

# Lake

Continued from Page 1A

that was before the Labor Day Fires impacted the town.

For now, with the rain still falling the Corps expects a good year, but they've started dumping water from the lake more quickly to get the reservoir back down to 1,558.5 feet. If May and June prove exceptionally dry, that could have an impact on the area's recreation.

"We want to limit the number of days that we're above that 1,558 mark," Gaylord said.

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# Shutoff

Continued from Page 1A

person for the utility commission, said.

Asked what type of data that was, Young said several utilities have meteorologists on staff.

"They can better determine how that weather issue or incident is going to impact their system because they know their system the best," Young said.

The commission calls power shutoffs a tool "of last resort" because shutting off power can have wide-ranging effects. Hospitals and nursing homes

rely on power for medical equipment, and people on well water use electric pumps.

Temporary rules around shutoffs were approved for last year's fire season but these new rules are permanent.

The commission doesn't regulate co-ops owned by customers, like Salem Electric, so these new rules about how and when the utilities have to publicize shutoffs don't apply to them.

The investor-owned utilities also have to submit plans to the commission for dealing with the risks of fire every year. The commission approved the 2022 plans last month.

# Heat

Continued from Page 1A

## Heat rules

Last summer, Oregon experienced historically-high temperatures.

More than 100 people statewide, including more than a dozen in Marion County, died during a late June heatwave when temperatures in Salem reached a record 117 degrees.

Sebastian Francisco Perez, a nursery worker who had recently arrived from Guatemala, died on a 104-degree day at Ernst Nursery and Farms.

Advocates had for months prior called for the state to establish emergency heat rules to protect farmworkers and other outdoor workers. OSHA released temporary heat rules in July, after the June heatwave.

A list provided to the Statesman Journal of the heat-related complaints OSHA received from mid-June to the end of July shows 19 of the 219 complaints were from agricultural or processing sites.

One alleged a Yamhill County nursery denied workers the ability to leave work early on a hot day. Another alleged a Mid-Valley nursery was not providing workers water in triple-digit temper-

atures.

OSHA's permanent heat rules say when the heat index passes 80 degrees, employees must establish and maintain one or more shaded areas that are available to outdoor workers and supply workers with at least 32 oz. of cool or cold drinking water per hour.

When the heat index reaches 90 degrees, employers must:

- Monitor workers for signs of heat illness, including regular communication with employees working alone or creating a mandatory buddy system.
- Designate and equip one or more employee at each worksite to call for medics.
- Develop a written heat rest break schedule that provides a minimum 10-minute break every two hours when temperatures reach 90 degrees and a 15-minute break every hour when temperatures reach 100.
- Develop training on heat illness prevention, including how workers can recognize symptoms of dehydration and how to respond to others who may be experiencing heat-related illnesses.

## Wildfire smoke rules

Thousands of agricultural workers in the Mid-Valley worked in smoky conditions during 2020's Labor Day fires. Farmworker advocates reported hearing

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# Legacy

Continued from Page 1A

Boarding School Initiative, a series of examinations into the generational impact of 408 federal boarding schools and more than 1,000 religious and privately run schools upon Native peoples, and how to address those impacts.

Deborah Parker, the CEO of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, spoke during an often-tearful news conference outlining the report's release and next steps.

"Our children had names," Parker said. "Our children had homes. They had families. They had their languages, their regalia, their prayers and religions."

But as Parker, a member of the Tula-lip Tribes, pointed out, a system of federal, private and religious-run boarding schools over more than 150 years did its best to wipe out thousands of years of Native languages, cultures and family ties. The damage done to these children, and to the generations that followed, was immense, she said.

The report was commissioned by Haaland in 2021 following the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves of children in Canadian residential schools. Like the U.S. schools, the Canadian residential school system sought to wipe out Native cultures, languages and traditions, and assimilate Indigenous children.

Just as the U.S. government's failure to consult with and respect the practices of Indigenous peoples' land stewardship may have led to the environmental tragedies of the 20th and 21st centuries, Haaland said, federal policies moved to exterminate, eradicate and assimilate Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians.

"The languages, cultures, religions, traditional practices and even the history of Native communities was targeted for destruction," Haaland, a member of the Laguna Pueblo, said. "Nowhere is that clearer than in the legacy of federal Indian boarding schools."

Haaland said her own grandparents were taken from their parents and placed in boarding school at age 8. They joined tens of thousands of other Indigenous children as young as 4 who were forced into boarding schools run by the Interior Department and religious insti-

tutions.

## Ongoing quest for answers

Oregon Gov. Kate Bown called the report a "somber reminder" of the "nation's legacy of colonialism, violence and intergenerational trauma against Indigenous and tribal students and their families" in a tweet.

"We must recommit ourselves to building a just and equitable country, to ensure that our Indigenous communities are able to grow & heal from these terrible acts," Brown added.

Chemawa Indian School was one of the 408 federal schools across 37 states that operated between 1819 to 1969 identified in the Department of Interior's investigation. The official list of Federal Indian boarding schools lists nine schools in Oregon:

- Grand Ronde Boarding School.
- Kate Drexel Industrial Boarding School.
- Klamath Agency Boarding School.
- Siletz Boarding School, Simnasho Boarding and Day School.
- Umatilla Boarding and Day School.
- Warm Springs Boarding and Day School.
- Yainax Indian Boarding School.

Families of former Chemawa Indian School students have long called for answers.

They spoke to the Statesman Journal last year about their desire to discover precisely what happened to their ancestors and their hope for a public apology for the trauma endured.

An emotional great-niece of Tillie Franklin recounted her experience discovering Franklin's burial site near the entrance of Chemawa's cemetery. Franklin's siblings were put into different off-reservation boarding schools after their family home burned down in 1916.

"I can still hear my grandmother say to me that she never saw Tillie again," Medina said.

It took decades for her to find out Franklin had been sent to Chemawa. School records identified Franklin's family as unknown.

Advocates organized a run last year to raise awareness for unidentified children buried at Chemawa. The school's cemetery was established in 1886, a year after the school was moved from Forest Grove to its current location.

SuAnn Reddick, a former volunteer

from countless people describing headaches, nausea, loss of appetite and other smoke-related symptoms, as well as pressure to continue working in dangerous conditions.

OSHA issued guidance, but no rules, during the Labor Day fires.

Air quality in Salem during wildfires in 2020 topped 400 on the air quality index (AQI) scale, and in Bend topped 500. Levels over 100 are considered unhealthy. Members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects when the AQI is over 151. Levels over 300 are considered hazardous, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's air quality index.

A report from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality highlighted that there's been an increase in the number of days that wildfire smoke creates unhealthy air conditions for sensitive groups. Climate change also is expected to make wildfires more frequent and intense.

OSHA established temporary smoke rules last year that required employers to train employees on wildfire smoke hazards.

Similarly, the permanent rules require employers whose workers are exposed to wildfire smoke to take precautions when the ambient air concentration for fine particulate matter is at a PM2.5 or an AQI of 101.

historian for Chemawa, conducted research for 25 years to compile a list of names of those buried at the cemetery. Her research was published last year in partnership with Eva Guggemos, an archivist and associate professor at Pacific University.

## According to the website:

- At least 270 students died in the custody of the schools at Forest Grove and Chemawa between 1880 and 1945.
  - 175 of those children were buried in the school cemetery.
  - The remains of approximately 40 students were returned home near the time of their deaths.
  - The locations of approximately 50 student remains are unaccounted for. Maps indicate there could be up to 40 plots in the cemetery that contain remains of unidentified students or staff.
- Reddick said she had reached out to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Department of Interior to offer her research but neither she nor Guggemos received any inquiries from the DOI about their work in publishing the new website with deaths at Chemawa.

## Effort to locate graves, acknowledge trauma

The federal report stipulates that due to missing records, the exact numbers may never be known, but Haaland said one goal of the new initiative is to enumerate them as fully as possible.

Many of these children never made it home. The report seeks to locate those children and bring them home.

To date, the Interior Department and its partner, the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, has identified 53 burial sites, both marked and unmarked, and hopes to locate all of them. The department will not make public the specific locations of the identified burial sites to protect them against grave-robbing, vandalism and other disturbances, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland said during the news conference.

Another legacy of these schools was the intergenerational trauma inflicted on children, families and communities. Newland said the impacts of the boarding schools have left lasting scars on Indigenous peoples.

"That impact continues to influence the lives of countless families from the break up of families and tribal nations to the loss of languages and cultural prac-

A PM2.5 are solid particles and liquid droplets suspended in air, known as fine particulate matter, with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller and measured in micrograms per cubic meter.

Employers must:

- Monitor wildfire smoke when employees are exposed to an air concentration of 2.5 particulate matter above a 101 AQI.
- Provide information and training to employees on addressing wildfire smoke, including symptoms of exposure and the chronic effects of exposure.
- Train workers on the importance of using a filtering facepiece respirator and requiring employers to make them readily accessible to workers for no charge.
- Communicate wildfire smoke information to employees, such as changes in air quality and health symptoms that may result from exposure to smoke.

*Former Statesman Journal and Report for America reporter Dora Totoian contributed to this story.*

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tices and relatives," Newland, an Ojibwe and a citizen of the Bay Mills Indian Community, said.

"There's not a single American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian in this country whose life hasn't been affected by these schools. We haven't begun to explain the scope of this policy era until now."

Haaland and Parker referenced a recent study by researcher Ursula Running Bear that found adults who attended boarding schools now suffer from poor physical health. They also said Native people have the highest rates of suicides, children in foster homes and in the criminal health system.

Jim LaBelle Sr., an Inupiaq from Alaska and vice-chair of the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, said Alaska Natives are 18% of the state's total population, yet represent 40% of people in the state's criminal justice system.

## Report sets out next steps

Newland and Haaland said an all-of-government approach will be necessary to rebuild the bonds within Native communities that the boarding school system set out to break. Haaland added that President Joe Biden supports the initiative.

"We have begun working through the White House Council of Native American Affairs on the path ahead to preserve tribal languages, invest in survivor-focused services, and honor our trust obligations to Indigenous communities," Haaland said.

The report identifies the next steps that will be taken in a second volume, aided by a new \$7 million investment from Congress through fiscal year 2022.

In addition to locating the remaining burial sites, the agency will determine an approximate amount of federal funding directed to support boarding schools, produce a list of students brought to the schools over the years, including tribal affiliations, from existing records and a deeper investigation into the impacts of the schools on Indigenous communities today.

On Thursday, the Indigenous Peoples Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee will hold the first hearing on a bill to establish a truth and healing commission on Indian boarding

**See LEGACY, Page 3A**