

# Oregon has law mandating fish passage past manmade obstructions

FISH from Page 1

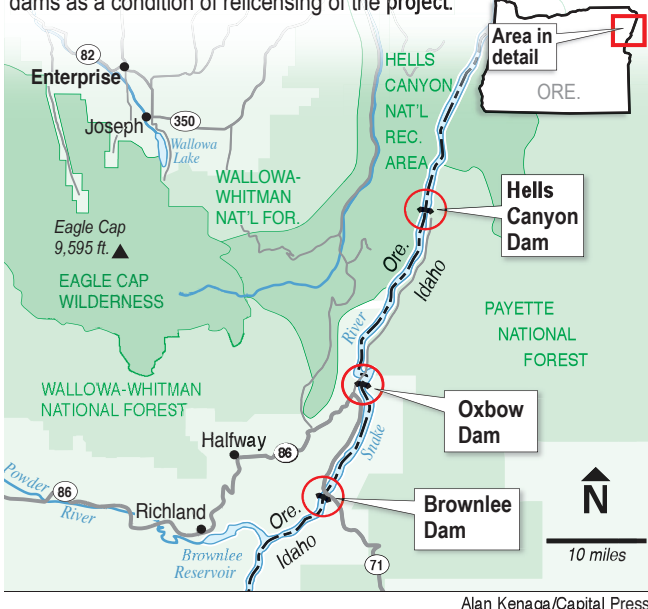
public comment periods that end Feb. 13. Oregon's draft would require Idaho Power to implement technology to enable salmon and steelhead to pass above and below the complex.

Marilyn Fonseca, hydro-power program coordinator with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, explained her state has proposed a phased-in reintroduction plan spanning about two decades. Initially fish would be introduced in Oregon's Snake River tributaries upstream of the complex, starting with Pine Creek. Ultimately, Idaho Power officials said the company would capture fish in special collection areas, trucking adult steelhead and salmon upstream of the complex and juvenile fish downstream.

Fonseca said Oregon has a state law mandating fish

## Fish passage dispute

Idaho irrigators have filed to intervene in a case involving Oregon's demands that Idaho Power Co. take steps to allow endangered steelhead and salmon passage above the Hells Canyon Complex of dams as a condition of relicensing of the project.



passage past any manmade water obstruction, but the state's legal argument hinges

its own water quality standards, drafted in accordance with the federal Clean Water

Act, requiring that Oregon waterways maintain robust fish populations.

In a letter to Oregon leaders, Idaho Gov. Butch Otter opposed reintroduction of endangered species in his state without the Legislature's consent, citing problems with federally reintroduced wolves.

"While I appreciate Oregon's willingness to limit these reintroductions to Oregon tributaries, the agreement would result in reintroduced fish entering Idaho waters," Otter wrote.

Idaho Power spokesman Brad Bowlin said the company has filed a petition asking FERC to step in and resolve the dispute between the states. Bowlin said the company believes the federal government has authority under the Federal Power Act and the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

"Idaho Power's position is not to support or oppose fish passage," Bowlin said. "Our position is that resolving this issue of passage is a federal question, especially given that we have two states whose positions are diametrically opposed."

Bowlin said Idaho Power owns and finances four hatcheries and releases millions of fish below the dams.

Both the IWUA and Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association have filed to intervene in the case before FERC. Lynn Tominaga, executive director for the pumpers, said his members are primarily concerned about increased power rates to run their wells if Idaho Power has to bear such a large new expense. Semanko explained his members are concerned the agreement could create water shortages, as more

water could be demanded downstream for salmon, and cost them hundreds of millions of dollars in new regulatory requirements.

FERC staff members have agreed reintroduction "could be warranted but is premature at this time." They note degradation due to agricultural and municipal uses have made water quality upstream of the complex inadequate for steelhead and salmon. FERC has also referenced the lack of a written plan to guide reintroduction and fears mortality during migration could outweigh the benefits.

Fonseca said her department and its Idaho counterpart are working with partners, including Idaho Power, to address water-quality concerns including dissolved oxygen levels, high water temperature and excessive phosphorus loads.

# Zippy Duvall: It's been a long week but a good week

AFB from Page 1

Which is good, because much of the other news coming out of the convention workshops and presentations wasn't of the slap-happy nature.

## 'Golden Age' over

The Farm Bureau's director of market intelligence, John Newton, flatly told delegates, "The Golden Age of ag income is over."

Net farm income is projected to decline for the third consecutive year, and exporters' biggest markets — China, Canada, Mexico and Japan — aren't expanding. Newton said producers need to look at markets that are projected to grow, such as Africa. The world population is projected to hit 9 billion by 2050, and that provides opportunities for American's farmers, Newton said.

"We are the breadbasket of the world, everybody knows that," he said.

Newton was part of a three-person AFBF economic team presentation.

Economist Veronica Nigh said producers should borrow the Uber ride-share company's slogan and "Get your side hustle on" to develop other revenue streams.

She suggested farmers open their property to hunting and outfitting operations, develop a private fishing lake, offer motor home and boat storage rentals, operate a CSA or look for export options.

Producers can find export help from various trade associations, Nigh said. "You don't have to come up with that brochure in Mandarin all by yourself," she said.

Economist Katelyn Mc-



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press

American Farm Bureau Federation economist Katelyn McCullock speaks to members during the organization's annual convention in Phoenix. She said farmers can cope with stagnant prices by becoming more efficient, principally through genetics and technology.

Cullock said farmers can cope with stagnant prices by becoming more efficient, principally through genetics and technology. On the latter, automatic feeders and robots can reduce labor. "I've never met a farmer that said they want to manage more people," she said.

## Political divide

The nation's political divide came under the microscope during a panel discussion Jan. 9, when a pair of political strategists said

Donald Trump's surprising win presents a baffling puzzle about how he will govern.

"I think people all over the country are saying what we thought was politically impossible is now possible," said Stan Barnes, president of the Copper State consulting group in Arizona. "This unconventional thing that's happened, whatever it is, has changed American politics."

"Everything we used to use to gauge normalcy has just evaporated," Barnes said.

Barnes said Hollywood

celebrities and the pop culture elite will attack Trump, portray him as a buffoon and a racist and "never let him up," but their impact on Congress may be limited.

He said "nation-states like California" are prepared to "torpedo" anything Trump does and said it's significant that California hired Obama's former attorney general, Eric Holder, to frustrate Trump in the court system.

"What will our Democrat friends do when it's time to vote with a president they

really don't like?" Barnes asked. "It puts them in a knot that has some entertainment value."

## New political system

William "Billy" Moore, a partner in Vianovo, a Washington, D.C., strategic advisory firm, said Trump has blown up the political system. "We've gone from a one-hump camel to one with two humps that don't touch, politically," he said.

Moore said Trump's cabinet is made up of eight power centers with no one in charge but him. He predicted rival cabinet members will snipe at each other and significant turnover and turmoil is likely.

The two men spoke before allegations surfaced that Russian agents or operatives may have compromising information about Trump and sought to influence or even collaborated with his campaign. Trump angrily called the allegations "fake news" and a "political witch hunt."

Barnes said Trump could quickly run into trouble if he provokes a trade war or seeks to deport illegal immigrants and their children who were born in the U.S. He said "smarter people in the White House" will prevail and head off major political unrest.

Moore said Trump isn't really a Republican — he's more of an Independent — and will shift alliances as needed.

"The stage is set for a fairly partisan first six weeks, then shift to more bipartisan for the next couple months, then partisan again as they pass a 2018 budget," he said.

Despite the uncertainties facing ag, convention delegates came through the week unified, said Duvall, the AFBF president.

"It's been a long week but a good week," he said.

'There is some discretion where you could interpret the testing protocols'

WHEAT from Page 1

of flour and water, some farmers received less for their crop.

Weather contributes to alpha amylase, an enzyme that breaks down starch and thins the mixture. But suspicion also has fallen on more-controllable factors, such as whether some wheat varieties are more prone to the enzyme and whether testing protocols are consistent.

Tests from the same samples have yielded different results, said Rep. Joe Schmick, a Republican from Whitman County, the nation's top-wheat producing county.

"The biggest thing I've seen, looking at it, is the inconsistency. If that can be addressed, I think that would go a long way in helping the situation," he told Sandison.

Sandison said WSDA asked the USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service to audit every state grain-testing laboratory and machine.

"Basically, we passed with flying colors. There were not problems with our testing," Sandison said.

In an interview with the Capital Press Tuesday, Washington Grain Commission CEO Glen Squires said he was confident WSDA has made sure fluctuating numbers aren't caused by inconsistent testing methods.

He also praised WSDA's efforts to keep low starch numbers from becoming a reoccurring problem.

"I think they're doing a lot. I appreciate the director's active involvement," Squires said. "He recognized the significance of the issue."

Sandison described WSDA's response as a four-pronged approach.

- Develop consistent federal and regional testing procedures. The Hagberg-Perten test includes steps — such as grinding wheat, adding water and shaking a test tube — that can affect results. "There is some discretion where you could interpret the testing protocols," Sandison said. "We want to get the Federal Grain Inspection Service to tighten those up, so there isn't variability with respect to how someone interprets the testing protocol."

- Work with research institutions, particularly Washington State University, to identify whether some wheat varieties are prone to alpha-amylase. "If that's the case, we need to stop using certain breeds that have that susceptibility," Sandison said.

- Improve on the Hagberg-Perten test. "We're looking long term at a replacement test," Sandison said. "I think the USDA agrees with us that needs to be done. It's going to take awhile. The basic research has to be done to develop the test."

- Develop portable-testers to use at grain elevators. "So we don't have the problem where a good load goes in and then a load with a low falling number gets dumped on top of it," Sandison said. "If we get a hand-held analyzer, we can do that segregation."

WASHINGTON OREGON  
**POTATO**  
CONFERENCE 2017

To view the conference schedule and to register visit:

[www.potatoconference.com](http://www.potatoconference.com)

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

Three Rivers Convention Center & Toyota Center  
Kennewick, WA