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ONE DOLLAR



Cheri Lerma, owner of Cheri's Cafe, grabs a pastry for a customer.

Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Oregon to challenge FCC on net neutrality

Several states plan to file a lawsuit over repeal

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said she plans to join a lawsuit to challenge the Federal Communications Commission's decision to repeal a rule barring internet providers from blocking or charging more for to access to one website over another.

The FCC voted 3-2 Thursday along party lines to scrap the rule approved in 2015. The commission's two Democrats voted against it.

**'WE ALL RELY
ON A FREE AND
OPEN INTERNET.'**

Ellen Rosenblum | Oregon attorney general

"The decision today by the FCC to reverse course on net neutrality will have lasting negative impacts for our economy and almost every aspect of our lives," Rosenblum said. "We all rely on a free and open Internet, and we will no longer have an even playing field if we start to incentivize Big Cable over other companies."

The vote came despite calls from state attorneys general, consumer advocates, tech executives and even some Republican lawmakers to postpone or cancel the decision.

Rosenblum spearheaded a letter from 18 state attorneys general to the FCC urging them to delay a vote until investigators could determine whether fraud was committed in the FCC comment process.

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's office has been investigating whether commenters to the FCC on the proposed rule change illegally used the identities of Americans from around the country to give feedback on net neutrality.

Schneiderman released new information Wednesday that his office had identified a total of 2 million fake comments on net neutrality to the FCC using stolen identities.

His office has a search engine where residents can look to see if their identity was used fraudulently in comments.

Oregon is one of more than a dozen states expected to join New York in launching a legal challenge of the FCC decision.

"I'm proud to stand up with other attorneys general and join New York to petition for review," Rosenblum said.

Supporters of the rule change argue that it will benefit consumers by spurring more competition between broadband providers and cutting internet providers' expenses.

FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel, one of the two FCC commissioners who voted against the rule change, told NPR's "The Takeaway" Tuesday that half of U.S. households have only one choice for a broadband provider.

PAYING THE PRICE

Delays in federal flood maps leave Cannon Beach businesses feeling the pinch of high insurance

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — For the past two years, Cheri Lerma of Cheri's Cafe & Cannon Beach Cookie has spent almost \$10,000 on flood insurance she knows she doesn't need.

As a part of a countywide study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, preliminary mapping in 2014 showed flood hazard zones shrinking by 27 percent in Cannon Beach. The changes take almost all of downtown out of a zone that requires mandatory flood insurance.

But the federal government has been slow to adopt new flood plain hazard maps, leaving some downtown businesses like Lerma's to pay thousands of dollars in insurance.

A letter of determination, which ratifies the new maps, is scheduled to be delivered later this month, said David Ratté, a regional engineer for FEMA. After the city receives the letter, it will go through a six-month adoption period before the maps will be recognized.

"In my mind, I've taken a match to \$10,000," Lerma said. "Everyone knows I'm not in the zone, but because it hasn't been ratified I have to pay for it. Some bigger companies could withstand this, but to me, a small business? Paying this much can knock me out of the park."



Steve Sinkler looks over his inventory at The Wine Shack in Cannon Beach.

Delays

The project to update flooding risks along the coast started more than seven years ago.

There are a few reasons FEMA's mapping project has faced delays, Ratté said. Concerns with the draft coastal analysis in the Columbia River Estuary, as well as assessments of a

levee in Warrenton, stalled creating preliminary maps. While Gearhart, Seaside and Cannon Beach raised no concerns about the maps, Ratté said separating out these communities from the estuary would have been costly and logistically difficult.

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'Protect our Puffins' sweatshirts raise money for scientific research



A puffin on Haystack Rock.

Lisa Sheffield

Data could help explain bird decline

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — In July, John Underwood donated his time and money to create and sell sweatshirts with the mission "Protect our Puffins" embedded on the front.

The goal was to raise the profile of and money for the Haystack Rock Awareness Program. It was his way of trying

to help after hearing how the tufted puffin population has declined for the past 20 years.

Almost six months later, the money raised from the sweatshirts — which totals more than \$4,000 — will help fund research to figure out why.

During a talk Wednesday at Cannon Beach Library, Shawn Stephenson, a wildlife biologist with the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex, gave a presentation about the town's iconic seabird.

Stephenson is waiting to hear back from a research grant that would allow him and other biologists to collect blood samples and

study migration patterns more thoroughly than any other study done in Oregon in the past couple of decades. If awarded, 80 percent of the money raised for the sweatshirts would go to match the grant.

"Getting that info gives us more power to get these birds onto the threatened species list, where they'll get more protections," Stephenson said. "There is something going on here — they're not just moving out."

Detecting the problem

The tufted puffin population

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