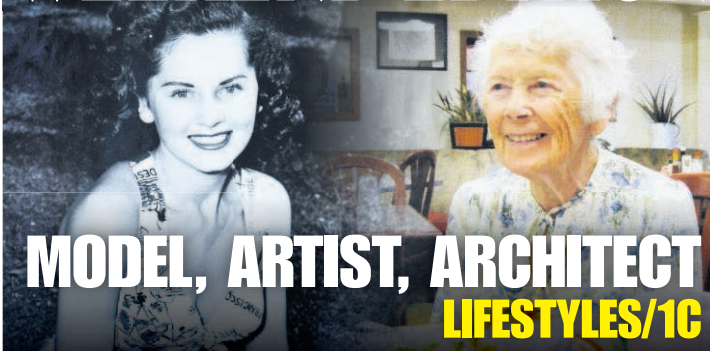


**RACING  
'ROUND THE  
ROUND-UP  
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**WEEKEND EDITION**



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# EAST OREGONIAN

JULY 22-23, 2017

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## DAM NEAR GONE



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

An excavator with an air-chisel attachment demolishes a section of the Dillon Diversion Dam on Wednesday in Echo. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is removing the irrigation diversion dam to improve fish passage and due to the high cost of maintenance.

## Crews begin work removing fish impediment

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**  
East Oregonian

It took 20 years of planning, studies and grant writing, but removal of the Dillon Diversion Dam is finally underway on the Umatilla River.

A pair of excavators rumbled over the dry, rocky riverbed Wednesday morning two miles downstream of Echo, while project managers watched from a clearing along the stream bank. One of the backhoes, fitted with a massive air chisel, moved into position and sliced into the aging concrete like a hot knife through butter.

"I've been on a lot of construction projects, but never a deconstruction," said Michael Ward, executive director of the Umatilla Basin Watershed Council.

Ward, who was hired by the watershed council last November, is the third director to help carry the project across the finish line. His predecessors,



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

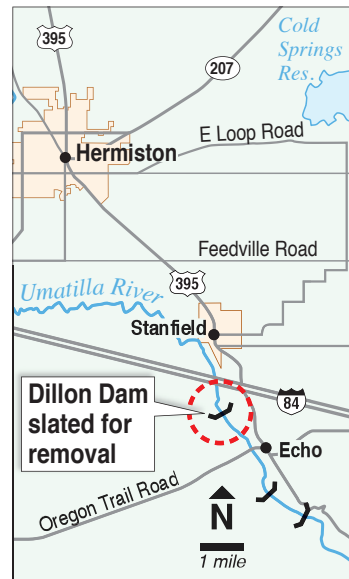
Concrete from the removal of the dam will be used to fill the old Dillon irrigation ditch, west of the old dam.

Greg Silbernagel and Jon Staldine, also played key roles in applying for funds and rallying local partners.

Work officially began July 13 to tear out the dam, which had been identified as a fish-blocking, water-clogging burden. Not only did the structure pose a barrier to

salmon, steelhead and lamprey, but due to its location gravel bars would routinely wash over the irrigation headgate during high flows, leaving ranchers to clean up the mess.

Crews will have until Sept. 15 to finish the job, which is around the same time fall chinook



Alan Kenaga/EO Media Group

usually start making their way back up the river to spawn.

Fish passage is, of course a major theme of the project, Ward said. But that's not the only perk to removing the dam.

See **DAM/13A**

**"Our fish come a long way to spawn. Let's make it as easy as possible for them."**

— **Rick Christian**, Umatilla Basin habitat project leader for the CTUIR

## HERMISTON School district to tap interim superintendent on Monday

East Oregonian

A current Hermiston School District employee, a retired Hermiston High School principal and an Arizona consultant are finalists for the district's interim superintendent position.

The district announced Friday it will interview Tricia Mooney, Philip "Buzz" Brazeau and Richard Rundhaug on Monday, followed by a school board meeting at 6:30 p.m. to make a final selection.

The interviews will take place from 2-6:30 p.m. in the district's boardroom, 305 S.W. 11th St. Staff and community members are encouraged to stay through the entire process and provide written feedback on all three candidates.

One of them will be selected to fill in for superintendent Fred Maiocco for the next 12 to 18 months as he takes a leave of absence to serve a tour of duty in Europe with the U.S. Army Reserves.

Mooney is the district's assistant superintendent of human resources. From 2009 to 2016 she worked for Pendleton School District, first as director of human resources and then as assistant superintendent. She started her education career in 1995 as a teacher for Hermiston School District and later served as principal at Rocky Heights Elementary School and Armand Larive Middle School. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Northwestern College in Iowa and a master's degree in educational leadership from Washington State University and is currently working on a doctorate degree.

Brazeau was principal of Hermiston High School from 2007 to 2012 and assistant principal there from 2004 to 2007. He recently retired as superintendent for Central School District 13J in Independence and earlier in his career was assistant principal for North Medford High School. He was one of the original board members for the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. He has a bachelor's degree in physical education from Washington State University, a master's degree in education from Southern Oregon University and an administrator's license from Portland State University.

Rundhaug has been a consultant for A+ Educators in Phoenix since January 2015. He served as superintendent for Willcox Unified School District from June 2008 to June 2014 and assistant superintendent for Coolidge Unified School District before that. He has a bachelor's degree in diversified general studies from Hope International University, a master's degree in educational leadership from Northern Arizona University, master's in business analysis from Webster University and a doctorate degree in educational leadership from Capella University.

## Shooting migratory birds flies in face of federal law



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Raptors sit on a perch in a flight pen at Blue Mountain Wildlife on Friday in Pendleton. The red-tailed hawk on the left and the Harlan's hawk on the right were both brought into animal rehabilitation center with gunshot wounds.

## Ferruginous hawk killed in Coombs Canyon

By **KATHY ANEY**  
East Oregonian

The sight sent a jolt of horror through bird watchers June Whitten and Diana Dillenburg.

On a rock face in Coombs Canyon, a ferruginous hawk lay dead, near where the women had seen him at a nest only a few weeks prior. The nest was now empty and there was no sign of his mate. Sadness washed over both women.

"We were about in tears," Whitten said. "It was an emotional thing."

Ferruginous hawks are the largest hawks, about the same size as osprey. The birds sport rusty backs, a white underside and feathers all the way to their feet. The women, though they

travel around the county on weekly birdwatching expeditions, don't often see this type of hawk.

Dillenburg climbed the steep hill carrying a scoop shovel, a plastic bag and a pair of gloves and collected the carcass. They delivered the decomposing raptor to Lynn Tompkins, executive director at Blue Mountain Wildlife, who took an X-ray. The image showed bullet fragments and a leg broken in two places.

"It either starved or bled out," she said.

Tompkins sees plenty of gunshot birds at her rehabilitation facility. The majority come in alive, but the odds are slim the birds will stay that way.

"Most of them get euthanized," she said. "They are too damaged. We just can't fix them."

See **BIRDS/13A**



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