

DROWNING: Life jackets are available

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medical condition.
Recent outdoor temperatures in the area have reached the 80s, but online data from the Fish Passage Center shows the average daily temperature of the Columbia River at McNary Dam is 49.3 degrees.
Sgt. Dave Johnson of the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office said the marina is a great place to fish, but he offered a word of warning.
"If you take your child

near water, put them in a Coast Guard-approved life vest," he said.
Huxel said shore anglers generally don't wear life jackets, but the best practice is to wear the personal flotation devices while on or near water.
There is a free-to-borrow life jacket station at the Umatilla Marina, and Johnson said the sheriff's office and others are trying to add stations at the ramp just above the McNary Dam and

at Hat Rock.
He also said the sheriff's office provides water and boating safety classes on request. Call 541-966-3600 for a schedule or to request one.
There have been a few drownings on the Columbia River in the past several years. Last September, an Irrigon man drowned at Warehouse Beach while showing some colleagues how to swim. And in summer of 2015, two Morrow County

teens drowned in the same stretch of the Columbia River, a month apart.
Cold temperatures of the water can often catch swimmers off guard, especially on hot summer days. The cold water can lead to cramping, which can leave even an adept swimmer unable to move. Fast currents and wind can also surprise swimmers and tubers.
Daniel Wattenburger contributed to this story.



A cup of fishing worms sits on the jetty near the popular fishing spot where Juan Carlos Armenta Madrigal drowned while saving his son Wednesday at the Umatilla Marina.

MAIN: Farmers market will open next Friday

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remaining inconvenience might be temporary steel plates placed at the intersection of Main and Emigrant Avenue, although pedestrians can still walk over them.
This is good news for the farmers market, which wants to use both the 300 and 400 blocks of Main Street for

the market season opening on May 4 and the beginning of its First Fridays concert series on June 1.
Additionally, instead of closing all four lanes of Main Street on the 400 block, crews will direct traffic through two open lanes while the project is ongoing.
Beyond the 400 block

of Main Street, the project currently extends to parts of the 300 and 500 blocks of Main Street, Emigrant Avenue and Frazer Avenue.
When the project started on Monday, the farmers market planned to move the market from its usual home on the 300 block of Main Street to the 200 block.
Businesses on the

400 block like the Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co. were also affected by the construction, with the restaurant reporting losing thousands of dollars on Monday and Tuesday.
Juzeler expects the project to stick to its two-to three-week timeline, although it could change as the project proceeds.

MARIJUANA: OLCC has 19 compliance inspectors, four more to come

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—the Oregon Liquor Control Commission — has only one marijuana data analyst, and not enough inspectors to randomly inspect grow sites and processing facilities to ensure the accuracy of the data they are providing.
A recent state audit concluded the lack of trained inspectors and "reliability issues" with self-reported data hurt the commission's monitoring of Oregon's adult-use marijuana program.
"I think this is a fundamentally sound system," the commission's executive director, Steve Marks, told The Associated Press. But he conceded: "It's not being used to its capabilities. We don't have the workforce there."
Oregon's experience is reflective of one of the significant challenges in the expanding legal U.S. marijuana industry: the ability of governments to keep track of their own markets.
Washington, which with Colorado became the first state to broadly legalize marijuana in 2012, recently switched tracking contractors after it outgrew the first system, and quickly ran into major technical problems. Colorado has reported no significant technical issues but has only five people on the data analysis staff to help with investigations and look for potential violators.
Last year, Nevada switched tracking companies after its first system crashed. California became the world's largest legal marijuana market on Jan. 1 without the promised vast computer system for tracking. It won't be available for months.
The Oregon tracking system was created by Franwell, a Florida-based technology company that has contracts in a handful of states, including California. Licensees log entries into the system as seeds sprout into plants, the plants are harvested, processed, sent to stores and then sold.
The flood of data is checked by the single full-time marijuana data analyst, with occasional help. Five more will be hired soon,

but they'll have their hands full as an estimated 2,000 medical marijuana growers start entering the tracking system on July 1.
According to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, a recent inventory of adult-use marijuana in the state stood at more than 1 million pounds. That's roughly 4 ounces for each of the state's 4.1 million residents.
Avitas general manager Joe Bergen said the pot businesses are inputting a "ridiculous" amount of information to the tracking system. He said 10 percent of Avitas' staff at the Salem facility is dedicated to rules compliance: tagging plants and finished products, tracking the inventory and filling out official shipping manifests.
"It's important to do it, but it's burdensome for a small business," Bergen said.
The data has been useful in confirming wrongdoing in roughly 50 investigations, though less than half of them were triggered by the data, commission spokesman Mark Pettinger said.
On a recent morning, Cecilia Espinoza sat at a table inside Avitas' production facility, staring at a desktop computer. A small wheel spun on the screen for a couple of minutes as she waited for the web application to open so she could update information about the hundreds of plants growing in the 12,000-square-foot building.
"We call it the 'spinning wheel of death,'" Espinoza said with a laugh. "It's tedious."
Across the room, Bergen placed marijuana products into a bin for delivery to Mr. Nice Guy, a marijuana shop in Salem. He then walked back the history of one of the cartridges of marijuana oil. The powerful oil was produced from Strawberry Fields, a marijuana strain that the pot review site Leafly says is "tranquilizing."
Bergen clicked on a column and added filters until he found a date — Nov. 14, 2016. That was when one of the plants whose THC was a component of the oil

was cloned, when an Avitas grower snipped a sprig from a mother plant and stuck it into spongy material soaked in nutrients.
"It's the first batch we ever produced here," Bergen exclaimed, grinning and pointing at the screen. "That's the beginning; that's the origin story!"
Cannabis producers and regulators compare the tracking system to filing income taxes: They operate

to a large extent on good faith, but when an auditor or inspector comes there better be evidence to back the numbers.
However, the chances of a "compliance inspector" showing up at a site is low. The Oregon commission only employs 19, with four more to be added soon.
They don't have time to randomly check grow sites and compare amounts of marijuana they see with the

data. Instead, inspectors are largely tied up investigating complaints, for example on someone carrying out a function beyond the scope of a license, or harvesters lacking the required permit, commission officials said.
Companies that have gone the legal route — paying for licenses, security and other systems to meet the requirements — say regulators should focus on those who remain outside the

legal system. They note the illegal producers are unfair competition, without the large overhead.
"Really, there is no incentive for us to do anything but stay in the recreational market," said Bergen, whose company invested millions in the Salem facility. "Why would we have gone to all this trouble, just to lose our license from doing something stupid like selling on the black market?"

STEELHEAD: CTUIR gets \$190K for Desolation Creek

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extensive degradation by overgrazing the uplands and allowing cattle unrestricted access to riparian areas.
The current landowners, Terrance and Peggy Long, purchased the ranch in 2000. Since then, they have worked with multiple partners, including OWEB, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to restore the property.
Together, they have cut juniper on more than 665 acres and converted open irrigation ditches to pipes. Last year, the Wheeler SWCD installed 21 artificial beaver dam structures along the creek to increase surface flows in streams that otherwise dry up during the summer. The tribes have also committed an additional \$500,000 for riparian zone restoration through 2020.
Bulay said the land trust was excited to work with such committed landowners.

here in the Walla Walla area, as far as the salmon and steelhead spawning streams and the wildlife habitat and the working lands," Bulay said. "We thought there were a lot of great potential land projects in the area, and landowners to work with."
Bulay said the land trust also received \$800,000 in funding from OWEB to purchase an easement at the 9,000-acre Bennett Ranch in Baker County to protect sage grouse habitat.
The Canyon Creek Ranch easement is just one of 21 projects funded by OWEB in the Mid-Columbia region, totaling \$3.1 million. John Keith, executive director of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, applauded the grants, saying they will help to maintain the Oregon way of life for generations to come.
"Oregon is unique for many reasons, and one is the commitment Oregonians have made to conserve what's left," Keith said.
Other projects funded by OWEB include:
• \$190,176 to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation for restoring the floodplain at Desolation Creek south of Ukiah.
• \$150,000 to the Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District to restore 240 acres of wetlands along the Columbia River between Umatilla and Irrigon.
• \$103,687 to the North Fork John Day Watershed Council for restoration work on Granite Creek, reducing sediment and lowering water temperature flowing in to the Middle Fork John Day River.

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