

Business Notes

Board looks at role of federal forests in state

The Oregon Board of Forestry's advisory committee on federal forestlands will meet on Friday, January 5, in Salem. The meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Tillamook Room at the Oregon Department of Forestry, 2600 State Street. The meeting is open to the public.

An agenda for the meeting is being developed and, when finalized, will be posted on the committee's web page at www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/FFAC.shtml. A public comment period will be included – either

Many needed to improve habitat

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izen groups, organizations and agencies working to restore healthy watersheds in Oregon. OWEB actions support the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, created in 1997. Funding comes from the Oregon Lottery as a result of a citizen initiative in 1998, sales of salmon license plates, federal salmon funds and other sources. For more information, go to www.oregon.gov/OWEB or call OWEB in Salem at 503-986-0178.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service – Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land. Through WHIP, NRCS provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. WHIP has proven to be a highly effective and widely accepted program.

Tillamook Estuaries Partnership (TEP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the estuaries of Tillamook County and the many watersheds that sustain them. Organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, the Board convenes a wide array of stakeholders to implement the conservation plans established under the Tillamook Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, or CCMP. For more information visit <http://www.tb-nep.org>

late in the morning or sometime in the afternoon.

The Federal Forestlands Advisory Committee has been charged by the Governor and the Oregon Board of Forestry to “create a unified vision of how federal lands should contribute to the sustainability of Oregon's forests.”

Federal forests cover more than 16 million acres in Oregon – about 58 percent of the forest land base. The board strives to consider forests of all ownerships – federal, private, state, tribal and other – in seeking a sustainable flow of environmental, economic and social benefits for Oregonians.

The work of the advisory committee is a key part of the board's effort to give Oregonians a greater voice in charting the future of federal forestlands. The advisory committee is helping the board develop a vision for how federal forestlands can better contribute to Oregon's environmental, economic and social well-being.

Forestry board Chair Steve

Hobbs leads the advisory committee, which has members representing a broad range of interests. The committee's 12 members represent environmental, industry, local government, tribal, and other interests. They were selected from a group of candidates that included recommendations from Oregon's congressional delegation.

The work also is consistent with Senate Bill 1072, passed by the 2005 legislature, which encourages state-federal collaboration on federal forest management.

The advisory committee will work with the board over the next two years, with the board tentatively scheduled to adopt a guidance document and send it to the governor for his consideration in early 2009. The document will state Oregon's interests in forest policy-making at the national level, and also to be used as input in specific management planning conducted by federal forest units within Oregon.

Little change in county job rate

Columbia County's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.9 percent in November. The rate was higher than the statewide rate of 5.3 and the national rate of 4.5. Total employment was up 120 from the previous month but the number of unemployed people also increased, by 160. Total employment was 22,506 in November and 1,363 people

were unemployed.

November 2005's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 6.3 percent. Total employment this November was 689 greater than one year before and 56 fewer people were unemployed.

Unemployment rates for other counties can be found at <http://www.qualityinfo.org/olmis/j/AllRates>.

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