

Cormorants: The plan will be up for public review

Continued from Page 1A

“These birds are not doing well throughout their range with the exception being East Sand Island, Sallinger said.

Much public interest

The Corps received more than 152,000 comments on its draft management plan last summer. Many were against the Corps’ preferred option to kill the birds and instead favored the other, nonlethal options the Corps listed.

However, the Corps and others believe that killing the birds is the best way to keep the colony’s population at a manageable level and protect endangered or threatened salmon and steelhead at the mouth of the Columbia River. By some estimates, the colony consumes an average of nearly 11 million juvenile salmonids each year.

Paul Lumely, executive director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission,

called it a necessary management decision.

However, he said in a statement Feb. 6, “It may not be enough to reduce the staggering fish losses. From 2010-2013, exploding double-crested cormorant populations nesting on the man-made East Sand Island have consumed at least 74 million juvenile salmonids in the lower Columbia River. These losses equate to 740,000 returning adult salmon and steelhead. After more than a decade of research, we can no longer afford to study cormorant impacts without addressing their threats to salmon recovery.”

Control options

According to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, the Corps’ contractors will shoot individual birds on the island or as they fly over the water as well as oil eggs in nests to prevent them from hatching. The Corps will also use non-lethal methods such as hazing. Under the biological opinion for the Columbia River hydro-power system, the Corps has until 2018 to reduce the size of the colony.

The cormorants are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and are a natural part of the Columbia River Estuary’s



Daily Astorian File

The Army Corps of Engineers proposes to kill half the double-crested cormorants nesting on Sand Island near the mouth of the Columbia River because the birds eat too many young salmon and steelhead.

ecosystem. The Corps will need to get several permits in place before it can legally kill, or “take,” the birds.

The permits will also likely allow for “incidental take” of other species, such as Brandt’s cormorants which also nest on the island and can easily be mistaken for double-crested cormorants especially when they are in

the air, in motion. Researchers on the island told The Chinook Observer even they’ve mistakenly shot the wrong species when they’ve killed birds for research purposes.

East Sand Island — a 62-acre island easily visible from Chinook — is home to other problematic birds as well: one of the largest colonies of Caspi-

an terns on the West Coast. The Corps first brought these birds to East Sand Island in the 1980s after determining they were eating too many juvenile salmon 16 miles upriver at Rice Island, an island the Corps had made from dredge spoils.

Since then, both colonies, tern and cormorant, have swelled. While a management plan has been in place for the terns, restricting where they can nest and consequently limiting their growth, no such plan had been developed for the cormorants until last year.

Review by March 16

The plan, “Final Environmental Impact Statement: Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan to Reduce Predation of Juvenile Salmonids in the Columbia River Estuary” is available for public review anticipated to begin Feb. 13 and end March 16.

It, and other related documents, can be viewed at <http://1.usa.gov/1D6MOxd>

Festival: FFA forestry club season begins Feb. 28 at Knappa High School

Continued from Page 1A

the log he’d leapt off, used his momentum to heave and wrap the cable around it, set his choker and took off back toward the finish line at the center of the arena.

A growing entourage of teammates followed as Hendrickson hurdled his last set of logs and crossed the finish line less than a second faster than his opponent from Clatskanie.

“I’m just waiting to take it to them at state,” said Hendrickson about his team’s goal of avenging their loss at last year’s state finals.

Leading Knappa’s FFA forestry program this year is Mike Rathfon, a 1999 Knappa graduate and its new forestry instructor, who admittedly has never competed in timber sports, but said he’s learning the ropes from his students.

In a log-rolling match afterward, senior Trentne Smith, after throwing an ax in the relay, showed off his footwork on a slippery, barkless tree trunk rotating on a spit over a small pool. With some frantic shuffling and expert balance, Smith stayed upright as it rolled clockwise and counter-clockwise, while his opponent from Clatskanie took a fall into the pool time and time again, completing



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Devon Spencer, center, and Isaiah Ives, left, compete in double-buck sawing event during the Astoria Timber Festival Saturday at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

Knappa’s sweep of events Saturday.

But old feelings die hard. As some of the Knappa team members celebrated around the log-rolling pond, Smith motioned Skirvin over for a look at something interesting. He took the bait, as the rest of Knappa’s team snuck up from behind and gave their former coach a congratulatory splash.

Forestry

Tuesday’s exhibition was a glorified practice before

the FFA forestry club season begins Feb. 28 at Knappa High School, starting several months of events at each of the nine schools in Oregon that field timber sports teams. In May, teams travel to Bend for the FFA state finals.

Skirvin, a Clatskanie native who taught for a long time at Knappa and even sent his kids to school there, said it’s hard to compete against his former students, but it makes both sides better competitors.

Playing with axes and saws at school is frowned upon, and Skirvin lets many of the competitors from Clatskanie and Knappa train at his private timber sports arena.

Only about 10 percent of timber sports athletes can make a living at it professionally, Skirvin said. While teaching art and forestry, logging in the summers, running forestry programs and recovering from a shoulder injury, the 42-year-old plans to compete for the



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Kevin Fresh, right, yells encouragement, while Meisha Boettcher, left, Knappa, and Kevin Tilander, center right, compete in a double-buck sawing competition against a team from Clatskanie at the Astoria Timber Festival festival Saturday at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

sixth time in the upcoming Stihl Timbersports Series this spring.

While at Knappa, he also started a forestry program to teach students the technical aspects of harvesting timber and managing land, a program Rathfon, who attended OSU for a forestry degree, is continuing.

The FFA forestry program, the Astoria Timber Festival and its accompanying job fair all fit squarely into the regional context of Clatsop County, which is 95 percent forested. The Oregon State University Rural Studies Program estimated in 2012 that forest and

wood products comprised approximately 28 percent of Clatsop County’s economic output.

During the 24th annual Community Leaders Forest Tour in September, an annual countywide plug for the impact of forestry, Executive Director Kevin Leahy of Clatsop Economic Development Resources said that Clatsop County has more than 1,700 of Oregon’s 79,000 forestry sector jobs. “At an average wage of about \$65,000, that’s an annual payroll in Clatsop County of \$111 million,” Leahy said.



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

The Bunun Fortune cargo vessel is being loaded off of Pier 2 at the Port of Astoria.

Shutdown: ‘Most of us are doing our best to keep people talking’

Continued from Page 1A

Shippers and terminal operators have blamed work slowdowns along the West Coast on the International Longshore and Warehouse Unions, while the union has criticized the PMA for threatening to shut down West Coast ports, bargaining in the media and distorting the facts of the two sides’ contract negotiations. The ILWU has been operating without a new contract since July 1.

Jim Knight, executive director of the Port of Astoria, has said previously that the Local 50 in Astoria has been loading log ships as quickly as ever.

There have been issues, though, between the Astoria Forest Products and the Local 50 over who transfers logs from storage on Pier 3 to the export yard on Pier 1. Mike Weston, director of business development and operations

at the Port, said the longshore union claims jurisdiction to transport logs from Pier 3 to Pier 1. The log company, he added, said that would be alright, but the longshore union would have to provide its own trucks.

The Bunun Fortune, said Weston, was expected to be loaded and leaving by Tuesday, but now might take until Wednesday or Thursday. It’s the first, he added, of three log ships in close succession, the next scheduled to arrive Saturday.

“It’s just really bad timing, because the entire West Coast (ports) are in similar circumstances that I’m in,” said Knight Thursday. “It’s just our turn.”

“Most of us are doing our best to keep people talking,” said Knight about differences between shippers and longshore labor. “When people stop talking is when problems start.”

Cougar: Few of them live on the North Coast

Continued from Page 1A

Wildlife, who confirmed it.

“The Warrenton Police Department is relaying this information to keep the public informed due to this area being in close proximity to several residential neighborhoods,” Workman said on his department’s Facebook page.

Workman said his department receives about two to three reports per year of possible cougar sightings and found tracks. The calls often come from the Fort Stevens State Park area.

“It’s not unusual. As the city grows and we are spread out into the wilderness areas, we get into wild animals’ hunting grounds,” Workman said.

ODFW tracks cougar activity and make decisions as to whether or not to take any action.

Herman Biederbeck, ODFW biologist in Tillamook, said ODFW did not do a field investigation, but relied on the state park’s report.

Wildlife officials can determine a cougar kill by identifying certain telltale signs.

After a cougar kills an animal it will bury it with leaves or branches, in an effort to hide the carcass for later, Biederbeck said.

Another sign is the cougars paw prints.

On Monday, Wing said, the deer carcass was not buried and did not have marks around it’s neck.

Biederbeck said cougar populations are low on the North Coast. The highest cougar populations are found in Northeast and Southwest Oregon, he said.

“We get reports of an occasional sighting in the general Fort Stevens areas,” Biederbeck said. “There isn’t much evidence of a robust cougar population. They are low density compared to other parts of the state.”

Cougar activity in Oregon made news last week when the Bend Bulletin reported ODFW officials killed a cougar Jan. 30 after they tranquilized and removed it from a tree in southeast Bend. The cougar was a 110-pound, 2-year-old male, according to ODFW.

Officials killed it with a lethal injection rather than relocate it because of where the animal was found — in a dense neighborhood — and its age, the Bulletin reported.

If released nearby, officials said, it may have returned, and if released far away it could have been forced into a territory fight with another cougar.

Newman: ‘It’s about life change’

Continued from Page 1A

Newman and his board of directors are unapologetically Christian, believe in the power of prayer, see God’s hand in their victories and God’s lessons in their struggles.

Providing food, shelter

Marlin Martin, the co-director of Clatsop Community Action, a nonprofit social services group, helps direct food to the mission.

“It’s taking people who are without homes and shelter off the street,” he said of Newman’s work. “It’s getting them safe and getting them comfortable and helping to preserve their dignity.”

“There are a lot of people in this world who look down on those who are the victims of poverty, thinking they did something wrong, it’s all their fault, they’re bad people.”

“They’re not. They’re victims in many cases of the world, of what happens in our country.”

Lean and intense, with the evangelism of a convert, Newman, 44, can speak from experience.

He describes himself as a foster child and former drug abuser who had four children out of wedlock before a personal collapse led him to the mission.

Tom Jones, the mission’s longtime executive director, became his father-in-law. New-

‘I can give a guy a job. I can put him to work. I can put him in a house. ... but if that person doesn’t have a life change, he will lose the house, he will stop showing up to work ...’

— **David Newman**
executive director of the Astoria Rescue Mission

man and his wife, Amy, who runs the women’s house, have three children.

“It’s about life change,” said Newman, who is also a contractor. “I can give a guy a job. I can put him to work. I can put him in a house.”

“I can do all those things, but if that person doesn’t have a life change, he will lose the house, he will stop showing up to work ...”

Newman measures success by salvation. “The success here is Christ,” he said.

Visit us online at
www.DailyAstorian.com

