

Idaho group recommends ways to bolster salmon, steelhead

By KEITH RIDLER
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — A group brought together by Idaho Gov. Brad Little to find ways to bolster faltering salmon and steelhead populations has agreed to encourage habitat restoration but avoided making a decision about breaching dams.

The report released over the weekend by the Republican governor's workgroup flatly states it's not a recovery plan. Rather, it's a list of recommendations approved by a group that includes conservationists, power companies, farmers, tribes, irrigators and ranchers.

At the group's first meeting in June 2019, Little tasked members with finding achievable goals to improve struggling salmon and steelhead populations. They met an additional 15 times through December 2020 to hash out recommendations, including creating a statewide inventory of habitat in all river basins and collaborating with property owners and water users to improve habitat.

"I am proud of what the workgroup has accomplished over the last 18 months," Little said in a statement to The Associated Press. "This is the first time a broad group of stake-



Pete Zimowsky/Idaho Statesman, File

A working group of diverse interests convened by Idaho Gov. Brad Little to find consensus ways to bolster faltering salmon and steelhead populations has released a report encouraging habitat restoration and collaboration but steering clear of dam breaching.

holders has worked collaboratively to help shape Idaho's policy on salmon and steelhead. Over the next few weeks, I will review the recommendations provided by the workgroup. While a lot remains to be done, I am confident we are moving in the right direction."

Thirteen species of Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead are listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act, including all salmon

and steelhead that return to Idaho.

The Idaho populations once numbered more than 2.3 million fish combined, the report said. Now, they number about 45,000.

The group adopted Columbia Basin Partnership goals for Idaho runs that call for a low goal of 75,000 fish and a high goal of 385,000. The partnership is a task force that NOAA Fisheries' Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee put

together in 2017.

The Idaho Conservation League, which took part in Little's panel, "believes the workgroup's recommendations, if adopted and implemented, will be useful ways for the state of Idaho and all Idahoans to help our fish," executive director Justin Hayes said in a statement. "This is a meaningful accomplishment, one that likely would not have happened without this workgroup."

The league was among the members that support breaching four dams on the lower Snake River in Eastern Washington that are blamed for killing many salmon and steelhead. Others oppose that move.

"Limiting our recommendations to only those that would enjoy consensus support meant that there were many policy ideas discussed but not advanced," the report said. "Consensus on dam breach/retirement

could not be reached."

But the group did support operating dams to maximize benefits to fish and minimize effects on power generation.

Idaho Power, a public utility with about 570,000 customers in Idaho and Eastern Oregon, took part in the workgroup. The company has 17 dams to generate electricity and operates four hatcheries to produce salmon and steelhead.

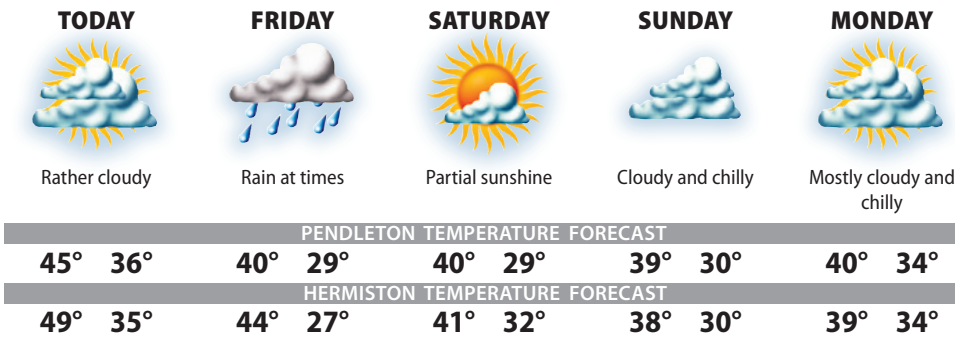
"Given the objective of creating consensus-based recommendations, the scope and depth of the measures are quite impressive, especially given the large size and diverse nature of the group," Brett Dumas, the company's environmental affairs director, said in an email.

The group agreed that restoring sustainable salmon and steelhead runs would provide jobs and tourism benefits.

It also said state officials should get more involved in regional forums that regulate the harvest of Columbia basin salmon and steelhead.

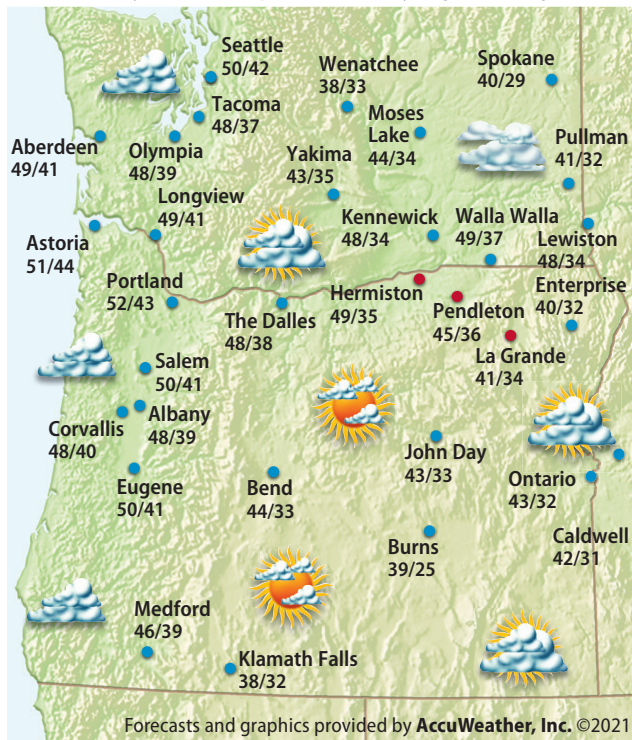
Members agreed to continue coordinating with federal authorities to ensure fishing seasons can occur for salmon and steelhead, and that Idaho should promote federal programs that protect fish from predators like sea lions that feed at the base of dams.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

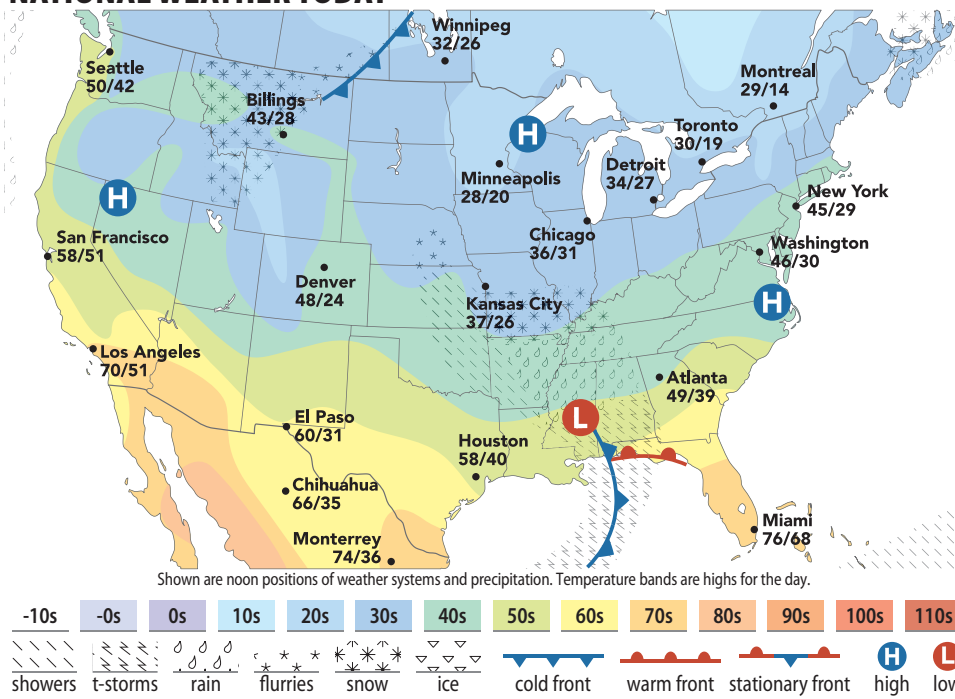
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	55°	46°	
Normals	40°	26°	
Records	70° (1914)	-6° (1942)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace		
Month to date	0.15"		
Normal month to date	0.35"		
Year to date	0.15"		
Last year to date	0.15"		
Normal year to date	0.35"		
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	56°	39°	
Normals	40°	28°	
Records	60° (2020)	-8° (1974)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace		
Month to date	0.11"		
Normal month to date	0.24"		
Year to date	0.11"		
Last year to date	Trace		
Normal year to date	0.24"		
WINDS (in mph)			
Today	Fri.		
Boardman	NNE 4-8 SSW 4-8		
Pendleton	ENE 4-8 SW 7-14		
SUN AND MOON			
Sunrise today	7:35 a.m.		
Sunset tonight	4:28 p.m.		
Moonrise today	1:18 a.m.		
Moonset today	12:23 p.m.		
New First Full Last			
Jan 12	Jan 20	Jan 28	Feb 4

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 83° in Kingsville, Texas Low -14° in Daniel, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



La Grande medical practice employee sentenced to four years in federal prison

Anndrea D. Jacobs must also pay more than \$1.2M in restitution

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — A La Grande woman was sentenced to federal prison on Tuesday, Jan. 5, for defrauding two separate employers and filing false tax returns, according to a press release from U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams.



Jacobs

Anndrea D. Jacobs, 49, a former office manager and bookkeeper for a La Grande medical practice, was sentenced to four years in federal prison and five years of supervised release after previously pleading guilty to filing a false personal income tax return, falsely impersonating an IRS employee, aggravated identity theft and bank fraud.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Ryan Bounds, formerly of Hermiston, wrote the government's sentencing recommendation for Jacobs.

"Defendant Anndrea D. Jacobs is a persistent swindler," according to Bounds'

six-page memo. "Over the course of a decade — and perhaps longer — she stole business receipts, loan proceeds, and tax payments from the medical and dental practices at which she worked, diverting more than \$1.1 million dollars from them to sustain a lavish personal lifestyle and her own failing businesses."

According to court documents, beginning on or about January 2011 and continuing until her termination in December 2015, Jacobs used her position and access to a medical practice's finances to steal money from the practice by, among other means, writing business checks to herself or for her own benefit. Jacobs used the stolen funds to make payments on personal credit cards and pay other personal expenses unrelated to the medical practice.

In an attempt to hide her actions, Jacobs prepared and maintained false business financial records, overstating expenses and estimated tax payments. She also opened a business bank account without the knowledge or consent of the medical practice owner, deposited a business check payable to the Oregon Department of Revenue into her own personal account, gave the practice owner falsified property

tax statements with total due balances of zero, and convinced the practice owner to grant her limited power of attorney to handle the practice's pending IRS tax-collection action.

Jacobs also created a fictitious identity as an IRS Taxpayer Advocate named "Linda Gibson," established a phone number and voice-mail account for the fake identity, and purported to assist the medical practice owner with his IRS tax collection issues while purporting to be "Linda Gibson."

A federal grand jury in Portland returned a 15-count indictment in 2018 charging Jacobs with wire fraud, filing false tax returns, aiding or assisting the preparation of false tax returns, falsely impersonating an employee of the U.S. and aggravated identity theft. Jacobs' pretrial release was revoked in June 2020 for committing bank fraud while embezzling from a second employer — a dental practice in Hood River — and Jacobs was indicted a second time for the new scheme.

During sentencing, U.S. District Court Chief Judge Marco A. Hernandez ordered Jacobs to pay more than \$1.2 million in restitution to two former employers, Wells Fargo Bank and the IRS.

IN BRIEF

Gray wolves delisted, remain protected in Oregon

SALEM — Gray wolves are no longer protected by the federal Endangered Species Act, but they remain protected in Oregon.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service formally removed the gray wolf species from the endangered species list in the lower 48 United States, turning over management of the species in Oregon to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The known wolf population in the state has grown from 14 in 2009 to 158 at the end of 2019, with 141 of those found in the eastern management zone.

ODFW said in a press release that the most significant change to the management of Oregon's wolves will be in the form of depredation. Lethal removal of a wolf by ODFW could be allowed in situations where nonlethal measures have proven unsuccessful.

Nonlethal and preventative measures for resolving conflicts with wolves will remain a focus for ODFW. It remains illegal to hunt or kill wolves in Oregon.

Fish and Wildlife encouraged livestock producers to visit their website to review preventative measures to limit conflicts with wolves and to sign up for updates on wolf-livestock conflicts.

— EO Media Group

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