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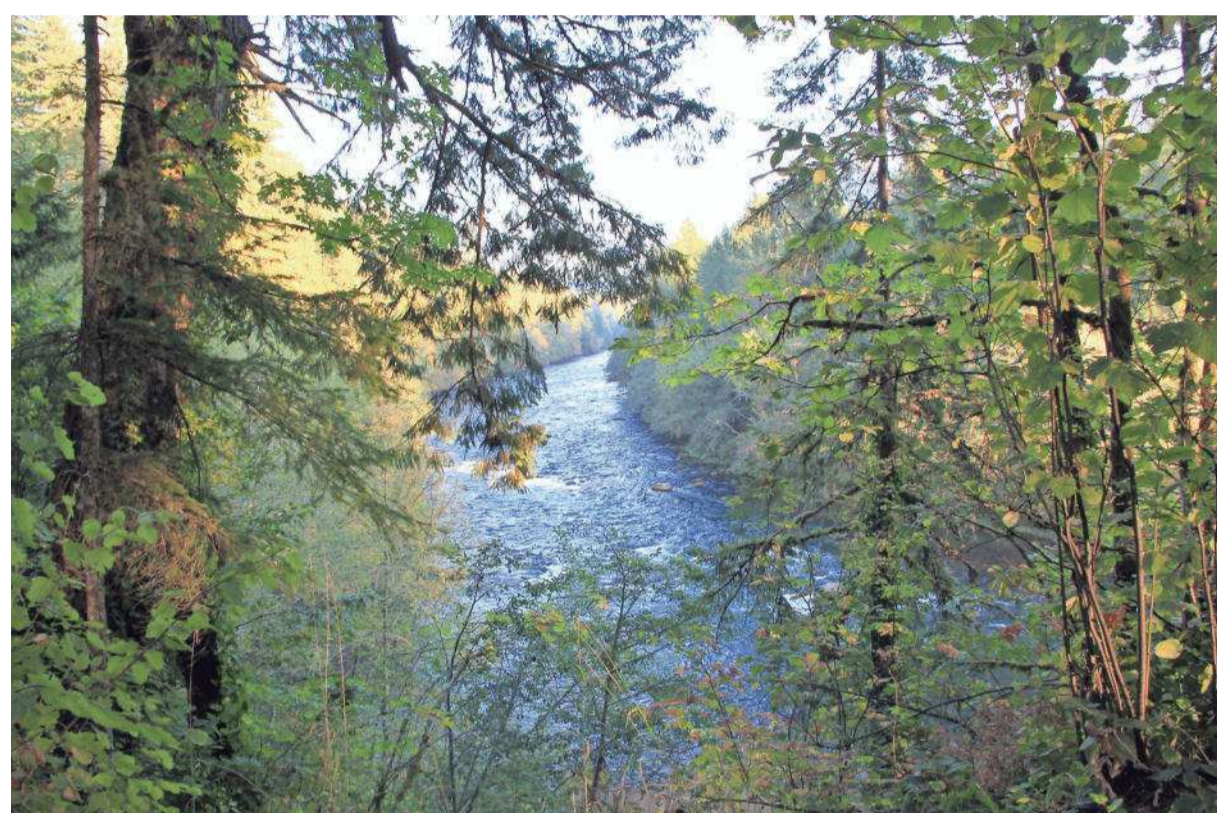
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Appeal Tribune

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019 ■ SILVERTONAPPEAL.COM

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How much is a river worth? Try \$170 million



Several views of the North Santiam River can be had from trails in Minto County Park. ZACH URNESS / STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

Millions of dollars can be lost when something goes wrong

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The North Santiam River has an impact of \$170 million each year from uses including municipal water for 235,000 people in cities like Salem and Stayton, recreation on the river, hydropower and irrigation, according to an ECONorthwest report.

And millions of dollars are lost when something goes wrong, such as the toxic algae blooms at Detroit Lake last summer.

The ECONorthwest report – which cost \$30,000 – was commissioned by the North Santiam Watershed Council and the Oregon Business Council and was funded by Meyer Memorial Trust, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, Marion County and Salem. It was the first to address the economic impact of the river.

The report comes as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages Detroit Dam, has proposed draining Detroit Lake to a level below previous

drought stages for one to three years to build a cooling tower and aid in fish passage up the North Santiam River.

The Corps of Engineers is under a legal mandate to correct water temperatures to save the endangered Willamette River Steelhead and Upper Willamette River Spring Chinook.

The Corps' plans have worried residents and river users. Draining Detroit Lake would damage recreation use at the lake and all along the 100-mile-long river, plus it could restrict agriculture irrigation and force cities to find other sources of drinking water.

When a drought or some other issue befalls the river, the impact is felt in multiple ways, according to the report:

- Each year there is a shortage of water in the North Santiam costs between \$2 million and \$3.6 million in lost outdoor use of the river.
- The 84,421 residential households that depend on water from the North Santiam for drinking water

See RIVER, Page 2A

Oregon graduation rates up across the board

Natalie Pate
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Oregon is seeing more students graduate high school, with increases across the board regardless of demographics.

More than 78 percent of all eligible high schoolers in Oregon graduated in four years in 2017-18, according data released Thursday by the Oregon Department of Education.

This is a 2-percentage-point increase from the previous year and brings Oregon the closest it has been in recent history to having 80 percent of students graduating on time.

Even when looking at individual demographics, Oregon's numbers have all increased.

Regardless of gender, disability or economic sta-

tus, race or language background, every single group saw gains this past school year.

Among the students with the largest increases were students experiencing homelessness, who saw about a 4-percentage-point increase; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, who saw about a 6-percentage-point increase; and American Indian/Alaska Native students, who also saw about 6-percentage-point increase.

"It's important to remember that we are talking about students, not statistics," Colt Gill, director of the Oregon Department of Education, said in a statement. "In this case, a two-point increase in graduation means an additional 950 students getting their diplomas within four years of starting high school."

See GRAD RATES, Page 2A



Art Gregg, one of the state's oldest World War II veterans, and his daughter Ann Snelling flip through a book she made him at his home in Silverton on Friday, Jan. 25, 2019. MICHAELA ROMÁN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

World War II pilot Art Gregg turning 100

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

SILVERTON – In 1943, Art Gregg was a fresh-faced 23-year-old seeing another part of the world for the first time.

Gregg, who grew up on a farm in Ohio dreaming of being a pilot, was stationed about 20 miles south of Ledo, India for his duty with the United States Army Air Corps.

But when dozens of Japanese Zero's swooped down from the sky to attack the base on February 25, 1943, Gregg ran for his P-40 and managed to take off while under attack and give chase.

Gregg was among a group of American pilots who shot down at least 28 planes that day. He was credited with shooting down one.

See VETERAN, Page 3A

Fishing groups want to keep hatchery fish in North Santiam

Zach Urness
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Oregon fishing groups are fighting a plan to eliminate summer steelhead from the North Santiam River.

Last October, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers confirmed it was eliminating funding for a program that releases 121,000 summer steelhead smolts into the river east of Salem.

The hatchery-raised fish are the only ones anglers are allowed to catch and bring home for dinner, meaning that ending the program will effectively kill steelhead fishing, state officials said.

See FISHING, Page 4A



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