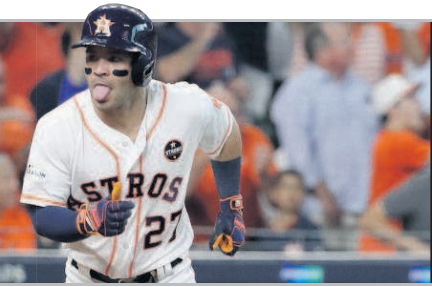


ALTUVE GOES NUTS
PLAYOFFS/1B



WHITE HOUSE, NRA SUPPORT BUMP STOCK REGULATIONS
NATION/6A

EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2017

141st Year, No. 254

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Your Weekend



- Harvest Festival
- Saturday in Boardman
- Free First Friday at Tamastlikt
- Live musical theater all weekend at BMCC

For times and places see Coming Events, 6A

Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
74/51	63/44	61/36

Watch a game



Mountain View vs. Pendleton
Friday, 7 p.m., Round-Up Arena

Task force: Independent commission should redistrict

By CHRIS LEHMAN
Oregon Public Broadcasting

A task force created by Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson is recommending that future redistricting be done by an independent commission.

That would be a significant change from the current model, which tasks Oregon lawmakers with drawing up a plan.

Redistricting is the process of drawing new legislative and congressional districts to match shifts in population. It takes place every 10 years, following the U.S. Census. Oregon's next redistricting will occur in 2021.

The current method of allowing lawmakers to draw the maps is "susceptible to political manipulation," Richardson wrote in a newsletter announcing the task force report. "There is an inherent conflict of interest in allowing legislators to draw their own districts and pick their own voters."

Legislative redistricting
See REDISTRICTING:/8A

PENDLETON

So the wells don't run dry



The intake for the city of Pendleton's aquifer recharge system takes water from the Umatilla River east of Pendleton during the higher rates of flow.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Drought-resistant Pendleton still sees dwindling groundwater

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Pendleton's aquifer storage and recovery system has won plaudits from the state and been a crowning achievement for the city's public works director, but it isn't a silver bullet.

Despite the innovative system that allows Pendleton to funnel most of its drinking water from the Umatilla River rather than pumping it from the ground, the city's groundwater supply has still dwindled over the years.

The numbers fluctuate depending on whether it has been a wet or dry winter, but Public Works Director Bob Patterson said groundwater levels have dropped an average of 1.4 feet per year for the past 14 years since the ASR went online.

That's better than the average 3.5 feet per year decrease before. But the new system isn't consistently preventing groundwater loss, much less recharging the aquifer.

Groundwater depletion is often discussed in an agricultural context



The water pressure for the city of Pendleton's well water system reads on a gauge at city well 14 on the west side of Pendleton. The city currently operates eight wells for its drinking water system.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

in Oregon, but cities across the arid Eastern Oregon landscape rely on the same supply.

If the area can't stop drawing heavily from the aquifer, Patterson's

prediction is dire.

"At some point, someone's going to go dry," he said.

It's just a matter of where and when.

Deepening wells

Patterson, whose work in the development of Pendleton's ASR system earned him a spot on the 2016 Top Ten Public Works Leaders by the American Public Works Association, compared extracting groundwater to straws in a bowl.

Pendleton has eight straws in the bowl — wells that pump 8.5 million gallons of water per day during peak use.

The city eases its groundwater consumption by drawing water directly from the river during the winter and spring, treating it and storing it at the water filtration plant in east Pendleton.

Utilizing micro-turbines that power five wells and a first-of-its-kind siphon design used for water filtration, the city has stored billions of gallons of water in a drought-plagued region that averages just 12 inches of rain per year.

On balance, the city now draws 100 percent of its supply from water stored from the cooler months,

See GROUNDWATER/8A

Firefighting funding added to \$29B disaster package

By ANDREW TAYLOR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration on Wednesday asked Congress for \$29 billion in disaster aid to cover ongoing hurricane relief and recovery efforts and to pay federal flood insurance claims.

The request comes as the government is spending almost \$200 million a day for emergency hurricane response and faces a surge in flood claims for federally insured homes and businesses slammed by hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

White House budget director Mick Mulvaney told lawmakers in officially submitting the request that the federal flood insurance program "is not designed to handle catastrophic losses like those caused by Harvey, Irma, and Maria. The NFIP is simply not fiscally sustainable in its current form."

Mulvaney proposed a package of changes to the flood insurance program that, among others, would



LEFT: This Sept. 4 photo provided by Inciweb showed the Eagle Creek wildfire burning in the Eagle Creek Gorge east of Portland. RIGHT: In this Oct. 4 photo, a monkey walks over the rubble left in the wake of Hurricane Maria on Cayo Santiago, known as Monkey Island, in Puerto Rico, one of the world's most important sites for research into how primates think, socialize and evolve.



Associated Press

protect low-income policyholders from big rate hikes, allow the government to drop from the program properties that have been repeatedly flooded, and phasing out policies on new homes in flood zones.

In the meantime, Wednesday's request proposal would provide \$16 billion to pay those flood claims, along with \$13 billion for Federal Emergency Management Agency

disaster relief efforts. Federal firefighting accounts would receive \$577 million as well to replenish them after a disastrous season of Western wildfires.

Rep. Greg Walden (R-Oregon) applauded the funding designated to recoup firefighting costs, as well as the included recommendation that forestry reform be pursued to help curb wildfire borrowing going forward.

"Another fire season

winds down and, once again, the Forest Service needed to rob money from important fire prevention work to pay for fighting wildfires," he said in a statement. "We must not only supplement those accounts to pay for the cost of this fire season, but it's past time that we fix how we pay for fires and treat them like the natural disasters they are."

The Senate's top Democrat quickly backed the aid

request but signaled opposition to the administration's proposed restrictions on flood insurance.

"This funding request is a good start, but those affected by Maria, Harvey, Irma and wildfires still have a long and difficult road ahead," said Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "We should act on this supplemental quickly, but it

See WILDFIRE/8A



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