

**LEAPING DOWN UNDER:
PENDLETON TRIPLE
JUMPER READY TO FLY
SPORTS/B1**



**SCREEN TIME:
YOUR GUIDE TO
WHAT'S ON
INSIDE**

EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2018 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

Our Schools

TO CANCEL OR NOT TO CANCEL

Administrators
consider weather,
student safety

By **JAYATI
RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

Echo School District has an unofficial policy: If it's nice enough to go sledding, it's nice enough to go to school.

Superintendent Raymon Smith said teachers have often jokingly said something similar to students on snowy days where school has not been canceled. On Monday and Tuesday, when most districts in the region told their students to stay home, Echo students were in the classroom.

Smith said he and district transportation supervisor Bob McSpadden make the decision, usually the day of school, after determining if students can safely get there.

"I was up at 4 a.m. driving roads, he was out there at 5," Smith said. "We monitor whether the conditions are doing what they're supposed to, and if they will improve or not during the day."

He said there have been a few families that haven't sent their children to school, but attendance hasn't been significantly decreased due to the snow. There are several families who send their children to school in Echo from other districts, Smith said, and they encourage those people not to drive too fast in order to get their kids to school.

"We tell parents, we understand if you're going to be a bit late," he said. "Just take your time."

Unlike Echo, most Umatilla and Morrow County districts canceled school on Tuesday, the result of another round of snow and inclement weather the previous day. Districts are now rearranging their schedules to accommodate the weather, and making sure students reach the number

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SNOW BUSINESS



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Travis Hamman uses a Bobcat to move snow Monday while working with NW Installations snow removal service at Horizon Project in Pendleton.

Some cash in on winter weather, others wait it out

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The winter storm that closed freeways and schools proved a financial boon for the crew with Pendleton-based NW Installations.

Home renovations are the company's usual line of work. But Travis Hamman and crew hit the streets with shovels, snow blowers and a small plow Monday to clear snow from driveways and more.

"It's been a day," Hamman.

They won bids to remove snow from a few homes on Southwest Nye Avenue and had a deal to clear Banner Bank's lot in Pendleton. But Hamman said they arrived to find the bank manager already had someone take care of the work.

"We lost out of about \$1,600," Hamman said. "But that's OK. We're in high spirits. We're getting it done."

He said the business cut a deal that afternoon to remove snow from the parking lot of the nonprofit Horizon Project, 223 S.W. Court Ave., plus its other properties in Pendleton for more than \$300.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Zechariah Ayers of Pendleton shovels snow from a sidewalk while clearing snow at Horizon Project on Monday in Pendleton.

The way the snow was coming down, they were set to go back for seconds.

"Customer satisfaction is our job," he said.

The Saturday shutdown of Interstate 82 at the Oregon-Washington border sent stranded motorists seeking a place to stay.

Many landed at the Comfort Inn

& Suites off Interstate 84 outside Hermiston.

"Obviously we didn't know that was going to happen," hotel general manager Ryan Lynch said. "We're kind of limited on staff here, so everyone just kind of pulled their own weight."

Housekeepers worked longer hours,

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Recent snowstorms boost local snowpack

East side of the state faring far better
than the west; stands at 114 percent

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The recent spate of snowstorms may have canceled school and snarled traffic across Eastern Oregon, but it was good for the region's snowpack.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Resources Conservation Service released its February Water Supply Outlook Report on Friday, which revealed that some of the snowpack for the area's biggest contributors to surface water were in good shape.

By the end of January, the Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Willow basins were at 102 percent of normal levels, the USDA reported.

But that didn't account for a strong period of precipitation over the past few days.

Julie Koeberle, a snow survey hydrologist for the

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Thawing snow to raise rivers



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A stream of melted snow rushes over Kash Kash Road on Tuesday afternoon on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation south of Mission. Rain and snowmelt are expected to cause standing water on roadways and raise water levels on creeks and rivers through Wednesday evening, according to the National Weather Service.

