

Public meeting slated in Heppner to evaluate highway plans for Eastern Ore.

Highway Division construction and repair projects scheduled for northeastern Oregon in the Preliminary Six-Year Highway Improvement Program will be discussed at a public meeting in Heppner on Wednesday, Oct. 12, announced the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The meeting is set to begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Morrow County Courthouse. It is an effort by Department of Transportation officials to find out what the public thinks about highway projects scheduled over the next six years for Eastern Oregon, as well as for the rest

of the state.

A number of projects for improving traffic flow in this area have been included in the six-year program, according to Bob Hector, highway division region engineer in La Grande. Hector says those projects call for repair and

improvements on roads, bridges and bicycle paths in the highway division's easternmost region (Region Five), over which he has jurisdiction.

Region Five covers all of Eastern Oregon and includes more square miles than any of

the other four highway regions, he said.

The Heppner meeting is one of 18 different public meetings being held around the state during September and October to explain the program and hear public comments. The meetings are part of a

two-year update of the program, covering work scheduled through 1989.

The highway division plans six years ahead for major repair projects, as well as for new improvement projects. This is done so the division can better coordinate use of limited

funds and its available work force.

According to highway division officials, the six-year plan proposes few new construction projects. Top priority has been given to preserving the existing highway system.

In all, some \$900 million will be spent on rebuilding work

and improvements over the next six years, according to the program document.

Copies of the Preliminary Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan are available from the Highway Division office at 211 Adams Avenue in LaGrande. The phone number is 963-3177.

Morrow Co. to receive \$18,126 from B.L.M. Co. schools being visited by extension staff

Oregon counties were to gain \$2,580,305 this Wednesday as 1983 payment in lieu of taxes compensating them for revenues lost because of tax-exempt federal lands such as Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands within their boundaries, announced Bill Keil of B.L.M. Morrow County's payment was to be \$18,126.

The payments are based on acreage of federally managed lands within the counties, population, and income paid to the counties from other sources such as federal timber sales and mineral payments. In Oregon, 28,971,237 federal acres are covered.

Interior Secretary James Watt said that the U.S. government will pay \$95.9 million to 1,693 units of local government nationwide. California receives the largest share, \$10,127,144. President Reagan recently signed a bill amending the Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act negating a Michigan court decision which would have complicated the

payment formula by requiring payments to be made to 17,000 local governments.

Secretary Watt said, "These payments go to the principal providers of fire and police protection, search and rescue operations, road construction, and other services supplied by local governments that collectively contain more than 455 million acres of federally owned lands that are not subject to state and local taxes."

"The Reagan administration vigorously supported this program. We feel that it is only fitting that the U.S. government give some measure of financial assistance to these local governments to help ease the fiscal impact resulting from the presence of tax-exempt federal lands within their boundaries."

Robert Burford, B.L.M. national director, said, "How the local governments use the funds is entirely up to them. There are no conditions prescribed by Washington. BLM's Oregon-Washington

State Director, William G. Leavell, said, "We are pleased that Congress has made these funds available to help the counties."

The annual payments are authorized by legislation approved in 1976 and are in addition to revenues the federal government regularly shares with state governments from sale of timber, minerals, and other materials, and products derived from public lands and from oil and

gas leases.

In addition to B.L.M. and Forest Service-managed lands, the payments cover other federal lands, national parks, federal water resource development projects, national wildlife reserves and inactive or semi-active military installations used for non-industrial purposes.

Since the first payments were made in 1977, local governments have received \$65.8 million through the program.

By extension staff

By BIRDINE TULLIS
Morrow County
Extension Service

During the National 4-H Week, October 2 through 8, all elementary schools in Morrow County will be visited by Extension 4-H staff members Stephen Campbell and Birdine Tullis. The two, along with a number of 4-H members, will be showing and telling all

students in grades four through six of the many opportunities available to them as 4-H members.

At this time, too, they will be actively seeking new leaders for all project areas. Any one with an interest in youth is encouraged to get more information on 4-H leadership from Stephen or Birdine at the extension office in Heppner, 676-9642.

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Heppner Masonic Lodge donates to Heppner band



Heppner band instructor Don Christensen and Trina Palmer, an HHS sophomore, test the sound of a new Roland SH101 synthesizer, purchased by the Heppner Masonic Lodge No. 69 for the school band.

Lodge member Lucky Felt said the lodge wanted to purchase the piece of equipment as part of the lodge's support of local schools.

Local Soroptimists attend district meeting

Several members of the Heppner Soroptimist Club attended a district meeting in Lewiston, Idaho last weekend. Those making the trip were District Secretary Cista Venard, Heppner Club President Mary Goheen, Heppner Club Secretary Molly Rill and Lenna Smith.

Plans for this month include

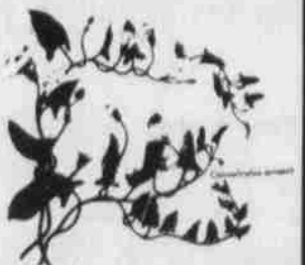
an October 13 summary of reports from the district meeting and a slide show presented by Mary Goheen of Istanbul, Turkey, where she recently attended a Soroptimist Convention.

On October 20, Avon Melby will give a program honoring United Nations Day.

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