

Child's body remains unidentified

State police seek the public's help in identifying the body of a child found in rural Lincoln County.

The body was found Dec. 10 in H.B. Van Duzer Forest State Scenic Corridor, a heavily wooded state park.

The child was female, 6 1/2 to 10 years old, with long dark brown or black hair. Her race or ethnic origin hadn't been determined.

Due to the condition of the remains, she had likely been dead at least 30 days before she was discovered.

Anyone with information is asked to call 800-442-0776 or *OSP (*677).

Sculpture to be dedicated in spring

The installation of artwork planned this week at Warrenton Community Library will be delayed.

An official dedication ceremony will take place in the spring, which should pose fewer COVID-19 concerns, City Commissioner Rick Newton said.

Newton, along with Spruce Up Warrenton, paid for the metal sculptures of children reading. The sculptures were completed last week by Pacific Fabrication, a company owned by Pacific Seafood.

Officer graduates from academy

Seaside Police Officer Jensen Segui will graduate from the 402nd police academy conducted by the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

Graduation is set for 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 7, in Salem.

Columbia River temperature rising, wetlands decreasing

The Columbia River has been through some major changes in the past five years and even more profound changes in the past 150 years.

The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership talks about successes and concerns in its just-published report on the state of the river. The nonprofit group publishes a report every five years that focuses on Columbia River research, restoration, changes, progress and emerging issues. The last report was in 2015.

"This report summarizes some of the significant issues facing the lower Columbia as well as the work being done to protect and restore it," said Elaine Placido, the group's executive director. "We hope this is a useful tool that can be used to learn, and that our analyses will help groups and agencies advance their work to protect our river."

The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership was established in 1995 by the governors of Washington and Oregon and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to provide regional coordination on preservation and improvement efforts and to advance science.

The group is required to report on the river's health every five years.

While this year's report is a bit different – it's presented as an interactive story progression on the partnership's website – it focuses on many of the same issues: habitat, land use, endangered species, water quality, and community connections.

The partnership is most concerned with what's considered the lower Columbia River, which stretches from the mouth of the river in Warren-



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
A small boat operator struggles crossing the Columbia River Bar.

To learn more

See the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership's interactive report at estuary-partnership.org/state-of-estuary-2020.

ton upstream to Bonneville Dam — the farthest extent of tidal influence.

Indigenous tribes managed the land along the river's shores since time immemorial, the group says, but the watershed has been profoundly changed since European colonization in the late 19th century.

Previous analysis found more than 50 percent of native habitat and 70 percent of historic tidal wetlands were lost from the 1880s through the 2010s.

To reverse the trend, a concerted effort from the agency and its regional partners has resulted in the protection or restoration of more than 28,000 acres of habitat since 2003.

Some key points found in the 2020 report:

- **Water quality** -- The

last five years have brought some of the warmest temperatures in recorded history to the region. Mainstem Columbia water temperatures regularly exceed "threshold temperatures" important for salmon and steelhead from July through September, along with lower dissolved oxygen levels. The report details efforts to enhance cold-water refuges for fish and highlights additional issues such as microplastics and cyanotoxins.

- **Endangered species** – Fifty-five species

of birds, fish and wildlife that rely on the lower Columbia River are listed or are candidate species under the Endangered Species Act. Plants, invertebrates and fungi also are imperiled. The report describes the status of "indicator" species and the large-

scale losses in families of species, such as pollinators and songbirds.

- **Habitat** – In the past five years, local groups have restored or protected 7,623 acres of habitat, a 20 percent increase over the previous five-year period, and three times what was accomplished from 2006 to 2010.

While many of the straightforward projects on public lands have been accomplished, future gains will be more costly and challenging.

- **Land use** – An analysis of land use found little significant change from 2010 to 2015 (the most recent period for which data are available), with a very small increase in developed land (less than 1 percent) and a modest decrease in wooded habitat (3 percent gain in forest and 13 percent decrease in scrub-shrub).

- **Connections** – The partnership reached more than 23,000 students and with them planted more than 75,000 streamside trees in the past five years.

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