

# State grants money to aid observatory

Improved year-round scientific research and observation will soon be possible at the University's Pine Mountain Observatory because of new state support authorized Friday by the Oregon Legislative Emergency Board.

The board, acting on a request made by Sen. Fred Heard (D-Klamath Falls), authorized \$150,500 for upgrading the University's Pine Mountain facility.

The funding will allow the University to acquire, house and instrument a new 16-inch precision

telescope, provide more dependable winter access to the site by providing a four-wheel drive truck and truck-mounted snow blower unit, add needed electronic instrumentation to the observatory's 24-inch telescope and replace its retiring astronomer earlier than expected.

"I think the board's action is a demonstration of the legislature's concern for research and the research-type experience we provide our students," said John Baldwin, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, who helped Sen. Heard, Chancellor Roy Lieuallen

and University Pres. William Boyd present the proposal to an Emergency Board sub-committee Thursday.

"Through it the citizens of Oregon have shown their interest in astronomy and their interest in the University's full mission, which includes research, both for the science it accomplishes and for the training that is possible for our students only in a research context," said Baldwin.

"The new telescope will greatly increase the capacity of the observatory in getting observational data. It will be the first telescope in the state provided by state money," he continued.

The Pine Mountain Observatory was erected in 1967 by University physics professors E. G. Ebbighausen and Russell Donnelly to obtain data for research and to provide research experience in astronomy for University students.

Since its founding, the observatory has received more than \$500,000 in federal support from the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Aeronautics and Space Administration and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. The funding has helped support research leading to several major discoveries, including scientists' discovery of "black holes" in space.

In recent years, however, the observatory has been unable to successfully compete for federal funds.

"While NSF gives funds for research on the basis of national competition for good proposals," officials explained in presenting

the request to the Emergency Board, "the judging of proposals inevitably includes an assessment of the local contribution to the program and the seriousness of the commitment of the University to good research. State support is absolutely essential to back up scientific proposals. Since this support has not been truly evident to reviewers, the NSF support for Pine Mountain has dwindled to near zero, creating a crisis situation of a magnitude which was not appreciated even two years ago."

News media in Central Oregon reported on the crisis and last summer began identifying needed improvements.

University professors Ebbighausen and Donnelly, James

Kemp, Marvin Girardeau, Ira Nolt, and James Radostitz gathered and analyzed information. Working with Baldwin, they specified the need for year-round access, equipment improvements and replacement personnel.

Professor Ebbighausen, who serves as the facility's astronomer, is expected to retire in 1977. The University has already commissioned a search for his successor.

The availability of state support permits the University to employ its new astronomer before 1977. The earlier employment will allow the new scientist to begin research and grant application work during the 1976 summer observing season.



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## They've (almost) got away

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court was asked Monday to save one of the rarest fish in the world—the Devil's Hole pupfish—from extinction.

A Justice Department attorney, A. Raymond Randolph, told the court that the pupfish is threatened by the pumping of water from the Nevada pool in which it lives.

At last count, he said, there were only 294 pupfish left. "That is the smallest population of any known species of fish," said Randolph.

The fish, less than one inch

long, lives only in Devil's Hole in Death Valley.

Until the pumping started in 1968, the usual summer population was about 700, Randolph said.

The court heard arguments on the appeal of Francis Cappaert, a land-owner from Vicksburg, Miss., from a lower court order restricting his right to pump water from wells near the pool.

The argument revolves around a 1952 order by Pres. Harry S. Truman establishing the pool as a national monument under a 1906 act for the preservation of American antiquities.

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