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DESCHUTES COUNTY

Irrigators seek drought declaration

County is experiencing its driest spring in 127 years

BY MICHAEL KOHN
 The Bulletin

Deschutes County is going through its driest spring since records started 127 years ago. That fact combined with low levels of water in the Central Oregon reservoirs has prompted irrigators to seek a drought declaration from the state.

On Wednesday the Deschutes Basin Board of Control sent a letter to the Deschutes County Commission requesting the drought declaration. The commissioners will consider the request when they meet this Wednesday. Deschutes County declared a state of drought last year.

An official declaration of drought, recognized by the governor, allows farmers to tap into state and federal financial assistance programs. The financial assistance could help farmers

who aren't able to plant on all their acres due to water restrictions.

The Deschutes Basin Board of Control comprises eight irrigation districts, including Arnold, Central Oregon, Lone Pine, North Unit, Ochoco, Swalley, Three Sisters and Tumalo. Collectively they convey water to over 150,000 acres of farms and ranches, as well as local cities, parks, and schools.

The letter, written by basin board president Craig Horrell, requests that

county commissioners declare a state of drought and they, in turn, ask Gov. Kate Brown to issue an executive order recognizing the severe drought.

"The DBBC believes County action and support from the state is needed," Horrell stated in the letter. "This may include assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Department and other Oregon executive branch agencies, operating within their statutory authorities."

See **Drought** / A4

PRINEVILLE

Off-duty firefighter rescues woman

Jared Hopper didn't wait for help, rushed into burning home

BY KYLE SPURR
 The Bulletin

Bend firefighter Jared Hopper was off-duty Friday morning when he saw heavy smoke billowing out of a house in Prineville.

A distressed neighbor told Hopper a disabled woman lived in the home on Mariposa Avenue and couldn't get out.

Hopper, 28, who has worked as a Bend Fire & Rescue firefighter and paramedic for the past three years, didn't hesitate.

Without waiting for help or equipment, he ran into the smoke-filled house and found the woman, who had a broken foot in a boot.

Hopper lifted the woman off her bed and into a wheelchair, then whisked her out of the house.

He pushed her across the street, safely away from her burning home.

See **Rescue** / A9

KLAMATH PROJECT

Zero water allocation pushes farms to the brink



Holly Dilleluth/For the Capital Press

Midland cattle rancher and Klamath Drainage District board member Luther Horsley is preparing for a devastating summer in the Klamath Basin.

BY GEORGE PLAVEN
 AND HOLLY DILLEMUTH
 Capital Press

KLAMATH FALLS — What was already forecast to be a historically bleak water year in the Klamath Project has quickly become a living nightmare for farms and ranches fighting for survival in the drought-stricken basin.

"I don't think there are any of us who are insulated from this. Everybody is going to feel the effects, even businesses on Main Street."

— Ben DuVal, who grows alfalfa hay and raises registered Black Angus cattle near Tulelake, California

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation shut down the Project's A Canal for the entire irrigation season May

12 in response to worsening conditions — allotting zero surface water from Upper Klamath Lake for thirsty

crops and livestock.

It is the first time in more than a century the A Canal will deliver no water. Meanwhile, irrigators are left to wonder how they will pay the bills as fields turn to dust.

"We know what a zero allocation is going to mean to our individual farms and the community as a whole," said Ben DuVal, who grows alfalfa

hay and raises registered Black Angus cattle near Tulelake, California. "It's going to mean a lot of farms go out of business."

DuVal, who is also president of the Klamath Water Users Association, said he has already had that difficult conversation around his own kitchen table.

See **Klamath** / A4

MT. BACHELOR

Ski resort to build summit hiking, biking trail

BY KYLE SPURR
 The Bulletin

Mt. Bachelor ski resort is moving forward with plans to build a new 5.5-mile hiking and mountain biking trail that will loop from the mountain's base to the summit.

The ski resort's proposal also includes plans to create better access for a snow cat to groom more ski runs and the addition of two snowmaking guns. There is no timeline yet for the snow cat trail and guns, but construction is expected to begin on the hiking loop this summer, said John McLeod, Mt. Bachelor president and general manager. The trail is expected to take about two years to complete, he said.

See **Bachelor** / A5

TODAY'S WEATHER



Variable cloudiness
 High 66, Low 44
Page B6

INDEX

Business/Life	C1-8	Editorial	A8	Lottery	B2	Obituaries	A9
Classifieds	B5	Horoscope	C3	Market Recap	B4	Puzzles	C4
Dear Abby	C3	Local/State	A2-3	Mon. Comics	C5-6	Sports	B1-3

The Bulletin
 An Independent Newspaper

Vol. 117, No. 329, 58 pages, 6 sections

We use recycled newsprint





HOME & GARDEN SECTION

INSPIRING IDEAS FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT

Our biannual Home & Garden sections highlight ideas and suggestions from experts on landscaping, gardening, home projects and decorating ideas.

In The Bulletin TODAY!



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