

EAST OREGONIAN

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142nd Year, No. 55 WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar



Long-time National Weather Service forecaster Dennis Hull poses in front of the radar dome near the Pendleton NWS office. Hull's last day is Wednesday.

The weather man

Dennis Hull retiring after 39 years with National Weather Service

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Veteran weather forecaster Dennis Hull predicts sunny days ahead.

The prediction, defying the gray inversion clearly in view outside our windows, is a metaphor for his retirement that begins Thursday. Hull retires after 39 years with the National Weather Service, almost 20 of them in Pendleton.

Much has changed over the decades. On Tuesday, Hull took a lingering look around the center's NASA-esque control room. Several fellow forecasters sat in the cool glow of three or four computer monitors apiece, scrutinizing weather data in a variety of forms, examining maps that overlaid one another, zooming in and out and gazing at looping satellite images.

A low-tech pair of binoculars sat on a window sill. Outside was



A meteorologist monitors several screens of weather data Tuesday at the National Weather Service office in Pendleton.

a panoramic view of the Blue Mountains. Once in a while, Hull said, someone will get up from their desk and peer through the binoculars at lightning or gathering clouds or a bluebird sky. Inevitably, a coworker will jokingly yell, "That's cheating."

This data-rich environment contrasts Hull's early days on the job in Montana, Mississippi, Utah and Kansas.

"When I first started, paper maps (18 inches by two feet) came out of a fax machine," Hull said. "We posted them on the wall and stood back."

Meteorologists typed their forecasts onto punch tape and sent them out on the teletype.

Technology steadily evolved during Hull's career. The advent of Doppler radar helped forecasters more closely pinpoint storm activity by calculating motion and detecting the intensity of precipitation. A deadly tornado that swept into Mississippi when he worked as a forecaster there still haunts him, because Doppler weather radar would likely have given people time to take precautions.

"The storm killed a dozen people about two miles from where I lived," Hull recalled. "It was rocking and rolling. We drove around later and saw

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— Dennis Hull, National Weather Service forecaster

Immigration plans may include citizenship

Will discuss potential DACA deal this week

By ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The U.S. Homeland Security secretary said Tuesday the White House would consider immigration legislation that includes a pathway to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of young people, but she emphasized it wasn't an endorsement.

Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said President Donald Trump would consider any legislation Congress passes and noted that some lawmakers want to include a pathway to citizenship for about 800,000 people who have been temporarily shielded from deportation.

Asked whether the president would support citizenship, she said, "I think he's open to hearing about the different possibilities and what it means but, to my knowledge, there certainly hasn't been any decision from the White House."

In September, Trump said he wouldn't consider citizenship for DACA recipients — an Obama-era program that Trump said last year he was ending.

He gave Congress until March to deliver a legislative fix.

The secretary said she was hopeful the White House and Congress can reach a deal that includes border and immigration enforcement measures. She said building a wall along the Mexico border was "first and foremost," and the administration wanted to end "loopholes" on issues that include handling asylum claims and local police working with immigration authorities.

"I remain optimistic. You have to be," Nielsen said. "It's very important. The American people have said they wanted it. I think we should find common ground. The devil's in the detail."

Nielsen said she and other senior administration officials would discuss a potential deal with members of Congress this week, and the president would take it up in a meeting Wednesday with congressional leaders on legislative priorities for 2018.

The secretary spoke hours after the president blasted Democrats for "doing nothing" to protect DACA recipients. Trump tweeted that "DACA activists and Hispanics will go hard against Dems, will start 'falling in love' with Republicans and their President! We are about RESULTS."

Nielsen, who visited prototypes of Trump's proposed border wall in San Diego, said the president would request \$1.6 billion next year for the barrier, in addition to \$1.6 billion he is seeking this year to build or replace 74 miles (118 kilometers) in California and Texas.

"It's all a down payment," she said.

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Walden navigates newfound power, Trump backlash



In this May 2017 file photo, U.S. Rep. Greg Walden talks at a town hall meeting in Baker City.

Oregon's only Republican in Congress charts course

By JEFF MAPES
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Oregon Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, is an increasingly powerful figure in Washington, D.C. — and he is sticking more closely than ever to his party in the tumultuous first year of the Trump presidency.

Just as Donald Trump rose to the presidency, Walden was taking over the chairmanship of one of the most powerful committees in Congress. The reach of the House Energy & Commerce committee is huge — ranging from health care to the internet to the electrical grid. Colleagues treat Walden with a certain deference and

lobbyists flock to his fundraisers.

But Oregon's only Republican congressman is also under a critical spotlight more than ever before. He was besieged at town halls back home by voters upset with his high-profile attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and for his support of the Trump administration.

Life in the spotlight

"He's getting his ass kicked out there," said Walden's best friend in the House, Texas Republican Rep. Pete Sessions, of the raucous town halls. "He's got the gavel and he's got a lot of things but we are finding that the perception of Republicans is based on the president's viewpoint."

The difficulty of working with Trump became clear earlier this year when Walden shepherded the GOP

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