

USFWS to review 7 endangered, threatened species

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will review the status of seven threatened or endangered species in Washington state, including four types of pocket gophers found in only two westside counties.

USFWS also solicited new information Tuesday about the Oregon spotted frog, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark. The three are found in Oregon, as well as Washington.

Washington Farm Bureau CEO John Stuhlmiller said producers should welcome the reviews. "I view this as a very positive thing," he said. "The review doesn't make anything tougher on you."

The Endangered Species Act calls for USFWS to look at a listed species every five years. All the species up for review were granted federal protection in 2013 or 2014. USFWS has not proposed any changes in status.

Endangered species are populations that are on the



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Photo

The Yelm pocket gopher is a threatened species found in Thurston County, Washington. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing the status of it and six other federally protected species in Washington.

brink of extinction. Threatened species are heading that way. The Taylor's checkerspot butterfly is endangered, while the other six are threatened.

The Olympia, Tenino, Yelm and Roy Prairie pocket gophers are subspecies of Mazama pocket gophers. They live primarily underground, and there is no practical way to count them or document whether

the population is increasing or decreasing, according to USFWS.

USFWS considers them threatened because their prairie habitat has been reduced in Thurston and Pierce counties. The suppression of fires has allowed forests to expand, and development has brought dogs and cats, predators to the gophers, according to USFWS.

Smith's contract with Baker County to end

Officials say decision due to money, not performance



Smith

By JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Baker County Commission Chairman Bill Harvey and Commissioner Bruce Nichols say their decision to not extend the county's contract with economic developer Greg Smith is based on declining revenue, not on Smith's performance as the county's contractor over the past several years.

Both commissioners also said they were not concerned about potential conflicts of interests based on Smith's contracts as an economic developer with adjacent counties, or his service as a state legislator.

The Baker County Economic Development Council, which advises Harvey, Nichols and the third commissioner, Mark Bennett, voted Thursday not to renew Smith's \$96,000-per-year contract when the new fiscal year starts July 1.

The reason, both Harvey

and Nichols said on Monday, is that revenue from a tax collected

from guests at motels and other lodging establishments has dropped substantially over the past fiscal year.

That lodging tax revenue is the source of the money for Smith's contract.

The contract, which took effect July 1, 2018, was slated to continue through June 30, 2022. The contract includes a clause allowing either party to cancel the agreement with 60 days written notice. That clause also allows the county to end the deal if "funding from federal, state or other sources is not obtained and continued at levels sufficient to allow for the purchase of the indicated quantity of services."

Harvey said Smith "did very good work for us for many years."

The county has contracted with Smith, a longtime Republican state legislator from Heppner, since 2011.

The likelihood that Smith

won't remain as the county's economic developer is "just economics," Harvey said.

He said the situation is not related to a story by *The Malheur Enterprise* newspaper in Vale, that examined Smith's multiple contracts to oversee economic development in other counties besides Baker, including Malheur and Harney.

Both Harvey, who was elected as commission chairman in 2014, and Nichols, who was elected in 2016, said they don't believe Smith's simultaneous holding of contracts for economic development in those counties constituted a conflict of interest, or that Smith's company failed to do the work for which it was hired.

"We just can't afford that position," Harvey said.

Baker County's lodging tax revenue dropped from \$625,000 in the 2016-17 fiscal year to \$538,129 in 2017-18. The majority of that money is paid by guests at lodging establishments in Baker City.

The county is projecting a further drop in the lodging tax revenue, to \$420,000, for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

Forecast for Pendleton Area

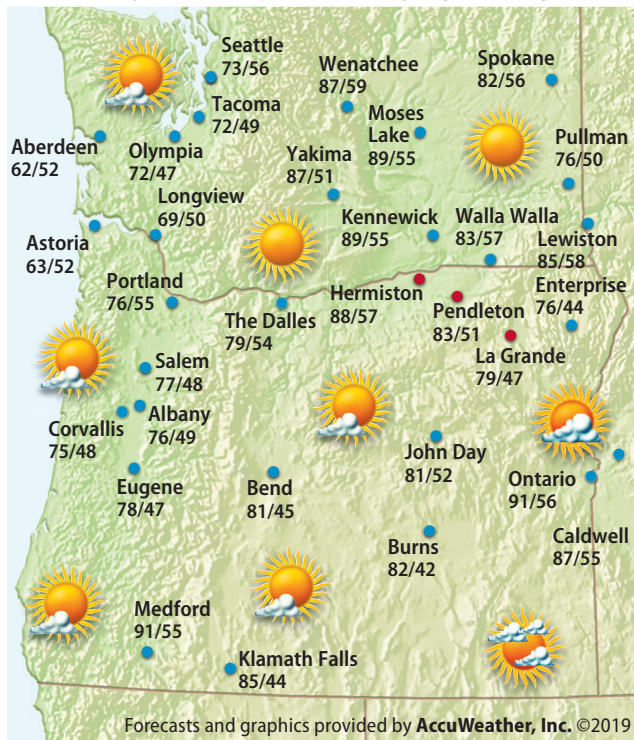
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Table with 2 rows and 6 columns showing temperature forecasts for Pendleton and Hermiston.

OREGON FORECAST

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



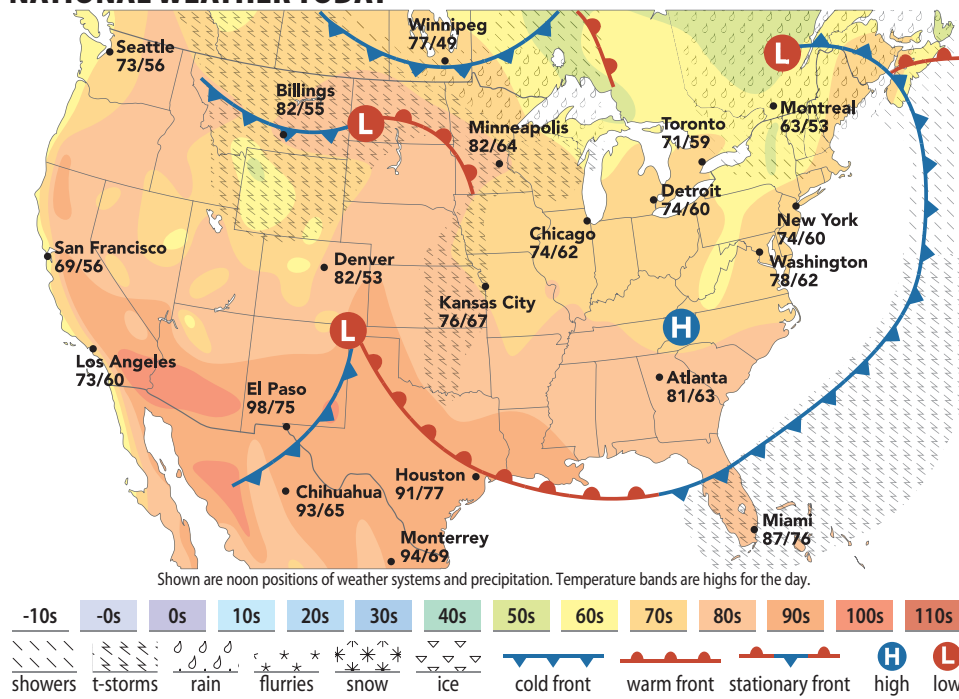
ALMANAC

Almanac section containing weather statistics for Pendleton and Hermiston, including temperature, precipitation, and moon phases.

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states) High 113° in Needles, Calif. Low 27° in Brimson, Minn.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



BRIEFLY

Motorcyclist killed in crash in Gresham

GRESHAM (AP) — A 19-year-old motorcyclist has died and the driver of an SUV was injured in a crash in Gresham.

KOIN reports the crash happened Wednesday afternoon.

The 81-year-old driver of the Hyundai SUV involved in the crash was cooperating. No arrests or citations have been issued.

Gresham police officers said the SUV driver was turning into a shopping center and then crashed with the motorcycle.

The motorcyclist was later identified as Henry Sweeney of Gresham.

Police said a large group of people had gathered at the beach and that someone fired a gun during a fight and hit the man who was killed. Police are investigating.

Lawsuit: Oregon woman punched in eye sues her ex-boyfriend

PORTLAND (AP) — A Bend woman is suing the man she says was her boyfriend for allegedly punching her in the eye and shattering multiple bones.

The *Oregonian*/OregonLive reports Gina Bevill says Shawn McCloud should pay for the reconstructive facial surgery she says she will need.

She seeks medical costs plus \$975,000 for pain and suffering, in the suit filed May 31 in Multnomah County Circuit Court.

McCloud hasn't been charged with a crime and the accusations have been made solely in the civil suit.

He says he did not assault Bevill and that "if the facts in this lawsuit were true" he would have been charged with a crime.

Bevill's lawyer Greg Kafoury says McCloud called police after the April 28 incident though Bevill was the one seriously hurt. Kafoury says police took no action.

A Bend police spokeswoman didn't respond to a request for information.

Man fatally shot at Portland beach

PORTLAND (AP) — Police say a man was fatally shot during a fight at a Northeast Portland beach.

The *Oregonian*/OregonLive reports the shooter and other people at Broughton Beach fled the area after the Wednesday night shooting, according to Portland police.

No arrests have been announced.

Officers responded about 9:25 p.m. to the beach, which is on Northeast Marine Drive near Portland International Airport. Police say they tried to save the man but he died at the scene.

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