

Corps plans site inspection of former Boardman Air Force Range

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is evaluating Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) that had historically been used for military training. One of these sites, Boardman Air Force Range, is located in Morrow County, near Boardman.

The Corps will do this evaluation by conducting a Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP), Site Investigation (SI). The SI will be conducted in the next few months by a Corps contractor, Shaw Environmental. The work to be performed will include access to and a visual inspection of property that was part of the former Boardman Air Force Range. The inspection may also include soil and/or water sampling.

Corps project manager Mike Nelson said, "The SI will be used to determine what future work the Corps may do to clean-up possible munitions related components and chemical constituents used during training." The Corps of Engineers inspects and evaluates sites contaminated with hazardous waste, radioactive waste, and/or ordnance according to federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations.

In order to begin the SI, the Corps will be contacting property owners of the former Boardman Air Force Range site and request owners to provide a signed Department of the Army

Right of Entry (ROE) for Investigation and Sampling.

Additionally, a public informational meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 20, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Port of Morrow, River Front Center, 2 Marine Drive, Boardman, to provide the public an overview of the MMRP, SI process and ROE request information.

Between 1941 and 1943 the U.S. Army Air Corps acquired more than 95,000 acres of land through private purchase and Department of Interior (DOI) land transfers for a practice bombing and gunnery range at the former Boardman Air Force Range. The Army Air Corps operated the range until 1946 when the land was placed in excess.

In 1948, the U.S. Air Force withdrew the range from excess and used the bombing range from 1948 until August 1960 when it was placed back in excess. In November 1960 the Air Force transferred the eastern half of the land to the U.S. Navy. The western half is owned by agricultural organizations, Portland General Electric, Morrow County, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers- The Boeing Company and the Nature Conservancy lease two large tracts of land.

More information about Boardman Air Force Range will be available on Portland District's website at www.nwp.usace.army.mil/pa/fuds.

Babe Ruth coach gets a refreshing drink



Babe Ruth Coach Rick Johnston begs for mercy against his team players Zach McCarl, Jordan Hatfield and Michael Hawks, while Tomas Elguezabal considers the consequences at the last Heppner vs. Heppner Babe Ruth game held on Saturday, July 1. Photo by Sandy Matthews.

Fire season declared on private lands

Fire season has been declared on private lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry, Prineville/Sisters and John Day units within Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Gilliam, Harney, Jefferson, Morrow and Wheeler counties starting at 6 a.m. Saturday, June 24.

Burning permits are required on all private and state forest lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry within Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Gilliam, Harney, Jefferson, Morrow, and Wheeler counties. The Oregon Department of Forestry will generally not issue permits within rural fire districts where burn bans are in effect.

Fire tools, water supply and a watchman service are required on commercial forest operations occurring on private lands protected by

the Oregon Department of Forestry. Information on industrial fire prevention requirements may be obtained from your local Oregon Department of Forestry office.

If you did burn any yard debris or slash last fall or this spring, please check your piles for residual heat. Backyard and other debris burn piles can hold fire for weeks and even months; they may appear to be out, however, landowners should check the piles for heat. If a holdover fire escapes, the responsible party could be held liable for firefighting costs. Remember, you must have a permit if burning is allowed in your area.

Campfires on private forestlands are allowed with landowner permission only.

"We've had a wet spring this year and that has delayed the onset of fire

season for a couple of weeks. However, this is the time of year when we can expect consistent hot and dry conditions and with that, a rapid increase in fire danger levels. There will be wildfires in Central Oregon this summer and all the agencies responsible for firefighting are ready," said George Ponte, unit forester with the Oregon Department of Forestry. "By complying with the fire season restrictions, the public can help us minimize the number of fires and help us avoid the large, catastrophic fires we have seen in past years."

Restrictions do vary from private to public lands across Central Oregon so people are advised to call their local fire department or land management agency and find out what restrictions are in place before striking that match.

Housing loans to help low income families

Home loans that will help borrowers qualify for a better house have been expanded into Morrow County, it was announced recently.

The loans- offered through ACORN Housing, one of the largest housing counseling non-profit organizations in the country and national lending partners like Bank of America, Chase and Citibank- benefit moderate and low income families in the county through unique features. No down payment, no mortgage insurance, interest rates lower than market rate and undocumented income are four of these.

According to the organization's Portland Office Director Clark Tierney, these combined features frequently help families qualify for between \$20,000 and \$40,000 more house.

"Given the rapid appreciation of house prices throughout Morrow County," said Tierney, "this can mean the difference between buying a home or not."

Tierney also noted that the lower-than-market-rate feature makes the lives of homeowners easier by reducing monthly payments.

"We're particularly concerned about those

families who have been victimized by predatory lenders," Tierney said. "Our organization helps these homeowners get out of the clutches of these predators everyday, and we particularly want to help these victims recover."

To qualify for an ACORN Housing home loan, borrowers need to make less than the maximum Area Median Income (AMI) established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and have decent credit for the last 12 months. AMI in Morrow County is \$48,200.

"We must also ask them to come to Portland for counseling and have worked out a special program for them to complete the program in just one day."

Celebrating its 20th

Local students make honor roll at OSU

Names of students who have made the Scholastic Honor Roll Spring term have been announced by Oregon State University.

A total of 504 students earned straight-A (4.0). Another 2,459 earned a B-plus (3.5) or better to make the listing. To be on the Honor Roll, students must carry at least 12 graded hours of course work.

Students on the Honor Roll included: Boardman- 3.5 or Better: Andrew D. Goad, Junior, Pre-Computer Science; Adriana Zuniga, Senior, Liberal Studies; Heppner- 3.5 or Better: Marcy A. Miller, Junior, Business Administration; Ione- 3.5 or Better: Natalie B. McElligott, Sophomore, Animal Sciences; and Irrigon- 3.5 or Better: Matthew A. Gordanier, Senior, Pre-Civil Engineering.

Valby Lutheran to hold VBS

"God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth," is the subject of Valby Lutheran Church's Vacation Bible School, to be held Saturday, July 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The day will include scripture study, music, arts and crafts and excerpts from the film series "The Wonders of God's Creation." Special emphasis will be on the solar system, Earth, the animal kingdom and human life. Lunch is provided.

VBS is open to any student who has completed kindergarten through fifth grade; older students are welcome as helpers and younger students are also welcome if accompanied by a teen or adult.

Valby is located about 15 miles south of Ione. Please call Lea Mathieu at 422-7215 for directions or with questions.

year this month, ACORN Housing was founded in 1986 to assist moderate- and low-income families to succeed as homeowners. Through March of 2006, in its 40 offices around the U.S., housing counselors have counseled 195,906 homebuyers and homeowners and helped lending partners create 67,927 mortgages totaling \$7,611,853,073.

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