



Lyra Fontaine/The Daily Astorian

Dalin D'Alessandro from Portland State University and Tiffany Boothe from the Seaside Aquarium take measurements of the dead whale at Oswald West State Park.

Researchers examine dead whale

By LYRA FONTAINE
The Daily Astorian

ARCH CAPE — Slightly north of the surfers and hikers, a small team from the Seaside Aquarium and Portland State University examined the remains of a whale at Oswald West State Park Thursday morning. Curious passers-by stopped to take pictures and ask questions.

The dead humpback washed ashore at the state park's Short Sand beach on Tuesday. It originally beached in nearby Arch Cape on Friday, before washing back out to sea.

The team hopes to find some clues as to why the whale died, which may be challeng-

ing. Keith Chandler, the general manager of the Seaside Aquarium, said most of the whale's internal organs are gone after it blew up, and it has been dead for a while.

Portland State University biology research assistant Dalin D'Alessandro and Seaside Aquarium employees Tiffany Boothe and Mollie Schmidt measured the whale and will take blubber and skin samples.

"We are looking for external signs of trauma and entanglement and possible hemorrhage by cutting through the blubber layer," D'Alessandro said, adding that they are examining exposed parts of the whale, conducting a "limited nec-

ropsy" due to not having heavy equipment.

The whale is about 38 feet long and is missing its tail.

"Its tail was severed by something, probably after it was already dead," Chandler said.

Oswald West State Park will likely be its final resting place, since the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has decided to leave the whale and let nature take its course. However, when larger storms hit the coast over the next months or weeks, what's left of the mammal could wash back out to sea, Boothe said. It may take longer to decay in cooler weather. State park staff will provide educational talks about the whale at 1 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

New York firm gets \$1 million contract to review ODOT

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — The state has awarded a nearly \$1 million contract to New York-based McKinsey & Co. to conduct a long-awaited management review of the Oregon Department of Transportation before lawmakers approve a transportation package in 2017.

State officials in late July nixed a previous contract with John L. Craig after revelations about his close ties with ODOT and an unearthed email showing he had sought to replace the agency's director.

Lawmakers have said they want an independent, third party review to ensure the department is operating efficiently before they approve a transportation package in 2017. That legislation — one of Gov. Kate Brown's priorities as governor — could hike gas taxes and fees on drivers and funnel hundreds of millions of dollars in additional funding to the agency.

In an effort to get a review finished in time for the 2017 session, the Department of Administrative Services launched an emergency process for selecting a new contractor.

Brown selected McKinsey based on the recommendations of a state procurement team, said Bryan Hockaday, a press secretary in Brown's office.

"McKinsey had the most responsive proposal, and they are a national company recommended for their expertise," Hockaday said.

McKinsey has 25 days to deliver its work plan for the review and until the end of February to submit a final product, Hockaday said.

The state reached out to several firms with experience in management reviews and received proposals from McKinsey and Boston Consulting Group, Hockaday said.

Craig, who won the original \$350,000 contract to do the review, oversaw the agency's \$1.3 billion outsourced bridge repair and replacement program for six years. He stepped down as program manager of Oregon Bridge Development Partners just 15 months ago.

After questions arose whether Craig's connections with ODOT employees presented a conflict of interest, a transportation commissioner dug up an old email from Craig in which he appeared to be seeking agency Director Matt Garrett's job.

Tammy Baney, chairwoman of the Oregon Transportation Commission, received the job solicitation email from Craig in January.

She said she didn't read the entirety of its contents until after Craig landed the contract for the ODOT review, when she recalled he had previously reached out to her. After reading the email in July, she recommended that state officials revoke his contract.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Big email hack doesn't exactly send the message Yahoo needed

Attack a hit on a struggling brand

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Yahoo has been struggling for years to keep people coming back to its digital services such as email. That challenge just got more daunting after hackers stole sensitive information from at least 500 million accounts.

The startling breach disclosed Thursday is believed to be the largest to hit a single email provider. The security breakdown risks magnifying Yahoo's preexisting problems — specifically, that it is losing users, traffic and the advertising revenue that follows both, to rivals such as Google and Facebook.

Some snarky online commentators quipped that the hack would have been far more devastating if people actually still used the company's services. While there's some truth to that observation, millions around the world still rely on Yahoo mail and other services, and are now potentially at risk of identity theft or worse.

Losing users

And if these people give up on Yahoo as a result, the consequences for the company itself — now scheduled to become part of Verizon as soon as its \$4.8 billion deal closes — could also be dire. "Yahoo may very well be facing an existential crisis," said Corey Williams, senior director of products and marketing at the computer security firm Centrifry.

Yahoo was already facing a steep decline in email traffic, despite CEO Marissa Mayer's efforts to upgrade the service in order to foster more user loyalty. In July, 161 million people worldwide used Yahoo email on personal computers, a 30 percent decline from the same time in 2014, when the breach first occurred. That's according to the latest data from the research firm comScore. By contrast, Google's rival Gmail service saw desktop users rise 9 percent to nearly 429 million over the same period.

The email breach raises questions about Yahoo's ability to maintain secure and effective services, particularly since it's been laying off staff and trimming expenses to counter a steep drop in revenue over the past eight years.

At the time of the break-in, Yahoo's security team was led by Alex Stamos, a respected industry executive who left last year to take a similar job at Facebook.

Once more unto the breach

Yahoo didn't explain what took so long to uncover a heist that it blamed on a "state-sponsored actor" — parlance for a hacker working on behalf of a foreign government.

The Sunnyvale, California, company declined to explain how it reached its conclusions about the attack for security reasons, but said it is working with the FBI and other law enforcement. Yahoo began investigating a possible breach in July, around the time the tech site Motherboard reported that a hacker who uses the name "Peace" was trying to sell account information belonging to 200 million Yahoo users.

Yahoo didn't find evidence of that reported hack, but additional digging later uncovered a far larger, allegedly state-sponsored attack.

"We take these types of breaches very seriously and will determine how this occurred and who is responsible," the FBI said in a Thursday statement.

Most accounts ever stolen

The Yahoo theft represents the most accounts ever stolen from a single email provider, according to computer security analyst Avivah Litan with the technology research firm Gartner Inc.

"It's a shocking number," Litan said. "This is a pretty big deal that is probably going to cost them tens of millions of dollars. Regulators and lawyers are going to have a field day with this one."

Yahoo says it has more than 1 billion monthly users,

although it hasn't disclosed how many of those people have email accounts.

The data stolen from Yahoo includes users' names, email addresses, telephone numbers, birth dates, scrambled passwords, and the security questions — and answers — used to verify an account holder's identity. The company said the attacker didn't get any information about its users' bank accounts or credit and debit cards.

Security experts say the Yahoo theft could hurt the affected users if their personal information is mined to break into other online services or used for identity theft. All affected users will be notified about the theft and advised how to protect themselves, according to the company.

Yahoo also is recommending that all users change their passwords if they haven't done so since 2014. If the same password is used to access other sites, it should be changed too, as should any security questions similar to those used on Yahoo.

The Verizon impact

News of the security lapse could cause some people to have second thoughts about relying on Yahoo's services, raising a prickly issue for the company as it tries to sell its digital operations to Verizon.

That deal, announced two months ago, isn't supposed to close until early next year. That leaves Verizon with wiggle room to renegotiate the purchase price or even back

out if it believes the security breach will harm Yahoo's business. That could happen if users shun Yahoo or file lawsuits because they're incensed by the theft of their personal information.

Verizon said it still doesn't know enough about the Yahoo break-in to assess the potential consequences. "We will evaluate as the investigation continues through the lens of overall Verizon interests, including consumers, customers, shareholders and related communities," the company said in a statement.

Delay of sale?

At the very least, Verizon is going to need more time to assess what it will be getting into if it proceeds with its plans to take over Yahoo, said Scott Vernick, an attorney specializing in data security for the law firm Fox Rothschild.

"This is going to slow things down. There is going to be a lot of blood, sweat and tears shed on this" Vernick said. "A buyer needs to understand the cybersecurity strengths and weaknesses of its target these days."

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