

# Cybercrimes on the rise due to sophisticated scams

By **ANDREW SELSKY**  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — On Dec. 14, 2018, Aaron Cole was about to buy a new house and received an email that he thought was from his title company, directing him to make a \$123,000 deposit.

Cole complied, not realizing that a sophisticated hacker network had likely been spying on his communications with the title company and that although the email looked like others he had received from the title company, this time, the email address was slightly different.

A week later, the title company called, advising him it was time to send money. The Oregon man suddenly realized he had given away his family's life savings to criminals. The money was from the sale of their former house.

"It was the worst feeling," Cole said Friday. "And then having to go home and tell my wife that I just gave away all the money. She could tell right when I walked in the house and just sat down, and I just couldn't come up with the words to tell her."

In 2015, \$220 million was lost to wire fraud in the United States. In 2019, losses will surpass \$1.5 billion, according



**FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge George Chamberlin, left, speaks in Portland to reporters about the rise of cybercrime in Oregon. He was joined by Gabriel Gundersen, an FBI supervisory special agent with the Oregon Cyber Task Force, center, and Loren Cannon, FBI special agent in charge of the Portland Division.**

AP Photo/Andrew Selsky

to WFG National Title Insurance Company.

In the past, attempts to trick people were often clumsy, FBI agents told journalists on Friday. Now they can be sophisticated. If people are asked via email to transfer

money under a deadline, they should not rush and instead call a known number of the person the email is purportedly from and confirm the request, the agents said.

"The emails have gotten well-crafted and quite

detailed. They're highly tailored to that particular victim," said Gabriel Gundersen, an FBI supervisory special agent with the Oregon Cyber Task Force. "It's a social engineering piece, where they're coercing a victim to do some-

thing based on an artificial agenda or an artificial timeline."

In one of the largest cases of its kind in U.S. history, federal authorities in Los Angeles announced an indictment in August charging 80 people,

most of them Nigerians, with stealing \$6 million in an email scam and money laundering network. George Chamberlin, assistant special FBI agent in charge of the Portland division, said such cases can take years to develop.

Partnerships between victims, local law enforcement, the FBI and its field offices overseas, and law enforcement in other countries is critical to combatting this transnational crime, said Loren Cannon, the FBI's special agent in charge of the Portland office.

In Oregon, losses surpassed \$24 million from computer-related crimes from Jan. 1 through Sept. 30 of this year. For all of last year, \$23.5 million was stolen, the FBI said.

Most of the money has been lost in so-called business email compromise scams, in which organized crime groups trick victims into making wire transfers to bank accounts controlled by the criminals.

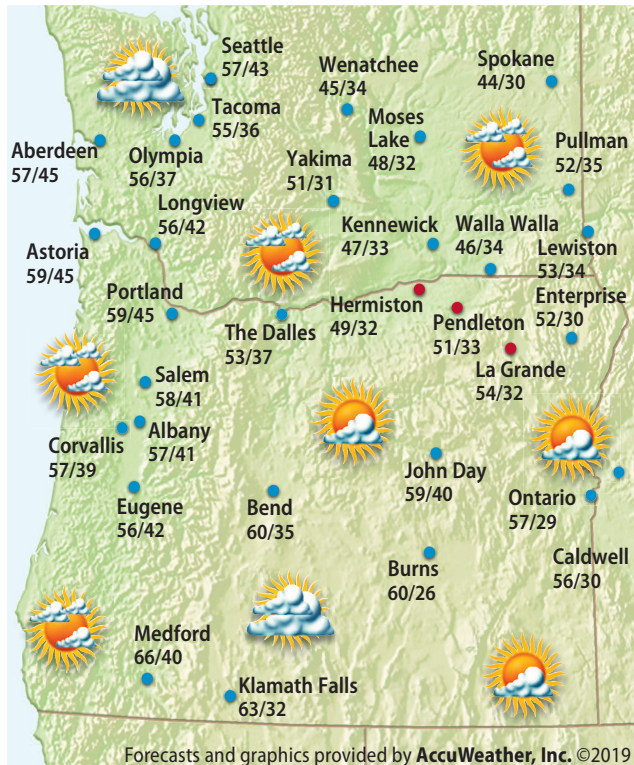
Cole, from the Portland suburb of Oregon City, was lucky. His title firm, WFG National Title Insurance Company, hired him — for the same amount of money he lost — to be a spokesman to warn others about cyber scams.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	ACCUWEATHER	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP		
Partly sunny	Increasing cloudiness	Mostly cloudy with a shower		Mostly sunny	Sun and areas of high clouds
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST					
51° 33°	47° 34°	55° 38°		56° 40°	65° 47°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST					
49° 32°	47° 33°	57° 34°		55° 36°	63° 44°

## 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	43°	27°
Normals	51°	34°
Records	80° (1999)	7° (1955)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.03"
Month to date	0.03"
Normal month to date	0.50"
Year to date	11.34"
Last year to date	8.25"
Normal year to date	10.49"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	43°	26°
Normals	52°	34°
Records	74° (1999)	8° (2014)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace
Month to date	Trace
Normal month to date	0.45"
Year to date	4.94"
Last year to date	6.46"
Normal year to date	7.73"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Thu.
Boardman	NE 4-8	VAR 2-4
Pendleton	N 4-8	NNW 4-8

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:51 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:27 p.m.
Moonrise today	5:31 p.m.
Moonset today	7:51 a.m.

Last New First Full

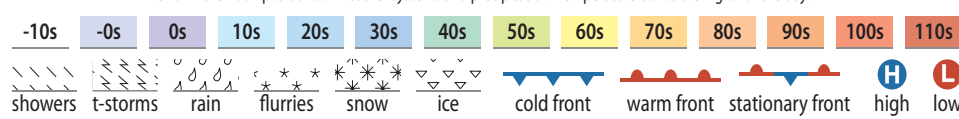
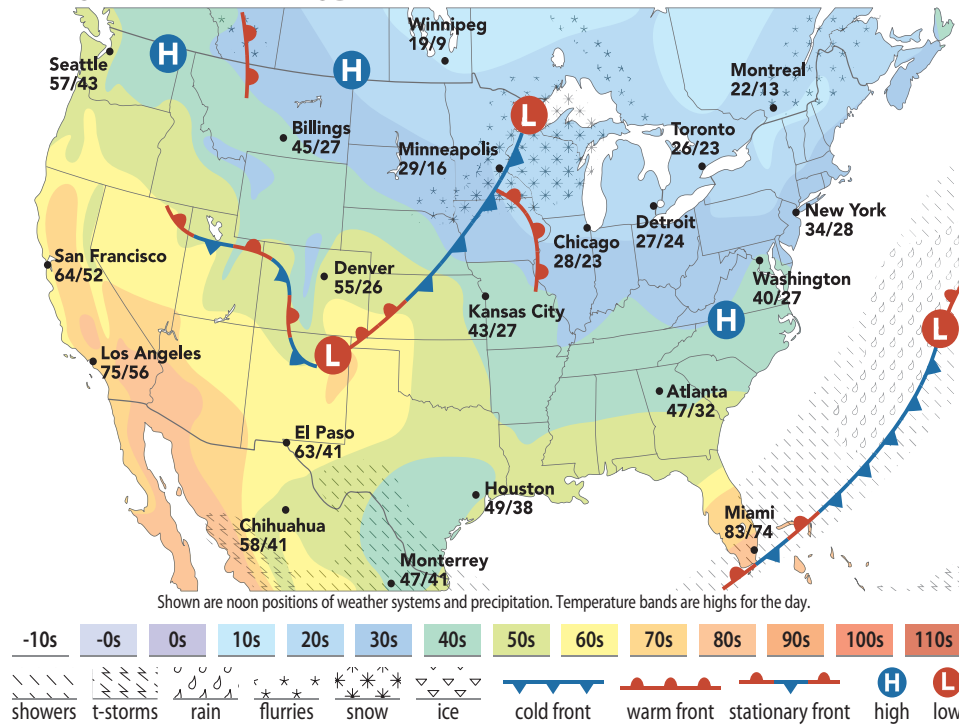


## NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 90° in San Bernardino, Calif. Low -16° in Cotton, Minn.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Senators introduce Owyhee bill

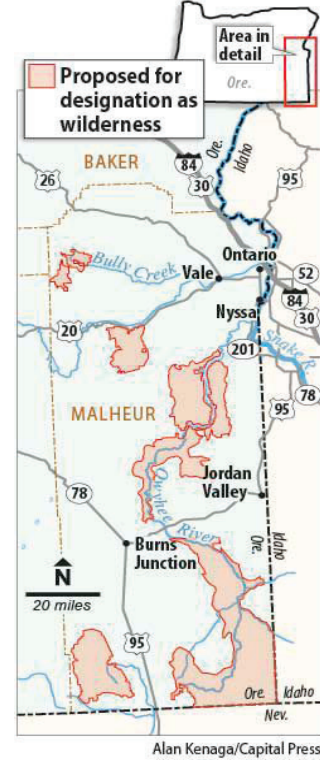
By **BRAD CARLSON**  
Capital Press

ONTARIO — U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, both D-Ore., on Nov. 7 introduced legislation that would designate more than 1.1 million acres of the Owyhee River Canyonlands in Malheur County as wilderness.

The area is important to the local economy because it includes significant grazing land, recreation destinations and other assets. Recent research there has focused on preserving sage grouse and other wildlife habitat, and native grasses.

The Malheur County Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act — largely a result of collaboration among ranchers, conservation groups, university researchers and others — aims to maintain and improve rangeland, preserve grazing, and protect areas important to wildlife and recreation.

The legislation supports science-based adaptive management of federal lands "to make efficient ranching a continued conservation tool and ensure real-time management responses to threats on the ecological integrity of the lands," the senators said in a



Alan Kenaga/Capital Press

to continue, including in newly designated wilderness areas. The legislation would provide funding for research, active-management activities and monitoring as well as enforcement of anticipated uses. It would also maintain existing roads, and establish "loop roads" to encourage tourism while improving access for firefighting.

The legislation would not create a national monument, amend the Taylor Grazing Act, impede current projects, impact water rights or irrigation districts, or affect management of Owyhee Reservoir.

It would give wilderness protection to parts of the Trout Creek Mountains, Castle Rock, Leslie Gulch, Honeycombs, Three Forks and Jordan Craters. Wild and Scenic River management would be used on 14.7 miles of the Owyhee River below Owyhee Reservoir.

The legislation "ensures the safeguarded protections of desert wildlife habitat, native and rare plants, and vast wild places for future generations to enjoy" while also making sure ecological health drives management, Friends of the Owyhee said in an online newsletter.

joint statement.

Adaptive management aims to encourage flexibility by allowing for adjustments based on current or recent results. To help ensure management actions produce ecological improvements, the legislation calls for creating a monitoring network of ranchers, businesses, environmental groups and land managers. Grazing would be allowed

## BRIEFLY

### GOP mailer mimics Census form

PORTLAND — The Republican National Committee is sending mailers to some Oregon voters that mimic the look of a U.S. Census form and solicit donations for President Trump's re-election.

KGW-TV reported Tuesday the mailers are labeled "2019 Congressional District Census" but are not from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The survey asks the person's age, political preference and whether they plan on supporting Donald Trump in the 2020 Presidential election. The mailer also includes questions about domestic issues, national defense and immigration.

Officials in Montana last month issued a warning about the mailers.

Legitimate census survey documents are postmarked from the U.S. Department of

Commerce and U.S. Census Bureau.

In an email to KGW, a Republican National Committee says the mailers are clearly marked as being from the GOP.

### Police: Woman passenger in truck that ran her over

PORTLAND — Authorities say a woman killed in a hit-and-run was a passenger in the same truck that ran her over. The woman was found dead about 2:20 a.m. Monday in Portland.

After investigating, authorities believe the woman was a passenger in a white pickup but, for some reason, fell out onto the road. The truck then ran the woman over before fleeing the scene.

The woman's identity has not yet been determined.

— Associated Press

**CORRECTION:** In the Page A1 story "Tax law snags electric co-ops," published Tuesday, Nov. 12, the story misspelled the name of Umatilla Electric Cooperative Member Services Administrator Steve Meyers.

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