



University of Washington Photo via OPB

The Axial Seamount is the most active volcano in the Pacific Northwest.

## AXIAL

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we can," he said.

An expansive seafloor monitoring network installed in 2014 has allowed Chadwick to monitor Axial Seamount in real time. Over the past few years, he's watched the volcano slowly grow.

"We're using that repeated pattern of inflation and deflation to try to anticipate when the next eruption might be," he said.

Chadwick said making such a straightforward and public forecast is its own

kind of experiment.

"We're just kind of doing this forecasting ... to see if it works. In my mind it's more honest and more of a test to see if it's really useful to do it before something happens, because it's easy to kind of fool yourself in hindsight or spin it a certain way," he said.

Other scientists in the Pacific Northwest also are monitoring the seamount for signals of eruption.

University of Washington's William Wilcock studies

earthquakes at Axial Seamount. The seismic activity gives indications of what's

happening inside the volcano.

"Immediately after an eruption, there are very few earthquakes, and then the number of earthquakes steadily increases as the volcano inflates," he said. "So after the eruption in 2015, the number of earthquakes that we recorded went down to just a handful and it's now up to maybe 50 a day."

Wilcock said he believes Bill Chadwick's forecast is in the right ballpark.

"My personal view is it's probably more likely in 2022 to 2024. But I think there's some uncertainty," he said.

Unlike the eruption of a land-based volcano, like Mount St. Helens, the eruption of the Axial Seamount won't cause any problems for humans.

"For the size of eruptions we've seen in the last 20 years ... if you were on top of it on a boat, you would never know it," OSU's Chadwick said. But the forecast eruption does provide a unique opportunity scientifically.

"There's a lot of interest in trying to set up experiments, to basically observe more of (the volcanic processes) as it's happening," Wilcock said.

## ELGIN

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Church, La Grande.

At the Harvester's Church of the Nazarene, 1120 Birch St., the vandals did most of their damage by pouring syrup and punch on the carpet and

furniture, said Pastor Lauri Ferring. In addition, paper, books and other items were dumped onto the floor.

The suspects may have crossed the legal line just getting into the building. "They broke in through a locked door," Ferring said.

This was the second time in the past

three months the church was the target of vandals, Ferring said, and the building sustained similar type of damage each time.

The pastor credited volunteers with doing an outstanding job of cleaning up the mess quickly, allowing a church service to be conducted Sunday.

## BAN

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said he wonders how far this will go down the line of banning all kinds of plastic.

"I think it's not the government's business to tell retail stores what to use when checking people out," Barreto said. "I don't agree with the government getting mixed up in the market on saying how much it will cost to provide something."

Major retail chains, such as Walmart and Safeway, have already been dealing with such a ban in other states and cities. California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, New York and Vermont have established statewide bans.

"Albertsons and Safeway stores in Oregon are ready for the plastic bag ban implementation," according to Nicky Nielsen, marketing promotional coordinator for Safeway. "Stores are supplied with paper and reusable

plastic bags and we encourage customers to bring their own reusable bags."

The Safeway and Albertsons chains are owned by the same company.

"Walmart is aware of the legislation and will be ready to comply with any new laws," Tiffany Wilson, director of communications for Walmart, said in an email.

In February, the company announced new initiatives to reduce plastic waste not only from the bags people use to carry their purchases home but also in the packaging for products. One of Walmart's goals is to "achieve 100 percent recyclable, reusable or industrially compostable packaging for its private brand packaging by 2025." Stores that use plastic bags offer bins for people to drop off their used bags to be recycled into new ones, and the company is developing alternatives to plastic products such as single-use forks.

"This announcement

sends a positive signal to the marketplace, especially in the United States," Steve Alexander, CEO of the Association for Plastics Recyclers, said in a statement. "We applaud Walmart for establishing such a strong recyclable packaging goal and encourage others to pursue similar ambitions."

Oregon's plastic bag ban also is joined by a bill requiring restaurants to give only plastic straws to customers who specifically ask for them and will go into effect on Jan. 1. A third bill, which would have banned foam takeout containers, did not pass.

Stores that violate the new law may receive a fine of up to \$250 per violation.

According to the law, people who make purchases using WIC vouchers and electronic benefits transfer cards will receive free recycled paper bags or reusable plastic bags at checkout. Stores may offer reusable

fabric bags for free as a promotion for up to 12 days in a year.

Under this law, cities, counties or other local governments can increase fees for bags as long as they follow the other provisions of the law.

La Grande City Manager Robert Strope said the city has no provision for increasing fees and the question has not come up with the council at this point.

Union County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Suzannah Moore-Hemann said that while the process may have hiccups in the beginning, she believes people will enjoy having a couple of nice reusable bags instead of a stack of single-use plastic to find a place for. "I have heard some people say they hope it is a good transition," Moore-Hemann said.

*EO Media Group reporter Jade McDowell contributed to this story.*

## STATE

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our seasoned directors as well to learn new ideas and thoughts with fresh people to bounce ideas off of," Warner said. "It's been really successful and mutually beneficial."

As part of the new directors forum, DAS Chief Operating Officer Katy Coba will assign "learning partners," or matching veterans with newcomers so they have someone to turn to for answers or morale support. Warner said learning partners were only expected to meet for six months. Almost all of the relationships formed through the program have lasted well beyond that.

One of those relationships, Warner said, is the professional friendship between State Parks Director Lisa Sumpston and Department of Energy Director Janina Benner. The two were paired when Benner came onboard toward the end of 2017. They're still close.

### Benefits and synergy

Another piece of Warner's job is to oversee the state's mentorship program. She enjoys matching mentors and proteges across departments so state employees can understand more about their government than just the office where they work.

For example, Warner's team recently paired Health Authority Deputy Director Kris Kautz to mentor Department of Transportation Deputy Surveyor Chris Glantz. While the Health Authority and ODOT might not seem like they have a lot in common, the cross-pollination has a lot of benefits and promotes a synergy that's been previously unseen across Oregon's agencies, Warner said.

Warner said her program's best benefit gives agency directors and state employees people to turn to when a job isn't quite so pleasant. As people become more distrustful of government at all levels, Warner sees opportunities to show that "hardworking people"

are doing difficult jobs on behalf of the public. "It makes me sad when you read about all the negativity because there's some really good, hardworking people in our state government who have the best interest of Oregonians in mind," Warner said. "That's not always shown or apparent to people."

For Peters, seeing Warner and DAS staff bring her idea to life has been fulfilling. It's also provided support to new people tapped for leadership positions. "Bringing the model of executive leadership training from the national corrections level to directors of Oregon's state agencies has been a very fulfilling experience," she said. "My peers at other agencies are hungry to lead their agencies into the future and provide needed services to all Oregonians. This guidance prepares them for all of the excitement and challenges of leading people, achieving objectives and enriching the lives of Oregonians."

# State Senate seat to be filled Jan. 6

By Jayson Jacoby  
EO Media Group

BAKER CITY — Republican Party officials from Baker County and 10 other counties are slated to meet Jan. 4 in John Day to nominate candidates to replace Cliff Bentz, state senator for District 30 who is resigning Jan. 2 to run for Congress.

Elected commissioners from each of the 11 counties in District 30 are scheduled to convene Jan. 6 in Ontario to pick Bentz's successor from among the GOP nominees.

Bentz, a Republican from Ontario, hopes to replace Rep. Greg Walden, who announced in late October he would not seek another term representing Oregon's 2nd Congressional District. Walden's two-year term expires at the end of 2020.

The process for replacing a state lawmaker involves two steps.

First, precinct committee members from the party of the departing legislator — Republicans, in Bentz's case — meet to nominate candidates.

Suzan Ellis Jones, chair of the Baker County Republican Party, said the GOP plans to pick three candidates when it convenes on Jan. 4 at the Grant County

Airport in John Day.

As of Dec. 23, Jones said two people have applied — Lynn Findley of Vale, a state representative whose district includes Baker County, and Rod Runyon of Wasco County.

State law requires precinct committee members to nominate three, four or five candidates to fill a vacancy, Jones said.

If fewer than three people apply, then Oregon Gov. Kate Brown would appoint Bentz's replacement.

But Jones said she expects there will be at least three candidates by the Monday deadline the Oregon Republican Party set for people to submit a letter of interest. To be eligible, candidates must live within District 30 and have been a member of the Republican Party for at least 180 days prior to Jan. 2, 2020.

Although party committee members nominate candidates, the final choice is made by commissioners from the counties in District 30. That district, the largest geographically in the Oregon Senate, includes all of Baker, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Malheur and Wheeler counties, as well as parts of Deschutes, Lake, Wasco, Clackamas and Marion counties.

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