

# Cost overruns hit Treasure Valley Reload Center

By BRAD CARLSON  
Capital Press



Anderson Perry Inc./Contributed Image

An artist's rendering of Treasure Valley Reload Center as originally designed. It is under construction near Nyssa and costing about \$9.8 million more than the original \$35 million budget.

NYSSA — Building the Treasure Valley Reload Center to original design specifications would cost almost one-third more than originally estimated, prompting proponents to scale back the project.

The truck-to-train loading facility to be built north of Nyssa would ship onions and other commodities east to major markets. Southeast Oregon and southwest Idaho produce about a quarter of the country's fall storage onions.

The 2017 Legislature approved a \$26 million ConnectOregon grant from lottery-backed bonds. Legislators this year approved a \$3 million grant, from federal coronavirus recovery funds, to the city of Nyssa, for a water line extension for the reload center and future industrial development.

Greg Smith, Malheur County Economic Development director and officer of the separate Malheur County Development Corp., said the project is about \$9.8 million more than the original \$35 million budget. The original plan called for opening

nearly 290 acres of industrially zoned ground for development.

He said an overarching solution is to reduce the budget and features "from a Cadillac to a Chevrolet" including eliminating "unnecessary wants."

Cost overruns include about \$5 million in unexpected necessary excavation to deal with excess ground-

water, a price from lone building-construction bidder TCG Construction, Meridian, Idaho, that was about \$2.9 million above expectations, and steel and asphalt costs driven by high inflation.

Smith said construction bidding interest has dropped due to development in southwest Idaho and high transportation costs. The

corporation will solicit new bids.

About \$3 million could be saved by delaying construction of one of the three rail spurs for three years, he said. And \$1 million could be saved by using a septic waste system instead of a lagoon system serving several companies.

Smith said \$2 million could be saved by eliminat-

ing all access roads except the one to the reload center. Industrial park roads could be added later as funding becomes available.

Substantial excess groundwater lies in the path of planned rail spurs. An engineering solution that uses riprap rock to displace water and add support strength is expected to reduce remediation cost by about \$1 million, he said.

Another \$300,000 could be saved by reducing office square footage.

"We don't need \$10 million, we need \$3 million," Smith said.

The development corporation is inquiring with legislators and state economic development unit Business Oregon about potential solutions.

Smith said potential funding sources are the Legislative Emergency Board, which meets between sessions, and the state Special Public Works Fund that provides low-cost financing to municipalities.

A Special Public Works loan would be repaid by Malheur County or Nyssa, depending on which applies. He said it would be backed by the development corporation,

either through the 65 acres it has acquired or future sale of industrial park lots.

Malheur County Judge Dan Joyce, who heads the commission-like county court, said commissioners likely would be hesitant to borrow. The county at the outset did not plan to spend money on the project but ended up doing so to help the corporation purchase the site.

But the county supports the economic development project "and would like to see it come to fruition," he said.

Nyssa City Manager Jim Maret could not be reached immediately.

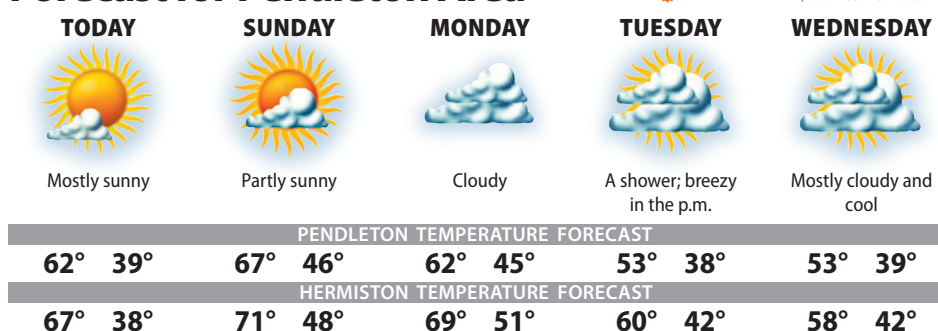
Site work started in October, triggering state funding. Steel for the building is on-site. Smith said rail will be placed starting by late this month or in early May.

"Our goal is to ship onions by Oct. 1, and as of right now we are within that schedule," he said.

A less expensive building is an option, though capacity to place and briefly store onions is important to handling efficiency, Smith said.

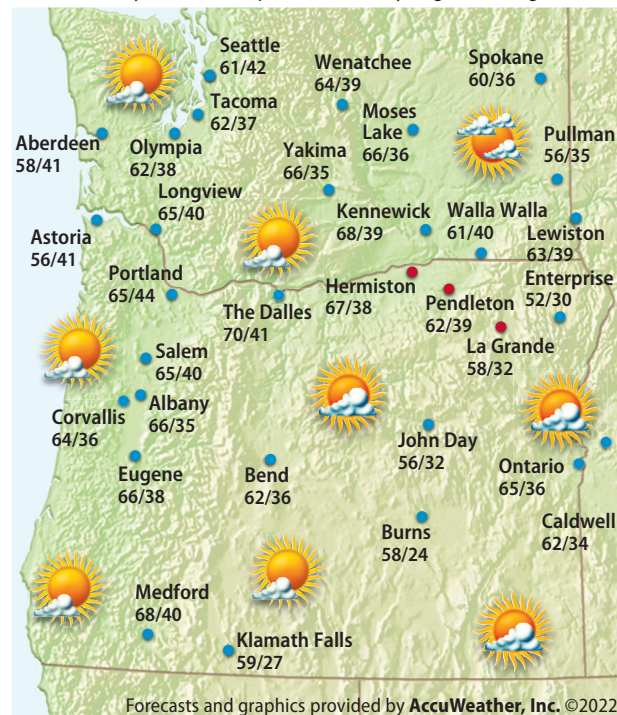
Reload Center features would be added as funding becomes available, he said.

## 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	59°	33°
Normals	65°	41°
Records	95° (1934)	29° (2006)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace
Month to date	1.06"
Normal month to date	0.96"
Year to date	4.66"
Last year to date	3.34"
Normal year to date	5.03"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	65°	32°
Normals	69°	40°
Records	94° (1934)	25° (1951)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	1.37"
Normal month to date	0.57"
Year to date	3.32"
Last year to date	1.73"
Normal year to date	3.34"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Sun.
Boardman	WSW 6-12	SW 4-8
Pendleton	W 7-14	WNW 4-8

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	5:56 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:52 p.m.
Moonrise today	3:05 a.m.
Moonset today	11:48 a.m.

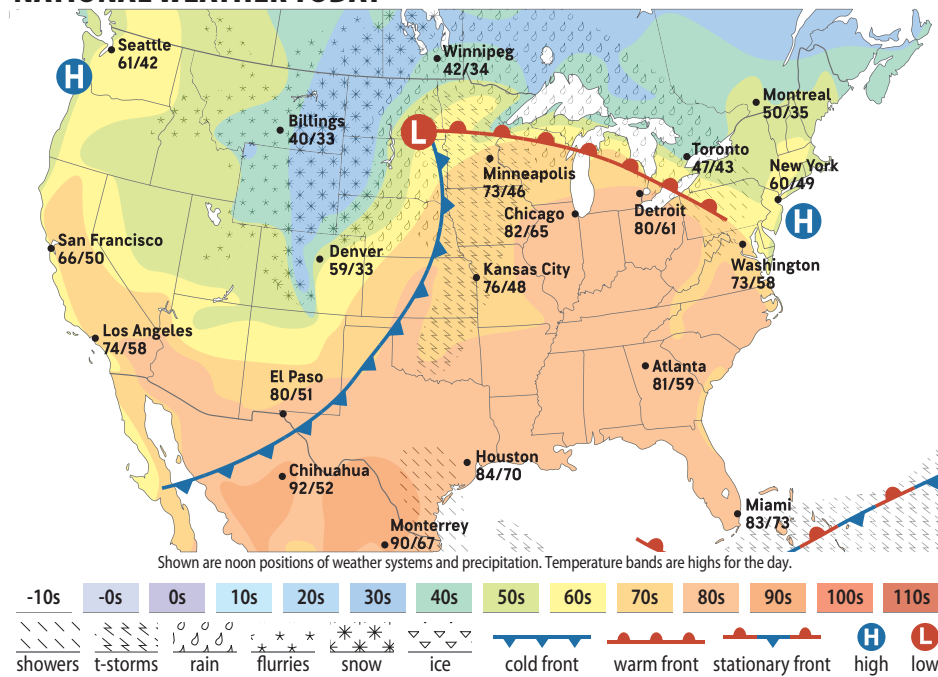


## NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 101° in Pecos, Texas Low 18° in Clear Creek, Calif.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



## Baker City students meet K9 officer

By IAN CRAWFORD  
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Local elementary students in the Friday Academy program had the chance to meet Capa, the Baker City Police Department's drug-detecting dog, the morning of April 15.

The students gathered at Geiser-Pollman Park to meet not only Capa, but also his handler, Sgt. Wayne Chastain.

"Why do we need dogs?" Chastain asked the students.

After a few odd guesses and anecdotes, he eventually gestured to his own nose in an overt hint.

"Yes! Their nose! A dog's sense of smell is five million times stronger than ours," Chastain said.

The students learned about K9 training, the importance of Capa's sense of smell when detecting drugs and also how other dogs are trained for finding contraband in jail, chasing down perpetrators and otherwise keeping the community safe.

One by one the children were invited to gently pet Capa, a German shepherd and Belgian Malinois mix, as he busied himself gnawing on a braided toy, which by the end of the session was leaning toward replacement.

"See that? This was new this morning," Chastain said.

Accompanying the Friday Academy students were



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Sgt. Wayne Chastain of the Baker City Police Department is the handler for Capa, the department's drug-detecting dog.

several chaperones, as well as Robin Maille, family and community health mentor for the Oregon State University Extension Service in Baker County, which arranged the event, and Katie Hauser, OSU Extension's 4-H program coordinator.

OSU's outreach specifically sets out to help students in need of additional support in matters of classwork and personal skills, as well as giving them extracurricular experiences such as museum visits and even yoga classes.

"Students are invited based on academic needs, and

we provide a delicate balance of academics and fun to keep kids coming," said Angela Lattin, director of the Baker Early Learning Center.

The Friday Academy meets each Friday and largely consist of students from second through fourth grade, although the program isn't limited to those grades.

Students enrolled are usually recommended by their teachers. The program runs through May 13, with a final trip for the school year at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

## IN BRIEF

### Pendleton turkey hunters rescued after vehicle gets stuck in the snow

BAKER COUNTY — Members of the Baker County Sheriff's Office's Search and Rescue team helped two turkey hunters from Pendleton after they spent the night in the Wallowa Mountains when their car got stuck in the snow earlier this week.

Curtis Davidson and Missy Hull were in good conditions when rescuers arrived Tuesday morning, April 19, according to a press release from the sheriff's office.

The pair had gone hunting on Monday, April 18, near Balm Creek Reservoir, several miles north of Keating Valley.

While driving, their Subaru became high-centered on snow. They sent a message

to a friend, who contacted other friends but none were available to help.

Davidson and Hull had food and water and spent the night in their car.

On the morning of April 19 their friend called police, and Davidson and Hull were able to call 911, allowing dispatchers to pinpoint their location via GPS.

Sheriff Travis Ash deployed search and rescue volunteers at about 8:27 a.m. April 19. They drove a side-by-side all-terrain vehicle and helped Davidson and Hull free their car and return to a main road.

The sheriff's office reminds hunters and other recreationists to prepare for a wide range of weather and road conditions, and to notify others of where you're going and when you plan to return.

—EO Media Group

# 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.

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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

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