

# Flooding, landslides rock the North Coast

Crews are scrambling to cover slides

By ERICK BENDEL  
The Daily Astorian

Stormy weather is causing landslides and disrupting traffic on the North Coast.

Beerman Creek has flooded U.S. Highway 101 in Seaside, prompting the Oregon Department of Transportation to close the highway this morning to all vehicles.

Department crews are also clearing away several landslides, according to Mark Buffington, ODOT District 1 manager.

A landslide on U.S. Highway 103, in a woody area about 100 feet from Highway 26, has closed traffic at milepost 8.78. The slide caused trees to fall on power lines. Witnesses reported smoking and flames. The department doesn't yet know the status of the incident and is waiting for the public utility district to shut off the power.

The biggest landslide the department is working on closed Oregon Highway 47 at milepost 2, just outside Clatskanie.

Another slide on Oregon Highway 47 at milepost 50, near Pittsburg, briefly closed the highway there. It has since reopened.

A slide on Oregon Highway 202 is blocking the road at milepost 22.

ODOT has closed the road and the public utility district is heading there now to shut the power off. The trees are smoking there as well, Buffington said.

"Generally what happens is, when we get 3 1/2 inches of rain all at once, this is pretty much what we do, is we run around and we chase these slides," Buffington said.

A coastal flood advisory will be in effect for the north Oregon and south Washington coasts today. The advisory will be in effect for minor tidal flow in low-lying coastal areas.

A flood warning is currently in effect for the Nehalem River near Foss until Saturday morning. The river is expected to crest at 19 feet, the National Weather Service said. Once the river rises above 18 feet, widespread flooding of low-lying areas will begin. The town of Nehalem likely will see street flooding later tonight.

Tides could reach close to 12 feet beginning at 11 a.m., the weather service said. Rivers draining the coastal range also will rise significantly, which will exacerbate the high tides.

Low-lying areas along Highway 101 and the lower reaches of coastal rivers may experience minor overflow. Seaside and Nehalem may see some of the most flooding, the weather service said.

High winds are also posing danger on the North Coast.

# EPA finalizes agreement with Nygaard's on wetlands violations

Company illegally filled near airport

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has finalized an agreement with prominent local forester Martin Nygaard and Nygaard Land LLC to restore more than 70 acres of former woody wetlands illegally filled in for pastures near the Astoria Regional Airport. The company will also pay a \$62,924 fine.

Nygaard Land filled a northern portion of about 24 acres in 2014, and a second parcel of about 50 acres in 2015, in both instances without a federal Clean Water Act permit. The fill destroyed the wetlands and 3,500 feet worth of tidal inlets, which the company will have to recreate.

The violations came to light after the reopening of U.S. Highway 101 Business, which runs next to the property. The highway had been closed for repairs to the Lewis and Clark Bridge.

"Work was originally scheduled for last fall, but heavy autumn rains pushed the restoration activities back until spring," a release from the Environmental Protection Agency said. "Work at the site will involve heavy equipment working in the fragile wetland habitat to remove culverts and other structures, while also restoring filled tidal channels."

The company is required to complete the restoration by the end of May. Most of the land



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

Nygaard Land LLC's violation of the Clean Water Act by filling wetlands without a permit came to light after U.S. Highway 101 Business, which runs adjacent to the site, reopened following repairs to the Lewis and Clark Bridge.

will be left to restore naturally, while the company will revegetate more than 2 acres, including the tidal inlet connecting to the Lewis and Clark River.

"The river is home to bottom-feeding sturgeon, which is a popular sport fish in the area," the EPA's release said. "It is also home to an extensive salmon repopulation program. The river also supports runs of wild steelhead and cutthroat trout. Each of these species depend on cold, clean, oxygen-rich water to survive and use tidal channels and wetlands for feeding and rearing their young."

Yvonne Vallette, a wetlands coordinator for the EPA in Portland, said the company will be allowed to remove several more trees near the border with

the airport because of air traffic concerns, leaving them on site as habitat features. She said the EPA will require the company to submit annual monitoring reports, and will keep watch on the site over the next decade.

Nygaard and his companies

have previously run afoul of the Department of State Lands and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for filling wetlands in Hammond in 2009 and Seaside in 2007. The agencies deferred the case to the EPA based on the past violations.

# Cannon Beach officers honored for Goodding response

Police chief, officers receive commendations

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn and Cannon Beach Police officers were among those honored at a ceremony for first responders this week at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

Schermerhorn, a former Seaside police officer, was among the hundreds of first responders who attended a private memorial on Monday for Goodding, who was shot and killed in the line of duty trying to apprehend Phillip Max Ferry on a felony warrant one year ago.

Goodding's death brought an outpouring of support from the community and emergency responders around the nation, including members of the Cannon Beach Police, who assisted Seaside Police in the aftermath.

Schermerhorn and officers were honored for their "valued contribution after the loss of our beloved officer," Seaside Police Chief Dave Ham said.

Lt. Chris Wilbur, Officer Josh Gregory, Officer Seth Collins and Cpl. Joseph Bowman also received commendations.

At Tuesday's City Council meeting, Wilbur received special recognition for his work

as the liaison with agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to track down the source of the handgun used to kill Goodding. As a result of that investigation, Jamie Lee Jones pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Jones's sentencing is set for March 27.

On Wednesday, Seaside's chief thanked Schermerhorn for his "continuing support, not only to the Seaside Police Department, but the Goodding family," Ham said. "He and his wife have both been tremendous liaison and support and friends of the family. I know Amy (Goodding) is appreciative of that, as we are at the department."

"We were honored to help

them and we'd certainly do anything to help them in the future," Schermerhorn said. "It was a pretty dark time for all of us. I was proud of the community and all the support we got from the different agencies."

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