



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A resting gaggle

Canada geese swim together in the Columbia River on Monday near Boardman.

SESSION: Smith's bill would make EOU the state's rural university

Continued from 1A

should be a positive on both sides."

ODFW already does annual year-end reports on wolf management and population. Between 2014 and 2015, the population rose 36 percent from 77 to 110 total wolves. The most recent population stayed mostly flat with 112 wolves at the end of 2016.

The Legislature also created the compensation fund for ranchers in 2011, which pays for livestock losses as well as implementing non-lethal wolf deterrents such as range riders and fladry fencing.

Funding is administered by Department of Agriculture, which awards grants to individual counties. Barreto said the program issued \$395,000 last year for 112 wolves — those numbers would serve as the base line for future compensation under his proposal.

The bill has already garnered support from the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, and skepticism from wolf advocates who worry the program is not being used responsibly.

Smith will sponsor House Bill 4153 to designate Eastern Oregon University in La Grande as the state's rural university. Smith said the legislation is more than a "feel good" proposal. The designation would provide EOU some protection from closure or cuts during tough economic times, he said, while sending the message the state's smaller universities matter as much as their

larger compatriots.

Smith also said he is learning more about education policy because he serves as vice chair of the joint committee on student success. Oregon needs to take a good look at how education is working and what it should be doing better.

The Hermiston School District, the largest in Smith's House district, had the 21st worst graduation rate in the state, according to data from the Oregon Department of Education. Among the state's largest school districts, Hermiston is eighth from the bottom.

Hansell said he will push Senate Bill 1556 to help community banks.

Those banks assign loans to federal finance agencies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Hansell explained, which require the banks to use an electronic system to file while prohibiting the banks from recording the loan assignments in the county records.

Hansell said counties are suing the banks to recover recording fees and his bill would ban those lawsuits. Nothing under Oregon law requires counties to record the bank's assignments, he said, and the counties are not entitled to a recording fee.

Smith and Hansell also emphasized bipartisanship would yield the best solutions.

To see a full list of proposals in the upcoming session, visit www.oregon-legislature.gov.

FESTIVAL: Water feature part of next phase

Continued from 1A

the festival street farther down Second Street in both directions and add a water feature to the municipal parking lot across from city hall, but Spencer said the timeline for those would depend on future funding opportunities.

As parking spaces are removed from one side of the street but changed to diagonal spots on the other, Spencer said the first phase should end up with the same number of total parking spaces as before. He said the city was looking for a place to move the

cardboard collection station in the parking lot to free up a couple of extra spaces there during construction.

"Substantial" completion of the project is planned for Memorial Day, with any final punchlist items finished by June 15.

The city hopes to use the completed festival street for annual events like Funfest in addition to adding some new, small events such as live music during First Thursdays to help draw people downtown.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

CARBON: About 100 Oregon companies would qualify

Continued from 1A

has not given up on enacting a cap and invest program during the Legislature's 35-day session, Feb. 5 to March 11.

"I continue to believe there is room for negotiation, and all I would say is like the New England Patriots, if we get on the field during a snowstorm, we are going to work hard on the field and we are going to get that ball ... across the goal line," Kotek said.

Gov. Kate Brown said she would like to see lawmakers move "as quickly as possible on legislation that reduces carbon emissions."

"The reason why I think that is important ... is that we are seeing the impacts of climate change on a regular basis," she said.

The lawmakers made the comments during The Associated Press's legislative preview at the Oregon State Capitol Monday when

lawmakers announce their priorities for the upcoming session.

The cap and invest legislation, introduced by Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, and Rep. Ken Helm, D-Beaverton, would charge Oregon industries for emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and use the revenue to invest in projects meant to slow climate change.

The legislation reemerged this year after stalling last session and after several years of work on the proposal. House Democratic leadership had identified the legislation as a top priority for the 2018 policymaking session, but critics argue the bill is more appropriate for the Legislature's five-month-long session in 2019, when there would be more time for refinement.

Modeled after a program in California, Oregon's

so-called "Clean Energy Jobs" bill would set a cap of less than 25,000 tons of CO2 per year for each company, beginning in 2021.

An estimated 100 Oregon companies that emit more than that amount would be required to buy market-priced allowances for the excess. The "price" on emissions is designed to encourage businesses to adopt technologies and practices that reduce their carbon footprint. The allowances would be sold at a North American auction and generate revenue that would be invested in green-energy and environmentally friendly agriculture projects.

The program would eventually generate hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue that would be invested in projects that slow climate change, Dembrow said. The exact cost of the program has yet to be calculated, but previous estimates pegged

revenue at about \$700 million per year.

Carbon trading markets are gaining momentum around the globe. Washington recently proposed a state cap and invest program. China has plans to launch a carbon market later this year that would account for about a quarter of that country's industrial emissions, according to E & E News, a Washington, D.C., environment and energy publication.

No cap and trade system in the world has resulted in significant emissions reductions, in part because caps still remain relatively high and businesses haven't had to pay out a lot of money, according to E & E News. But the programs have "served as political consensus builders that have gotten industry accustomed to climate policies," E & E News's Debra Kahn wrote in December.

Umatilla Electric is offering the following scholarships for the 2018-19 school year:

ACADEMIC

Twelve \$2,500 scholarships are available for members of UEC and/or their dependent children who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program at a two- or four-year college. Apply online at: www.oregonstudentaid.gov.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

A \$5,000 scholarship is administered to a college student who has completed their freshman year and is interested in pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering-Power Systems. Apply online at www.oregonstudentaid.gov.

LINEMAN TRADE

A \$2,500 scholarship is available to members and/or applicants whose parent or guardian is an active member, and are interested in the Line Construction trade and will be attending an accredited Line College. Go to: UmatillaElectric.com to download the application.

For more information visit our offices in Hermiston or Boardman or our website: UmatillaElectric.com.

You can also call us at 541-567-6414 or OSAC at 1-800-452-8807.



Deadline is March 1, 2018