

# NW lawmakers clash over dam conversations with Gov. Brown

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
*Capital Press*

SALEM — Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson and representatives of Oregon Gov. Kate Brown spoke for months about removing dams on the Snake River, sparking criticism from other members of Congress from the region.

“I don’t know how many times I have to say that I have not written legislation,” Simpson said in a press release. “What is available to the public is what currently exists.”

Lawmakers in Oregon and Washington accused Simpson and Brown, who supports removal of the dams, of a lack of transparency. They say it’s part of an effort to push Simpson’s \$33.5 billion plan to remove the dams, in the name of preserving salmon and benefiting agriculture, through Congress without regional support.

Brown did not respond to requests for comment.

A 397-page document containing conversations between Simpson’s office and Brown’s office were released in response to a public records request from the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental group.

“It’s clear this proposal is not just a starting point, but rather a radical and fully-baked plan he is actively seeking to put into law,” Reps. Dan Newhouse and Cathy McMorris Rodgers, of Washington, and Cliff Bentz, of Oregon, said in a press release. They asked why Simpson



Nicholas K. Geranos/Associated Press, File

**Water moves through a spillway of the Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River near Almota, Wash., on April 11, 2018. Some Republican members of Congress from the Northwest are accusing a GOP Idaho lawmaker of conducting secret negotiations with the Democratic governor of Oregon over a controversial proposal to breach four dams on the Snake River to save endangered salmon runs.**



**Bentz Brown McMorris Rodgers Newhouse Simpson**

appears to be building his plan behind closed doors, and supporting Brown’s perspective, instead of the governor of his state, Idaho’s Brad Little. “Not only does this have

harmful impacts on our regional dialogue, but it also raises questions about the viability of the ‘Four Governors’ agreement signed last year which was purportedly intended to formalize a collaborative platform to work together to address these important issues in the Northwest,” they stated.

Simpson asked how he could be working on the plan in secret

when he has been working on it for three years, speaking with everyone who would listen, including Newhouse and McMorris Rodgers.

He said he wanted as many answers as possible before going public with the concept, and he is traveling around the region taking and incorporating feedback.

“I expected pushback when this all started,” Simpson stated. “What I did not expect was colleagues with whom I have worked for a number of years on a number of issues to question my integrity, to insinuate I have lied about my motivation and in fact have nefarious intentions to — what? Sabotage the economy of my own state? I have a strong record of public service to the State of Idaho that does not need to be listed here to prove the absurdity of that notion.”

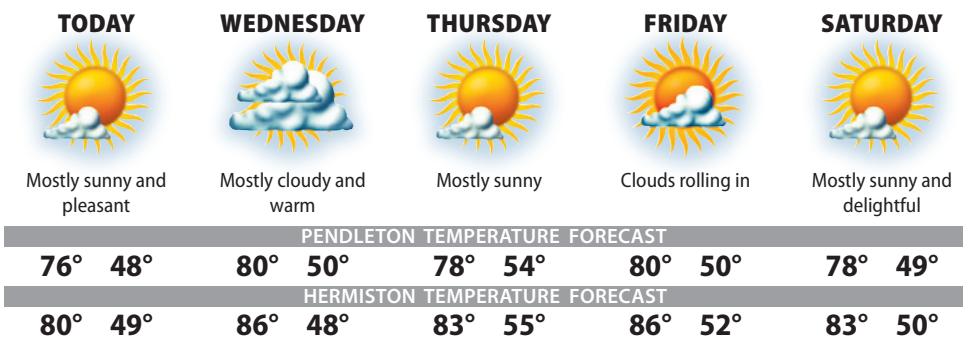
Simpson argued that “nothing undermines regional dialogue more than refusing to talk.”

Simpson called the Center for Biological Diversity one of the “extreme environmental groups” that opposes his concept, “because it would end their business model of keeping the stakeholders in the region in perennial litigation over the four Lower Snake River dams.”

“It is interesting that Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Dan Newhouse and Cliff Bentz are using this group’s work in their effort to discredit me,” Simpson stated.

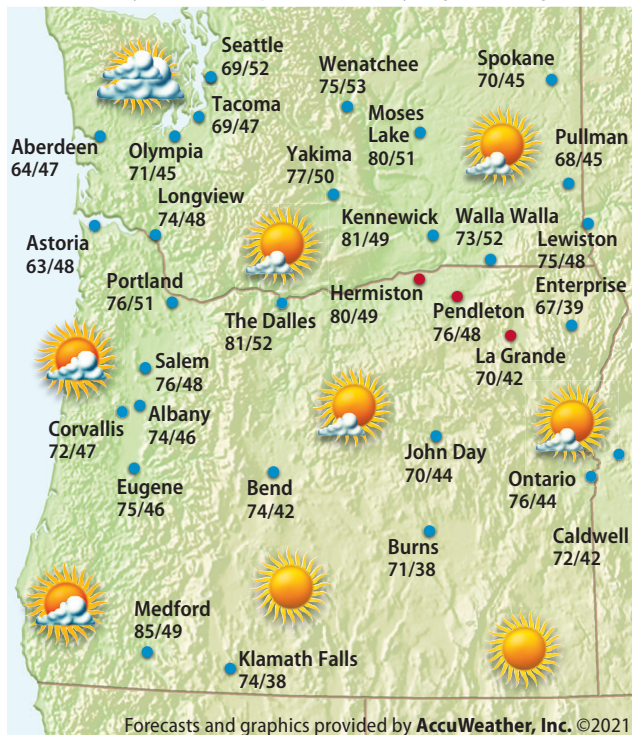
Agricultural stakeholders and power companies also oppose the plan, saying removal of the dams is a nonstarter.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST

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



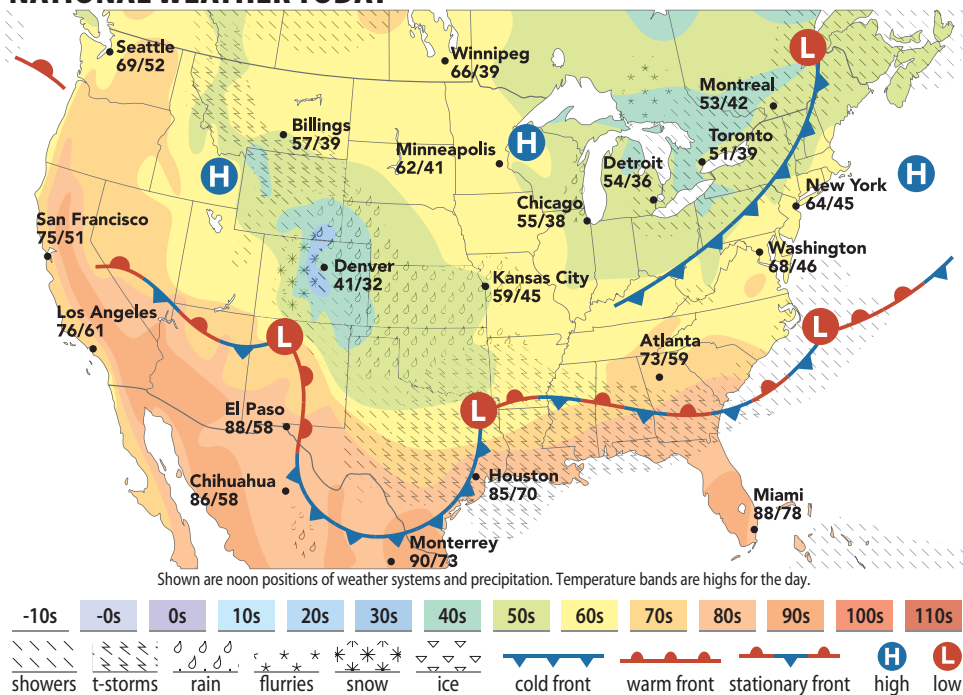
## ALMANAC

Table with weather statistics for Pendleton and Hermiston, including temperature, precipitation, and wind data.

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday’s National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 101° in Laredo, Texas Low 13° in Atlantic City, Wyo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## Oregon will allow youth overnight camps to resume this summer

By **JAMIE GOLDBERG**  
*The Oregonian*

SALEM — Oregon will allow youth overnight camps to resume this summer with significant restrictions to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

The state allowed day camps to move forward last summer during the heart of the pandemic, but banned overnight camps for school-aged children.

But the Oregon Health Authority released new guidance last month to allow both day and overnight camp operators to move forward with programming this summer.

All youth programs, including day and overnight

campers, must put together communicable disease management plans, implement enhanced cleaning standards, screen for symptoms and require anyone who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms to stay home, split participants into stable groups of no more than 30, and require that both staff and most youth participants wear masks. The state will not require children to wear masks if they can’t wear them due to medical conditions or disabilities, or they are unable to remove the masks on their own.

Overnight camp operators must all ensure there is at least 30 inches between beds and that campers sleeper head-to-toe. Camps must

limit use of cabins and tents to a single cohort of no more than 30.

Overnight camp operators are also encouraged, but not required, to restrict campers and staff from leaving and returning to camp during sessions.

Daily coronavirus cases and the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in Oregon had been rising steadily since March, but declined slightly over the past week.

More than 36% of Oregonians over 16 have been fully vaccinated, while nearly 16% have received one vaccine dose and still need to receive a second dose. The vaccines are currently only authorized for people 16 and older.

## IN BRIEF

### Oregon’s embattled state forester resigns

PORTLAND — Oregon’s state forester and the leader of the long-struggling Department of Forestry, Peter Daugherty, has resigned effective May 31.

Daugherty submitted his resignation to the state Board of Forestry, which oversees the department, *The Oregonian/OregonLive* reported on Friday, May 7.

Daugherty has led the agency since 2016, and his tenure has been marked by department financial problems, a dysfunctional relationship with the Board of Forestry and the loss of state lawmakers’ confidence. That’s all as the agency is looking for a large infusion of new resources to better respond to increasingly extreme wildfire seasons.

Daugherty’s resignation comes following a critical report from outside accounting consultant MGO, which described a fundamental lack of financial controls and oversight within the agency. The report was reviewed in a hearing this week before the Oregon Legislature’s Natural Resources subcommittee of

Ways and Means, prompting some incredulity from lawmakers.

Sen. Kathleen Taylor, D-Portland, said she believes the Legislature should be overseeing the Department of Forestry.

“The board has been given this awesome responsibility by the public ... and I’m concerned the board did not do its duties of overseeing the department,” she said.

Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene, said many of the shortcomings revealed in the report had been noted in a 2015 department audit by the Secretary of State’s Office.

“We are six years later dealing with the same damn issue and I don’t see any improvement,” he said.

In Daugherty’s resignation letter, he said he had discussed the decision with the governor’s office and decided it would be in the best interest of the newly reconstituted board and the department to select a new state forester.

— *Associated Press*



Daugherty

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