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The verdict is still out on the fate of a lawsuit filed in late March over Hood River County's land exchange with Mt. Hood Meadows, LLC., of Oregon.

On Friday, county attorneys Teunis Wyers and Will Carey faced off in Circuit Court with Ralph Bloemers and Chris Winter from the Cascade Resources Advocacy Group. The Portland-based public interest law firm was hired to represent the Hood River Valley Residents Committee (HRVRC) and Mike McCarthy, one of its members.

At issue is whether the court should hear the case which alleges that the Hood River County Commission violated state statutes in its exchange of forest land south of Parkdale. That trade was approved last August and finalized on March 11 following a timber appraisal. Under that agreement, the county netted 785 acres and Meadows received 640 acres adjacent to the Cooper Spur Inn Property it purchased last year. The county paid Meadows \$1 million to offset the difference of value in marketable timber.

After listening to more than 60 minutes of arguments, Judge Donald Hull told both parties he needed more time to examine the case law before deciding whether to grant the county's motion for dismissal. That ruling is expected to come within the next two to three weeks.

Wyers and Carey contend that Bloemers and Winter did not file the lawsuit within the allowable 60-day time period from the date of decision and are wrongly seeking to have the court review a legislative process. In addition, they allege that both the HRVRC and McCarthy's claims of "speculative" injury from the trade are not valid because they are based on Meadows using the property in the future to build a destination resort.

The HRVRC and McCarthy believe the county should have factored the developable value of the forested acreage into the land appraisal. They also contend that, while the county board agreed to make the exchange last August if the value difference did not exceed \$1.5 million, the deal was not finalized until the deed was filed on March 11, within two weeks of their legal action.

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