

**FIRE** *from A1*

rologist.”  
 Much of the study is based on data from NOAA’s National Centers for Environmental Information, which shows a marked rise in average summer high temperatures between 1991 and 2020. In the long term, annual average temperature trends in the region have also seen a gradual increase between 1895 and 2020.  
 Borgioli also pointed to an increase in dryness. Though drought recordings in Oregon dating back to 1895 show that swings between dry and wet periods are frequent, March 1 through May 31 this year marked the driest meteorological spring on record.  
 Over the past 45 years, said Borgioli, many areas

have had increases in the average time without precipitation events, which means not only drier summers, but during the other seasons as well. Precipitation events themselves are also becoming more varied.  
 The global temperature for May 2021 tied with 2018 as the sixth highest for the month of May in the 142-year NOAA record, which dates back to 1880.  
 Every 10 years, NOAA’s “30-year Climate Normals” are updated. The most recent update occurred on May 4, 2021, to cover the period of 1991 through 2020. The trends show warmer temperatures and changes in precipitation patterns.  
 Eugene, for example, saw 5.27 inches less rainfall in

the new climate normal period.  
 The city’s period of 1981-2010 saw 46.10 inches of rainfall, but for the updated period of 1991-2020, the new Normal Annual Precipitation was at 40.83 inches.  
 Nationally, the Southwest is trending toward longer and more frequent droughts and the trend has crept up into parts of Oregon as well.  
 Borgioli pointed to more episodes of strong, persistent, high pressure in the Pacific Ocean which “blocks” storms as part of the reason for some loss of annual precipitation.  
 “Increased variability and overall lower precipitation has strong influence on agriculture, vegetation and wildfires,” said Borgioli. “Increased time between

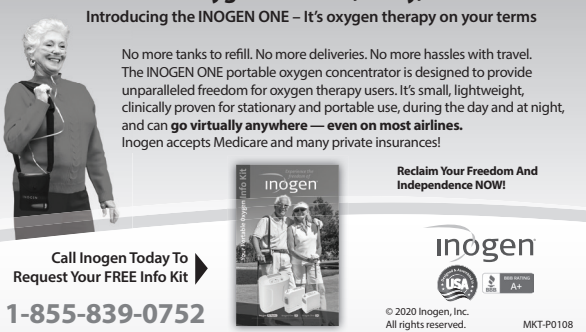
precipitation events has a large impact on wildfires and also affects soil, livestock, vegetation and wildlife.”  
 Borgioli pointed out that the changes in climate are due to various influences.  
 “We are seeing changes in the climate, some of which appear to be influenced by man – greenhouse gases trapping heat and causing a slightly warmer environment,” he said. “Basically, greenhouse gases act to prevent more radiation from leaving Earth at night. This means the incoming solar radiation (sunshine) has less net escape during the night due to these gases acting like a ‘blanket.’ The end result is more overall heat.”  
 Natural phenomena

have had an effect this year as well. The relatively weak turnout this last season of the climate pattern La Nina, for example, impacted the lack of precipitation this year while a stronger presence may have meant a wetter period.  
 Ultimately, the overall trends point to higher fire risks.  
 “Summers are getting warmer and thus this affects wildfire behavior,” said Borgioli.  
**FIRE MANAGEMENT**  
 Tuesday, June 15 was the final day for outdoor burning for most Lane County residents until October.  
 During the fire season,

yard debris may not be burned, however LRA-PA noted that removing overgrown vegetation is important work to defend against wildfires.  
 Lane Forest Products, Rexius, or Lane County’s transfer stations and dumpsites are resources available to the community to dispose of debris. Composting and chipping are also encouraged.  
 Residents who burn during the closed season are subject to violations ranging from \$50 to \$2,500 or more.  
 The Lane County Fire Defense Board will decide

see **FIRE** on A11

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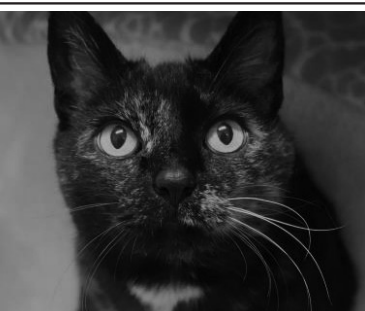
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