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THURSDAY

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OUT TO PASTURE

Overgrazing a common problem on local small-acreage farms

By **LYNNETTE HINTZE**
Daily Inter Lake

Ranchettes are plentiful in the Flathead Valley, but if pastures aren't managed correctly, weeds can also be plentiful.

A group of more than 30 small-acreage horse and cattle owners gathered near Foy's Lake last week to learn how to avoid overgrazing their land. The free workshop was offered by the Montana State University Extension Service and will become an annual event.

"A problem that is increasing in the Flathead Valley has been the number of people who buy small acreage — five to 20 acres — and put several horses on it, wishing to live the 'Montana Dream,'" said Pat McGlynn, MSU Extension agent for Flathead County. "These horses quickly eat all of the available plants and this is when the problem begins."

Once the grass has been consumed, noxious weeds move in where the soil has been disturbed.

"Landowners may not realize that grasses do not store their carbohydrates, or energy in their roots like other plants," McGlynn said.

The grass stores carbohydrates in the lower two to three inches of the blade. When people allow horses, cattle, goats or sheep to eat the grass below a 3-inch level, all the way to the soil, the grass cannot grow back, McGlynn explained.

"It has no energy reserves and the meristem, where the plant begins, has been eliminated," she said. "Only weeds can grow. The weeds are not palatable to the livestock so they avoid them. This is the perfect storm as far as the noxious weed problem in our area."

McGlynn said she gets calls about pasture management several times a week. She plans to offer the free workshop each summer during the third week in July.

"It was such a good group," she said of the workshop participants. "So many people said, 'I have to tell my neighbor about this.'"

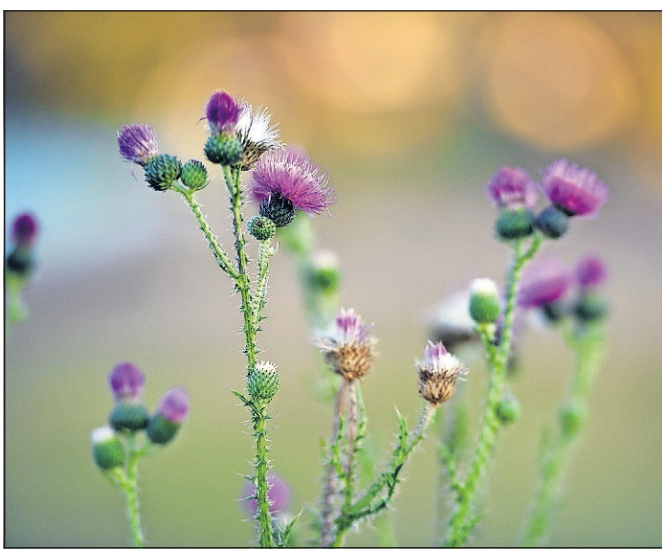
According to MSU Range Management Specialist Jeff Mosley, 10 acres for one horse, with a five- to six-month grazing season, is the recommended stocking rate for the Flathead Valley. But the matter of how many animals a pasture can sustain depends on the length of the grazing season, whether the property is irrigated or not, and whether the animals alternate between a dry lot and grazing land.

Flathead County zoning regulations, however, allow two horses per acre in several zoning districts, including suburban agriculture 5- and 10-acre zones and some residential zones. That ratio puts Flathead pasture land at a greater risk of overgrazing if property owners don't fully understand pasture management, McGlynn said.

See **GRAZING, A8**



MONTANA STATE University Agricultural Extension Agent Pat McGlynn kneels in a field west of Kalispell that has been overgrazed for two years and has now been ruined by an infestation of knapweed and other noxious weeds. (Brenda Ahearn photos/Daily Inter Lake)



BRIGHT PURPLE thistles are one of the weeds that have taken over a pasture in the Foy's Lake area after the land was overgrazed two years in a row.

Hecklers greet couple charged in puppy mill case

By **MEGAN STRICKLAND**
Daily Inter Lake

A man and woman who appeared for felony aggravated animal cruelty charges in Lake County Justice Court on Wednesday exited the courthouse to a chorus of boos and chants of "no more puppy mills."

Larry and Nadine Latzke of LDR Kennels in Charlo are accused of having more than 100 dogs and not providing proper care. Lake County sheriff's deputies seized 11 of the dogs earlier this month and four were determined to be in need of medical care. The other dogs were left in care of the couple.

Lake County Justice of the Peace Randal Owens conditionally appointed the Office of the Public Defender to represent the couple because they showed up to court without representation. Owens said that a date for an arraignment in Lake County District Court will be set in the next 30 days.

"The maximum penalty under this charge under Montana statute is \$2,500, so the fines could be anywhere from zero to \$2,500," Owens told the Latzkes.

See **PUPPY, A8**

Zoning debate centers on future of downtown Whitefish

By **HEIDI DESCH**
Whitefish Pilot

A request to allow recreation guides and outfitting businesses to operate in the city's secondary business zoning district quickly turned into a discussion last week about the future of retail business in downtown Whitefish.

Lakestream Outfitters has asked the city for a zoning text amendment that would add recreation guides and outfitters as an allowed use in the WB-2 zone. The business currently operates out of a shop on Central Avenue, which is zoned WB-3, but is looking to relocate to Spokane Avenue in the WB-2 zoning district.

Speaking in front of the Whitefish City Council on Aug. 1, Lakestream owner Justin Lawrence said it's important for his business to have adequate parking for boats and display rafts for sale. Lakestream has grown from a small retail business into an outfitting business that only has about 25 percent of its sales in retail.

"There is no zone that accommodates outfitting businesses," he said. "WB-2 is a great fit for parking and displays."

Lakestream is looking to move into a building that was remodeled after most recently operating as The Shak restaurant.

The request quickly turned into a struggle between supporters who say the longtime Whitefish business needs a way to keep operating, and opponents who say the change could lead to an exit of businesses from downtown.

Council decided to table the request

See **ZONING, A8**

Tribal ceremony in Glacier will honor grizzly bears

A ceremony Friday at Glacier National Park will bring together tribal leaders as they honor the grizzly bear and bring attention to the species' proposed removal from the federal endangered species list.

Listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1975, grizzly bears are considered a sacred animal by some Native American tribes.

A tribal coalition opposed to the

possible delisting, Guardians of Our Ancestors' Legacy, is hosting the event.

"Our brother, the grizzly bear, is the power of our people," Blackfeet Chief and organization vice-chair said in a press release. "His is the only brother that was a human being in his time on Mother Earth. The grizzly bear is not only equal to, but also far superior to us pitiful humans. To kill the grizzly is to kill our own kind."

Glacier Park spokesman Tim Rains said an estimated 250 to 300 bears currently reside within the park boundaries, part of the largest of five separate ecosystems delineated as federally protected grizzly habitat.

"We in the park are at the heart of a much larger landscape, the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem, and we have the goal of collaborating on that landscape to

ensure long-term ecological health," Rains said. "It's a success story in a lot of ways, and we're here to commit to supporting the mission of the National Park Service as well as the Endangered Species Act."

The ceremony takes place at the park's Rising Sun Campground on Friday at 2 p.m. on Friday.

For more information, visit www.goaltribal.org.

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Family discusses aftermath of boat fire

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FROM PAGE ONE



A WORKSHOP was held at Herron Park on July 27 to discuss pasture issues in the Foy's Lake area. Montana State University faculty member Emily Glunk, a forage specialist, speaks to attendees in this photo. (MSU Extension Service)

GRAZING

As summer days get shorter late in the season, grasses shed their roots and that's when it's most important to rest pastures.

"People really should have their animals on a dry lot in July to August 1 and then put them back out [to pasture]," McGlynn said. "But no one wants to feed hay when they can see grass ... as soon as the overgrazed land gets a tiny bit of green, animals will overeat because the new growth is more palatable, so the pasture never gets to rest."

Animal owners also may underestimate how much horses eat in a short amount of time, McGlynn said.

"They eat so much when they first get out there; they're nonstop mowing machines," she said. "Grazing a couple of hours a day isn't actually resting the pasture. It's



KNAPWEED side-by-side with cheatgrass, two noxious weeds that have taken over a pasture that was overgrazed. (Brenda Ahearn/Daily Inter Lake)

actually hurting it worse than leaving [horses or cattle] out for three days and then taking them off. They can eat 2 percent of their body weight in the first couple of hours."

An added problem with overgrazing is the potential for horses to get sand colic from inhaling sand into their stomachs

when the plant material is gone, McGlynn added.

"They will also begin eating poisonous weeds if that is all that is left in the pasture," she said. "Livestock normally instinctually will avoid poisonous material, but if left in an enclosed area with no other choices, they will consume deadly

weeds."

More information about stocking rates and grazing recommendations is available through the local MSU Extension Service; call 758-5553.

Features editor Lynnette Hintze may be reached at 758-4421 or by email at lhintze@dailyinterlake.com.

ZONING

from A1

until its Aug. 15 meeting and asked planning staff to return with a proposal that would allow for guiding and outfitting services to be added to the WB-2 zone as a conditional use, which would require an outfitting business to obtain a conditional use permit from the city to operate in the WB-2 zone.

Councilor Frank Sweeney said the issue is challenging.

"We shouldn't be doing this because of one business," he said. "We do have a responsibility to create growth for our businesses."

"It's important to find a place for a business like this," added Councilor Richard Hildner. "This isn't about Lakestream, which is just the vehicle for this conversation."

Guiding and outfitting businesses are considered "personal services" under city code and personal services are not listed in the allowed use of WB-2. The WB-2 district is described as intended for those retail sales and service operations that typically need large display or parking areas, large storage and by outdoor commercial amusement or recreational activities.

The proposed definition of recreational guides and

outfitters are businesses offering licensed guides as well as equipment and supplies for sale or rent for specialty outdoor activities such as fishing or hunting. Retail sales related to the primary activity are allowed up to 30 percent of the gross floor area.

"Uses can change overtime in the zoning," Planning Director Dave Taylor said. "The purpose of this use seems to fit with the intent of the WB-2 zone and the WB-2 seems like the best location for these businesses — certainly it wouldn't be downtown."

Councilor Jen Frandsen voiced her concern that a guiding business could have up to 30 percent of its building as a retail space. She pointed out that a business operating in a three-story building could have, as an example, a 30,000- to 45,000-square-foot footprint and therefore be allowed to have 15,000 square feet of retail.

"I appreciate the concerns about where do these businesses fit," she said. "I need to keep an eye out for the larger community and keep an eye out for what we want these businesses to be. There's no specific requirement in our code that would keep chain businesses out."

Supporters and opponents streamed to the

podium to speak before the council.

Turner Askew said Lakestream doesn't fit downtown and it needs an appropriate place to continue operating.

"I've watched someone from Lakestream stand in the middle of Central Avenue teaching clients to throw a fly," he said.

"This may not [already] be in the zoning, but that's what you're here for," he said.

Mike Jenson agreed that changing the zoning code is the right move to make.

"We need to define a place for this type of business to operate," he said. "This will not be an end to our downtown — this will provide a place for this businesses to actually stay in our community."

Christina Trieweller Schmidt said businesses like Lakestream are a key piece of the tourism industry.

"If you allow businesses like this, it will fill those new hotels," she said. "Business like Lakestream will expand the heart of Whitefish."

Mayre Flowers, with Citizens for a Better

Flathead, said the city's growth policy calls for completing a corridor study for the area before making a change in the zoning code.

"I'm not saying outfitting businesses aren't important," she said. "But we need to be following the growth policy and making sure that is not just doing what's good for one business. The problem is that the interpretation of this is open-ended for guides and it may open up this for other business. Whitefish has one of the most vibrant downtowns in the county because you've directed retail growth downtown."

Chris Schustrom, with the Heart of Whitefish, said the change is an attempt to redefine the entire zone that could lead to a business like Cabela's moving into the zone.

"It's important to encourage businesses to stay, but you shouldn't dismiss the zoning work that has already been done," he said.

Gary Stephens said the decision stretches beyond just one business and that keeping a strong downtown

U.S. registers \$113 billion budget deficit in July

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government last month recorded the biggest monthly budget deficit since February, and the deficit so far this budget year is running 10 percent higher than a year ago.

The Treasury Department said Wednesday that the deficit came in at \$112.8 billion in July, highest since February's \$192.6 billion but down from \$149.2 billion in July 2015. For the first 10 months of the budget year, which ends Oct. 1, the deficit was \$513.7 billion, up from \$465.5 billion a year earlier.

The government runs a deficit when it spends more than it collects in taxes and other revenue.

So far this budget year, government revenues are flat from a year earlier but spending is up 2 percent. Spending rose on interest payments and Medicaid, a health care

program for the poor. Revenue from corporate taxes is down 12 percent so far this year, reflecting a drop in business profits.

The Congressional Budget Office predicts the 2016 deficit will total \$590 billion, up from last year's budget gap of \$439 billion, largely because of lower-than-expected revenues.

Accumulating budget deficits add to the federal debt, now nearly \$19.4 trillion. That figure includes \$5.4 trillion the government owes itself, mostly from borrowing from Social Security.

The Center for a Responsible Budget estimates that Hillary Clinton's budget plans — including an expansion of the Affordable Care Act — would add \$250 billion to the debt over a decade.

It is recalculating its assessment of Donald Trump's plans after he offered a revamped economic plan this week.

PUPPY

from A1

"There is an \$80 surcharge on top of any fine that is imposed, and there is the possibility of up to two years of incarceration on a charge like this, and there is the possibility of restitution if applicable."

Owens also told the Latzkes that he would let them remain out of jail on their own recognition, but that they would have to follow the conditions of a restraining order set in place that requires the kennel to not get rid of the dogs. The dogs are considered evidence, a prosecutor handling the case said.

Larry Latzke asked to make a statement during the hearing, but Owens said that Latzke should consult with an attorney before doing so.

The Latzkes exited the courthouse through a

side entrance and many protesters followed them to their vehicle, chanting "no more puppy mills." The protesters numbered more than 40 and held signs with messages urging state officials to impose stricter laws on puppy mills. The protesters packed the Lake County Justice Courtroom during the hearing. The protesters came from as far away as Missoula to protest.

"We are the voice for the voiceless," Bigfork protester Tom Hicks said. He and his wife Linda Hicks have fostered dogs over the years and felt strongly about the importance of "alerting people that there is a cancer called puppy mills."

Linda Hicks focused on the legal system and said Montana's lack of legislative action has helped enable the puppy mill business.

"There are no laws in Montana," Hicks said.

core is essential to the town's vitality. He said Lakestream will find a way to operate in Whitefish if they want to keep their business here.

Several fishing guides, who work for Lakestream, talked about how the business has grown from a few guides to roughly 30.

Rick Adams, who owns Flathead Fish and Seafood and guides part time with Lakestream, said he knows from experience of running his own business that operating in Whitefish can be a challenge. He moved his business to Highway 40 because zoning in Whitefish wouldn't accommodate it, he noted.

"Lakestream is a great business for the gateway to Whitefish," he said.

Guide Drayton Osteen said it's important to support businesses like Lakestream because the economic impact goes beyond the business itself.

"I'm an independent contractor," he said. "This is about 27 different businesses and families being supported by Lakestream."

Concerns were raised at the Planning Board meeting about the request being spot zoning.

City Attorney Angela Jacobs said because the change, if implemented, would apply to the entire zone, it's not spot zoning.

"This would apply unilaterally in the zone so it's not spot zoning," she said.

"This may be initiated by one business, but it would apply zone-wide."

Thank you,

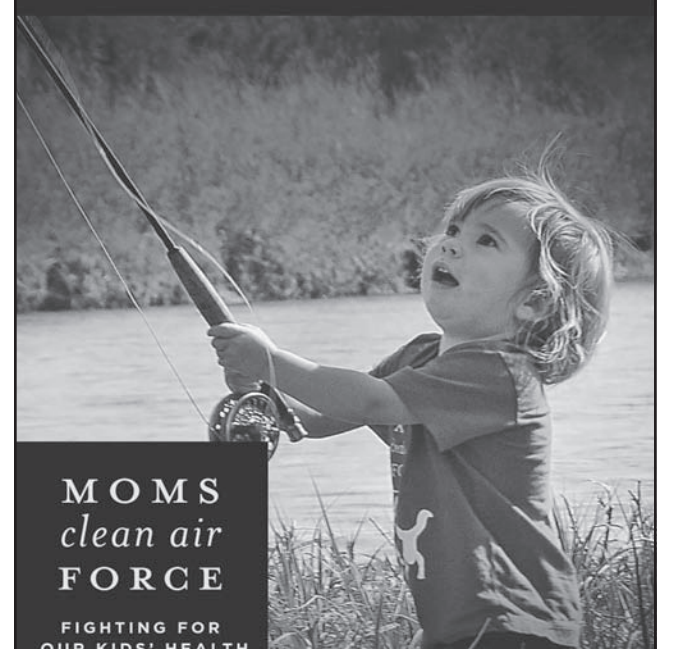
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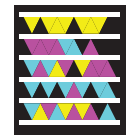
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