



Photos by Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

Volunteers with the North Coast Land Conservancy plant 'seed bombs' at a coastal prairie restoration site in Clatsop County. The habitat is crucial for the threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly.

SEED BOMBS

Volunteers take **bombastic approach to restore prairie**

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

While sheep watched from a hillside, women and men unloaded grocery bags of bombs from the back of a pickup truck.

They carried the bombs to an exposed rectangle in the middle of a grassy prairie turned yellow and brown for the winter, where the earth was peeled back to reveal soft, sandy soil. Some people worked on hands and knees to plant the bombs one by one in the ground. Others stood, dropping bombs every few inches and pushing them in delicately with a booted foot.

They're hoping for an explosion on the Clatsop Plains.

No one has quite figured out how to restore Oregon's coastal prairies, unique habitat that is critical to the recovery of the threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly. But the seed bombs planted at Reed Ranch near Gearhart earlier this month may be a start.

Volunteers with the North Coast Land Conservancy planted 8,000 to 12,000 of the small globes of rust-colored clay stuffed with native seed. Plantings at Reed Ranch had failed previously, but the land conservancy saw some success at smaller plots and wanted to try on a larger scale again.

The bombs, project leaders theorize, will not only protect seeds from hungry birds, they will also keep the seeds from immediately blowing away, an issue that likely contributed to the failure last time, said Melissa Reich, the stewardship director for the land conservancy.

It's an experiment, Reich said, but



Volunteers with the North Coast Land Conservancy stop to examine a clump of dune goldenrod at a test site where the organization has successfully been able to grow plants native to the area's coastal prairie habitat.

one made even more important because of how difficult it can be to get enough seed and young plants to really make an impact on the prairie.

"This seed is very precious," she said.

Restoration work

The restoration work finds its focus around the silverspot butterfly, a small, reddish-orange insect with distinctive silver spots. They have declined or completely disappeared from sites within their range because of habitat loss.

See *Prairie*, Page A7



Eric Owen, land steward for the North Coast Land Conservancy, shows volunteers a sprouted seed bomb.

Fishery reports mostly positive

Astoria sees increase in landings, decrease in value

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

Astoria saw an increase in seafood landed into the community, but a dip in the overall value of the catch, according to federal fisheries reports released Thursday.

The two reports — one that looks at the economics of the nation's 2016 commercial and recreational fisheries and another that examines landing data and catch revenue in 2017 — paint a picture of U.S. fisheries that is, overall, positive.

Both the volume — 9.9 billion pounds of fish and shellfish landed by fishermen nationwide, an increase of 344 million pounds over 2016 — and the value of fishery landings — \$5.4 billion — increased in 2017, noted Ned Cyr, director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Science and Technology.

Seafood consumption also increased. "This report exemplifies the vital economic benefits provided by commercial and recreational fisheries to American communities nationwide," U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said of the report detailing landings and value.

"Every year, farmed and wild fisheries across the United States deliver food to our tables while safeguarding thousands of American jobs."

See *Fisheries*, Page A3

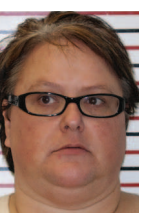
Thief gets reduced prison time

A change to the state's sentencing guidelines

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

A former Diamond Heating employee's 29-year prison sentence for stealing more than \$214,000 from the Seaside business was cut Thursday to just over 20 years.

The reduction came after the Oregon Court of Appeals ruled in May that the original sentence didn't account for changes to state sentencing guidelines.



Deana Lynn Freauff

See *Thief*, Page A7

Wauna Federal Credit Union expands

A new location planned for Astoria

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Wauna Federal Credit Union is moving in Astoria and opening a new branch in Seaside, part of a regional expansion.

The credit union recently purchased a vacant lot from the Lum family near Marine Drive and Fifth Street, where it plans a new two-story commercial building to open in 2020. The new location will replace Wau-

na's existing branch at the intersection of Columbia Avenue, Bond Street and Marine Drive, where the credit union has been located since 1979.

Wauna's branch in Astoria has become the most popular, with nearly 6,400 members banking there, separate from a branch inside Astoria Safeway hosting more than 1,300 members. The Uniontown location is hemmed in by traffic lights, limited parking and heavy surrounding traffic.



Robert Blumberg

"Astoria is outgrowing that facility, and that building is a historical building, so it's very difficult to expand there," said Wauna CEO Robert Blumberg. "There's a whole lot of hoops we have to jump through in order to expand or reconfigure the building. So we decided to go ahead and move the location."

Wauna moved its Warrenton branch in 2013 from the Youngs Bay Plaza to the North Coast Retail

See *Wauna*, Page A3



Wauna Federal Credit Union is moving its Astoria branch from a busy intersection in Uniontown to the corner of Marine Drive and Fifth Street.

The Daily Astorian

