



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A private development group could help reinvigorate the East Mooring Basin, which has largely sat empty except for a small collection of commercial vessels and sea lions that haul out on docks during fish runs.

Developers offer new vision for the East Mooring Basin

Floating homes and a cruise ship terminal

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A development group led by Floyd Holcom, the owner of Pier 39, is behind a project near the Port of Astoria's East Mooring Basin that could involve float-

ing homes, a cruise ship terminal and a promenade.

Fishermens Wharf - Astoria LLC, which will present the project to the Port Commission on Tuesday, seeks a 50-year lease of the mooring basin, with multiple extension options.

Nik Sernande, a San Francisco-based architect who has worked with Holcom on the redevelopment of Pier 39, is the managing director of the company, which

formed last year. Holcom, who could not immediately be reached for comment, is a member of the company.

Sernande recently sent a letter to the Port Commission describing a public-private partnership to reinvigorate the marina, which is largely empty except for some commercial boats and sea lions that haul out during fish runs.

See BASIN, Page 7A

Scientists turn to saildrones to collect fish data along West Coast



Sebastien de Halleux

Scientists are using saildrones to capture data on fish populations.

New technology could improve accuracy

By HANNAH SIEVERT
The Daily Astorian

When fishermen pull in their hauls of Pacific hake from the ocean this summer, they will know how many fish they

can catch while still leaving enough to reproduce for future years.

Scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration believe their yearly count of fish populations can become even more accurate with the use of a new technology: saildrones.

Since launching two saildrones off Neah Bay, Washington, in early June and two more out of San Francisco two weeks ago, researchers have been fine-tuning how they use the remotely operated, solar- and wind-powered vehicles that are sailing south along the West Coast.

This is the first time NOAA has tried saildrones for data collection along the West Coast after experimenting in Alaska. If the 100-day expedition is successful, the technology could become a common way to capture information.

"We'll make recommendations based on how well it goes," said Larry Hufnagle, the project lead for NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center saildrone project. "Our hopes are very high. We think it's going to go well."

See SAILDRONES, Page 7A

'IT'S CONCEIVABLE THAT NEW ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY FOR REMOTELY SENSING FISH SPECIES COULD EVOLVE, THEN SAILDRONE-ONLY SURVEYS COULD THEN BE A POSSIBILITY.'

David Demer | leader of advanced survey technology at NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center

Housing administrator fires back at agency

Sims alleges retaliation

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

A top Northwest Oregon Housing Authority administrator who is on paid leave pending the results of an investigation has lodged a complaint against the agency with the state Bureau of Labor and Industries.

The complaint, filed Friday by deputy director Teresa Sims, claims Todd Johnston, the executive director, retaliated against her for complaints about his job performance.

Her allegations reveal details about ongoing investigations at the housing authority that had been shielded from public view.

The housing authority manages low-income housing in Clatsop, Tillamook and Columbia counties and provides rental assistance. Since Sims was appointed deputy director in 2011, she has supervised the federal housing choice voucher program staff and overseen human resources.

In May, Sims sent a letter to Scott Lee, the chairman of the housing agency's board, complaining about Johnston. The letter claimed that during his tenure as executive director, Johnston has mismanaged public funds, misused grant funds, engaged in negligent hiring practices and failed to conduct employee performance reviews.

The housing authority hired an outside firm to investigate Johnston.

Sims was placed on leave around the same time as the accusations against Johnston surfaced. A different outside firm began investigating whether Sims, in her role with the agency, had falsified records to allow her son and fellow employee, Benjamin Natividad, to receive public housing assistance when he was renting from his uncle.

Sims' complaint to the Bureau of Labor and Industries claims Johnston was misrepresenting federal regulations to "retaliate against me and to undermine my credibility in respect to the concerns I reported to the Board of Directors."

Johnston specifically claimed Sims falsified an income verification form on behalf of her son, according to Sims' account. Sims claims that both her and her son's signatures on the form were forged.

See HOUSING, Page 7A

Land steward finds a trail back home

Tomlinson works with the land trust

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

On Thursday afternoon, Austin Tomlinson was walking the derelict, overgrown railroad tracks along the Twilight Eagle Sanctuary near Knappa with his dog, Porter.

He stopped periodically and snapped photos as part of an annual monitoring effort to

EVERYDAY people

see how the land is evolving amid conservation.

Working as a land steward with the Columbia Land Trust is a dream come true, said Tomlinson, a South County native who left for his education in the applied sciences before slowly piecing together a living back home.

"When I left for college, I

knew I was going to be back here," he said. "It was just kind of like, 'How?' It took me six years until I found this opportunity."

After graduating from Seaside High School, Tomlinson left for college at Humboldt State University, where he earned a bachelor's in range-land sciences with a focus on soils. As a college student, he interned with the North Coast Land Conservancy, where he first took an interest in restoring and conserving natural environments.

See TOMLINSON, Page 7A



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Austin Tomlinson, a land steward with the Columbia Land Trust, surveys and takes photos of a conservation site at the Twilight Eagle Sanctuary east of Astoria.

