



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

The shrubland on the Skipanon Peninsula is populated by shotgun shells, the burned-out husks of cars and the occasional homeless camp.

Port: 'This project is one that makes a lot of sense'

Continued from Page 1A

the failed LNG project. But the land has largely remained an unofficial dumping ground and off-road course surrounded by dikes that connect Warrenton's trail system.

The Port shut off access to King Avenue, the main access road, in 2015 to curtail trespassing in the wake of multiple fires.

Tessa Scheller, a member of the Skipanon River Watershed Council, said the group had the land surveyed more than a decade ago. The council recently recommended the concept of flooding as a way to restore about 75 acres of prime off-channel salmon habitat while providing the Port and other agencies a badly

needed wetland mitigation bank.

"The last time the Port used this for commercial uses was in 1985," she said. "They assembled oil derricks there, then put them on ships. The Port hasn't had anything commercial going on there for a long, long time."

The Port's budget committee, in the process of crafting the agency's budget for the coming year, could allocate money for a feasibility study of the project. The watershed council is also considering paying for part of the study, Scheller said.

The feasibility would be studied by the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce, a group that works with willing landowners on projects to rehabilitate wetlands.

"This project is one that makes a lot of sense, but it's going to be expensive

and it's going to be a long process," said Denise Lofman, the director of the task force.

The task force would look at the costs of flooding the land while building up levees to protect surrounding property owners. Most of the task force's projects are funded by the Bonneville Power Administration to offset the impact of hydroelectric dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers, but a mitigation bank for the Port would require alternative funding.

The project could be expensive, but could also be a moneymaker for the Port, which recently paid more than \$260,000 for 1.5 acres worth of wetland mitigation credits from Warrenton Fiber to offset runway work at the Astoria Regional Airport. The Port has also used credits

from the Airport Mitigation Bank, created in the 1980s near the mouth of the Lewis and Clark River, to offset other developments.

The project could also help improve surrounding levees, Knight said, while leaving the Port land to develop along Harbor Drive and fronting the eastern bank of the Skipanon River. The Port and the task force have previously discussed similar Bonneville-funded projects.

For her part, Scheller thinks commercial development, wetlands and trails can all coexist on the peninsula, providing a multifaceted public benefit.

"As far as I know, this is the largest piece of publicly owned land (on the lower Columbia) that can be restored to what it once was," she said.

The Port of Astoria in 2015 blocked access to King Avenue and the land it owns on the Skipanon Peninsula.
The Daily Astorian



Painter: Was a second-generation fisherman

Continued from Page 1A

He was arrested in January for possession of heroin, tampering with physical evidence, driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving. An Astoria police officer allegedly saw Painter smoking heroin while driving, and he later attempted to hide the paraphernalia when pulled over. Last year, he was charged with heroin and cocaine possession, DUII and reckless driving for a 2016 crash.

An Astoria native, Painter was a second-generation fisherman who worked on a number of fishing boats, including as a captain. He was featured in several seasons of the Discovery Channel's "Deadli-

est Catch," during which he became skipper of the F/V Maverick. The popular show documents the lives of crab fishermen in the Bering Sea off Alaska.

"It's a crab boat. It's not a democracy. There's one guy in charge and now I'm that guy," he said at one point during the show, according to the "Deadliest Catch" fan site.

A host of fishermen weighed in on social media about Painter's death.

"My sincerest condolences to Capt. Blake's family, friends, crew, and all who loved him," Keith Colburn, captain of the F/V Wizard, wrote Tuesday on Twitter. "Fair winds and following seas, Captain. Rest easy; we have the watch."

Vaccinations: Reason for objection not required

Continued from Page 1A

disease. More than a dozen students in Lane County, including two at the University of Oregon in Eugene, contracted whooping cough earlier this spring, according to media reports. In December, about a dozen cases of the disease were reported at schools in Clark County, Washington, across the Columbia River from Portland.

The Oregon law requires parents who seek a nonmedical exemption to receive education about the risks of foregoing immunization from one of two sources. They can opt to submit documentation that they have watched an educational video on the health authority's website or have consulted with a health care provider. About 95 percent of

parents choose to provide documentation of watching the online video, de Assis Matthews said.

"That is not to say parents aren't talking to health care providers," she said. "Anecdotally, we are hearing from health care providers that they do have discussions with parents and if parents are still wanting to claim an exemption, the providers ask them to watch the online video."

Parents are not required to give a reason for their objection to immunizations.

The anti-vaccination movement dates back to 1998 when a reputable medical journal, The Lancet, published a study by British physician Andrew Wakefield who claimed there might be a link between the measles, mumps and rubella vaccination and autism,

though the study was subsequently and overwhelmingly debunked by the vast majority of researchers, according to a 2013 history by the Columbia Journalism Review.

Rates of autism continue to rise every year. The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed the development disorder affects 1 out of every 59 children in a count of 11 communities across the United States.

The scare over vaccinations started to gain momentum in 1999 when the Food and Drug Administration found that there was no evidence that thimerosal in vaccines was harmful but, as a precaution, recommended removing the ingredient from vaccines given to infants. The panic intensified in 2000 when former Brit-

ish Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife declined to disclose whether their son, Leo, had been immunized, according to the Columbia Journalism Review. Years later, the couple said he had, in fact, been vaccinated on schedule, the CJR reported.

Subsequent studies by the CDC have found no evidence to support a link between vaccines and autism.

In 2015, Oregon state Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton, proposed a law to eliminate philosophical exemptions to mandatory vaccines, but she later withdrew the legislation after hearing opposition from both Democrats and Republicans.

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