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NEWS

LOCAL

WEST

Ban on water bottling moves closer to ballot

By TRACY LOEW
Statesman Journal
DEC 9, 2015

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SALEM — Opponents of Nestlé’s proposed water bottling plant in the Columbia River Gorge have turned in three times the number of signatures required to qualify a local ballot measure blocking the deal.

The citizen measure is being watched around the country, as other communities ponder whether publicly owned water should be given or sold to for-profit corporations, said Julia DeGraw, Northwest organizer for Food & Water Watch.

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The measure would prohibit any bottled water exports from Hood River County.

The Local Water Alliance, which is leading the campaign, believes it's the first measure of its kind nationwide.

The deal to build a bottling plant in economically depressed Cascade Locks has been in the works for more than six years. It centers on state-owned water rights at nearby Oxbow Springs.

Cascade Locks had proposed trading its city well water gallon-for-gallon with the state's Oxbow Springs water, then planned to sell the spring water to Nestlé. The plan faced an extensive review to determine whether it served the public interest.

In April 2015, the city and state decided to pursue a new agreement that would permanently trade water rights instead of just water, eliminating the need for a public interest review.

The decision drew complaints, protests and a formal letter from nine legislators urging Gov. Kate Brown to intervene.

Last month, Brown ordered the state Department of Fish and Wildlife to withdraw its cross transfer application and return to the original water exchange process, which will require a public-interest review.

Nestlé officials said they were disappointed with the decision.

"This will likely further delay much needed economic development in Cascade Locks that our project would bring," said Dave Palais, natural resource manager for Nestlé Waters North

The Oregon State Seal is partially visible at the bottom of the advertisement. It features a circular design with the words "STATE OF OREGON" around the perimeter. The central image depicts a landscape with a ship on the water, a plow, and a sheaf of wheat, symbolizing commerce, agriculture, and industry. A banner at the bottom of the seal reads "THE UNION".

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The plant is expected to provide about 50 jobs. The company also is asking for tax breaks.

The plant’s opponents say it doesn’t make sense to send 200 million gallons a year out of a county that has been in a serious drought.

“This project would set a dangerous precedent that Hood River County is a county willing to give away the future of our water security,” said Aurora del Val, campaign director for the Local Water Alliance. “That precedent puts at risk our entire economy, which heavily relies on water, and it is not worth the small number of jobs Nestlé could create at a highly automated bottling plant.”

Nestlé sells 64 brands of water in 43 countries. It taps 50 springs across the United States, but doesn’t have a source of spring water in the Pacific Northwest. Instead, it trucks bottled water here from Sacramento.

Today’s Local stories

SCHOOLS

Oregon’s Wyden, Bonamici, Schrader applaud as Senate sends major education bill to Obama

BUSINESS

8:55 a.m.

Eugene downtown redevelopment proposal gets support from chamber of commerce



WEATHER

8:54 a.m.

Blustery day in the Eugene-Springfield area

WEATHER

8:32 a.m.

The Latest: Seven from homeless camp rescued after being swept into Washington’s Puyallup River

LOCAL NEWS

8:12 a.m.

DA settles case with youth involved in fire that destroyed historic Civic Stadium



WEATHER

8:28 a.m.

Portland woman killed in bed as Northwest storm sends tree crashing onto home



WEATHER

Snowstorm headed for Cascades in Lane County, but just when it will hit and how much snow it will deliver remains unclear



BUSINESS

Hop Valley joins five Roseburg craft breweries to produce fundraising ale for UCC victims and families



LANE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Fern Ridge Lake area public safety property tax moves forward



LANE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Lane County commissioners seek clarity on land request



CRIME

Lane County jury hears two views of Eugene shooting death

LOCAL NEWS

37th annual Senior Holiday Dinner needs community donations



LOCAL NEWS

Oregon fire official offers fire safety tips for the holidays

WEST

Ban on water bottling moves closer to ballot

WEST

State pays \$2.2 million in I-5 fatality settlement

WEST

Survey finds more monarch butterflies than expected

WEST

Police video shows car chase, shootout

WEST

Downpour pummels northwest Oregon; forecast calls for more rain

LOCAL NEWS

Around the region

LOCAL NEWS

Briefly Northwest

LOCAL NEWS

For the Record

LOCAL NEWS

Community

LOCAL NEWS

Calendar

Local

LOCAL NEWS

DA settles case with youth involved in fire that destroyed historic Civic Stadium

Lane County prosecutors have quietly settled a case with a Eugene boy involved in a fire that destroyed Civic Stadium, negotiating a deal with him ...



-
- Portland woman killed in bed as Northwest storm sends tree crashing onto home
 - Snowstorm headed for Cascades in Lane County, but just when it will hit and how much snow it will deliver remains unclear
 - Hop Valley joins five Roseburg craft breweries to produce fundraising ale for UCC victims and families
- More* **LOCAL** »
-

Food

FRESH APPROACH

It’s not the food that matters, it’s the company

Long before there was Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving was a time when mothers were more likely to take their

daughters to lunch rather ...



- Give latkes a nutritional punch with sweet potatoes

More **FOOD** »

Weekend

OUT AND ABOUT

Fancy some fresh cut?

Area tree farms bustle with seasonal greenery and good cheer

It’s that time of year. Tree farms are open for business, in some cases up to Dec. 24, and offer a range of festive activities ...



- Weekend events in Lane County for Dec. 12-13 and beyond
- Make drinks with ease: ideas to stock the home bar
- St. Nick tradition is full of tasty surprises

More **WEEKEND** »



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