

# Oregon begins killing sea lions after relocation fails

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
Associated Press

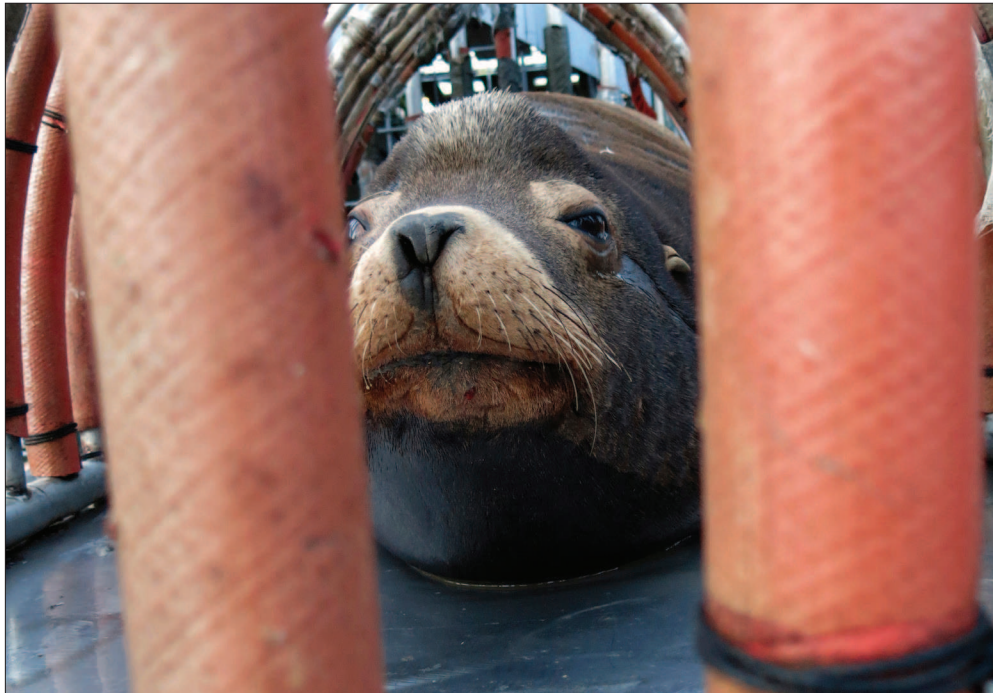
PORTLAND — Oregon wildlife officials have started killing California sea lions that threaten a fragile and unique type of trout in the Willamette River, a body of water that's miles inland from the coastal areas where the massive carnivorous aquatic mammals usually congregate to feed.

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife obtained a federal permit in November to kill up to 93 California sea lions annually below Willamette Falls south of Portland to protect the winter run of the fish that begin life as rainbow trout but become steelhead when they travel to the ocean.

As of last week, wildlife managers have killed three of the animals using traps they used last year to relocate the sea lions, said Bryan Wright, project manager for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's marine resources program.

The adult male sea lions, which weigh nearly 1,000 pounds each, have learned that they can loiter under the falls and snack on the vulnerable steelhead as the fish power their way upriver to the streams where they hatched.

The trout travel to sea



In this March 14, 2018, file photo, a California sea lion peers out from a restraint nicknamed "The Squeeze" near Oregon City as it is prepared for transport by truck to the Pacific Ocean about 130 miles away.

from inland rivers, grow to adulthood as steelhead in the Pacific Ocean and then return to their natal river to spawn. They can grow to 55 pounds and live up to 11 years.

The sea lions breed each summer off Southern California and northern Mexico, then the males cruise up the Pacific Coast to forage. Hunted for their thick fur, the mammals' numbers dropped dramatically but

have rebounded from 30,000 in the late 1960s to about 300,000 today because of the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act.

With their numbers growing, the dog-faced sea lions are venturing ever farther inland up the Columbia River and its tributaries in Oregon and Washington — and their appetite is having disastrous consequences, scientists have said.

Last winter, a record-low

512 wild winter steelhead completed the journey past the Willamette Falls, according to state counts. Less than 30 years ago, that number was more than 15,000.

The sea lions are eating so many winter steelhead at Willamette Falls that certain runs are at a high risk of going extinct, according to a 2017 study by wildlife biologists.

Wildlife officials moved about a dozen sea lions to



The Medford Mail Tribune/Jamie Lusch, File  
In this July 7, 2016, file photo, a steelhead trout is reeled in near Dodge Bridge along the Rogue River in Shady Cove.

the coast near the small city of Newport last year, but the animals ended up swimming back to the falls within days.

So the state petitioned federal officials for permission to start killing the animals, which are listed as a federally endangered species.

The permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service says the targeted sea lions must have been observed eating at least one steelhead near Willamette Falls between Nov. 1 and Aug. 15 or have been observed in the same stretch of river on two consecutive days in that period.

Individual sea lions are identified by trained observers who look at brands on

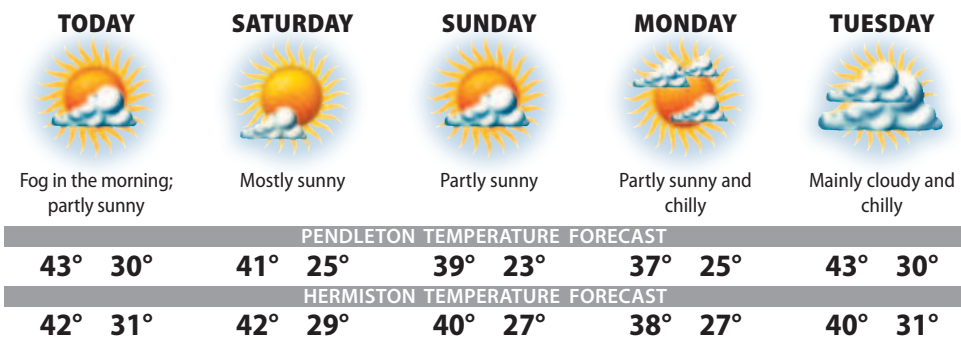
their back or tags on their flippers.

The animals are being euthanized by a veterinarian by lethal injection in the same way that dogs and cats are put down, Wright said. Their flesh goes to a rendering plant.

Before a sea lion is killed, the state must find out if there is a zoo or aquarium that wants the animal. If so, Oregon wildlife managers must hold the sea lion for 48 hours before killing it.

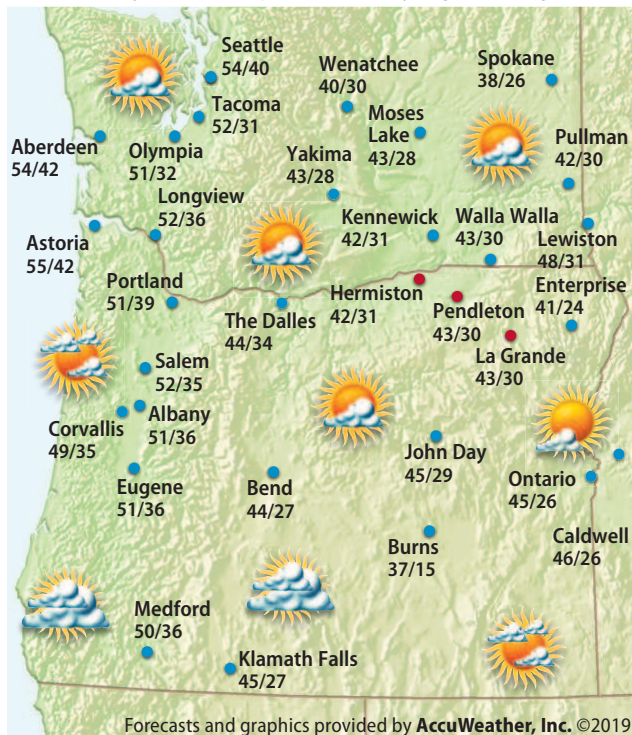
In a similar program, Oregon and Washington have already killed more than 150 sea lions below the Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River to protect threatened and endangered salmon.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



## ALMANAC

**PENDLETON** through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	55°	32°
Normals	41°	27°
Records	59° (2006)	-21° (1909)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date 0.12"  
Normal month to date 0.57"  
Year to date 0.12"  
Last year to date 0.33"  
Normal year to date 0.57"

**HERMISTON** through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	50°	31°
Normals	41°	28°
Records	69° (1959)	-24° (1909)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date 0.18"  
Normal month to date 0.40"  
Year to date 0.18"  
Last year to date 0.26"  
Normal year to date 0.40"

**WINDS** (in mph)

Today	Sat.
Boardman NNE 4-8	NE 4-8
Pendleton NE 4-8	N 4-8

**SUN AND MOON**

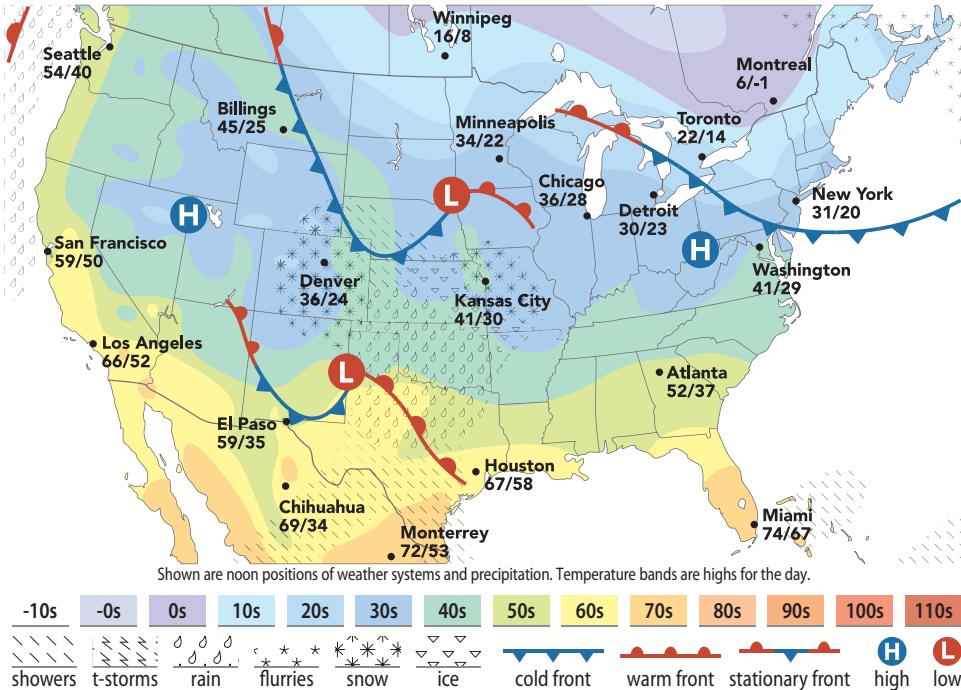
Sunrise today	7:34 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:32 p.m.
Moonrise today	10:42 a.m.
Moonset today	10:13 p.m.

First Full Last New  
Jan 13 Jan 20 Jan 27 Feb 4

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 78° in Thermal, Calif. Low -14° in Cotton, Minn.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## State investigation: Care home resident smelled of 'rotting flesh'

By FEDOR ZARKHIN  
The Oregonian/OregonLive

PORTLAND — A national corporation shuttered a Brookings group home for people with disabilities last month after state regulators found that managers repeatedly ignored caregivers' concerns about a disabled person's festering pressure wound, including that it smelled of "rotting flesh."

State regulators for the Department of Human Services moved to revoke the home's license before the company's local affiliate, Mentor Oregon, closed the facility along the Southern Oregon coast Dec. 11.

Overarching safety concerns also prompted officials to temporarily prohibit the company from accepting new residents at any of its 28 homes across Oregon, including six in the Portland area. In some cases, a ban for accepting new residents wasn't lifted until December.

The state rarely takes such aggressive action, issuing similar restrictions only a handful of times in recent years.

State regulators found that Mentor Oregon managers

failed to train staff, provided minimal care and made medically inappropriate decisions as a disabled person who couldn't walk or communicate deteriorated for months in 2017, according to an investigative report from May 2018 obtained by *The Oregonian/OregonLive* through a public records request.

The person was eventually moved to a new home and immediately hospitalized for surgery to remove dead and decaying tissue, according to state records.

State reports don't provide the person's name, age or gender.

Toni Larson, state ombudsman for people with disabilities, said the official findings are "disturbing" because they show the facility failed to provide a basic level of care.

"It wasn't one missed mistake or one missed opportunity," Larson said.

Mentor Oregon's director, Yvette Doan, said in a statement that the company has taken extensive steps to train staff and worked closely with the state to make changes.

While the company is proud of its work in Oregon, Doan wrote, "if we are going to accept any small measure

of credit for a job well done for those we support, we must also acknowledge when our services may fall short."

The five managers named in the report no longer work for the company, Doan said.

Because regulators substantiated abuse allegations against those former employees, they would be unlikely to pass a background check to work at a similar home in Oregon, said Lilia Teninty, director of the state Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities division.

Neglect at the Brookings group home lasted multiple months in late 2017, an investigator found, and continued after the investigation began. The victim was moved to a different group home in November, nearly two months after Community Living Case Management, a state contractor that oversees disability services in southwest Oregon, launched its investigation.

The investigation found that the person lost more than a quarter of his or her weight because the home didn't have a scale; staff members were trained improperly or not trained at all; and employees likely didn't do enough to treat the person's pain.

## Boy, 12, held in death of 92-year-old woman

CRESWELL (AP) — A 12-year-old Oregon boy is being held in juvenile detention on suspicion of killing a 92-year-old woman.

The *Register-Guard* reports that Emma Burnell was found dead in her Creswell home on Monday afternoon after someone called authorities to

report an injured person at her address.

Jason Davis, a Lane County Health and Human Services Department spokesman, tells the newspaper that the boy was arrested either Wednesday or Thursday.

He was booked at the Serbu Juvenile Justice Center in Eugene on suspicion of murder and first-degree burglary.

His name was not released because of his age.

Authorities declined to say whether Burnell knew the boy, what led to his arrest, who called authorities or how Burnell was killed.

The child will make his first appearance in juvenile court on Friday.

**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.

The Jan. 9 article "Agencies team up for after-school program" misstated how the \$5,000 Cycle Oregon grant will be used. It will be used for program supplies.

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