

# Kitzhaber scandal top Oregon story of 2015

By STEVEN DUBOIS  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Gov. John Kitzhaber's unprecedented fourth term turned into an unprecedented short term, and his abrupt February resignation was selected Oregon's story of the year in the annual vote conducted by The Associated Press.

Every editor or news director who submitted a ballot of 10 top stories had the governor's downfall as either the biggest or second-biggest story of 2015. Those who didn't put Kitzhaber in the top spot chose the massacre at Umpqua Community College, which finished in second place, just ahead of the legalization of recreational pot.

Those were the only stories named on every ballot as editors went all over the map with their remaining picks. Reflecting the variety of opinions, the three stories that just missed the top 10 included the rollout of Common Core-aligned testing, the Portland Timbers winning the Major League Soccer championship and the improbable stardom of the Portland International Airport carpet.

**1. Kitzhaber resigns:** Just weeks after being sworn in for his fourth term, Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber surrendered to political pressure and quit over allegations his live-in fiancée, Cylvia Hayes, used their relationship to win contracts for her consulting business and failed to report the income on her taxes. Federal agents launched a criminal investigation in February, but no charges had been filed as 2015 drew to a close. Kitzhaber has denied wrongdoing. Secretary of State Kate Brown assumed Oregon's highest office after Kitzhaber ended his four-decade political career.

**2. College shooting:** A 26-year-old gunman opened fire at Umpqua Community College, fatally shooting nine people before killing himself. The Oct. 1 attack shattered the Roseburg community and immediately reignited national debates about gun violence, school safety, mental health and media coverage. President



In this Oct. 10 file photo, Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber talks to reporters before a debate against Republican challenger Dennis Richardson in Portland.



In this Oct. 5 file photo, faculty members embrace on their return to Umpqua Community College, in Roseburg following the fatal shooting of nine people there.



In this July 29 file photo, activists hang from the St. Johns Bridge in Portland to protest the departure of Royal Dutch Shell PLC icebreaker Fennica, which is in Portland for repairs.

Obama lamented that mass shootings and the reaction to them have become "routine." He visited the timber town to meet privately with grieving families, ignoring protests from gun-rights activists.

**3. Marijuana legalization:** The decision by Oregon voters to approve recreational marijuana was last year's No. 1 story. The process of putting legalization into practice remained a

major topic throughout 2015. The highlight day was Oct. 1, when medical pot dispensaries began selling to recreational users over 21. Some shops opened at midnight, giving away free food and T-shirts, and offering discounted marijuana.

**4. Drought:** Last winter saw a dreadfully low snowpack, and the continuing dry weather led Gov. Kate Brown to declare drought emergencies for more than two dozen counties. Record December precipitation that triggered flooding and landslides eased the drought, with much of the rain and snow occurring after the ballots had been sent.

**5. Houses burn:** Officials and rural homeowners feared a bad wildfire season because the land was so dry. Their fears were realized in many parts of the state as flames raged through parched forests and grasslands. A lightning-sparked blaze near John Day burned 172 square miles and destroyed more than 40 homes. No Oregon wildfire since the Great Depression has destroyed more homes.

**6. Public pensions:** The Oregon Supreme Court ruled in April that some cuts to public-employee retirement benefits are unconstitutional, wiping out much of the savings lawmakers were trying to attain. The justices said workers were promised an annual inflation increase of up to 2 percent, and the

Legislature couldn't scale it back retroactively. It was the second time in a decade the court rejected legislative efforts to curtail pension benefits already accrued.

**7. Gun background checks:** Oregon legislators approved a law requiring background checks for private gun transactions. The law requires gun buyers and sellers who aren't related to visit a licensed gun dealer who can run a background check. Republicans opposed the measure, saying it would burden gun owners who are committed to following the law without changing the behavior of people willing to break it.

**8. Oregon Ducks football:** Heisman winner Marcus Mariota led the University of Oregon to the first College Football Playoff national championship game, but dreams of bringing a national title back to Eugene crumbled in a 42-20 loss to Ohio State. The Ducks were held to their lowest point total of the season.

**9. Port of Portland:** Two major shipping companies stopped serving the Port of Portland amid labor turmoil. Hanjin and Hapag-Lloyd, which represented more than 90 percent of container traffic at the port, said their move was based on low productivity. Businesses that relied on the container terminal for international shipping are now paying more to send their goods to out-of-state ports via truck or rail.

**10. Drilling protest:** Greenpeace activists rappelled off Portland's St. Johns Bridge this summer in a dramatic attempt to stop a Royal Dutch Shell icebreaker from leaving the city to join an Arctic drilling operation. The vessel eventually threaded its way past the dangling demonstrators. But late in September, Shell announced it was ending further exploration in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas because of disappointing results from an exploratory well.

# Feds reject hydro project

GOLDENDALE, Wash. (AP) — A proposed energy storage project in southwest Washington is on hold after federal regulators denied a utility's request to extend its permit application.

The small Klickitat County Public Utility District wants to build a 1,200-megawatt off-stream hydroelectric project near the John Day Dam near Goldendale.

The project would pump water uphill to upper reservoirs when there's surplus energy, including when wind turbines are cranking. Water would be released through turbines to a lower reservoir to generate power during peak demand or when winds are calm.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in December dismissed the utility's request for a second permit extension as well as a request for a new permit the utility had also filed, the *Yakima Herald-Republic* reported.

Regulators also denied a permit filed by a private company, Portland-based Clean Power Development, which was set up by one of the utility's former consultants.

The decision throws the fate of the \$2.5 billion proposal into question. The utility's existing preliminary permit, which gives it exclusive right to study and develop the project, is now expired.

Brian Skeahan, the utility's project lead, says the next step will be up to the utility's board and HydroChina, a major Chinese hydroelectric company collaborating on the project.

## Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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### AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<b>COLD</b>	<b>COLD</b>	<b>COLD</b>		
Freezing fog; very cold	Freezing fog; very cold	A little snow in the afternoon	Cloudy and cold	Mostly cloudy and chilly
<b>PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST</b>				
22°	13°	24°	14°	26°
13°	14°	16°	16°	19°
<b>HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST</b>				
25°	15°	25°	18°	27°
15°	18°	19°	19°	23°
23°	23°	33°	25°	25°

### ALMANAC

#### PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

#### TEMPERATURE

HIGH	LOW
Yesterday 26°	21°
Normals 40°	26°
Records 65° (1996)	-10° (1978)

#### PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	2.28"
Normal month to date	1.60"
Year to date	10.09"
Last year to date	13.24"
Normal year to date	13.07"

#### HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

#### TEMPERATURE

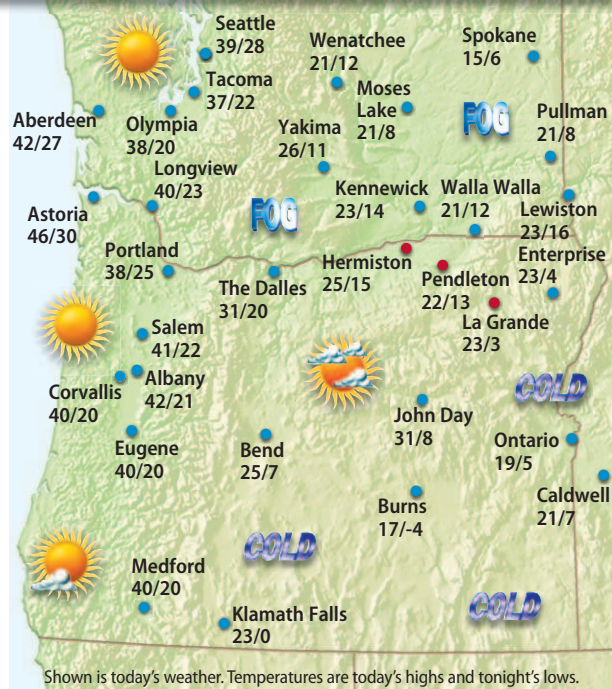
HIGH	LOW
Yesterday 28°	20°
Normals 39°	27°
Records 57° (1970)	-8° (1978)

#### PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	1.78"
Normal month to date	1.45"
Year to date	7.17"
Last year to date	7.60"
Normal year to date	9.92"

#### SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:36 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:21 p.m.
Moonrise today	none
Moonset today	11:29 a.m.



### REGIONAL FORECAST

**Coastal Oregon:** Plenty of sunshine today. Clear tonight. Sunshine tomorrow.

**Eastern Washington:** Low clouds and freezing fog may break today; however, freezing fog across the south.

**Cascades:** Plenty of sunshine, but cold today. Frigid tonight. Plenty of sun tomorrow.

**Northern California:** Plenty of sunshine today; frigid in the interior mountains. Clear and cold tonight.

**Eastern and Central Oregon:** Freezing fog today; areas of freezing fog, then sun in central parts and near the Cascades.

**Western Washington:** Sunshine and patchy clouds today; patchy fog in central parts in the morning.

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	46	30	s	44	32	s
Baker City	18	1	pc	18	9	pc
Bend	25	7	pc	25	12	s
Brookings	46	31	s	48	40	s
Burns	17	-4	pc	11	0	pc
Enterprise	23	4	pc	24	9	pc
Eugene	40	20	pc	37	25	pc
Heppner	23	10	c	25	13	c
Hermiston	25	15	c	25	18	c
John Day	31	8	pc	29	8	pc
Klamath Falls	23	0	s	25	20	s
La Grande	23	3	c	26	15	pc
Meacham	26	6	c	26	13	pc
Medford	40	20	pc	40	31	pc
Newport	44	29	s	42	31	c
North Bend	50	31	s	50	38	s
Ontario	19	5	c	18	13	c
Pasco	24	15	c	24	19	c
Pendleton	22	13	c	24	14	c
Portland	38	25	s	37	26	s
Redmond	26	9	pc	26	16	pc
Salem	41	22	s	39	25	s
Spokane	15	6	c	17	10	c
Ukiah	26	4	c	26	7	c
Vancouver	37	24	s	35	25	s
Walla Walla	21	12	c	22	15	c
Yakima	26	11	c	25	13	c

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	44	22	s	49	22	pc
Hong Kong	69	63	pc	69	65	pc
Jerusalem	44	36	sh	43	38	r
London	47	46	r	53	44	sh
Mexico City	73	49	pc	72	48	pc
Moscow	9	3	c	6	1	pc
Paris	49	45	c	52	43	sh
Rome	55	42	c	58	47	sh
Seoul	43	35	pc	50	32	pc
Sydney	78	64	pc	75	66	pc
Tokyo	53	41	pc	56	45	pc

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Saturday
Boardman	NE 3-6	NE 4-8
Pendleton	N 3-6	NNE 3-6

### UV INDEX TODAY

0 1 0 0 0 0

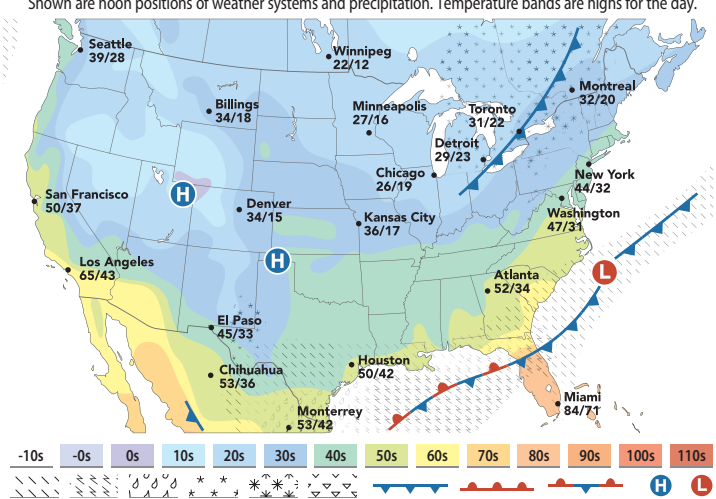
8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.  
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

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.



**National Summary:** Much of the nation will be dry today. Snow will fall downwind of the Great Lakes as rain extends from Texas to the Carolina coast. Areas of fog and freezing drizzle will linger in the interior Northwest.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 86° in Naples, Fla. Low -20° in Craig, Colo.

### NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	36	22	c	41	23	c
Atlanta	52	34	c	51	35	pc
Atlanta City	47	34	pc	43	34	s
Baltimore	45	27	pc	43	25	s
Billings	34	18	s	34	17	s
Birmingham	47	31	c	50	30	pc
Boise	20	5	c	21	13	c
Boston	42	29	s	39	30	s
Charleston, SC	63	45	r	59	39	c
Chicago, IL	41	25	pc	41	25	pc
Chicago	26	19	pc	30	18	s
Cleveland	31	23	sf	32	26	pc
Dallas	49	32	c	54	36	c
Denver	34	15	s	40	18	pc
Detroit	29	23	sf	33	26	pc
El Paso	45	33	c	49	33	c
Fairbanks	29	22	pc	34	23	pc
Fargo	25	14	s	27	11	s
Honolulu	81	68	pc	81	68	s
Houston	50	42	r	53	41	c
Indianapolis	29	22	sf	31	22	s
Jacksonville	67	48	t	62	45	c
Kansas City	36	17	s	35	16	c
Las Vegas	47	33	s	50	37	s
Little Rock	49	27	pc	52	28	pc
Los Angeles	65	43	c	68	46	c
Louisville	39	26	s	41	26	s
Memphis	47	28	pc	50	29	s
Miami	84	71	pc	82	70	c
Millwaukee	26	17	pc	28	18	s
Minneapolis	27	16	pc	27	16	s
Nashville	46	25	pc	49	26	s
New Orleans	52	45	r	55	45	c
New York City	44	32	pc	42		