

New pen may allow sale of horses for slaughter

U.S. Forest Service builds corral in California to bypass federal restrictions

By SCOTT SONNER
Associated Press

RENO, Nev. — The U.S. Forest Service has built a new corral for wild horses in Northern California, which could allow it to bypass federal restrictions and sell the animals for slaughter.

The agency acknowledged in court filings in a potentially precedent-setting legal battle that it built the pen for mustangs gathered in the fall on national forest land along the California-Nevada border because of restrictions on such sales at other federal holding facilities.

The agency denies claims by horse advocates it has made up its mind to sell the more than 250 horses for slaughter. But it also says it may have no choice because of the high cost of housing the animals and continued ecological impacts it claims overpopulated herds are having on federal rangeland.

“While slaughtering wild horses does not present a pleasant picture, the reality of this dire situation is not

pleasant,” Justice Department lawyers representing the agency wrote in its most recent filing last month. “The Forest Service is taking a step to reduce what is universally recognized as a natural catastrophe.”

Horse advocates have been suing the government for two decades over mustang roundups that private ranchers say are necessary to curb growing herds that reduce the forage on federal lands they lease for cattle and sheep grazing across the U.S. West. The region holds roughly 90,000 wild horses.

A sharp reduction in demand in recent years for a federal program that offers the horses for adoption to the public has left little room in existing corrals. Horse advocates argue the mustangs are federally protected and that taxpayers subsidize the livestock grazing on U.S. land.

A hearing is scheduled Jan. 31 in federal court in San Francisco on a motion filed by the Animal Legal Defense Fund and American Wild Horse Campaign seeking an injunction to block the sale of the horses captured in the Modoc National Forest in October and November for possible slaughter. The new pen is in the forest, about 170 miles northwest of Reno.



In this June 5, 2013, file photo, some of the hundreds of mustangs the U.S. Bureau of Land Management removed from federal rangeland peer at visitors at the BLM’s Palomino Valley holding facility about 20 miles north of Reno in Palomino Valley, Nev.

Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen announced late last year she would postpone any sales for slaughter until at least Feb. 18.

The protection groups say it would be the first time in nearly a half-century the government has sold mustangs “without limitation,” or for any purpose, including slaughter.

Horse slaughterhouses are prohibited in the U.S. but legal in many other countries, including Canada, Mexico and parts of Europe where horse meat is considered a delicacy.

The Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burros Act that President Nixon signed into law in 1971 prohibits the inhumane destruction

of wild horses. Congress approved an appropriations amendment in 2004 that allows the Forest Service, under its parent Agriculture Department, to sell horses without limitations if they’re over age 10 and have been offered for adoption three times unsuccessfully.

But in most years since then, Congress has speci-

cally prohibited the Bureau of Land Management, under the Interior Department, from using any appropriations for such purposes. President Donald Trump proposed allowing such sales in his 2017 budget, but Congress refused to go along.

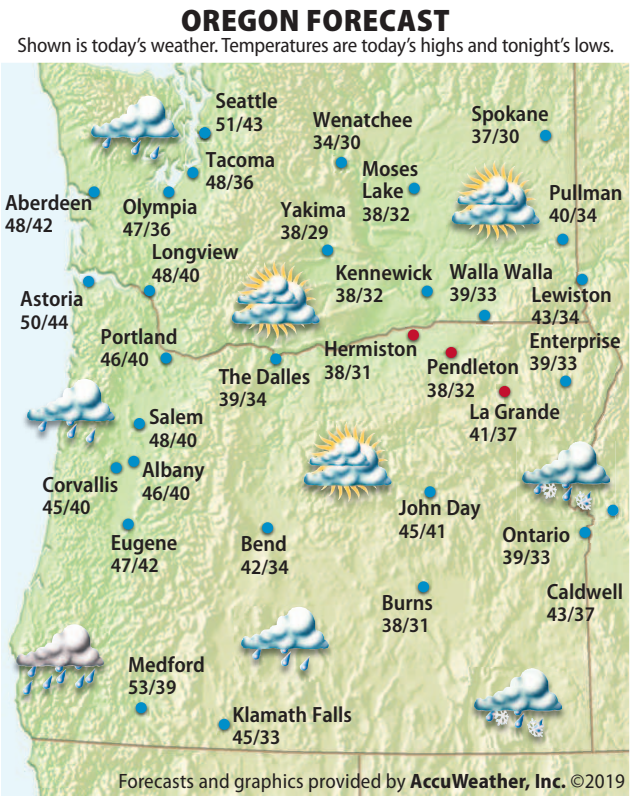
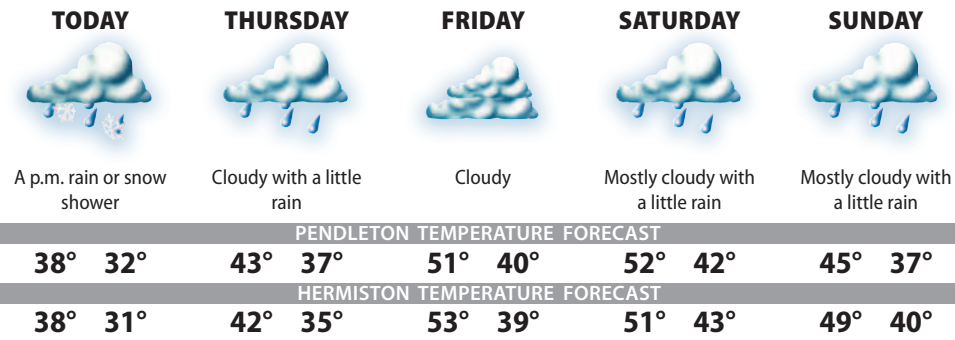
The Forest Service normally holds the horses it gathers at pens belonging to the BLM, which manages 385,000 square miles of public lands in the West.

With few exceptions, lawsuits have targeted the bureau because it captures the vast majority of the horses. BLM lands hold an estimated 83,000 wild horses, while national forests managed by the Forest Service hold about 8,000.

The Forest Service gathered 932 horses in the Modoc National Forest late last year and shipped about 260 to the new corral, while placing about 650 at a BLM facility in nearby Susanville, California.

Justice Department lawyers acknowledged in the December filings “BLM is not permitted to humanely destroy healthy, unadopted horses or conduct any sale that could ultimately result in their destruction, which includes any Forest Service horse in BLM custody.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.

HIGH

LOW

Yesterday

29°

27°

Normals

41°

27°

Records

68° (1974)

-8° (1907)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

0.00"

Month to date

0.12"

Normal month to date

0.81"

Year to date

0.12"

Last year to date

0.53"

Normal year to date

0.81"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.

HIGH

LOW

Yesterday

33°

32°

Normals

41°

28°

Records

63° (1961)

-10° (1950)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

Trace

Month to date

0.18"

Normal month to date

0.62"

Year to date

0.18"

Last year to date

0.43"

Normal year to date

0.62"

WINDS (in mph)

Today

Thu.

Boardman

NE 4-8

N 3-6

Pendleton

ENE 4-8

NNE 4-8

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today

7:32 a.m.

Sunset tonight

4:38 p.m.

Moonrise today

12:53 p.m.

Moonset today

2:32 a.m.

Full

Last

New

First









Jan 20

Jan 27

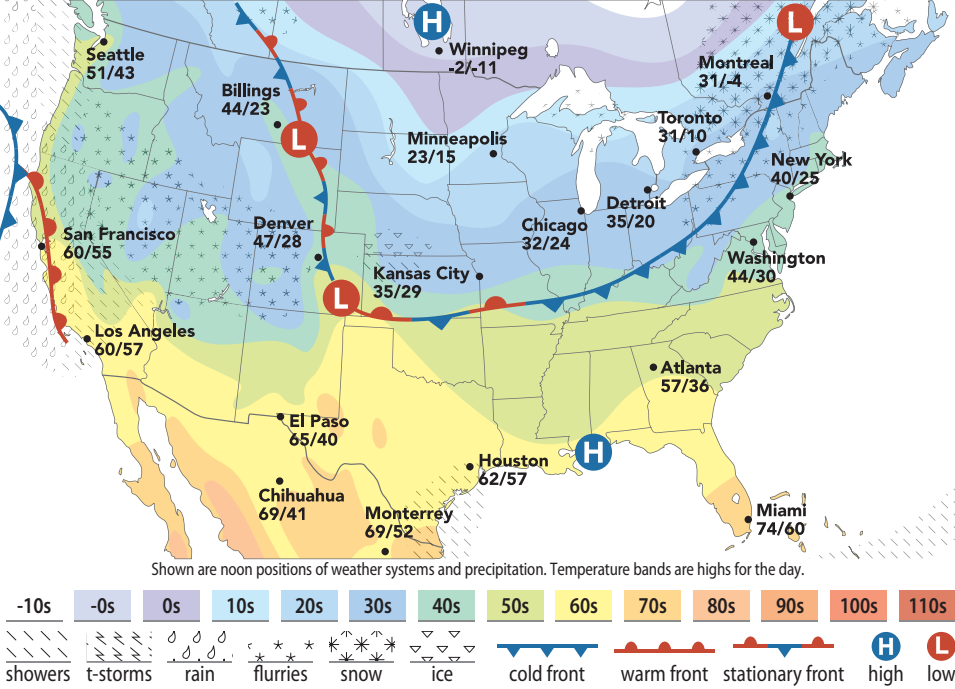
Feb 4

Feb 12

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 70° in Marathon, Fla. Low -39° in Antero Reservoir, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Senators ask FDA to update rules on certain pot products

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon’s two senators on Tuesday urged the head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to update federal regulations to permit interstate commerce of food products containing a key non-psychoactive ingredient of cannabis.

The appeal by Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley came after Congress legalized the production and sale of industrial hemp and hemp derivatives, including cannabinoids, known as CBD. Wyden and Merkley had been behind a hemp provision that Congress passed and was included in the 2018 Farm Bill.

But after President Donald Trump signed the bill in December, FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb restated his agency’s stance that CBD

is a drug ingredient and therefore illegal to add to food or health products without his agency’s approval. The FDA has sent warning letters to some companies making health claims for CBD.

In a letter to Gottlieb, the senators asked the FDA to update “outdated regulations” that prohibit food products containing CBD from being sold across state lines.

“Farmers in Oregon and nationwide are poised to make real economic gains for their communities once these regulations are updated,” they wrote. They said it was Congress’ intent in the bill to ensure producers and consumers have access to hemp-derived products, including CBDs.

The Oregon Democrats asked the agency to clarify to the public several issues, including its authority in the

production and marketing of hemp and its derivatives, and whether the FDA will consider issuing a regulation to allow hemp derivatives in food, beverages or dietary supplements that cross state lines.

CBD oils are increasingly popular in lotions, tinctures and foods. Proponents say CBD offers health benefits, including relieving pain and anxiety.

Scientists note there have been few comprehensive clinical studies on how CBD affects humans. Harvard Medical School said the strongest scientific evidence is for its effectiveness in treating childhood epilepsy syndromes that typically don’t respond to anti-seizure medications. The FDA recently approved the first ever cannabis-derived medicine for these conditions that contains CBD.

BRIEFLY

Contagious kids with measles at Portland airport

VANCOVUER, Wash. (AP) — County health officials in southwest Washington state are warning people who may have crossed paths recently with unvaccinated children contagious with measles at the Portland International Airport in Oregon.

KATU-TV reports that the Clark County Public Health department said the two children — one a young child and the other an adolescent — are known to have visited Concourse D and the Delta Sky Lounge at the Portland airport on January 7 and the Church of Truth in Vancouver on January 6.

Anyone who may have been exposed and is experiencing symptoms should contact health officials to contain the spread of the infection.

Symptoms include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes and rash.

There is one other confirmed case of measles in the county, and also 11 other suspected cases.

Tri-Cities groups pushing support for Snake River dams

KENNEWICK, Wash. (AP) — A plan to spend \$750,000 of state taxpayer money to study the impacts of tearing down four dams on the lower Snake River is not sitting well with Tri-Cities area supporters of the dams.

They’ve drafted a letter to Washington Gov. Jay Inslee saying the study would be a waste.

The *Tri-City Herald* reports the latest push to remove the dams is tied to the decline of killer whales off the Washington coast. The orcas rely on chinook salmon, including from the Snake River, for most of their food.

Opponents say the study proposed by the governor duplicates federal studies.

The letter is intended to highlight the benefits of the hydroelectric dams, which are located in eastern Washington, and about 17 local governments and agencies are expected to sign on.

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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