



Senator Herman Baertschiger

Oregon State Capitol
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Last lumber mill in Josephine County closes

Salem, OR – The Rough and Ready Lumber Company announced it is closing its Cave Junction sawmill. The mill, which provided 85 family wage jobs with benefits, has not been able to secure a sufficient supply of logs to remain competitive.

“Today is a very sad day for Josephine County,” said Senator Herman Baertschiger (R-Grants Pass). “The great tragedy is that the land surrounding this mill is full of timber, 2.7 million acres of timber. It is like starving in a grocery store and not being allowed to eat.”

Rough and Ready Lumber Company was founded in 1922 and has employed four generations of Josephine County residents. At its peak, the company employed more than 200 employees and helped sustain another 600 jobs in the community. In 1975 there were 22 sawmills in Josephine and Jackson Counties.

A decades long stalemate over how to best manage forests for health and production has meant an inadequate supply of timber for companies like Rough and Ready.

“I am a little upset, because I feel the legislature and our federal delegation have done nothing,” said Baertschiger. “They have turned their backs on rural Oregon and have done thing. That is unacceptable.”

Baertschiger has served on several county boards and tasks forces. He and his wife have raised their two sons on a ranch west of Grants Pass. He is an avid hunter, fisherman and enjoys horseback riding and is a private pilot.

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