

# Record low numbers of steelhead returning to Columbia River

Just 29,000 steelhead pass Bonneville Dam since July 1

By **BRADLEY W. PARKS**  
*Oregon Public Broadcasting*

PORTLAND — Columbia River steelhead are in hot water.

The number of steelhead returning from the Pacific Ocean to the river this year is the lowest ever recorded. As of last week, just more than 29,000 steelhead passed Bonneville Dam since July 1 — that's less than half the average of the past five years.

The low number has led a coalition of conservation and fishing organizations to call for a shutdown of all recreational steelhead fishing in the Columbia Basin for the fall season.

"This is a really, really dire year for steelhead — especially wild steelhead — in the Columbia River Basin," said Rob Kirschner, legal and policy director for the Conservation Angler, which advocates for protection and restoration of wild fish in the Pacific Northwest and Kamchatka, Russia.

The coalition sent a letter to the Oregon, Washington and Idaho agencies that manage fish and wildlife requesting an immediate closure of recreational steelhead fisheries on the Columbia River, the Lower Snake River and their tributaries.

"The status of these individual populations are so low that we are trying to protect every eligible



Steve Hanks/Lewiston Tribune, File

**A group of steelhead fishermen has the Clearwater River to themselves on Feb. 4, 2014. Record low numbers of steelhead are returning to the Columbia River in 2021, prompting conservationists and anglers alike to call for a halt to recreational fishing for the sea-run fish.**

spawned," Kirschner said. "Every one of these fish counts."

Steelhead trout on the Columbia and Snake rivers are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. After hatching in freshwater rivers and streams, steelhead migrate to the ocean and return to freshwater to spawn.

The construction of hydroelectric dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers, overfishing and climate change have contributed to steelhead population declines.

This year, as much of the Northwest has faced excessive heat and

relentless drought, high water temperatures on the Columbia and Snake rivers have been detrimental to steelhead runs.

Commissioners and staff with the Oregon and Washington departments of fish and wildlife met virtually Friday, Aug. 27, to discuss options for limiting damage. Most fisheries on the Columbia require fishermen to release any steelhead they catch this fall.

"There just aren't many more places to get significant savings," said Ryan Lothrop, Washington's Columbia River fishery manager.

The groups that wrote the letter to commissioners say that's not true. They say closing recreational steelhead fisheries altogether for the fall could prevent unnecessary fish deaths — and that fishermen stand to benefit.

"[W]e simply do not believe that fishing for ESA-listed steelhead during their worst return on record is appropriate for these fish or future generations of fishermen," the letter reads. "For a species that has provided generations with memorable fishing experiences, asking fishermen to

sit a season out is reasonable and necessary considering the circumstances."

Signatories included representatives from the Native Fish Society, Friends of the Clearwater, Wild Fish Conservancy, North Umpqua Foundation and Fly Fishers International in addition to the Conservation Angler.

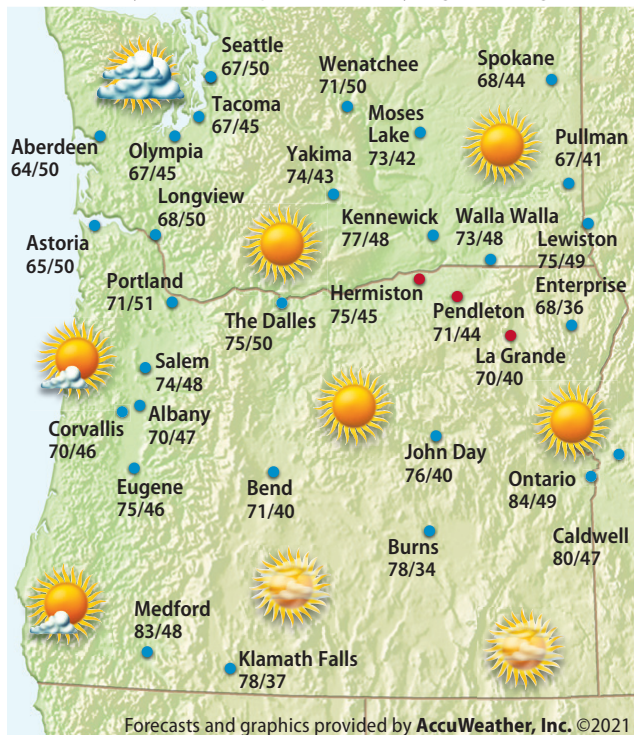
Commissioners with the Oregon and Washington department of fish and wildlife made no decisions or recommendations for recreational steelhead fisheries at the Aug. 27 meeting, but may do so soon.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Pleasant with plenty of sunshine	Pleasant with plenty of sun	Nice with plenty of sun	Pleasant with plenty of sunshine	Sunny and pleasant
<b>71° 44°</b>	<b>73° 45°</b>	<b>78° 50°</b>	<b>82° 56°</b>	<b>83° 60°</b>
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
<b>75° 45°</b>	<b>77° 45°</b>	<b>82° 47°</b>	<b>86° 51°</b>	<b>88° 60°</b>
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				

## OREGON FORECAST

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



## ALMANAC

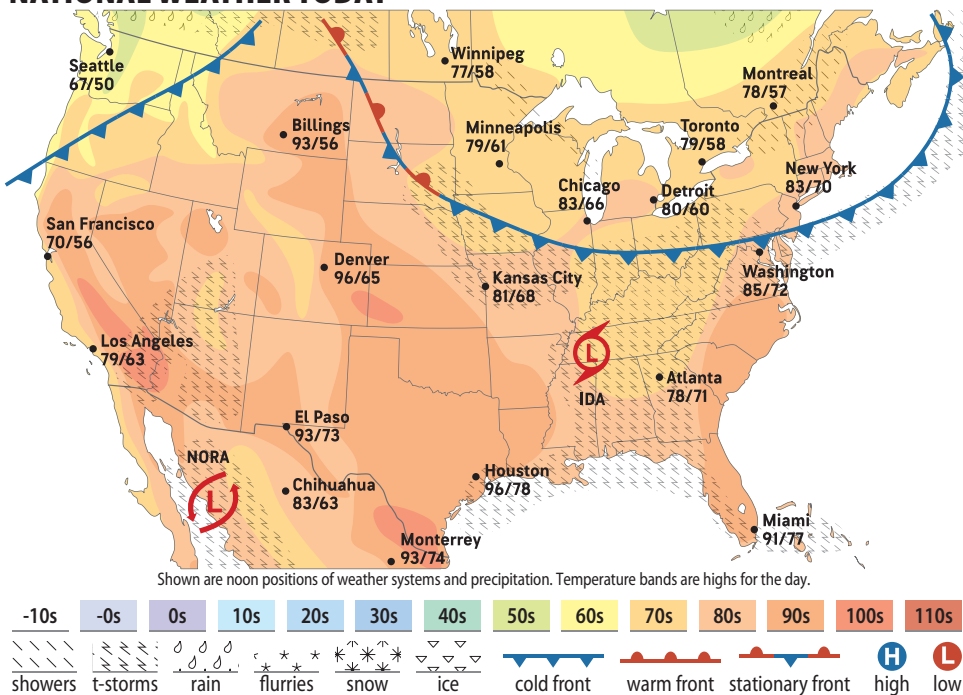
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	81°	57°
Normals	85°	55°
Records	103° (1967)	37° (1924)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.01"	
Normal month to date	0.33"	
Year to date	4.37"	
Last year to date	8.68"	
Normal year to date	8.64"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	83°	57°
Normals	87°	53°
Records	102° (2007)	39° (1965)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	Trace	
Normal month to date	0.16"	
Year to date	1.93"	
Last year to date	1.66"	
Normal year to date	5.30"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	WSW 7-14	WNW 3-6
Boardman	WSW 7-14	WNW 3-6
Pendleton	W 8-16	WNW 6-12
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	6:15 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	7:35 p.m.	
Moonrise today	none	
Moonset today	3:53 p.m.	
New	First	Full
Sep 6	Sep 13	Sep 20
		Sep 28

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 111° in El Centro, Calif. Low 23° in Daniel, Wyo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Officials warn against horse dewormer for COVID-19

Stores report uptick in interest

By **EMRY DINMAN**  
*Walla Walla Union-Bulletin*

WALLA WALLA — "You are not a horse. You are not a cow. Seriously, y'all. Stop it."

This was the warning issued by the U.S. Federal Drug Administration on Saturday, Aug. 21, after a spike in reports that Americans are using ivermectin, an anti-parasitic drug commonly used to deworm horses and cows, in a misguided attempt to treat COVID-19.

"The FDA has received multiple reports of patients who have required medical support and been hospitalized after self-medicating with ivermectin intended for horses," the federal agency wrote in a consumer report last week.

Walla Walla Valley businesses on both sides of the Washington-Oregon border have reported that residents here also are buying the oral formulation — there are injectable and pour-on forms as well — of the deworming drug for off-label purposes.

Overhanging shelves stocked with the anti-parasitic drug in Walla Walla's Tractor Supply Company is a sign warning customers against using the drug to treat COVID-19.

"We have had people call asking for us to give dosage amounts for nonanimals," said a worker at Milton-Freewater Ranch and Home who asked not to be named. "Basically so they could use it on themselves."

Businesses could face legal liability if they knowingly provided ivermectin to a customer

who intended to use it on themselves, the worker said.

Other businesses stated that, while they wouldn't advise anyone on how to use the dewormer on themselves, they couldn't stop customers from purchasing the drug.

"I think it's stupid they're doing that," said the owner of Bordertown in Milton-Freewater, who also declined to be named for this story. "But that's their deal, not mine."

Interest in the off-label use of ivermectin has resulted in a spike of calls to poison control centers throughout the country. In 2020, the Washington Poison Center received around nine calls for ivermectin, said Dr. Scott Phillips, medical director for the WAPC. So far in 2021, the agency has received 26 calls, nearly three times as many, including 10 just in August.

Phillips is quick to note that, while the increase in calls is sizable, the overall call volume still is very low. Of the calls the agency has received regarding ivermectin, around one-third were simply calls for drug information, not reporting a poisoning.

"We really haven't had any life-threatening reactions yet, but that doesn't mean that you can't," Phillips said.

Ivermectin is not an anti-viral drug, according to the FDA, and oral tablets only are approved for human use at very specific doses for some parasitic worms. Taking a large dose of the drug can cause serious harm, the FDA warns, and veterinary formulations of ivermectin are very different from the drugs prescribed to human patients.

## IN BRIEF

### More children hospitalized in Oregon with COVID-19

SALEM — Oregon health officials have seen an increase in children with COVID-19 cases severe enough to require hospitalization and said it mirrors a national trend. State health officials said nine babies, toddlers or preschoolers were hospitalized in Oregon last week according to the state, plus one child aged 6 to 11 and one child aged 12 to 17.

Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state epidemiologist who trained in pediatrics, said in a statement "it's especially disheartening when there is a sharp rise in serious cases among the

youngest people in our community."

He urged everyone who can get vaccinated to do so and asked Oregonians to wear masks, to help protect those who cannot get the shot including young children.

"New hospital admission rates for kids due to COVID-19 in the U.S. have reached the highest levels since tracking pediatric cases started about a year ago," Sidelinger said. "The delta variant is more contagious than previous variants — and likely is causing more severe disease in children, as it is in adults — and is leading to a surge in pediatric hospitalizations nationwide."

— EO Media Group

**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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