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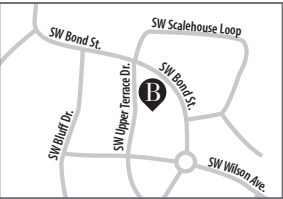
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Newsroom 541-383-0348
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NEWSROOM EMAIL
Business business@bendbulletin.com
City Desk news@bendbulletin.com
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NEWSROOM FAX
541-385-5804

OUR ADDRESS
Street 320 SW Upper Terrace Drive
Suite 200
Bend, OR 97702
Mailing P.O. Box 6020
Bend, OR 97708



ADMINISTRATION
Publisher
Heidi Wright 541-383-0341
Editor
Gerry O'Brien 541-633-2166

DEPARTMENT HEADS
Advertising
Brian Naplachowski 541-383-0370
Circulation/Operations
Maria Johnson 541-617-7830
Finance Wendy Dougherty 541-383-0324
Human Resources 541-383-0340

TALK TO AN EDITOR
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LOCAL, STATE & REGION

Gov. Brown declares a statewide emergency over wildfire danger

28 active fires burning in Oregon, with largest at more than 10,700 acres

BY GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau
The Rum Creek Fire, the state's largest active wildfire burning in southwest Oregon, grew to more than 10,700 acres as of Monday morning.

Containment on the fire centered near Galice in Josephine County was at 1%.

Southwest of Bend, the Cedar Creek Fire has burned 7,654 acres since it began Aug. 1 about 3 miles west of Waldo Lake. The fire was 10% contained as of Monday morning.

The two wildfires are among the 28 active fires in Oregon, according to the State of Oregon Fires and Hotspots Dashboard. And with temperatures rising and widespread drought, other Gov. Kate Brown declared a statewide emergency Sunday due to wildfire danger.



Fire crews structure-wrap the historic Whisky Creek Cabin on Aug. 23 with an aluminum fire blanket material designed to protect structures from sparks or embers and withstand intense heat from the Rum Creek Fire, the state's largest active fire. The cabin is one of the few remaining relics of the Rogue River gold rush era.

"With wildfire behavior increasing across the state, and with the threat of fire not likely to recede in the near future, it is imperative that we act now to prevent further loss — of life, property, business, and our natural resources," Brown said in a statement announcing the emergency declaration.

The declaration also comes as Oregon approaches the two-year anniversary of the massive 2020 Labor Day fires

that burned over 1.1 million acres, killed 11 people, and destroyed more than 3,000 structures.

According to Brown's announcement, "The Governor's declaration authorizes the Oregon Department of Forestry and the Office of the State Fire Marshal, in coordination with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, to utilize personnel, equipment, and facilities from other state agencies

5 fires in NE Oregon left to burn naturally

BY JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald
Forest Service officials are monitoring five lightning-sparked fires in the Eagle Cap Wilderness with the intention of letting the blazes burn naturally.

The agency has employed that strategy for more than 30 fires over the past quarter century in the Eagle Cap, which at 365,000 acres is Oregon's biggest federal wilderness area.

It's also the place Forest Service officials have most often allowed lightning fires to burn themselves out.



That's not a coincidence. The Eagle Cap is not only is bigger than either Multnomah or Hood River counties, but the wilderness has areas where fires, rather than turning rap-

idly into conflagrations that threaten people and property, tend to grow slowly, often because there are natural barriers, such as outcrops of rock, that help keep the flames contained.

The Nebo Fire, estimated at 20 acres on Sunday is burning in the Eagle Cap Wilderness north of Halfway. U.S. Forest Service

Columbia Riverkeeper challenging new gas pipeline infrastructure

East Oregonian
An environmental group is challenging the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the Coyote Springs Cogeneration Project near Boardman.

According to state and federal energy department documents, the \$32.5 million fracked gas pipeline compressor station would operate on a 22-acre site at the Port of Morrow Industrial Park. The plant would have two combustion turbines that would generate 440 average megawatts of energy when complete. The project would be built in phases.

Columbia Riverkeeper, which filed the petition chal-

lenging the decision, seeks a rehearing of FERC's approval. Audrey Leonard, staff attorney at Columbia Riverkeeper, said Friday the organization is "taking a stand against another misguided fossil fuel project."

The regulatory commission issued a license to Gas Transmission Northwest, which the company TC Energy owns, to build new infrastructure to increase the pressure of fracked gas in its pipeline system. Columbia Riverkeeper contended approving new fracked gas infrastructure is inconsistent with Oregon's and Washington's climate goals calling for a rapid reduction in fossil fuel use.

"Our communities are al-

ready feeling the impacts of climate change," said Maig Tinnin from community organization Rogue Climate. "The only way to meet our climate goals is to stop building new fossil fuel infrastructure and to transition to clean energy and greater energy efficiency."

The Coyote Springs station would result "in more annual greenhouse gas pollution than all commercial buildings in the state of Washington," according to Columbia Riverkeeper.

FERC released its approval of the Coyote Springs compressor station on July 28. The agency has 30 days to respond to Columbia Riverkeeper's petition for rehearing.

Man gets life sentence for killing his mother

BY CATALINA GAITÁN
The Oregonian

A Washington County circuit court judge on Monday sentenced Garth Patrick Beams, 47, of Tualatin to life in prison for beating his 74-year-old mother to death with a baseball bat in 2018.

Beams was convicted of second-degree murder and unlawful use of a weapon. He will be eligible for parole after 25 years, the Washington County District Attorney's office said in a statement Monday.

Prosecutors said Beams attacked his mother, author and screenwriter Wendy Jane Henson, in a fit of rage.

According to court records, Beams was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1995 and was the subject of a conservatorship. He lived with his mother, who managed his Social Security income. Tensions began escalating between the two in early 2018 due in part to the increasing level of care Henson needed as she aged, court records show.

On July 19, 2018, Beams struck Henson in the head with a baseball bat.

Tualatin police officers arrived just before 3 p.m. and found Henson inside the home with multiple head injuries. She was rushed to Oregon Health & Science University Hospital but died from her injuries. Officers arrested Beams that day.

Beams underwent a psychiatric evaluation at the Oregon State Hospital in Salem and was declared fit to proceed with a bench trial in December of 2020, according to records.

Henson published a textbook on screenwriting and wrote various novellas and screenplays, her LinkedIn profile says. She also wrote a movie-review column for the publication Tualatin Life.

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