

Seaside, Gearhart firefighters help combat California wildfires

Local crews battle blazes

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Five members of the Seaside Fire Department and three members of the Gearhart Fire Department have joined the Clatsop County Task Force and crews from throughout the West to battle wildfires in Northern California.

On Thursday, the firefighters headed to Santa Rosa, according to Gearhart firefighter Chad Sweet.

This summer, California sent resources to Oregon to fight blazes. Oregon firefighters want to “return the favor,” Sweet said.

Gearhart Fire Chief Bill Eddy is among Gearhart firefighters in California. The Gearhart Fire Department has had the role of looking for and extinguishing spot fires that can easily flare back up after the initial fire was dissolved, his sister, Melissa Eddy said.

All strike teams the Oregon State Fire Marshal has sent south to assist with the wildfires in California are actively engaged on a 24-hour work cycle protecting homes and other structures.



Submitted Photo

Seaside firefighters join crews fighting California blazes.

On Saturday, California fire officials sent an additional request for strike teams from Oregon to assist with fires burning near Chino in Southern California.

In addition to Oregon, resources have come from Washington state, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, and Arizona.

“Take the time to thank any of your volunteers,” Seaside City Manager Mark Winstanley said. “It’s a very, very serious fire and very difficult to handle. Keep them in your prayers.”



Submitted Photo

Gearhart firefighters join the Clatsop County Task Force in fighting California wildfires.

Columbia, Snake dam rulings could be overturned by Congress

By CASSANDRA PROFITA
Oregon Public Broadcasting

A bill sponsored by several U.S. House lawmakers from the Northwest aims to overturn two recent court decisions on Columbia and Snake river dams.

Last year, U.S. District Court Judge Michael Simon rejected the federal plan for managing dams to protect salmon in the Columbia River Basin.

He then ordered federal agencies to spill more water through the dams to help fish and to consider removing Snake River dams.

A new bill in the U.S. House would allow Congress to overrule those decisions. House Bill 3144 reinstates

the rejected plan and cancels court orders for spilling water and analyzing dam removal.

At a hearing before the House Committee on Natural Resources Thursday, Washington state Republican Cathy McMorris Rodgers, one of the bill’s sponsors, said the goal is to reassert congressional authority over the dams and keep hydro-power affordable.

With Bonneville Power Administration already hiking electricity rates, she said, utilities are shopping for other options.

“Unnecessary litigation and unnecessary spill requirements by this Oregon judge only add onto the cost,” she said. “Dams and fish can coexist, but we must get out of the courtroom and allow fish recovery to continue.”

Nail spill disrupted traffic on New Youngs Bay Bridge

The Daily Astorian

The New Youngs Bay Bridge was closed to southbound traffic Saturday afternoon after thousands of nails fell out of a vehicle.

Authorities said the nails were spilled in front of the Premier Center off U.S. Highway 101 in Warrenton.

Drivers were directed to a detour via the U.S. Highway 101 Business Loop.

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