

Bull trout lawsuit targets 26 dams in Columbia River Basin

Environmentalists claim Endangered Species Act violations

By KEITH RIDLER
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — More than two dozen dams operating in Idaho, Oregon, Washington state and Montana are harming bull trout and violating the Endangered Species Act, an environmental group says.

A federal lawsuit filed by the Alliance for the Wild Rockies this week in Portland names the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Bonneville Power Administration as defendants. The alliance says the three federal agencies have failed to complete required consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on how to operate 26 dams in areas designated as critical bull trout habitat.

The group is asking a judge to force the agencies to complete those consultations that could lead to changes at the dams benefiting the federally protected bull trout.

"We're just trying to get them to do what they promised us they would do," said Mike Garrity, executive director of the Missoula, Montana-based Alliance for the Wild Rockies.

The dams cited in the lawsuit include the four large dams that span



Bart Gamett/U.S. Forest Service

A bull trout in the Little Lost River in Idaho. The environmental group, the Alliance for the Wild Rockies, filed a federal lawsuit contending 26 dams operating in Idaho, Oregon, Washington state and Montana are harming bull trout and violating the Endangered Species Act.

the Columbia River where it forms the border between Oregon and Washington state. Four Snake River dams in Washington state are also named. Idaho and Montana have two dams each named in the lawsuit, and additional dams are listed in Ore-

gon's Willamette Basin, which feeds into the Columbia River.

"Defendants have failed to protect and prevent adverse modification of certain rivers and streams designated as bull trout critical habitat," the lawsuit says.

Scott Lawrence, spokesman for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said the agency doesn't comment on pending litigation. Kevin Wingert, spokesman for Bonneville Power Administration, said the agency was reviewing the lawsuit and didn't

have an immediate comment. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation didn't return a call from The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Specifically, the lawsuit contends the agencies have failed to write biological assessments for many of the dams pertaining to bull trout and required following the 2010 designation of critical habitat for the species in the four states and a small portion of Nevada.

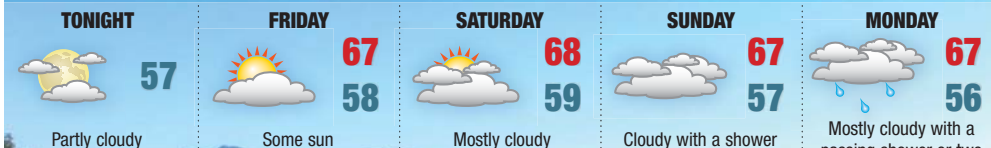
The lawsuit also says the agencies, whether biological assessments have been written or not, haven't taken the next required step and consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on how best to manage the dams to benefit bull trout.

"At some point the alliance felt we needed to bring this into court to have these schedules brought into play and have these things done," said Timothy Bechtold, an attorney representing the alliance.

Bull trout evolved with salmon after the last ice age and preyed on young salmon and salmon eggs. But bull trout have declined along with salmon, and they were listed as threatened in the lower 48 in 1999. Bull trout now only occupy about 60 percent of their former range.

Threats to the cold-water species include warming water caused by climate change, isolated populations, hybridization with non-native brook trout, and competition from non-native lake trout, according to experts.

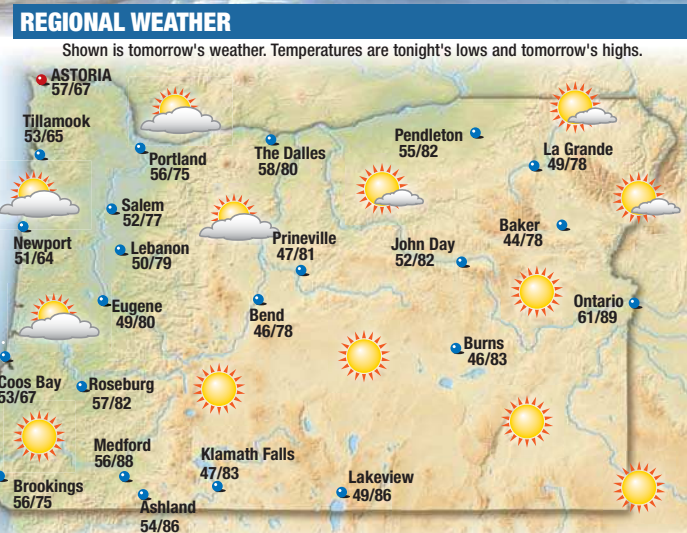
FIVE-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA



ALMANAC table with weather statistics for Astoria through Wednesday.

SUN AND MOON table with sunset and sunrise times for Astoria.

REGIONAL WEATHER



UNDER THE SKY section with tonight's sky forecast.

REGIONAL CITIES table with weather data for various cities.

TOMORROW'S TIDES table with high and low tide times for Astoria.

TOMORROW'S NATIONAL WEATHER section with a map of the US showing weather systems.

NATIONAL CITIES table with weather data for major cities across the US.

Astoria Police to join pedestrian safety enforcement program

The Daily Astorian

Astoria Police will have extra officers on duty on Monday to participate in a pedestrian safety enforcement program.

The program is in conjunction with Oregon Impact, a non-profit that provides educational experiences on ending impaired and distracted driving.

Officers will act as pedes-

trians crossing at marked and unmarked crosswalks. They will focus on drivers that fail to yield.

In addition, officers will be watching for vehicles that pass another vehicle that has stopped for a pedestrian in a crosswalk. Officers will enforce other traffic violations that are witnessed during the enforcement period.

The fine for failing to stop and remain stopped for a pedes-

trian or for passing a vehicle that is stopped at a crosswalk for a pedestrian is \$260. The goal is to increase the safety of all pedestrians and drivers in and around Astoria. The program is paid for by grant money awarded to Astoria Police by Oregon Impact.

For more information, contact Astoria Police Sgt. Brian Aydt at the police department or by phone at 503-325-4411.

Two dead after crash south of Vernonia

The Daily Astorian

Two people died Wednesday afternoon when their pickup trucks collided and caught fire on Highway 47 south of Vernonia.

Oregon State Police responded to the crash at about 3:23 p.m. Troopers saw two Ford F-150 pickups that were fully engulfed in fire and

had been involved in the rear head-on crash.

One of the pickups was found in the southbound lane and the other was on the southbound shoulder, according to state police.

Both drivers died. Their names have not yet been released.

State police said it is possible some bystanders stopped at

the crash and left prior to the arrival of emergency responders and troopers. Any possible witnesses are asked to contact the Oregon State Police dispatch center at 503-375-3555. Trooper Billy Bush is the lead investigator for the crash.

Highway 47 was closed near the crash scene and the Oregon Department of Transportation had a detour set up.

Bill would require probes of rail accidents

By KRISTENA HANSEN
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Oregon U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden are sponsoring new legislation that would require a fed-

eral investigation into every oil train derailment and also clarify federal transportation officials' moratorium power on railway traffic following such incidents.

The bill is the latest effort in Oregon leaders' push for a

crackdown on the transportation of oil by railway after the fiery June derailment of a Union Pacific oil train on the Oregon side of the Columbia River in Mosier, tiny town about 70 miles east of Portland.

LOTTERIES

OREGON Wednesday's Pick 4: 1 p.m.: 2-5-6-3 4 p.m.: 0-1-6-3 7 p.m.: 0-3-4-2 10 p.m.: 9-8-5-1 Wednesday's Powerball: 7-18-24-30-32-46 Estimated jackpot: \$7.4 million Wednesday's Powerball: 3-15-29-54-57, Powerball: 10 Estimated jackpot: \$333 million

WASHINGTON Wednesday's Daily Game: 2-9-8 Wednesday's Hit 5: 14-17-20-31-36 Estimated jackpot: \$250,000 Wednesday's Keno: 01-05-10-11-20-23-26-27-28-36-39-42-44-54-56-59-67-75-78-80 Wednesday's Lotto: 12-20-26-30-37-38 Estimated jackpot: \$2.3 million Wednesday's Match 4: 01-03-04-09

PUBLIC MEETINGS

THURSDAY Seaside Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 1225 Avenue A. Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.

DEATH

July 12, 2016 GRIFFITH, Danny, 65, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

SCOREBOARD

SPORTS SCHEDULE table with today's Seaside Baseball Tournament and other events.

OBITUARY POLICY

The Daily Astorian publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include a small photo and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. The deadline for all obituaries is 9 a.m. the business day prior. Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Death notices and upcoming services will be published at no charge. Notices must be submitted by 9 a.m. the day of publication.

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