

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Ed. Note: The following, from Roger Grimsrud of Vernonia, about Columbia County's land use and Goal 5 process is so well expressed that we felt it should be placed in this opinion column. It has been minimally edited for brevity, but is too long for this small space and is continued on page 4. The opinions expressed are those of Mr. Grimsrud.

Enough is Enough!

The Columbia County Land Use Board had a special hearing at St. Helens High School auditorium, May 19, at which it heard testimony from landowners from unincorporated areas of Columbia County. This hearing concerned proposed changes to the County's land use zoning regulations by the Board in its efforts to comply with Goal 5 of the State of Oregon's sensitive land use planning requirements. The auditorium was half-filled by landowners from all areas of Columbia County who, in short, wanted to tell the Board that current land use regulations were already excessive as well as expensive, and that the proposed additional regulations and requirements were not in the best interests of the County's taxpayers. The message the Board received from attending landowners, without exception, was "Enough is Enough!"

The Land Use Board is considering changes to land use regulations in keeping with a State of Oregon mandated study performed every 10 years. The "Report, Sensitive Lands Update, Columbia County" was prepared for Columbia County Department of Land Development Services by Beak Consultants Incorporated in June, 1995. This eight year-old study is the newest data used by the Department of Land Development for its' recommendations. Notice of the proposed changes and the Board's request for public input due to potential impact on property values in unincorporated areas of the County, were sent out in March, and a question-and-answer meeting was held at the regular planning meeting April 6. It started at 6:30 p.m. and discussions continued for one hour then, due to the response from County landowners, the second meeting was scheduled for May 19, and the location was changed to the St. Helens High School Auditorium.

May 19 testimony regarding big-game regulations was received from some of the more elderly landowners. They stated the proposed changes were nonsense since, during the 1880s through the 1930s, elk and deer were rare in the County due to large stands of old growth timber, and that it made no sense to protect an animal that was not natural to the area in large numbers. They further stated that it was only after Crown Zellerbach and other large timber companies had massive clearcuts in the County that the deer and elk populations began to increase.

Proposed changes would also affect setbacks from fish bearing waterways. Currently, if a fish-bearing waterway has a flow of less than 1000 cubic feet per minute, then activities surrounding use of land on either side are restricted up to 25 feet away from the high water mark. The proposed regulated use would change that to 75 feet away from the high water mark. No time frame was specified for when the high water mark or flow measurement was determined (i.e.: summer flow from July through September vs. winter flow November-December through April). In my family's case, we own over 23 acres straddling the Nehalem approximately 1 mile southeast of Pittsburg. There, the Nehalem forms a lazy-S in a East-to-Northwest pattern. During summer months, a person can easily wade across the water to the abandoned railroad bed opposite the highway side. During winter months, from from 2-to-4

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THE ANNUAL "DUMB BUSINESS" AWARD

WHO'S IT GOING TO BE?

OR IT COULD BE YOU!

WHO PAID OUT OVER 70 MILLION DOLLARS TO A BIG VIDEO CHAIN STORE, JUST FOR THE LATE FEES, DUH!!?

YOU CHOOSE - TO PLACE YOUR VOTE PHONE - 1-800-

IT COULD BE OPB

Let's Beg The T.V. Viewer For Money, So We can Pay A Poor Wage to Our Employees, And Then Pay Our C.E.O. TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR!

IT COULD BE THAT BIG SPORTS SHOE COMPANY WHO OVERPRICE ITS SHOES... PAYS ABOUT TWO BUCKS A DAY TO ITS OFF SHORE EMPLOYEES AND THEN NEEDS TO PAY NINETY MILLION DOLLARS TO THEIR SPOKES PERSON!

JUNE 2003 © ROBINSON # INDEPENDENT

Ike Says...

By Dale Webb, Member
Nehalem Valley Chapter, Izaak Walton League



(In the May 1 INDEPENDENT, Dale Webb told of an 1884 boat trip down the Nehalem River, and how it inspired Webb, Troy Horton, Dennis Nelson and Stan Horton to emulate that journey by kayaking 100 river miles, from Clear Creek to Nehalem Bay. In this column, Webb tells about the rest of the journey.)

Day two of our Great Nehalem Challenge dawned bright, with blue skies and the warmth of a yellow orb in the sky. After washing the sleep off, I went to check on the kayaks, which we had left on the stream bank, and noticed Dennis Nelson standing next to the kayaks, looking downstream. I hollered a greeting down to him, and he motioned there were visitors. I eased on down to Dennis and saw his fixation. A herd of elk was grazing along the riverbank only a hundred yards from us. Of course my commotion had spooked them and they were soon splashing into and across the river. We returned to camp and soon enjoyed a filling meal of hash browns, eggs, bacon and lamb sausage. The last chore before taking off on our day of paddling was to break camp.

I queried our group about how they felt as we climbed back into our boats, amazingly, we all felt pretty good. We slipped gradually back on the swirling waters of the Nehalem and started to stretch our muscles as we waited for the last boater to get ready. It was a beautiful morning to be on the water, with blue skies overhead and morning songs from all the birds to lift our spirits.

Our goal this day was to make it (from our Natal campground) to a point just upstream from Jewell, a 26-mile paddle. This segment of water consisted of a lot of slow water, which makes for a lot more work. We continued to see abundant wildlife, including ducks, herons, beavers, deer, muskrats and, to our surprise, two bald eagles.

The sunshine remained with us while we ate lunch just downstream from the Vesper Bridge, but soon disappeared behind a screen of clouds as we continued our journey. The river makes a large bend in the Northrup Creek area and it seemed as though it took forever to make much headway toward our campsite. We stopped again for a short break just upstream from the Northrup Bridge. We had found that short breaks, even just floating down the river in our boats, had a rejuvenating effect upon our bodies. The clouds started getting thicker and one could sense that rain was not far behind. Dad (Don Webb, who was driving a support vehicle.) had gone ahead and had to do some bushwhacking down to the river from our campsite. His mission was to find a good takeout and to mark it with some ribbon. As soon as we found the ribbon, we followed his trail through a reprod patch to our camp on State Forestry land.

Dinner tonight was salad, garlic bread, wine and fresh spring Chinook Salmon. We were hoping that the spirit of the salmon would provide us with guidance down the river the next day. Day three would provide a change in scenery and river flow, would we be up to it? We could hear thunder off in the distance and soon we had a steady rainfall; it was time for bed and the patter of raindrops soon gave way to steady snores.

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