

Fishermen want state to halt gillnet ban

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Commercial gillnetters said Oregon should halt its phased-in ban of their salmon fishing method in the main channel of the Columbia River.

Speaking to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission on Friday, panelists representing gillnetters said alternative commercial fishing methods are expensive or unproven, and plans to develop salmon runs in side channels show little promise.

Astoria fisherman Jim Wells, president of Salmon for All, said only big migratory fish returns the past couple years have kept gillnetters operating. He said limiting gillnetting to the Columbia's side channel sloughs will cost commercial anglers two-thirds of their income.

"We've been lucky to have big runs," Wells said. "Our income is coming off the mainstem. We need to be there."

He and others asked the commission to halt implementation of the main channel gillnetting ban, which takes full effect in 2017. The commission wasn't scheduled to take action Friday, but invited panels to speak on the issue.



Photo courtesy WDFW

Gillnetters harvesting salmon in 2013. Commercial fishermen on the Columbia want the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to halt the ban of gillnetting.

Sports fishing groups, led by the Coastal Conservation Association, take the opposite view.

More than two-dozen backers, many of them wearing red CCA caps, attended the ODFW Commission meeting to support the Columbia River Harvest Management Plan adopted by Oregon and Washington in 2013.

Sports fishing groups argue that gillnetting is an indiscriminate method that catches and kills salmon whether they are hatchery raised or wild.

"With over a dozen Columbia

River salmon and steelhead stocks listed under the (federal) Endangered Species Act, we all know that non-selective gillnet fisheries have no place in the future of our Columbia River fisheries," the CCA said on its website.

The CCA argues that sports-fishing brings more money to river communities. Guide fees, license fees, hotel stays and other income circulate as recreational anglers have greater access to salmon in the lower Columbia, the organization maintains.

The management plan was approved by the Oregon Legislature in 2013. In addition to shunting gillnetting to side channels, it allocates 70 percent of salmon catch to recreational anglers this year and 80 percent next year.

The gillnetting ban has political backers, as well.

In a March 14 letter, state Sens. Fred Girod and Rod Monroe urged the ODFW Commission to "continue implementing this common sense plan."

The senators praised the economic impact of a gillnetting ban and said more selective fishing methods "are critical to conserving wild salmon populations and maintaining hatchery production."

Salmon For All representatives respond that the commercial industry has lost part of its valuable spring and summer Chinook harvest, side channels haven't been improved as promised and alternative gear such as seines is prohibitively expensive. Group member Irene Martin said the management change was based on a policy decision that turned out wrong.

"We've seen a lot of heartache in our communities," Martin said. "Policy without science is a gamble. We gambled the science would work."

State ag could benefit from improved Cuba relations

By ALEX PAUL
Albany Democrat-Herald

ALBANY — It's too early to tell what will come from this week's visit by President Barack Obama and his family to Cuba — both politically and economically — but one outcome could be increased agricultural sales of Oregon products to the island.

Politically, the United States slapped a trade embargo on the Caribbean island of 11 million residents after Fidel Castro's guerrilla army took control in 1959 and allied with communist China and Russia.

But in reality, more than \$300 million in U.S. agricultural products were exported to Cuba in 2014 under the Trade Sanctions and Export Enhancement Act of 2000.

In fact, the United States was the leading exporter of agricultural products to Cuba for nine of 11 years since 2000, topping out at \$658 million in 2008.

Leading exports have been chicken, corn and soybean meal.

An estimated 70 to 80 percent of all food consumed by Cubans is imported.

President Obama spent two years in secret talks with Cuban officials and in December 2014 announced that diplomatic relationships would be restored. A symbol of that effort was the recent reopening of the U.S. embassy in Cuba.

Bruce Pokarney of the Oregon Department of Agriculture said that although other states in the Southeast or along the Eastern Seaboard would have an easier trade path to Cuba, just 90 miles away from Florida, the expanded Panama Canal has made the trip from the Pacific Northwest to Cuba more economically feasible.

"Obviously, our top market is Asia," Pokarney said. "But we are always open to looking at new markets. It's a situation where we want to maintain

existing markets and to find new ones."

Pokarney said Oregon could play a role in providing specialty products such as hazelnuts, which are on a marked upswing among products grown in Oregon. New hazelnut orchards are popping up throughout the mid-valley.

Oregon wines could also be welcomed in Cuba, if not necessarily for its own residents but for the flood of tourists, expected to jump from last year's 3.5 million.

The number of tourists from the United States jumped 77 percent last year alone.

Those tourists generated almost \$2 billion in revenue, or more than 10 percent of the country's total gross domestic product.

Oregon products that could likely see increased exports include wine, craft beer, blueberries, apples, pears, cherries and beef.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the European Union and Brazil are Cuba's leading agricultural partners, with the United States third.

The European Union and Canada are Cuba's largest supplier of wheat with more than \$170 million and \$67 million in sales, respectively. The United States has not shipped wheat to Cuba since 2011.

Argentina and Brazil were the largest corn exporters and the U.S. was third with \$28 million in sales. The United States had been the country's largest exporter of corn from 2002 to 2012, reaching 64 percent of the country's corn supply in 2012. That figure dropped to 14 percent in 2014.

Other major exporters to Cuba are Vietnam and Brazil, which supply the majority of the country's rice. The United States once supplied up to 40 percent of Cuba's rice needs, but has not exported rice to Cuba since 2009.

Sheriff tells Oregon standoff backers to stay out of arrest

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — The last named defendant in the armed occupation of an Oregon wildlife refuge was still at large Tuesday, drawing calls for supporters to flock to his Montana hometown and a local sheriff to urge outsiders to stay out of it.

Supporters of the 41-day standoff this winter over U.S. land restrictions used social media to rally behind Jake Ryan, urging the sheriff to resist federal efforts to apprehend him and for people to head to the small northwestern town of Plains to pray with Ryan's family.

Sanders County Sheriff Tom Rummel, trying to head off any new armed conflicts, warned standoff supporters to stay away during negotiations for Ryan's arrest.

"There is no standoff, and I want to keep it that way," Rummel told The Associated Press. "I don't need anybody showing up in my county that's only going to add tension to the situation."

A federal judge released Ryan's name Monday as the 26th defendant charged in connection with the occupation at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Ryan and another man are accused of using heavy equipment to dig a trench through a Native American archaeological site at the refuge.

He and Travis Cox were the only people facing charges who had not been arrested by Tuesday morning.

The sheriff, like the occupation supporters, is wary of federal officials. Rummel once gave his support to failed legislation in Montana that would have required any federal agency to get written permission from a sheriff before making an arrest or conducting a search in that sheriff's jurisdiction.

However, he has sought to be a facilitator in this case. In response to Ryan's supporters, Rummel released a statement Monday saying he intends to provide for Ryan's safety and rights. He said an attorney hired by Ryan's family is working with the FBI on the charges.

Ryan's mother, Roxsanna Ryan, said she does not know where her son is. A few of Ryan's friends have shown up at their home to wait with the family, but she declined to give details during a brief interview with the AP.

"We're just waiting and waiting on something to happen," she said. "Until that happens, we're not going to reveal a lot."

Ryan participated in the armed standoff that launched Jan. 2 to demand the government to turn over public lands to local control and oppose prison terms for two ranchers convicted of setting fires. The occupation ended Feb. 11 with the surrender of four holdouts.

Ryan faces charges of depredation of government property, conspiracy to impede officers and possession of weapons in a federal facility.

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	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly sunny	An afternoon shower in spots	A bit of morning snow	Mostly sunny	Rather cloudy

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

57°	44°	53°	37°	54°	31°	58°	42°	54°	32°
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HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

61°	45°	58°	40°	59°	30°	61°	43°	59°	34°
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ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	52°	41°
Normals	56°	36°
Records	83° (1911)	13° (1898)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.24"
Month to date 1.39"
Normal month to date 0.97"
Year to date 3.76"
Last year to date 2.23"
Normal year to date 3.52"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	60°	42°
Normals	59°	36°
Records	78° (1940)	19° (2014)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.23"
Month to date 1.21"
Normal month to date 0.66"
Year to date 2.70"
Last year to date 1.27"
Normal year to date 2.93"

SUN AND MOON

	Full	Last	New	First
Mar 23	Mar 31	Apr 7	Apr 13	

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Periods of rain today; any time across the north, in the afternoon in central parts.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Partly sunny today; warmer in central parts and near the Cascades.

Western Washington: Mostly cloudy today. A shower; a morning shower, then periods of rain at the coast.

Eastern Washington: Partly sunny today, except more clouds in the north; a stray shower in the mountains.

Cascades: Occasional rain and drizzle in central parts today; a shower elsewhere.

Northern California: Mostly sunny today; warmer in central parts.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	54	44	r	52	43	r
Baker City	51	32	pc	51	31	c
Bend	53	39	pc	49	29	c
Brookings	55	46	pc	56	41	c
Burns	51	34	pc	52	29	c
Enterprise	48	34	pc	43	30	c
Eugene	58	45	pc	57	41	c
Heppner	56	40	pc	50	35	c
Hermiston	61	45	pc	58	40	c
John Day	55	44	pc	52	34	c
Klamath Falls	54	31	pc	55	27	c
La Grande	54	40	pc	49	33	c
Meacham	49	36	pc	45	32	c
Medford	62	43	pc	62	38	c
Newport	54	46	c	53	44	sh
North Bend	58	48	sh	55	44	c
Ontario	58	39	pc	59	36	c
Pasco	61	44	pc	60	40	c
Pendleton	57	44	pc	53	37	c
Portland	57	45	c	53	44	sh
Redmond	56	36	pc	51	29	c
Salem	58	45	c	55	43	sh
Spokane	49	40	pc	49	34	c
Ukiah	51	37	pc	45	31	c
Vancouver	55	46	c	52	44	sh
Walla Walla	55	44	pc	54	39	c
Yakima	61	39	pc	59	33	c

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	58	28	s	58	30	s
Hong Kong	73	61	sh	63	52	sh
Jerusalem	70	57	pc	78	56	pc
London	54	41	pc	53	44	r
Mexico City	78	50	pc	79	49	pc
Moscow	28	12	s	29	17	sn
Paris	53	41	pc	51	44	c
Rome	59	46	c	61	43	sh
Seoul	54	32	pc	52	32	s
Sydney	79	64	c	79	64	s
Tokyo	60	42	pc	48	40	r

WINDS

	Today	Thursday
(in mph)	WSW 8-16	WSW 12-25
Boardman	WSW 7-14	W 10-20
Pendleton		

UV INDEX TODAY

0	2	4	4	2	0
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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: Snow, ice and rain will extend from the Great Lakes to northern New England today. Snow and wind will ramp up from the central Rockies to the northern Plains. Storms will erupt over the South Central states.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 91° in Presidio, Texas Low 9° in Bangor, Maine

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thur.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	59	29	pc	64	35	s
Atlanta	73	55	pc	70	45	t
Atlantic City	65	50	pc	66	54	pc
Baltimore	70	51	pc	74	57	pc
Billings	52	33	sn	57	35	c
Birmingham	71	59	pc	68	42	t
Boise	55	40	pc	56	37	c
Boston	57	38	c	46	43	pc
Charleston, SC	78	58	s	81	63	pc
Chicago, IL	72	50	pc	72	43	t
Chicago, IN	49	41	r	47	28	r
Cleveland	59	50	c	63	44	r
Dallas	83	47	pc	65	42	s
Denver	38	24	sn	50	28	pc
Detroit	51	43	r	61	33	pc
El Paso	72	39	pc	72	43	s
Fairbanks	35	12	c	42	21	s
Fargo	40	22	pc	46	33	s
Honolulu	81	67	sh	83	69	sh
Houston	77	59	pc	68	44	pc
Indianapolis	64	56	c	61	32	r
Jacksonville	78	56	s	83	64	pc
Kansas City	77	34	pc	49	28	s
Las Vegas	69	51	s	75	54	s
Little Rock	72	52	pc	61	37	pc
Los Angeles	76	54	s	79	56	s
Louisville	64	58	pc	64	37	t
Memphis	70	58	pc			