



The Blue Mountain EAGLE

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OREGON WOLVES

Plan update may be ready for review in December

By Eric Mortenson
EO Media Group

State wildlife officials made more than 50 changes so far to a draft wolf management plan and hope to have it ready for public and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission review by the end of the year.

Conservation groups have criticized what they consider a delay in updating the plan, especially as five wolves have been legally shot since August due to repeated attacks on livestock. Groups such as Oregon Wild argue that ODFW should not authorize lethal action on wolves while a management plan review is pending.

Commission Chairman Michael Finley defended the process. "I will say there is no intention to delay or pause for the sake of delay," he said by email. "We have a responsible wolf plan in place and are working to replace it with an updated plan that reflects lessons learned and works to recover the wolf."

At a Sept. 15 commission meeting at Resort at the Mountain, on the flanks of Mount Hood, ODFW wolf program coordinator Russ Morgan said most of the changes are based on input from the public and from commission members.

"To me that strengthens this document," said Morgan, who is retiring effective Oct. 1 and was making his last report to the commission.

Commission members thanked Morgan for his work in managing a controversial species, a process in which conservation groups and livestock producers hold opposing and hotly debated points of view.

Commissioner Greg Wolley said people recognize "what a

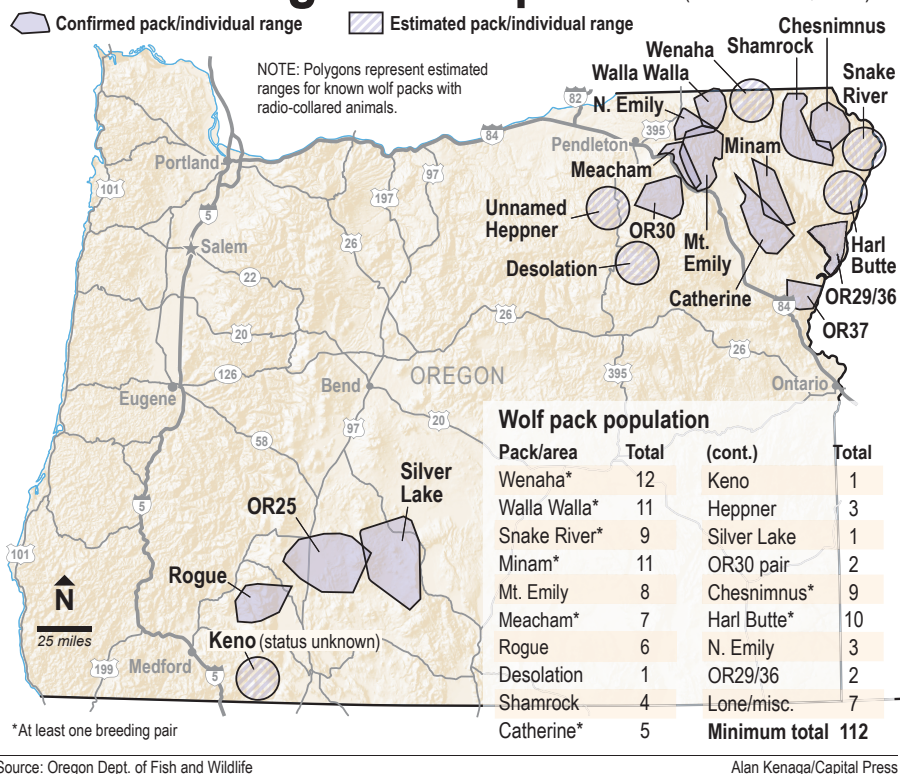
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“We have a responsible wolf plan in place and are working to replace it with an updated plan that reflects lessons learned and works to recover the wolf.”

Michael Finley
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission chairman

Known Oregon wolf packs (As of Dec. 31, 2016)



John Day man charged with pointing firearm at another

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A John Day man has been charged with pointing a firearm at another after an incident Sept. 9 at The Ugly Truth Bar & Grill.

Joseph William Leo, 40, faces charges of unlawful possession of a firearm and pointing a firearm at another, both misdemeanors, ac-

ording to court documents.

The document filed by Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter accuses Leo of carrying a concealed firearm and purposely pointing it at Brian Hubbard.

John Day Police Sgt. Damon Rand said the department was notified of an incident at 12:11 a.m. Sept. 9.

Rand said Leo was arrested

without incident and was the only person arrested. He said no shots were fired, and no one was injured.

He said he would not discuss the details of the case pending trial.

Leo could not be reached for comment. His plea hearing is scheduled for 9:15 a.m. Oct. 26.

Greg Honachefsky from New

Jersey said he was in John Day playing poker at the bar when a man came in and joined the game. He said a verbal confrontation occurred, and later he saw the man had drawn a gun beneath the table and pointed it at Hubbard.

No one else had seen the gun, Honachefsky said, so he asked Hubbard to go outside.

Hubbard said they went outside to smoke, and Honachefsky told him Leo had a gun. He said they saw the gun while Leo was leaning over the bar, so they subdued him and took the gun.

Honachefsky said he had flashbacks of the incident during his entire drive home to New Jersey.

"Every morning I still see it all and want to puke," he said.

New drug laws draw mixed views

Small-scale possession now a misdemeanor

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Small-scale drug possession is now a misdemeanor in Oregon, but jail sentences could actually be longer.

While some believe House Bill 2355 will help people who are addicted to drugs by promoting treatment rather than jail time, Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter said the changes might not reduce sentences for offenders. The bill reducing the charges for personal possession of drugs, such as cocaine, methamphetamine and heroin, from felonies to misdemeanors for first-time offenders



A photo illustration of cocaine.

The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

took effect Aug. 15.

Carpenter said these changes, however, might not reduce sentences for offenders, and fines may actually increase as a result.

As an example, he said possession of meth is classified as a crime seriousness of one, the lowest, on the Oregon felony sentencing guidelines grid, which carries a presumptive sentence of 10 days in jail. As a misdemeanor, the same crime is

not subject to the same sentencing guidelines, Carpenter said.

"The maximum sentence for simple possession now classified as a misdemeanor is 364 days in jail, a \$6,250.00 fine, or both," he said. "I now have the option, instead of recommending 10 days for every offense, of recommending increasing amounts of jail time for each subsequent

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One escape from a life of addiction

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Otis started drinking when he was 9. "I held out a long time before I started," he joked.

His first taste was sampling his uncle's home-brewed beer when his father asked him to fetch one.

"I was a full-fledged alcoholic by junior high," he said. "I just loved the buzz."

His parents, migratory fruit pickers, were constantly on the move. Otis said he attended as many as eight grade schools in his childhood. His parents accepted and normalized his drinking at a young age. It was during this time he found his passion for music, playing the guitar and banjo.

While Otis said he had a good childhood, he doesn't remember a single sober weekend in high school.



Otis

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