

The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

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High water



Dry periods between heavy rains allowed high waters to move down river, avoiding major problems in the upper Nehalem Valley. The photo above is Rock Creek.

SWCD named weed management agency

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has been declared Columbia County's Weed Management Agency, by the county Board of Commissioners (BOC). The SWCD is the lead agency in the Columbia Invasive Weed Control Partnership (CIWCP), which includes 14 government, private and citizen groups who have partnered to work toward controlling invasive weeds.

Members of the weed control group asked the BOC in August to designate Columbia SWCD as the county's Weed Management Agency, in order to provide county residents with a specific place to address their weed concerns. After some consideration, the county commissioners notified the members of the partnership on September 9 that the Columbia SWCD would be the Weed Management Agency for Columbia County.

Columbia SWCD will act as a resource for county residents in the battle against invasive weeds, but it has no enforcement power and will be working with residents on a voluntary basis.

Recognition by the county will allow the partnership to function more efficiently and support the effective funding of weed management projects.

There are many ways to control the spread of invasive species including effective pasture management and early identification and containment of invasive plant populations.

Two plants that are of great concern in Columbia County at present are Japanese knotweed and purple loosestrife. To learn more about these and other invasive plants, or to participate in the Columbia Invasive Weed Control Partnership, visit the Columbia SWCD office at 2514 Sykes Road in St. He-

lens, or call 503-397-4555, ext. 100.

Three council applicants will be interviewed Jan. 9

Three citizens who have applied for the vacant Vernonia City Council position — Janie Wasmann, Elizabeth Lopez-White and Steve Whiteman — will meet the public Monday, January 9, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, when the Council will host a "Meet the Candidate" question and answer session. The public is encouraged to attend and ask questions of the candidates.

Wasmann, an Avon representative, has served as a vice-president of the Vernonia Chamber of Commerce this past year. In her application she wrote "I would like to have a chance to know more about how the City of Vernonia operates. I am a real supporter of small towns and believe I would be an asset to the community if selected for this position. I don't know a lot about how the City is run but I am willing to learn. I have gotten involved in the Chamber of Com-

merce and know most of the business owners and quite a few of the local citizens."

Lopez-White is a "stay-at-home mom raising two boys," and volunteers at the schools and serves on the library board. White wrote, "I moved to Vernonia in 1997. Vernonia is no longer just a town but my home. Home to me means family, friends, and sense of community. I am proud to be a Vernonian. I believe in giving back to the community and making a difference. I would like the opportunity to learn about Vernonia's past, present, and future. We cannot move forward unless we know where we have been. What I foresee for Vernonia is a town that is diverse in its demographics; where we work together to attract new business, technology and families. If given the opportunity I would like to explore our endless possibilities and make them a reality for all Vernonians."

Whiteman teaches in the Forest Grove school district and taught in Vernonia 1984-86. He serves on the learning center committee. He wrote, "After retiring in Colorado, I had the opportunity to choose where I wanted to live. I chose to return to Vernonia. If I can be of assistance to the City, I would do my best in providing stable and thoughtful decision-making. A city councilor's goal should be to provide the best possible infrastructure for the health, safety, and prosperity of the City's citizens."

The City Council position is vacant due to the resignation of Councilor Shirley Goodman in October, 2005. The City Council will appoint a new councilor by majority vote at the January 17 City Council meeting.

Time to Fly...



This immature bald eagle was caught by the camera just as he took off from trees at Vernonia Lake. Juvenile bald eagles are a mixture of brown and white with a black bill in young birds. The adult plumage develops when they reach sexual maturity, at about 4 or 5 years of age.