

Action on Owyhee wilderness bill likely in 2020

By BRAD CARLSON
Capital Press

SALEM — Supporters of a proposed wilderness designation for a chunk of Malheur County expect the bill to make progress in Congress as 2020 unfolds.

U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, both D-Ore., on Nov. 7 introduced Senate Bill 2828, the Malheur County Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act. It would designate more than 1.1 million acres of the Owyhee River Canyonlands in Malheur County as wilderness.

Local ranchers, business people and community members collaborated with conservation groups, university researchers and others to craft the bill. It's viewed as important in preserving the area's historic and economically significant ranching industry, and protecting wildlife, scenic and other values as the area draws more visitors.

The bill was read twice in the Senate and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Wyden serves on that committee.

"Sen. Wyden will hit the ground running in



Owyhee Basin Stewardship Coalition Treasurer Elias Eiguren, right, with son Thales, 10, at the family's ranch near Arock.

2020 to get a hearing in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee as soon as possible for the legislation backed by the broad-based coalition he put together in Eastern Oregon," said Hank Stern, Wyden's Oregon press secretary based in Portland. The broad group com-

prises environmental organizations and the Owyhee Basin Stewardship Coalition. The coalition consists of local ranchers, business owners, outdoor enthusiasts, law enforcement officials and others.

In a nod to local leadership, the Oregon Cattlemen's Association Pub-

lic Lands Committee and national Public Lands Council went against standing policy in deciding they would not oppose the wilderness legislation.

OBSC Treasurer Elias Eiguren, whose family runs a ranch in southern Malheur County, said when a hearing on the

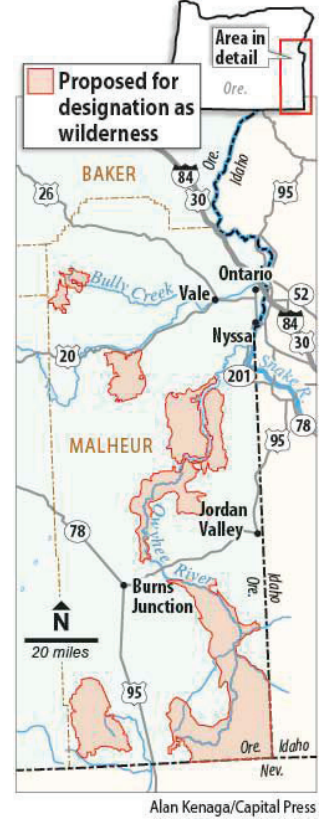


Photo contributed by Toni Jo Eiguren

bill is held in Washington, D.C., OBSC members likely will participate. "We are waiting on the senator's direction," he said, referring to Wyden. Locally, OBSC — which opposed an Obama-era proposal to designate a national monument — has been discussing details and on-the-ground impacts of the legislation as well as concerns. Eiguren said some peo-

ple have voiced questions or concerns about how the legislation would affect existing water rights, and how wilderness designation would impact access to federal land for hunting, fishing or ranching.

Input about concerns can help in "seeing if there is a possibility to address these concerns within this legislation as we go through the legislative process," he said.

"Especially when you are dealing with this type of acreage and the uniqueness of the landscape, it is very important to get things right so you don't shut out access for people who have traditionally used the land in ways that are low-impact or beneficial," Eiguren said.

The legislation would allow grazing to continue, partly as a land-management tool used to minimize impacts of wildfire and other threats.

It would provide funding for research, active-management activities and monitoring, and enforcement of anticipated uses.

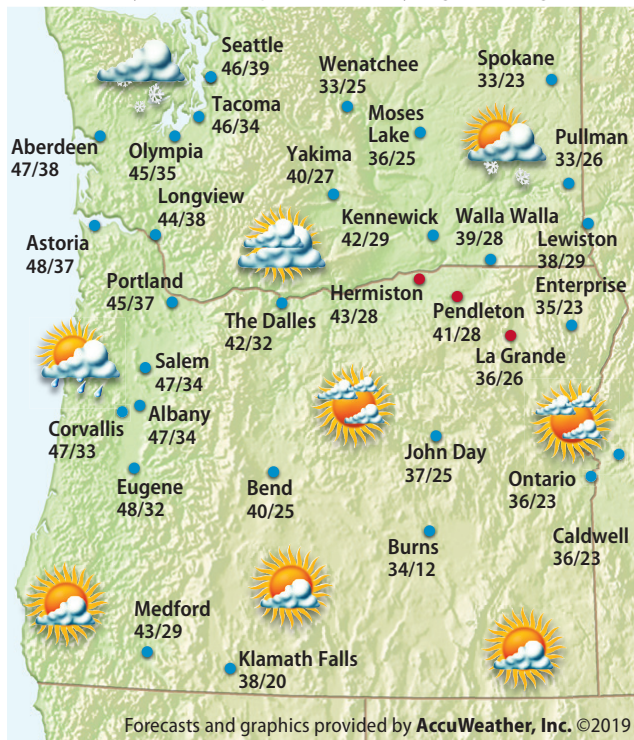
It would maintain existing roads, and establish "loop roads" to encourage tourism while improving access for firefighting.

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
A stray afternoon shower	Periods of clouds and sunshine	Considerable clouds	Clouds and sun	Cloudy
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
41° 28°	38° 32°	37° 31°	40° 31°	45° 34°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
43° 28°	39° 31°	39° 30°	43° 32°	46° 35°

OREGON FORECAST

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



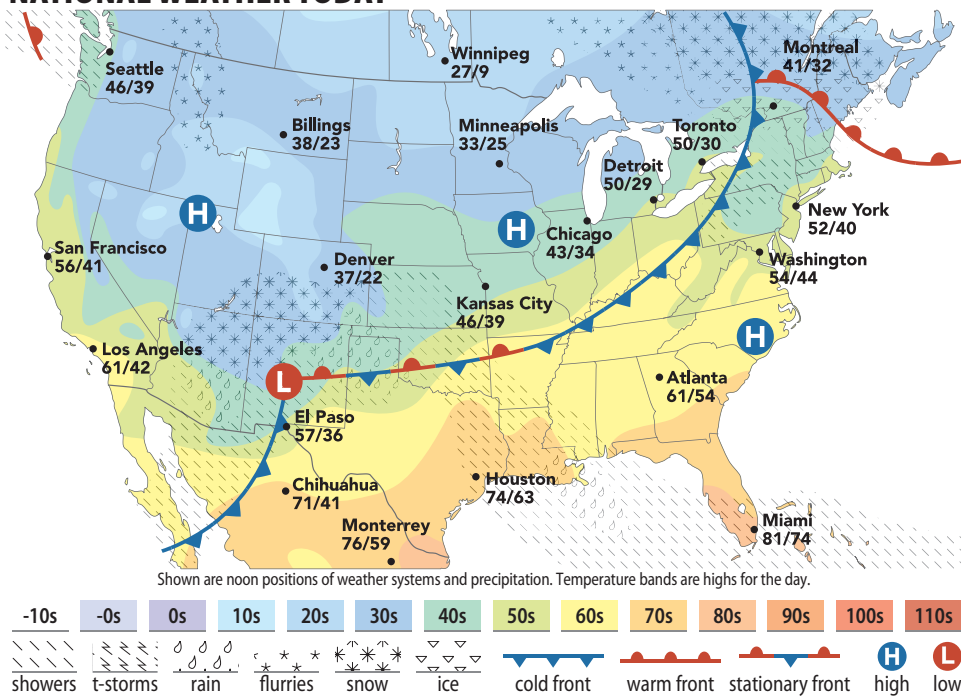
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	38°	31°
Normals	39°	25°
Records	67° (1980)	-9° (1924)
PRECIPITATION	24 hours ending 3 p.m.	
Month to date	0.00"	
Normal month to date	0.75"	
Year to date	1.33"	
Last year to date	12.33"	
Normal year to date	10.20"	
Records	67° (1980) -9° (1924)	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	43°	32°
Normals	39°	27°
Records	67° (1980)	5° (1948)
PRECIPITATION	24 hours ending 3 p.m.	
Month to date	0.00"	
Normal month to date	0.13"	
Year to date	1.24"	
Last year to date	5.08"	
Normal year to date	7.62"	
Records	67° (1980) 5° (1948)	
WINDS (in mph)	Today	Sat.
Boardman	WSW 4-8	NE 3-6
Pendleton	WSW 6-12	WNW 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	7:35 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	4:17 p.m.	
Moonrise today	8:56 a.m.	
Moonset today	5:53 p.m.	
First	Full	Last
Jan 2	Jan 10	Jan 17
		Jan 24

NATIONAL EXTREMES

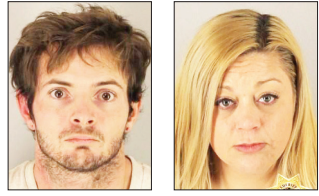
Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 83° in Naples, Fla. Low -11° in Big Piney, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Human trafficking investigation in Bend leads to two arrests

By BRENNNA VISSER
EO Media Group



Ford

Johnson

BEND — Two people were arrested during a human trafficking investigation in southeast Bend on Christmas Eve.

Around 1:20 p.m. on Tuesday, Bend police pulled over a stolen 2009 silver Dodge Charger near the intersection of Southeast Murphy and Southeast Country Club roads.

Jennifer Marie Johnson, a 40-year-old Portland resident, and Tyler John Charles Ford, a 29-year-old Gresham resident, were in the car along with a 15-year-old girl from Portland.

Officers identified the teenage girl as a missing person out of the Portland area.

Throughout the investigation, officers believed the teenager was being groomed for work in the commercial sex trade.

No one was injured during the investigation and the girl is now safe.

Heroin and methamphetamine were seized from

the vehicle, along with stolen and forged identification documents. Several of the recovered documents were linked to thefts in the Portland area.

Johnson was jailed on suspicion of 10 counts each of identity theft, first-degree forgery and criminal possession of a forged instrument, and one count each of prostitution and unlawful possession of methamphetamine.

Ford was jailed on suspicion of unlawful possession of heroin and was found to be in violation of a restraining order for being in contact with the 15-year-old juvenile female in the vehicle.

BRIEFLY

Missing skier at Mt. Bachelor in Oregon found safe

BEND — Authorities have found a 30-year-old skier from California who went missing while skiing at an Oregon resort on Christmas Day.

The search for Ashlee Gingerich began around 5 p.m. Wednesday when Deschutes County deputies were alerted she had not reunited with her skiing partners at Mt. Bachelor. The ski patrol swept all the runs right away and did not find her.

Deschutes County Search and Rescue professionals and volunteers then got involved.

The *Bulletin* reports Gingerich was found in good condition Thursday after spending the night on the mountain because of an alcohol-fueled ski crash.

Lt. Bryan Husband, Deschutes County Search and Rescue coordinator, said she was unable to get back into her skis, abandoned her equipment and began walking downhill.

Gingerich then grew tired, fell asleep and walked to a chairlift in the morning, Husband said. She displayed mild signs of hypothermia, but was otherwise unharmed.

Former Walmart worker faces charges of bomb, death threats

YAKIMA, Wash. — A former Walmart employee in Washington state pleaded not guilty to charges he threatened to blow up one of the stores and kill two managers, according to court records.

Roy Lee Maynard, 41, was arraigned Tuesday on a charge of making a threat to bomb property and two counts of felony harassment, *The Yakima Herald* reported Tuesday.

Maynard was recently fired from the Walmart in Yakima and sent texts to an assistant manager Dec. 10 saying he was going to blow up the building and kill two managers, authorities said.

Maynard also said in the texts he would make the managers watch as he killed their families. Both managers told police they believed the threats, authorities said.

Maynard has no prior felony convictions, but Yakima police asked the court to impose a high bail due to the victims' fear of the suspect and severity of the threats, court records said.

Maynard was released on his own recognizance as part of the Yakima County Superior Court's pretrial release program, records said.

— EO Media Group and Associated Press

CORRECTION: In the Page C5 story "Days Gone By," published Saturday, Dec. 21, in the 25 Years Ago section, former Port of Portland Executive Director Mike Thorne's name was misspelled. 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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