

Siuslaw News Sports & Recreation

On the Bite

A WEEKLY FISHING REPORT FOR THE LOCAL REGION

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WINTER TROUT FISHING

Don't let your trout fishing season end just because the cold weather has arrived. Here are just some of the weekend opportunities from this week's Rec Report:

- Several ponds and lakes in the Willamette Zone just took delivery of large brood trout.

- In the Southeast Zone, the Ana River has been kicking out trout in the 12- to 16-inch range. The Blitzen also has great year-round fishing.

- Expo and Reinhart ponds in the Southwest Zone were recently stocked with legal and larger trout last week.

- The Central Zone has several popular winter trout fisheries including the Deschutes, Fall and Metolius rivers. Also the Crooked River, which has rebounded in 2017.

Winter steelhead water watch

This time of year, water conditions for winter steelhead fishing can vacillate between too low and clear, and too high and muddy.

Successful anglers will:

- 1) adjust their gear and tackle for current conditions, and/or

- 2) be ready to hit the water when water conditions improve — usually once water levels start to drop after a good rain.

Check out the zone reports for your best bets.

See **FISHING 3B**

SHS, MHS football may join new special districts

OSAA Ad Hoc committee is proposing changes to create a more competitive balance among football programs

By NED HICKSON
Siuslaw News

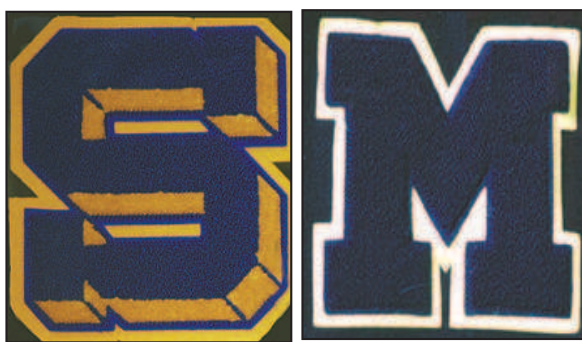
After being moved to the new Sky-Em League by the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) during the most recent round of reclassifications and redistricting, Siuslaw was set to join powerhouses Marist, Cottage Grove and Marshfield, along with Elmira and Junction City beginning next fall.

However, with a record of 3-11 over the last two football seasons, it wasn't viewed as a particularly positive change for Siuslaw High School administrators, who saw the disparity in the student ratio between Sky-Em

schools — in some cases with student enrollment outnumbering Siuslaw nearly

2-to-1 — as creating anything but a level playing field.

"We were on the borderline of dropping down to the 3A. So when the decision came through that we'd be staying in the 4A and playing



against Cottage Grove, Marist and Marshfield, we kind of felt like we were just out of luck," said Siuslaw High

trend has made Siuslaw one of the three smallest schools in the 4A.

The concerns held by Siuslaw were echoed by other school football programs among all classifications, from 1A through the 6A. After receiving testimony from nearly a dozen other football programs, the OSAA's Football Ad Hoc Committee convened in a work session to discuss ways to address the schools' concerns. At a public meeting held Dec. 18, the committee submitted its recommendations to the OSAA Executive Board for review.

Among the committee's

School Athletic Director Chris Johnson. "When you're looking at criteria based on the last four years, it doesn't take into account the most recent trend."

And over the last two years, that

See **DISTRICTS 4B**

Peaceful hike to start new year

The eighth annual Peace Hike will be held New Year's Day along the Amanda Trail



COURTESY PHOTO

Start the New Year off on the right foot by joining the 8th Annual Yachats New Year's Day Peace Hike being held Monday, Jan. 1.

Participants in this six-mile round-trip hike will proceed from the Yachats Commons, 441 N. Highway 101), along the Amanda Trail to the Amanda Grotto south of town, where a Peace Ceremony will take place.

Hikers will traverse both paved roads and narrow dirt trail surfaces with some steps and moderate inclines. Sturdy shoes, layered clothing and walking sticks are recommended.

In addition, a new activity this year for both hikers and non-hikers who would like to acknowledge and honor Amanda's journey will be a candle-light vigil for peace at Yachats' Little Log Church.

Here are details for both events:

- 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

Hikers may check in at the Yachats Commons' kitchen. All hikers will need to sign liability waivers and will receive safety information, route

See **AMANDA 3B**

A statue honoring the tragic journey of Amanda along the Amanda Trail near Yachats.

TimeOut

By LLOYD LITTLE
Retired teacher, coach and game official

One and Done

In 1981, the Siuslaw Viking football team won the state championship. Their team motto was simple:

"We."

Together, they succeeded in attaining their goal. Today, universities across the nation are being inundated with a breed of athletes and coaches with a "one and done" mentality.

They are collectively

See **LITTLE 2B**

TIDE TABLE

Entrance Siuslaw River

High Tide	Low Tide
Dec. 30 9:01am / 8.5 10:30pm / 6.4	2:51am / 2.7 4:07pm / -0.6

Dec. 31 9:51am / 8.9 11:23pm / 6.8	3:48am / 2.7 4:56pm / -1.2
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Jan. 1 10:40am / 9.2	4:43am / 2.8 5:45pm / -1.7
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Jan. 2 12:17am / 7.1 11:29pm / 9.3	5:36am / 2.7 6:32pm / -1.9
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Jan. 3 1:05am / 7.3 12:19pm / 9.1	6:28am / 2.6 7:19pm / -1.8
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Jan. 4 1:53am / 7.4 1:10pm / 8.7	7:22am / 2.5 8:06pm / -1.4
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Jan. 5 2:41am / 7.5 2:03pm / 8.1	8:18am / 2.5 8:53pm / -0.9
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Sport abalone season postponed indefinitely

SALEM — ODFW is calling a time-out on abalone season, postponing the 2018 recreational season that was set to open Monday, Jan. 1, until further review and Commission consideration in March.

The decision follows California's closure of its 2018 abalone season due to concerns over the health of the population.

Abalone stocks in California have fallen below target levels as abalone face ongoing environmental conditions that have reduced their food sources. Since California

"Oregon's abalone population has declined from historic levels."

—Scott Groth
ODFW shellfish biologist

Fish and Wildlife closed its season on Dec. 7, ODFW has seen a dramatic

spike in inquiries about the Oregon fishery, which is dwarfed by the California fishery.

Oregon issues about 300 abalone permits per year, while California issues 25,000 or more.

Southern Oregon is on the northern edge of red abalone range and the state's fishery is managed conservatively to protect the health of Oregon's relatively small population.

"California's closure could lead to a large fishing effort shift to Oregon, which would cause a spike in harvest

See **ABALONE 4B**

SPORTS Calendar

• JAN. 2

MHS GIRLS B-BALL

HOSTS MCKENZIE

5:30 P.M.

MHS BOYS B-BALL

HOSTS MCKENZIE

7 P.M.

SHS GIRLS B-BALL

HOSTS WALDPORT

6 P.M.

SHS BOYS B-BALL

HOSTS WALDPORT

7:30 P.M.

• JAN. 9

MHS GIRLS B-BALL

AT SILETZ

5:30 P.M.

MHS BOYS B-BALL

AT SILETZ

7 P.M.

SHS GIRLS B-BALL

AT J. CITY

7:15 P.M.

SHS BOYS B-BALL

HOSTS J. CITY

7 P.M.

Whale Watching Week continues through Sunday

A variety of activities are being offered at the Cape Perpetua Visitor Center as Whale Watch Week, which began Dec. 27, continues through Sunday. Cape Perpetua is a partner of Whale Watch Spoken Here, a program of Oregon State Parks that promotes whale watching at 24 designated locations along the Oregon coast.

Trained Whale Watch volunteers are on-hand each day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., to share information and help visitors spot whales. The public is also

invited to attend the presentation, "Experiencing Gray Whales" by Michael Noack, scheduled today at 11:30 a.m. in the Cape Perpetua Visitor Center.

Noack, a retired Chief Park Ranger and Naturalist, has been educating agency staff and the public about the natural world, especially gray whales, for many years. He has trained whale watch volunteers and has been involved with whale research.

After the program, Noack will be

available to discuss whale watch techniques that have worked for him.

Visitor Center winter hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. During the holiday season the Visitor Center will be closed New Year's Day on Monday, Jan. 1.

The presentation is free, but a Northwest Forest Pass, Oregon Coast Passport, and Federal Recreation Pass or \$5 day-use fee is required within the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area.

For more information, call the Visitor Center at 541-547-3289.

**SIUSLAW
NEWS**
148 Maple St.
Florence
541-997-3441