

NW Ag Show returns to state fairgrounds

By MITCH LIES
For the Capital Press

SALEM — The Northwest Ag Show returns to the Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center on Jan. 16-18.

It is the first time in more than 45 years that the show is being held in Salem — and a first for Capital Press and its parent company, the EO Media Group. The newspaper is producing this year’s show.

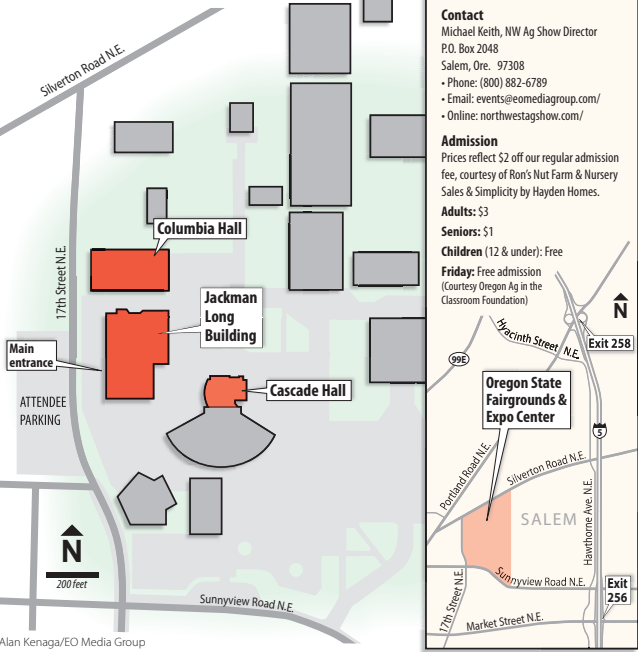
The 2019 edition of the Northwest Ag Show will feature Oregon’s major farm-equipment retailers and a whole slate of new activities, ranging from seminars and presentations to a career expo.

In addition, the show will serve as the signature event and launch of the first-ever Salem Ag Week, a week-long celebration of agriculture in the heart of the Willamette Valley.

“This has been a learning experience for us,” Joe Beach, editor and publisher of the Capital Press, said. “The people at the (Oregon State) Fair have been an immense help in setting up this first show.”

In addition to the Ag Show, Salem Ag Week

2019 Northwest Ag Show moves to Salem



activities include:

- Oregon Aglink’s annual meeting, which will be Jan. 17 in the fairgrounds’ Cascade Hall.
- Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom’s first ever Agricultural Career Expo, which will be Jan. 18, also in Cascade Hall.
- The Salem Area Cham-

ber of Commerce’s SAIF Agri-Business Banquet, which will be Jan. 18 at the Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. S.E.

- The Oregon Dairy Princess-Ambassador program’s coronation on Jan. 19. It will also be at the Salem Convention Center.

More than 110 vendors,



Jackman-Long Hall at the Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center is one of several building that will house Northwest Ag Show exhibitors, seminars and presentations.

ranging from large-scale farm-equipment dealers to insurance and financial companies, vineyard supply companies and others will showcase their goods and services in two halls, the Jackman-Long Building and adjacent Columbia Hall, and on the grounds at the Fair and Exposition Center.

Seminars on topics such as farm financing, estate planning, worker safety, employment law, water rights and drone technology will take place in Cascade Hall on Jan. 16-17. Participating organizations said they were excited to be part of the launch of Salem Ag Week and to partner with the

Northwest Ag Show.

“We are looking forward to where our members are able to come to the annual meeting and also enjoy everything the Northwest Ag Show has to offer,” said Mal-lory Phelan, executive director of Oregon Aglink, which moved its annual meeting from Woodburn to Salem to be part of the proceedings.

Capital Press moved the show from Portland, where it was held from the early 1970s through 2016, primarily because of traffic issues, a decision that has elicited widespread support from vendors and others associated with the show.

“We have received really

At a glance

What: The Northwest Ag Show

Where: Oregon State Fairgrounds and Expo Center, 2330 17th St. NE, Salem, Ore.

When: Wednesday, Jan. 16, through Friday, Jan. 18

Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday

Admission: \$3, \$1 for seniors. Children under 12 are free. On Friday, the admission is free for all attendees.

Website: www.northwestagshow.com

good response,” said Michael Keith, marketing manager for the EO Media Group and the Northwest Ag Show director. “I think people are excited that we are having it in Salem, just because it is easier to get into and out of the venue.”

Also, Keith said, with Marion County being the No. 1 agricultural county in Oregon, “It just makes sense to have the show here in Salem.”

Wolf attacks continue to frustrate SW Oregon rancher

Rogue pack responsible for killing at least 12 animals

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

The start of the new year was like déjà vu for cattle rancher Ted Birdseye in southwest Oregon.

Birdseye, who runs the Mill-Mar Ranch in rural Jackson County, awoke on Jan. 1 to find an injured, 5-month-old calf about 200 yards from his house, with 2 feet of intestine sticking out of its backside. Wildlife officials arrived later in the day to investigate, and later confirmed the calf was attacked by wolves from the Rogue pack. It was almost a year ago to the day that Birdseye lost his first animal to the Rogue pack, a 250-pound calf partially eaten in a fenced pasture on the property. The



Courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

OR-7 trots past a trail camera carrying what a wildlife biologist said is an elk leg in the Southern Oregon Cascades, April 14, 2017. Oregon’s famous wandering wolf formed the Rogue pack in 2014 and is responsible for a recent spate of livestock attacks in Jackson and Klamath counties.

wolves returned again the following week, killing and eating two more calves down to the rib cage and spinal column.

All told, wolves killed at least five calves and one guard dog, a Tibetan Mastiff, at the ranch in 2018. The pack was also blamed for killing four calves in neighbor-

ing Klamath County in October, and at least one heifer at another ranch northeast of Medford, Ore., in November.

“It’s just been the same old story,” Birdseye said during a recent interview. “It’s not a good situation.”

The Rogue pack was started by OR-7, the famous “wandering wolf” that trav-

eled from northeast Oregon to California before finding a mate in the southern Oregon Cascades. As of 2017, the pack was estimated to have seven members, including two new pups that survived to the end of the year.

For Birdseye, living alongside the wolves has forced him to get creative protecting his small herd of cattle, while causing plenty of sleepless nights.

When the wolves howl at night, Birdseye said it puts him on edge. Despite lining the perimeter of the ranch with fladry — lines of rope mounted along the top of a fence with nylon flags that flap in the wind to scare off predators — and hanging automatic flashing lights, the pack continues to prey on his livestock. Biologists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have even camped overnight at the ranch to haze wolves when they approach.

“I don’t really know what

the answer is,” Birdseye said. “There may be a place for wolves, like Yellowstone (Park), but they sure don’t belong in my backyard, eating my property.”

Unlike the majority of the state’s wolf population in Eastern Oregon, the species is still federally protected under the Endangered Species Act west of highways 395, 78 and 95. That limits options for management to strictly non-lethal tools.

Birdseye said he has worked with staff and volunteers from wolf conservation and advocacy groups, including Defenders of Wildlife, a nonprofit organization that has helped to clean up animal carcasses and maintain fladry at the ranch.

Suzanne Stone, senior Northwest representative for the group, said it was a carcass that initially lured the Rogue pack out of the woods and down to the ranch last year.

“Wolves are scavengers,

and they can smell dead livestock from miles away, which for them is like ringing the dinner bell,” Stone said.

Looking forward, Stone said they will consider trying other wolf deterrents at the ranch, including inflatable “tube men” powered by electrical fans. The product is normally used to advertise outside stores and businesses in cities.

While it may be “outside the box” for predator control, Stone said at least one rancher in northeast Oregon has had success with tube men keeping wolves away that had previously preyed on his llamas.

“There’s really creative, effective ways to prevent these kinds of livestock attacks, but you have to be proactive and you have to be able to implement the right one for the right situation,” Stone said. “That is what we’re trying to figure out now.”

Wolf: It’s time to move on to the next step

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Rodger Huffman, who ranches near Catherine Creek in Union County, said the “chronic depredation” standard of two confirmed kills in nine months is a win for the livestock community. He was also pleased the agency will continue to make GPS collars a priority to help ranchers know when wolves are around their pastures.

“I appreciate where we’re at with a lot of these pieces,” Huffman said.

Jim Akenson, conservation director for the Oregon Hunters Association, said at some point the state needs to look at specific wolf management zones with hard population caps to protect deer and elk herds, but for now he is comfortable moving forward with the proposed plan revisions.

“It’s time to move on to the next step,” Akenson said.

Environmental groups, however, claim the Wolf Plan is now weaker than it was before they started, with ODFW cowing to industry demands and racing to kill wolves in response to livestock depredation.

Amaroq Weiss, West Coast wolf advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity, said the mediation process “failed miserably, because wildlife managers wouldn’t listen to the most recent science or Oregon residents who say we need to stop killing wolves.”

“We’ve tried for years to come to an agreement, but the state won’t fix its broken, outdated approach to wolf

management,” Weiss said.

ODFW is supposed to update the Wolf Plan every five years to reflect the wolf population and distribution statewide. According to the most recent annual report in 2017, Oregon has at least 124 known wolves, and the minimum population has risen every year since 2009.

The latest Wolf Plan review began in 2015. The Fish and Wildlife Commission was set to adopt a revised plan in April 2018, but after hearing from opponents on both sides of the issue, they postponed voting and ordered ODFW to try and build more compromise.

That is when the agency hired Deb Nudelman, a professional mediator with the firm Kearns & West in Portland, and convened the work

group to begin negotiations.

At one point, it appeared they were on the verge of a breakthrough, discussing a framework for ranch-specific wolf deterrence plans emphasizing non-lethal deterrence. Hum said it was a good idea in theory, but would have required the agency to hire more than 20 new full-time staff across the state, costing more than \$3 million.

“That’s a big request,” Hum said.

In her proposed budget, Gov. Kate Brown does set aside roughly \$1.2 million to help implement the updated Wolf Plan. The money would go toward hiring five new full-time employees, who would help with wolf surveys, collaring and assisting ranchers with non-lethal deterrents.

Environmental groups

sharply criticized other parts of the plan, such as lowering the proposed definition of “chronic depredation” in Eastern Oregon from three conformed attacks over 12 months to two attacks in nine months. Once that condition is met, ODFW can consider killing wolves from these packs, as it did with the Pine Creek pack in Baker County in 2018.

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