

## WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

## S. Korea's leader willing to visit North, talk to US, China

SEOUL, South Korea — New South Korean President Moon Jae-in said as he took office today that he was open to visiting rival North Korea under the right conditions to talk about Pyongyang's aggressive pursuit of nuclear-tipped missiles.

Moon's softer stance on North Korea could create friction with Washington, which has swung from threats of military action to hints of dialogue as it seeks to formulate a policy under President Donald Trump.

South Korea's first liberal leader in a decade, Moon also said he'll "sincerely negotiate" with the United States, Seoul's top ally, and China, South Korea's top trading partner, over the contentious deployment of an advanced U.S. missile-defense system in southern South Korea. The system has angered Beijing, which says its powerful radars allow Washington to spy on its own military operations.

In a speech at the National Assembly, Moon pledged to work for peace on the Korean Peninsula amid growing worry over the North's expanding nuclear weapons and missiles program.

"I will quickly move to solve the crisis in national security. I am willing to go anywhere for the peace of the Korean Peninsula — if needed, I will fly immediately to Washington. I will go to Beijing and I will go to Tokyo. If the conditions shape up, I will go to Pyongyang," Moon said.

## Far fewer refugees entering US despite travel ban setbacks

AUSTIN, Texas — Somali refugee Mohamoud Saed was elated when he learned that his wife and eight children had completed the lengthy refugee application process that would allow them to join him in the U.S., reuniting the family for the first time in seven years.

But the Saeds never made the trip to the Atlanta suburbs because their travel documents expired during the legal wrangling over President Donald Trump's executive orders to limit the refugee program and ban travel from several countries, including Somalia. They are now living in a refugee camp in Ethiopia, desperate for a permanent, peaceful home.

The family's case illustrates how Trump's travel bans have caused the number of refugees coming into the U.S. to plummet in the last two months, despite his executive orders largely being blocked in the courts. The number of refugees arriving in the U.S. dipped to 2,070 in March, which was a six-year low except for a period in 2013 when the federal government was shut down. The figure was slightly higher in April, 3,200, but it was still much lower than the months preceding Trump's order.

An executive order signed by Trump in January decreased the refugee limit from 110,000 to 50,000 this fiscal year, but the cap was not blocked in court until mid-March. That caused the State Department to tightly rein in monthly arrivals when the cap was in effect.

## Trump to meet top Russian diplomat at the White House

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump will meet today with Vladimir Putin's top diplomat at the White House, officials say, marking the highest level, face-to-face contact with Russia of the American leader's young presidency. It would also signal that the two countries have improved ties that Trump recently described as being at an "all-time low."

Trump's talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will take place after the Russian's meetings earlier in the day with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

## Coos County to vote on block to LNG project

By JES BURNS  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

PORTLAND — Voters in Coos County are considering a May ballot measure that would block the Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas project.

The measure is a product of the community-rights movement, which broadly aims to give local communities final say over corporate projects that affect them.

The Coos County measure specifically targets and bans fossil fuel transport through the county, except when it is intended for local use. It establishes a county-wide bill of rights that guarantees a "sustainable energy future" and the rights of nature to thrive.

"What we've been doing isn't really working," says measure co-petitioner Mary Geddry. "So we have to get to a point where a community can say, 'We're not going to negotiate how many toxins or poisons we're willing to accept in the air,' which is what happens when you work through the regulatory process."

The Coos County measure and larger community-rights movement stem from a feeling of frustration and powerlessness when faced with controversial industry activity.

"We are being abused for corporate profit. That is not acceptable. I don't think that's acceptable in any community," said Nancy Ward, a board member of the state community rights umbrella group, Oregon Community Rights Network.

## Trump support

The Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas export terminal and pipeline project is owned by the Canadian company Veresen. Federal energy regulators blocked the project last year, but the company has reapplied for permits. The Trump Administration has voiced support for the project, though the final decision will fall to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Support for the project has been mixed. Proponents tout job creation and economic



Jes Burns/OPB

"Hike the Pipe" supporters on Rogue River show opposition to the Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas project last year.

development. Some opponents don't want additional fossil fuel development; others oppose the probable use of eminent domain (the forced taking of private property) by a foreign corporation along the pipeline route.

A similar measure in Lincoln County would block aerial pesticide spraying. Residents in Columbia County are using the community rights framework to try to block oil trains. Local organizers there are currently collecting signatures to put that measure on the next ballot.

Coos Bay Mayor Joe Benetti is a committee member of Save Coos Jobs, a PAC formed to oppose the Coos County measure. He says he understands the feelings of powerlessness supporters of the measure feel.

"I totally agree with some of their sentiment that they want to make sure they have a discussion in this. And I think they have and I think they need to continue to do that," he said.

But Benetti says this measure is not the way to accomplish those goals.

"It's going to give a wrong impression that we're not open for business," he says.

## For and against

The Coos County measure has drawn major attention from the corporate backers of the Jordan Cove Project. As of May 5, Jordan Cove Energy Project LP has contributed nearly \$360,000 to "no" campaign.

By contrast the committee

that federal laws supersede state and local laws. And that's a real foundation to our legal structure," said Greg Dotson, a law professor at the University of Oregon.

Congress and the federal government have the authority to regulate interstate commerce — things like natural gas pipelines.

"This ballot initiative is simply not going to be able to wrest that authority away," he said, adding it would likely not stand up if challenged in court.

But Dotson said there is some uncertainty, because the measure contains a severability provision — meaning even if a court strikes down a piece of the measure, the other provisions would still stand.

"It's not clear to me what would be left, so you could end up with some activities withstanding judicial scrutiny that would create certain unlawful acts," Dotson said.

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## Cannon Beach: Clashes over supervisory control

Continued from Page 1A

Instead, the city will consider a 3 percent rate increase to cover normal operational costs, as well as transferring up to \$250,000 and \$275,525 for water and wastewater capital projects, according to a draft of the budget.

Public Works Director Dan Grassick said that any rate increase after this fiscal year will be considered after the public works committee finishes reviewing the master plans and rate structure, which would have increased water bills from about \$52 a month to \$70.

"That is a very complex and multifaceted discussion that will need to involve an in-depth and detailed discussion with the full council, and given this is Cannon Beach, with the greater residential and business community before any decisions about a potential rate increase are decided upon," Grassick said in an email.

## Butting heads

During a special meeting Tuesday, Grassick and members of the public works committee did find common ground on projects such as replacing brittle water lines,

upgrading outdated pump stations and fixing sand filtration systems.

But there were clashes over the necessity and cost of a supervisory control and data acquisition system, called SCADA, that would automate data-point collection and give remote access to operators.

"I think we should be cautious and take slow steps into this instead of all at once," committee member Les Wierison said.

Grassick reminded the committee to think of the plan more like a 20-year wish list to work off slowly. The advantage of a plan like this is so that when it is submitted to the state, there is evidence to say the city has a plan to solve a known problem, Grassick said. That in turn helps keep a city's insurance rates low.

"You want to replace your system every 80 to 100 years," Grassick said. "That is an industry goal. It's about resiliency."

While the committee agreed many of the projects were necessary, they didn't feel comfortable recommending to City Council a rate increase that committee member Carolyn Propst said felt problematic.

"For the past four years, the average amount of water used

per household has been 4,270 gallons. But in the rate study, it was based on 3,270 gallons," she said. "Fundamental assumptions were not reconciled between actual usage and that is my main concern. How can the amount of water we use be that different from one year?"

## Next steps

The public works committee will now spend the next week preparing what they will recommend to the City Council to adopt at the next council meeting. But in the long term, the committee will need to spend time reviewing priorities and looping back with consul-

tants about alternatives, Grassick said.

"Those decisions will drive what rates may look like," Grassick said.

Some on the committee believe that many of the projects included in the master plans should be paid for with a general obligation bond rather than revenue bonds from rates.

"G.O. bonds are something the people can vote for," Wierison said. "And it's the best way to have second-home owners pay their fair share."

It's a strategy that has worked in the past. In 2012, voters in Cannon Beach passed a bond to construct the wastewater treatment facility.

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