

Judge says he'll rule on Hammonds' grazing allotments in July

By **CONRAD WILSON**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

PORTLAND — After hours of testimony, a federal judge in Portland extended a temporary restraining order as he considers whether or not to prevent a controversial Harney County ranching family from grazing their cattle on certain parcels of public land in southeast Oregon.

On Friday, U.S. District Court Judge Michael Simon granted the extension to allow for more evidence. After that, he said he would rule on whether to not to grant a preliminary injunction, a more permanent decision that would stay in place until the case is resolved.

In May, a trio of environmental groups sued the Bureau of Land Management. They're trying to prevent the federal government from allowing the Hammond family from grazing cattle on what the environmental groups argue is sensitive lands for sage grouse and redband trout.

The Hammonds and their run-ins with federal officials were at the center of the 2016 occupation of the Malheur National

Wildlife Refuge. In 2012, Dwight and Steven Hammond were convicted of arson on public lands. Standoff leaders cited their punishments in that case as the reason for the refuge takeover. President Donald Trump pardoned the Hammonds a year ago, and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke restored their grazing rights on his way out of office in January.

The order granted the Hammonds, prominent in the Harney County ranching community, the right to graze cattle on 26,000 acres of federal land.

As part of the lawsuit, Wildearth Guardians, the Western Watersheds Project, and the Center for Biological Diversity raised concerns not only about the environmental effects of grazing cattle, but also laid out past abuses on public lands committed by the Hammond family.

Earlier Friday, the federal government floated a proposal that would allow for a mix of grazing and conservation on some of the land discussed in the lawsuit.

Simon encouraged the two sides to come to an agreement.

"If you're both moder-

ately unhappy that's generally a good sign," Simon said.

But an attorney representing the environmental groups declined the offer and instead pushed for a preliminary injunction.

Hours of testimony from experts followed on the subjects of sage grouse "leks" used for mating, native grasses, sage brush, cheat grass, wildfire and riparian zones.

Clait Braun, a sage grouse expert, testified about the negative impacts of cattle grazing on the sage grouse habitat. He said it will take 40 to 60 years for some of the land the Hammonds want to graze to recover from previous grazing.

"Resuming grazing would make the issue worse," Braun said.

In order to grant a preliminary injunction the environmental groups must prove grazing cattle on certain public lands near Steens Mountain will cause "irreparable harm."

The U.S. Department of Justice, which is representing the BLM, said the environmental groups don't have a strong enough argument for Simon to make that finding.



AP Photo/Pete Zimowsky, File

In this Oct. 21, 2012, file photo, a fisherman works the Salmon River downstream from Riggs, Idaho.

Idaho workgroup begins efforts on salmon, steelhead recovery

By **KEITH RIDLER**
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — Idaho Gov. Brad Little told a salmon and steelhead recovery group Friday it should focus on achievable goals that can bolster the state's struggling fish populations.

Little also told the nearly two dozen environmentalists, ranchers, recreationists, power company and state officials at their first meeting that it will help define the state's position on federal efforts to save salmon and steelhead in the Columbia Basin.

Billions of dollars have been spent in Idaho, Oregon and Washington to save 13 species of Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead protected under the Endangered Species Act. Four of those species are in Idaho.

"I just feel strongly that helping salmon thrive and fostering a strong Idaho econ-

omy produces good jobs," Little said. "Those two things are not mutually exclusive."

The Republican cautioned the group not to get bogged down in discussions about breaching four dams on the Snake River in Washington.

"I remain unconvinced at this time that breaching the dams will recover salmon in Idaho," he said. "In order to keep this diverse group of stakeholders (together), we will put polarizing issues aside and focus on pragmatic, achievable solutions."

A federal judge ruled in May 2016 that the U.S. government hasn't done enough to improve Northwest salmon runs and ordered an environmental review, urging officials to consider removing the dams.

Federal agencies are working on that document that involves 14 federal projects on the Columbia River system.

"This workgroup's effort

should help inform Idaho's position on this massive undertaking," Little said.

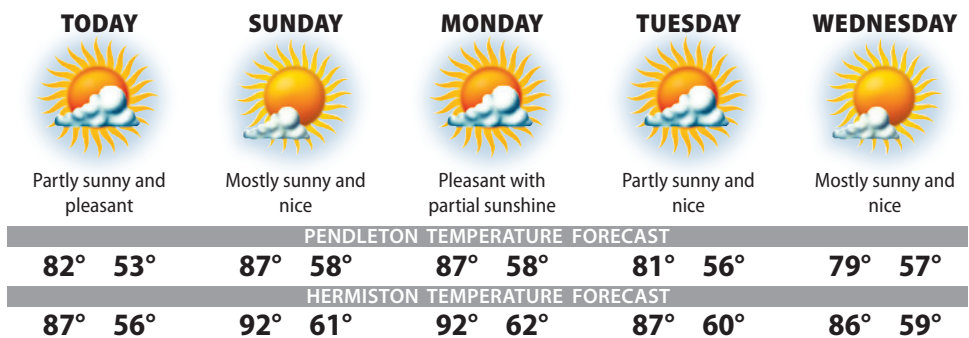
Idaho Conservation League Executive Director Justin Hayes, a panel member, questioned Little about appearing to take dam breaching off the table. But he also said Little forming the panel showed he cared about healthy salmon and steelhead populations.

"Seeing Gov. Little commit resources to bringing people together to try to find solutions is a step in the right direction," Hayes said.

Republican Rep. Fred Wood of Burley, another panel member, said perhaps it is time to look again at the issue that has been simmering since the 1990s.

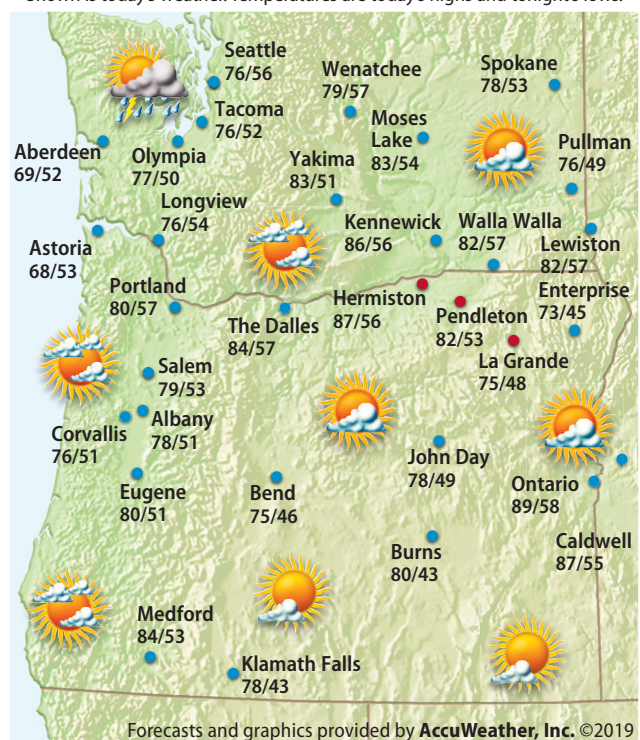
"I asked myself, 'What has changed?'" he said. "Of course, it's a new governor. So let's take a fresh look at it and a fresh look at the science that is currently available and see where we go from here."

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



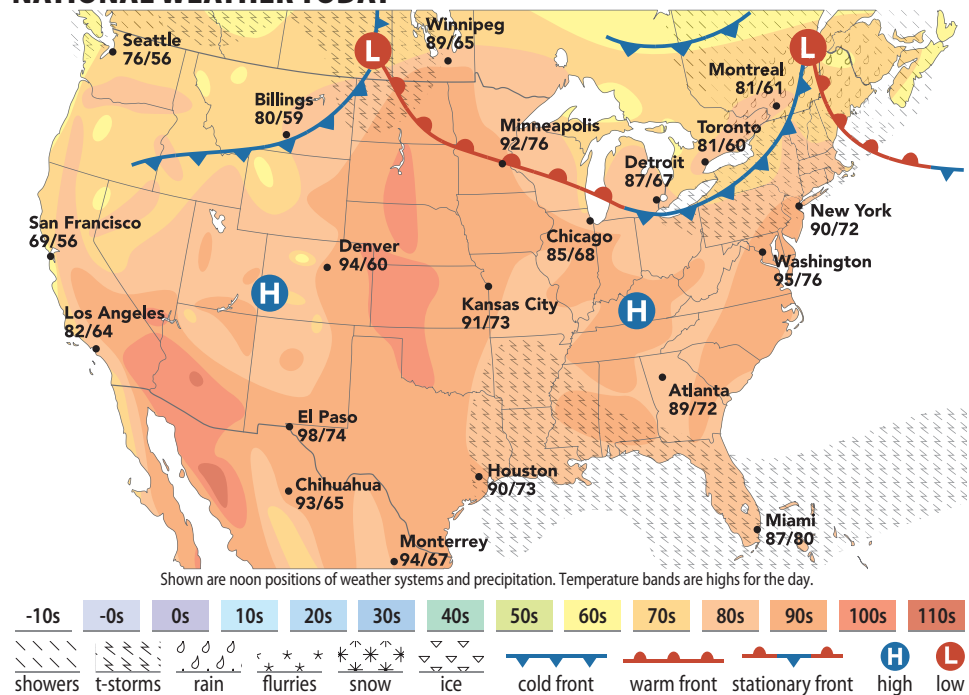
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	72°	46°
Normals	83°	55°
Records	109° (2015)	40° (1908)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.04"	
Month to date	0.29"	
Normal month to date	1.02"	
Year to date	9.57"	
Last year to date	6.49"	
Normal year to date	7.53"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	77°	51°
Normals	84°	55°
Records	107° (2015)	40° (1964)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.05"	
Month to date	0.13"	
Normal month to date	0.56"	
Year to date	4.55"	
Last year to date	5.10"	
Normal year to date	5.67"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Sun.	
Boardman	WSW 4-8	N 4-8
Pendleton	NW 6-12	N 6-12
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	5:08 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	8:49 p.m.	
Moonrise today	2:55 a.m.	
Moonset today	5:38 p.m.	
New	First	Full
July 2	July 9	July 16
		July 24

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 109° in Mesa, Ariz. Low 24° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Man convicted of killing corrections director released during appeal

PORTLAND (AP) — A man who has spent nearly three decades in prison for the 1989 killing of Oregon's prisons director was freed Friday while the state appeals the ruling that led to his release.

Frank Gable left prison after a U.S. magistrate found in April that the trial court made an error in excluding evidence of third-party guilt, *The Oregonian/OregonLive* reports.

U.S. Magistrate Judge John V. Acosta also found that Gable's attorneys provided him with "ineffective assistance in failing to assert Gable's federal due process rights in the face of the trial court's error."

Gable, now 59, left the prison in Lansing, Kansas, and had to report directly to a federal probation officer in Kansas City. He'll be

allowed to live with his wife in Kansas.

"We don't really want to talk about the case or nothing, just glad to be out," Gable told Fox 4 News.

"He thanks those who believed in his innocence all these years," said Nell Brown, one of two assistant federal public defenders who represented Gable in challenging the murder conviction.

Gable was convicted in the stabbing death in Salem of prisons chief Michael Francke, 42, and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Francke's brothers, Pat and Kevin Francke, have been staunch defenders of Gable and believe he was wrongly convicted.

Gable must participate in drug and mental health assessments and counseling

as directed by the U.S. Pretrial Services Office. He was not placed on electronic monitoring, although the state urged it.

The April ruling came after multiple witnesses recanted their testimony and defense lawyers cited a record of improper interrogation and flawed polygraphs used to question witnesses and shape their statements to police.

Acosta then ordered Gable to be released or retried within 90 days of his order.

The state's appeal contends another man's confession was unreliable because he had changed his account multiple times.

Acosta agreed to put his order to retry Gable on hold while the state's appeal is pending before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

BRIEFLY

Animal advocates raise funds online for wolf fence

KLAMATH FALLS (AP) — A Southern Oregon animal advocacy group has launched an online fundraising drive to help safely separate wolves and livestock.

The *Herald and News* reports that KS Wild set up a GoFundMe account to raise money for an electric fence to keep wolves off private property in Prospect.

The crowdsourcing drive by the Ash-

land-based group has collected \$1,500 of its \$6,000 goal for the fencing that will stand 6 feet high.

The fence is expected to cost about \$45,000 with additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Property owner Ted Birdseye says he has lost cows to an area wolf pack.

The rancher has cared for wolf pups in the past, but he wants to keep his family and livestock safe.

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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