



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Smoky air: ‘This is a Western problem’

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“Four years ago we thought we might, but the issue that year turned out to be hurricane-like conditions in Seaside,” Floyd said.

If air quality remains unhealthy, organizers will defer to the judgment of the state Department of Environmental Quality, the Oregon Health Authority and the American Lung Association on coordinating an advisory that would let runners know the risks that come with breathing smoke “so participants can make an educated decision,” Floyd said.

Canceling the event would be unlikely, but possible depending on the severity of the smoke and the advice from the state, Floyd said. Organizers will work with runners with more severe health concerns on a case-by-case basis about a refund.

“Safety is always first,” Floyd said.

Kirsten Aird, the chronic disease programs manager at the Oregon Health Authority, said the most important thing a runner can do is check the Air Quality Index. If the area is marked unhealthy or higher, she recommends limiting outdoor activity altogether.

People making the decision to run should consider mitigating tactics like recirculating air in their vehicle, keeping doors closed, or carrying



Ollie Baker makes adjustments to a temporary bridge spanning U.S. Highway 101 in Seaside for Hood to Coast runners.

a rescue inhaler for those with asthma. “Listening to your body” is also recommended. Common side effects associated with smoke inhalation include watery eyes, shortness of breath and headaches.

But most importantly, Aird emphasized that runners should not rely on surgical masks or bandanas to filter out bad air. “We do feel really strongly about exposure,” she said.

While the smoke has been noticeable around Clatsop County, it has not had any apparent influence on visitor volume, according to local visitor centers.

“It’s not terribly bad here. We’re still seeing our parking lots fill up,” Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Director Jim Paino said.

But people are curious, Seaside Chamber of Commerce Director Brian Owen said, with calls coming in daily from peo-

ple looking for a refuge from the smoke.

“We’ve had a lot of tourists leave the metro area and come over here because we’re not as inundated, even though we still have some,” Owen said. “I think a lot of people think they are at the coast so they expect to not be experiencing any of that.”

While the effects of smoke on coastal tourism have yet to be seen, other regions of the state are starting to feel the impact, said Linea Gagliano, communications director for Travel Oregon. In southern Oregon, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival has had to cancel a record 22 shows due to wildfire smoke. At about \$60,000 per show, the festival is already feeling about \$1 million in losses.

Travel Oregon is trying to educate communities about different grant opportuni-

ties offered to help carry them through rough financial times. The marketing organization is also doubling down on promoting tourism in the offseason, as well as convincing Oregonians to take more in-state vacations to help offset losses incurred this summer.

“We’re trying to remain as nimble as possible, sharing information about who isn’t and is affected (by the smoke),” Gagliano said. “Their trip may not be impacted, so we are trying to raise awareness so visitors can make informed vacation decisions.”

But concerns about the long-term impacts of more frequent and intense fire seasons remain.

“This is a Western problem. We need to come together as the West and ask: How do we work on this together?” Gagliano said. “Outdoor recreation is huge out here, and we all need to raise awareness. Fires don’t care about borders, and we know smoke for sure doesn’t.”

This weekend, the forecasts for cooler temperatures and rain appear to be in Hood to Coast’s favor. But with wildfires becoming more prevalent and intense throughout the Pacific Northwest, outdoor events like the relay may have to be ready to adjust.

“Every year there’s something that’s a concern,” Floyd said. “Every year we prepare to handle it.”

Deal: ‘You better be thinking proactively’

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The major area of concern is a former McCall pipeline leaching petroleum into the Columbia between piers 1 and 2. Several solutions have been proposed over the years to remove the groundwater contamination, from a new bulkhead or a clay cap to leaching out contaminants through wells or solidifying them as rocks.

Hart Crowser, a consultant hired by the Department of Environmental Quality,

recently recommended a series of marine mattresses be laid along the slip and covered with rock riprap at a cost of \$3.2 million. Neither the Port nor the oil companies warmed to the solution.

The Port had previously recommended a wall be built across the slip to keep contamination out of the river. But Hart Crowser determined the solution was overly expensive and would not last through a large earthquake. Port commissioners shared their concerns that

anything less than a wall would not hold up to the area’s rough weather, potentially leaving the agency holding the bag if more contamination reaches the water.

Nobody would be off the hook if the new system fails, Coates said, and the slope would be designed specifically to withstand the area’s weather. Another reason for the slope is creating potential aquatic habitat, something the wall would not allow, Coates said.

“That is something we need

to consider for permitting by” the National Marine Fisheries Service, she said.

Thane Tienson, the Port’s attorney during much of the cleanup negotiations, said any solution also needs to take into account climate change.

“You better be thinking proactively about what sea level rise is going to do to coastal communities like my hometown of Astoria, Oregon, over the next 30 years before you commit yourself to something,” Tienson said.

Trump suggests outlawing deals with defendants

By ZEKE MILLER, CATHERINE LUCEY and JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump, incensed over a deal his longtime personal attorney Michael Cohen cut with prosecutors, says it might be better if “flipping” were illegal because people “just make up lies.”

Trump, in a television interview broadcast today, tried to play down his relationship with his longtime “fixer,” who claims the president directed a hush-money scheme to buy the silence of two women who say they had affairs with Trump.

The president contends Cohen only worked for him part-time and is accusing the lawyer of making up stories to reduce his legal exposure.

“I know all about flipping,” Trump told “Fox & Friends,” which taped the interview at the White House on Wednesday. “For 30, 40 years I’ve been watching flippers. Everything’s wonderful and then they get 10 years in jail and they — they flip on whoever the next highest one is, or as high as you can go.”

That tool “almost ought to be outlawed. It’s not fair,” Trump said, adding it creates an incentive to “say bad things about somebody ... just make up lies.”

Trump made the comments as his White House struggled to manage the fallout from Cohen’s plea deal and the conviction of Trump’s former campaign chairman Paul Manafort on financial charges. The president suggested that Cohen’s legal trouble stemmed from his other businesses, including involvement with the New York City taxi cab industry.

The back-to-back legal blows have raised speculation that Democrats would launch impeachment proceedings if they win the House of Representatives this fall. Trump argued the move could have dire economic consequences.

“If I ever got impeached, I think the market would crash. I think everybody would be very poor,” Trump said. He added: “I don’t know how you can impeach somebody who’s done a great job.”

Trump did not say whether he would pardon Manafort, but expressed “great respect” for him and argued that some of the charges “every consultant, every lobbyist in Washington probably does.”

Cohen, who says he won’t seek a pardon from Trump, pleaded guilty Tuesday to eight charges, including campaign finance violations that he said he carried out in coordination with Trump. Behind closed doors, Trump expressed worry and frustration that a man intimately familiar with his political, personal and business dealings for more than a decade

had turned on him.

Yet his White House signaled no clear strategy for managing the fallout. At a White House briefing, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders insisted at least seven times that Trump had done nothing wrong and was not the subject of criminal charges. She referred substantive questions to the president’s personal counsel Rudy Giuliani, who was at a golf course in Scotland. Outside allies of the White House said they had received little guidance on how to respond to the events in their appearances on cable news. And it was not clear the West Wing was assembling any kind of coordinated response.

In the interview, Trump argued, incorrectly, that the hush-money payouts weren’t “even a campaign violation” because he subsequently reimbursed Cohen for the payments personally instead of with campaign funds. Federal law restricts how much individuals can donate to a campaign, bars corporations from making direct contributions and requires the disclosure of transactions.

Cohen had said Tuesday he secretly used shell companies to make payments used to silence former Playboy model Karen McDougal and adult-film actress Stormy Daniels for the purpose of influencing the 2016 election.

Trump has insisted that he only found out about the payments after they were made, despite the release of a September 2016 taped conversation in which Trump and Cohen can be heard discussing a deal to pay McDougal for her story of a 2006 affair she says she had with Trump.

The White House denied the president had lied, with Sanders calling the assertion “ridiculous.” Yet she offered no explanation for Trump’s shifting accounts.

Trump’s national security adviser was pressed by a reporter during a news conference today in Geneva about whether he was concerned that Trump posed a security risk.

“Honestly, have a little faith in the American people who elected a president,” John Bolton said.

Manafort faces trial on separate charges in September in the District of Columbia that include acting as a foreign agent.

That Cohen was in trouble was no surprise; federal prosecutors raided his offices months ago. But Trump and his allies were caught off-guard when Cohen also pleaded guilty to campaign finance crimes, which, for the first time, took the swirling criminal probes directly to the president.

Both cases resulted, at least in part, from the work of special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russia’s attempts to sway voters in the 2016 election.

Caucus: Mitigation or adaptation may present commercial, job opportunities

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Climate change mitigation or adaptation may also present commercial and job opportunities on the coast.

Rising sea levels, for example, will mean coastal infrastructure such as roads will have to be moved or modified, but there may also be more opportunities to develop renewable energy and make irrigation technology more efficient.

State economist Mark McMullen noted that a carbon reduction policy targeting large commercial emitters of carbon would not have a huge direct impact on the coast relative to other parts of the state.

Any carbon tax or pricing plan “that passes the cost-benefit sniff test” will target big emitters first, McMullen said.

Coastal communities, then, would be more affected by any downstream costs such as residential energy and transportation fuel.

“This is where you see a disproportionate burden on all the rural communities, but in particular the coast,” McMullen said. “So, not only do coastal communities require more transportation fuel and heating fuel just because of the weather and the distances they have to travel, but more importantly, these are a bigger burden on low-income households because these expenses make up a lot more of their overall budget.”

McMullen noted some prior policy proposals have included tax subsidies and low-income energy assistance to offset some of those costs.

State Rep. Caddy McKeown, D-Coos Bay, said she felt carbon reduction and climate issues were important, but implored her colleagues to consider the effect of potential increases in residential and transportation energy costs for her constituents.

“Please, while you’re putting this together, understand that there doesn’t seem to be a whole lot of upside for a very poor, rural community who is older ... I need to be able to go to them honestly and say, ‘This is going to benefit you,’ and right now I don’t believe I can do that,” McKeown said. “I don’t see a huge upside for small, rural communities.”

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JEFFERY M. LEINASSAR
DMD, FAGD

503 325-0310 • 1414 Marine Drive, Astoria
www.smileastoria.com