

# Contract awarded for forest management on Mount Emily

By DICK MASON *The Observer*

LA GRANDE — A controversial plan for forest management in the Red Apple portion of the Mount Emily Recreation Area will go forward, but over a longer timeline.

The Union County Board of Commissioners voted Jan. 5 to award ReedCo Forestry a contract for the project, which will include some logging in the 300-acre Red Apple area of MERA. The contract will pay the Union County-based business \$500 an acre for its work.

The Red Apple area is filled with popular trails for hiking and mountain biking and other nonmotorized activities. Its users have expressed concern that while fire prevention and forest health are paramount, the proposed project could damage the area's trails and landscape.

The contract calls for ReedCo to do most of the thinning and removal of fuels this winter and in the winter of 2022-23. The original plans were for it all to be done this winter. The bidding process for the work was postponed to allow Union County officials more time to take public input on the project.

Sean Chambers, Union County's parks manager, said he will meet with Jesse Reed, the owner of ReedCo Forestry, to discuss plans for his company's work, which could start as soon as this week.

Chambers said the two-year timeframe will reduce the negative impacts of the project. He said it is best to do forest management work in the winter, when the ground is harder due to freezing conditions and there is snow cover. This



Dick Mason/The Observer, File

**ReedCo Forestry of Union County on Feb. 2, 2021, works to create a firebreak at the Mount Emily Recreation Area near La Grande. The Union County Board of Commissioners in early January awarded the company the contract to do forest management work that will include some logging in the 300-acre Red Apple area of MERA.**

reduces the chance of equipment damaging the land.

"Having an extended work window will allow for protection of trails and allow for open public access during the spring and summer without interference with any operations," he said.

ReedCo Forestry was the lone bidder for the project. The company is familiar with MERA.

In 2021, it created a 6-mile firebreak along MERA's Mainline Trail.

Chambers said ReedCo did an excellent job of creating the firebreak, adding the forest management project will be much different because the firebreak work involved clearcutting but the work in the Red Apple area will not.

He said trail corridors of the Red Apple, Rock Garden, Lower Hotshot and MERA loop trails will be flagged to help ReedCo identify them, avoid damaging them and limit the crossing of them.

Chambers said any damage that

may occur will be repaired by the county. He added that in the interest of safety, there will be some closures during the work.

"These closures will be limited and may allow for weekend access, something to be coordinated with the contractor," he said.

The project area — 300 acres — is about 8% of MERA's total acreage of 3,700 acres.

Forrest Warren, a member of MERA's advisory committee, said he does not like the idea that

the management project will be completed over two winters because it means the Red Apple trails may be tied up over a longer span. Still, he sees an upside because the work will be done when there is frozen ground and snow cover.

"It will be a lot better on trails," he said. "There will be a lot more no-trace logging."

Warren, echoing a concern expressed by many in late 2021, said he wishes more public input had been given serious consideration before the decision to move forward on the forest management plan was made, but he said he is impressed with Chambers' concern for MERA.

"Sean has the best interest of MERA at heart," he said.

In his address to the Union County Board of Commissioners on Jan. 5 before its vote, Chambers noted there were a number of meetings during the last two years where plans for forest management work at Red Apple were discussed, including a board of commissioners work session in August 2020 that was followed by a field review at the Owsley Canyon Trailhead not long after that meeting, as well as a field review in November 2021.

The parks coordinator believes the county has been transparent about the development of its plans for a forest management project meant to protect a cherished portion of the Mount Emily Recreation Area.

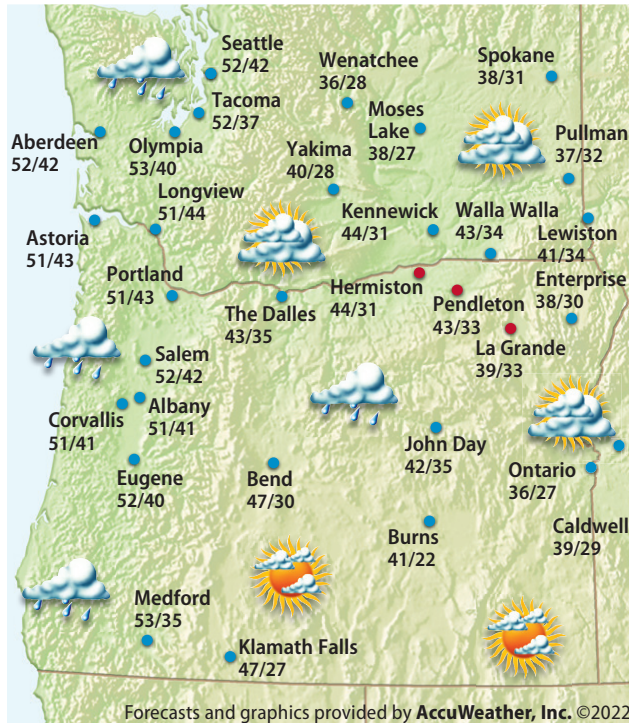
"We all appreciate what a gem this is for our community," Chambers said, "and we are intent on making it shine brighter."

## Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
A little afternoon rain; cooler	Fog early, then cloudy	Some brightening	Mostly cloudy and chilly	Mostly cloudy and milder
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
43° 33°	43° 30°	40° 26°	38° 30°	50° 40°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
44° 31°	43° 32°	43° 29°	42° 31°	51° 38°

## 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	56°	46°
Normals	42°	28°
Records	61° (2021)	-19° (1909)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date 1.33"  
Normal month to date 0.63"  
Year to date 1.33"  
Last year to date 0.41"  
Normal year to date 0.63"

**HERMISTON** through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	45°	34°
Normals	43°	29°
Records	67° (2021)	-11° (2017)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date 0.77"  
Normal month to date 0.47"  
Year to date 0.77"  
Last year to date 0.32"  
Normal year to date 0.47"

**WINDS** (in mph)

	Today	Fri.
Boardman	SSE 4-8	N 4-8
Pendleton	SSW 6-12	N 4-8

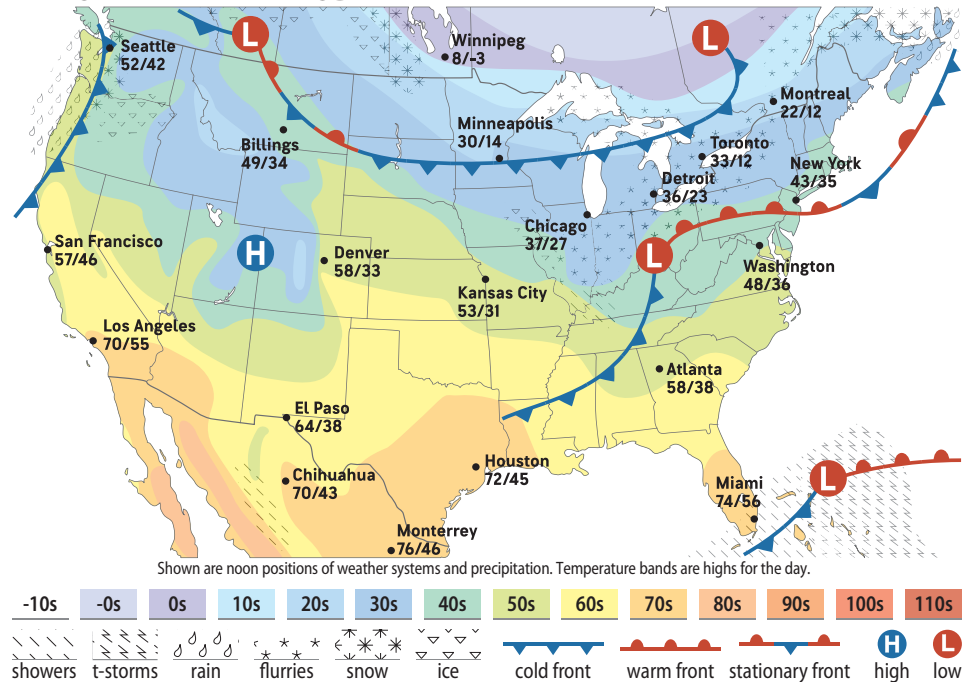
**SUN AND MOON**  
Sunrise today 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset tonight 4:35 p.m.  
Moonrise today 1:10 p.m.  
Moonset today 4:07 a.m.

Full Last New First  
Jan 17 Jan 25 Jan 31 Feb 8

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 81° in Santa Monica, Calif. Low -25° in Sebomook, Maine

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## Fishtrap to explore drought in the West

Wallowa County Chieftain

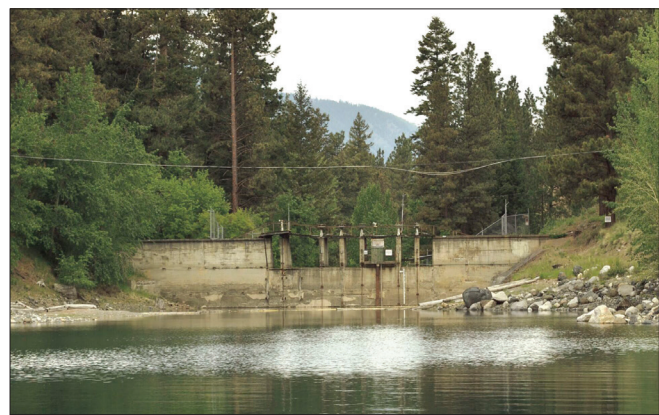
ENTERPRISE — Fishtrap Director Mike Midlo said it's time to talk about the drought in the West as a community.

Fishtrap will host Winter Fishtrap: Drought, an online conference on two consecutive Saturdays, Jan. 22 and 29, at 10 a.m., according to a press release. Registration costs \$50, or \$45 for Fishtrappers. Student registration is \$20.

"As of August 2021, 99% of the United States west of the Rockies was in drought, as severe a measurement as any in the historical record," Midlo quoted Sierra Magazine.

But how did we get here? And where do we go from here?

Winter Fishtrap will explore drought as it relates to the environment, the economy, socioeconomic justice, cultures and the ultimate future of the American West. Guests include rural land use and water policy expert Hannah Gosnel, director of



Wallowa County Chieftain, File

**The Wallowa Lake Dam was well on its way to holding a full lake in June 2021 despite the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners declaring a drought. Winter Fishtrap on Jan. 22 and 29, 2022, will host an online conference on the drought in the West.**

the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute; Erica Fleishman of Oregon State University; research fellow Kyle Hogrefe; Wallowa County rancher Dan Probert; and Katy Nesbitt, who will lead a panel discussion from local and regional experts.

On Jan. 22, there will be an online discussion with Fleishman on the causes and consequences of aridification across the West and some of

the surprising ways in which natural and agricultural systems can adapt to these trends.

On Jan. 29, the panel will discuss agriculture, timber and tourism, as Nesbitt moderates, with Gosnel, Hogrefe and Probert in addition to local farmers, ranchers and regional experts.

Learn more about Winter Fishtrap: Drought and register at Fishtrap.org.

## IN BRIEF

### Dead wolf found in Wallowa County likely shot, OSP says

WALLOWA — Oregon State Police are seeking information about a dead wolf found in Wallowa County that apparently was shot.

A resident reported the wolf carcass to state police about 10:36 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 8. The wolf was along Parsnip Creek Road about 6 miles southeast of Wallowa. The wolf, which was fitted with a tracking collar, is a 2-year-old female that had dispersed from the Chesnimnus Pack, according to a press release from OSP.

The initial investigation showed the wolf had been fatally shot.

Oregon State Police is urging anyone with information regarding this case to call the Oregon State Police TIP line at 1-800-452-7888, \*677 or email at TIP@state.or.us.



Oregon State Police/Contributed Photo

**This 2-year-old wolf was found dead on Saturday, Jan. 8, 2022, apparently shot, along Parsnip Creek Road about 6 miles southeast of Wallowa.**

Reference case No. SP22006179.  
—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 © 2022, 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:**  
• Angel Aguilar  
541-564-4531 • aaguilar@hermistonherald.com  
• 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