

# Warm Feb. takes toll on snowpack

SEATTLE (AP) — Warm temperatures and a lack of snowfall in February have taken a toll on winter snowpack in the Cascade Mountains and other areas in the West, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service said Wednesday.



AP Photo/Seattlepi.com, Joshua Trujillo

**This Feb. 9 photo shows hiker Mike Naiman surveying the closed Snoqualmie Pass ski area in Washington State. Warm temperatures and lack of snowfall in February have taken a toll on winter snowpack in the Cascade Mountains and other areas in the West. A third of monitoring sites in the Cascades and Sierra Nevada reported the lowest snowpack ever measured as of March 1, and some sites didn't even have snow, unusual for this time of year.**

One-third of monitoring sites in the Cascades and Sierra Nevada reported the lowest snowpack ever measured as of March 1, and some sites don't even have snow, unusual for this time of year.

The March forecast also shows that snowpack in Nevada, Utah and Idaho fell farther below normal.

"Snowpack along the Continental Divide is about normal, but it drops off as you go South and West," said Cara McCarthy, a hydrologist with the service, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "If the weather doesn't change, we're looking at low-stream flow in a lot of areas."

Snow that falls in the mountains during the winter typically melts slowly during spring and summer, providing water for much of the region. A lack of snowpack can lead to drought. Low-flowing rivers in the summer also may affect fish, wildlife, livestock, municipal water supplies and hydropower production.

"The snowpack in the

Western U.S. is counted on to be an additional reservoir that holds a whole bunch of water, so that water is released slowly as the snow melts. Westerners count on that snow for spring and summer, for irrigation and other water uses," McCarthy said.

Snow surveyors in many places across the region reported seeing little or no snow at sites they visited. In Oregon, for example, about 45 percent of the snow-monitoring sites are snow-free.

Statewide in Washington, the snowpack was 29 percent

of a 30-year median as of March 1. The amounts varied widely by region, from a record low 2 percent of normal in the Olympic Mountains to 85 percent of normal in the Methow basin in north-central Washington.

Still, while snowpack has been below normal in Oregon and Washington, there has been plenty of rain. Those states have seen near-normal precipitation since fall. Some reservoirs have benefited from the rainy winter.

In Montana, the lack of snowfall and rain, as well

as warmer than usual temperatures, led to a decrease in snowpack. Statewide, the snowpack is at 91 percent of normal as of March 1.

In south Idaho, snowpack range from 22 percent of median in the Owyhee basin to 115 percent in several Snake River headwater drainages in Wyoming.

"If February's dry weather continues for one more month, we'll be writing a different story in the April 1 water supply report," according to the Idaho water supply outlook.

## BRIEFLY

### Atkins sworn in as Secretary of State, will finish out Brown's term

SALEM (AP) — Jeanne Atkins has been sworn in as Oregon's new secretary of state.

Gov. Kate Brown administered the oath of office to Atkins on Wednesday.

Atkins, a Democrat, recently retired as the state director for U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, a post she'd held since 2009.

Before that, she was Merkley's chief of staff when he was speaker of the state House.

She was formerly staff director of the Office of Family Health in the state Department of Human Services.

Atkins says it's a privilege to have the opportunity "to protect and safeguard some of our deepest values as Oregonians."

Brown was secretary of state until she took over as governor following John Kitzhaber's resignation last month. Under state law, she appointed her replacement.

### Gov. Brown ends contract with Kitzhaber adviser, business owner

PORTLAND (AP) — Gov. Kate Brown has ended a state contract with former Gov. John Kitzhaber's forest adviser, who collected nearly \$400,000 in fees and expenses while also running a consulting business.

The Oregonian reported Wednesday that Brown took the action the day she took office, Feb. 18.

Environmentalists and a timber industry leader said they questioned the roles of Tom Tuchman, but they say they didn't raise objections publicly for fear of alienating Kitzhaber.

When he was an adviser to Kitzhaber, Tuchman also owned a company called U.S. Forest Capital that had expertise in financing for buyers such as conservation groups to purchase timberlands.

### Jackson County voters approve local marijuana tax, despite ban

MEDFORD (AP) — Voters in Jackson County have approved a local tax on recreational marijuana once it becomes legal, despite a specific prohibition against local taxes in the state law.

The Mail Tribune reports election results Tuesday show the measure winning 64 percent to 36 percent. The measure gives the county power to tax marijuana sales up to 25 percent.

County commission Chairman Doug Breidenthal has said he was confident it would withstand legal challenge.

Dave Fidanque of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon says Measure 91 gave the state the sole right to tax marijuana so that local taxes would not run up the price and make legal marijuana more expensive than black market pot.

### Judge tells longshore union to pay \$60K in Portland dispute

PORTLAND (AP) — A federal judge has ordered the longshore union to pay nearly \$60,000 to the National Labor Relations Board for violating a court order to resume normal operations at the Port of Portland's container terminal.

## Lawmaker drops bill to ban most vaccine exemptions

SALEM (AP) — Legislation aiming to pressure Oregon parents to get their kids vaccinated was abandoned Wednesday because of formidable opposition in a state that has the nation's highest rate of nonmedical exemptions, a move that comes as several other states wrestle with similar proposals.

The bill, which had the support of Gov. Kate Brown, would have made Oregon the third state in the country allowing exemptions for immunizations solely for medical reasons, and no longer for religious, philosophical or personal reasons. Mississippi and West Virginia are currently the only other states that have comparable legislation in place.

The Oregon bill's sponsor,

state Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, said pushback against it largely revolved around who was right or wrong about the benefits of vaccines and she has decided not to pursue the legislation.

"She strongly believes that making personal choices such as whether or not to vaccinate children are largely a matter of privacy, but — as with all matters of personal choice — we have to be certain that our choices don't impinge on our neighbors' health and well-being," said Paige Spence, Steiner Hayward's chief of staff.

A handful of other states have been considering similar bills eliminating personal and philosophical exemptions to vaccinations as dozens of people across the country fell

ill from a measles outbreak that started at Disneyland in December. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 142 people from seven states, including one from Oregon and two from Washington, were linked to the outbreak.

In February, three California lawmakers introduced legislation that would require parents to vaccinate their children before they enter school unless they can't for medical reasons. That bill has yet to come up before a committee.

Last year, Oregon passed a law requiring parents with kindergarten to consult with a health professional or watch a one-hour educational video before shots are waived. Steiner Hayward, who also

sponsored that bill, said she'd heard parents were only going through the motions of watching the video when they attended consultations, which is why she sought to strengthen the state's immunizations requirements.

This year's measure drew heated testimony from parents who argued it took away their medical freedom and right to informed consent. The bill was pulled before it got a committee vote, though it did get a public hearing.

"The fundamental issue was that of informed consent. We're supportive of safe and effective vaccinations. We're not anti-vaccine. We're pro-informed consent," said Vern Saboe, a chiropractor from Albany who testified against the bill.

## Corrections

The March 11 story "Traditional textbooks becoming old school" listed the wrong date for a presentation by Cable Green. Green will speak Thursday from 6-8 p.m. at Blue Mountain Community College's Science and technology building. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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## AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Sunny to partly cloudy and mild	Partly sunny and mild	Considerable cloudiness and mild	Breezy with rain at times	Partly sunny with showers around

### PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

65°	39°	68°	48°	67°	51°	59°	42°	62°	41°
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### HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

68°	35°	69°	42°	68°	44°	62°	40°	65°	38°
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### ALMANAC

#### PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	63°	47°
Normals	54°	34°
Records	72° (2007)	16° (1950)

#### PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date Trace  
Normal month to date 0.41"  
Year to date 1.55"  
Last year to date 3.34"  
Normal year to date 2.92"

#### HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	66°	47°
Normals	56°	33°
Records	76° (1930)	16° (1956)

#### PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date Trace  
Normal month to date 0.35"  
Year to date 1.06"  
Last year to date 2.13"  
Normal year to date 2.59"

### SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:14 a.m.
Sunset tonight	6:56 p.m.
Moonrise today	1:03 a.m.
Moonset today	10:55 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Mar 13	Mar 20	Mar 26	Apr 4

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

### REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Clouds giving way to sun today; a morning shower in spots across the north.  
Eastern and Central Oregon: Partly sunny today; pleasant near the Cascades during the afternoon.  
Western Washington: A shower today; clouds breaking, but mostly cloudy at the coast.  
Eastern Washington: Times of clouds and sun today. Mainly clear tonight.  
Cascades: Not as cool in central parts today; sunny to partly cloudy across the north.  
Northern California: Mostly sunny today. Warmer; pleasant in central parts. Partly cloudy tonight.

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	61	43	pc	62	50	c
Baker City	60	27	pc	63	37	pc
Bend	60	33	s	65	39	pc
Brookings	61	46	s	58	49	pc
Burns	60	25	pc	64	37	pc
Enterprise	58	32	pc	63	40	pc
Eugene	65	42	pc	66	48	c
Heppner	63	35	s	66	44	pc
Hermiston	68	35	s	69	42	pc
John Day	59	35	pc	66	42	pc
Klamath Falls	62	32	s	66	37	pc
La Grande	62	29	pc	67	44	pc
Meacham	56	27	s	64	40	pc
Medford	71	40	s	70	46	c
Newport	59	47	pc	60	50	c
North Bend	62	47	pc	60	51	pc
Ontario	66	33	pc	68	43	pc
Pasco	70	34	s	70	43	pc
Pendleton	65	39	s	68	48	pc
Portland	67	45	pc	68	51	c
Redmond	63	31	s	67	40	pc
Salem	67	43	pc	68	50	c
Spokane	60	36	pc	63	45	pc
Ukiah	60	34	s	66	42	pc
Vancouver	66	42	pc	68	49	c
Walla Walla	67	43	s	69	52	pc
Yakima	69	35	s	68	43	c

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	55	28	pc	55	31	s
Hong Kong	68	64	r	73	67	c
Jerusalem	52	42	sh	58	46	s
London	54	44	c	49	36	r
Mexico City	65	46	sh	68	49	pc
Moscow	39	29	c	39	27	s
Paris	56	35	pc	50	36	sh
Rome	58	40	s	59	40	sh
Seoul	43	30	s	44	27	s
Sydney	81	66	pc	73	64	c
Tokyo	54	39	pc	55	42	s

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	WSW 6-12	NE 3-6
Pendleton	WSW 7-14	ENE 4-8

### UV INDEX TODAY

0	2	4	4	2	0
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8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.  
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme  
The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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### NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

Legend: -10s, -0s, 0s, 10s, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 100s, 110s  
showers, t-storms, rain, flurries, snow, ice, cold front, warm front, stationary front, high, low

National Summary: Rain will soak areas from the Gulf Coast to the Tennessee Valley today. As chilly air invades New England, warmth will hold over the Plains. Showers will affect the Rockies as the Pacific coast dries.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 90° in Orlando, Fla. Low 9° in Leadville, Colo.

### NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.			Today			Fri.			
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	
Albuquerque	65	42	pc	63	39	t	Louisville	63	51	pc	61	57	r
Atlanta	66	49	r	55	51	r	Memphis	67	63	r	69	60	r
Atlanta City	45	32	s	49	41	pc	Miami	83	72	pc	82	73	pc
Baltimore	55	29	s	51	42	c	Millwaukee	47	36	s	58	43	pc
Billings	64	36	pc	62	39	s	Minneapolis	64	47	pc	57	37	pc
Birmingham	71	58	r	64	59	sh	Nashville	69	57	r	63	57	r
Boise	64	38	pc	68	47	pc	New Orleans	74	64	r	71	56	r
Boston	37	21	s	40	32	s	New York City	49	33	s	47	42	pc
Charleston, SC	68	54	c	68	60	r	Oklahoma City	68	47	s	65	46	pc
Charleston, WV	63	43	pc	55	50	r	Omaha	74	42	s	71	40	pc
Chicago	55	37	pc	58	46	r	Philadelphia	51	32	s	52	42	pc
Cleveland	44	34	pc	54	45	r	Phoenix	87	63	c	87	64	pc
Dallas	61	51	pc	65	51	pc	Portland, ME	34	15	s	36	28	s
Denver	64	36	pc	58	34	sh	Providence	39	18	s	38	28	s
Detroit	45	30	s	54	44	r	Raleigh	62	40	pc	49	48	r
El Paso	70	47	pc										