

OPINIONS

Help your neighbors stop Bear Grub

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

The Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has proposed the Bear Grub Timber Sale in the mountains between Ruch, the Little Applegate Valley and the Rogue Valley above Talent. The project proposes 1,245 acres of commercial logging on China Gulch, Forest Creek, Poorman Creek, Sterling Creek, Anderson Butte, and above the Little Applegate River.

Some units are adjacent to homes, while others are in our viewsheds and recreational areas, including the East Applegate Ridge trail, the Jack-Ash trail, and Wellington Wildlands.

While the BLM has been busy marking timber, they apparently do not have the time to include us in the public process. The BLM did accept public comment when the initial Scoping Notice was released in October 2019, however, no further opportunities for community input have occurred. On six different occasions Applegate Neighborhood Network (ANN) has requested that the BLM conduct a Bear Grub public meeting or field trip, but they have denied these requests. According to the BLM an Environmental Assessment will be released in late spring or early summer. They plan to auction these forests off to the highest bidder in September.

In a significant portion of the Bear Grub Timber Sale, the BLM is proposing “group selection” logging, a form of incremental or staggered clearcut logging that removes whole groves of mature forest and large, fire-resistant trees, including trees over 30 inches in diameter.

In the Applegate Watershed, when large, fire-resistant trees are removed and canopies are cleared, woody shrubs and flammable young trees regenerate in the newly created canopy gaps. By removing large trees and drastically opening forest canopies, fire resistance will be reduced, fuel loading will increase, and stands will become more

dry, windy and vulnerable to fast-moving, high-severity wildfires.

In recent BLM environmental analysis, group-selection logging has been shown to increase fire hazards and fuel loading, while decreasing stand resilience. The BLM admitted that forested stands subjected to group-selection logging “could exhibit higher flame lengths, rates of spread and fire intensity. Fires started within these stands could be difficult to initially attack and control. For five to 20 years following planting, the overall fire hazard would increase in these stands” (Clean Slate Vegetation Management Project Environmental Analysis; emphasis added).

Although in many ways ANN agrees with BLM’s analysis, we also believe the duration of the effects will last far longer than 20 years. In fact, the elements of fire resistance currently found in many of the proposed logging units, such as thick, insulating bark and high canopies, will likely take at least 60 to 80 years to be restored, leaving nearby communities vulnerable for at least a generation.

The impact of this logging on viewsheds, scenic values, and popular hiking trails will be severe, with large unnatural gaps created in mature forest canopy. Habitat values for species like the Northern spotted owl and the Pacific fisher, as well as nesting habitat for great gray owls would also be degraded.

ANN has organized the Bear Grub Outreach Committee to coordinate community efforts and oppose this timber sale. If you share our concerns, please join your neighbors and help us Stop Bear Grub!

For more about the timber sale or to view photographs of the proposed units or get a yard sign, visit stopbeargrub.org.

Luke Ruediger, Executive Director Applegate Neighborhood Network luke@applegateneighborhood.network

EDITOR’S NOTE

Your paper needs your help

BY BERT ETLING

You hold the *Applegater* in your hands. You also hold its fate in your hands.

That’s nothing new. For many years, the paper has been a community product, made possible by the contributions—from articles and photos to time and money—generously donated by people eager to create a vehicle carrying local news and views to every doorstep in the 181 square miles of the watershed.

It’s all about getting to know each other better and serving as a platform where we can express ourselves, communicate with each other, and inform, entertain and socialize. Even at a distance, it allows us to grow closer.

The *Applegater* strives to be a civic good that provides value, forging a sense of place and identity through a common frame of reference, a collective consciousness for the nearly 20,000 residents of the Applegate.

That value comes at a cost. Funds are needed for the ink, paper, and mailing that account for the bulk of the *Gater’s* budget, plus nominal sums for putting it together.

The vast majority of the labor that goes into the paper—the writing—is cost free. We have a citizen staff and are the better for it.

Response to donation envelopes included in the spring *Applegater* was not up to the usual level, perhaps due to concern about the looming new coronavirus. Impact of the virus clearly cut into the need for advertising, further trimming our revenue.

So, again, the *Gater* needs your help. Here’s a reminder of ways you can do so monetarily:

- Send a check to the *Applegater* News magazine, PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530. (We are a tax-deductible nonprofit: Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, ID No. 26-2062663.)

- Use your credit card or PayPal to donate via the link on our homepage at applegater.org.

- Order items through Amazon? A portion of your purchases—at no extra cost to you—will go to the Applegater if you do your online shopping at smile.amazon.com. You need to select Applegate Valley Community Newspaper as your charity of choice once; after that, it’s automatic.

- Purchase a personal mailing label and get your *Gater* with your name on it—or have it mailed anywhere in the US. You can send it to family and friends so they know what’s going on in your neck of the woods for just \$14.99/year or \$24.99/two years (four or eight issues, respectively). You can mail a check or pay online. Addresses above.

- Support our advertisers that help bring the *Gater* to you at no charge. Tell them you saw their ad in the *Gater* and appreciate their advertising here.

- Want to get the word out about a product, service, or event? You, too, can be an advertiser and reach the entire readership of the *Applegater* at an affordable rate, as well as Jacksonville and areas of Grants Pass and Medford. For information, contact Ron Turpen at 541-601-1867 or ron.turpen@gmail.com.

- Classified ads are also available for just \$12 for three lines of text. Contact Ron.

The paper you get for free comes at a cost. We hope—we know—you can help bear it. Putting together the *Applegater* is like raising a barn: Many hands make light work.

Thank you all for all you do to make this paper possible. It wouldn’t—and won’t—happen without you.

Bert Etling, Editor in Chief
Applegater newsmagazine
 541-631-1313
bert@applegater.org

OPINION PIECES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinion pieces and letters to the editor represent the opinion of the author, not that of the *Applegater* or the Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc. As a community-based newsmagazine, we receive diverse opinions on different topics. We honor these opinions, but object to personal attacks and reserve the right to edit accordingly. Opinion pieces and letters to the editor **must pertain to and mention the Applegate Watershed. We encourage authors to include verifiable facts to back up their arguments.**

Opinion pieces. Limited to 500 words; no images. Opinion pieces submitted by the same person will not be run consecutively. Responses to previously published opinion pieces will not be published. Must include publishable contact information (phone number and/or email address).

Letters. Limited to 200 words; must be signed, with a full street address or PO Box and phone number. Only the writer’s name and hometown will be published.

Anonymous letters and opinion pieces, reprinted articles, press releases, and political campaign articles will not be published. Individual letters and opinion pieces may or may not be published. All submissions will be edited for grammar and length.

Email opinion pieces and letters to gater@applegater.org or mail to *Applegater*, Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

ADVERTISERS!

We can help you reach your market!

The *Applegater* is the only newsmagazine covering the entire Applegate Valley. With a circulation of 13,000 and a readership of more than 20,000, the *Applegater* covers Jacksonville, Ruch, Applegate, Williams, Murphy, Wilderville, Wonder, Jerome Prairie, and areas of Medford and Grants Pass.

For more information, contact:
 Ron Turpen @ 541-601-1867 or
ron.turpen@gmail.com

Next deadline: August 1

Mobile Automotive Windshield and Glass Repair and Replacement



APPLEGATE AUTO GLASS
 Efficient, Dependable Automotive Glass Repair & Replacement

Call for a FREE QUOTE
541-621-1889
ApplegateAutoGlass@outlook.com

- › Local Family Owned
- › Mobile Convenience
- › OEM Glass
- › All Vehicles
- › Classic Automobiles
- › RV Windshields
- › All Insurance Companies
- › Competitive Cash Prices
- › Licensed & Insured



Ramsay Realty
 541-899-1184
 Cell 541-973-9105



Jayda Wood
 Licensed in Oregon • Principal Broker
 Lifetime member of the Million Dollar Club

7604 Hwy 238 • Jacksonville, OR 97530
 Fax: (541) 899-8662 • E-Mail: jaydafay888@gmail.com
 Web Site: <http://www.ramsayrealty.com>



Pegasus Sound Therapy
 PEGGY LEVITON, MM, CERTIFIED

Jacksonville, OR
707-382-8641
 Individual Sessions • Acoustic Modalities