

Idaho rancher's family files wrongful death lawsuit

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Several family members of an Idaho rancher shot to death by law enforcement officers in 2015 have filed a wrongful death lawsuit over the killing.

Rancher Jack Yantis had been called to euthanize a bull that had been hit by a car when he was shot 12 times by two deputies from the Adams County Sheriff's Office.

Last year, the Idaho Attorney General's Office decided against pursuing criminal charges against the two officers, Cody Roland and Brian Wood, citing conflicting witness accounts about the incident.

After his bull was injured by a car on the evening of Nov. 1, 2015, Yantis arrived at the scene with a rifle after being notified of the collision by police dispatchers.

Yantis' wife, Donna, and nephew, Rowdy Paradis, claim the rancher was preparing to shoot the bull in the head when one of the deputies grabbed him and then both deputies opened fire.

According to their account, Yantis was pointing his rifle in a direction that didn't endanger anyone.

The two deputies, on the other hand, said the trajec-

tory of his rifle threatened the safety of people near the scene, which prompted them to issue commands such as, "Whoa, whoa, stop, hang on," and, "We're not doing this."

According to their version, Yantis swung and fired his gun, causing them to discharge their weapons.

While there were other witnesses at the scene, Idaho's Attorney General found their accounts "provide little, if any, clarity regarding the interaction."

Donna Yantis and her two daughters Sarah and Lauretta have joined with Paradis to file a federal complaint against Adams County, its sheriff's office, Sheriff Ryan Zollman, the two deputies and unnamed people involved in the incident.

Their lawsuit alleges livestock are routinely euthanized with firearms by their owners after being injured by vehicles in Idaho, so the situation encountered by the deputies was "highly foreseeable" and it would be unreasonable to fear for their safety.

According to the allegations, both deputies were hired by Adams County despite being unfit to serve in law enforcement.

Weak La Nina portends winter of weather uncertainty in California

By TIM HEARDEN
Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — Much of California could be in for a drier winter if the building consensus calling for a weak La Nina pattern turns out to be accurate, a National Weather Service meteorologist says.

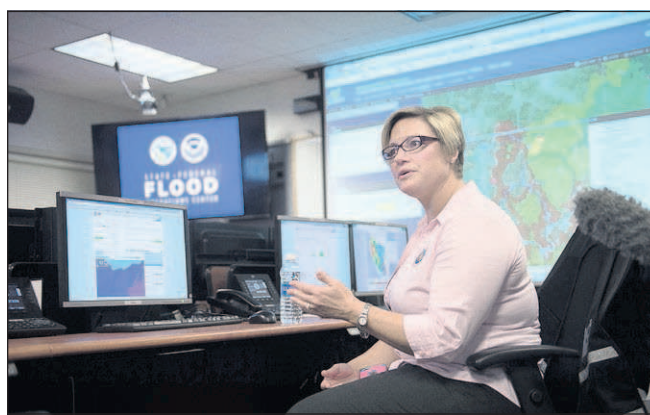
The federal Climate Prediction Center issued its winter outlook on Oct. 19, noting that oceanic and atmospheric conditions appear to favor wetter-than-average conditions across the northern U.S. and drier weather across the South.

For California, similar conditions early last fall led to one of the wettest seasons on record. But since 1950, only 10 percent of weak La Nina winters have been wet, said Cindy Matthews, an NWS forecaster in Sacramento.

Sixty percent of such winters turned out dry, including 2011-12, which was the first of five years of drought.

"The main point here is, just like last year, past events do not guarantee a future outcome," Matthews said in an email.

In a La Nina, a mixture of atmospheric and ocean surface temperatures tends to steer storms toward the Pacific Northwest.



Calif. Dept. of Water Resources

Michelle Mead, a National Weather Service warning coordinator, examines computer models at the State-Federal Flood Operations Center in Sacramento. The weather service sees an equal chance of drier- or wetter-than-normal conditions in northern and central California as weak La Nina conditions take hold in the Pacific Ocean.

In such cases, the prospects for a wet winter tend to be better in far Northern California, where Shasta Lake and Lake Oroville anchor the federal Central Valley Project and State Water Project, respectively, than in the rest of the state. And they improve if the ocean surface temperatures that drive the direction

of storms revert to neutral, as they did last year.

As it is, the CPC's long-range precipitation outlook through April shows a better-than-average chance of a wet winter from Salem, Ore., and Boise, Idaho, northward, and a likely drier-than-normal winter from Bakersfield, Calif., and Las Vegas south.

Elsewhere, Matthews said people can "get the dart board out" as winter outlooks show equal chances of above-, near- or below-normal precipitation throughout much of the West.

Much of California received its first significant rainfall Oct. 19-20, but most areas are off to a slower than normal start to the water year and much slower than in 2016, when Northern California had one of its wettest Octobers ever.

But there's more water in reservoirs now than a year ago, as Shasta Lake is at 72 percent of capacity compared to 59 percent at this point in 2016, according to the state Department of Water Resources.

That abundance comes after most areas finished the 2016-17 water year on Sept. 30 well above their normal precipitation. For instance, Redding sopped up 47.7 inches of rain for the season, easily eclipsing its annual average of 34.6 inches, according to the National Weather Service.

Federal ATF takes over the investigation of fruit company fire

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has taken over investigation of the Oct. 18 fire that destroyed a pear packing and shipping building at Underwood Fruit and Warehouse Co. in Bingen, Wash.

ATF spokesman Jason Chudy of the bureau's Seattle field office said a national response team of a couple dozen fire investigators is involved. Chudy said the work is not a criminal investigation at this point, but the Bingen Fire Department, a volunteer department, requested help due to the size and complexity of the fire.

"It was much larger than Bingen was able to do on their own," Chudy said. "It was a very large fire, there was a lot of equipment (involved) and it consumed the entire facility."

Chudy did not know the exact square footage of the destroyed building. A cause and damage estimate have not yet been released.



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Members of the ATF's National Response Team work their way through rubble at the Underwood Fruit and Warehouse Co. in Bingen, Wash., on Oct. 22. A fire four days earlier destroyed a pear packing, storage and shipping building at the company. ATF was called in due to the size and complexity of the fire. A cause and damage estimate are not yet available.

The fire was reported about 5:45 a.m. on Oct. 18. A large pear packing room, packed fruit storage space and shipping facilities were destroyed, said Don Gibson, president of Mount Adams Orchard Corp. in Yakima, Wash., and manager of Underwood Fruit and Warehouse LLC. The packing house is part of Mount Adams Orchard.

The packing company was at peak inventory with picked fruit, but Gibson said last week the company is insured and growers' losses will be covered.

Underwood primarily packs pears, apples and cherries for growers in the Columbia River Gorge of Washington and Oregon. The company is 100 years old this year.

EPA's new NW boss butted heads with agency

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

An Alaska state official who contended with the Environmental Protection Agency as the manager of a city in the Aleutian Islands has been picked to be the agency's new Northwest administrator.

The selection of Alaska commerce director Chris Hladick, announced Oct. 19 by EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, was welcomed by the head of a Washington farm group critical of the previous regional administrator, Dennis McLerran.

"What little we've heard about (Hladick) is that he's a competent administrator," said Gerald Baron, director of Save Family Farming. "We have big hopes given the very troubled relationship between the farm community as a whole and the Dennis McLerran era."

Hladick will oversee Seattle-based Region 10, which takes in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska and about 270 tribes. Michelle Pirzadeh, who was deputy regional administrator under McLerran, has been acting director since January.

Farm groups in Washington were critical of the EPA under the Obama administration, accusing it of overreaching and favoring environmental organizations. Outrage over What's



Chris Hladick

Upstream, an EPA-funded lobbying campaign by a Puget Sound tribe to restrict farming near water in Washington, deepened the rift.

Washington Farm Bureau director of government relations Tom Davis said the organization has not met Hladick, but is optimistic that "his appointment is in line with the fair and balanced approach Secretary Pruitt has brought to EPA."

"All that agriculture is asking for is a fair shake when it comes to regulatory activities," he said.

In 2012, Hladick signed a consent decree with the EPA on behalf of Unalaska, a city of 4,400 people and the setting for the Discovery Channel's reality show, "The Deadliest Catch." The city admitted no wrongdoing, but agreed to pay a \$340,000 fine and pledge to upgrade a sewer plant to settle a federal lawsuit alleging the city had polluted the bay.

At the time, Hladick issued a written statement saying the improved plant will have benefits for years, but added that utility rates would probably double, and that "there is no evidence of actual damage to the environment or diminishment of any threatened species

by our current waste water treatment system."


The Bristol Bay Times reported the city spent more than \$500,000 in legal fees, but avoided a threatened fine by the EPA of more than \$150 million.

"Chris Hladick knows firsthand the overbearing nature of the previous administration's EPA, helping lead a challenge against them while serving as city manager of Unalaska," U.S. Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, said in a written statement. "I'm optimistic Chris can begin rebuilding a level of trust and confidence in the EPA that was steadily eroded over the previous eight years."

Hladick was appointed commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development in early 2015. He had been city manager of Unalaska, the state's 11th largest city, for 14 years.

Previously, he had been city manager of Dillingham, Alaska, for seven years and before that worked in the public works department for Galen, Alaska, according to the Bristol Bay Times.

U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, said in a written statement that the state's all-Republican congressional delegation had been "relentlessly pushing to have an Alaskan" appointed Region 10 administrator.



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- **Back by Popular Demand: Wed. Evening Dine Around Oregon.** Tickets available online.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Meetings: Oregon Farm Bureau Luncheon (by invitation)

Training: CORE No registration required - 2 to 4* credit hours (Repeated Thursday)

- 10:30-11:30AM • Andony Melathopoulos; **Going Soft on Pollinators and Hard on Pests** (1 CORE) This session will have an easy-to-apply set of rules to help you judge how to apply pesticides with minimal impact to pollinators.
- Lunch Break
- 11:30-12:30PM • Janet Fultus; **Worker Protection; Standards Update** (1 CORE)
- 1:30-3:30PM • Andy Steinkamp; **Practical Sprayer Calibration** (2 CORE) Covers the importance of sprayer calibration, sprayer calibration methods and dry bait calibration methods. It will cover step by step examples using basic math. There will be a best practices discussion and time for questions. Does not cover specific controller brands and operations.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Meetings: Pennington Seed Growers Breakfast (by invitation)

Training:

- 10:30-12:15PM • CPR/AED/ Standard First Aid Training (advanced registration required): CPR: Participants will review and practice emergency procedures that prepare responders to act in breathing and cardiac related emergency situations with adults and children (ages ~ 12+); AED - Automated External Defibrillator: Training will offer device tech info, preparation, and operation. Participants will be trained on how to use the AED for adult and pediatric victims.
- 1:30-2:45PM • Standard First Aid: Participants will review skills to recognize and respond to sudden illness and emergencies. Training will culminate with skills practice and testing. Certification awarded upon completion. \$30 for CPR/AED/First Aid Training; \$15 for First Aid Training only
- 1:00 - 3:00PM **Forklift Certification Training:** Includes classroom, workbook, written knowledge check verification with scheduled practical driving evaluation immediately following. Proof of successful completion of course, knowledge check and practical driving evaluation provided within 7 days. Program and equipment provided/donated by Pape Material Handling and OVERTON Safety Training. Class size limited to 50 people. Advanced registration required online at www.wvaexpo.com. This class is free with paid admission. Class size limited to 50 people.

Dine Around Oregon - Back by popular demand!

- 5:00pm - 8:00pm: \$12 Admission in advance online at www.wvaexpo.com (or at the door while tickets last.) Ticketed progressive, hearty dinner event featuring food and products from Oregon. 4-6 serving stations throughout the Expo. Enjoy Oregon beef, lamb and cheese, produce, wine and brew!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Training: CORE training - Repeated from Tuesday, November 15th, 2016

- 10:30-12:30PM • Andy Steinkamp; **Practical Sprayer Calibration** (2 CORE) Covers the importance of sprayer calibration, sprayer calibration methods and dry bait calibration methods. It will cover step by step examples using basic math. There will be a best practices discussion and time for questions. Does not cover specific controller brands and operations.

Lunch Break

- 11:30-12:30PM • Janet Fultus; **Worker Protection; Standards Update** (1 CORE)
- 2:30-3:30PM • Andony Melathopoulos; **Going Soft on Pollinators and Hard on Pests** (1 CORE) This session will have an easy-to-apply set of rules to help you judge how to apply pesticides with minimal impact to pollinators.

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