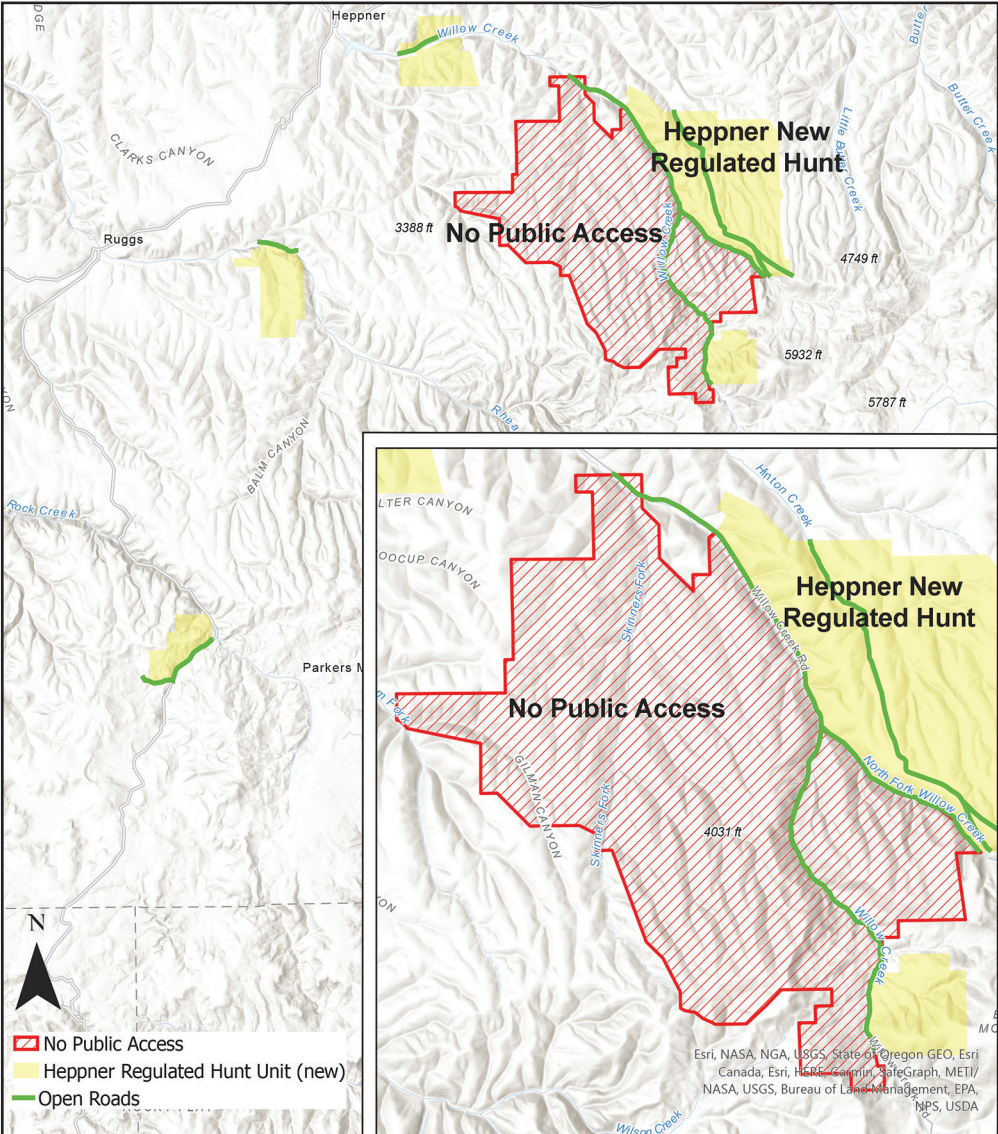


Heppner deer tags cut by 250

Change in land ownership reduces public hunting access



The ODFW map of the new Heppner Unit hunting area.

Because of an unexpected change in land ownership causing a “significant loss” of public access land, this year’s available deer tags in the Heppner unit has been reduced by 250, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) recently announced.

ODFW says the tags are being cut because the Heppner Regulated Hunt Area (see above map) has been reduced in size from about 63 square miles to 22 square miles. Available land was cut because of an “unexpected change in land ownership causing a significant loss of publicly accessible hunting area”.

The Heppner unit was not the only area losing hunting tags, however. The hunts impacted are:

- Heppner Unit #1 (hunt #148) –2,610 tags will be available, down from 2,860.
- Starkey Experimental Forest (#152B) – Zero tags available in 2022, down

from 5.

-Interstate Unit (#175) –850 tags available, down from 1,308.

-Interstate Unit Bow (#175R) – 270 tags available, down from 413.

These tag numbers are being reduced from what appears in the current Oregon Big Game Regulations.

Reasons for the reductions in the other areas the ODFW says are mule deer populations have continued to decline within Starkey Experimental Forest, so all deer hunting opportunity in the Experimental Forest is being removed to avoid jeopardizing ongoing research objectives. The decline within the Experimental Forest is primarily due to poor habitat conditions, from in growth of understory conifers and exacerbated by drought which have resulted in poor nutrition and low fawn survival. The Interstate deer tags are being reduced

in two hunts because of habitat impacts and access closures due to last year’s wildfire activity, ongoing drought conditions, and poor fawn recruitment, the department says.

Hunters who applied for one of these hunts who wish to change their application have until June 1 to make the change online via their account or at a license sale agent. All hunters also are reminded that Sunday, May 15 is the deadline to apply for 2022 fall controlled hunts, says ODFW.

By Doris Brosnan

“We couldn’t even find her,” reports Nancy Anderson about her friend Nancy Ekstrom, as Ekstrom innocently smiles her impish “Really?” Traveling weather and companion – daughter Cindy – have made keeping up with Ekstrom a challenge recently, and she has no plans to pause long between trips any time soon.

Pat Lankford returned to Heppner a year ago. When she lived in Heppner many years ago, she was a bridge player, but she wasn’t brave enough to try her hand at it again until last week. She admitted to being very nervous but found that eventually she was having such a good time, she almost forgot to be nervous. The other players at Molly Rill’s home enjoyed her attitude immensely, which may have contributed to her final declaration, “I loved it.”

A testament to the love of tennis some local women share was evident on the courts last Wednesday. So desperate to play, they completed their two sets while the wind blew, and rain drops fell off and on. Kelly Fox had kindly removed most of the weeds that had invaded the many cracks in the court surface, so not many balls ricocheted in unexpected directions, just the ones that hit the cracks.

His love of football and kids have to be key ingredients in Chad Doherty’s success as the Heppner middle school football coach since 2009. Kudos to Chad, as he was recently named the “Middle School Coach of the Year” by the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association.

Good News Only

And kudos to Blane Mahoney for his win of the steer wrestling event at the Oregon Trail High School Rodeo on April 22-23 in Hermiston. Blane’s two-run time was 13.77 seconds.

Lucky Cardinals: The graduating seniors in Lone were recently honored luncheon guests two weeks in a row. Three weeks ago, the Topic Club/Friends of the Library treated the eighteen teenagers to lunch catered by Alvin Lui, followed by the Lone Community Seniors enjoying lunch last week with twelve of the graduates, a delicious meal prepared by Linda Halverson.

Maya Ressler, granddaughter of Kit and Shirley George, recently received a scholarship from DePaul University, College of Law, awarded for her “academic accomplishments, personal achievements, and potential for legal studies.” Maya is an RN who works in pediatrics for the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab at their research hospital in downtown Chicago. That facility will reimburse Maya to cover what the scholarship does not cover, as she will continue to work there during her three years of law school and, with her emphasis on health law, plans to continue there in some capacity after graduation from law school. Maya’s mother, Kimberly George, has surely served as an inspirational model as she has successfully carved out her career in the health industry.

On April 24, members of the Hopeful Saints congregation gathered at Pastor Katy’s for a barbecue and an “all hands make light

work” effort to plant the vegetable and fruit garden that is intended for sharing with the area’s community. Reported by Claudia Hughes, “Cherry Webber is the sunshine in the garden, which has been a repeated success for seven years, with great help from Dave Johnson, Pastor Katy, and other dedicated parishioners.” Ages eighty to three enjoyed working together, with a job for everyone. For example, Little Emery and Reiley High had their system of one poking her finger in the dirt to make a hole and the other dropping in the seed and covering it. As the garden matures, everyone is welcome to enjoy the garden, “partake of nature’s abundance,” and pull a weed or two, if desired.

Kay Proctor shares the many thanks extended to Mike Duncan, owner of Silver Creek Contracting, for donating labor and supplies to build a new dugout at George Waterland Field. “The old dugout was completely kaput.” So, this new protection is obviously a great gift.

Lexington’s May gift to everyone is returning this Saturday, remember. The May Day Celebration will feature food, games, car show and a parade. The community effort is to be commended and the events to be enjoyed.

So many reasons to smile this week. We can thank everyone who thought to share their tidbits by sending them to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or by calling 541-223-1490. Here’s hoping that some good news comes to everyone reading this.

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under “Card of Thanks” at a cost of \$10. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

An open and honest letter to my community

To the editor;
My name is Victoria Waltz. Some of you know me, some of you don’t. I am 25 years old. I moved here in 2019 and started working for the Morrow County Health District as the Clinic Discharge Coordinator at Pioneer Memorial Clinic. I quit in June of 2021 after coming back from paid administrative leave.

In the last week, I have received several comments from the community calling me “brave” for calling out MCHD. In all honesty, I have the least amount to lose from exposing their true colors. Those involved are not my friends, not my family, not somebody I grew up with my whole life. They are just people. People who are hurting a community I have come to know and love.

The health district will label me as “just a disgruntled former employee.” Which is fine, but that’s not just who I am. I am a member of this community. I was a patient of MCHD even after I quit. I’m a patient advocate. I am a person who knows and understands the value of having a medical clinic and hospital in our small town.

But most of all, I know you. I know the patients. I’ve been there to listen to your concerns. I’ve been there to share your happy moments. I’ve been there to help you. I’ve been there to be your advocate in healthcare.

I, along with many other employees, past and present, have been with you

every step of the way. We do more than sit in an office. We have rapport with you. We cry with you. We cry for you. We are there with you when you feel like your world is falling apart. We laugh with you. We do what we do because of you. We understand that without you there is no us. For the people who are with you every step of the way, no amount of money in the world can replace you.

I didn’t start this campaign to cause drama. I created this campaign to show you, the public, our patients that administration does not have your best interest at heart. They are not being transparent. There is a lot of things the public can’t know and won’t know that are bound by legalities. Is it fair? No. But it’s a part of our world. We are bound by laws and contracts that protect the administration from disclosures that might hurt their image.

I write this letter to ask the community for your help. It’s now your turn to help us change. We need your help to stand up. Ask the hard questions. Make administration understand that you run the show. Not them.

The Health District told you the national turnover rate for hospitals is 19.5 percent and we are at a 5 percent turnover rate. What they are failing to mention, is in 2017 there were a reported 34,752 ambulatory care clinics nationwide. In 2020, 4,799 were rural healthcare. The percentage of RHC’s nationwide is 16

percent.

This means the health district is comparing our 5 percent turnover rate to the National average of 16 percent rural health clinics and 84 percent non-rural health clinics.

I’m putting this in the paper, because last week’s issue printed false information, personnel file information, and my name wasn’t even spelled correctly.

What is coming from me is what I have experienced and what I know,

Endorsement for Lindsay

To the editor;
I am writing to offer a strong endorsement for Melissa Lindsay as a candidate for re-election to the Morrow County Board of Commissioners.

I first met Melissa during her 15-year tenure as a vice-president and manager of the mortgage division of the Bank of Eastern Oregon, before she stepped down to become an integral part of a growing family farming operation.

Counties do many things, but a keen awareness of fiscal issues is vital in the management of county budgets. She brings a wealth of experience to the job and that has not gone unnoticed. She is now finishing a term as treasurer of the Association of Oregon Counties having been selected by her peers. As president of that organiza-

tion, I work closely with Commissioner Lindsay on a regular basis.

Umatilla and Morrow counties have forged a strong partnership and we work together often on matters of mutual interest. Commissioner Lindsay has been a strong supporter of that effort which has proven beneficial for both counties as a way of developing a stronger voice for our portion of eastern Oregon.

She is energetic, has roots deep in Morrow County, and is a delight to work with. From my vantage point, Morrow County has a winner in Commissioner Lindsay and the voters would be wise to return her to office.

George Murdock,
Umatilla County Commissioner
Pendleton



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