

IN BRIEF

State reports 19 new virus cases for county

The Oregon Health Authority reported 19 new coronavirus cases for Clatsop County on Friday.

Since the pandemic began, the county had recorded 4,379 virus cases and 38 deaths as of Friday.

— *The Astorian*

State releases draft rules for therapeutic psilocybin program

Oregon has released draft rules for the therapeutic use of psilocybin, commonly called magic mushrooms.

Voters approved Measure 109 in November 2020, giving the state two years to set up the framework to regulate legal magic mushrooms in the state.

Researchers believe psilocybin could help treat depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and addiction, and Oregon's system would allow for consumption of the substance in a therapeutic setting for anyone 21 years or older. No prescription or diagnosis would be required to take part in the program.

The rules released last week by the Oregon Health Authority are not complete and are not yet adopted, but they give a glimpse into what the program might look like.

The draft rules deal with how training programs for those administering psilocybin will be evaluated and credentialed, what the psilocybin itself will be and how that substance will be tested.

These draft rules contain some interesting take-aways. Manufacturers can only cultivate or possess one specific species of fungi: *Psilocybe cubensis*.

According to Jessie Uehling, a professor in the botany and plant pathology department at Oregon State University and the mycologist for the Psilocybin Advisory Board, there are more than 200 species of fungi that are proven to or suspected of being able to produce psilocybin.

"Psilocybe cubensis is a fungal species to consider focusing on initially because there is a long history of safe consumption of this species," Uehling told *The Oregonian*.

— *Associated Press*

Oregon lawmakers may raise their own pay in effort to increase access to elected office

Community groups, labor unions and the Portland Business Alliance are urging Oregon lawmakers to give themselves a raise.

Right now, the base pay for Oregon lawmakers is around \$33,000 a year. But under a bill that had its first hearing in early February, that would go up to about \$57,000 per year, which is the average salary in the state. Going forward, it would automatically keep pace with that average. Lawmakers with children under the age of 13 would also get a \$1,000 monthly child care stipend.

Proponents say all of this would diversify the pool of people who would consider running for office in the first place.

State Sen. James Manning Jr., a Democrat from Eugene and a sponsor of the bill, said he knows of a House member who is working two part-time jobs to make ends meet. He did not name the lawmaker.

"If you have lawmakers, elected officials, that go into public service and then have to live on public subsidies, what does that look like for our state?" Manning asked.

— *Oregon Public Broadcasting*

BIRTH

Jan. 20, 2022

KNUTSEN, Ross and Sarah, of Warrenton, a boy, Colt Robert Knutsen, born in Astoria. Older sibling is Maverik Knutsen. Grandparents are Bob and Liz Knutsen, of Warrenton, Sue Larsen, of Astoria, and Tim Malinen, of Seaside.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Port of Astoria Commission, 4 p.m., workshop session, (electronic meeting).

Clatsop County Fair Board, 5:30 p.m., 92937 Walluski Loop, Astoria.

Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

WEDNESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 10 a.m., work session, (electronic meeting).

Astoria City Council, 1 p.m., work session, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Seaside School District Board, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

the Astorian

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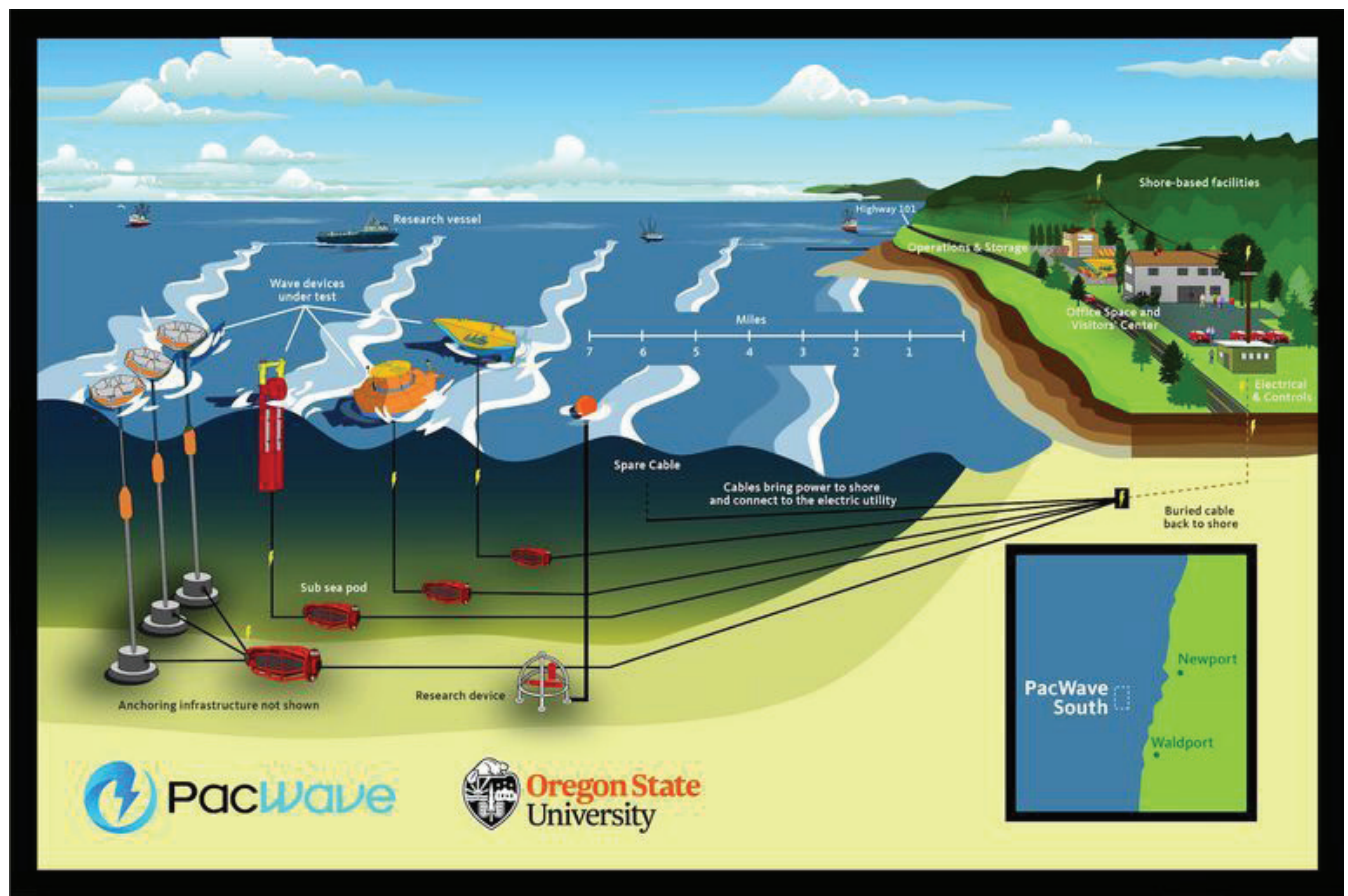
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Oregon State University

A digital rendition of the PacWave wave energy testing site near Newport.

US Department of Energy awards \$25M for coastal wave energy testing

By ALEX HASENSTAB
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Just south of Newport, a new wave energy facility called PacWave is about a year away from being operational. It will be the first commercial-scale, grid-connected wave energy test site in the U.S. and one of few in the world.

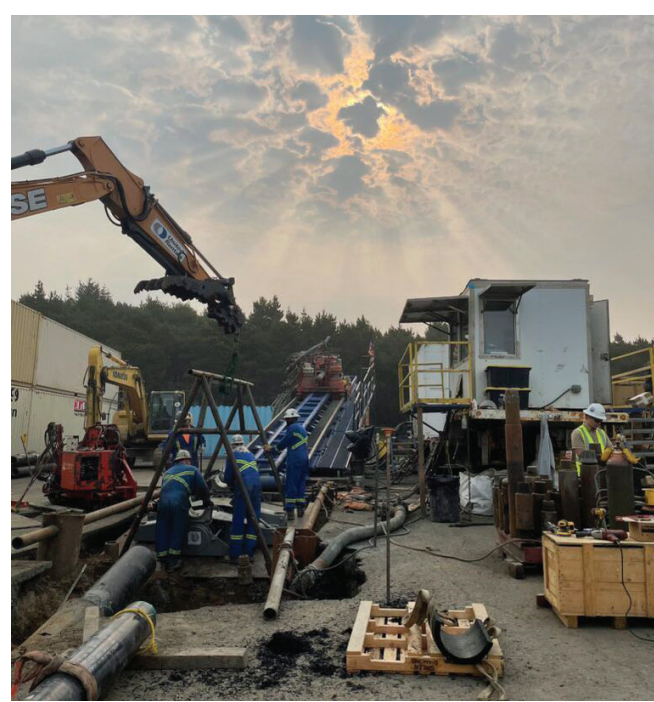
Seven miles offshore, the Oregon State University facility won't be visible from the beach. In fact, it won't impact beach-goers at all.

PacWave's chief scientist and Oregon State professor Burke Hales said he hopes the facility will help him and other researchers learn more about what impact renewable wave energy has onshore.

"It's got very different characteristics than solar or wind — the waves are always going," Hales said. "The sun sets, and you can't harvest any solar energy when the sun is down, but the waves are still persisting ... It will always be there."

The purpose of the new Oregon State facility is to test new and relatively obscure wave energy technology, but Hales said the university can't do it alone. Researchers from across the country will use the facility to test the best way of harnessing the ocean's energy and to explore how effectively it can be transformed into usable power. The U.S. Department of Energy awarded \$25 million to eight different groups, including two universities, to do just that.

Oregon State is not a recipient of the funding, as the university will be host-



Oregon State University

Crews drill tunnels for underground cables connecting the wave energy capturing devices and the power grid connection facility at Driftwood State Recreation Site.

ing researchers at their facility and must remain neutral.

The Department of Energy entered into a partnership with Oregon State in 2016 to build the PacWave South facility for exploring how to capture the carbon-free wave energy created by wind blowing over the surface of the sea.

"The thing that I think is really important about this funding announcement is that even though it didn't fund OSU directly, it shows the DOE is really committed to this facility," Hales said.

Construction of the offshore facility began in June 2021. The approximately \$80 to \$90 million facility is expected to be operational in 2023, and grid-connected

testing is anticipated to begin the following year.

In addition to the wave energy capturing devices in the water, cables connecting the devices to the power grid will run underground a mile offshore then another 6 miles along the bottom of the ocean. Researchers will conduct the majority of their testing at a shoreside grid connection facility that will be located near Driftwood Beach State Recreation Site north of Waldport.

Hales said some estimates show wave energy could produce up to 10% of U.S. energy. The research groups will be testing a variety of models that can capture energy from the oscillating movement of the waves

and transmit it to shore.

"The other thing is survivability — seaworthiness," Hales said. "These devices are intended to be deployed and stay out in the ocean for years, and they can't sink. They can't break loose from their anchor lines. The Oregon coastal ocean is a very demanding place. And so if they can survive there, then that's a really good proving ground."

The groups chosen to test the technology will have a few years to complete their testing before a new round of research groups come in.

Portland State University received a \$4.5 million award from the Department of Energy, and the University of Washington received \$1.3 million. Additional funds are going to CalWave Power Technologies Inc. of Oakland; Columbia Power Technologies Inc. of Charlottesville, Virginia; Dehlsen Associates LLC, of Santa Barbara; Oscilla Power Inc. of Seattle; Integral Consulting of Seattle; and Littoral Power Systems Inc., of New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Hales said that other, privately funded research groups may also bid to perform testing at the facility. In the future, he said, Oregon State will likely perform their own research at the facility, as well.

With this new facility Oregon will be ground zero for wave energy testing in the U.S., Hales said, and the research could benefit other parts of the country that don't have the extensive renewable energy options that Oregon has, such as solar and wind.

Oregon to receive \$262M in wildfire recovery funding for federal forests

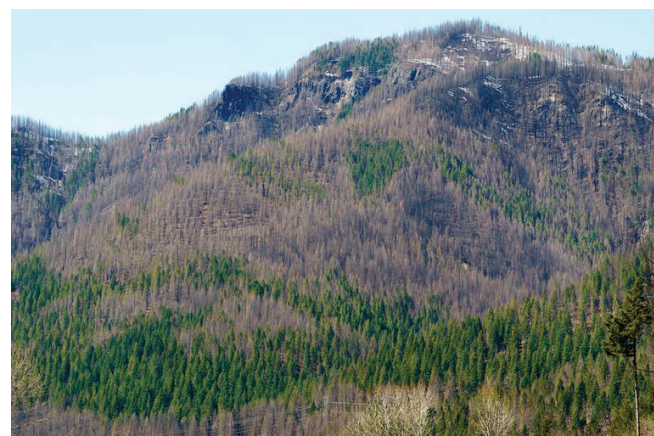
By CASSANDRA PROFITA

Oregon Public Broadcasting

The U.S. Forest Service in Oregon will be getting more than \$262 million in federal disaster funding to help with wildfire recovery.

The money is part of \$1.1 billion in disaster assistance that passed last year to help regions across the country recover from a variety of natural disasters over the last three years.

Oregon's U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, both Democrats, supported the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act of 2021, which passed in September with more than a billion dollars in funding for recovery efforts after wild-



Kristyna Wentz-Graff/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Fire damage can be seen on the hills in Willamette National Forest in April.

fires, hurricanes, tornadoes and other natural disasters.

More than a million acres of land across Oregon burned in the Labor Day wildfires in 2020, calling attention to the need to manage trees and

brush in federal forests to reduce the risk of wildfire.

In a statement, Merkley said the additional wildfire recovery funds announced Wednesday are a direct result of his work as chairman of an appropriations subcommittee that makes decisions on funding the U.S. Forest Service.

"Over the last three years, Oregon's forests and surrounding communities have been devastated by catastrophic wildfires, adversely

impacting Oregonians, our lands, wildlife and waters," Merkley said. "This funding will fill a critical gap in wildfire response and recovery by investing in restoring these landscapes, rebuilding trails and recreational access points, and helping grow a more resilient forest."

Wyden said in a statement that, "restoring forests' resiliency to reduce fire risks" will be a significant part of Oregon's recovery from extensive wildfires.

"Oregonians know in painful detail how wildfires have ripped a destructive path through our communities statewide in recent years," Wyden said in a statement. "I'm glad these federal funds will help our state recover from these disasters."

Additionally, the Biden administration recently announced a \$3 billion plan to reduce wildfire risk through forest management actions that would remove flammable material through selective logging and prescribed burning.

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