

# Oregon biotech fish labeling bill dies

Proposal approved by House but fails to pass muster in Senate committee

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
EO Media Group

SALEM — A bill that would require genetically engineered fish to be labeled in Oregon has died in committee but the proposal will likely be resurrected next year.

House Bill 4122 was approved 32-27 earlier this month by the House and was referred to the Senate Committee on Health Care, which did not act on the bill by the legislature's Feb. 23 deadline.

Supporters of the bill said it would bolster Oregon's fishing industry by allowing consumers to easily discern between local wild-caught salmon and a biotech variety

approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last year.

Critics of HB 4122 argued that labeling would unnecessarily alarm consumers about the safety of such fish and claimed the bill was premature because the FDA is still determining whether federal labeling guidelines for such salmon are appropriate.

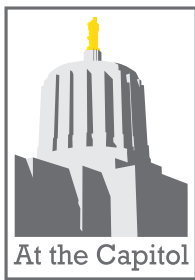
Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson, the committee's chair, said during a Feb. 23 hearing that she was generally supportive of HB 4122 but it was "dropped in our lap" only recently, so there wasn't sufficient time to discuss it during this year's short legislative session.

Originally, HB 4122 would have lifted Oregon's

ban against local regulations on genetically engineered crops, which the Legislature approved in 2013 as part of a broader package of bills passed during a special session.

The Oregon Farm Bureau vigorously opposed the reversing this pre-emption statute, arguing it would create a patchwork of conflicting county ordinances across the state. Proponents said local control was necessary due to insufficient regulations on biotech crops at the state and federal levels.

However, the initial language of HB 4122 was replaced with the fish labeling provisions, which won the approval of Oregon's salmon industry but continued to face opposition from biotech



supporters and food manufacturers.

The Center for Food Safety, which supported both versions of HB 4122, will continue to educate legislators about genetic engineering in anticipation of proposals being revived in

2017, said Amy van Saun, legal fellow for the non-profit group.

The fish labeling component may be rendered moot by 2017, depending on federal action, said Scott Dahlman, policy director of Oregonians for Food and Shelter, an industry group that opposed the bill.

However, Dahlman said he wouldn't be surprised if the biotech pre-emption issue will be raised during the longer legislative session next year.

# Bill ratifying wolf delisting heads for Senate vote

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
EO Media Group

SALEM — The fate of an environmentalist lawsuit over the removal of wolves from Oregon's list of endangered species will soon be decided by the Oregon Senate.

Under House Bill 4040, the legislature would ratify last year's decision by state wildlife officials to delist wolves, effectively neutralizing a legal challenge filed by several environmental groups in the Oregon Court of Appeals.

The Senate will soon vote on HB 4040 having passed a key legislative committee on Feb. 23 and earlier having passed the House.

Proponents of the bill, including the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, argue that livestock producers could be excluded from any potential legal settlement between the environmental plaintiffs and Oregon's wildlife regulators, thereby circumventing the public process in setting wolf management policy.

Environmentalists and animal rights advocates fear the delisting will lead to hunting and argue that HB 4040 will preclude judicial



Courtesy of ODFW

OR-3, a three-year-old male wolf from the Imnaha pack, is shown in this image captured from video taken by an ODFW employee in 2011 in Wallowa County.

review of whether the delisting decision was based on sound science, which the Legislature should not attempt to answer.

Sen. Chris Edwards, D-Eugene, said it's not unprecedented for Oregon lawmakers to weigh in on thorny policy issues instead of having them hashed out during prolonged litigation.

"As public policy makers, we do intervene when we believe it's healthier to resolve a situation rather than let it

happen in a courtroom," he said.

Edwards joined two Republican colleagues on the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources in voting in favor of the bill, which passed the committee 3-2 and is now headed for a vote on the Senate floor.

The two other Democrats on the committee — Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene, and Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland — said they were

uncomfortable with lawmakers trying to influence the legal process from the outset.

Prozanski said he would have preferred a bill that would require the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and Oregon Farm Bureau to be included in any settlement negotiations, rather than render the lawsuit moot.

"I'm concerned about us being asked to intervene at this stage in a judicial proceeding," he said.

## BRIEFLY

### Baker City man pleads guilty to illegally taking wolf

CANYON CITY (AP) — An Oregon hunter who fatally shot a radio-collared wolf last fall has pleaded guilty to taking a threatened or endangered species.

Harney County District Attorney Tim Colahan says Brennon Witty of Baker City was fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay the same amount in restitution to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. He also had to forfeit the rifle to the state.

In a plea agreement, prosecutors dropped a charge of hunting with a centerfire rifle with no big game tag.

Witty was hunting coyotes in Grant County when the shooting occurred. He reported the incident to authorities.

Colahan prosecuted the case because the Grant County district attorney knows Witty's father.

### State has spent more than \$6.6M on legal fees for Cover Oregon

SALEM (AP) — Oregon has paid more than \$6.6 million on legal fees in ongoing litigation over the failed Cover Oregon health insurance exchange portal.

The *Statesman Journal* reports that documents released to the newspaper by the Oregon Department of Justice show payments as high as \$960,900 made between May 2014 and December 2015 to attorneys representing the state.

The state and Oracle Inc., the primary tech contractor on Cover Oregon, have been engaged in a lengthy, multi-case legal battle over who is responsible for the project's failure since 2014.

Though the \$6.6 million figure far exceeds the \$2 million the state set aside for the lawsuits, DOJ spokeswoman Kristina Edmunson said Tuesday the agency does not expect to need to ask the Legislature for additional money for the cases.

### Police say three residents tortured 63-year-old relative

KLAMATH FALLS (AP) — Three Klamath Falls residents have been arrested for what authorities describe as the torture of a female relative.

The *Herald and News* reports that police on Monday arrested a 56-year-old woman, her 24-year-old daughter and a 29-year-old man. All three live with the 63-year-old victim and the mother and daughter are the woman's caregivers.

According to an Oregon State Police report, the victim was hospitalized Feb. 11 in critical condition. She said her 56-year-old caregiver restrained her in a chair and beat her with a metal spoon. She said she was also sexually abused while restrained.

The victim also said the man broke her arm while forcing her into the chair.

Police say they found blood splatter throughout the house and believe the abuse has been going on since May 2015.

## 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** Sunshine and patchy clouds  
**FRIDAY** Increasing cloudiness  
**SATURDAY** A morning shower  
**SUNDAY** A shower or two in the afternoon  
**MONDAY** Intervals of clouds and sunshine

**PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST**  
56° 33° 57° 43° 54° 36° 58° 38° 54° 30°

**HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST**  
59° 33° 58° 42° 58° 34° 55° 37° 56° 30°

**ALMANAC**

**PENDLETON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday  
**TEMPERATURE**  
HIGH 52° LOW 30°  
Yesterday 52° 30°  
Normals 49° 31°  
Records 72° (1986) 10° (1993)  
**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.82"  
Normal month to date 0.98"  
Year to date 2.33"  
Last year to date 1.49"  
Normal year to date 2.36"

**HERMISTON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday  
**TEMPERATURE**  
HIGH 54° LOW 28°  
Yesterday 54° 28°  
Normals 51° 30°  
Records 67° (1964) 15° (2005)  
**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.34"  
Normal month to date 0.82"  
Year to date 1.44"  
Last year to date 1.05"  
Normal year to date 2.10"

**SUN AND MOON**  
Sunrise today 6:42 a.m.  
Sunset tonight 5:35 p.m.  
Moonrise today 8:49 p.m.  
Moonset today 8:01 a.m.

Last New First Full  
Mar 1 Mar 8 Mar 15 Mar 23

**REGIONAL FORECAST**

Coastal Oregon: Times of sun and clouds today; pleasant across the north. Partly cloudy tonight.  
Eastern and Central Oregon: Mostly sunny today; however, some clouds near the Cascades. Patchy clouds tonight.  
Western Washington: Intervals of clouds and sun today. Partly cloudy tonight.  
Eastern Washington: Sunshine and patchy clouds today. Mainly clear tonight.  
Cascades: Mild today with times of clouds and sun.  
Northern California: Partly sunny today. Partly cloudy tonight.

**REGIONAL CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	61	44	pc	56	46	c
Baker City	51	24	s	53	34	pc
Bend	62	33	pc	60	38	pc
Brookings	60	47	pc	56	47	r
Burns	50	22	s	51	29	pc
Enterprise	53	26	s	54	38	pc
Eugene	63	43	pc	60	46	sh
Heppner	56	32	pc	58	41	pc
Hermiston	59	33	pc	58	42	pc
John Day	64	32	s	67	45	pc
Klamath Falls	63	31	pc	58	34	pc
La Grande	55	31	s	57	40	pc
Meacham	54	31	s	55	39	pc
Medford	68	42	pc	63	43	pc
Newport	61	46	pc	56	47	sh
North Bend	63	48	pc	60	47	sh
Ontario	56	31	s	59	43	pc
Pasco	58	31	pc	57	40	pc
Pendleton	56	33	s	57	43	pc
Portland	64	43	pc	59	47	pc
Redmond	65	29	pc	63	38	pc
Salem	63	42	pc	59	46	c
Spokane	50	32	s	55	40	pc
Ukiah	57	30	s	58	38	pc
Vancouver	63	40	pc	57	46	pc
Walla Walla	55	36	s	57	42	pc
Yakima	60	32	pc	56	38	pc

**WORLD CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	43	16	pc	47	27	s
Hong Kong	61	55	c	62	57	c
Jerusalem	66	52	pc	69	52	c
London	43	28	pc	45	33	pc
Mexico City	76	46	s	73	47	pc
Moscow	36	26	c	35	29	i
Paris	45	31	pc	43	30	c
Rome	61	46	c	60	49	sh
Seoul	41	21	pc	41	24	s
Sydney	95	75	s	82	72	pc
Tokyo	43	35	c	50	39	pc

**WINDS**

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	NE 3-6	NE 3-6
Pendleton	NNE 4-8	ENE 3-6

**UV INDEX TODAY**

0 2 3 2 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.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. © 2016

**NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY**

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

**National Summary:** Rain and strong winds will ease over northern New England with spotty showers southward to the mid-Atlantic today. Snow showers will occur over part of the Midwest. Most other locations will be dry.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 86° in Fullerton, Calif. Low -14° in Lake Yellowstone, Wyo.

**NATIONAL CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	59	32	s	66	35	s
Atlanta	52	32	pc	53	34	s
Atlanta City	50	34	pc	40	27	s
Baltimore	50	30	pc	41	23	s
Billings	55	32	pc	62	40	pc
Birmingham	54	33	pc	54	33	s
Boise	57	34	s	61	44	pc
Boston	55	34	r	41	20	pc
Charleston, SC	61	37	s	59	34	s
Chicago, IL	40	27	sn	37	26	sf
Chicago	38	25	c	37	27	pc
Cleveland	35	21	sn	28	21	sf
Dallas	58	32	s	62	42	pc
Denver	49	27	pc	60	33	s
Detroit	35	18	sn	30	21	pc
El Paso	67	37	s	72	40	s
Fairbanks	38	14	s	38	19	pc
Fargo	29	23	c	41	31	pc
Honolulu	80	68	c	84	68	pc
Houston	71	40	s	64	39	pc
Indianapolis	37	25	sf	37	27	c
Jacksonville	64	40	s	60	34	s
Kansas City	43	24	pc	55	30	s
Las Vegas	75	50	s	78	51	s
Little Rock	55	31	s	57	38	s
Los Angeles	82	55	s	80	53	pc
Louisville	42	30	sf	44	29	c
Memphis	50	31	s	53	38	s
Miami	73	53	s	72	50	s
Millwaukee	36	26	c	36	29	pc
Minneapolis	34	23	c	40	33	pc
Nashville	44	31	sf	49	31	s
New Orleans	68	45	s	62	42	s
New York City	52	30	sh	38	24	s
Oklahoma City	53	27	s	62	36	s
Omaha	40	26	pc	42	32	pc
Philadelphia	51	32	c	40	25	s
Phoenix	84	54	s	86	55	s
Portland, ME	55	30	r	37	11	c
Providence	55	33	r	39	19	pc
Raleigh	56	34	s	50	27	s
Rapid City	43	24	s	59	33	s
Reno	67	34	s	68	37	pc
Sacramento	74	44	s	72	46	pc
St. Louis	43	29	c	47	36	pc
Salt Lake City	51	32	s	55	38	s
San Diego	78	55	s	73	55	pc
San Francisco	68	51	s	64	51	pc