

Death:

Continued from Page A1

According to a statement March 31 by the OSP, McDowell spent his career at OSP as a member of the Patrol Division, the Fish and Wildlife Division and as a K-9 handler working in the John Day and La Grande areas.

"He was respected by all and especially those he has worked so closely with throughout the years," the statement said.

The State Medical Examiner's Office has determined the manner of death to be a suicide. He was on duty at the time of his death, the statement said.

Fish said McDowell has lived in Joseph "many years" and has family in the area.

Units from Enterprise Ambulance and the Joseph Fire Department also responded, as did three Enterprise Police Department officers, a total of three WCSO units and three OSP troopers. North College Street between East Joseph Avenue and East Williams



Oregon State Police troopers walk up to a Wallowa County Sheriff's Office pickup Tuesday, March 29, 2022, as part of an investigation into a shooting death at a residence along North College Street in Joseph.

Avenue was blocked to traffic while the investigation was underway.

OSP Superintendent Terri Davie issued a statement in Fish's release.

"Thank you to our partner agencies for their assis-

tance, compassion and professionalism during this tragic time," Davie said.

"Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to the family, friends, coworkers and responding emergency personnel."

Davie activated OSP's Critical Incident Response Team to provide peer support to other officers who have been affected by the tragedy.

"The OSP thanks the members of the public and

other public safety partners for their support during this difficult time," Davie said in a separate statement. "Law Enforcement Officers have some of the same struggles

as the rest of us and need help too. Mental Health is just as important as physical health in Law Enforcement. It has only been since 2018 that The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017 was signed into law recognizing that law enforcement agencies need and deserve support in their ongoing efforts to protect the mental health and well-being of their employees."

Assistance in the investigation was provided by officers and investigators from the EPD, the Pendleton Police Department, OSP and the Crime Lab.

The OSP statement urged anyone who knows of someone struggling with mental health to speak up, ask for help or reach out to professionals. Resources available to include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline that provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources at 800-273-8255. Crisis Text Line is a texting service for emotional crisis support. Text HELLO to 741741. It is free, available 24/7, and confidential.

Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Dam:

Continued from Page A1

wait and make sure we have our money before we get started."

He said the district board has agreed to hold off spending until it actually receives the lottery money and determines how to make up the difference.

Seeking extra funding

"We're going to still have the conversation on what we do with the gap," Butterfield said. "Right now, we're brainstorming on where else we could get money."

The major stakeholders of the dam include the irrigation district, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Nez Perce Tribe's Department of Fisheries Resources Management and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Minor stakeholders also are involved, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which has jurisdiction over bull trout; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and others.

A spokeswoman for state Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athens, shed a little light on the funding issue in an email April 4 that the stakeholders met in two separate meetings last week.

"First, we brought the larger stakeholder group together to talk about progress on all projects within the Wallowa Basin that relate to fish passage or irrigation efficiency," Ann Rava of Hansell's office said. "The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife announced that they will be able to contribute \$1.25 million toward design and engineering work for both

the Wallowa Lake Dam fish passage and the fish passage for the Consolidated Ditch. The Wallowa County Soil and Water Conservation District shared that they will be going after some federal funds related to a downstream project. RS also brought the signatories of the instream water memorandum of agreement together to get a presentation on updated costs and design elements to the Wallowa Lake Dam. It was a sobering presentation because the costs have risen so significantly in just a few years and even with significant federal funding opportunities, it will be hard to get over the finish line. However, the group is still committed to working together and finding the funding to complete the project."

The refurbishment of the century-old dam is intended to improve the spillways, include a fish passage, add more concrete for weight, replace the five conduit gates with new ones and to upgrade the electrical

and instrumentation.

Fish passage

One of the major issues in designing the dam is what kind of fish passage there will be.

Butterfield said no agreement on that issue has been arrived at by the stakeholders yet.

According to a report in the Aug. 31 Chieftain, it's up to the engineer, McMillen, Jacobs and Associates of Boise, Idaho, to determine the type of fish passage that will be included and to finalize the plans for the dam.

Wallowa County native Mort McMillen, the engineer on the project, said at the time a fish passage to allow both upstream and downstream migration of fish is being worked into the project. It will be determined by the stakeholders based on the plans his firm comes up with.

"Everybody has their preferences," McMillen said. "We haven't arrived at the final selection. ... We're working really good as a group."

McMillen declined to comment April 4.

The fish passage is a crucial element of the dam's new design. In fact, state law requires the inclusion of a satisfactory fish passage in the dam, according to Jim Harbeck, field office supervisor of the Nez Perce Tribes Department of Fisheries Resources Management.

Jeff Yanke, a watershed manager with the ODFW, said in August it's up to the engineer to select a type of passage.

"We've been talking concepts and it's up to them to pick one," he said.

The "volitional passage" is often known as a fish ladder.

Another option is the "trap and haul" option that's a type of water elevator to move the fish, Yanke said.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

LANE ROUSE

Lane Rouse did it all for the Wallowa Valley baseball team in last week's road sweep of Vale. In two games, Rouse had a combined six hits, including the go-ahead single in the opener of a game eventually won by the Eagles, 8-3, and hit two home runs on the day — one in each game. He also pitched the last three innings of the first game, striking out five batters, to earn the win on the mound.

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