

PHOTOS BY NED HICKSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

The Siuslaw Vikings (left) and Mapleton Sailors (right) football programs could face changes in district competition if the latest OSAA recommendations are adopted later this month.

**Districts** from 1B

suggestions was to include Siuslaw among 30 schools playing down a classification in new Class 3A special districts. The proposal would put the Viking football program in the 12-school Special District-2 with Harrisburg, Brookings-Harbor, Cascade Christian, Hidden Valley, La Pine, Pleasant Hill, Santiam Christian, South Umpqua, St. Mary's (Medford) and Sutherlin.

Marshfield into a seven-school 4A special district with Cottage Grove, Henley, Klamath Falls, Mazama, North Valley and Phoenix. North Bend would be part of a 5A special district along with Ashland, Churchill, Crater, Eagle Point, South Eugene, Thurston and Willamette. "From our perspective, this proposal makes a lot more sense and keeps schools with 450 kids or so playing against schools with 900 kids," said Johnson.

percent or less Colley winning percentage formula, based on the last two seasons rather than four years, to determine which schools would qualify to drop into a lower classification for football for the 2018-2022 seasons. At with a 21.4 winning percentage against schools in its own classification for the past two seasons (1-6 in 2017 and 2-5 in 2016), Siuslaw easily qualified for a special district slot within the 3A.

would be re-evaluated in two years, with the understanding that the eventual goal is for each school's football program to eventually transition back to its original classification. "Siuslaw has a proud football tradition but we have to take a realistic look at where we are," said Johnson. "This is an opportunity to continue that tradition by bringing some competitive balance to the program." While the changes won't have a big impact on Mapleton's 8-man football

program, it will mean a shift in competition as teams from Alsea, Eddyville, McKenzie, Powers and Triangle Lake — all of whom have been part of the Mountain West — have expressed interest in 6-man programs. That would mean The Sailors would join the 1A Special District-1, with Crow, Elkton, Mohawk, Myrtle Point, North Douglas, Siletz, Waldport and Yoncalla. The changes would only apply to football; all other sports would continue to compete within each school's pri-

mary classification and district. Schools have until Friday, Jan. 5, to make their final decision on their Special District placement in advance of the next public meeting of the Ad Hoc Football Advisory Committee set for Tuesday, Jan. 9, in Wilsonville, beginning at 9 a.m. For more information, visit [www.osaa.org/governance/committees](http://www.osaa.org/governance/committees). The meeting will allow for public testimony before holding a closed work session.

**Abalone** from 1B

under the current rules. Yet we suspect that Oregon's abalone population has declined from historic levels," says Scott Groth, ODFW shellfish biolo-

gist for the south coast. "This emergency action postpones the fishery so we can hold off on issuing 2018 abalone permits until we've had a chance to do a more thorough review of the situation." ODFW staff plan to evaluate

the fishery (including potential impacts from California's closure), solicit public input, and present suggestions, including possible rule changes, to the Fish and Wildlife Commission at their March 16 meeting in Salem.

Annual regulations require recreational abalone harvesters to purchase an Oregon shellfish license and obtain a free annual abalone/scallop permit from ODFW. ODFW will continue to issue permits for scallops after Jan. 1.

Abalone are highly prized and the fishery creates a high demand, primarily among divers. While seven species exist on the West Coast, five of these have some listing status under the Endangered Species Act.

Red abalone are the only species still fished in the contiguous United States, and southern Oregon and northern California are the only areas where recreational harvest has occurred in recent years.

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