



AP Photo/Marty Lederhandler, File

In this Sept. 10, 1979, file photo, NBA commissioner Larry O'Brien, right, shakes hands with Lawrence Weinberg, president of the Portland Trail Blazers, before a hearing in New York.

# Former Trail Blazers owner Larry Weinberg dies at 92

PORTLAND (AP) — Larry Weinberg, one of the founders and original owners of the Portland Trail Blazers, has died. He was 92. Weinberg's death was announced Wednesday by the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee. KATU reports that Weinberg was one of three partners who got the franchise started as an NBA expansion team in 1970 to the tune of \$3.7 million.

Weinberg, a veteran of World War II, real estate developer, and a pro-Israel activist, sold the team to the late Paul Allen in 1988 for \$70 million. In a tweet the Trail Blazers said the team "was saddened to hear of the passing of our original owner." Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden said via Twitter that Weinberg was "a true mensch ... and like many, I will mourn his passing."

# Two more Puget Sound orcas predicted to die by summer

SEATTLE (AP) — Two more Puget Sound orcas are ailing and probably will be dead by summer, according to an expert on the critically endangered population of killer whales that live in the waters of the Pacific Northwest.

Drone photography taken this past September showed the ailing population of orcas known as the southern residents went into the winter thinner than they were when the whales arrived in the San Juan Islands last summer. They also are thinner than Puget Sound's so-called northern resident population of killer whales, which have been steadily growing in population for the past 40 years in their home waters primarily in northern British Columbia and southeast Alaska, where they have access to more fish and cleaner and quieter water. The northern residents gave birth to 10 new calves last year. The Seattle Times reports Center for Whale Research founding director Ken Balcomb said photos taken of a southern resident orca known as J17 on New Year's Eve showed the 42-year-old female has so-called peanut

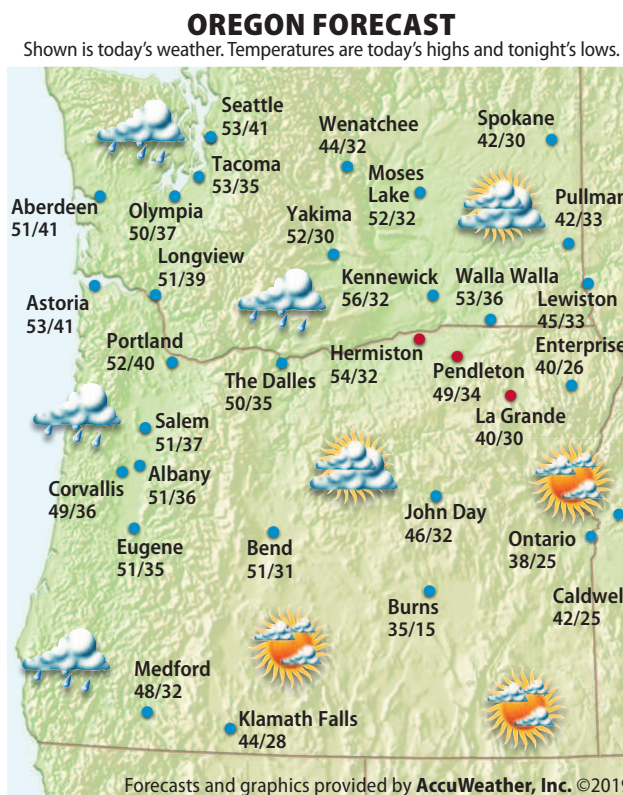
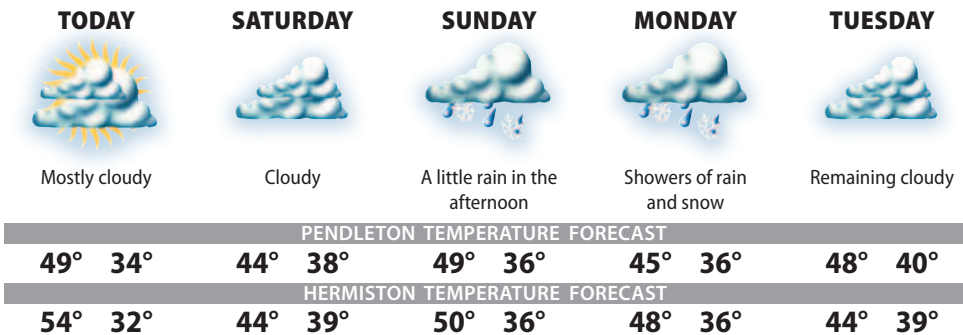


AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, File

In this Jan. 18, 2014, file photo, an endangered southern resident female orca leaps from the water while breaching in Puget Sound, west of Seattle.

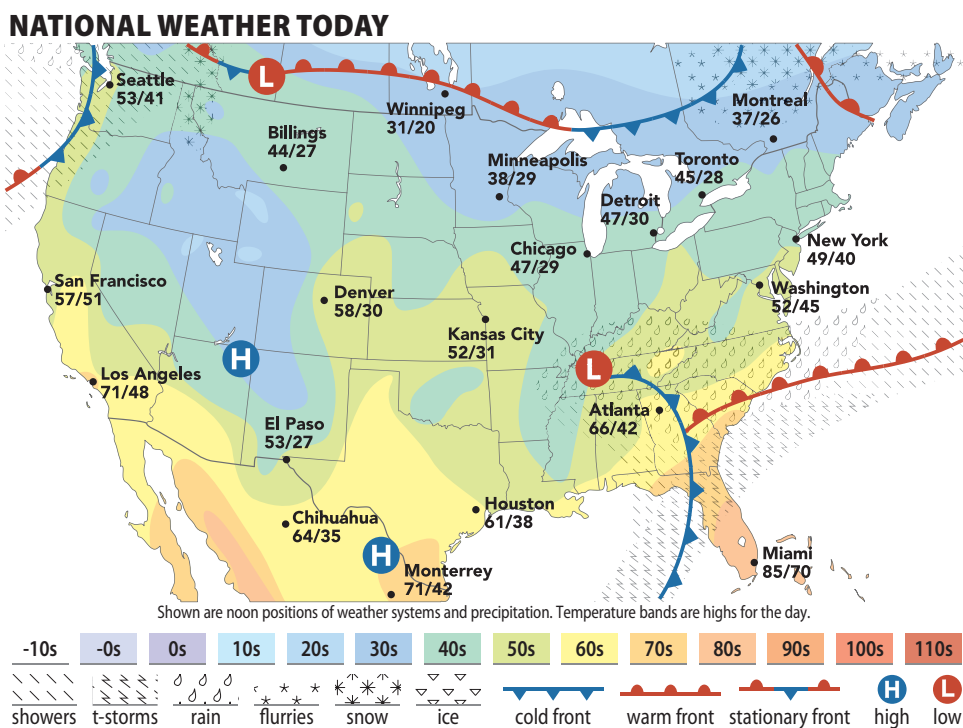
three years. The southern resident population is at a 35-year low after three deaths in 2018. There are only 74 left. Losing J17 would be a blow to the southern residents because she is a female still of reproducing age, said Deborah Giles, research scientist for University of Washington Center for Conservation Biology. Giles said she was not surprised to hear about K25. The social dynamics of the southern residents, in which older females help their pod, and especially their sons by sharing food, is both a blessing and a curse if that female dies, Giles said. "These large, adult, hungry males benefit by the females in their family," Giles said. "There probably is still family foraging going on, but not like he had when his mom was alive." The coming year is not looking any easier for the southern residents in terms of their food supply. The whales mostly eat chinook salmon. Ocean conditions and poor river migration, with warm water and low flows, have hurt chinook salmon returns in the past several years.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



ALMANAC section with weather data for Pendleton and Hermiston, including temperature, precipitation, and wind forecasts.

NATIONAL EXTREMES: Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states) High 88° in Immokalee, Fla. Low -33° in Waverly, Colo.



# Funding for Columbia River jetties, dredging included in Army Corps budget

By GEORGE PLAVERN EO Media Group

The federal agency in charge of maintaining navigation for cargo ships on the Columbia and Snake rivers will receive increased funding in 2019 for key infrastructure improvements, including major rehabilitation of three jetties at the mouth of the Columbia River.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released its latest work plan and budget in November for fiscal year 2019, earmarking \$28 million for the jetties as well as \$64 million for maintenance dredging, pile dikes and other projects on the Columbia and Lower Willamette rivers below Portland and Vancouver, Wash.

The Corps' budget drew support from the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, a nonprofit trade organization that represents ports, businesses and agricultural groups in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Heather Stebbings, government relations director for the PNWA, emphasized the importance of the river system to the region's farmers, who depend on water transportation to move and sell their products overseas.

"Our projects out here did pretty well," Stebbings said. "We definitely have a lot of good news." It all starts and ends at the jetties, which were built between 1885 and 1939 and serve as the gateway to and from the Pacific Ocean. Together, the North Jetty, South Jetty and "Jetty A" protect ships entering and leaving

the estuary, ensuring safe passage. Over the years, storms packing up to 30-foot ocean waves have regularly battered the jetties and receded the sand spits on which they are built. If the structures are breached, it could risk shutting down all commercial navigation inland. "That's what we're trying to avoid," said Kristin Meira, PNWA executive director. "All the good work inland is for naught if we can't keep the entrance to the system open." In 2012, the Corps completed its Major Rehabilitation Report for the jetties, estimating the total cost of repairs at \$240 million. Construction on Jetty A was finished in 2017, while the timeline for completion on the North Jetty is 2020, and 2023 on the South Jetty. The PNWA has also lobbied for funding to maintain dredging the 110-mile Columbia River shipping channel at a depth of 43 feet needed to fully load ocean vessels. The channel dredging project was completed in 2010, and has already attracted more than \$1 billion in business investments, according to the organization, including a \$230 million export grain terminal in Longview, Wash. — the first new grain facility built in North America in 25 years. The Columbia River is the third largest grain export gateway in the world. Glen Squires, CEO of the Washington Grain Commission, said most of the wheat grown in the Pacific Northwest is exported, including 60 percent from Idaho, 90 percent from Washington and roughly 85-90 percent from Oregon. Squires described the Columbia River as a "national highway of commerce," and said the industry is appreciative of funding from Washington, D.C., to keep the system in shape. "The jetties are critical," Squires said. "the ships would have a hard time if one of those failed. It's a big issue."

## Oregon State Police seek killer of adult bald eagle

ROSEBURG (AP) — Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife officers are seeking information on the person or people who shot and killed an adult bald eagle in Douglas County. Tips that lead to an arrest could lead to an award.

OSP said Thursday the eagle was found shot in the neck with a small caliber rifle from Lower Cow Creek Road approximately 2 miles south of Doe Creek Road. The shooting happened sometime in November. The suspect was driving a newer red or maroon compact four-door truck — likely a Nissan Frontier or a similar model.

CORRECTIONS: The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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