

make Oregon Fish and Wildlife Dept. headlines

Earlier this year the badger was trapped in Oregon about 10 miles southeast of Harper in Malheur County. It was sporting a tag in one ear which indicated it had previously been captured across the state line.

Communication with the Idaho Cooperative Research Unit which had earlier conducted a badger study in-

dicated this animal had been tagged in June 1977 about 10 miles southeast of Melba, Idaho in the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area.

If the animal traveled in a straight line, the distance is somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 miles. Badger number 198 had to cross the rugged Owyhee drainage, Succor Creek (no small drainage

in itself), and possibly the Snake River since it was uncertain whether the animal was tagged east or west of the river.

In a letter to Oregon district wildlife biologist Bill Olson of Ontario, John Messick, research biologist who originally tagged the badger, said the badger was a yearling when captured and weighed about

15 pounds. "We have found that young-of-year badgers and some yearlings disperse rather long distances from their natal area," he wrote. "I have not yet calculated the distance moved by this animal, but it may be the longest yet recorded. One of our juvenile females moved 50 km (31 miles)."

The badger is one of the

larger members of the weasel family and is best known for its flattened appearance, fearless demeanor, and digging ability. Outdoor writer John Madson once wrote a short story about the badger appropriately titled "The Fighting Doormat."

The badger is one of the few animals that makes its living by outdigging other earth-

moving animals. Equipped with short, powerful legs and long claws, this squat carnivore can move earth faster than the earth-living rodents on which it feeds. The badger will eat anything in the way of meat, fresh or carrion, but rodents make up the largest items on its diet. It is found in mountains as well as rangelands and prefers the dryer

climate of Eastern and Southern Oregon.

1979 ANGLING REGULATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

The 1979 synopsis of angling regulations is now available from license agents throughout the state, according to the Fish and Wildlife Department. The booklets, which are normally available prior to Jan-

uary 1, were delayed this year due to paper shortages.

Booklets have been mailed out during the past two weeks from the Department's Portland office and should now be available wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold. Booklets are free and the Department urges all anglers to pick up a copy of the new rules.

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THRIFTWAY

Rep. Ullman re-introduces water rights bill

Oregon Congressman Al Ullman re-introduced legislation Monday that would validate existing contracts and agreements between the federal government and users of water from federal irrigation projects.

In introducing the measure of the opening day of the 96th Congress, Ullman emphasized the importance of prompt Congressional action to end uncertainty among western farmers and ranchers who receive water from federal projects.

Ullman's district includes thousands of acres of land irrigated by federal water projects, primarily in the central and southeastern portions of Oregon.

The Oregon Democrat originally introduced the measure in the last Congress, but subsequent court actions delayed implementation of proposed Interior Department regulations which had clouded the status of land holdings irrigated with federal water.

The proposed Interior regulations are aimed at implementing the 160-acre per person limitation contained in the 1902 Reclamation Act.

"This bill is a simple one. It will give Congress the opportunity to demonstrate that the federal government is as good as its word," Ullman said.

Federal water users have long relied on the Bureau of Reclamation's interpretation of law allowing for release from the acreage limitations once project construction costs are repaid.

Ullman said some farmers agreed to the restrictions and conditions of the contracts only because of government assurances that the restrictions would end on repayment.

The proposed Interior regulations would require disposal of excess lands even by those landowners who had been assured they were released from restrictions.

Ullman said his contract ratification proposal should be considered promptly and, if need be, separately from the general review of reclamation law expected during the 96th Congress.

"The only issue addressed by this legislation is whether the United States government does indeed intend to keep its words to Federal water users in the Western states," Ullman said.

The 2nd District congressman said he would be reviewing the other, more comprehensive, proposals for addressing problems raised by the proposed Interior regulations, including limitations based on the potential of the land's productivity, rather than an arbitrary acreage restriction.

McElligott on U. of Portland honor roll

Michael James McElligott of Ione is listed on the fall semester honor roll at the University of Portland.

He is a senior in the School of Business Administration at the university.