

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2026



SUNNY
High, 63. Low, 43. > B10
seattletimes.com

The Seattle Times

WINNER OF 11 PULITZER PRIZES

INDEPENDENT AND LOCALLY OWNED FOR MORE THAN 129 YEARS

\$2.00

FEMA approves nearly \$1.5M for atmospheric river flood recovery

GRANTS | Agency denies statewide assistance that would help protect against future floods.

By LAUREN GIRGIS
Seattle Times staff reporter

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will provide nearly \$1.5 million to Washington communities and organizations for the historic flooding in December

2025, but it denied grant funding to improve preventive infrastructure statewide.

The Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, which is designed to take proactive action against future flooding, also announced over \$19

million in funding to Oregon for long-term projects.

The awards announced Thursday include:

- Nearly \$930,000 to the city of Enumclaw for culvert design replacement to reduce flooding from the Newaukum Creek
- Nearly \$300,000 to Snohomish County for a countywide flood risk study of infrastructure

• Nearly \$180,000 for the Washington State Department of Ecology to develop a flood-risk reduction strategy for frequently flooded areas

FEMA determined statewide mitigation assistance was “not warranted,” according to a letter from the agency to Gov. Bob Ferguson. See > **FEMA, A14**

DOJ drops probe of Fed chair over \$2.5B renovation

By COLBY SMITH, TONY ROMM AND ALAN FEUER
The New York Times

The Justice Department, in a stunning reversal, announced Friday that it was dropping its criminal investigation into the Federal Reserve and its chair, Jerome Powell. The decision could clear the path for Kevin Warsh, President Donald Trump's pick to lead the central bank, to win confirmation.

The decision came just two days after Jeanine Pirro, the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, vowed to continue the investigation despite a federal judge dealing the inquiry a crippling blow in court last month. The move reflected the reality that Trump, who has spent years trying to get rid of Powell and browbeating him to lower interest rates, would not be able to install his choice for the job while the inquiry continued.

Trump had been defiant in the days before prosecutors dropped the investigation, which focused on whether Powell lied to Congress about costly renovations of the Fed's headquarters.

Trump has continually blasted — and inflated — the price of the \$2.5 billion project, saying earlier this week that he had to “find out how this can happen.”

See > **POWELL, A14**

New views of forest animals' world

Woodland Park Zoo's Forest Trailhead, opening next week, offers two-story pavilion space and an acre of outdoor habitat



KEVIN CLARK / THE SEATTLE TIMES

The Forest Trailhead pavilion at Woodland Park Zoo on Friday. Home to various forest animal species, the zoo's newest exhibit will open to the public Friday, with members getting early access Tuesday through Thursday.

By ANGELA LIM
Seattle Times features reporter

Just past Woodland Park Zoo's west entrance, guests can be found strolling through a canopy path in the treetops at the new Forest Trailhead, catching a glimpse of tree kangaroos and a red panda.

The trailhead builds on the zoo's Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program, which started in 1996 to protect the Matschie's tree kangaroo population. The program works with communities in Papua New Guinea to save one of the last intact cloud forests in the world, according to the organization.

Home to various forest animal species, the zoo's exhibit will open to the public Friday, with members getting early access



KEVIN CLARK / THE SEATTLE TIMES

A red panda at the new exhibit on Friday. In addition to tree kangaroos and the red panda, visitors can view kea parrots from New Zealand and nearly 20 species of reptiles, amphibians and fish.

Tuesday through Thursday. The Forest Trailhead, which has a two-story, fully accessible space, will operate year-round from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, according to the zoo. Access to the facility is included in zoo admission or membership.

“There (are) over 40 staff members in Papua New Guinea that are sharing in the celebration of this exhibit that links Woodland Park Zoo across the world, across the Pacific, to the forests and communities of Papua New Guinea,” said Lisa Dabek, a senior director of the program and a senior conservation scientist with Woodland Park Zoo, during a media preview Friday.

Through the exhibit, guests can see tree kangaroos at the zoo

See > **ZOO, A13**

U.S. and Iran prepare for renewed ceasefire negotiations

By MUNIR AHMED, JON GAMBRELL AND JAMEY KEATEN
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — President Donald Trump is sending his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Pakistan to meet with Iran's foreign minister, the White House said Friday, as officials there pushed to revive ceasefire talks between the U.S. and Iran.

The talks planned for Saturday come as much of the world is on edge over a war that has snarled crucial energy exports through the Strait of Hormuz, clouded the global economic picture and left thousands dead across the Middle East.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Islamabad late Friday. Earlier on social media, he wrote that he was traveling to Pakistan on a trip focused on “bilateral matters and regional developments.” He didn't specify who he would meet.

Shortly after Araghchi touched down, the country's government made it clear there would be no direct negotiations with American government representatives during this visit.

See > **TALKS, A14**

Watchdog pushes FAA to address Boeing system that poured smoke into planes

By LAUREN ROSENBLATT
Seattle Times business reporter

The Federal Aviation Administration should do more to address safety risks from an engine feature on Boeing's 737 MAX that has twice filled planes with smoke, a government watchdog said this week.

That feature — called a load reduction device — is meant to pro-

tect the engine from damage in the event of an emergency, like a bird strike. But in two instances in 2023, the system poured smoke into planes. Smoke filled the passenger cabin in one instance and the cockpit in the other, sparking concern that the device could make it difficult for pilots to see and safely fly or land the plane.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's inspector general opened an investigation last year into how the FAA handled safety concerns about the system following internal disagreements within the regulator.

One team at the FAA recommended changes to takeoff procedures for all Boeing 737 MAX oper-

ators, a temporary fix while Boeing and engine-maker CFM International developed a permanent solution. Another FAA team disagreed, arguing that changes to takeoff procedures could increase pilot workload and introduce new safety concerns.

That team, which had final say in what directives the FAA issued, required Boeing and CFM to update the system and declined to change takeoff procedures.

On Tuesday, the Transportation Department's inspector general

See > **BOEING, A13**

© 2026 Seattle Times Co.
Our newspaper contains recycled fiber, and inks are reused.

