



Linh DePledge/For The Daily Astorian

The MSV Fennica, a Finnish flagged icebreaker, passed through Astoria Friday on its way to a Portland shipyard for repairs.

## Activists protest icebreaker

Vessel needed for offshore drilling

Associated Press

PORTLAND — Environmental activists in Portland are protesting the arrival of the Fennica, a vessel that Royal Dutch Shell PLC plans to use in its Arctic offshore drilling project after it's repaired.

The damaged ship, a 380-foot icebreaker, arrived at a Swan Island dry dock about 3 a.m. Saturday. The icebreaker is a key part of Shell's exploration and spill-response plan off Alaska's north-west coast. It protects Shell's fleet from ice and carries equipment that can stop gushing oil.

The Fennica was damaged earlier this month in the Aleutian Islands when it struck an underwater obstruction, tearing a gash in its hull.

About 75 "kayaktivists" and other protesters in boats were on the water Saturday afternoon, near where the Fennica is docked, holding a peaceful on-the-water rally against arctic offshore drilling, activist Mia Reback said. No arrests have been made.

Environmental groups had wanted the Obama administration to reject permits sought by Shell to drill in the Chukchi Sea because of the absence of the icebreaker.

But earlier this week, the federal government gave Shell approval to begin limited exploratory oil drilling in Chukchi Sea, with conditions. Shell can



Linh DePledge/For The Daily Astorian

The MSV Fennica picked up a U.S. Coast Guard escort in Astoria.

only drill the top sections of wells because the company doesn't have critical emergency response equipment on site to cap a well in case of a leak. That equipment is aboard the Fennica.

The missing safety equipment is called a capping stack, a roughly 30-foot-tall device that can be lowered onto a wellhead to stop gushing oil after a blowout or connect to hoses to direct oil to vessels on the surface.

The Interior Department's Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement said in a statement that Shell could submit an amended application for deeper drilling when the capping stack can be deployed within 24 hours.

"President Obama ignored the will of the people earlier this week when he undercut his climate legacy and gave conditional approval to Shell to drill in the Arctic," Dan Ritzman, director of

Sierra Club's Arctic campaign, said in a statement.

Environmentalists worry the Arctic's remoteness and rugged conditions will hamper cleanup efforts in the event of a spill, risking devastation of a fragile marine ecosystem.

But proponents of arctic drilling say it can be conducted safely with existing technologies and that future production will help sustain the country's energy needs and limit reliance on imports.

Shell spokeswoman Kelly op de Weegh said by email earlier this week that receipt of the drilling permits signals the end of the permitting process, and drilling will begin when the area is clear of sea ice. Both of Shell's drill rigs are on their way to the Chukchi sea.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates the Arctic offshore reserves in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas at 26 billion barrels of recoverable oil.

## Electrical failure caused Warrenton triplex fire

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The cause of a fire that damaged a Warrenton triplex July 13 has been changed, after further investigation by the Warrenton Fire Department.

An electrical failure in circuit wiring was found in the remains of the exterior wall and is believed to be the cause.

The new information was discovered after the fire department re-interviewed the occupant and the landlord,

leading to investigators returning to the scene.

Officials originally attributed the fire to smoking debris found in a chair, which had been sitting against an exterior wall on the deck. The fire department now knows the occupant did not start the fire by smoking and it was not her fault.

The fire department responded to the fire at the triplex on the 92000 block of Hummingbird Drive. First arriving crews found heavy fire enveloping a large, covered

deck on the second floor.

The fire had also extended into the second floor apartment.

Nearly half of the triplex was damaged from the fire, including smoke and water damage.

Disaster action volunteers with the American Red Cross responded to triplex. This multi-family fire affected one adult and a pet.

The Red Cross provided food, lodging, clothing, shoes, comfort kits and recovery information.

## Half of Columbia River sockeye salmon dying due to hot water

By KEITH RIDLER  
Associated Press

BOISE — More than a quarter million sockeye salmon returning from the ocean to spawn are either dead or dying in the Columbia River and its tributaries due to warming water temperatures.

Federal and state fisheries biologists say the warm water is lethal for the cold-water species and is wiping out at least half of this year's return of 500,000 fish.

"We had a really big migration of sockeye," said Ritchie Graves of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "The thing that really hurts is we're going to lose a majority of those fish."

He said up to 80 percent of the population could ultimately perish.

Elsewhere in the region, state fisheries biologists in Oregon say more than 100 spring Chinook died earlier this month in the Middle Fork of the John Day River when water temperatures hit the mid-70s. Oregon and Washington state have both enacted sport fishing closures due to warm water, and sturgeon fishing in the Columbia River upstream of Bonneville Dam

has been halted after some of the large, bottom dwelling fish started turning up dead.

Efforts by management teams to cool flows below 70 degrees by releasing cold water from selected reservoirs are continuing in an attempt to prevent similar fish kills among Chinook salmon and steelhead, which migrate later in the summer from the Pacific Ocean.

The fish become stressed at temperatures above 68 degrees and stop migrating at 74 degrees. Much of the basin is at or over 70 degrees due to a combination that experts attribute to drought and record heat in June.

"The tributaries are running hot," Graves said. "A lot of those are in the 76-degree range."

In Idaho, an emergency declaration earlier this month allowed state fisheries managers to capture endangered Snake River sockeye destined for central Idaho and take them to a hatchery to recover in cooler water. Of the 4,000 fish that passed Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River, less than a fourth made it to Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River. An average year is 70 percent.

"Right now it's grim for adult sockeye," said Russ

Kiefer of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. He said sockeye will often pull into tributary rivers in search of cooler water, but aren't finding much relief.

"They're running out of energy reserves, and we're getting a lot of reports of fish dead and dying," he said.

Thirteen species of salmon and steelhead are listed as endangered or threatened in the Columbia River basin.

Don Campton of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said fish congregating in confined areas trying to find cool water makes them a target for pathogens.

"When temperatures get warm, it does stress the fish out and they become susceptible to disease," he said.

Graves said that this year's flow in the Columbia River is among the lowest in the last 60 years. But he said the system has experienced similar low flows without the lethal water temperatures. He said the difference this year has been prolonged hot temperatures, sometimes more than 100 degrees, in the interior part of the basin.

"The flow is abnormally low, but on top of that we've had superhot temperatures for a really long time," he said.

## Police plan extra pedestrian safety enforcement

The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Police Department will have extra officers on duty Friday for a pedestrian safety enforcement program.

The program is in conjunction with Oregon Impact, a group that provides educational experiences to end impaired and distracted driving.

It will focus on drivers that fail to yield to an officer who is acting

as a pedestrian, crossing at marked and unmarked crosswalks.

In addition, the officer will be watching for vehicles that pass another vehicle that stopped for a pedestrian in a crosswalk.

Officers will be enforcing other traffic violations seen during the enforcement.

The fine for failing to stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian or for passing a vehicle that is stopped at a

crosswalk for a pedestrian is \$260.

The goal of the enforcement is to increase the safety of all pedestrians and drivers in and around the city, according to the police. The project is paid for with grant money awarded to the Astoria Police Department by Oregon Impact.

For questions about the project, contact Sgt. Brian Aydt at the Astoria Police Department or by phone at 503-325-4411.

## Q&A: A look at Shell Oil and Arctic offshore drilling operations

By DAN JOLING  
Associated Press

ANCHORAGE — Shell Oil drill vessels are heading to the Arctic.

But they will not be permitted to drill into petroleum-bearing rock until a key piece of blowout response equipment, a capping stack, is on site.

The capping stack is carried on the icebreaker Fennica, which arrived early Saturday for repairs in Portland, Oregon.

Arctic offshore drilling opponents plan to demonstrate while the Fennica is in port.

### What's at stake?

Royal Dutch Shell and other companies want to tap into U.S. Arctic offshore reserves that the U.S. Geological Survey estimates at 26 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 130 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Shell has invested upward of \$7 billion in Arctic offshore investment. During the 2015 summer open water season, it hopes to drill two wells to begin determining whether there are commercial quantities

of oil at its Burger Prospect about 70 miles off the coast in the Chukchi Sea.

Offshore Alaska offers some of the most prolific, undeveloped hydrocarbon basins in the world, potentially increasing domestic supply by over 1 million new barrels of oil per day, according to Shell.

### Why are conservation groups opposed?

Environmental groups contend oil companies have not demonstrated they can clean up a major spill in ocean that ranges from open to frozen to slushy, putting the Arctic's rich marine life at stake.

The drill sites are more than 1,000 miles from the nearest Coast Guard base. The northern Alaska coastline lacks deep-water ports, major airports and basic infrastructure such as hotel accommodations for spill responders.

Critics also say opening a new, vast fossil fuel field will delay a transition to renewable energy and add to a global warming problem that has hit the Arctic hard by reducing sea ice, a habitat critical to po-

lar bears and walrus.

### Is exploratory drilling safe?

Exploratory wells will be drilled in water 130 to 140 feet deep — far different from the 5,000-foot water depth of the well in the Gulf of Mexico's Deepwater Horizon explosion and blowout in April 2010. Shell expects to drill wells under a fraction of the pressure of the well in that disaster.

Shell says its flotilla of about 30 vessels will have everything on hand to respond in the "unlikely" event of a blowout.

Drilling foes say Shell's performance in 2012, the last time it sailed north, is evidence of what can go wrong. One rig was separated from its tow vessel and ran aground off Kodiak. The other was fined \$12.1 million for breaking maritime law.

### What is being repaired in Portland?

The Fennica is a Finnish icebreaker. The vessel's hull received a gash roughly 3-feet long and a half-inch wide July 3 as it departed Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Shell considered a temporary fix in Alaska but decided to make a permanent fix at Portland's Vigor shipyard.

The vessel's primary purpose is to carry a capping stack, a roughly 30-foot piece of gear that in a blowout can form a metal-to-metal contact on a wellhead. The capping stack is designed to shut off oil like a giant spigot or connect to hoses to direct oil to vessels on the surface. It would be maneuvered into place by an A-frame winch on the Fennica and underwater remote-operated vehicles.

Shell also will have a blowout preventer on the ocean bottom that could seal

a well with shear arms; drilling mud to plug a blowout; a second rig to drill a relief well; and a vessel carrying a containment dome that could funnel leaking crude to vessels on the surface.

### What can Shell do without the capping stack?

Oil-bearing rock is 8,000 feet below the ocean bottom. Shell received conditional approval Wednesday to drill above it.

Top-hole work begins with a mud-line cellar, an excavation to house the blowout preventer beneath the ocean floor, where it can't be scraped by the bottom of a passing iceberg. Top-hole work also involves drilling to about 1,300 feet and setting a foundation for the well to grow in depth.

Shell can apply to drill into oil-bearing rock when the Fennica is repaired and in the Chukchi Sea. Shell expects that to happen by mid to late August.

**WANTED**  
Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber  
Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA  
Contact: Steve Axtell • 360-430-0885 or John Anderson • 360-269-2500

Call Anytime  
Free Fast Estimates  
**Jeff Hale Painting**  
• Residential  
• Commercial  
• Cedar Roof Treatments  
• Interior & Exterior  
Over 20 years local experience  
503-440-2169  
Jeff Hale, Contractor  
LICENSED BONDED INSURED  
CC8179131

**PELICAN BREWING COMPANY**  
Phil the Pelican is coming to Cannon Beach!  
**HIRING NOW**  
Kitchen & Restaurant Managers  
Start training NOW in Pacific City and open our new Brew Pub in Cannon Beach in 2016.  
Competitive Wages, 401K, Benefits, Vacation  
**Pelican Brewing Company**  
Pacific City, Oregon  
503-965-7779 ext. 307  
www.yourlittlebeachtown.com/jobs  
employment@pelicanbrewing.com