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Tentative deal is reached to end the Iran war

Trump orders a stop to US naval blockade

By MUNIR AHMED, JULIA FRANKEL, ABBY SEWELL and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The United States and Iran reached

an initial agreement early Monday to open the Strait of Hormuz and further extend a shaky ceasefire in the Iran war, potentially allowing desperately needed oil and natural gas to reach the global market.

Details of the deal were not immediately released and Iran signaled implementation would not start until the signing,

which key mediator Pakistan said would occur Friday in Switzerland.

But the memorandum of understanding over the war already faced intense challenges. Israel's continued hostilities with the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah in Lebanon, where Israel bombed Beirut's southern suburbs Sunday, nearly

derailed the negotiations.

Meanwhile, the deal gives just 60 days to resolve what to do about Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium and its atomic program. That took years to resolve in Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from that accord in

his first term, setting the stage for the tensions that culminated in the war.

"Congratulations to all!" Trump wrote on social media as he celebrated his 80th birthday Sunday with a UFC cage match fight at the White House.

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JIM ELSER will retire this year, after serving as the director of Flathead Lake Biological Station for 10 years. (Hailey Smalley/Daily Inter Lake)

Retiring bio station director's love for lakes leaves lasting impact

By HAILEY SMALLEY Daily Inter Lake

Jim Elser met two of his greatest loves at once. The sophomore biology student was taking summer classes at the University of Notre Dame's field station in Wisconsin when he came face-to-face with the woman he would marry and the subject he would spend the next 40 years researching.

"It's kind of a romantic story," said Elser. "I fell in love with my wife, and I fell in love with lakes, and the rest is history."

This autumn, Elser will officially close the book on part of that history when he retires from his role as director of Flathead Lake Biological Station.

Growing up, Elser didn't think a career in biology was possible.

The only scientist he knew was his father, who worked as a physician, and the sight of blood made Elser's stomach churn. He much preferred to examine the living worlds that swam through the streams outside the industrial Connecticut town he called home.

"I guess I was a tree hugger, but I didn't have a very realistic view of science or what a scientist does," said Elser.

It was only after meeting his mentor, Steve Carpenter, at the field

Monday PROFILE Jim Elser

station that Elser realized he could get paid to pursue his childhood hobbies. By the end of the summer, he was head over heels for limnology, the study of lakes and other inland waters.

Many of his early dates with Monica, the woman he met at the field station, involved driving to a nearby lake in the beat-up car Elser inherited from his grandfather, a small plastic boat haphazardly strapped to the top. The duo paddled out to the center of the lake and dipped vials beneath the water, collecting samples that Elser would then spend hours poring over.

After graduating from the University of Notre Dame, the pair enrolled in a master's degree program in ecology at the University of Tennessee. They briefly returned to the University of Notre Dame to work in Elser's mentor's lab, and Elser completed a doctorate degree at the University of California Davis before the couple decided to shift their lives, once again, to Arizona State University.

The desert was, admittedly, a strange place for a limnologist to build his career, but Elser said the new environment also gave him a chance to stand fully on his own, apart from the guidance of more well-established hydrologists.

"Being the only lake guy for 100, 200 miles ended up being good for me because I had to justify my existence," he said.

Over the next 25 years, Elser published hundreds of scientific studies on lakes across the world. He spent his summer breaks and sabbaticals studying tarns in remote Alaskan wildernesses, alpine lakes in China and springs in the Mexican desert. Closer to home, Elser helped develop and led the Sustainable Phosphorus Alliance, a nonprofit that aims to facilitate more sustainable management practices for phosphorus.

Despite his mounting success at Arizona State University, Elser admitted he had his eye on another university position, some 1,200 miles north of the southwestern desert.

Every few months, Elser pulled up the webpage for Flathead Lake Biological Station to see whether longtime director Jack Stanford had announced his retirement. Founded in 1899, the University of Montana's field post on Flathead Lake had what Elser described as a "tremendous

See DIRECTOR, A5

Whitefish City Council set to approve draft budget

By HEIDI DESCH Daily Inter Lake

Whitefish City Council on Monday is poised to approve a \$63.4 million preliminary budget for fiscal year 2027.

The budget includes an increase in expenditures of about \$2 million, which is split evenly between capital projects and an increase in personnel services.

City Council meets at 7:10 p.m. at City Hall, 418 E. Second St.

The draft budget plans to levy 10 additional mills over the previous fiscal year, which aims to address budgetary impacts, including a decline in investment earnings, increasing costs for employee wages, new positions and rising operating costs.

The increase in budget spending is expected to raise property

See BUDGET, A2

Kalispell City Council to vote on forming housing committee

By JACK UNDERHILL Daily Inter Lake

Kalispell City Council on Monday will consider forming an advisory committee tasked with helping to guide a housing study and develop a housing plan.

The proposal stems from a housing initiative Mayor Ryan Hunter championed during his successful campaign for office. While he pushed for a permanent board that would also focus on homelessness, councilors opted for a temporary committee with a set goal and timeline.

Council meets at 7 p.m., June 15 in City Hall, 201 First Ave. E.

The committee would help staff draft a request for a proposal for a citywide housing study. Kalispell has set aside \$126,000 from a grant received in 2023 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to fund the effort.

The five-person board would be able to make policy recommendations to Council and is expected to include members from the public, for profit, and nonprofit sectors with direct housing experience, according to a memo from City Manager

See COMMITTEE, A5

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