

Woman injured in fall at Indian Rock

By **SABRINA THOMPSON**
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — La Grande Rural Fire Protection District and La Grande Search and Rescue put their practice to use in a cliffside rescue Monday evening, according to a statement from La Grande Rural Fire Protection District Chief Craig Kretschmer.

When Jacki Mulhair fell from the Indian Rock Overlook, the search and rescue team, which happened to be training for this exact type of rope rescue on Mount Emily, was quickly on the scene.

Search and Rescue Lt. Nick Vora and his team were packing up their cars 2.5 miles away, when they got the call. They had spent most of the day working on rope drills and training, something they do the third Monday of each month. While rope rescue is a low frequency type of rescue, it poses high risks, Vora said, which means they like to practice a lot to stay on top of their game.

“When we first got the call, I was shocked,” Vora said. “Getting that call when we were just practicing that type of rescue, when we were already nearby, it couldn’t have been better (timing).”

Mulhair, 34, of La Grande, was visiting the

Indian Rock Overlook for the first time to watch the sunset with her boyfriend, Jeff Hill, when she jumped out of the truck to take a look over the edge. While Hill was backing up the car, Mulhair got too close to the ledge and slipped over, falling 86 feet. She had taken off her boots and sat on her butt to scoot down to the lower bench of the cliff for a better view when she started to slide. When she realized she was falling, Mulhair flipped onto her stomach to try and grab something, slipping off the cliff’s edge.

Hill immediately called 911 and the search and rescue team responded first. The SAR volunteers assembled a rope line so that an SAR EMT could reach Mulhair to assess her injuries. Because daylight was fading, they used car headlights and flashlights to generate sufficient lighting until the fire department arrived.

“Besides the lack of light, we are grateful things worked out the way they did,” Vora said.

Once an ambulance was on the scene, two more responders rappelled down to Mulhair to assist with her injuries and with getting her up the side of the cliff. Due to the severity of her injuries, a Life Flight helicopter was called to transport her to Kadlec Regional Medical Center in Richland, Washington. It was



Photo courtesy of Andrea Borges

Jacki Mulhair, 34, of La Grande, was visiting the Indian Rock Overlook for the first time to watch the sunset, got too close to the ledge and slipped over, falling 86 feet. Mulhair suffered multiple injuries in her fall.

difficult to bring Mulhair up in the basket, according to Vora. Because it wasn’t an entirely vertical cliff, the rescuers had to navigate a series of ledges.

Mulhair suffered multiple injuries in her fall, including four broken ribs on her left side, a broken nose, a broken right hip, and her right femur was broken in three places. Borges said more injuries may be discovered as testing continues. Since arriving at the hospital, Mulhair has had surgery to place a rod in her right leg and surgery to correct her hip.

“She is awake, although she did lose consciousness,” Mulhair’s sister Andrea Borges, also of La Grande said. “She is in a

ton of pain, and her face is unrecognizable.”

Mulhair lives in La Grande with her two children, ages 9 and 2. Right now they are staying with Mulhair’s youngest sister. Mulhair works as a babysitter and is a homemaker. The family has set up a GoFundMe page to help with medical expenses. She is expected to make a full recovery, but will be closely monitored to fight against the likelihood of infection and blood clots, according to Borges.

While her injuries are serious, Mulhair is lucky that SAR was in the right place at the right time. Not all are so fortunate. In 2016, 27-year-old Warren Webb, of La Grande, died

Arsonist gets 55 months in prison

By **CHRIS COLLINS**
EO Media Group

BAKER CITY — Raymon Haze Garcia, the 21-year-old man who set the fire that destroyed a block of historic buildings in Huntington in late May, pleaded guilty to arson and reckless burning on Tuesday in Baker County Circuit Court and was sentenced to 55 months in prison.

Garcia, of 390 E. Jefferson St. in Huntington, pleaded guilty to one count of first-degree arson, one count of second-degree arson and one count of reckless burning. He was sentenced to 37 months in prison on the first-degree arson charge and 18 months on the second-degree arson charge.

The reckless burning charge is a misdemeanor and does not carry prison time, according to a press release from District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff.

Garcia was originally charged with two counts of first-degree arson, but one of the charges was reduced to second-degree arson, as required under Oregon law, because one of the buildings was not regularly used when Garcia lit the fire on May 23. The Streamliner Lounge and Howell’s Cafe had not been open for about one year prior to the fire, according to the press release.

A restitution hearing has

been scheduled for Oct. 4. According to the press release, restitution could be “well in excess of \$100,000.”

Shirtcliff said the victims will prepare records of their losses, including

loss of the buildings and the loss of their abilities to operate their businesses, for the restitution hearing.

A judgment will be established by the court and a payment plan will be developed that Garcia must follow to pay some part of whatever income he makes toward paying off the debt, Shirtcliff said.

Garcia was eager to settle the case and that is partly why the restitution hearing will take place later, Shirtcliff said.

Garcia had been moved to the Grant County Jail at Canyon City after he damaged a sprinkler head in his Baker County Jail cell, Shirtcliff said.

Prosecuting Garcia for the damage, which was a misdemeanor, would have delayed resolution of the arson cases, Shirtcliff said. Instead, Garcia decided to plead guilty to the arson charges and to be sentenced Tuesday, and the state dropped the pending charges related to damage at the jail.



Garcia

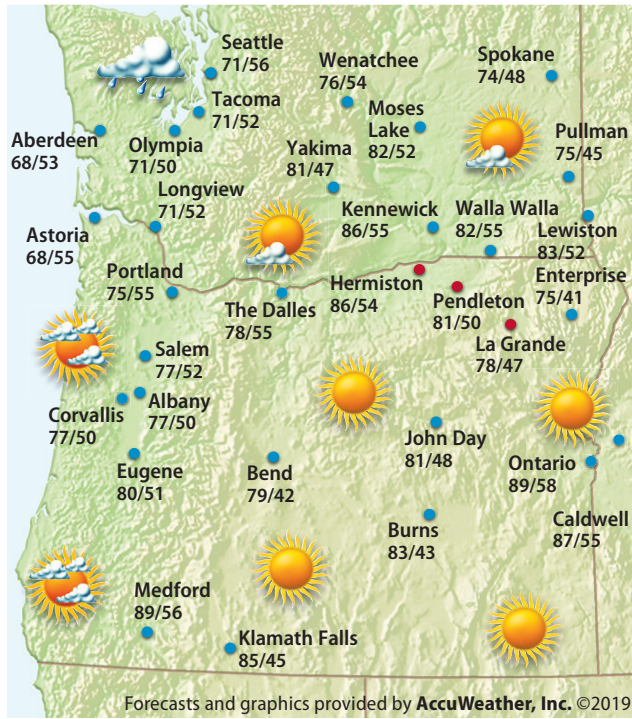
Forecast for Pendleton Area

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TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly sunny; breezy, pleasant	Mostly sunny and nice	Pleasant with plenty of sunshine	Mostly sunny	Sunshine and hot
81° 50°	78° 50°	86° 53°	92° 58°	95° 64°
86° 54°	83° 50°	90° 53°	96° 64°	100° 68°

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	80°	64°
Normals	89°	59°
Records	110° (1918)	43° (1913)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.02"
Normal month to date	0.17"
Year to date	9.59"
Last year to date	6.49"
Normal year to date	7.74"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	85°	67°
Normals	89°	59°
Records	108° (1941)	45° (1939)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	Trace
Normal month to date	0.12"
Year to date	4.55"
Last year to date	5.10"
Normal year to date	5.82"

WINDS (in mph)

Today	Fri.
Boardman WSW 10-20	SW 6-12
Pendleton W 10-20	W 7-14

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	5:23 a.m.
Sunset tonight	8:39 p.m.
Moonrise today	10:03 p.m.
Moonset today	6:59 a.m.

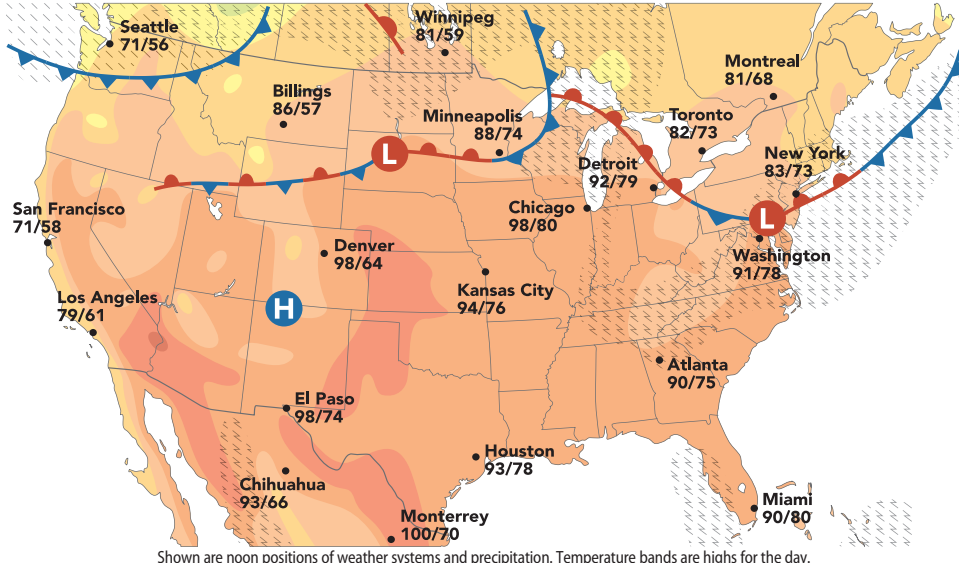
Last New First Full
July 24 July 31 Aug 7 Aug 15

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 108° in Thermal, Calif. Low 32° in Stanley, Idaho

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

-10s -0s 0s 10s 20s 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s 90s 100s 110s

showers t-storms rain flurries snow ice cold front warm front stationary front high low

Judge curtails grazing in Hammond case

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

PORTLAND — U.S. District Judge Michael Simon has ruled environmental groups are likely to prevail in their claim that former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke improperly renewed a grazing permit lost by Dwight and Steven Hammond due to setting fire to rangelands.

Western Watersheds Project, Center for Biological Diversity and Wildearth Guardians have shown the renewal decision was likely “arbitrary and capricious” because Zinke didn’t evaluate the father-and-son’s prior non-compliance incidents or whether they’d be “good stewards of the land,” among other requirements, the judge said.

The judge entered a preliminary injunction limiting grazing as requested by the environmental plaintiffs, though the Hammonds’ cattle can still graze one public land allotment under an amended plan suggested by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Under the order, cattle can consume 30 percent of the forage available on 6,000 acres of the Hardie Summer allotment, down from 50 percent under the Hammonds’ permit, and cannot graze at all on the 8,200-acre Mud Creek allotment except when briefly traveling through it.

One of the pastures within the Hardie Summer allotment will also be off-limits to grazing and the BLM must conduct monthly monitoring of rangeland conditions on the allotment, with its findings submitted to the judge in October.

Dwight and Steven Hammond were ultimately convicted of setting a fire in 2001



Capital Press Photo, File

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon has ruled in favor of environmental groups trying to revoke federal grazing permits issued for Dwight and Steven Hammond.

that consumed 139 acres of federal property, while the younger rancher was also found guilty of lighting a “back burn” that spread onto an acre of public land in 2006.

A federal judge originally imposed prison terms of three months for Dwight Hammond and a year for Steven Hammond after finding the five-year mandatory terms required under federal law “really would shock the conscience.”

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned that decision and the ranchers were required to serve the full five years behind bars.

They returned to prison in early 2016 — inspiring a notorious standoff between protesters and the government at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge — but were fully pardoned and released a year ago by President Donald Trump. Apart from their problems in criminal court, the BLM refused to renew the Hammonds’ grazing permit in 2014 based on their criminal convictions, citing the ranchers’ “disregard for human life and public property.”

However, early this year,

Zinke found that the pardons represented “unique and important changed circumstances” that, along with Hammonds’ time behind bars and civil penalties, justified restoring the grazing permit.

The environmental plaintiffs filed a complaint challenging that decision, arguing that Zinke hadn’t followed federal land management law and associated regulations in making the decision. The groups also claimed they’d suffer irreparable harm from grazing impacts to the Greater sage grouse and redband trout.

Simon has now agreed that Zinke didn’t follow procedures for renewing a grazing permit under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and also that the renewal was improperly excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act. While the judge agreed that it’s likely the environmentalist have shown “irreparable harm” to the sage grouse from grazing levels under the Hammonds’ permit, he determined the reduced grazing plan wouldn’t result in such damage.

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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