



The Homestead

Fall 2006

Polk County Citizen Involvement Program

The Polk County Board of Commissioners encourages citizens to become involved in the County's land-use planning process. Several Area Advisory Committees have been formed to provide citizens with an opportunity to participate in County land-use. The committees address land-use issues such as urban boundaries, zone changes, land partitions, subdivisions, dwelling construction in restricted areas, property rights, growth restrictions, and air- and water-quality. The committees provide citizen input to the County's Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners regarding land-use matters. Anyone who lives or owns property in Polk County and has concerns about land use and land development is encouraged to become involved in their local Area Advisory Committee (AAC).

Polk County has three active Area Advisory Committees: Eola (West Salem), Rickreall, and Southeast Polk County. During January, these AACs will hold a special introductory session for new members and interested citizens. The County hopes to form additional Area Advisory Committees in the Northwest Polk County, Perrydale, Dallas, and Falls City areas. Citizens interested in joining one of the existing Area Advisory Committees should attend their January meeting or contact the appropriate Chair listed below. Citizens interested in forming an Area Advisory Committee in their area should contact Sherri Bray, Chair of the

County's Committee for Citizen Involvement at (503) 623-8755.

Eola AAC: Thron Riley (503) 363-1546, West Salem Library, Wednesday, January 10 at 7pm.

Rickreall AAC: Penny Cox (503) 623-3281, Polk County Fairgrounds, Main Bldg., Monday, January 22 at 7pm.

Southeast Polk AAC: Pat Wheeler (503) 838-1436, OSU Federal Credit Union, 464 S. Pacific Highway, Monmouth, Monday, January 22 at 7pm.

Forest Lands in Polk County

Forest lands are a major component of the landscape of Polk County. These lands comprise more than 271,300 acres or 57 percent of the total area of Polk County, including nearly all of the western half of the county. These forests are the source of raw materials for an industry - timber and forest products - that employed about 9 percent of the county's work force in 1993. Forest lands provide the watersheds necessary for municipal water supplies and recreation. Forests and woodlands are the principal habitat for big game and the spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous fish.

Today, however, Polk County and the State of Oregon face a major challenge from increasing demands for timber products, for outdoor recreation and for a quality environment. The steadily increasing demand for wood products will continue as population increases. Forecasts indicate that

the demand for forest products will continue to increase through the end of the century. Although there is no question that Polk County has rich and renewable forest resources, these resources need to be carefully managed to meet future needs.

The importance of forest lands to the economic well-being and livability of Polk County is evident. They are certainly one of the County's most important resources. The role of forest lands in Polk County will continue to increase in the future. The preservation of prime forest land should be as important as the preservation of the rich farm land that exists in the county."

The text above is taken from the Polk County Comprehensive Plan. Friends of Polk County shares the ideals expressed above, and will continue work to preserve forest lands for production of timber, protection of watersheds, and preserving habitat for big game and fish. See article on the Zena Forest below for the multiple private and public benefits of good timberland management.

The Zena Forest

The varied terrain of the 1700 ac. Zena Forest runs along the crest of the Eola Hills north of Hwy. 22, east of Oak Grove Road and Southwest of Zena Road just a few minutes from downtown Salem. This forest is an example of a unique Willamette Valley forest ecosystem (as opposed to Coast Range or Cascade forests), with increasingly rare Oak Savannah and Oak Woodlands on south and west slopes, mature, mixed hardwood and conifer stands, scattered planted Douglas fir stands of various ages, and beautiful oak and maple stands in the numerous canyons. Native tree species include primarily Douglas Fir, Oregon White Oak and Oregon Big Leaf Maple and secondarily, Madrone, Red Alder, Oregon Ash, Cottonwood, Cascara, Yew and

Grand Fir as well as thriving young plantings of Western Red Cedar and Valley Ponderosa Pine. The forest property protects parts of the headwaters of three watersheds; Rickreall, Yamhill and Spring Valley, has one larger pond, several smaller fire ponds, picnic meadows and abundant wildlife which, among other services, provides annual hunting opportunities for 100 or more local hunters. Deer are abundant, the occasional cougar and bobcats can be seen, beavers come and go, coyotes, jackrabbits, cottontails, raccoons, skunks, several kinds of squirrels, wood rats, snakes, lizards and frogs are plentiful and we once saw a Western Pond Turtle. The variety of micro-sites across the forest also provides varied habitat for many bird species.

The forest is commercially managed, selling up to 100 truckloads of logs to local mills annually while providing a number of other forest related jobs such as loggers, truck drivers, road builders and tree planters. Harvest taxes are paid on all logs sold (between \$1,000 and \$10,000/yr over the last 10 yrs.), a portion of which goes to the county. The Zena Forest management includes no rotation age, but permanent forest where single trees of all species can be selected for harvest to create additional space for higher quality neighboring trees, thus constantly enhancing the value of the forest. We do not use chemicals, and avoid soil compaction with permanent skid roads off which no vehicles are allowed. While we have planted many trees over the years, particularly to convert formerly marginal agricultural land back into forest, we feel now that we can generally rely on natural regeneration, largely because we value all native, site specific tree species for both their wood value and their ecological value in the forest. Our goal at Zena is to demonstrate that "conservation can pay," that

an economically viable forest can also strongly support conservation values.

To this end we have experimented successfully with producing and selling Oregon White Oak flooring using an undervalued local species for a value added product which has heretofore been imported to Oregon markets from many distant locations. The potential to expand this business to other underused species is great, producing both jobs and substantial additional revenue. Zena is also a founding member of the Build Local Alliance, a group of local, sustainable timber growers and green building contractors with the goal of filling the increasing demand for local, sustainably grown and harvested wood products. At present, two demonstration “green homes” are being built with Zena wood in SW Portland through this alliance. Our hope is that the Zena Forest will be a credible model for the commercial management of ecologically diverse forests as an alternative to short rotation, plantation forestry or conversion of woodlands to other uses.

A forest like Zena has many values beyond its commercial timber value. During much of the year it provides a home to hundreds of commercial beehives, a mutually valuable relationship for forest ecosystem and bees. With our careful, low impact logging practices and avoidance of chemicals we protect increasingly valuable water resources while providing both a weather buffer and a carbon sink for the Salem area. To the extent possible we work with neighbors to extend the reach of healthy forest and healthy habitat including a fruitful working relationship with the Oregon 4-H Center on our eastern boundary. Local hikers and horseback riders use our miles of roads and trails, often filling containers with sweet blackberries during summer months or picking the occasional mushrooms in the fall. Rocks for garden

landscaping, boughs for Christmas decoration, and dozens of cords of firewood annually leave the Zena forest. A small local business, Wild Carrot Herbals, collects plants from the Zena Forest for use in the production of a variety of salves and lotions. Due to its convenient location the forest is often used by both schools and universities for educational and research projects. Willamette University, OSU and Chemeketa Community College have all been able to use Zena in a variety of ways including class tours and individual projects. The Heritage School in Salem did a several month forest studies project with many visits to Zena. Most recently we have added the Jane Goodall Middle School to our list of partnering schools.

We at Zena endeavor to make a positive difference, a real contribution to our neighborhood and our county in as many ways as possible. In so doing we hope to justify our existence as part of the community. In light of many Measure 37 claims in our neighborhood for multiple dwelling, subdivision-like developments, our existence as a conservation-minded commercial forest seems threatened. In light of this situation we are particularly grateful to the Friends of Polk County for their commitment to preserving farm and forest land in Polk County.

For information on hunting access contact Steve Fahndrich at 503 399-7799. For general information or tours contact Sarah Deumling at 503 585-6380.

Calendar

- Dec 21 FoPC Board Meeting, 7 pm
Independence Public Library
- Jan 18 FoPC Board Meeting, 7 pm
Independence Public Library

235 New Dwellings and Wells Proposed in Eola Hills Groundwater- Limited Area

Communities in rural Polk County depend on their water supply from common aquifers. Fifteen Groundwater-Limited Areas have been identified in the Willamette Valley. One of these is the Eola Hills area in northeastern Polk County. As a result of Measure 37, numerous claims have been submitted, and the county and state have waived certain land-use regulations on seven properties in this area. Development of up to 235 new dwellings and wells have been proposed in these seven claims. Each new well could legally pump 15,000 gallons per day. Water levels in the basalt aquifers have dropped over 60 feet in 40 years in the Willamette Valley. As a result, current residents and property owners in Eola Hills may face a significant drawdown of their water table. They may face big expenses for new wells, or a new water system, and their property values could be affected adversely. Residents of Eola Hills should contact Polk County (www.co.polk.or.us) and the Oregon Water Resources Department (www.wrd.state.or.us) to discuss protection of their water resources.

Proposed developments in the Eola Hills Groundwater-Limited Area include:

- Hidden Valley Ranch Inc., N. Oak Grove Rd. 69 new dwellings
- Olson/Powell, Bethel Rd., 54 new dwellings
- Freeman, Oak Grove Rd., 54 new dwellings
- Simmons, Nina Best Rd., 37 new dwellings
- Pratt, Oak Grove Rd., 19 new dwellings
- Synowski, Eagle Crest Rd., 18 new dwellings
- Berkey, Oak Grove Rd., 4 new dwellings

West Salem Neighborhood Association

The room is crowded as people interested in land use and its effect on the area filter in to the West Salem Roth meeting room, grab a glass of water and settle in, greeting friends and local officials. After the usual reading and approval of minutes (with some, or lots of discussion), various committee chairs give their reports. Schools, parks, city land-use actions, police come in turn. Usually an officer tells of local actions or of identity theft, burglaries or traffic problems.

Topics vary. Perhaps it is new subdivision proposals or the latest road-design program, block activities or parties, local awards and activities, or progress reports on past committee actions. The citizen comments can be loud and vociferous with people unhappy about growth, particularly since nearly 1,000 homes have been approved in the recent past.

The group meets twice a month, but the only notice appears to be word of mouth and a written notice and agenda mailed out to those on the sign-up slip. Yet people still come, regulars and newbies, for two hours of intensive reports and discussions. I wonder what brings and holds them. It must be the genuine concern of neighbors to play a role in shaping their community. Please consider attending. For more information call: Community Resources Division at 503-588-6261.

West Salem Neighborhood Association
Roth's West, Mezzanine 7 p.m.
1130 Wallace Road NW, Salem
First and Third Mondays of each month

Oregon Statewide Poll Results: Voters Have Buyer's Remorse for Measure 37

From October 12-16, 2006, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research conducted a statewide survey by telephone among 405 registered voters in Oregon who voted in the 2004 November general election that included Measure 37 on the ballot. The survey's margin of error is plus or minus 4.9 percent.

The survey asked how Oregon voters currently feel about Measure 37, which passed in 2004. The survey found that Oregon voters now have serious regrets and concerns about the effects the measure has had on their communities. In fact, voters in Oregon now overwhelmingly oppose Measure 37, and believe it has resulted in many negative and unforeseen consequences. This stands in stark contrast to just two years ago, when voters passed the initiative by a wide margin. We all need to keep speaking out in the newspaper about the need to repair that flawed legislation in the next legislative session.

Measure 37 Vote			
	2004 Ballot Results	Vote on Measure Today	
		All Voters	Voters "Who Have Heard A Lot"
Yes	61%	29%	26%
No	39%	48%	66%
Undecided	--	21%	7%

Current Impressions of Measure 37		
<i>For each one, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement about Measure 37.</i>	Total Who Agree	
	All Voters	Voters "Who Have Heard A Lot"
<i>Has created a lot of uncertainty</i>	72%	88%
<i>Opens the door to more development</i>	71%	91%
<i>Has caused a lot of chaos</i>	66%	74%
<i>Allows development on what was previously protected farmland and open space</i>	61%	75%
<i>Could cost taxpayers millions of dollars</i>	61%	73%
<i>Was a mistake</i>	48%	62%

Write Your Newspaper

Salem Statesman Journal - 200 Word Limit
PO Box 13009, Salem, OR 97309
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Capital Press Agriculture Weekly
PO Box 2048, Salem, OR 97308
FAX: (503) 370-4383
Email: newsroom@capitalpress.com

Polk County Itemizer-Observer
PO Box 108, Dallas, OR 97338
FAX: (503) 623-2395

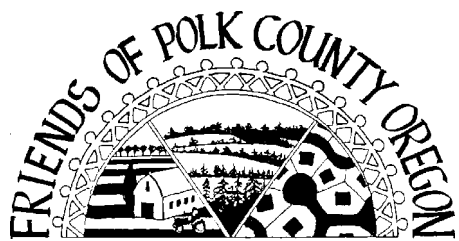
The Oregonian - 150 Word Limit
1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, OR 97201
FAX: (503) 294-4193
Email: letters@news.oregonian.com

Friends of Polk County Activity in 2006

Our main focus during 2006 has been review and comment on the numerous Measure 37 (M37) claims submitted in Polk County. Commenting is important because it provides the organization with standing in any future potential appeal process. We opposed M37 and are now watching closely as approved waivers are being used for land-use applications. Few voters who approved M37 expected the onslaught of proposed subdivisions in inappropriate areas. To avoid the closer scrutiny of planning officials for proposed subdivisions, applicants are attempting to implement them as serial partitions, with little consideration of infrastructure needs (roads, water, schools, and fire protection). We hope that County Planning Departments and elected officials will act wisely to ensure public health and safety and to prevent damage to neighboring property owners. Check our web page for more information on post-M37 land use applications and a citizen's guide for neighboring property owners. Below I summarize our activities. We thank you for your continued support and will continue to distribute information about Polk County and Oregon land-use issues.

Highlights for 2005-2006:

- Monitoring all Polk County M37 claims at county and state level
- Submission of comment letters on M37 claims at county and state level
- Distribution of Spring and Fall newsletters
- Annual meeting in June with County Commissioner candidate Sue Lamb as guest speaker
- Appeal of unwarranted partition of timber land in northeast Polk County
- Appeal of unwarranted UGB for Dallas
- Maintenance of Friends of Polk County web page
- Participation in Envision Oregon Workshop in Corvallis
- Participation in 1000 Friends of Oregon Affiliate Leaders meeting in Portland



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