



Courtesy of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists place a new GPS collar on OR-4, the Imnaha wolf pack's alpha male, after darting him from a helicopter in March 2012.

Wolf pack: 'It was a difficult decision'

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The decisive action by the department may have marked a somber turning point in the state's work to restore wolves to the landscape. It comes on the heels of the Wildlife Commission's decision in November to take gray wolves off the state endangered species list, and just as the commission is beginning a review of the Oregon Wolf Plan, the document that governs wolf conservation and management.

Oregon Wild, the Portland-based conservation group with long involvement in the state's wolf issue, said shooting wolves should be an "absolute last resort."

"While the wolf plan is out of date and under review, we shouldn't be taking the most drastic action we can take in wolf management," Executive Director Sean Stevens said in an email.

The commission should not have taken wolves off the state endangered species list in the first place, but it isn't likely to revisit that decision, Stevens said.

The commission should call upon the department to not shoot more wolves until the plan review is finished, he said.

"But, more importantly, they should recognize that delisting does not mean that we should suddenly swing open the doors to more aggressive management," Stevens said.

The ongoing wolf plan review, which may take nine months, should include science that wasn't considered in the delisting decision, and the public's will, he said. It also should create more clarity on non-lethal measures to deter wolves, he said.

Both sides

Publicly, at least, no one is celebrating the shootings.

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association, long on the opposite side of the argument from Oregon Wild, said ODFW's action was authorized by Phase



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press
Amarog Weiss, West Coast wolf organizer for the Center for Biological Diversity, said the March 31 Fish and Wildlife shooting of four Imnaha Pack wolves was a "terrible tragedy." Wolves were recovering well in the first phase of Oregon's wolf plan, she said, and the state now needs to carefully review what was working.

II of the state's wolf plan.

"The problem needed addressed and ODFW handled it correctly," spokeswoman Kayli Hanley said in an email. "We acknowledge that while this decision was necessary for the sake of species coexistence, it was a difficult decision."

Michael Finley, chairman of the commission, said the department handled the situation properly.

"I feel that the department acted in total good faith," Finley said. "They followed the letter and the spirit of the wolf plan."

Another conservation group, Defenders of Wildlife, called the shootings "a very sad day for us" but also said it appeared Fish and Wildlife followed the wolf plan.

"The final plan is a compromise, but it is among the best of all the state plans in that it emphasizes the value of wolves on the landscape, and requires landowners to try non-lethal methods of deterring wolves before killing them is ever considered," the group said in a prepared statement.

Amarog Weiss, West Coast wolf organizer for the Center for Biological Diversity, said the Imnaha Pack shootings may lead to more poaching, because



Eric Mortenson/Capital Press
Rob Klavins of Oregon Wild lives in Northeast Oregon's wolf country. He said the Imnaha Pack's alpha male, OR-4, one of four wolves shot for livestock attacks, "became a symbol for those who revere wolves as well as for those who hate them and hate the wild."

killing wolves decreases tolerance of them and leads to a belief that "you have to kill wolves in order to preserve them."

Weiss agreed that coming across a calf or sheep that's been torn apart and consumed — the skull and hide was all that was left of one calf after the OR-4 group fed on it — must be gut-wrenching for producers. But she said those animals are raised to be killed and eaten. "They don't die any more a humane death in a slaughterhouse than being killed by a wild animal," she said. "It's a hard discussion to find a common place of agreement."

She said such losses are the reason Oregon established the compensation program: to pay for livestock losses and to help with the cost of defensive measures that scare wolves away.

Rush to Phase II

Weiss said Oregon rushed to move to Phase II of its wolf conservation and management plan in the eastern part of the state, which was prompted by reaching a population goal of four breeding pairs for three consecutive years. That also prompted the Fish and Wildlife Commission to take wolves off the state endangered species list in 2015, although they remain on the federal endangered list in the West-

ern two-thirds of the state.

Like others, Weiss believes the state should have held off on such changes until it finished the mandated review of the wolf plan.

"Under Phase I, Oregon was the state we could all point to" for successfully managing wolves, Weiss said. "I would hope they look at what parts of the wolf plan are working, and look at the parts that are not working."

Politics and policy aside, the shooting of OR-4 gave people pause. He was a bigger-than-life character; he'd evaded a previous state kill order and had to be re-collared a couple times as he somehow shook off the state's effort to track him.

Pack history

OR-4's Imnaha Pack was the state's second oldest, designated in 2009, and it produced generations of successful dispersers. OR-4's many progeny included Oregon's best-known wanderer, OR-7, who left the Imnaha Pack in 2011 and zig-zagged his way southwest into California before settling in the Southern Oregon Cascades.

OR-25, which killed a calf in Klamath County and now is in Northern California, dispersed from the Imnaha Pack. The alpha female of the Shasta Pack, California's first, is from the Imnaha Pack as well.

Rob Klavins, who lives in Wallowa County and is Oregon Wild's field representative in the area, ran across OR-4's tracks a couple times and saw him once.

Despite his fearsome reputation, the wolf tucked his tail between his legs, ran behind a nearby tree and barked at Klavins and his hiking group until they left.

"Killing animals four or five times your size is a tough way to make a living," Klavins said. "Some people appreciate OR-4 as a symbol of the tenacity of wolves, even a lot of folks who dislike wolves have sort of a begrudging respect for him."

Brown: 'We will go forwards, not backwards'

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"I think that these first-ever achievements over the past 14 months would have made Gov. McCall very proud," Brown said.

She also committed to proposing a transportation plan during the 2017 legislative session. That echoed a promise she made in her first State of the State address in April 2015 to make transportation one of her top priorities, but she later delayed that plan.

She called her ascension from secretary of state to the state's highest office in February 2015 "unexpected." As secretary of state, she automatically succeeded Gov. John Kitzhaber when he resigned that same

month over an influence-peddling scandal involving his fiancée, Cylvia Hayes.

Brown said she has since strived to enhance government transparency.

She cited new policies that require lobbyists to disclose whom they represent within three days of hiring, and changes to ethics laws that increase penalties for knowingly using public office for private gain.

However, the Pamplin Media/EO Media Group Capital Bureau recently reported that meaningful public records reform, such as deadlines and fee limits for responding to public record, has failed to progress since Brown took office. She also failed to follow through on

a plan to create a public records advocate to help the public with public record denials, but she repeated her plan to propose legislation to create that position in 2017.

Brown described other accomplishments as investing \$70 million in addressing the state's housing shortage, boosting funding for higher education and early childhood education and subsidizing college tuition with the Oregon Opportunity Grant.

She offered few specifics on policy proposals for the coming year. In addition to offering a transportation package, she repeated her commitment to improve the state's graduation rate — one of the worst in the

nation. She recently created a new position of education innovation officer to develop a strategy to accomplish that goal and plans to hire for the position in the next couple of weeks.

Before the 2017 session, Brown will face one of four Republicans in the November 2016 election to complete Kitzhaber's term.

Looking forward, she promised to continue to lead Oregon's policy trailblazing.

"We will go forwards, not backwards," Brown said. "We will protect what makes Oregon great. We will be good stewards for future generations. We will be who we are: Oregonians — the blazers of new trails, the ones who get things done."

Keating: He still has family on the North Coast

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who represented Keating and Moss, told The Dallas Morning News. "There are cable networks that don't have the viewers that these guys do."

Keating recalls discovering YouTube while he was in the Navy. When he was medically discharged in 2007, he had a hard time finding work and started to invest in the video-sharing website.

He recently launched his own production company out of Chicago called New Millennial.

As Keating pursues his career and investments, he said, it all started for him back

in Astoria.

He still has family on the North Coast and visits when he can.

"My heart is always with you guys," he said.

— Kyle Spurr

No. 1 Loggers cruise, 9-1 and 10-0

The Daily Astorian

KNAPPA — Eight games into the season, and the Knappa Loggers find themselves in a familiar place — undefeated and at the top of the Class 2A rankings.

It's where they've been for the last year and a half, as the Loggers posted their latest wins Friday at home, 9-1 and 10-0 over Gaston.

Knappa held leads of 8-0 after three innings of Game 1, and 5-0 after two innings in the second game, helping starters Michal Goodman and Mason Hoover on their way to complete-game wins.

Goodman tossed a three-hitter over seven innings in the opener, with eight strikeouts and two walks; while Hoover gave up just two hits with four strikeouts and walk in Game 2.

Reuben Cruz had two doubles and three RBIs in Game 1, with two more hits

in the nightcap, including a triple and two RBIs.

Cruz is now 12-for-17 (.706) on the season, with four doubles, a triple and a home run, with 10 walks.

"We're the healthiest we've been since the Reed-sport games," said Knappa coach Jeff Miller. "The guys at the top of the order are doing what they're supposed to, and the players in the middle part of the lineup are starting to hit now, too."

Hitters in the top half of the order are all hitting .400 or better, while No. 1 pitcher Dale Takalo had the week off from pitching. "He was available, if we needed him," Miller said.

The Loggers have given up just six runs, lowest in the state at any level.

No. 1-ranked Knappa sits atop the league standings at 6-0. Knappa's next nine league games will be against Delphian (0-7), Nestucca (1-8) and Faith Bible (0-8).

Monroe sweeps at Warrenton

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Monroe scored runs in nine of their 12 at-bats Saturday, in a 16-4, 13-4 doubleheader sweep over Warrenton at Huddleston Field.

The Warriors helped, committing 10 errors and walking 10 in the first game, while the Dragons limited Warrenton to just eight total hits.

"And almost all the errors (in Game 1) were on routine plays," said Warrenton coach Lennie Wolfe. "Ten errors and walking 10 will hurt against average competition, and when it comes against a team like

Monroe ... you're going to get thumped."

Warrenton graduate Dan Wolfe made his return to Huddleston Field, as an assistant coach with Monroe.

Monroe freshman catcher Mason Crowson had three doubles on the day, while Joe Little and Gavon McFadden each had a double in Game 1, McFadden's double coming on the first pitch in the bottom of the first.

The Warriors scored four of their eight runs in the first inning, as they held leads of 3-0 and 1-0 in both games.

Warrenton plays a non-league game at Naselle Tuesday.

Seaside sweeps Fort Vancouver

The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Seaside's Jake Bassett and Scott Plampin both threw complete games, and the Gulls swept a nonleague doubleheader with Fort Vancouver Saturday at Broadway Field, 11-1 and 10-0.

Bassett allowed only three hits with seven strikeouts and four walks in Game 1, while Otto Hoekstre was 2-for-3 at the plate.

Astor Landwehr added a two-run double and Michael Lewis was 2-for-4

and drove in two runs for Seaside.

Plampin tossed a two-hit, six-inning shutout in Game 2, striking out nine with two walks.

Freshman Payton Westerholm led the offense by going 3-for-3 with a double and two runs scored, and Carson Schulte (triple, four RBIs) and Duncan Thompson also had big games at the plate.

The Gulls, who finished the game with an all-freshmen infield, resume league play Tuesday at Tillamook.

Warriors slay the Dragons

The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The Warrenton softball team gave up 23 runs in two games Saturday — but scored 29 of their own, in a 17-12, 12-11 doubleheader sweep over Monroe on the Warriors' home field.

Warrenton snapped a nine-game losing skid by racking up 19 hits in the twin-bill win.

The Warriors rallied from an 11-7 deficit after five innings of Game 1 with two runs in the sixth and three in the seventh.

In the bottom of the seventh, Warrenton's Dani Bue reached on an error, Heidi Erland drew a walk, and both runners advanced on a sacrifice by Rachel Dyer.

Bue scored on an infield single by Tyla Little and Erland scored on the throw. Little stole third and scored

the game-winner on a passed ball.

Landree Mieth had three of Warrenton's eight hits in the opener, and also had the complete-game win in the circle, allowing eight hits with four strikeouts and three walks.

The Warriors committed five errors, but took advantage of 12 walks and three hit batters by three Monroe pitchers.

Warrenton built a 14-5 lead through three innings of Game 2. Two Monroe pitchers walked 12 more batters and hit four, while Mieth tossed another complete game, allowing 10 hits and seven walks with seven strikeouts and four hit batters.

Mieth also had another three hits, with a double, triple, five RBIs and two runs scored, while Bue was 2-for-2 with two RBIs and two runs scored.