

# WOLF: Three wolves poached during 2015

Continued from 1A

rancher and wolf committee chairman for the Oregon Cattleman's Association, said although the number of confirmed attacks on livestock has gone down, those numbers do not account for the rise of missing animals — especially on forest allotments. Local ranchers have repeatedly said they need the ability to kill problem wolves to sustain their operations.

"I think this is the time we need to take a very serious look at limiting wolves in certain areas," Nash said.

ODFW recognizes 12 wolf packs and four additional pairs spread out across nine counties in Oregon, including a recently discovered pack near Heppner. The Oregon Department of Agriculture paid out \$174,428 in grants to pay for non-lethal deterrents and compen-

sate ranchers for livestock losses.

Morgan said the vast majority of wolves still live in northeast Oregon, but predicted more will branch out into unused territory to the south and southwest.

"I think the population increase is leveling out or will level out to some degree in northeast Oregon," Morgan said.

Arran Robertson, spokesman for the conservation group Oregon Wild, said they are pleased to see wolf management practices allow for the species to recover in Oregon, while reducing the number of livestock conflicts. However, he said they were unsettled by another aspect of the 2015 report, showing three wolves had been poached during the year.

Previously, only one case of poaching had been reported out of Grant County. Another pair

of wolves, the Sled Springs pair, were found dead under mysterious circumstances in August.

Those cases have been handed over to Oregon State Police, Robertson said, but he wondered why the reports weren't made public earlier.

"It is disconcerting," Robertson said.

Oregon Wild is one of the groups that has called for a judicial review of ODFW's decision to delist wolves. House Bill 4040, worked up by state Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove, and Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, would ratify the delisting at the legislature. That bill passed the House on Feb. 12, but remains tied up in the Senate.

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# LEAP: Government places birthday on March 1 during non-leap years

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Wildhorse Resort & Casino on Monday, meaning Trenton's birthday party with his family will have to wait until Tuesday — the first day of March.

Cody Cimmiyotti, a bartender and a 24-year-old leaping, treats the date of birthday celebrations even more liberally.

Growing up, Cimmiyotti said non-leap year birthday parties tended to fall on whatever weekend was closest to his hypothetical birthday.

Although his legal birthday is Feb. 29, 1992, Cimmiyotti said the government places his birthday on March 1 during non-leap years.

Cimmiyotti said leap years have their perks. This year, he was

able to get a free drink at Starbucks and celebrate his birthday with his family on its actual day.

While Cimmiyotti marked his birthday with a family dinner, Trenton Ellis has a slightly more elaborate request.

Trenton's grandmother, Raylene, used to teach cooking classes at Pendleton High School, which left her with the cake pans and know-how to make customized cakes for all her grandchildren.

Trenton's request? A police car Transformers cake.

"He's the MVP of Team Ellis this month," Raylene said.

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# SCHOOL: Smith also a finalist for Walla Walla superintendent

Continued from 1A

Mooney earned her bachelor's degree at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa and a master's degree in educational leadership from Washington State University. She's working toward a doctorate in educational leadership from Northcentral University, an online college based in Arizona.

Smith is in contention for two high-profile education jobs in the region, having been named a finalist for the Walla Walla Public Schools superintendent position.

Following a meeting with the public and an interview with the board in Pendleton on Tuesday, Smith will travel to Walla Walla Wednesday and go through the same process.

Smith was hired as the assistant superintendent for support services in 2007, but took on expanded responsibility as the interim superintendent from 2011-2012 while Superintendent Fred Maiocco was deployed to Kuwait as a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Upon Maiocco's return, Smith was named deputy superintendent.

Smith was also Morrow County School District assistant superintendent 2005-2007, a Morrow County principal 2002-2005 and a science teacher for the Long Creek School District, north of John Day. Smith has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in teaching from Willamette University. He's currently working on a doctoral degree from Concordia University, which he expects to complete in 2017.

Although he hasn't made a career in Umatilla County like the other two candidates, Kovach also brings an extensive resume to the table.

Kovach was promoted from associate principal to principal in 2012 and served the dual role of elementary school principal and director of migrant education for the Ontario School District from 2003-2009.

Before landing in Ontario, Kovach was the assistant principal at Nyssa Middle School 2001-2003, Nyssa School District director of student services 1998-2001, Harney County School District special education coordinator 1995-1997 and Crane School District special education coordinator 1993-1997.

The school board is currently vetting all the candidates through background and reference checks and expects to make an announcement on the next step in the process soon.

The new superintendent, who will replace outgoing Superintendent Jon Peterson, will start July 1 and will earn between \$127,500-\$140,000 per year.

The school board is slightly ahead of schedule in the selection process, but has previously committed to announcing Peterson's successor by April 5.

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