

## KFIR 2024 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Public Issues and Programs

The OLCC has introduced a new permit program. Food-delivery companies like Uber Eats, and Grubhub, will now be required to get a permit from the state to deliver alcohol as of Jan. 1st, 2024. According to Mark Pettinger, spokesperson for the OLCC said, this holds them a little more accountable than they have been up to this point.

According to KGW, 2023 legislators recognized this issue and approved legislation requiring what's now called the OLCC's third-party delivery facilitator permit. This means companies will have to create their own training program and get it approved by the OLCC before workers can resume alcoholic beverage deliveries.

The annual permit is free. But will cost \$2 hundred and 50 dollars for the OLCC to approve their training program.

Aired on 1/3/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

According to KDRV a court ruling against Oregon's gun control policy, Measure 114, is going to stand. Harney County Circuit Court Judge Robert Raschio had set a January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, hearing after defendants made more arguments in filings with Harney County Circuit Court. They were filed after Raschio issued his written legal opinion, ruling November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 that Measure 114 violated Oregon's constitution.

The defendants, that included AG Rosenblum, Governor Kotek, and Oregon State Police Administrator Casey Coddling, had filed the objection the first week of December to the Court's original finding, listing seven rationale for challenging the Circuit Court's ruling. Raschio set the hearing to consider the defendant's challenges.

He noted last month that the Court's hearing this week needed to occur prior to him signing the final order.

Aired on 1/4/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The 3 point 8-million square foot, five-story white and blue Amazon distribution center in Woodburn, billed as Oregon's biggest building, appeared finished for much of 2023. Yet, according to the Statesman Journal, the gigantic parking lot surrounding it has been mostly empty as the company syncs up their robotic operations before opening.

When the project was approved in 2021, the company projected it would open the distribution center estimated to cost \$4 hundred and 51 million dollars, in spring 2023. A spokesperson for Amazon declined to say when the distribution center is expected to open.

One official who's toured the building said they're done with building and they're bringing in their internal structure, the robots. October, Amazon said it has 7 hundred 50 thousand robots nationwide working in their distribution centers.

Aired on 1/4/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

A few folks, when out on walks, have found cell phones that flew out of the damaged Alaskan plane, which had already been restricted from flying over the ocean due to pressurization fail lights turning on three times that tests later said were not any problems found.

Sunday night, a top TSA official Jennifer Homendy, at around 9 p.m., said after an hour-long news conference, that the door plug was found in the backyard of a Portland schoolteacher's home identified only as Bob.

Bob took two photographs of the door plug and then emailed them to where the safety board disseminated the requested tips, photos, and videos connected to the accident. The door plug was critical for the TSA's investigation to understand precisely why the chunk of fuselage disconnected from the plane minutes after takeoff.

Aired on 1/8/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

A GAPS teacher and football coach has been charged with theft and criminal trespass.

South Albany High School teacher and co-head football coach David Younger was arrested Wednesday, Jan. 3, according to the Linn County Sheriff's office. He's facing two counts of first-degree theft, a felony, and one count of second-degree criminal trespass, a misdemeanor. The school district has placed him on administrative leave.

In August, Younger allegedly twice stole cash of the value of \$1 thousand dollars or more from school premises, according to court documents. Besides the two theft counts, Younger is charged with criminal trespass for allegedly entering South Albany High School unlawfully on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>.

In November the school district presented the information to the Albany Police Department, which conducted an investigation, according to the email.

Aired on 1/9/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

A rare blizzard warning has been issued by the National Weather Service due to projections of extreme amounts of snow for Tuesday and Wednesday on Oregon mountain road passes. Up to 4 feet of snow and winds 55 to 75 miles per hour could create whiteout conditions around Cascade mountain passes including Santiam Pass (Highway 20), Willamette Pass (Highway 58) and the Mount Hood area (Highway 26).

Although, snow is not likely in the Willamette Valley, until possibly later in the week. But a blizzard warning goes into effect at 4 a.m. Tuesday, with snow amounts ranging from 1 to 4 feet, NWS said. With heavy snow and strong winds, resulting in occasional whiteout conditions through Wednesday. Poor visibility and rapid snow accumulation could result in dangerous road conditions.

Aired on 1/9/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Oregon employers won't hire as rapidly over the next 10 years as the post-pandemic rebound fades, according to a new state projection. Health care, hospitality, and business services jobs are in line for the fastest growth. Overall growth will be held down by slow hiring by manufacturers, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

The agency expects total employment will grow by about 10 percent through 2032. A much slower growth than during the prior 10 years, when statewide employment grew by about 18 percent. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Oregon's population has declined in each of the past two years, reversing a decade of robust migration.

Aired on 1/10/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Dozens of leaders want Governor Kotek to have Oregon cover the \$45 million dollars, or more, in chemical costs and wear and tear on local drinking water systems after a historic drawdown of Green Peter Reservoir near Sweet Home, that was pushed by far-left environmentalists then was ordered by a judge.

Elected leaders said the muddy water flowing from Green Peter Dam carried way more murk, about 23 times more opaque than expected, according to a letter signed by 24 city councilors, county commissioners, and state legislators.

Municipal water systems were grossly inadequate to process these incredible turbidities without added costs, stated in the letter dated January 3rd, and spearheaded by Republican representatives Jamie Cate of Lebanon and Charlie Conrad of Lane County. 8 mayors and Linn County Commissioners also signed.

Aired on 1/10/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The ACLU of Oregon filed a complaint with the Oregon Secretary of State's office last week, claiming the Coalition to Fix and Improve Measure 110 campaign, the measure that decriminalized drug usage, violated multiple state campaign finance and transparency laws. Among their concerns, the ACLU claims the coalition has been spending campaign money since October on at least two petitions without filing the required forms or information.

Additionally, the complaint alleges that the coalition failed to report \$30 thousand dollars in expenditures on the most active petitions which the ACLU says is obscuring the actual beneficiary of the political spending.

This campaign is richly funded by large billionaires and led by a former chief of the Oregon prison system - to criminalize user-level drug addiction said Sandy Chung, ACLU executive director.

Aired on 1/11/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Alaska Airlines is canceling through Saturday all flights on Boeing 737 Max 9 planes like the one that suffered an in-flight blowout of a fuselage panel last week as it waits for new instructions from Boeing and federal officials on how to inspect the fleet.

OPB reported that came as some travelers indicated they might try to avoid flying on Max 9 jetliners temporarily. Seattle-based Alaska Airlines said Wednesday that it would cancel 1 hundred 10 to 1 hundred 50 flights a day while Max 9 planes remained grounded. By midday had canceled about 1 hundred 20 flights, one-fifth of its schedule that day.

United Airlines, the only other U.S. carrier operating the Max 9, canceled about 2 hundred flights, but it wasn't clear at the time of this writing how many were related to Boeing's plane.

Aired on 1/12/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Unsurprisingly, hundreds of flights were canceled across the US on early Sunday as severe weather forced many airlines to suspend their flight schedules.

Sunday, saw 7 hundred flights within, into, or out of the US were canceled by 4 a.m. ET. United Airlines led the pack with 2 hundred 20 flights getting canceled. This was followed by Alaska Airlines with 1 hundred 62 cancellations, and Southwest Airlines with 1 hundred 46.

And unrelated to the weather the FAA announced that it had launched an investigation to determine if Boeing failed to ensure completed products conformed to its approved design and were in a condition for safe operation in compliance with federal regulations. The probe comes after a Boeing aircraft lost a door plug. FAA says it can't happen again.

Aired on 1/15/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

According to OPB the Oregon Department of Forestry needs more and consistent funding to fight wildfires. That much was clear following the 2020 Labor Day fires that burned nearly 8 hundred 50 thousand acres of forests.

But instead of focusing on forest management to mitigate fires, lawmakers are split on how to pay for it. Two Democrat senators recently unveiled competing proposals to address long-term wildfire funding.

Sen. Jeff Golden, D-Ashland, wants a tax on the value of industrial timber harvests to pay for protection that he says disproportionately benefits private forest owners. Sen. Elizabeth Steiner, D-Portland, wants to charge every property owner in the state an annual fee to pay for what she sees as a statewide issue.

If the state can't manage forests, don't spend more, simply return them back to counties.

Aired on 1/17/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

With the warmer temps arriving Wednesday, some mid-valley roads remained closed due to slick conditions, county offices closed until noon, and Albany schools remained closed all day. As of Tuesday, tens of thousands of residents around the Portland ~~metro~~ area had been without power for four days. According to KGW, downed trees and power lines were still prevalent in some areas.

One West Hills resident said it's a mess. For the past four days, he's been stuck without power or Wi-Fi. Another resident and her family bundled up next to their fireplace to stay warm. But her living room went down to 49 degrees in the morning, even with a fireplace.

People across Portland told KGW that they've rarely heard from the power company since many lost electricity Saturday morning, though PGE said they are working as fast as they can. But PGE has faced massive trees and debris blocking roadways.

Aired on 1/18/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

A proposal that would charge each Oregon property owner \$10 dollars a year to offset rising fees that timber and ranch landowners pay now to the state for fire protection, has gone through major changes. According to the Capital Insider, a January 12<sup>th</sup> draft of the wildfire funding proposal, sponsored by Senator Steiner, a Portland democrat, no longer includes the \$10 dollar fee on Oregon's 2 million property holders.

The draft proposal still includes cuts to the per-acre fees that timber and ranch landowners pay to the Oregon Department of Forestry for fire protection, potentially saving them up to \$12 million per year. The proposal would create a new State Forestry Department Large Wildfire Fund but does not include details about where money for that would come from.

Taxpayers most likely.

Aired on 1/22/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

A plan to temporarily expand the child tax credit and revive tax breaks for businesses received overwhelming bipartisan support Friday. The GOP-led Ways and Means committee, voted 40 to 3 to send the Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act, to the House for vote.

Co-led by Chair Jason Smith of Missouri and Senate Finance Chair Ron Wyden it includes both parties' priorities to address child poverty and revive expired Trump-era tax breaks. The bill increases the child tax credit incrementally and adjusts for inflation starting at 18 hundred in 2023 to 2 thousand dollars by 2025. Smith said they're reforming the tax code in a way that supports workers, families, and small businesses.

Aired on 1/23/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Tuesday, an Oregon jury awarded \$85 million dollars to nine victims of wildfires that ravaged the state in 2020, the latest verdict in a series of legal proceedings that are expected to put the utility PacifiCorp on the hook for billions of dollars over its liability for the deadly blazes. According to KGW, PacifiCorp expects post-verdict rulings and insurance payments to bring its share of the verdict to just under \$80 million dollars, the company said.

Last June, a jury found PacifiCorp liable for damages for negligently failing to cut power to its 6 hundred thousand customers despite warnings from top fire officials. PacifiCorp has appealed.

The damages awarded Tuesday were the first in cases brought by that broader class, with additional trials expected in February and April. 2 hundred 99 million was paid last month.

Aired on 1/25/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho formed a working group to propose legislation to make the Pacific Standard Time permanent. Oregon state Senator Kim Thatcher, of Keizer will introduce Senate Bill 1548 when Oregon's legislative session begins on Feb. 5.

Oregonians have long-expressed their desire to stop changing the clock, said Thatcher. Some prefer keeping daylight saving time over standard time, and many don't care which – they just want to stop changing the clock. She writes, since daylight saving time is just not possible without congressional approval, and after waiting five years for Congress to approve a Daylight Standard Time bill, that passed here in Oregon in 2019, standard time has become a common-sense choice for 2024 and doesn't need Congressional approval.

And Washington, California, and Idaho are doing the same.

Aired on 1/29/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

As lawmakers prepare to tackle the state's addiction crisis, new data has come in from the Oregon Health Authority. In 2019, 2 hundred and 80 people died of a drug overdose in Oregon.

Fatalities rose every year after, more than tripling by 2022, when 9 hundred and 56 people died. And last year, even more people died, according to preliminary data. Each

month the number has been higher than the previous year, reaching 6 hundred and 28 in June. The state while compiling data predicts for 2023, the total could reach 1 thousand 2 hundred and 50 overdose deaths.

Oregon's overdose fatality rate is expected (to) sharply rise over the coming year due to the saturation of fentanyl said, Jonathan Modie, a public health spokesman. He points to Mexican drug trafficking.

Aired on 1/30/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Multnomah County, city of Portland, and state of Oregon are embarking on a 90-day experiment to address downtown Portland's fentanyl crisis. According to OPB, the three governments jointly declared a fentanyl emergency, directing their agencies to work alongside each other on programs that connect addicted people to treatment programs and crack down on drug sales.

But House Republican Leader Jeff Helfrich issued a statement in response to Kotek declaring a state of emergency in Portland. He said three years after Measure 110, and over a year after Kotek began her administration, it's about time she identifies a fentanyl crisis. But it's bigger than one city.

He asks Democrats to join Republicans on HB 4036 that reclassifies possession as a Class A Misdemeanor. It can mandate recovery programs and penalize drug dealers.

Aired on 2/1/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

In a Salem-Keizer Public Schools' news release, they announce licensed staff would receive a compensation package worth roughly \$37 million dollars over two years under Superintendent Castañee y da's latest contract offer.

The offer includes a 5 point 5 percent COLA raise this school year and a 3 point 5 percent raise next school year, according to details district officials released. It followed Castañeda's announcement of the district's offer of a \$45 million dollar compensation package to its classified workers' union.

The district was in contract negotiations with both unions since last spring. Castañeda said both offers represent the most the district can afford and the outcome of both offers will mean we are going to lose hundreds of employees. She blames Oregon's public school funding system for not keeping pace.



Aired on 2/2/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

An Oregon Health Authority, report released Thursday found Oregon needs to be able to treat nearly 3 thousand more people to adequately meet the demand by 2025 for residential mental health and addiction treatment.

That equates to nearly 8 thousand beds in all, an increase of 70 percent from the 4 thousand 8 hundred beds it has now. The current capacity includes care for people in adult foster homes, residential facilities, the Oregon State Hospital, psychiatric hospital care, and other programs. Expansions currently planned for existing facilities will enable providers to treat nearly 5 thousand 2 hundred patients.

The report estimates it would take more than \$5 hundred million dollars over at least five years to expand new facilities, not including operational costs, with the biggest gap - residential addiction treatment.

Aired on 2/5/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Despite increased government spending, both homelessness and the shortage of shelter beds in Oregon grew in 2023.

According to KOIN, an annual report by Portland State University's Homelessness Research study found the total number of homeless people in the state increased 8 and a 5 percent and the number of unsheltered homeless people increased 17 point 2 percent since 2022.

And this growth occurred despite billions of dollars of additional government spending and commitments to increase affordable housing and reduce homelessness in recent years. 1 point 1 billion dollars was spent on affordable housing from 2016 to 2020; tens of millions of dollars of additional funding came from the Portland and Multnomah County; and hundreds of millions of dollars of additional spending was approved by the Oregon Legislature.

Aired on 2/8/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Evidently after Scotus' ruling on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, Oregon's Supreme Court saw the handwriting on the wall. Late last week, Oregon's Supreme Court denied a petition to overturn a lower court's ruling that blocked the gun control law Measure 114, according to OPB.

The justices acknowledged the legal status of Measure 114 is of significant concern to many but declined to get involved. Harney County Circuit Court Judge Raschio signed the general judgment in January, finding the law violated the right to bear arms under the Oregon Constitution.

Raschio argued that Measure 114 does not increase public safety, with plaintiff attorneys saying the measure would make gun owners guilty until proven innocent by requiring those who possessed high-capacity magazines, prior to the law taking effect, to prove when they purchased it.

Aired on 2/12/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The Albany Visitors Association is proud to sponsor Albany's 17th Annual Albany Photography Contest. The purpose of this contest is to find images suitable for use in the coming year's marketing materials for Albany and Linn County. Photographers will get photo credit whenever possible.

Many of the photos will be used in advertising and the official Albany Visitor Guide with 20 thousand printed each year; and sent all over the world. Images will also be used on the associations website, social media platforms, and print marketing.

The contest is open to photographers of all skill levels. Categories include Downtown, Culinary, Events, Historic Albany, Landmarks, People, and Scenic. The Deadline for submission is 5pm Friday, March 8th.

Contact the Albany Visitors Association for more information.

Aired on 2/12/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

ODOT has selected as its preferred option a redesigned intersection of Highways 22 and 51 four miles west of Salem that includes an overpass, roundabouts, and access roads.

According to the Statesman Journal, ODOT recently chose the Northwest Loop Interchange over three other options after feedback online and from in-person open houses. The preliminary cost estimate is \$2 hundred and 70 million dollars.

The current intersection between Salem and Independence has an un-signalized left turn lane for westbound traffic. The proposed interchange would make it easier for drivers because they would take an exit and go through two traffic circles to merge onto

southbound Independence Highway 51. It might be a while since the 2019 Donald-Auroa interchange, won't be completed until 2027.

Aired on 2/13/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

According to Oregon dot gov students entering school from kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> grade are to have 17 vaccinations, as required by state law.

Feb. 21st is School Exclusion Day in Oregon, it's the day when families must submit vaccination record data for their children to show they've received their vaccinations or have been exempted. Families that have not submitted current vaccination records will receive a letter from Oregon Health Authority informing them how to do so. All letters were sent by Feb. 7, according to OHA.

According to CBS News, the kindergarten vaccine exemption rate continues to climb as more and more parents opt out of getting their children vaccinated. As OPB reports Oregon has the has one of the highest rates in the country for kindergarteners with vaccine exemptions.

Aired on 2/14/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

After declaring a state of emergency over homelessness and hoping for more state funding, Linn County now has \$2 point 9 million dollars to aid people without housing. According to the Democrat Herald, the money is spread across multiple agencies, including plans to build "emergency cottages" for families in Sweet Home. They are projecting, adding 1 hundred and 6 shelter and transitional beds.

Originally, Linn County was awarded over \$1 point 9 million dollars. But being a "waiver community," additional funding pushed the total award to \$2 point 9 million dollars, Community Services Consortium news release stated.

A county, multi-agency coordinating group set the goal to create 1 hundred 6 new shelter beds and rapidly rehouse 41 homeless persons and families by the end of June 2025.

Aired on 2/16/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

You probably have not heard of Cynthiana or La Creole Creek, but those were the names first given to what became the City of Dallas and Rickreal Creek, which runs through it.

And on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, the City of Dallas celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> year.

Dallas was first settled by French fur traders around 1840 and the first wagon trains arrived in 1843. The town was renamed to Dallas in 1852 and a few years later moved to the south side of the creek. It was officially first incorporated as the Town of Dallas in 1874.

Among other events, in downtown Dallas, there will be a pet parade at 10: 45, a parade at 11 am, and the burying of a time capsule. For more info, visit Dallas O R dot gov. that's Dallas O R dot gov.

Aired on 2/16/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

There was a time when dark mornings were concerning thinking of children venturing to school during the dark and thought Daylight Savings Time was a must. Just until spring sprung and all would be fine. Not so much anymore.

Last week an Oregon senate committee overwhelmingly approved a plan doing away with the state's annual one-hour switch from standard to Daylight Saving Time. Oregonians living in the Pacific Time Zone would be able to continue using standard time for the entire year under SB 1548. Oregon would become the third state after Arizona and Hawaii to not observe Daylight Saving Time.

In 2019 a rule permanently adopted Daylight Savings Time while waiting for neighbor states to do the same. No longer wanted if standard time passes on a soon to be floor vote.

Aired on 2/19/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

In a move to protect kids, Oregon's legislators in the House, unanimously passed HB 4160, aimed to better protect students from sexual grooming in schools.

According to the Statesman Journal, the bill increases the time, from 90 days to one year after graduating or leaving high school, during which an individual is considered a "student" for laws requiring reporting, investigation, and disclosures about a school employee, contractor, agent, or volunteer engaging in sexual contact with a student.

Republican Kevin Mannix, introduced the bill in response to a civil lawsuit brought last fall by two Salem-Keizer Public School graduates accusing a music teacher of grooming

them while they were students. Testimony exposed the current law's loophole. No one testified against it and the bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Aired on 2/22/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

In a press release, for a family event this weekend hundreds of dogs are expected at the Linn County Kennel Club AKC dog show. This weekend, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> dog lovers will see three dog shows at the Linn County Fair and Expo Center at 37 hundred Knox Butte Road in Albany starting each day at 8:00 a.m.

Bring a chair and spend the day watching judging on various breeds in conformation, agility, obedience, and rally trials. Watch owners take their dogs through the good citizens and tricks test. And don't miss the puppies getting started in the AKC sanctioned 4 and under 6 months puppy competition.

Show hours are from 8 am to 5 pm. Admission is free. Parking is \$5 dollars. For more information go to linn county kennel club dot com and look for the shows tab.

Aired on 2/22/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Oregon school districts are unable to ban books with authors or characters from protected classes under bill SB 1583, that passed this week by Senate Democrats who say it protects free speech.

According to the Capital Chronicle, the bill passed the Senate 17 to 12 along party lines. The bill now heads to the House, where Portland Democrat, Senator Lew Frederick said he expects it'll pass.

Republicans tried to introduce their own amendment to replace the bill with a new measure creating a task force to better establish standards for age-appropriate curriculum and limit books that contain graphic violence, are sexually explicit, contain vulgar language, or lack literary merit or educational value. Senate Minority Leader Tim Knopp said, their amendment was necessary because Frederick's bill eliminates parental rights and local control.

Aired on 2/29/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Oregon's average gas price has jumped up 18 cents this week, the Triple A said in a news release. This means Oregon had the largest week-over-week gain for a state in the nation.

According to the release, Oregon's average gas prices are now \$3 dollars 78 cents a gallon -- up 18 cents. The national average, on the other hand fell to \$3 dollars 27 cents.

Citing atmospheric rivers in California, refinery maintenance, and the switch to summer-blend fuel in Northern California, wholesale prices shot up on the West Coast due to the temporary crimp in supplies. These increases are being passed on to consumers. We can expect volatile pump prices for the next few weeks, said Marie Dodds, the public affairs director for Triple A in Oregon and Idaho.

Aired on 2/29/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

After how long of testing this new system, a long time, Oregonians trying to file for unemployment insurance will have to wait until next week. According to KOIN, the unemployment insurance and paid leave programs are going offline until Monday as the Oregon Employment Department's website is getting an upgrade.

We recognize that big transitions like this can be challenging and there will be bumps in the road, said Unemployment Insurance Division Director Lindsy Leahy. Customers will be able to do a lot more online through self-service features instead of waiting for a letter in the mail or calling the unemployment insurance program.

But is that reassuring with two services involved? As Leahy says phone support and customer service for employers and Paid Leave Oregon Claimants are also unavailable until Monday.

Aired on 3/1/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Cherry farmers in nine Oregon counties will be able to apply for federal loans and aid from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 2023, one of the worst growing seasons on record. Kotek announced that cherry farmers who'll be eligible included Clackamas, Marion, and Multnomah counties to name a few.

Last year, farmers experienced one of the shortest cherry growing seasons since OSU began tracking in 1945. By end of season, production was down 35 percent due to a long cool spring, excessive rain, and rapid heating. California's crop was three week's late last year creating competition for Oregon's cherry crop. And prices to Oregon farmer's dropped by 55 percent.

Growers considered leaving up to half of their cherries unpicked during the 2023 harvest because the cost of labor exceeded profits.

Aired on 3/4/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

After waiting for over a year people can now access Buena Vista Park and Boat Launch again. According to the Statesman Journal, users of the park on the west side of the Willamette River, about 7 miles south of Independence, will see huge improvements. The work just took longer than expected, but worth it.

There's a new lower parking lot, a new boat launch, a new floating dock, and a new bathroom.

The previous boat ramp had been damaged over decades of use. There was also a steep drop-off making it tricky to put a boat in the water. In the lower parking lot, there were 10 boat trailer and eight car parking spots. None were ADA accessible. There were also no accessible routes through the park for people in wheelchairs. So, as weather clears its time for boaters and kayakers to test the waters.

Aired on 3/5/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

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The contest is open to photographers of all skill levels. Categories include Downtown, Culinary, Events, Historic Albany, Landmarks, People, and Scenic. The Deadline for submission is 5pm Friday, March 8th.

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Aired on 3/6/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Time to make your voices heard. Oregon's state forester will recommend moving forward with a controversial HCP, for 6 hundred 34 thousand acres of state forest, but a final decision will come down to a vote from Oregon's Board of Forestry at a meeting this Thursday Mar 7th when Mukumoto makes his recommendations at 9 a.m. at the Oregon Department of Forestry headquarters in Salem.

Cal Mukumoto said he would recommend the current Habitat Conservation Plan, or HCP which prioritizes protecting wildlife habitat while scaling back logging for the next 70 years.

The Statesman Journal reports rural Oregonians say it will mean lost jobs and reduced county services. Concern has only been heightened after the closure of three sawmills in the last two months and predictions that “more pain is coming.”

Aired on 3/6/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The Oregon Legislature on Tuesday passed a bill that would allow school districts to install cameras on school buses so police can ticket drivers who fail to stop for school buses that are transporting children. According to the Capital Chronicle, the Senate passed House Bill 4147 with a 26-4 bipartisan vote. The measure, which has already passed the House, goes to Kotek’s desk.

Under the proposal, a driver who passes a stopped school bus with flashing red lights would face a fine of up to \$2 thousand dollars, the maximum for a traffic violation, and school districts could share camera footage with law enforcement to ticket drivers.

Oregon school bus drivers reported about 14 hundred incidents of drivers illegally passing them in a 2023 report, that surveyed drivers for just one day.

Aired on 3/8/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The Northwest Ag Show has been rescheduled and will take place next week March 13th and 14th at the Oregon State Fair and Expo Center in Salem.

The show had been scheduled for Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> but had to be canceled because of severe weather and dangerous road conditions. Several show sponsors and key exhibitors urged the Capital Press, the show’s producer, to reschedule if dates were available.

85 exhibitors have agreed to attend the show, which will be conducted in the Jackman Long building. It will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on March 13th, and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 14th.

There is no charge for attending the show. The fair charges 5 dollars to park. That’s next week the 13 and 14 at the Oregon state fairgrounds.

Aired on 3/8/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

This week Kotek announced she was halting plans to toll Portland freeways. It’s been an extremely unpopular plan with Oregonians who’d made their voices heard. But according to OregonLive, her reasoning to halt the project is due to inability to keep up with the rising project costs.



In a letter to the Oregon Transportation Commission, which sets state transportation policy, Kotek wrote that she believed it was time to end the work on the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, the state transportation department's plan to impose per-mile tolls on interstates 5 and 205 from Wilsonville to Portland's northern border.

Kotek wrote in her letter to commissioners, the state's path toward implementing tolling is uncertain at best. She wrote that the challenges of implementing the plan have grown larger than the anticipated benefits.

Aired on 3/12/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Animal rescue organizations across Oregon could soon be paying thousands of extra dollars in license fees. That's according to a proposal from the Oregon Department of Agriculture, which oversees the organizations. The new fee structure would charge rescues and shelters based on the number of animals they take in per year.

According to OPB Nearly 2 hundred people testified against the changes at a hearing last month, saying the tiered structure would disproportionately impact smaller organizations. ODA is accepting public comments on the proposal until Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

Karen Green is the executive director of Cat Adoption Team, the largest cat-specific shelter in the Northwest. Beverly Beach is a volunteer for Cat Utopia, a foster-based rescue in Eastern Oregon. They both see the increased in fees impacting services.

Aired on 3/13/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

During a school board meeting Tuesday, Maraline Ellis, vice president of the Salem Keizer Education Association, pleaded with board members to pressure district officials to settle the contract with the teacher's union. Ellis said they don't want to strike. But said they can't accept less than what is fair, reasonable, and helpful to their students.

According to the Statesman Journal, Superintendent Andrea Castañeda said at the meeting she didn't feel it was appropriate to discuss teacher contract negotiations in light of a shooting last week near South Salem High School that left one student dead, two injured, and another charged with murder and attempted murder.

But union members said the incident only underscores the need for smaller class sizes and more money. The vote to strike could come by March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Aired on 3/15/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Construction on the Ellsworth Street Bridge will begin soon, according to the Democrat Herald, redirecting traffic in the evening, starting Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. The bridge will be under construction to raise the beam supports, which have suffered damage over the years by tall trucks passing under — and sometimes colliding with — them.

Work on the Ellsworth Street Bridge, which features two eastbound lanes of Highway 20 over the Willamette River, will require that traffic be redirected during construction hours. Construction is scheduled to commence 8 p.m. on Sunday, March 24.

Closures will be in effect nightly from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Sunday through Friday. Traffic will be detoured onto the Lyon Street Bridge, with one lane of traffic in each direction.

The project is expected to wrap up by fall 2024.

Aired on 3/19/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

As more and more government funding goes to hospitals now three Adventist Hospital medical clinics plan to close soon in the coastal areas. According Becker CFO Hospital Review, Adventist Health Tillamook plans to close three medical offices in Sheridan, Welches, and Lincoln City. Closures are planned to happen from March 17<sup>th</sup> to April 12<sup>th</sup>. Becker reports it's not due to lack of patients.

Taxpayers Association of Oregon reports that Oregon politicians passed a \$3 hundred-million-dollar tax on hospitals and health care businesses a few years ago. Now, Oregon hospitals coincidentally have been losing \$3 hundred million dollars in lost revenue as of 2022.

Then in 2023, politicians passed 77 new and higher health care fees totaling \$17 million dollars.

Aired on 3/20/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The Oregon Employment Department has completed a \$1 hundred and 6 million dollar multi-year effort to replace its outdated computer system. But some users say they are running into a familiar problem: trouble contacting the agency.

Such as claimants say if you call you get a busy signal or you end up on hold for a four hours. In many cases claimants who had previously received benefits using the old website are confused at why their claim was flagged when they started using the new website, Frances Online. Fueling their frustration in their inability to reach the department.

A claimant said they've received benefits since September but hasn't gotten an unemployment check since the new system was implemented. The agency says it's hired 40 temporary staff through August of this year.

Aired on 3/22/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The Oregon Department of Ag reversed a new policy requiring anyone who milks even one cow or goat to obtain a permit from the state. The move comes two months after four small dairy farmers in Oregon filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court asking a judge to stop ODA from enforcing the rule against small dairies.

The lawsuit will continue because the withdrawal is temporary, and ODA has not conceded that it lacked the power to enforce the new requirements, said attorney Bobbi Taylor, of the Institute for Justice, which is backing the lawsuit.

Farms with no more than two producing cows or nine producing goats or sheep are exempt from Oregon's food safety and fluid milk license requirements. Because they don't confine their animals they didn't need to comply.

Aired on 3/25/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Coquille, used to have a Future Farmers of America, or FFA chapter until the 1980s, when it fell victim to budget cuts. According to the Capital Press, the program returned this year, however, thanks to a push from the community and the district's new superintendent.

Now Coquille and four other new chapters — Alsea, Condon, Creswell, and Helix — were welcomed into the organization during their recent 96th annual convention in Redmond. Oregon's FFA CEO Phil Ward said the five new chapters are more than what has been chartered in recent years; indicating demand for high school ag programs.

He expects their organization to continue to grow, which now stands at about 1 hundred 20 chapters, with 16 thousand 6 hundred members, a 55 percent increase since 2019.

Aired on 3/26/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

Malheur County residents could see substantial increases in their electric bill this fall if the Oregon Public Utility Commission approves the Idaho Power Company's proposed rate hike. In its first proposed rate increase since 2011, Idaho Power Company is asking the state to approve rate hikes of 36 percent for irrigators and 27 percent for residential customers, the commission reported.

The commission is scheduled to decide by October. The average farmer irrigating four months out of the year will see a nearly \$2 hundred and 56 dollar increase in their monthly utility costs. During the off-season, the jump in price would be \$9 dollars a month.

Sven Berg, a communication specialist with Idaho Power, said that farmers' energy use varies significantly. Some irrigate thousands of acres, while others only a few.

Aired on 3/28/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.

The USDA has issued a weather-related disaster declaration making sweet cherry growers in Washington eligible for up to \$5 hundred thousand dollars in federal loans. And the development, comes shortly after a disaster declaration for Oregon's sweet cherry industry.

According to the Capital Press, a USDA disaster designation will allow growers to access low interest emergency loans to help bridge operations into the 2024 season. They write that many growers who lost cherry income last year are worried about having operating capital this year as the losses may have affected their ability to get an operating loan. Or congress possibly allowing other funds for aid.

So far, it's too early to know what the 2024 cherry crop will look like, since many trees haven't yet bloomed.

Aired on 3/28/24 on various newscasts throughout the day 60 seconds.