

FBI tracked former Trump lawyer's phones with controversial device

By MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Michael Cohen, meet the Triggerfish.

Search warrant documents made public Tuesday show the FBI used highly secretive and controversial cellphone sweeping technology to zero in on President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer when agents raided his New York City home, hotel room and office last year.

Agents using a Triggerfish cell-site simulator tracked the whereabouts of Cohen's two iPhones to a pair of rooms a floor apart at the Manhattan hotel where he and his family had taken up residence while their apartment was being renovated, the documents said. The raid happened the next day.

The FBI said in its warrant application that it was only using the device to locate Cohen's phones, not to intercept his calls or text messages.

Separately, the agency obtained logs of the numbers Cohen was calling and texting, and reams of location data — including for the time period just before the 2016 presidential election, when he negotiated hush-money payments for women alleging they had sex with Trump. They also got permission to press Cohen's thumb



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File

In this Feb. 28, 2019, file photo, Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's former lawyer, leaves a closed-door interview before the House Intelligence Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington.

to the phones or hold them up to his face to unlock them.

But it was the agency's use of cell-site technology that stood out amid nearly 900 pages of documents from the Cohen raids.

Civil liberties and privacy groups have been objecting to the suitcase-sized devices, sometimes known as StingRays or Hailstorms, which act like a cell tower and often connect to cell-phones other than those of the person being tracked. Police departments and federal agencies have been using them in secrecy for nearly three decades.

The technology, originally developed for the military, can pull data from a target's devices — but also from unwitting people whose phones connect to the phony cell tower because it's often closest and shows the strongest signal. Police can determine the location of a phone without the user even making a call or sending a text message. Some even allow law enforcement to listen in on conversations or see text messages as they're being sent and received.

"They're very dangerous devices in that they intercept all

cellular communications in the area," said Adam Scott Wandt, a lawyer and professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.

The government said it did not want Cohen notified of its high-tech efforts to track his communications because it had reason to believe that would lead to evidence tampering or destruction, witness intimidation or other actions that would "seriously jeopardize an ongoing investigation."

In New York, use of the technology was virtually unknown to the public until last year when the New York Civil Liberties Union forced the disclosure of records showing the NYPD used the devices more than 1,000 times since 2008.

That included cases in which the technology helped catch suspects in kidnappings, rapes, robberies, assaults and murders. It has even helped find missing people. But defense lawyers have also fought to limit the use of evidence collected with the devices.

"Any time law enforcement gets to operate in complete secrecy and there's little to no oversight and with no ability for defense attorneys to challenge it in a court of law, you run into significant problems," said Legal Aid lawyer Jerome Greco.

Nominee to lead FAA will face challenge on Boeing oversight

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has tapped a former Delta Air Lines executive to lead the Federal Aviation Administration as the regulator deals with questions about its approval of a Boeing airliner involved in two deadly crashes within five months.

The White House said Tuesday that Trump will nominate Stephen Dickson to head the FAA. The agency has been led by an acting administrator since January 2018.

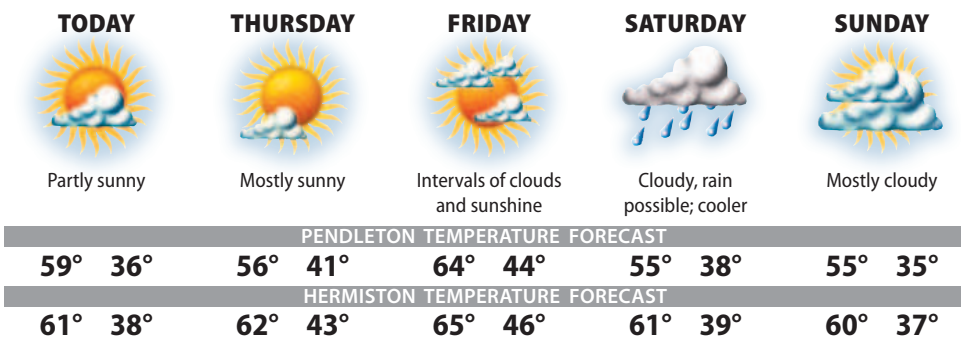
Separately, the Transportation Department confirmed that its watchdog agency will examine how the FAA certified the Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft, the now-grounded plane involved in two fatal accidents within five months.

The FAA had stood by the safety of the plane up until last Wednesday, despite other countries grounding it.

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao formally requested the audit in a letter sent to Inspector General Calvin Scovel III on Tuesday.

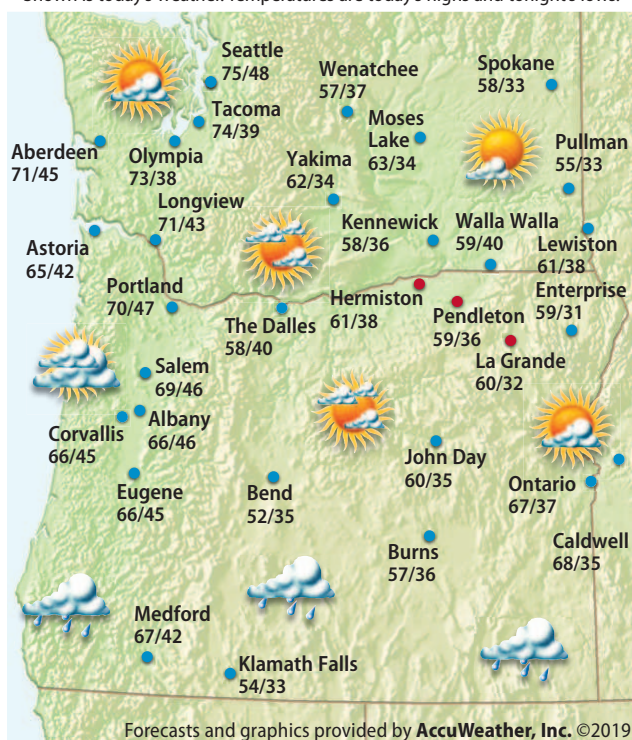
Chao, whose agency oversees the FAA, said the audit will improve the department's decision-making. Her letter confirmed that she had previously requested an audit. It did not mention that the inspector general and federal prosecutors have already started looking into the development and regulatory approval of the jet, as reported by news outlets, including The Associated Press.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



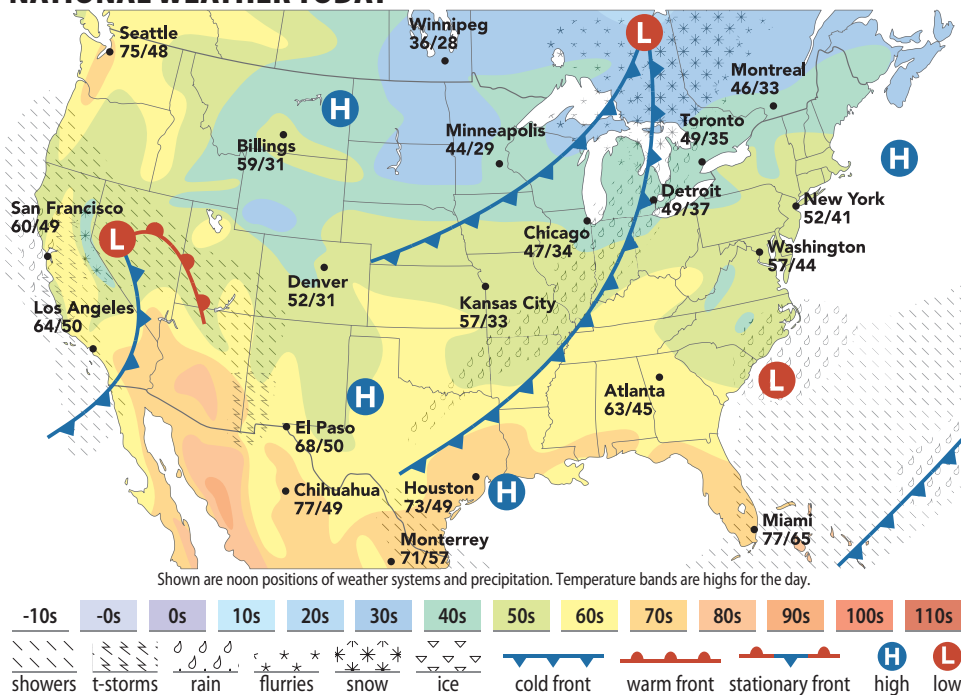
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	53°	29°
Normals	56°	36°
Records	80° (1934)	18° (1965)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.39"	
Normal month to date	0.81"	
Year to date	5.24"	
Last year to date	3.27"	
Normal year to date	3.32"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	59°	25°
Normals	59°	35°
Records	80° (1934)	13° (1965)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.10"	
Normal month to date	0.58"	
Year to date	3.49"	
Last year to date	2.06"	
Normal year to date	2.82"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Thu.	
Boardman	NNE 4-8	W 3-6
Pendleton	NE 4-8	WNW 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	6:59 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	7:07 p.m.	
Moonrise today	6:56 p.m.	
Moonset today	7:12 a.m.	
Full	Last	New
Mar 20	Mar 27	Apr 5
		Apr 12

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 89° in Thermal, Calif. Low -8° in Boulder, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Permanent offshore oil drilling ban OK'd by lawmakers

SALEM (AP) — Oregon state lawmakers on Tuesday overwhelmingly approved a permanent offshore oil drilling ban as the Trump administration forges ahead with a plan that could open up the Pacific coast for petroleum exploration and extraction.

The House voted 47-8 to prohibit drilling and exploration in the state's marine waters, extending a temporary 10-year ban that was set to expire next year. The measure already passed the Senate and will be sent next to Gov. Kate Brown. Brown, a Democrat, has previously spoken out against offshore oil drilling and has pushed for strong climate protections in the state.

"For generations, Oregonians have defended the environment," said Sen. Arnie Roblan, a Democrat who sponsored the initiative, in a statement. "Any oil drilling off the Oregon Coast could destroy the things we love in the state of Oregon — our pristine public beaches, and the local industries like fishing and tourism that drive our coastal economy."

U.S. states can ban drilling up to 3 miles offshore but the bill seeks to limit drilling in federal waters farther out by prohibiting state agencies from assisting with offshore oil extraction. Brown previously enacted an executive order banning that activity.

The move comes as the federal government finalizes a plan to open up nearly all federal waters for oil exploration and drilling. An initial draft released in October identified dozens of potential oil leasing sites off the Pacific coast, including one off the coast of Oregon

NORTHWEST

and Washington state. California, Delaware, Florida, Maryland and New Jersey have bans similar to the Oregon legislation, according to Oceana, an ocean conservation advocacy group. At least eight other coastal states are considering similar prohibitions.

The U.S. Department of the Interior plans to release an update to its offshore drilling proposal in the coming weeks, and it could remove previously identified areas of sale.

The oil industry has not identified much commercial potential for oil and gas in the coastal waters near Oregon and Washington. The Western States Petroleum Association, which represents oil interests in the West, has said there is currently "no oil production or refinement in Oregon, on or offshore."

Jury convicts Oregon man in hate-crime killing of black teen

PORTLAND (AP) — A jury on Tuesday convicted an Oregon man of murder, a hate crime and hit-and-run in the death of a black teenager, who was run down in suburban Portland after an altercation in a convenience store parking lot.

Prosecutors argued Russell Courtier was motivated by white supremacist beliefs in killing 19-year-old Larnell Bruce Jr.

The jury deliberated for a little more than a day following an eight-day trial.

As family members left the courthouse after Multnomah County Circuit Judge Jerry Hodson read the verdict, a few said they thought justice had been served, *The Oregonian/OregonLive* reported.

Christina Miles, Bruce's mother, was overcome with tears. "I'm so happy," she said.

Defense attorneys Kevin Sali and John Robb contended that Bruce suddenly started punching and beating Courtier unprovoked on the night of Aug. 10, 2016, after Courtier drove up to a 7-Eleven in Gresham with his fiancée.

The defense said Courtier, 40, has had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder since childhood and suffered a concussion or brain injury during the beating, causing him to react impulsively and without thinking clearly by getting in his Jeep and fatally striking Bruce.

Prosecutor David Hannon said there was no evidence that Bruce started the fight. Video shows Bruce peacefully standing outside the store when Courtier drove up and parked, then suddenly a fight began, the prosecutor said. Bruce was leaving the area when Courtier got into a Jeep and started driving toward him and onto a sidewalk, striking him while Bruce tried to get away, Hannon said. Bruce died three days later.

Hannon said he couldn't say what the fight at the convenience store was about, but noted that Bruce was black and Courtier is white. He also noted that Courtier joined a racist white prison gang, European Kindred, in 2003 or 2004 and had the gang's initials and shield logo tattooed onto his leg.

Hannon played a video for jurors in which Courtier said the N-word while in a police interview room. He also said there was no evidence in medical records that Courtier suffered a concussion or brain injury during the fight.

Courtier's girlfriend, Colleen Hunt, pleaded guilty to manslaughter last week.

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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