

Appeal Tribune

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022 | SILVERTONAPPEAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Forecast better than past 2 years

Oregon wildfire prediction still above normal for Bend

Zach Urness
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Early forecasts of Oregon's wildfire danger are milder than the last two seasons, but it's not a completely rosy picture as the state begins ramping up for the 2022 fire season.

The western half of Oregon looks far better than a year ago thanks to a wet and snowy April, but wildfire danger is projected to be above normal east of the Cascade Range and eventually across the length of southern Oregon, according to the latest forecast issued by the National Interagency Fire Center.

"April was obviously a big help — especially in the northwest — but it wasn't enough to break the longstanding drought in most of the state," said Eric Wise, a predictive wildfire meteorologist at the Northwest Coordination Center. "We have concern in particular

about Central Oregon in the early season and about southwest Oregon as we get deeper into the summer."

The projections, issued on the first of every month, rely on a combination of factors including drought, extended weather forecasts, forest fuel moistures and weather events like the monsoon season, which can influence lightning strikes in Oregon.

And while they're far from perfect, last year's forecast correctly projected an early wildfire season that brought outbreaks in May and significant wildfires and evacuations by mid-June. The

2020 projections also foretold above-normal wildfire danger in Western Oregon during a season that eventually saw the devastating Labor Day Fires.

The latest forecast came out May 1 and projects elevated fire danger in Central Oregon through May and June.

"The risk of fires in central Oregon in May and June will mainly be associated with dry and windy weather rather than lightning," the report said.

"I'd say we do expect an early start to the season in that area, and even if we

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MID-VALLEY'S HOMELESS CRISIS

'Dealt a bad hand'



"There is a lot of youth that are unfortunately in situations that I have been in and they're not being accounted for."

Kloi Spencer
President of the regional homeless youth action board Backbone, and one who has experienced homelessness

Homeless youth in Oregon have a plan to save themselves

Story by Dianne Lugo | Photos by Abigail Dollins
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

David Buntjer, 18, was "technically" homeless months before his father was killed in 2019. • "We were sleeping at my uncle's house. I don't really call that homelessness because I was with my dad and at that point in time I believed that when I was with my dad, I was at home. It didn't really matter where I was," Buntjer said. • After his death, a friend of his father's took him in. But three months later, she announced she was moving and there was no room for Buntjer or the friend's two daughters.

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By the numbers

1,540

Mid-Valley youth who are homeless.

10

Mid-Valley shelter beds for youth.

Willamette Valley Vineyards opens new location

Em Chan
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Willamette Valley Vineyards is opening a Lake Oswego Tasting Room and Restaurant as the first of several locations across the Portland Metro area.

"We are thrilled to join the Lake Oswego community

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Wine by an outdoor fireplace of Lake Oswego's new Willamette Valley Vineyards Tasting Room and Restaurant.

17-year-old could be tried as an adult

Murder case one of first under state's new juvenile reform law

Virginia Barreda
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Marion County judge will determine this week if a 17-year-old boy will be tried as an adult or juvenile for an alleged murder committed last January during a drug exchange in northeast Salem. The case is among the first in Marion County and Oregon to be charged under the state's juvenile justice reform law.

Gerardo Trujillo-Torres faces allegations of second-degree murder, attempted murder, first-degree assault and unlawful use of a weapon in the killing of Joshua Steward, 24, on Jan. 16 in the parking lot by Hoover Elementary School and Hoover School City Park, according to Salem police and court records. A 22-year-old woman who was with Steward was shot in the head.

The 2019 Youth Justice Reform Bill (Senate Bill 1008), enacts dramatic changes in how juveniles who commit serious crimes are sentenced on or after Jan. 1, 2020. The law, backed by multiple criminal justice reform advocates such as the Youth Justice Project and Criminal Justice Reform Clinic at Lewis & Clark Law School, is intended to help reduce victimization and increase positive outcomes for youth, according to officials from Oregon Youth Authority. Youth authority officials and advocates say youth are twice as likely to recidivate when they serve time in adult prison; the new law gives youth opportunities and motivation to improve their behavior.

The law removes the requirement to charge 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds as adults for Measure II crimes, including murder and rape. Previously, children under 18 who committed serious crimes were automatically tried as adults.

According to the youth authority, the bill also:

- Gives youth a "second look" hearing for a possible release after serving half their sentence, if a judge determines they have taken responsibility for their crime and have been rehabilitated. If approved, the youth would serve the rest of their sentence under community-based supervision, instead of being incarcerated.

- Prohibits youth from being sentenced to life without parole. Anyone receiving a life sentence for a crime they committed when they were under 18 must have an opportunity for parole after 15 years of incarceration.

- Provides some youth with a transfer hearing before moving to adult prison. Youth convicted as adults can stay in OYA facilities until age 25. At that time, if they have less than two years left in their sentence, they will receive a transfer hearing. A judge will decide whether the youth should finish their sentence in an adult prison or on community-based supervision.

A weeklong waiver hearing for Trujillo-Torres began Monday at the Marion County Juvenile Department on Center Street NE. Marion County Prosecutors and Trujillo's defense attorneys will present arguments to Judge Lindsay Partridge who will determine whether Trujillo-Torres's case will be adjudicated in juvenile court or if he will be tried as an adult.

Trujillo-Torres previously was adjudicated for assault, resisting arrest, and criminal mischief, and placed in Oregon Youth Authority custody, officials said.

The state must prove whether Trujillo-Torres had "adult-like sophistication and maturity" when he committed the alleged crimes, defense attorney Elizabeth Meuse said in opening statements. Meuse said Trujillo-Torres had been on an Individual Education Plan — a program through the Oregon Department of Education to assist students with disabilities — since elementary school. She added Trujillo-Torres was a strong candidate for reformation.

Shooting, crash near Hoover Elementary School

Prosecutors from the Marion County District Attorney's Office began calling witnesses Monday, including the 22-year-old woman who was shot and a

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Vol. 141, No. 21

Serving the Silverton Area Since 1880
A Unique Edition of the Statesman Journal

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