

# Regulators OK \$7.5 million for water projects

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

SALEM — Oregon regulators authorized about \$7.5 million for water projects, though much of the grant funding was awarded provisionally until more state money becomes available.

The Oregon Water Resources Commission unanimously voted to immediately grant \$1.8 million for a Deschutes County irrigation modernization project and a Jackson County water supply protection project.

The commission also approved \$5.7 million in grant funding for four other projects, though the funding can't be disbursed until the state government raises money by selling lottery revenue bonds in May.

The state only has about \$3.2 million remaining in its water supply development fund after a lottery bond sale was canceled earlier this year due to a shortfall in lottery revenues caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

However, lawmakers authorized another \$30 million for water project grants, with funding becoming available when \$15 million in lottery bonds are sold next spring and another \$15 million are sold in the spring of 2023.

The delay between the authorization for the projects and the time money will be available has raised questions about potential cost overruns in light of inflation and supply shortages.

"That is something we hear from time to time from grantees experiencing especially in recent times increasing costs," said Becky Williams, grant program manager for the Oregon Water Resources Department, which oversees the program, at the commission's meeting Friday, Dec. 3.

Though the agency does have a process for project managers to request additional grant funds, such an increase would still require another authorization from the commission, Williams said.

Staff at OWRD have been telling applicants to consider the possibility of inflation during their budget-setting process, said Kim Fritz-Ogren, OWRD's manager of planning, collaboration and investments.

"We have been really emphasizing and giving that advice to folks," she said.

Commissioner Joe Moll, executive director of the McKenzie River Trust nonprofit, suggested OWRD should have the authority to increase grants modestly, by 5-10%, to account for inflation without having to return for commission approval.

"I would certainly advocate for that kind of discretion," Moll said.

The commission voted unanimously to recommend that OWRD explore the possibility of making such adjustments.

"We would need clear delegation of authority from the commission," Fritz-Ogren said. "Then we would



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press, File  
**A center pivot irrigation system sprinkles water on alfalfa growing in Oregon. The Oregon Water Resources Commission on Friday, Dec. 3, 2021, approved \$7.5 million in grant funding for six Oregon water projects, though much of the funds won't become available until next spring.**

develop policies and procedures for how we would make those decisions."

Since the water supply grant program became operational in 2016, the commission has authorized 28 projects totaling \$28.7 million.

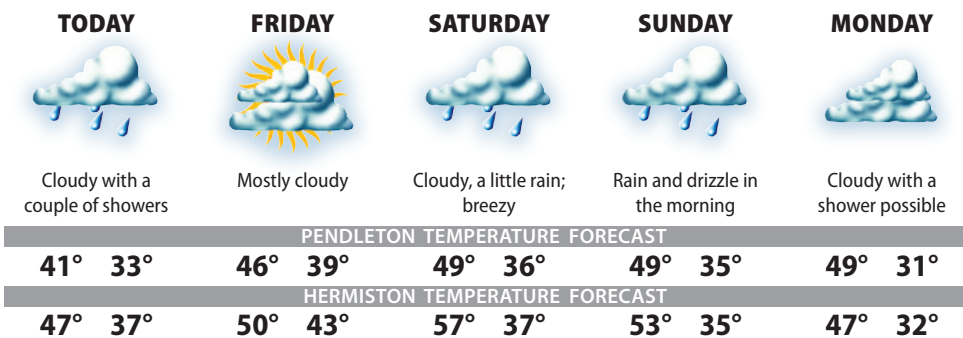
Following is the grant funding approved for this year's slate of six projects:

- \$530,000 for an irrigation ditch piping project in Wallowa County proposed by the Trout Unlimited nonprofit and a local cattle company.
- Nearly \$3 million to replace an outdated water treatment facility in John Day, with a new plant that allows wastewater to be reused.
- \$1.4 million for an irrigation ditch piping project proposed by

Tumalo Irrigation District, which has a total cost of more than \$6 million.

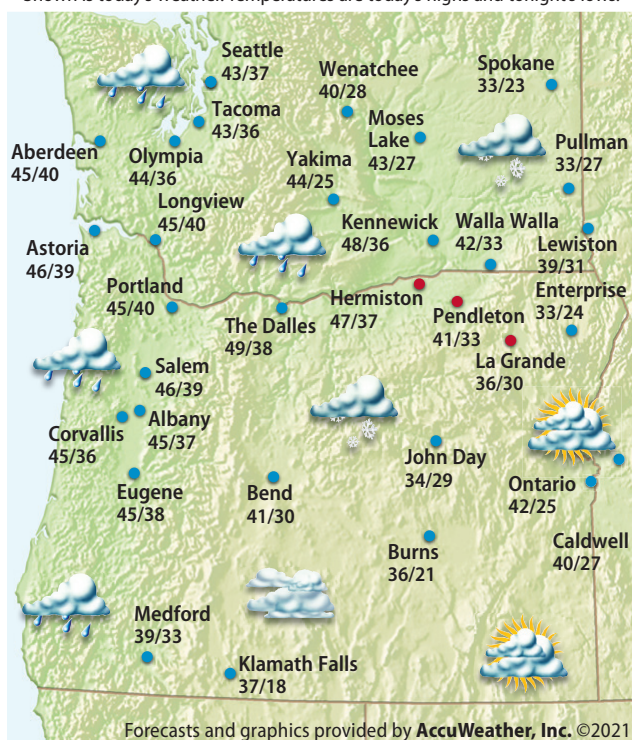
- \$2 million for an irrigation ditch piping project in Deschutes and Crook counties proposed by a conservation group and local irrigation districts.
- \$93,500 to create a fish passage, allowing for stream channel habitat restoration in Lake County.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST

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



## ALMANAC

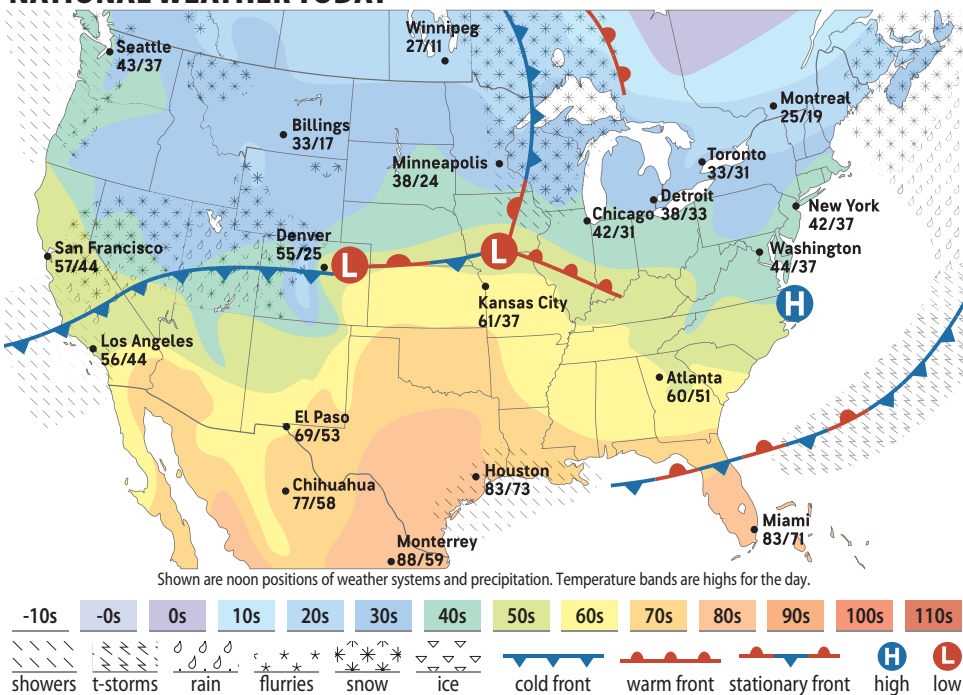
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	48°	35°
Normals	42°	29°
Records	67° (1915)	-11° (1972)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.05"	
Month to date	0.24"	
Normal month to date	0.36"	
Year to date	7.62"	
Last year to date	12.26"	
Normal year to date	12.09"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	53°	39°
Normals	43°	29°
Records	72° (2015)	-10° (1972)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace	
Month to date	0.04"	
Normal month to date	0.25"	
Year to date	5.11"	
Last year to date	3.94"	
Normal year to date	7.77"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Fri.	
Boardman	WSW 8-16	SW 7-14
Pendleton	WSW 8-16	WSW 8-16
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	7:24 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	4:11 p.m.	
Moonrise today	12:13 p.m.	
Moonset today	10:32 p.m.	

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 87° in Key West, Fla. Low -19° in Wakefield, Mich.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## Road signs aim to improve winter safety

The Observer

BAKER CITY — The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has installed new, brightly colored signs at several road junctions to remind travelers that some routes are passable only to snowmobiles and other specialized vehicles during winter.

Although signs have been posted on these roads in the past, stating that they weren't maintained for winter travel, drivers have continued to get their vehicles mired in deep snow occasionally.

"The driving factor pushing us towards installing extra signage at these locations has been the recent uptick with search and rescues involving Wallowa, Union, Grant and Baker counties," said Dan Story, roads manager for the south zone of the WWNF. "We carefully considered the language, colors, and placement of these signs to help more people understand that wheeled vehicles cannot safely pass through

these roads while they are covered with snow. Signs are bright yellow or orange to get the driver's attention before entry."

Signs have been installed on the Wallowa Mountain Loop Road at 39 Road and Highway 86 junction and 39 Road and Salt Creek Summit; 3955 Road just north of the 39 Road junction on the Imnaha River; 73 Road (Anthony Lakes Highway) at the town of Granite, a four-way intersection, and Grant County Route 24 junction; and 73 Road (Anthony Lakes Highway) at the 43 Junction (the road to Grande Ronde Lake).

Story said an increase in search and rescue calls can be partially attributed to increased winter travel through the mountains, failures of GPS directions to account for winter conditions, improvements in snowmobile grooming technology, making snowmobile routes look passable when before they would have been buried under several feet of snow, more miles of groomed routes

that connect with state highways, and, in many cases, a lack of preparation for backcountry winter travel by motorists.

The new signs will provide valuable and potentially life-saving information to motorists before they attempt to drive wheeled vehicles over impassable routes and roads on the way to popular destinations, Story said.

"We carefully considered the language, colors, and placement of these signs to help more people understand that wheeled vehicles cannot safely pass through these roads while they are covered with snow," he said. "Signs are bright yellow or orange to get the driver's attention before entry."

Road managers will uncover these warning signs when snow conditions become impassable this winter, maximizing the time that roads remain open to wheeled vehicles. Signs will be removed or covered after snowmelt allows reopening of the roads.

## IN BRIEF

### ODFW reports five goats killed in Elgin wolf attacks

ELGIN — Five goats were killed by at least one wolf in the Elgin area during a two-day period in late November, according to a report from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The first death was reported Nov. 27, when the owner reported that morning the animals had broken out of their night pen within a 44-acre private pasture. One goat was found dead and one was injured.

The morning of Nov. 28, four more goats in the Elgin area were found dead and two more were injured. The five dead goats, which each weighed 30 to 150 pounds, were two adult females, two yearling females and one kid.

ODFW determined wolf attacks were responsible for the goat deaths and injuries.

"The size, location and severity of injuries are consistent with wolf depredations," according to the ODFW report.

GPS location data indicated a radio collared wolf was at or near the site of both attacks.

Both wolf attack events are attributed to the Balloon Tree Pack, according to the report.

The Balloon Tree Pack was responsible for killing 12 ewes and injuring two guard dogs protecting sheep north of Elgin earlier this fall, according to ODFW investigations.

That pack's breeding pair produced pups for the first time in 2020, with at least three surviving through the end of that year.

An employee of a sheep rancher found three dead adult ewes on Sept. 29 on a private, timbered pasture, according to ODFW.

Officials from ODFW and from the federal USDA Wildlife Service agency arrived on Sept. 30 and found four more dead ewes.

Wildlife Service employees then found three more dead ewes on Oct. 1, and one dead and one injured ewe on Oct. 4. Workers euthanized the injured ewe that day.

— 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.

# EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211  
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211  
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed major holidays

EastOregonian.com

In the App Store:



East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.

Copyright © 2021, EO Media Group

### Circulation Dept.

For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops or delivery concerns call 800-781-3214

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings (cover price)
EZPay	\$10.75/month	50 percent
52 weeks	\$135	42 percent
26 weeks	\$71	39 percent
13 weeks	\$37	36 percent

### Single copy price:

\$1.50 Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

### ADVERTISING

Regional Sales Director (Eastside) EO Media Group:

• Karrine Brogotti  
541-963-3161 • kbrogotti@eomediagroup.com

Multimedia Consultants:

541-564-4531  
• Melissa Barnes  
541-966-0827 mbarnes@eastoregonina.com  
• Audra Workman  
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

Business Office

• Dayle Stinson  
541-966-0824 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

### Classified & Legal Advertising

Classified advertising: 541-564-4538  
Legal advertising: 541-966-0824  
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legals@eastoregonian.com

### NEWS

• To submit news tips and press releases: call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com  
• To submit community events, calendar items, engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email community@eastoregonian.com, call 541-966-0818 or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements.  
• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips, email sports@eastoregonian.com.

### COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Commercial Print Manager: Holly Rouska  
541-617-7839 • hrouska@eomediagroup.com