyotes and predator animal problem is multiplying and causing more trouble but the cattlemen are going to have a fight on their hands "no matter what."

"The urban people think the coyote is an endangered species," he said. "The urban representatives gang up on us (the rural representatives). We help them but they don't help us."

Bellamy said not much was done in the area of workman's compensation.

"Little was done to increase the benefits to meet the cost."

Bellamy said, "We are discouraged because it is being blocked by organized labor which will benefit the most from it. We have (in Oregon) the highest rates for workman's compensation in the country. The rates are double and triple of other states and yet the benefits are not any better."

"Probably half of the total disability cases in the U.S. are in Oregon because we are so liberal in giving disability claims. All you have to do is say you hurt your back and you can collect total disability for the rest of your life."

Bellamy recommended to the farmers to separate their hired hands to pay workman's compensation rates for employees who only work with crops and ones who only work with livestock to get a better rate.

He said the legislature increased the benefits but did not do anything to cut the rates.

In a question-answer session that followed his short talk, Bellamy elaborated on the workman's comp problem.

"Two percent of the labor force is not interested in working and organized labor is protecting them at the



Rep. Billy Bellamy, R-Culver, whose district includes Morrow County, was a Heppner visitor last week when he spoke before the Morrow County Livestock Growers Association.

expense of hard workers who have to pay the increased rate," he said. "Most of these disabled workers deserve to be mistreated after years of being on disability."

Bellamy said less benefits are given to people with specific injuries who are given specific amounts of money and more money is available to people under total disability, who may be faking a back problem.

"Anything is conceivable," he said. "Someone could injure his back in another state and come to Oregon and go to work and then say he injured it here just because we have such liberal laws and it is such an advantage to be totally disabled."

He said some people cannot afford to go back to work. They are hurt on the job and collect \$600 to \$1,000 a month tax free from workman's comp and then if they have other disability insurance on possessions, those things are

paid for until he is no longer disabled.

Bellamy then commented on the energy problem.

"I am afraid of the energy situation," he said. "In my first term I was a strong backer of nuclear power. My goal was not to let the radicals dictate the future for nuclear power but to let the experts decide."

"Special interest groups in the legislature have been dictating policies. Pebble Springs (nuclear plant) probably will not be built but the coal-fired plant will be. I was surprised there were not too many environmental roadblocks to that."

"Environmentalists say no to all the alternatives to nuclear power. If Pebble Springs is not built, PGE will be in financial difficulty and rumor has it they may have to sell the coal-fired plant."

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Morrow County's Livestock Growers of the Year, Herb and Bob Peterson of Lone, pose with the trophy they received at the annual livestockmen's banquet at the fairgrounds last Friday. From left are Barbara Peterson and her husband Herb, and Bob Peterson with his wife Donna.

Livestock growers of the year

## Using Simmental bulls has been successful for the Petersons

Herbert and Robert Peterson of Lone were honored as Morrow County Livestock Growers of the Year at the Farm City Banquet last Friday.

The Peterson partnership operates a cow-calf yearling operation. They have 280 cows to calve and 220 yearlings, which are last year's calves that have not sold.

Two secrets to the Petersons' livestock success are the use of intense breeding with Simmental bulls and the transporting of their cattle to the best grazing ranges for the time of year it is.

The Petersons participate in the More Grass Grazing Association. As stockholders in More Grass, the Petersons can graze their cattle on the 10,000-acre farm they own with six other ranchers. The More Grass Ranch can hold 1,000 cattle.

The Petersons have their cows for five months in Morrow County in the winter and early spring.

The other seven months of the year the cattle are trucked 100 miles to Long Creek in Grant County. About four-and-

one-half of those months the cattle are on federal reserve land and the other three-and-one-half months the cattle are on the More Grass Ranch.

With all the moving and transporting of the cattle, the Petersons surprisingly do not lose too many stray cattle.

"The first couple of years we lost some but we have not lost any the last couple of years," Robert Peterson said. "They know the range now."

Robert Peterson said full-time riders work for the More Grass cattle ranchers and they keep an eye on the cattle so they do not lose strays.

The Petersons say they like the high summer elevation for the cattle and the low winter range because it gives the cattle the best grazing conditions.

While in Morrow County, the cattle graze on stubble left over after the harvest of the grain on their 4,000-acre ranch.

"That is the advantage of having winter facilities," Herbert Peterson said. "In the winter, the cows can eat a half a ton of hay off the stubble and grain waste and hay is getting expensive."

"We have one of the best summer ranges available and there is an excellent rainfall belt there," Robert Peterson said. "This area (Morrow County) lacks a good summer range. With hay at \$90 a ton, winter costs could be high if we did not transport our cattle."

"Transporting between the two areas gives us as good a grazing area as we could have," he continued. "Some people say the cost of transporting the animals would be prohibitive but it has worked well for us."

The Petersons have one large truck for transporting their cattle and the More Grass ranchers use each other's trucks to make the job less expensive.

Now the Petersons breed their cows with Simmental bulls. The Petersons believe in Ron Baker who did research with breeds of bulls and his data showed the Simmental bulls from France have the most to offer.

So, since 1975, the Petersons have continually purchased Simmental bulls from Ron Baker. Before using the Simmental bulls, the Petersons cattle had a weaning weight of

about 470 pounds which "showed a lot of room for improvement," Robert Peterson said.

With the Simmental bulls, the average weaning weight the last few years has been 590 pounds with the average being about 610 pounds this year.

Herb Peterson's son, Treve, had the grand champion 4-H steer and top carcass steer for both 4-H and FFA. It was a Simmental bred steer raised out of the Peterson herd that won the prizes for Treve.

"It proved the end result to our program had been accomplished Herbert Peterson said. Prior to breeding, the Petersons give their range cows energy pellets.

"This is beneficial because it helps to bunch up the breeding," the Petersons explained. "We put out extra bulls and fresh bulls and it works because we have had only three open cows the last two years."

"The toughest breeding is for a young cow having her first calf and we had all of them bred last year—100 percent."

The Petersons said they have one bull for every 15

cows while most cattle raisers have a one to 25 ratio.

"Because we transport we need more bulls and more intense breeding," Robert Peterson said. "We have more bulls than most farmers because we like to have all the breeding done before we do the trucking. It disrupts the breeding cycle somewhat by taking them to Long Creek so we put fresh bulls out every two weeks to make sure it gets done."

The Petersons started farming with their father, Henry Peterson, 20-some years ago. They used to operate a feed lot and would buy calves and fatten them up to slaughter.

They have lived in one all of their lives in the Eight-mile area. They started farming when they got out of high school.

About five years ago, the Petersons began to intensify their cow-calf operation when the More Grass Association was formed.

The Petersons tag all of their cattle with permanent numbers. Records are kept on each one in the herd so that when the production is down they can be sold. They usually breed the cows from age two

to age 10 if they are putting out quality calves.

"To identify all the cattle takes determination and everybody has to have a cooperative spirit for the endeavor because it takes detailed work," Herbert Peterson said. "We have to keep the cows and their calves paired together at all times, even when we transport them."

Each year they do a pregnancy check on the cows and if one is not pregnant, they sell her.

"Open (non-pregnant) cows are sold and bred ones are kept," Robert Peterson said.

The calves are weaned and given shots of vitamins and injections for disease control Nov. 1. They are also cleaned with a substance that controls lice and grub. The Petersons give the thorough vaccinations themselves.

"We may go overboard a little bit but it keeps control of our death loss for yearlings at almost zero," Robert Peterson said.

They sell their steers twice a year—in July and September—when they reach 850 pounds. In the winter, the calves are

fed a liquid supplement of Lu-Mix. With two pounds of liquid a day, the calves can gain one pound a day which is a "healthy gain," they said.

At vaccination time, they shoot the steers with a growth stimulant and it is reimplanted in the spring.

The Petersons try to do calving in January, February and March prior to going to Long Creek.

So the year for the Petersons starting from January to March is the calving period. April is the spring round up and the cattle are taken to the More Grass Ranch in May. In June, they move to the federal reserve land and in October it is back to the Long Creek range. In November, the calves are weaned and the cows are given pregnancy checks.

In the yearlings operation, the young cattle are wintered until April 1 when the implanted bulls are put out with the stimulated young heifers and cows. In July, steers weighing 850 pounds or more are sold and the others are sold Sept. 1. Bred heifers are sold Sept. 1 and any part of the cow herd that needs to be replaced is

done so by the Peterson's own heifer crop.

"This has worked for us but it is not necessarily the way to go for everyone," Herbert Peterson said. "It is the consumers we all have to please in the end so we are striving for the best carcass and we are doing that."

Robert Peterson's father-in-law, Victor Lovgren, has helped in the Peterson program and they are also proud of the work done by their two full-time employees, Howard Angling and Mark Parm.

Robert Peterson and his wife, Donna, have two children. Rick, 23, was graduated from Blue Mountain Community College and is preparing to depart for Libya to work on a private food development plan on an irrigated farm under contract to the Libyan government. Dawn, 21, also graduated from BMCC and is employed in Pendleton.

Herbert and his wife, Barbara, have three children. Todd, 21, is a senior at Eastern Oregon State College; Jan, 19, is a sophomore at Oregon State University; and Treve, 17, is a junior at Lone High School.