

BRIEFLY
Biologists say there's enough data to decide wolf protection

GRANTS PASS (AP) — State biologists are telling the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission there is enough information to consider taking the gray wolf off the state endangered species list.

A draft status review was posted Tuesday on the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife website with materials for the commission's next meeting. The meeting's agenda includes a formal staff recommendation that the commission determine there is significant information to start the rulemaking process.

A final decision is not scheduled until August in Salem, but the commission is to make the first step in the process — deciding whether it has enough information to consider the issue — when it meets April 24 in Bend.

At last count, Oregon had 77 wolves descended from animals introduced in Idaho in the 1990s. The 76-page status report says they are projected to increase at a rate of 7 percent a year, and the probability of a major drop in population is very low. There is plenty of habitat available on public lands, and wolves continue to expand their range, establishing at least one new pack in the western third of the state.

The rate of wolf attacks on livestock has been low, the review notes.

Hoping to gain greater freedom to kill wolves attacking livestock, the Oregon Cattlemen's Association has been pressing for the commission to delist wolves since a statewide census last winter showed they had exceeded their restoration goal of four breeding pairs producing pups that survive a year for three years running. At last count, there were at least seven breeding pairs, six in northeastern Oregon and one, led by the famous wanderer OR-7, in the southern Cascades.

University of Oregon names Michael Schill next president

EUGENE (AP) — Michael Schill, dean of the law school at University of Chicago, was named president of the University of Oregon on Tuesday, becoming the school's fifth leader in six years.

The new president takes the helm amid significant transition at the institution, which was freed last year from the statewide university system and is now led by an independent governing board with ambitions for a big endowment and a national profile.

Schill will have to contend with diminished state funding for higher education and a need to raise money from private donors. Lillis said a reputation for prodigious fundraising was a big factor in the decision to hire him.

A first-generation college student when he enrolled at Princeton in the 1970s, Schill said he believes public universities are the key to opportunity for young people.

"I won't rest until every family that has a child says to that child, 'You should go to the University of Oregon, because you will get the best possible education,'" Schill told reporters in a news conference on the Eugene campus.

Before starting at Chicago in 2010, Schill was the law dean at the University of California, Los Angeles for five years. He was previously on the law school faculty at New York University and the University of Pennsylvania, where his research was focused on property and real estate law. He earned a law degree from Yale University.

Schill's appointment was approved unanimously. He begins July 1, replacing Interim President Scott Coltrane, who took over when Michael Gottfredson resigned abruptly last summer.

Congress will get say on nuke deal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Bowing to pressure from Republicans and his own party, President Barack Obama on Tuesday relented to a compromise empowering Congress to reject his emerging nuclear pact with Iran.

The rare and reluctant agreement between the president and the Republican-led Congress came after the White House maintained for weeks that congressional interference could jeopardize sensitive negotiations with Tehran.

But lawmakers refused to back down from their insistence that Congress have a formal role in what could be a historic deal to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved the compromise bill shortly after White House spokesman Josh Earnest conveyed the president's decision to sign it.

"Maybe they saw the handwriting on the wall," House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said after the White House dropped its opposition.

Both houses of Congress are now likely to pass the bill, which cleared the committee 19-0. It's expected to come before the full Senate as soon as next week.

A vote on an actual agreement to lift economic sanctions in exchange for Iranian nuclear concessions would come later, if negotiations between the Obama administration, Iran and five other nations come to fruition.

Obama retains his right to veto any attempt by Congress to scuttle such a pact if the time comes. To override a veto would require a two-thirds majority of both the House and Senate, meaning some Democrats would have to oppose their president to sink a deal.

The White House's announcement



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

A Capitol Hill police officer asks members of the protest group Code-Pink to sit down during a Senate Foreign Relations Committee business meeting on Capitol Hill Tuesday to debate and vote on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015.

came after an intensive administration effort to prevent Democrats from signing on to legislation requiring Obama to submit any pact with Iran to Congress.

International negotiators are trying to reach a deal blocking Iran's path toward nuclear weapons in exchange for relief from economic sanctions that are crippling its economy.

"We believe it is our role to ensure that any deal with Iran makes them accountable, is transparent and is enforceable," said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., chairman of Foreign Relations Committee.

Corker said Secretary of State John Kerry was lobbying against the legislation on Capitol Hill a few hours before the vote. The Republican said the White House's sudden support was dictated by the number of senators — Republicans and Democrats — backing the measure.

"I supported today's compromise

after the administration assured me that the reworked bill would preserve our negotiators' ability to do their jobs," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn.

Obama, whose foreign policy legacy would be burnished by a deal with Iran, has been in a standoff for months with lawmakers who said Congress should have a chance to weigh in and remain skeptical that Iran will honor an agreement.

The United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China reached a preliminary agreement with Iran on April 2 to curb its nuclear program and hope to finalize a pact by June 30.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., who opposed the original bill as "harmful to the negotiations," sent a letter to colleagues late Tuesday expressing support for the compromise worked out by Corker and Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md.

Tale of worker asleep in hold is a warning

SEATTLE (AP) — The misadventure of a baggage handler who fell asleep in the cargo hold of a jetliner should be a warning for airlines to improve security procedures, safety experts said Tuesday.

The worker banged on the plane for help shortly after takeoff on Monday from Seattle. Pilots heard the noise and quickly returned to the airport. The worker was not injured.

The Federal Aviation Administration was investigating, but few new details emerged Tuesday about the bizarre incident at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

Alaska Airlines has said the leader of a baggage-loading crew noticed the worker was missing and tried to call and text him before concluding he had gone home at the end of his 9 1/2-hour shift.

Safety experts say the crew should not have closed the cargo doors of Flight 448 to Los Angeles until they had accounted for the missing worker.

"This is a 'huh?' moment," said Thomas Anthony, director of the aviation security program at the University of Southern California and a former FAA official.

"That supervisor said, 'Huh, I wonder where Louie is?' The 'huh' is a yellow light that you need to pay attention to," he said. "The worst thing you can do is just say, 'It's



KIRO 7 via AP

In this frame from video, workers walk with a Menzies Aviation cargo worker after the worker was removed from the cargo hold of an Alaska Airlines airplane Monday at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

probably nothing."

Anthony said airports are responsible for screening workers with access to planes while airlines are responsible for the security of an aircraft.

A U.S. aviation official said there is no legal requirement that airline crews check a cargo hold before every flight. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because airline security programs contain sensitive information and are not public documents.

Investigators are likely to examine how the worker got left on the plane with luggage that had been screened.

"How do you have something in the cargo bin that you don't know is there?" asked John Cox, a safety consultant and airline pilot.

Alaska contracts for ramp work with Menzies Aviation, an English company that performs that work at

months and was fortunate he was trapped in a part of the plane that was pressurized and temperature-controlled for the entire flight. The worker had been off work the previous two days, the company said.

The flight carried 170 passengers and six crew members. It was more than an hour behind schedule when it eventually arrived in Los Angeles, the airline said. There was no immediate word on how much the delay cost the airline.

Such incidents are rare but have occurred.

— In 2011, a U.S. Airways bag handler was accidentally locked inside the cargo hold of a plane at Reagan National Airport. A passenger heard the man banging on the underside of the floor and alerted a flight attendant.

— In 2009, a bag handler for JetBlue flew from New York to Boston in the cargo hold. The 21-year-old said he fell asleep and panicked when he realized the plane was in flight. He used his cellphone to call the airline during the flight.

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