

Repairs on waterfront may suspend traffic, trolley

City hopes to avoid shutdowns

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Some needed repairs to wooden bridges at the north ends of Sixth through 11th streets may disrupt vehicle flow and Astoria Riverfront Trolley trips for a few weeks this summer.

The Oregon Department of Transportation recently inspected the timber structures and determined that the poor condition may pose safety risks. The repairs are intended to keep the bridges at a 3-ton load limit.

At a special meeting Friday, the Astoria City Council awarded a \$43,031 contract to OBEC Consulting Engineers to assist in designing the repairs.

The project is expected to cost approximately \$150,000. The money will come from the city's capital improvement and Promote Astoria funds.

The state gave Astoria until

Aug. 1 to get the repairs underway, though the city is working with the department to extend that deadline, since the design process alone could take two weeks.

Meanwhile, the Public Works Department is looking to hire a contractor to start the repairs immediately after the design work is finished.

"We're in a place where, if the repairs are not done, the bridges have to be shut down due to the safety concerns expressed by the ODOT bridge engineers," City Manager Brett Estes said, adding that the bridges would become pedestrian-only.

The bridges provide access to properties and businesses built on the Columbia River's edge. They also support a section of trolley tracks that run east-west along the riverfront.

Nathan Crater, the assistant city engineer, said he didn't know how often, or how long, the bridges would be closed to traffic and trolley rides during the planned 30-day construction window.

"Really, the goal is to have zero shutdown time," he said. "That might not be achievable.

'We're in a place where, if the repairs are not done, the bridges have to be shut down due to the safety concerns expressed by the ODOT bridge engineers.'

City Manager Brett Estes

There might be some minimal disruptions."

If there are disruptions, he said, the construction crews will try to work strategically to avoid inconvenience. The city may prioritize the work so that most repairs are completed during the first two-and-a-half weeks. The repairs will happen underneath the bridges.

Estes said the city will keep the Astoria Riverfront Trolley Association, the Astoria Chamber of Commerce, and property and business owners in the area apprised of any scheduled shutdowns.

City Councilor Russ Warr,

noting the tight time frame, said "it's absolutely imperative that we get moving on this as quickly as possible."

'A balancing act'

Trolley representatives expressed concerns about the repairs taking place during their busiest time of year.

"August is our main money-making month," Frank Kemp, the trolley's maintenance coordinator, told the council. "We're hoping to run as much as possible."

Jim Wilkins, vice president of the nonprofit trolley association, said, "We have peo-

ple come from all over the world to ride this trolley, and we know that it's going to have to be shut down at some intervals."

Crater said the trolley association can join the planning discussions so perhaps the repairs can work around the trolley schedule.

"We'll work with you guys to try to minimize disruption," Crater told Wilkins, adding, "It's a balancing act, and we're obviously trying to keep everybody's interests in mind here."

He said OBEC is aware the situation is dire, and that they will need to work fast.

Eventually, all of the repair work will be removed once the bridges get replaced as part of the Waterfront Bridge Replacement Project, which will be financed with a \$9.5 million grant the city received in federal bridge replacement funds through the State Transportation Improvement Program. That project is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2017.

The immediate repairs "will be designed to include only what has been deemed absolutely essential in order to min-

imize the expenditure of funds prior to the upcoming planned replacement of the structures," according to the staff report.

In the meantime, however, "these are repairs that are needed to be able to continue to keep the 3-ton vehicle load that's in place now," Estes said.

Waterslide repairs

In other business, the council awarded a \$12,125 contract to The Pool & Spa House to replace a broken pump and failed valves on the Astoria Aquatic Center's waterslide.

The popular waterslide has been closed since June 17 because of the needed repairs. The Pool & Spa House hopes to complete the work before the end of July, said Angela Cosby, director of the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department.

Though it might be too soon to know whether the slide shutdown has significantly impacted the aquatic center's revenue, "June and July are our busiest months of the year with school being out," Cosby said, "so we have a lot of disappointed kiddos right now."

North Carolina fugitive arrested after surrendering in Warrenton

Suspected of murder, dismemberment

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

A 25-year-old man wanted for murdering a woman in North Carolina knocked on the back door of the Warrenton Police station Friday night to turn himself in.

David Isaiah Godwin, of Newport, North Carolina, told a Warrenton officer that the police were "looking for me," and he was wanted for murder.

The officer found Godwin had an arrest warrant out of North Carolina for homicide and dismemberment and was listed as armed and dangerous.

According to North Carolina media reports, Godwin is accused of murdering 37-year-old Wendy Tamagne in her apartment Tuesday eve-

ning. Officers said the woman was found beaten, strangled, stabbed, and her body was dismembered.

Godwin was arrested without incident and booked into Clatsop County Jail.

A detective from Morehead City Police Department in North Carolina was contacted by Warrenton Police and will be starting the process to bring Godwin back to face charges.

Godwin faces no local charges and is believed to



David Isaiah Godwin

have possibly taken a bus from North Carolina to Oregon, according to police.

Citizen Police Academy returns to Astoria this fall

The Daily Astorian

Astoria Police are hosting the ninth annual Citizen Police Academy this fall.

Classes will be held every Thursday evening from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. from Sept. 15 to Oct. 20.

The academy is open to community members who are interested in learning more about how their local police department operates.

The goal is to form and maintain partnerships between the community and the police by educating community members about the role of law enforcement and encouraging citizens and the police to work together, according to the police.

Participants will learn about and experience the day-to-day operations of

the department. They will tour the department, learn about criminal investigations, functions of patrol, see basic defensive tactics, tour the jail and have the option to shoot various department firearms.

Participants must be 18 or older. All applicants are subject to a criminal background investigation.

An application packet can be downloaded from the Police Department section on the City of Astoria website or by emailing Officer Andrew Randall at arandall@astoria.or.us.

Applications need to be turned into the Astoria Police Department no later than 5 p.m. on Aug. 22.

Applicants will be notified by mail if they have been accepted to the academy.

Monarch listing decision due in 2019

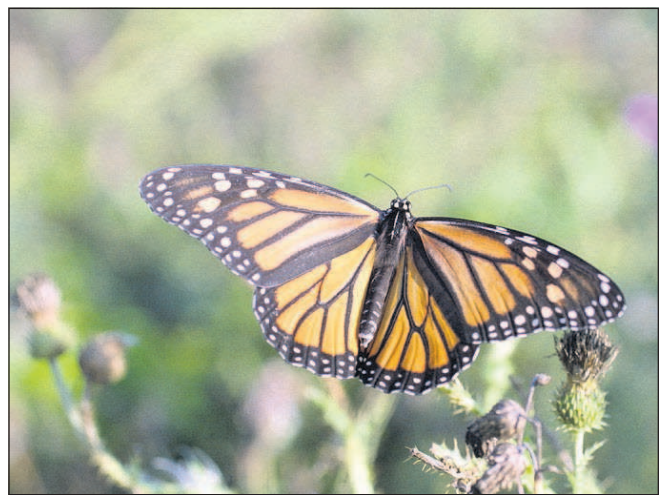
Endangered or threatened status could affect biotech crops

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Federal wildlife officials have three years to decide whether monarch butterflies should be protected under the Endangered Species Act under a legal settlement with environmentalists.

The government's decision could have implications for genetically engineered crops resistant to glyphosate herbicides, which environmentalists blame for the loss of milkweed that's crucial for the monarch's survival.

The Center for Food Safety and the Center for Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service earlier this year for failing to make a timely decision whether to list the species as threatened or endangered.



Courtesy of Elizabeth A. Sellers/USGS

Environmental groups have settled a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for not making a final decision whether to list monarch butterflies as endangered or threatened within 12 months of finding such a listing may be warranted, as required by federal law.

Under the terms of the settlement deal, the agency has until June 2019 to determine whether Endangered Species Act protection for the butterflies is warranted or not.

The environmental groups will be entitled to compensation for their attorney fees as prevailing parties in the lawsuit, according to the deal.

Unless they're able to strike an agreement with the government as to the total amount of compensation within two months, the plaintiffs can ask the court to order a payment.

The Fish and Wildlife Service may also get three additional months to make a decision, depending on whether

the Center for Biological Diversity files new lawsuits related to Endangered Species Act deadlines, or obtains additional remedies in such litigation.

The agency had found in 2014 that substantial evidence indicated that a threatened or endangered listing may be warranted for the monarch, but did not make a final decision within a year, as required under the federal law.

Populations of the butterfly declined roughly 90 percent over the past two decades, which the environmental groups attribute to the popularity of glyphosate-resistant biotech crops.

These crops have increased the prevalence of glyphosate, which is highly effective at killing the milkweed that monarchs depend on for food at the larval stage, according to the plaintiffs.

If the species does gain Endangered Species Act protection, environmental groups may push for federal requirements that farmers set aside reserves of non-biotech crops, reducing glyphosate usage.

Butterfly watchers seek out the flitting insects

By DIANE DIETZ
The Register-Guard

EUGENE — Four women set out in the west Eugene wetlands to chase the ephemeral flashes and flutters of July-awakened butterflies.

They sought the Eastern tailed-blue, the ochre ringlet and — were they to be lucky — the California tortoiseshell.

The comely insects skimmed the swaying heads of dry grasses, wove down among the stalks, popped up and turned in the air before disappearing again, low down.

"Why don't you stop and stay still for a moment so we can look at you?" retired psychiatrist and volunteer naturalist Jo von Hippel said to

a chocolate brown, common wood-nymph butterfly.

Though the flitting creatures are sometimes hard to follow, the butterfly ties together — as if by invisible filament — people, landscapes and continents.

The butterfly, for example, was the subject of high-level international diplomacy in Ottawa recently at the so-called three amigos summit of Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto, President Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The monarch butterfly, Pena Nieto told the amigos, "is a species that, in its pilgrimage, we can see how our countries are intertwined."

The butterfly is a genteel creature. Although a bird will consume a butterfly, a butterfly eats naught but the nectar of

flowers — a vegan without an attitude.

"They're beautiful and sweet," said Kathryn Kemp, retired mental health counselor and novice butterfly watcher.

Unlike the pursuit of birding, butterflying takes place at a civilized hour because butterflies don't come out until the day warms to at least 60 degrees. "If I can wear a T-shirt it's good butterflying," said David Hagen, member of the North American Butterfly Association's Eugene-Springfield chapter.

Butterfly watchers tend to be gentle people, too. Some practice catch-and-release, which allows them to net butterflies, gently scoop them into a clear cup, examine them — and then set them free again.

"I'm sorry we're disturbing

you," Kemp said upon liberating a tiny Eastern tailed-blue. "You are so cute."

For some butterfly watchers, even a gentle netting is too disturbing, and they advocate butterflying with special binoculars that feature a short focal point. A picture with a date and time stamp is enough for verification that they saw the species.

In the west Eugene wetlands, the butterfly watchers saw three common wood-nymphs before they even left the parking lot. In a half-mile walk, they spotted 39 butterflies belonging to a half dozen species.

The outing, one of three that day, was for the purpose of an annual count, which the organization compiles and scientists can use to establish the range of butterflies and the characteristics of their habitat.

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