

Oregon takes steps toward campaign finance reform

By SARAH ZIMMERMAN
Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon is one of only five states to have absolutely no limits on how much money can be donated to political campaigns.

But lawmakers took a step to change that Thursday, when the House passed a measure approving the state's first campaign contribution limits in decades.

The proposal caps contributions to House and Senate candidates at \$1,000 and \$1,500, respectively. Contributions to all other statewide candidates would be capped at \$2,800.

The measure now goes to the Senate, though voters would need to approve the limits in the 2020 election.

Although legislators have tried to implement campaign finance reform, they've run into legal complications thanks to the Oregon constitution's free speech provision. The state's Supreme Court ruled in 1997 that campaign donations are a form of free speech and can't be limited.

The high-priced governor's race last year rekindled the debate over spending limits and has prompted lawmakers to try again. In addition to donation caps, legislators are also considering disclosure require-

ments for political ads.

But campaign finance limits would still require a constitutional change, and voters would need to approve amending the state constitution in addition to the caps proposed by lawmakers.

Gov. Kate Brown secured re-election over former Republican state Rep. Knute Buehler in a race that broke fundraising records when candidates raised a combined total of \$30 million. Buehler received a \$1.5 million donation from Nike co-founder Phil Knight, the largest donation by an individual to a candidate in Oregon history.

Brown, who received a \$500,000 donation from the D.C.-based nonprofit EMILY's List, has made political spending limits a priority and expressed support for the constitutional change and the proposed limits.

"We are way out of step with the rest of this country on this issue," she said. "No one person should be allowed to buy a megaphone so loud that it drowns out all the other voices in the race."

But the proposed limits have drawn criticism, and Republicans rapped a loophole in the bill allowing for unlim-



Brown



Helt



Rayfield

ited money to flow to candidates through political party committees.

Rep. Cheri Helt, a Republican from Bend, said she supports campaign finance changes but said she believed this proposal "limits transparency."

Other opponents say the limits are far too high, higher than limits voters approved back in 2006. Voters over a decade ago approved capping donations to \$100 for legislative candidates and \$500 for statewide candidates, but that law never took effect because of the state's constitution.

This new proposal explicitly overturns the 2006 law, ensuring it can never be enforced even if voters eventually approve a constitutional amendment.

Rep. Dan Rayfield, the Democrat from Corvallis behind the proposal, said that while he understands the criticism, the state can't afford to continue to do nothing.

"This is a tough topic and it's probably why this legislature hasn't done anything on this in 44 years," he said. "This bill sets up a strong structure in the state of Oregon to build upon."

Mining company denies Nez Perce Tribe pollution allegations

By KEITH RIDLER
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — A mining company facing a potential lawsuit by the Nez Perce Tribe over pollution at a historic mining area in central Idaho is not to blame for the pollution because it has never mined there, the company said Thursday.

Midas Gold Corp. in a statement said more than a century of mining by other companies in the area about 3 miles west of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness is to blame for the pollution. Companies owned by Midas Gold acquired mining claims in the area starting in 2011, and then acquired claims owned by other companies.

"Midas Gold did not cause the current water quality issues at the site," the company said. "The company's actions have been limited to studying current conditions in the district, evaluating the optimal solutions for remediation and restoration and presenting those solutions to the regulators responsible

for the site."

In 2016, Midas Gold Idaho submitted plans to the U.S. Forest Service to occupy and use forest lands for an open-pit gold mine and ore processing facilities. The company said it will clean up the site if its plan is approved by federal authorities. The company has said the area in the headwaters of the South Fork of the Salmon River contains an estimated 4 million ounces of gold.

Federal authorities are in the process of analyzing the company's plan as part of an environmental review and permitting process.

The Nez Perce Tribe on Wednesday issued a 60-day notice of its intent to sue the company for what it said are violations of the federal Clean Water Act. The tribe said that it has fishing, hunting, gathering and pasturing rights to the area reserved in an 1855 treaty with the United States.

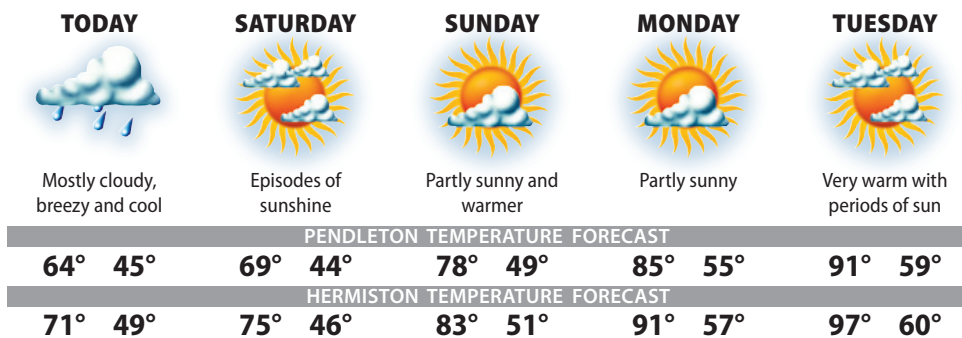
"Midas Gold's unlawful discharge of pollutants into the waters within and below their

proposed Stibnite Gold Mine threatens the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee Chairman Shannon F. Wheeler said in a statement. "Contrary to their public promises, the data clearly show that Midas Gold is harming the environment."

Previous mining dates back a century and has left two open pits — one now filled with water that has been blocking a salmon and steelhead spawning stream since the 1930s. The site also has extensive tailings left over from mining operations that are the source of elevated levels of arsenic. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has spent \$4 million since the 1990s trying to clean up the area.

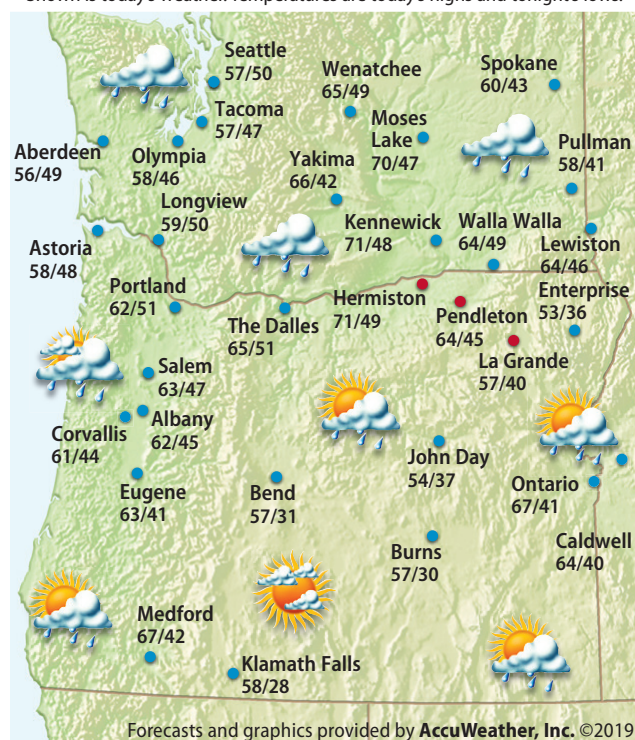
Midas Gold has said modern mining makes reopening the pits economically feasible. The company said it would process spent tailings at the site to recover gold past miners missed, resulting in removing tailings that are themselves a source of pollution.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

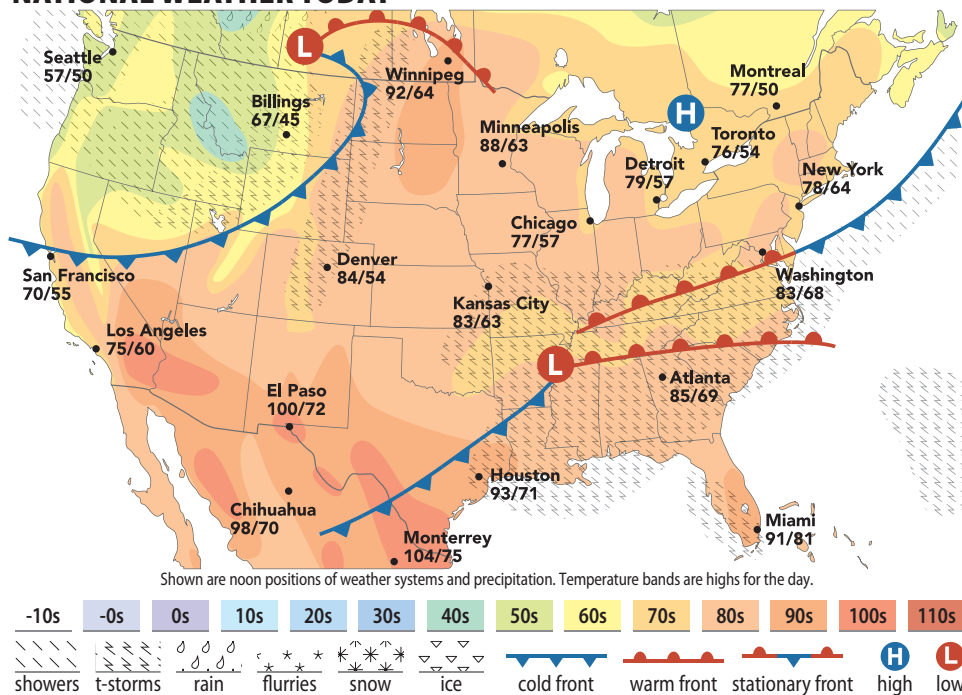
| PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest. | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------------|---------|--------|
| TEMP. | HIGH | LOW | | |
| Yesterday | 57° | 53° | | |
| Normals | 75° | 51° | | |
| Records | 103° (1931) | 35° (1901) | | |
| PRECIPITATION | | | | |
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | 0.05" | | | |
| Month to date | 0.05" | | | |
| Normal month to date | 0.35" | | | |
| Year to date | 9.33" | | | |
| Last year to date | 6.07" | | | |
| Normal year to date | 6.86" | | | |
| HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest. | | | | |
| TEMP. | HIGH | LOW | | |
| Yesterday | 66° | 58° | | |
| Normals | 77° | 52° | | |
| Records | 102° (2016) | 41° (1988) | | |
| PRECIPITATION | | | | |
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | Trace | | | |
| Month to date | Trace | | | |
| Normal month to date | 0.16" | | | |
| Year to date | 4.42" | | | |
| Last year to date | 4.96" | | | |
| Normal year to date | 5.27" | | | |
| WINDS (in mph) | | | | |
| | Today | Sat. | | |
| Boardman | WSW 12-25 | WSW 6-12 | | |
| Pendleton | W 12-25 | WSW 6-12 | | |
| SUN AND MOON | | | | |
| Sunrise today | 5:07 a.m. | | | |
| Sunset tonight | 8:42 p.m. | | | |
| Moonrise today | 9:34 a.m. | | | |
| Moonset today | 12:01 a.m. | | | |
| | First | Full | Last | New |
| | June 9 | June 17 | June 25 | July 2 |

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 105° in Needles, Calif. Low 29° in Leadville, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



BRIEFLY

Oregon votes to keep daylight saving time

SALEM (AP) — Oregon wants to make daylight saving time permanent and end the twice-yearly time change.

The House voted 37-20 Thursday to establish year-round daylight saving time if other West Coast states follow suit — and the federal government approves. The measure now goes to the governor, who will sign it.

California is considering the switch while the governor of Washington state already signed a bill approving permanent daylight saving time.

But the U.S. government still needs to give the OK. While states can opt

into standard time permanently — which Hawaii and Arizona have done — the reverse is prohibited and requires congressional action.

Dozens of states are considering legislation to preserve that extra hour of daylight.

President Donald Trump even weighed in over Twitter back in March to signal his approval.

Coast Guard rescues 2 in separate incidents

WARRENTON (AP) — Coast Guard officials say helicopter crews rescued an injured seaman off the Oregon coast and a stranded hiker in Southern Oregon in separate incidents.

The U.S. Coast Guard says a helicopter crew hoisted an injured 26-year-old Ukrainian man suffering from upper-body spasms from a boat about 72 miles off the coast on Wednesday night.

The spasms were believed to be linked to a laceration he suffered two days before that was not treated for tetanus. The man was taken to Astoria for treatment.

The Coast Guard says a different helicopter crew Wednesday night helped a rescue team in Curry County, hoisting a hiker from a ledge in Humboldt Mountain State Park after it was determined that there was no safe access to the hiker by land.

Officials say the hiker was taken to local responders in good condition.

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