

Judge Rules Against Alt-Weekly in Public Notice Case

David Nogueras | May 30, 2012 12:57 p.m. | Updated: May 30, 2012 1:02 p.m. | Bend, OR

Discuss Download A judge in Deschutes County has ruled a local alternative weekly isn't qualified to publish legal notices - like those announcing foreclosures.

David Nogueras / OPB

Public notices are often buried at the back of the paper. They're required by law as a way to keep the public informed about government and legal activities that might affect them. These notices have become a reliable source of revenue for publishers, even as the media environment continues to expand beyond newspapers.

In this case, a Redmond man placed a notice in a local publication called the Source Weekly. Western Communications - parent company of the Bend Bulletin - contested the weekly publishing such notices, arguing that the law requires a base of subscribers. The Source is free.

Aaron Switzer is publisher of the Source Weekly.

"The ruling is stating that notice can only be given in a paid publication and that's so contrary to the future and the trending for all media", he says. "A ruling like this does a real disservice to the community."

Switzer says he hasn't decided whether to file an appeal.