

# NORPAC settlement with farmers approved

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A bankruptcy judge has approved a settlement agreement between the former NORPAC Foods processing company and some 100 member farms, which means they'll collectively receive \$4.5 million.

Continued litigation between the defunct food processor and growers would have been highly complex and could have derailed the current bankruptcy process, the Capital Press reported.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Peter McKittrick said during a Friday court hearing that the court appreciates the work that went into the settlement.

Settlements have been reached in almost all the major lawsuits involving the cooperative, which is now called North Pacific Cannery & Packers after selling its name and intellectual property.

Earlier this year, the judge warned attorneys that NORPAC's bankruptcy was

turning into a "big pile of litigation" that could lead to "fighting over an administratively insolvent estate if we're not careful."

If the deal between farmers and the cooperative had collapsed, it likely would have forced the bankruptcy to convert from a Chapter 11 debt restructuring into a more time-consuming Chapter 7 dissolution, according to Albert Kennedy, lawyer for NORPAC.

In that case, it would have meant the end for the cooperative's proposed bankruptcy plan, under which \$28 million would be distributed to unsecured creditors who'd be repaid for about 25% to 50% of what they're owed by year's end, he said.

Payments to individual growers will range from about \$1,400 to \$300,000 under the settlement deal, though the \$4.5 million represents less than 28% of what the farmers said they were owed for crop deliveries.



Trucks in front of the NORPAC Packing Plant #8 in Salem. Layoffs were announced at the plant Nov. 13. DAVID DAVIS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

## Animals

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### How to help

Some Friends of Felines is looking for donations of pet goods, including food and litter. Donors can drop off supplies between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sundays at 980 Commercial St SE.

Monetary donations can be made through the Friends of Felines website.

The shelter is still doing adoptions by appointment due to COVID-19.

### Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary

After the 54-acre farm refuge in Scio was placed on a Level 1 evacuation warning, staff made a plea Wednesday on Facebook requesting help in evacuating its 350 rescues.

And by Thursday, the sanctuary secured a spot for nearly every animal, according to a staff update on Instagram.

Volunteers also helped build chutes in various pastures to safely move animals into trailers in case of an evacuation.

The refuge typically houses at least 130 pigs, 75 chickens, 12 cows, 13 horses, two donkeys, roosters, ducks, turkeys, bunnies and a bison.

"In the midst of all of the chaos, people have come together for the animals in the most moving and truly beautiful way," staff wrote. "We are grateful for every single one of you."

### How to help

Funds can be donated to Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary through Paypal or Venmo.

Volunteers with trailers are needed to help staff move animals to their safe destination.

For volunteering opportunities, follow Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary on Instagram and Facebook, or contact 541-636-7288.

### Green Acres Farm Sanctuary

With help from volunteers, Green Acres Farm Sanctuary in Silverton was able to evacuate its 200 animals from the pasture Tuesday during a level 2 notice.

The sanctuary's animals have gone to several different places, including Oregon State Fair Grounds, Polk County Fairgrounds, other sanctuaries, and with individuals who've taken them in.

"The outpour of people willing to pitch in to (help) total strangers is amazing," said sanctuary co-founder Tina Crow.

The volunteer, nonprofit farm typi-



Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary, shown here in a file photo, has secured places to relocate all of its rescue animals if the Scio farm needs to evacuate. STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

cally houses chickens, ducks, goats, sheep, pigs, horses, turkeys and a donkey.

Crow said she's keeping a close eye on the fire and crossing her fingers that the evacuation will be lifted soon. "We're optimistic. We're hoping it's only going to be a few more days."

### How to help

Crow said staff will post ways to help on their Facebook and Instagram pages.

When conditions improve, volunteers will be needed to help transport animals from their current locations back to the sanctuary and to help clean ashes and fire debris from the site.

The sanctuary is taking monetary donations through Facebook, Paypal and its website.

A wish list of needed supplies — including a hay elevator, a wood chipper, wheelbarrows and gift cards to Wilco and Petco — can be found on Amazon.

For volunteer opportunities, contact 503-873-8186.

### Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center

The Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center in South Salem is opening its doors to all wildlife affected but the Santiam Canyon fires.

"We're here to help," Director Jessy

Gill said. "We have a lot of property out here. We'd definitely be a resource for someone with a trailer full of animals, for example, where (the animals) could come and stay temporarily."

The 60-acre wildlife rehabilitation and care center, established in 2005, nurses on average between 150-200 animals until they can return to the wild. It has an additional 35 permanent residents.

The animals, ranging from a golden eagle to sugar gliders to skunks, are cared for by five staff members and 12 volunteers.

Gill said the rehabilitation center has not received any wildlife since the fires began, except for a bird with suspected inhalation issues.

Those who spot animals that are injured or threatened by fire, and want to help, should be prepared with a blanket and a carrier to transport the animal to the refuge.

"I think people envision (animals) running from the fire, but that's not necessarily the case," Gills said. "It's devastating. It's going to take a long time for that area is inhabitable again."

### How to help

The wildlife center is taking in all wildlife species (not domestic animals), including sugar gliders, guinea pigs, parrots, squirrels, songbirds, squirrels, rabbits, raptors, ducks, geese, etc.

Those who want to donate supplies can drop off food (including canned goods, meats, produce), linens, towels and medical supplies between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. every day at 9483 Jackson Hill Road.

For more information, contact 503-540-8664 or visit the Turtle Ridge Wildlife Refuge Center website.

### Taking care of your pets, farm

### animals during wildfires, evacuations

Here are some additional tips and resources for keeping your pets and livestock safe during the wildfires.

For pet owners living in locations with poor air quality due to wildfires:

- Shorten walks for dogs, limit exposure to air
- If possible, bring outdoor dogs and cats inside
- Keep in touch with your family veterinarian in case of a pet health emergency

For evacuees, make a list of dietary restrictions, special needs and medications for pets

For livestock and wildlife:

- Bring livestock closer to your property
- Have an evacuation plan ready
- Wildfire evacuees who have no choice but to let their horses go can write contact information using oil markers on their hooves
- Make a list of dietary restrictions, special needs and medications for animals to provide to their temporary caretaker/shelter
- For wildlife, place a shallow dish of water outside for animals passing through

Other resources:

Individuals looking for shelter for themselves and their pets and/or livestock can check the Oregon Fairs Association Wildfire Evacuation Resources page for an updated list of open state fairgrounds.

Virginia Barreda is the breaking news and public safety reporter for the Statesman Journal. She can be reached at 503-399-6657 or at vbarreda@statesmanjournal.com. Follow her on Twitter at @vbarreda2.



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## Miller

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the line.

It broke off the 4-pound-test line near the bank, but not before we got a good look at a whitefish checking in at what had to be 5-plus pounds.

It was the largest anybody had ever seen.

And the only whitefish that any of us hooked that summer.

Only Mick, the Ahab of whitefish anglers.

The frosting on the fishcake was during an outing back home at the Goleta Pier a couple of years later.

Michelle, naturally, caught the only Pacific lobster that any of us ever had seen outside of the live tank at Castagnola Brothers seafood market.

I mean really; who does that? Only Mick.

When she retires, I hope she can make it north for frequent Salem visits.

I'd like to take her fishing again and talk about old times.

Holding my own fishing rod, thank you very much.

Happy early birthday, kiddo.

**FISHING THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** Most frequent comeback to disparaging comments about fish photos? It looked bigger in the water.

Contact Henry Miller via email at HenryMillerSJ@gmail.com