

RON WYDEN
OREGON

United States Senate

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web site:
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September 12, 2000

OCT 16 2000
Dennis?
Tove

Mr. John D. Beaulieu
State Geologist
The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries
800 N.E. Oregon St., Suite 965
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Beaulieu:

Enclosed please find correspondence I recently received from my constituent, Earl Mannen, II, interested in geology in The Dalles area. Mr. Mannen is especially interested in coal deposits.

I would greatly appreciate your response to his concerns through a direct reply to Mr. Mannen. Please also send a copy to my Washington office, as I am interested in your response. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,



RON WYDEN
United States Senator

RW\rrr
Enclosure

Committees:

Budget
Commerce, Science
& Transportation
Energy & Natural Resources
Environment & Public Works
Special Committee on Aging

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The Jamison Building
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RECEIVED

SEP 14 2000

Hon Ron Wyden

Earl U. Manner II

P.O. Box 52

The Dalles, OR 97058

Sept 11, 2000

Honorable President Bill Clinton

Honorable Congressman Greg Walden

Honorable Senator Ron Wyden

Sir:

Thank-you for taking your time to read my letter.

This letter is for people who have an interest in geology events.

Near The Dalles, Oregon, and not far from the golf course, there use to be a man made underground tunnel. In this underground tunnel (I understand) was/is a low grade coal deposit.

I know for sure this underground tunnel caught on fire and it must of been the low grade coal that burned.

yes
coal
+ fine
for decades
wind blow 57
it goes up
coals.

Bull 641 - "Coal" - may be in there. * Wasco co. mine files.

Earl U. Manner II
Page 2

I know the tunnel was burning and yes I could see smoke issuing from the tunnel for I believe over a year. One day men sealed the tunnel with rocks. What I witness took place years ago.

The question I have is this:

How can there be a low grade coal deposit located between basalt in the Columbia Gorge?

Waiting to hear the answer from you. Thank-you.

Sincerely,

Earl U. Manner II

P.S. I never received an answer from a previous letter about the "Crystal Cave", an answer from the University.



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Department of Geology & Mineral Industries

Administrative Office
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Portland OR 97232
(503) 731-4100
FAX (503) 731-4066

October 24, 2000

Mr. Earl U. Mannen II
PO Box 52
The Dalles, OR 97058

Dear Mr. Mannen:

This is in response to your letter to Senator Ron Wyden about the burning coal deposit in The Dalles. Your letter was referred to this department.

There indeed has been evidence of an underground coal fire in The Dalles. I am not familiar with any published information about the occurrence, but anecdotal information indicates that for decades there has been occasional smoldering of coals in The Dalles area. Barometric pressure changes and possibly wind patterns and speeds can change the intensity of the smoke.

The stratigraphic location of the coal has not been examined, but it could exist between basalt flows. Many thousands to millions of years elapsed between flows, and a marshy environment could have given rise to sediments and vegetation capable of being transformed into coal upon burial by additional basalt flows. Thick soil horizons developed between basalt flows, and with the right conditions, coal could also have been formed.

I have found no literature on the man made tunnel you referred to in your letter.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Olmstead
Deputy State Geologist

C: Senator Ron Wyden

