

Eagle Creek Fire holdover flares up

Dry weather, wind could be to blame for early morning blaze, officials say

Zach Urness Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

CASCADE LOCKS — The Eagle Creek Fire apparently isn't finished.

A flare-up from last season's massive wildfire was reported May 29 near Herman Creek Trailhead in the Columbia River Gorge.

The glow from the small flare-up was spotted around 2 a.m., U.S. Forest Service officials said in a news release. Firefighters located the hotspot early this morning and are suppressing the fire, which was found smoldering in heavy downed timber with few ground fuels.

"Eagle Creek Fire has not yet been declared out and the hotspot is not unexpected," the news release said. "Heavy fuels and organic material known as duff can hold heat underground over winter and flare back up after a period of warm dry weather."

The dry weather and wind are two factors that could have kicked up the flames, said Rachel Pawlitz, spokeswoman for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

"It's a surprise to most people — it doesn't seem to make sense — but it's



A small flare-up of the Eagle Creek Fire was reported on May 29. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

actually a common occurrence," Pawlitz said.

"We may see a few more of these and we're keeping a close eye on it.

"It's a reminder of the reason many of these areas remain closed."

Hotspots are a post-fire hazard that have caused area trails to remain closed in the wake of Eagle Creek Fire, officials said.

Other hazards include fire-weakened trees and loose boulders that can fall on trails at unpredictable times, as well as ongoing rockslides and landslides.

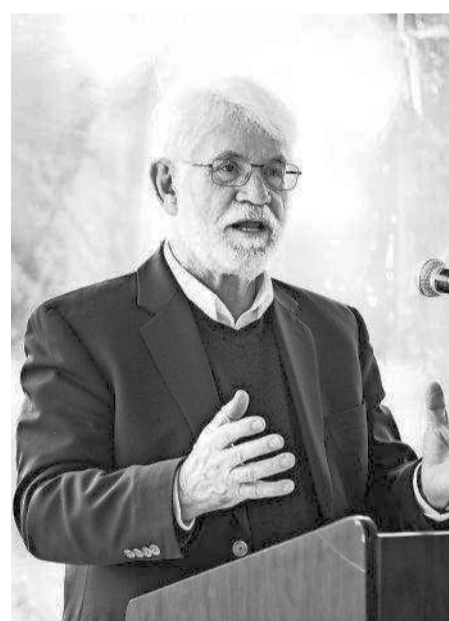
This spring has already been unusually dry in the Gorge, and the seasonal outlook suggests a hot, dry summer.

"People are reminded to be extra vigilant with campfires and observe any local prohibitions due to fire hazards," the

news release said. "As a reminder, fire-works are always illegal on federal public lands. Always check that a campfire is stone-cold out before leaving; whenever it is too hot to touch, it is too hot to walk away."

For a full list of Eagle Creek Fire closures and more details about response efforts, visit bit.ly/eaglecreekfireresponse.

Mayor: What is causing Detroit Lake algae blooms?



Salem Mayor Chuck Bennett is calling for an investigation into the cause of the toxic algae blooms at Detroit Lake. The most recent bloom is blamed for fouling the city's water supply.
MOLLY J. SMITH/STATESMAN JOURNAL

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Salem Mayor Chuck Bennett is calling for an investigation into the toxic algae bloom at Detroit Lake blamed for fouling the city's water supply.

Toxic algae blooms have been a common occurrence at the reservoir east of Salem, which serves as the source of the city's water supply.

But this year is the first time those toxins have infiltrated Salem's water supply at levels high enough to cause harm to vulnerable residents.

Bennett wants to investigate what's causing the toxic blooms, which Oregon officials say could become more common due to the impact of climate change.

"We need a specific reason the bloom is occurring not some general statement like 'it happens every year,'" Bennett said in a Facebook message to the Statesman Journal. "Something is wrong up there and appears to be getting worse."

Salem's water treatment facility, de-

signed in the 1930s, is based on the presumption of "excellent source water" from Detroit Lake and the North Santiam River, which has historically been true.

That allows the city to use a sand filtration system — which is rare in the United States but also is the cheapest option, city officials said.

"What we're doing is the least expensive way to deliver finished water to a community," Salem Public Works Director Peter Fernandez said at a press conference May 30.

But if toxic algae is fouling the source water, that needs to be addressed, Bennett said.

"I've asked the council to include a request for a detailed explanation of the increasingly regular algae blooms in some of the Detroit Reservoir tributaries," he said. "I want to understand whether actions underway up there are affecting our water quality."

Bennett pointed to factors such as fire damage, fire suppression practices, historic logging activities and weather conditions as potential culprits.

He noted that the situation has become more urgent following a plan by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to drain the reservoir for 1 to 2 years in a plan to improve fish runs, beginning around 2021.

"We need to know because the cost of treating our water differently to meet these challenges could cost in the upper tens of millions of dollars just for Salem and more when you factor in the Santiam Canyon communities that pull their water from the North Santiam," he said.

Fernandez said building a new type of water facility that could successfully treat the toxins entering Salem's drinking water could cost around \$200 million.

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Pot

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California, equally known for black-market pot from its Emerald Triangle.

Rules now in effect there cap only certain, medium-sized growing licenses. In some cases, companies acquired dozens of growing licenses, which can be operated on the same or adjoining parcels. The California Growers Association, an advocacy group, is suing to block those rules, fearing they will open the way for vast farms that will drive out smaller cultivators.

Beau Whitney, senior economist at national cannabis analytics firm New

"In my view ... it's a failing of the state for not stepping back and taking a look at where this industry is at following legalization."

U.S. Attorney Billy Williams, regarding the oversupply of licensed marijuana sellers

Frontier Data, said he's seeing California prices fall.

In contrast, Washington knew oversupply could draw federal attention and was more conservative about licensing. As the market matured, its regulators eased growing limits, but the state never experienced an oversupply crisis.

Colorado has no license caps, but strict rules designed to limit oversupply allow it to curtail a growers' farm size based on past crop yields, existing inventory, sales deals and other factors.

In Oregon, cannabis retail chains are emerging to take advantage of the shake-up.

A company called Nectar has 13 stores around the state — with three more on tap — and says on its website it is buying up for-sale dispensaries too. Canada-based Golden Leaf Holdings bought the successful Oregon startup Chalice and has six stores around Portland, with another slated to open.

William Simpson, Chalice's founder and Golden Leaf Holdings CEO, is expanding into Northern California, Nevada and Canada. Simpson welcomes criticism that his business is to cannabis what Starbucks is to mass-market coffee.

"If you take Chalice like Starbucks, it's a known quantity, it's a brand that

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Fishing

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self at <https://www.foodandwine.com/news/foods-royal-wedding-fever>.

Given how the algorithms are probably processing my search requests from, ahem, the previous week's column, in future I probably can expect to see ads in the margins of my searches offering medical appliances to put you in the proper position for consuming Velveeta Crowns and Cheese.

Those will be right next to the come-ons for the mud flaps and garden sprays.

But back to the original topic: Clamming.

My expectations of a minimal turnout for the low tide because of the Royal Wedding hysteria were — OK, consider the source — something of an undercount.

Probably by, let's see, a couple hundred.

It was a virtual rake and shovel-swarm, but almost everyone got clams, and many limited.

Cockles with a side of Crowns and

Cheese, anyone?

Anyone? And for the five or six people in Oregon who weren't at the coast because of the you-know-what, there are a couple of excellent minus-tide series coming up in June and July.

The first, one of the best of the year, runs June 13 through 18, with the lowest of the series on June 15, a Friday.

But the Saturday and Sunday minus tides also will provide excellent opportunities.

During July, there is another stellar minus series starting July 11 and wrapping up July 16 with the lowest of the series on July 13 and 14.

July 14, it should be noted, is a Saturday!

You can check out all of the tides for the Oregon coast online at <http://saltwatertides.com/dynamic.dir/oregon-sites.html>

It could be your crowning summer achievement, pun intended.

Henry Miller is a retired Statesman Journal columnist and outdoor writer. You can reach him via email at Henry-MillerSJ@gmail.com

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