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Contributed photo/Clancy Roth

A cow was found dead and mutilated at Bar DR Land and Cattle, a Deschutes County ranch in Hampton.

Investigators perplexed by death, mutilation of another Oregon cow

By Sierra Dawn McClain
EO Media Group

Authorities are investigating the mysterious death and mutilation of a cow on a remote ranch at the border between Oregon's Lake and Deschutes counties.

The range cow, a breeding animal worth about \$850, was found dead and mutilated — her genitals, udder, tongue and heart cut out — last fall at Bar DR Land and Cattle, a property in Hampton owned by ranchers Clancy and Stephen Roth.

The cause of death is unknown.

Lake County Sheriff's Office Deputy Tom Roark launched the investigation Sept. 18, 2019. The Bureau of Land Management is also on the case. Four months later, Roark said he still has no leads.

"It's creepy, gives me chills," rancher Clancy Roth said. "There's no evidence of who did it or how they killed her. It's so sad."

This isn't the first time the Roths have had their cattle maimed. About 20 years ago, Roth said, her father-in-law and her husband, Stephen, found multiple cattle mutilated in the same way with the same body parts removed.

And the Roths aren't alone.

In August 2019, a similar incident involving five bulls had occurred at Silvie Valley Ranch in Eastern Oregon.

According to FBI records, thousands of killings and mutilations of cattle have happened across the U.S. since the 1970s. The animals typically are found with the same body parts missing.

Kenyon Morehouse, the Roth's ranch hand, found

the cow dead when he visited the pasture to fill the water tanks, as he did every morning.

Deputy Roark said it's hard to discern how the cow died. By the time he arrived on site the morning after getting a call, which he said was "a good hour-and-a-half trip" from the sheriff's office, it was past the 24-hour window during which a necropsy could have been performed on the body.

There were no bullets, no strangulation marks, no recent lightning storms, no rope burns on trees, no tire tracks, no shoe prints — and no spilled blood.

Roth said the lack of blood is what troubles her most about her cow's death.

"The blood was gone," she said. "It looked like someone snipped her artery and drained her."

On the ground beside the cow's foot were agitated hoof marks, as though she had struggled in her last moments.

Roark said the missing body parts could not have been taken by scavengers.

"When a pack of coyotes or birds gets to a carcass, not much is left — just bones and hide, unevenly chewed," said Roark. "This was clean-cut, like it was done with a blade. If somebody was hungry, they would've whittled up a chunk of back meat and taken it home. This wasn't done for food. It was something sinister."

Roth speculates that her cow may have been poisoned.

She said after the killing, her husband and his friend found a tiny scrap of fiber resembling a feather tip caught in nearby

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NEW TAXING DISTRICT COULD FUND AQUATICS CENTER



Voters near John Day, Canyon City, Prairie City, Mt. Vernon and Seneca will likely determine fate of pool in Grant County

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

After this summer, it's likely the fate of a pool in Grant County will depend whether voters approve a new aquatics taxing district in November.

John Day City Manager Nick Green presented the proposal to the city council Feb. 28: a new taxing district likely comprised of John Day, Canyon City, Prairie City, Mt. Vernon, Seneca and their respective rural fire protection districts. The service area could still change and will need to be approved by the Grant County Court.

While the city council will receive the final feasibility study on the pool in March, additional planning will continue until May to prepare the ballot measure, Green said. During June and July, listening sessions will be held in the commu-



Eagle file photo

A crowd of swim team fans cheer from the stands at the 2019 John Day Swim Meet at Gleason Pool.

nities that would be affected, and action committees will then present the final plan to be recommended to the county, Green said.

Green said around July 22 the county would have to initiate the referral process to place the measure before voters that would be included in the district.

Gleason Pool will be open for the 2020 season, closing Aug. 22. The parks and recreation district

will continue to operate the pool this year.

"At that point, the park and pool revert to the city of John Day: The Parks and Rec. agreement has ended, and they have no further involvement in it by contract," Green said.

If the measure for the proposed aquatics district is approved, then the city will complete the final designs and planning the next fiscal year with the goal to open a new pool by the summer of 2022, Green said.

The city is interested in selling the property around Gleason Pool to the state to create a new Kam Wah Chung interpretive site. The city is working toward a purchase and sale agreement that could be accepted in September or October, Green said.

The city council agenda adds that proceeds from the sale of Gleason Pool will be used as bridge funds for the design and preliminary

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The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

John Day City Manager Nick Green, right, and City Councilor Shannon Adair discuss the importance of space at a proposed aquatic center at a city council meeting Jan. 28. The city has proposed a new aquatics taxing district to fund a new pool for Grant County. TOP PHOTO: Audrey Colson leaps into fun at Gleason Pool June 12. (Eagle file photo)

Quiet start to legislative session, but tensions simmer

First day of meetings in the Capitol not as contentious as expected ahead of votes on controversial bills

By Sam Stites, Jake Thomas and Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

A contentious proposal to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions dominated political chatter in the weeks before the 2020 legislative session began.

So much so that observers expected "sparks" when lawmakers convened on Monday, said Sen. Brian Boquist, R-Dallas.

But sitting in his office

on the appointed day, wearing cowboy boots, jeans and his signature turtleneck under a sports jacket, Boquist said, "It seems like it's in neutral. This building is never neutral."

Then the longtime senator reconsidered.

Instead, he said, it was more like the Legislature was "out of gear" or like standing on a calm beach as the water recedes before a tsunami.

As legislators prepared



Oregon Capital Bureau/Sam Stites

Cap and trade architect Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, explains how he's attempted to craft his bill to overcome Republican opposition.

for meetings inside the Capitol, Boquist said he was going back to his district office in Dallas to

read legislation and meet with constituents. This might be his last chance to do that for a while.

"As soon as committees begin, our lives are not our own," he said.

The pace is expected to pick up quickly as legislators race to meet deadlines to finish within 35 days.

"If it doesn't happen fast, it doesn't happen at all," Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, told reporters on Monday. "And that's the reality of a 35-day session. So I think you're going to see a lot of pressure at the very beginning."

Republicans have complained Democrats, who hold large majorities in

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