

# Port of Morrow cancels financing deal with Lake County biofuel facility

*New info shows project 'in distress'*

By David Sykes

The Port of Morrow recently cancelled a planned \$65 million bond sale helping to finance construction of a new biofuel plant in Lake County Oregon. The sale was nixed after the port received new information indicating the project may be in financial distress. "The bonding for Red Rock has been cancelled. The concern was with new information that the project was in distress," a Port spokesperson told the Gazette-Times last week. The port added there is a potential for another client to utilize those funds in Morrow County.

Earlier this year the Port had voted to issue a combination of tax exempt and regular revenue bonds and then loan that money to Red Rock. The decision was made after a tax-ex-

empt bond opportunity to finance a local Morrow County solid waste disposal facility became unneeded, causing the port to look for other ways to use the tax-exempt bonding opportunity. Congress allows only a limited amount of tax-exempt bonds each year, and rather than let this special funding opportunity expire, the Port agreed to combine the \$10 million with another \$55 million in regular revenue bonds and help the Lake County project.

According to the Fort Collins, CO based Red Rock, the biorefinery was scheduled for completion in spring of this year. Once operational, the company says it would be the world's first commercial size plant to utilize waste woody biomass from forests to create sustainable aviation fuel

(SAF) and cellulosic renewable diesel.

Prior to moving ahead with the bond issue, however, the port had petitioned the courts to determine if it could legally sell bonds for a project outside its jurisdictional boundaries. The Port's boundaries are the same as Morrow County. The court recently dismissed the petition without making a ruling just shortly before the port pulled the plug on the financing deal.

Representatives from Red Rock attended a recent Port meeting to go over their project once again in an apparent last-ditch effort to save the financing arrangement, but to no avail. Later when contacted by the Gazette to confirm that the Red Rock bond sale had indeed been cancelled, a Port spokesperson said in

# Piece of town's history finds new home at Farm Museum



The old Green Feed store front is now located at the Farm Museum in Heppner, where it is being preserved and on display for the public. -Photo by Kim Cutsforth.

By David Sykes

The old Green Feed store front uncovered during the recent construction of a new fitness center on Main Street in Heppner, has found a new home at the Farm Museum, Kim Cutsforth has announced.

As administrator of the Howard and Beth Bryant Foundation that finances worthy local projects, Cutsforth had arranged for the purchase of the old Lotts Electric building on Main Street with plans to remodel it into a new fitness center. However, once construction began it was discovered that the old building was not salvageable for a new modern fitness center. But what was able to be saved

was the old vintage Green Feed sign uncovered on the front of the building.

Discovery of the old sign caused much interest around the community so Cutsforth and building contractor Dave Allstott went looking for a new home, where a part of Heppner's history could be preserved and viewed by the public. They found that home at the Farm Museum not far down the road in Heppner.

Cutsforth is pleased the old historical sign is being preserved, and also gave an update on construction of the new "Lotts of Fitness" workout center. "The new center, which housed Lott's Electric and many other things prior to that,

will house a community fitness center accessible by membership. Hopefully completed in September, it will contain state of the art exercise equipment and space for yoga or other classes," Cutsforth told the Gazette-Times.

The new facility is owned and is being developed by Heppner Community Foundation, with funding coming from grants from Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group, Howard and Beth Bryant Foundation, Northwest Farm Credit, Wildhorse Foundation, Good Shepherd Community Foundation and The Morrow County Unified Rec District, Cutsforth said.

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## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

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### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Now under construction is the new "Lotts of Fitness" workout center on Main St. -Photo by David Sykes

## Elks Lodge holds annual Father's Day picnic



The Heppner Elks Lodge held their annual Father's Day picnic at Cutsforth Park on Sunday, June 20. A large group turned out for the event that included, food, beverages and games such as the egg toss (below). -Photos by Bobbi Gordon.



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