

**PENDLETON**

# Color run dashes back

East Oregonian

A splash of color is featured in a fundraising event for the Pendleton Swim Association and Pendleton High School cross country team.

The Color Dash is Saturday, May 30 with registration and packet pickup beginning at 8 a.m. and the dash starting at 9 a.m. at Roy Raley Park, 1205 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton. Packets also can be picked up Friday, May 29 from noon to 7 p.m. at the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce, 501 S. Main St. The cost is \$40 per person. In addition, family and group registrations are available.

Pre-registered participants will receive a T-shirt, bib, tattoo and color pack. People who plan to participate are encouraged to pre-register as T-shirts are only guaranteed for those that register in advance.

For more information about the event, find it on Facebook. Also, for specific questions about the use of colors, visit [www.cd5k.com/#about](http://www.cd5k.com/#about)



Joyce Hughes of Pendleton emerges from a cloud of blue dust during the 2014 Color Dash. This year's event, which raises money for the Pendleton High School cross country team and the Pendleton Swim Association, is Saturday, May 30 at Roy Raley Park.

EO file photo

# Biologists to kill off unwanted fish from Umatilla forest ponds

By **GEORGE PLAGEN**  
East Oregonian

The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife plans to use a plant-based toxicant to kill and remove unwanted fish from eight ponds in Umatilla, Union, Baker and Wallowa counties.

Six ponds are located on the Umatilla National Forest, including Lugar and Boundary ponds in Union County as well as Keyhole, Granite Meadows, Goldfish and Yellowjacket ponds in Umatilla County.

Kyle Bratcher, assistant district fish biologist for ODFW in Enterprise, discussed project details during a brief and lightly attended public meeting Monday at the Pendleton Convention Center. Other meetings were already held in La Grande, Baker City and Enterprise.

Over the years, several unwanted fish species — including largemouth bass, brown bullhead and goldfish — have been introduced into each of the small ponds, which compete for food and habitat with rainbow trout and degrade local fisheries.

Bratcher said the intruders are sometimes dumped into waterways because anglers have a fondness for the species, or were used as bait. In the case of goldfish, he said they are often pets that have been released into the wild.

It is illegal in any case to introduce fish to any Oregon water body, Bratcher said.

"They directly compete with the other fish we put in there," Bratcher said. "Often we'll see a reduction in native populations."

Biologists will use rotenone, a toxicant derived

**"They directly compete with the other fish we put in there. Often we'll see a reduction in native populations."**

— **Kyle Bratcher**,  
assistant district fish biologist for ODFW in Enterprise

from the roots and stems of certain plants, to kill off all fish in the ponds and come back later to reintroduce rainbow trout — essentially like hitting the restart button at each of the fisheries.

Rotenone has been used in the past at places like Diamond Lake on the Umpqua National Forest, which was overrun with non-native tui chub. ODFW spent \$1.4 million to deal with the problem in 2007, and the following year saw immediate improvements in water clarity, insect populations and trout catch.

The goal now is to treat the smaller ponds at a cheaper cost before unwanted fish can make it into larger water bodies, Bratcher said. All eight ponds are expected to cost about \$10,000 total to treat.

If all goes according to plan, ODFW will remove angling restrictions at the ponds from July through September, allowing fishermen to catch as many fish as possible before closing

the ponds in October. It will take one day to apply rotenone at each pond, which will stay present in the water for roughly two weeks.

Crews will then collect and bury the dead fish before reopening the areas in about two or three weeks.

Rotenone is not toxic to humans, mammals or birds at the concentrations used to kill fish. It is not mobile in soils, and has been approved for use by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"This stuff just binds to everything," Bratcher said. "It doesn't move around very well."

By introducing undesirable species, Bratcher said people usually have good intentions but don't understand the effect it has on fishing opportunities.

"Having quality fisheries here is pretty important," he said.

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# Merkley, Walden back federal research station

Funding would be cut in Obama's proposed budget

By **GEORGE PLAGEN**  
East Oregonian

With significant budget cuts looming, the Columbia Plateau Conservation Research Center can at least count on bipartisan support from Oregon's congressional leaders in Washington, D.C.

Both Sen. Jeff Merkley, a Democrat, and Rep. Greg Walden, a Republican, recently spoke up to defend the station, located on Tubbs Ranch Road between Pendleton and Adams.

Part of the federal Agricultural Research Service, the Columbia Plateau Conservation Research Service stands to lose \$911,000 — nearly half its annual funding — under President Barack Obama's proposed 2016 budget.

That would force the program to end its research into no-till farming for winter wheat and lay off three of five staff scientists. Merkley, who serves as the top Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, said he is working with his Repub-

lican counterparts to craft a bill that will fully fund the ARS.

"Oregon's economic success depends on agriculture," Merkley said in a statement. "Cutting local agricultural research that can respond directly to the challenges and opportunities our farmers and ranchers see on the ground means missing out on huge opportunities to strengthen our economy and support Oregon families."

In March, Walden also sent a letter to the House Appropriations Committee that, among other things, asks for budgetary language directing the ARS to support local field stations.

"Despite the positive impact of real world research, the Agricultural Research Service's proposed reductions in dryland wheat research at their Pendleton station continues a troubling trend in the Pacific Northwest," Walden said. "It is concerning that the ARS has not laid out a clear plan for this localized research to continue."

Oregon's other senator, Democrat Ron Wyden, sent a letter in April to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack explaining how

research in Pendleton could lead to greater productivity and profitability for wheat farmers across the country.

Since 2010, researchers at the station have looked into ways no-till farming can retain moisture in soil and cut down on wind erosion, without sacrificing yield. Soil scientists Stewart Wuest and Hero Gollany, as well as hydrologist John Williams, all work on the no-till project and are drafting a new five-year plan for the project — so long as funding remains intact.

The president's budget calls for cuts at multiple ARS stations, including those in Pendleton and Corvallis, in order for the Department of Agriculture to shift money to what the administration has identified as higher priority projects.

Wuest said farmers are slowly beginning to experiment with no-till, but it is a gradual process. Growers can't afford to risk their crop unless they are reasonably sure something new will work. That's where the ARS comes in with the data, he said.

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**PENDLETON**

# Police find few answers to fight

By **PHIL WRIGHT**  
East Oregonian

Pendleton police continue to search for a man following reports of gunshots early Saturday after a fracas outside a downtown Pendleton bar.

Police Chief Stuart Roberts in an email reported dispatchers at 2:22 a.m. told officers there was a report of gunshots outside Crabby's Underground Saloon, 220 S.W. First St., Pendleton. Officers arrived but found no one there. Roberts said another call moments later sent police to the corner of Southwest Fourth Street and Dorion Avenue to meet people with information about the gunfire.

Roberts said officers interviewed two females and one male who said they were in a physical altercation with strangers near Crabby's. Roberts said the females and another woman

were involved in what amounted to "more hair pulling than a fist fight," and one male struck and injured another male who tried to break the fight up.

After the scuffle, according to Roberts, the trio told officers a white car approached them as they walked west on Southwest Court Avenue. The car slowed to a crawl and they heard several loud pops. Police dispatch logs show a caller who reported the disturbance said the car was a white Toyota Celica.

Roberts said police caught up to a female and the car minutes later on South Main Street, questioned her and searched the car. She confirmed the fight, but police did not find evidence that backed up the reports of gunshots.

"None of the parties wished to pursue charges and/or cooperate concerning the physical altercation,"

according to Roberts.

Video footage puts the car and the suspect in the area at the time of the incident, he said, but nothing showed illicit activity. Police also did not find bullet shell casings or other evidence.

Roberts said per the witness statements someone may have fired in the air as a show of force. No property was damaged, he said, and no one was injured.

Officers also did not find the male, who Roberts stated is a "suspect/person of interest." Roberts said the male is a felon who recently paroled and is under the authority of Grant County Community Corrections. The chief said police at this time only want to ask him questions and there is no probable cause for his arrest.

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**Happy Spring**

From Dr. Hibbert,  
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