

Wallowa County Sheriff

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As the conservators of the peace in Oregon, the Sheriff's have a very broad duty to the public. We do the peoples work to keep our communities safe and prosperous to make it a better place to live for all of us. We are mandated for search and rescue, court security, jail and civil process. These duties are only the ones required by law and do not take in the amount of law enforcement and traffic safety that we do on a daily basis. Our office does not have 24 hour coverage in Wallowa Co. but Deputies are on call and available for emergencies at all hours and days.

In 2011 the largest Marijuana grow in Oregon history was located in Wallowa Co. After this was located by local citizens and eradicated by the Sheriff with help from the local drug task force a lot of time and resources went into making sure this did not happen again. During the summer months of 2012 deputies and officers along with Oregon National guard Helicopters did an extensive search of Wallowa Co. for several weeks. I am happy to report no new grows were located, in fact in the entire State less than 900 plants were located and most of those were legalized Marijuana growers for medical purposes. We have also taken our community corrections program from union county and started operating it ourselves in the last year. This has reduced the amount of people reoffending by a significant amount as they are now supervised daily or weekly by our probation officer or electronic monitoring. It has also improved reporting to the state on these individuals which equals financial benefits to our county.

Priorities for the coming year are to continue to focus on public safety issues that arise during the summer tourist season. These are ongoing with complaints from citizens about speeding and erratic driving and trespass issues. The speed complaints should be somewhat less as we have purchased a new speed radar trailer to monitor this issue at locations where we receive continuous complaints. This equipment is available on a first call first serve basis and we will try to see that it is out and visible everyday we can. Training and continuing education for Deputies and Dispatchers is a high priority so we can stay up to a high level of professionalism and knowledge of current techniques in Law Enforcement and other processes we must do. The State of Oregon has mandatory minimums in training to stay certified, However we have never believed minimum was enough. Working with and collaborating with other agencies and service providers is also a priority for myself as the Sheriff, as I do not believe one person is a community and in order to solve problems or make a better living condition we must work together. Working with the County Commissioners, The Forest Service and the State Game commission as well as many other agencies will help keep lines of communication open for new ideas.

In current economic times the financial issues with all government agencies is in crisis, Even small agencies are going to suffer loss of some resources. The issues comes to surface when the public expects the same level of service they have always had. We are in Challenging times and it will take all of our combined efforts to continue giving the taxpayer what they deserve in service. I do not currently have an answer to some of these Questions but am committed to keeping the service at least the current levels. Working with budget committees, County commissioners and others is a long term goal to see these challenges met and overcome. In the area of training for Deputies we need to work more with the Dept. of public safety and use the resources they may have available to small rural agencies. We have

used them for some of what we need, but they have some of the same issues as we do so it is about working together and offering assistance to other agencies to make training costs less for all.

I see working with other county elected officials as necessary to meet the challenges coming in the future. Working with other agencies on the state and federal level will help keep local citizens informed and up to date with changes and assist us in bettering our service.

The Oregon State game Commission is now setting up training classes for Deputies to investigate Wolf depredation reports with the ability to say yes it is or no it is not. This has come about as the result of new law that allows the kill to be called by a law enforcement officer. The new law came out without any requirements as to the training. The game commission is going to work with the sheriff's offices to set a standard for officers involved in these cases.