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ONE DOLLAR



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Laurie Weitkamp, a biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, checks a juvenile steelhead caught in the Columbia River near Cathlamet for a tag.

Solving a clearcut image problem

Oregonians favorable to forestry but not logging practice

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Oregon's timber industry has a blemish on its otherwise positive public image: People consider clearcutting unsightly.

Most Oregonians know that state law requires trees to be replanted after harvest, but clearcutting is nonetheless associated with negative words, including "ugly," "sad" and "greed," according to the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, which educates the public about forestry.

According to an OFRI survey, 68 percent of Oregon residents had a favorable view of the forest products industry — more than for tourism, construction and high-tech manufacturing — and 62 percent agreed that current forest protection laws are strong enough.

See **TIMBER**, Page 8A

Plucked from the river

Biologists study young salmon for wetlands restoration consequences

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

CATHLAMET, Wash. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wants to know how wetland restoration efforts are benefiting juvenile salmon as they feed in the mouth of the Columbia River on their way to the Pacific Ocean.

Trying to answer that question are multiple field teams working under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

"I think, in part, we're spending a lot of money on restoring wetlands, and there's some controversy in that, because it's not cheap," said Kurt Fresh, the principal investigator in the migration study and head of the estuarine and ocean ecology program in the National Marine Fisheries Science Center, part of NOAA. "And there's a question of how effective all this work is. Are we getting the benefits people think we are?"

Fishing for yearlings

Fisheries biologist Laurie Weitkamp leads one of Fresh's field teams that catch, dissect and preserve migrating juvenile salmon on the main channel of the Colum-



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

NOAA biologist Laurie Weitkamp extracts the liver from a juvenile steelhead. The liver was then frozen and packed to be sent to a lab for testing.

bia. The samples they collect tell researchers how the fish indirectly benefit from wetlands they pass by.

On a misty morning Friday, Weitkamp and her contracted research and boat crew from Ocean Associates Inc., headed out of Elochoman Slough Marina in Cathlamet in the research vessel Tyee, followed by a

smaller skiff. Together, the vessels trawled for several minutes in the main channel of the Columbia next to the Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge, and near a recently restored wetland at Steamboat Slough.

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'Cadillac' health drives Gearhart's budget rise

Short-term rental fees to offset increases

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — Planning costs, legal fees and health insurance are driving the Gearhart budget to almost \$1.7 million, up about \$200,000 from last year. Some of these costs will be addressed by proposed short-term rental fees, which could bring in about \$140,000 in revenue, City Administrator Chad Sweet said.

In a public meeting on the budget with members of the City Council and the Budget Committee last week, Councilor Dan Jesse questioned health care costs.

"The figures seem quite high for 10 employees," Jesse said.

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Ghost fishing land mines: Cleaning up lost fishing gear

By WAYNE PARRY
Associated Press

WARETOWN, N.J. — They are the land mines of the sea, killing long after being forgotten.

Abandoned or lost fishing gear, including traps, crab pots and nets, litter the ocean floor in coastal areas around the world. Many continue to attract, entrap and kill fish and other marine life in what's called "ghost fishing."

Groups, governments and companies around the world are engaged in efforts to retrieve and recycle as much of the abandoned gear as they can get their hands on. The goal is to protect the environment, prevent marine life from being killed, remove threats to navigation, and in some cases, generate energy.

Pascal van Erp, a Dutch diver who was horrified by the amount of abandoned fishing equipment he encountered, founded the Ghost Fishing Foundation to tackle the issue.

"The problem with lost gear is enormous," he said. "It is found in all seas, oceans and inland waters at all depths, along the beach and under the sand. I think the problem never can be resolved completely, but we can keep it from getting worse by showing the problem to the public and the authorities."

Lost traps

For as long as mankind has been fishing, it has been losing some of that gear, but the problem has become particularly acute in recent decades with rapid advances in technology and the expansion of global fishing fleets.

Industry experts and scientists estimate that commercial fishermen lose about 10 percent of their traps per year to bad weather, currents that drag them to far-flung places or boats that sever tie lines intended to keep them in place.



AP Photo/Wayne Parry

Robert Cericola, a commercial crabber, shows some of the 103 discarded crab traps he and others retrieved from Barnegat Bay in and around Waretown, N.J. in just one week.

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