



Merkley, Wyden introduce bill to address sea lion predation while respecting Tribal rights

WASHINGTON – Oregon’s Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden today introduced the Predation Reduction of Salmon (PRO Salmon) Act. The PRO Salmon Act would address the urgent issue of sea lion predation of endangered salmon on the Columbia River and at Willamette Falls, while promoting Tribal management of natural resources and ensuring the humane removal of animals.

Sea lions are currently having a devastating impact on endangered salmon recovery, eating up to 25 percent of certain salmon runs. At Willamette Falls, for example, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) research estimates that unless sea lion predation is addressed, the winter steelhead run in the Willamette River will likely face extinction.

Current efforts to manage sea lion predation, including hazing and non-lethal deterrence, have not been effective. When ODFW captured two sea lions at Willamette Falls and transported them 230 miles away to Newport, Ore., the sea lions returned to the falls in less than a week. Despite the best efforts from state wildlife managers, federal legislation is needed to address the growing problem of sea lion predation.

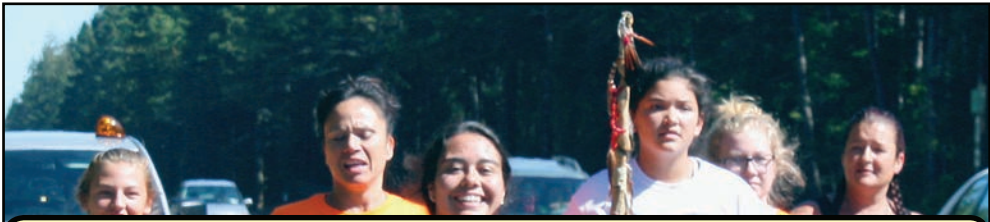
“Salmon are critical to Oregon’s culture and heritage, and it’s clear that sea lions are creating a serious threat to endangered salmon that needs to be

solved,” Merkley said. “It’s possible to address this problem in a targeted way that enables equitable Tribal management and does not impact sea lion populations, and that is what we should strive for.”

“Sea lions are taking a bite out of Oregon’s salmon and steelhead stocks, and it’s clear a response is needed to reverse the rapidly reducing supply of these endangered fish in Oregon’s rivers and waterways,” Wyden said. “This legislation will help solve the challenge of this dwindling supply of salmon and steelhead, protecting good-paying recreation jobs and Oregon’s coastal and fishing communities.”

The PRO Salmon Act would target critical endangered salmon habitat and give wildlife managers more flexibility to remove sea lions from areas where salmon are most at risk, including Bonneville Dam, Willamette Falls and other emerging areas. The PRO Salmon Act would also ensure humane treatment of sea lions, stronger than current federal law.

The PRO Salmon Act would allow the states of Oregon, Idaho and Washington to enter into agreements with Tribes who have legal or historic interests in the protection of salmon to manage sea lion predation.



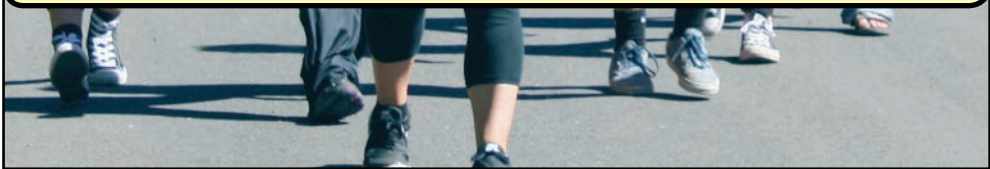
2018 Run to the Rogue has been canceled

The 2018 Run to the Rogue has been canceled due to the Klondike fire that’s burning in the area of Agness, Ore., very near the run’s finish line.

As of Aug. 27, the fire stood at 89,579 acres and was 37 percent contained, but it was growing on the western side. The evacuation level was raised to Level 2 in the Agness zone on Aug. 26 by Curry County Sheriff John Ward due to safety and health concerns for nearby residents.

Current air quality is unstable and dependent on wind patterns. With the ongoing risk of the fire continuing to spread, we have been forced to cancel the event.

We look forward to seeing everyone next year.



File photo

Taylor Oleman, Dee Butler, Salina Sanchez, Lexi Christensen, Kristina Ewing and Kayanne Bearden participate in the 2016 Run to the Rogue. The 2017 event was canceled due to fire danger, air quality and potential evacuation restrictions.

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Most likely removed from their homeland in Rogue River County in the mid 1800s, and marched north to Siletz and the confinements of the Coast Reservation. This annual relay run is the closest today’s Tribal members can come to their ancestors’ experience on the journey from their homeland.

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Nesika Illahee Pow-Wow
Pauline Ricks Memorial
Pow-Wow Grounds
Siletz, Oregon
Aug. 10-12, 2018

Six men in war bonnets lead a Grand Entry, including (l to r) Creed Taylor, Ed Ben Jr., Charles Ben, William DePoe, Allan Paul and John Harrington.

