# **WDFW OKs razor clam dig starting Monday**

OLYMPIA, Wash. - Clam diggers can return to two coastal beaches Monday through Thursday, to dig razor clams during a month packed with potential digging opportunities.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife approved the dig at Long Beach and Twin Harbors after marine toxin tests showed the clams are safe to eat

As in previous openings, the dig is scheduled on evening tides. No digging will be allowed on any beach before noon.

Under state law, diggers are required to keep the first 15 clams they dig. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container.

The four-day dig is scheduled for the following dates, beaches and low tides:

• March 2, 4:49 p.m.; 0.5 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 3, 5:26 p.m.; 0.4 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 4, 5:59 p.m.; 0.4 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 5, 6:30 p.m.; 0.5 feet, Long Long Beach, Twin Harbors

Beach, Twin Harbors

WDFW shellfish managers have tentatively scheduled a nine-day dig beginning March 16. Low tides will switch to morning from evening tides midway through the proposed dig on the following dates, beaches and tides:

• March 16, 4:15 p.m.; 0.3 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 17, 5:08 p.m.; -0.2 feet; Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 18, 5:57 p.m.; -0.5 feet,

• March 19, 6:42 p.m.; -0.5 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 20, 7:26 p.m.; -0.4 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks

Seasonal switch to morning tides

• March 21, 7:55 a.m.; -0.5 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks

• March 22, 8:42 a.m.; -0.7 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks

• March 23, 9:31 a.m.; -0.6 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

• March 24, 10:21 a.m.; -0.3 feet, Long Beach, Twin Harbors

All diggers age 15 or older must have an applicable 2014-15 fishing license to harvest razor clams on any beach. Licenses, ranging from a threeday razor clam license to an annual combination fishing license, are available on WDFW's website at https:// fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov and from license vendors around the state.

More information about razor clams is available on WDFW's webpage at http://1.usa.gov/1DrPdBN

# Courtney: Lawmakers should vote on school aid now

#### **By PETER WONG** Capital Bureau

SALEM — Senate President Peter Courtney says lawmakers should vote soon on a \$7.23 billion state school fund, the largest single item in the state budget.

It's the fund from which Oregon's 197 school districts draw the lion's share of their operating costs.

"I want the co-chairs (of the budget committee) to put the  $\tilde{K}$ -12 budget as fast as I can get it," the Salem Democrat told reporters Wednesday.

"I want it out now, and I'm not going to quibble over the amount."

It's been a little over a month since the Legislature's chief budget writers, Sen. Richard Devlin of Tualatin and Rep. Peter Buckley of Ashland, proposed \$7.23 billion as part of their framework for the next twoyear budget.

The amount is \$600 million more than in the current two-year cycle that ends June 30, and about \$300 million more than the \$6.9 billion that then-Gov. John Kitzhaber proposed in the two-year budget submitted on Dec. 1.

Gov. Kate Brown, who succeeded Kitzhaber last week after his resignation, has not stated a preference. But Brown, herself a former legislative leader, said Friday that in regard to the budget, "the governor proposes and the Legislature disposes."

"You can always adjust it if you have to, or if there's more money," Courtney said. 'But that's the most

important thing right now. I think we've got to get that budget out. We need to start to move budgets."

lawmakers Usually, await the May 15 economic and revenue forecast before making final decisions on the budget, which actually comes in the form of individual agency bills rather than a single overall plan.

A recent exception was in 2011, when lawmakers approved the state school fund and the governor signed it in mid-April. But it was a low point in the economic downturn, and the approved

amount was all that schools got that cycle.

The co-chairs' current plan puts more money into state aid for public schools, community colleges and universities — and less into targeted education priorities sought by Kitzhaber, such as early childhood programs, reading skills, and high school and college completion.

Minority Republicans and some education groups want to raise the state school fund beyond the amount proposed by the colion for the next two years. Some advocates say the current legislative plan is still several millions short of allowing schools to maintain current service levels.

However, according to last week's quarterly economic and revenue forecast, the possibility of a kicker refund to taxpayers next year is likely to decrease the amount available for spending in the next two-year budget, if only by a modest amount.

The projected refund, which would be in the form of a credit against 2014 taxes due next year, is \$349 million. But the kicker still could change, because the projected threshold is just barely more than what is needed to trigger the kicker.

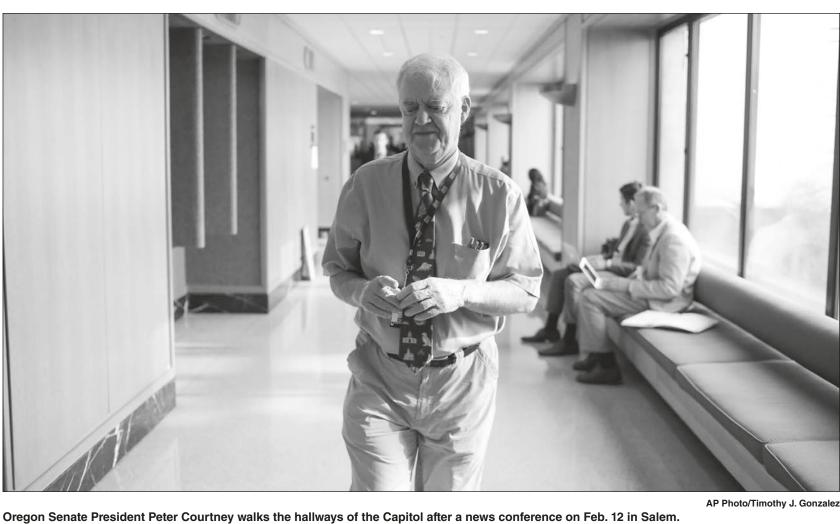
While Oregon's economic indicators are good, says state economist Mark McMullen, "additional economic growth does not translate into additional resources and an easier job for legislative budget writers."

Lawmakers on the House and Senate revenue committees did hear last week that property tax collections will be up

\$134.6 million from what was previously projected for the next two-year cycle. For 2015-16, according to legislative revenue economist Dae Baek, collections will be up by 5 percent instead of 3 percent; for 2016-17, up by 4.7 percent.

The projected two-year total of property taxes for schools, including the amounts for education service districts, is \$3.67 billion

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### 35 Lost & Found

Lost: Transition glasses in black case, Sunday in the Liberty theater

parking area. (503)325-3733 **46** ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Jewell School District #8 Announces Elections for:

School Board Member Positions #1, #3 & #5

Clatsop County School Board Elections will be held May 19, 2015. The terms for Positions #1, #3 & #5 on the Jewell School Board end on June 30, 2015 and the new term will begin July 1, 2015 and run through June 30, 2019.

If you would like to consider representing Jewell families on the governing board, please visit or call the Clatsop County **Elections Department.** 

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## 70 Help Wanted



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