

DAILY PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Friday, Dec. 14, the 348th day of 2018. There are 17 days left in the year.



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Dec. 14, 2012, a gunman with a semi-automatic rifle killed 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, then committed suicide as police arrived.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$5.5 million
1-7-11-14-27-39

Mega Millions: \$262 million
4-38-39-54-59-12 x2

Powerball: \$246 million
4-9-21-29-64-PB 26-x2

Win for Life: Dec. 12
5-50-66-77

Pick 4:

- Dec. 13
- 1 p.m.: 7-5-8-1
- 4 p.m.: 5-5-1-0
- 7 p.m.: 3-1-8-4
- 10 p.m.: 2-5-3-2
- Dec. 12
- 1 p.m.: 7-0-6-1
- 4 p.m.: 6-7-4-8
- 7 p.m.: 1-3-7-1
- 10 p.m.: 6-2-7-3

ROAD REPORT

- Numbers to call:
- Inside Oregon: 800-977-6368.
 - Outside Oregon: 503-588-2941.

NEWSPAPER LATE?

Every effort is made to deliver your Observer in a timely manner. Occasionally conditions exist that make delivery more difficult.

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If your delivery is by motor carrier, delivery should be by 6 p.m. For calls after 6, please call 541-975-1690, leave your name, address and phone number. Your paper will be delivered the next business day.

MOOSE

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population is low — fewer than 70 in Oregon.

Akenson said in the release there are more than twice that many gray wolves in the area.

“Moose deserve at least equal management protection,” he said.

Pat Matthews, district wildlife biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, said 70 moose in the area is an accurate number.

“It’s very difficult for us to come up with a population estimate that we’re confident with,” Matthews told The Observer. “Seventy is reasonable based on what we’ve observed. They’re very solitary creatures. They generally live in pretty thick habitat so it’s hard to even observe them from the air.”

Matthews said ODFW is seeing cows with calves every year.

“We know they’re doing okay,” he said. “They’re expanding (their territory) a little.”

He said the subspecies in Oregon likes mountainous areas — not the swampy habitat that is generally associated with moose. Oregon’s population are Shera moose, the smallest subspecies in North America. Even so, males still tip the scales at 1,000 pounds.

Matthews said moose’s introverted-extroverted nature, meaning they are solitary and only occasionally socialize, semi-protects them from their natural predators.

“If the wolves were to take too many moose, we’d be able to detect it right off the bat,” he said. “Of the collared animals we have, which isn’t many, we haven’t lost any to wolves. That’s a good sign.”

Wolves were not to blame for the recent killing, though. The moose was shot, and

it very likely was done on purpose.

“(Moose are) not the same color (as elk),” Matthews said. “Their head shape is different. It’s a stretch to say it was an accident.”

He said he can remember one previous time in Oregon a moose was taken illegally.

He noted there have been reports of a parasite threatening the moose population. However, he said, that was slightly misconstrued.

“It’s unclear what effect the parasite had on the moose as far as regulating populations,” Matthews said. “We know it can cause mortality but they can also carry it and it won’t affect them at all.”

He said the moose population in Oregon is growing, albeit slowly.

According to a 2005 Observer article, Wallowa County moose sightings date back to the 1960s. They were infrequent until around 2000, when sightings increased. In 2005, there were an estimated 15-20 moose living in Northeast Oregon.

Moose, the largest existing member of the deer family, began coming into Oregon from Washington or from Idaho across the Palouse Prairie, according to the ODFW website.

That population is now slightly smaller. According to the release, the poached moose was shot and partially cut up off of the USFS 46 Road between Teepee Pond and mile marker 35 in the Chesnimus Unit. The suspect(s) accessed the moose carcass from a campsite on the north side of the USFS 46 Road. Additionally, a side-by-side UTV was used to haul the moose meat and parts from the kill site back to the campsite.

Anyone with information is asked to call the OSP Turn in Poachers (TIP) line at 800-452-7888 or OSP Senior Trooper Mark Knapp at 541-426-3049.

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