

New report warns of potential radiation release at Hanford

By ANNA KING
Oregon Public Broadcasting

RICHLAND, Wash. — A new federal report says that a massive building at the Hanford Nuclear Site is worse off than managers thought.

The so-called PUREX — Plutonium Uranium Extraction — plant isn't clean. Starting in 1956 the plant processed loads of plutonium. Its walls are up to 6 feet thick, and it's as long as three football fields.

PUREX is located within Hanford's 200 East Area. It's about 7 miles from the Columbia River and 5 miles from State Highway 240.

Locals call these large buildings with deep underground walls "canyons." They're also called "Queen Marys" because of their long shape resembling ocean liners sailing amid the sagebrush.

Now, the behemoth canyon is slowly degrading. Final cleanup isn't slated for more than a decade, around 2032. After studying the PUREX plant, the federal government has just released a new plan that would stabilize the building for now. But it's hard to



Contributed Photo, File
A new federal report says that a massive building at the Hanford Nuclear Site is worse off than managers thought.

balance all the urgent clean-ups on the site, according to Theresa Howell with the Washington State Department of Ecology. There's 56 million gallons of radioactive sludge stored in aging underground tanks, too.

"It's an ongoing struggle at Hanford to continue to get funding to address all of the risks out there," Howell said. "So this is one way to get a little bit of movement forward."

If not dealt with soon, Washington state officials

say they worry the PUREX plant will contaminate the environment.

The new federal report underscores that worry, saying: "the 202A Building [PUREX] has degraded. Spread of contamination has been observed throughout the building and has the potential to continue as the facilities degrade."

Besides PUREX, there are three similar facilities at Hanford that need to be torn down: U Plant, REDOX and B Plant.



AP Photo, File
The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on Wednesday authorized killing some members of a wolf pack that are preying on cattle in the northeastern corner of the state.

State OKs killing of wolf pack members preying on cattle

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on Wednesday authorized killing some members of a wolf pack that are preying on cattle in the northeastern corner of the state.

Agency director Kelly Susewind said the state will kill part of the OPT pack, for the second year in a row, in an effort to change the behavior of the pack.

The action comes after a cow was found on Saturday in Ferry County that had been killed and partially consumed by wolves.

"This is a very difficult situation for all those involved, especially given the history of wolf-livestock conflict in this area," Susewind said. "Our goal is to change this pack's behavior."

Wolf tracks were seen near where the cow was found, the agency said.

Last year, the agency killed several members of the OPT pack that were preying on livestock, but left

some members of the pack alive.

Conservation groups contend that repeatedly killing wolves in the same area does not stop cattle depredations.

"Instead, our wildlife agency should walk its own talk about using innovative solutions," said Sophia Ressler of the Center for Biological Diversity, which opposes the killing of wolves.

"State and federal officials could find an alternate grazing allotment that isn't such fantastic wolf habitat," she said.

Wolves were wiped out in the state by the 1930s on behalf of livestock interests. But the animals started returning to the state early this century from surrounding areas. Most of the wolves live in the northeastern corner of the state, where they have prompted numerous conflicts with livestock producers.

The WDFW said the state had a minimum of 126 wolves in 27 packs with 15 successful breeding pairs last year. For the first time, a wolf pack was found living

west of the Cascade Range.

Gray wolves are no longer listed as an endangered species under federal protection in Eastern Washington. They are still federally protected across the rest of the state, although the federal government is considering lifting those protections.

Susewind said the OPT pack has repeatedly preyed on cattle on federal grazing lands in the Kettle River Range.

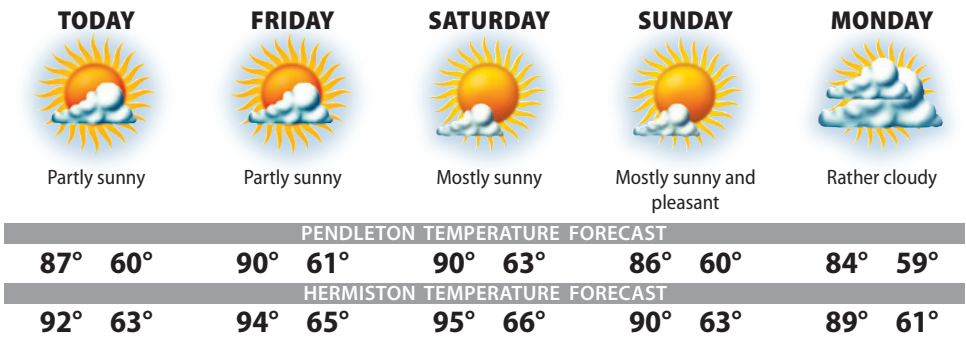
Last year, the OPT pack was involved in 16 depredations in less than two months. That prompted the WDFW to kill two members of the pack last September, leaving two members alive.

The WDFW said the pack has since grown to five adult wolves and four pups.

The rancher involved in this case has taken numerous steps to protect his livestock from wolves, and efforts to kill some wolves will begin almost immediately, the agency said.

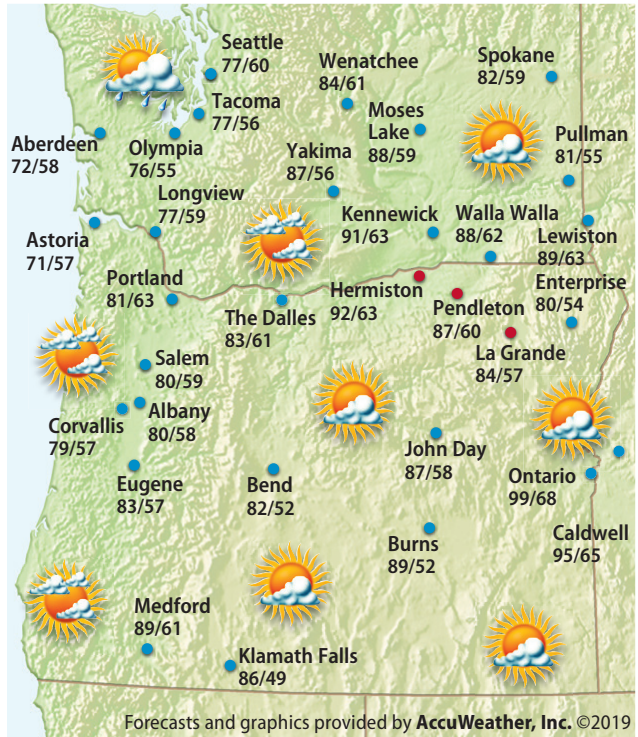
The agency said it will kill one or more wolves and then evaluate whether more need to be killed to prevent livestock depredations.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



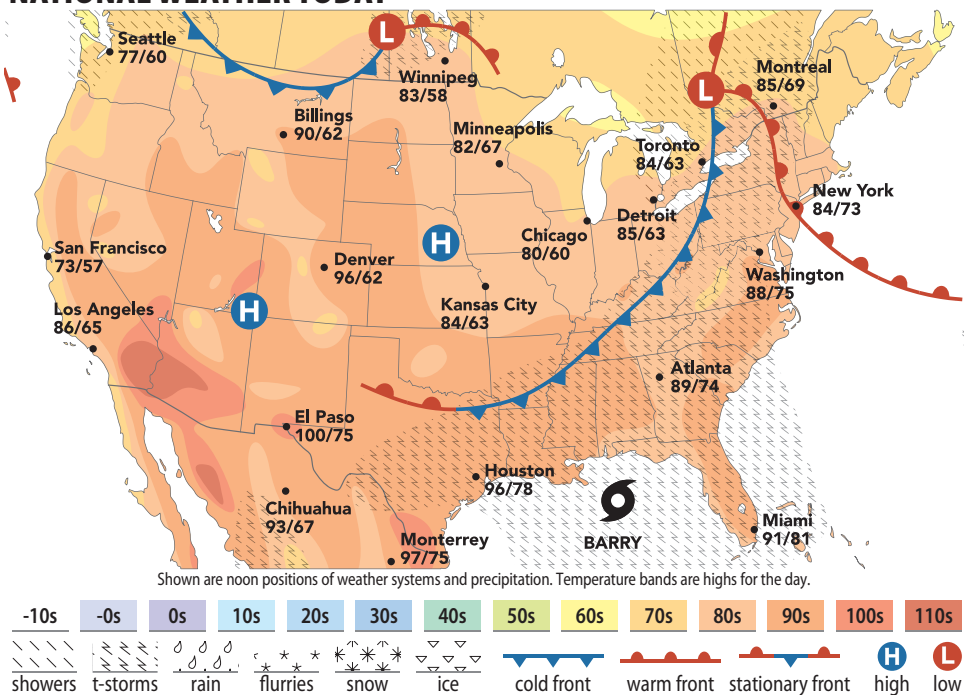
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	85°	62°
Normals	88°	58°
Records	106° (1975)	40° (1911)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.02"	
Normal month to date	0.10"	
Year to date	9.59"	
Last year to date	6.49"	
Normal year to date	7.67"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	86°	65°
Normals	88°	58°
Records	106° (1975)	46° (2009)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	Trace	
Normal month to date	0.07"	
Year to date	4.55"	
Last year to date	5.10"	
Normal year to date	5.77"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Fri.	
Boardman	WSW 6-12	WSW 6-12
Pendleton	WNW 6-12	WNW 6-12
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	5:17 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	8:44 p.m.	
Moonrise today	3:55 p.m.	
Moonset today	1:40 a.m.	
Full	Last	New
July 16	July 24	July 31
		Aug 7

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 112° in Thermal, Calif. Low 29° in Angel Fire, N.M.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Two rural Oregonians from #TimberUnity visit White House

By SIERRA DAWN MCCLAIN
Capital Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Two representatives of Oregon's #TimberUnity movement were at the White House Monday, where they had been invited to hear President Donald Trump deliver remarks on "America's environmental leadership."

The president had invited Todd Stoffel, of GT Stoffel Trucking, and Marie Bowers, of Bashaw Land & Seed, to represent Oregon's trucking, logging and agricultural industries.

"It's not very often that you get invited to the White House, especially as a rural Oregonian," said Bowers. "Just the honor of that was pretty astounding."

The president's invitation came after the 2019 Oregon Legislative session, which brought thousands of rural Oregonians — along with their tractors and trucks — to the Capitol in Salem to protest controversial climate bills, such as House Bill 2020, a bill to limit carbon emissions.

The group #TimberUnity, which Stoffel and Bowers represented at the White

House on Monday, started as a grassroots effort to fight HB 2020 and is now a registered political action committee devoted to standing up for loggers, ranchers, truckers and other working-class Oregonians.

In his speech Monday, Trump focused on his administration's environmental achievements. He said his priorities were promoting the "cleanest air," "crystal clean" water, reducing carbon emissions and "being a good steward of public land."

The president invited his various administration officials, including Environmental Protection Agency Chief Andrew Wheeler and Interior Department Chief David Barnhardt, to take turns at the lectern.

Trump has raised the ire of environmental groups by rolling back more than 80 environmental regulations and withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris climate change accord.

In his speech, the president said he withdrew from the Paris agreement because it disadvantaged American workers and taxpayers.

"Punishing Americans is never the right way to

protect the environment," he said. "We will defend the environment, but we will also defend American prosperity."

Trump also said that he does not support the "Green New Deal" Democrats in Congress are pushing for, which he claimed would cost the U.S. nearly \$100 trillion.

"That's not affordable even in the best of times," he said.

Bowers, who helped lead the fight to kill HB 2020 in Oregon, said she agrees with the president. "My biggest takeaway from this weekend is that you shouldn't 'fix' the environment at the cost of jobs," she said. "The two aren't mutually exclusive."

Bowers said that she and Stoffel, along with the rest of the #TimberUnity movement leaders, are continuing to formulate what their movement means and what it will stand for moving forward.

"There are a lot of issues we could stand for that don't get attention," she said. "The main thing is that we'll be advocating for natural resources and working people."

Stoffel couldn't be reached for comment.

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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