

Bonneville Dam lock repairs keep barges on hold

A damaged concrete sill

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

Barge and elevator operators who rely on the Columbia River to transport millions of bushels of wheat to market say they hope a fix for a damaged concrete sill at the Bonneville Dam navigation lock will take place sooner rather than later.

“One nice thing is we’re 95% done harvesting, so I think we’ve all put the crop away,” said Damon Filan, manager of Tri-Cities Grain and a member of the Washington Grain Commission. “We’re all kind of hoping this will be a very temporary one-week or two-week outage.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Wednesday that the lock should be reopened by 10 a.m. on Sept. 30.

“It’s important to recognize the patience from our Columbia River users, who depend on this critical piece of infrastructure to run their businesses,” said Col. Aaron Dorf, the Army Corps’ Portland district commander.

“This lock closure is sig-



Megan Innes/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

A critical lock at Bonneville Dam has been shut down for repairs, meaning barges that shuttle millions of tons of wheat, wood and other goods to the Pacific Ocean for transport can’t move.

nificant, which is why our engineers, experts and contractors are working tirelessly to ensure we get the locks back in service as quickly as possible. It is not lost on anyone in the Portland district that this outage has tremendous impacts to Columbia River users,”

he said. “Between now and Sept. 30, our teams will be working around the clock to construct the new sill to restore Columbia River traffic.”

Three groups in the industry are the most impacted — grain shippers, transporters and exporters,

said Rob Rich, vice president of marine services at Shaver Transportation Co. in Portland.

Morrow County Grain Growers was slated to ship several barges this week, said grain merchant Brian Peiler.

“We’ll just have to wait

until the river opens back up and ship it then,” he said.

Some grain slated to be shipped is outside and some is in the elevator, he said. The grain that’s outside may need to be moved inside if the delay lasts more than a week, he said.

Fourteen commercial vessels are impacted by the lock closure, according to the U.S. Coast Guard’s Columbia River Waterways Management Division — seven from Tidewater Barge, four from Shaver Transportation and three from American Cruise Lines.

Shaver operates a fleet of 20 grain barges between Lewiston, Idaho, and export terminals on the lower Columbia River.

“This, of course, is a busy time of year postharvest,” Rich said.

Three Shaver barge tows are above Bonneville Dam 40 miles upstream from Portland and waiting to go through the locks. Ten barges are loaded.

They are tied off at the Fort Raines barge storage area above Bonneville Dam, awaiting transit through the locks when they reopen, Rich said.

“All that wheat is going to move” despite the delay,

Rich said.

The barges are closed-hatch and weather is moderate, so Rich doesn’t expect the delay to harm the grain.

“It is not uncommon for wheat to be in barges three or four weeks or more,” he said. “There isn’t a concern about quality degradation.”

Wheat exports have been slow due to trade wars and global competition, Filan said.

Overseas customers tend to purchase wheat several months out, he said.

“If it was a very long-term deal, then we’d have some challenges, because I’m not sure the rail could handle the demand,” he said.

Railroad tracks line the river gorge, but have much smaller capacity than barges. A four-barge tow carries 480,000 bushels of wheat, roughly the equivalent of 120 to 130 rail cars, Filan said.

About \$2 billion in commercial cargo travels the entire system annually, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It’s the No. 1 export gateway in the U.S. for wheat and barley and the No. 2 export gateway for corn.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

US expands hunting and fishing at national wildlife refuges

By KEITH RIDLER
Associated Press

The Trump administration said Tuesday that it is expanding hunting and fishing in 77 national wildlife refuges in a move that critics contend is deferring management to states and could harm wildlife.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said hunters and anglers can shoot and cast their rods on 2,200 square miles of federally protected land in 37 states, much of which is considered critical habitat for waterfowl and other birds to rest and refuel during their migration.

“This is the largest single effort to expand hunting and fishing access in recent history,” Interior Secretary David Bernhardt said last month before the changes were posted Tuesday in the Federal Register.

It’s the latest effort by the Trump administration to open public lands to recreation and industry, including oil and gas drilling, which critics say comes at the expense of the environment and wildlife.

President Donald Trump also has scaled back two sprawling national monuments in Utah, a move that opened the lands that were cut to potential drilling and mining. New plans for the monuments allow more grazing and recreation.

Hunting and fishing will be allowed at seven national wildlife refuges for the first time and expanded at 70 others. The agency, which also now permits it at 15 national fish hatcheries, said some 5,000 regulations have been eliminated or simplified to match state rules.

In the Pacific Northwest, 10 national wildlife refuges and national fish hatcheries have added or expanded hunting and fishing opportunities.

In Oregon, 100 additional fishing days have been added at Bandon Marsh and Nestucca Bay national wildlife refuges and 85 additional hunting days at McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

In Washington state, San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge and the Spring Creek, Leavenworth, Little White Salmon and Entiat



The Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

national fish hatcheries will open to sport fishing for the first time. In addition, the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge will open more land to waterfowl hunting this season.

Conservationists said the changes went into effect without adequate environmental review.

“While the Trump policy retains federal ownership, it basically eviscerates federal management,” said Jeff Ruch, of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. “The states end up managing federal land with federal dollars but following state laws. That’s a sea change from federal management for conservation and biodiversity rather than promoting hunting.”

One of the big concerns is that state and federal officials don’t appear to have a monitoring system to see what effect the changes might have, not only on game species but those that aren’t hunted, Ruch said.

Hunting groups generally supported the changes.

Adam Putnam, the CEO of Ducks Unlimited, a group that works to conserve waterfowl habitat, said the changes wouldn’t harm wildlife populations. He said simplifying regulations by adopting state rules would draw more people outdoors.

“It’s going to encourage new hunters and anglers to enter the sport and fall in love with the outdoors and become lifelong conservationists,” he said.

Among the areas opening to hunting and fishing for the first time are the 4 ½

square miles at the Leadville National Fish Hatchery in central Colorado.

Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge in southern Idaho faces two significant changes: opening a season for hunting elk with bows and arrows and extending boating season by a month.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game officials, like several other state wildlife agencies, said the federal changes fell short of what they wanted. The U.S. agency said in the newly released rule that it looked forward to working with states on future changes for the start of the 2020 fall hunting season.

President Theodore Roosevelt founded the National Wildlife Refuge system in 1903, signing an executive order to establish the Pelican Island National Wildlife Ref-

uge in Florida to protect several types of birds from ornamental plume hunters. There are now more than 550 national wildlife refuges.

Monica Samayoa of Oregon Public Broadcasting contributed to this report.

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2. Right click a picture.... select “Copy”.
3. Right click your “Pics 4 Desktop” folder.... select paste.
4. Right-Click a black space on your computer’s desktop & click “Personalize”.
5. Just below the word “Background” click then select “Slideshow”.
6. Just below that, click “Browse” click on “Pics 4 Desktop” folder, then “Choose this folder”.
7. Under “Change picture every” click & choose your timing.



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Q: What causes bad breath?

A: Basically, all food eaten begins to be broken down in your mouth. Bacteria which accumulate with food form a sticky film called plaque which leads to gum disease. This process creates what is known as volatile sulfur compounds resulting in bad breath. Poor brushing habits, a coated tongue, strong odor foods, smoking and heavy alcohol drinking all contribute to bad breath. If this is you, do something about it by calling your dentist to schedule an evaluation.

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A: The Market was an offshoot of a Saturday market that took place near the Columbia River Maritime Museum. A new board formed to create Astoria Sunday Market, which began in 2000 with a late summer start on 12 th Street Between Commercial and Duane. Its first full season was 2001.



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