

## IN BRIEF

## Razor clamming closed along the Oregon Coast

SALEM — Razor clamming on the Oregon Coast is closed because of high levels of domoic acid.

The closure, announced Friday by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, applies to commercial and recreational clamming.

Domoic acid is a naturally-occurring marine toxin.

## Workshop set on draft forest management plan

The Oregon Department of Forestry is hosting a public input and question-and-answer session in Astoria on the draft revised Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan.

The meeting will be held at the Judge Guy Boyington Building at 9 a.m. on Friday. The comments will provide input to project staff prior to finalizing the draft revised plan.

The department will accept comments through January.

Comments may be emailed to [odf.sfcomments@oregon.gov](mailto:odf.sfcomments@oregon.gov), submitted through the department's website or mailed to ODF Public Affairs, 2600 State St., Salem OR., 97310.

## Crash on Highway 101 Business causes injuries, closes highway

A crash closed U.S. Highway 101 Business near G Road for 30 minutes Wednesday afternoon.

A driver was rear-ended when she stopped to turn into her residence.

Police say the crash resulted in severe damage.

The driver of the vehicle that was hit was taken to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria with injuries.

— *The Astorian*

## Congressman opposed to Jordan Cove LNG project

COOS BAY — A Democratic congressman has announced his opposition to the proposed Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas terminal and its 230-mile feeder pipeline in southern Oregon.

The World reports U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, of Springfield, said in a letter to campaign supporters last week that he doesn't support the project because the federal approval process is run by "unelected political appointees, the project tramples on private property rights, and it will exacerbate the urgent and immediate threat of climate change."

While he hadn't taken a hard stance on Jordan Cove previously, DeFazio has spoken out against the 2005 Bush-Cheney Energy Policy Act, which allowed the Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission to claim eminent domain for energy projects.

He has introduced legislation to reverse the commission's eminent domain powers, DeFazio said.

DeFazio also said his office can't stop the Jordan Cove project.

— *Associated Press*

## ON THE RECORD

## Assault

• Ryan Dale Tallman, 21, of Baker City, was arraigned Friday on charges of unlawful sexual penetration in the first degree, assault in the fourth degree and criminal mischief in the second degree

## Menacing

• Robert Dale Larson, 52, of Jewell, was

arrested Wednesday on Oregon Highway 103 in Jewell for menacing and criminal mischief in the second degree.

## DUI

• Travis Jon Meacham, 58, of Steilacoom, Washington, was arrested Thursday on W. Marine Drive and Fourth Street in Astoria for driving under influence of intoxicants.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## MONDAY

**Astoria City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

## TUESDAY

**Union Health District of Clatsop County**, 8 a.m., Providence Seaside Hospital ED Center.

**Port of Astoria Commission**, 4 p.m., 10 Pier 1 Suite 209.

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors**, 5:15 p.m.,

Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

**Warrenton City Commission**, 5:15 p.m., special session on budget, City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

**Seaside Planning Commission**, 7 p.m., work session, City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**Shoreline Sanitary District Board**, 7 p.m., Gearhart Hertig Station, 33496 West Lake Lane, Warrenton.

## Salmon die-off closes Chinook salmon fishing

## Closure at rivers on the North Coast

By ZACH URNESS  
*Statesman Journal*

The recent die-off of fall Chinook salmon has expanded from the Wilson River to three other river basins, leading to a total closure on salmon fishing on the North Coast, wildlife officials said.

Salmon killed before they were able to spawn by the parasite cryptobia has been observed in the Nestucca, Trask and Kilchis rivers near Tillamook during the past week.

To help the remaining Chinook spawn, officials have closed the entire North Coast to all salmon angling effective Friday to Dec. 31.

The closure includes all basins from the Nestucca to the Necanicum rivers, including bays, the Oregon Department of Wildlife said Wednesday in a news release.

Angling for steelhead is unaffected by this change and remains open under permanent regulations.

"We need to protect the remaining spawners to help



Rick Swart/Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
**Fishing for fall Chinook on the North Coast has been closed by recent salmon die-offs.**

provide for future runs of fall Chinook on the North Coast," said Robert Bradley, district fish biologist for the state fish and wildlife's North Coast Watershed District.

The parasite, which is naturally occurring, caused the death of more than 200 salmon in the lower Wilson River earlier this month. After tips from local anglers, biologists then discovered the parasite in a substantial number of dead salmon sampled in the three other river basins last week.

The parasite is no risk to humans.

Bradley blamed abnormally dry conditions in Oregon for the spread of the parasite, which has caused fish deaths in the past but never on this scale, he said.

"This scale of die-off is really unheard of," he said. "This parasite typically doesn't escalate to this level."

The low-water conditions kept salmon trapped in small pools of water for long periods, allowing leeches that carry the parasite to get on a higher density of fish, Bradley said.

"We've seen that happen in small tributaries in the

past, but never in the mainstream of these rivers the way we've seen this year," he said.

It's unclear what impact the die-off will have long term on the native fish runs on the North Coast.

"Luckily we did have rain in October, so some fish were able to move upstream and spawn before it dried out," Bradley said. "Long-term it will depend on how many more fish come in — which usually lasts until January — and can get eggs in the gravel. That's why it's so important to protect what's left."

All salmon angling is closed in the following areas: Necanicum River basin; Nehalem Bay and river (including the NF Nehalem); Tillamook Bay and rivers (Tillamook River, Trask River, Wilson River, Kilchis River and Miami River); Nestucca Bay and river (including Three Rivers and the Little Nestucca River).

Beginning in the new year, no wild salmon can be harvested on the North Coast, meaning the closure on fall Chinook essentially remains in place when the calendar flips.

## Anglers paid \$1.1M for catching fish in Columbia, Snake rivers

By ZACH URNESS  
*Statesman Journal*

It pays to go fishing.

Anglers across the Pacific Northwest were paid \$1.1 million this year for catching and removing 146,000 northern pikeminnow from the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Pikeminnow prey on salmon and steelhead smolts, protected under the federal Endangered Species Act, as they migrate toward the ocean.

To improve survival rates, the Bonneville Power Administration has rewarded anglers with \$5 to \$8 per pikeminnow removed from

the system for the past three decades. The pikeminnow must be over 9 inches to quality, and there are a few specially tagged fish that anglers can reclaim for \$500.

In 2019, a total of 2,700 anglers claimed a reward, including one angler who was paid \$53,000 for catching a whopping 6,482 fish.

The program's goal is not to eliminate northern pikeminnow, which is native to both rivers, but "rather to reduce the average size and number of the predatory fish," Bonneville Power officials said in a news release.

"Large northern pikeminnow are responsible for eat-

ing the most salmon and steelhead smolts," said Eric McOmie, Bonneville Power program manager. "Reducing the number of large pikeminnow can help more young salmon make their way to the ocean, which means more of them will return to their home streams as adults."

The rewards to anglers are paid by ratepayers to Bonneville Power, which operates the Columbia River Basin's system of dams and is responsible for mitigation efforts for endangered salmon and steelhead.

Pikeminnow have also been blamed for feeding on

endangered lamprey, which has seen declining numbers.

"Lamprey are often found in the diets of the northern pikeminnow," said Mac Barr, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Predation Studies project leader. "In 2019, we began exploring ways to better estimate how many juvenile lamprey in the Columbia and Snake rivers are eaten by the northern pikeminnow. Understanding the predation rates on lamprey is important because they are a state sensitive species as well as a federal species of concern and are culturally important to many Columbia Basin tribes."

## Congress criticizes how Coast Guard investigates harassment

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT  
*Associated Press*

The U.S. Coast Guard's leadership has failed to conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations of harassment and bullying allegations, according to a congressional investigation released this week.

The report, called "Righting the Ship," also found Coast Guard leaders didn't hold officials accountable for deficient and incomplete investigations and didn't take corrective action to address retaliation against people who report harassment and bullying. It concludes that the service needs to make "significant improvements" in its policies and procedures.

The U.S. House Oversight and Homeland Security Committees launched the 18-month investigation after questions were raised about how complaints were handled at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. Subcommittees for the two committees discussed the findings Wednesday during a joint hearing.

Coast Guard Vice Adm. Michael McAllister said at the hearing the service's senior leaders are taking "every step to foster and develop a climate that's free from harassment, bullying and retaliation" and take all complaints seriously.

McAllister, the deputy commandant for mission support, spoke about changes the Coast Guard has made to the way it handles allegations, including updating its civil rights awareness training, creating new positions to improve oversight

at the academy and revising procedures to require commanders to notify their superior of the findings and outcomes of harassment, hate, hazing and bullying inquiries.

McAllister acknowledged there's room for improvement and said he looked forward to "enhancing our policies" with help from Congress.

U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Mississippi Democrat, said the Coast Guard must make major changes to address its climate and cultural challenges and ensure accountability.

"The Coast Guard's biggest asset is not its fleet, but its people," said Thompson, the Homeland Security Committee chairman. "If the service does not know how to take care of its own people, it cannot execute its critical mission to protect our homeland."

The GOP didn't sign onto the report because Republican representatives were given only a few days to review it, said Rep. Chip Roy, a Texas Republican, arguing the report should have been issued after the hearing, to include information presented Wednesday.

Republican Rep. Debbie Lesko, an Arizona Republican, called it a "one-sided report" that should have included feedback from the Coast Guard. She praised the service for its commitment to improving and said the Democratic majority spent considerable time and expense investigating an issue that had been already investigated.

The report includes a lengthy discussion about a case involving a mem-

ber of the permanent teaching staff at the Coast Guard Academy, Lt. Cmdr. Kimberly Young-McLear. She reported in 2015 that her supervisor harassed her and created a hostile work environment, partly because she is a lesbian and a black woman. The report says the academy never investigated her allegations, instead using an alternative dispute resolution process.

Young-McLear, who testified Wednesday, said she turned to the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General after she suffered retaliation for making the complaints. The Coast Guard, she said, did not hold those responsible accountable or provide a safe working environment. Her case is not isolated, she said, and such issues are happening across the Coast Guard.

"Many Coast Guard individuals, who are overwhelmingly talented, devoted people of color, women and LGBTQ, have reached out to me to share their experiences and to convey that these systemic issues up and down the ranks are not unique to the Coast Guard Academy," said Young-McLear, who is doing a cybersecurity fellowship in Washington but plans to return to the academy.

Young-McLear was asked how she found the strength to "fight the Coast Guard" for years.

"I don't see it as I'm fighting the Coast Guard," she said. "I see it as I'm fighting for a better Coast Guard."

The inspector general's 2018 report substantiated Young-McLear's claim that she was retaliated against on the basis of her discrimination and harassment complaints, in violation of the Military Whistleblower Protection Act. The Coast Guard has acted on that report's recommendations, McAllister said.

The congressional report

also finds fault with how a related bullying case at the academy was handled, and notes that 45% of female cadets reported experiencing sexual harassment in 2018.

The committees said that although the cases they most closely examined involved faculty and leadership at the academy, the policy and processes used to address allegations apply to the entire Coast Guard.

McAllister said he does not have data to suggest bullying and harassment is widespread, but he would like to hear directly from anyone who believes the issues are common. He said Young-McLear is helping the Coast Guard by participating in diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Adm. Karl Schultz, the head of the Coast Guard, was asked to testify Wednesday. Committee leaders said Schultz declining to appear reinforces their concerns that the Coast Guard leadership does not take the issues seriously enough. They criticized the Coast Guard for delaying the delivery of requested documents and heavily redacting them during the investigation.

But McAllister said he spoke for the service because he is in charge of human resources, training and personnel policy. He said it was their intent to be responsive and transparent, and pursuing a diverse and inclusive service is a top priority.

The congressional investigation was launched by the late U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Maryland Democrat who worked on Coast Guard diversity issues throughout his career, and Thompson, in consultation with U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney. Courtney, a Connecticut Democrat whose district includes the academy, said the report isn't an attack on the Coast Guard, but if there's a problem it needs to be fixed.

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