

Nestle, pondering an Oregon bottling plant, sees bottled water sales fall

by Scott Learn, The Oregonian

Monday August 24, 2009, 10:42 AM



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Nestle Waters North America is eyeing this spring in Cascade Locks as a source for a new water bottling plant.

Nestle, which is exploring a water bottling plant in Cascade Locks, saw bottled water sales dip about 3 percent in the first six months of the year.

The drop mirrors trends industry-wide, as the recession and perhaps environmental concerns over bottled water have prompted more consumers in North America and Europe to turn to tap water.

Earlier this month, the Swiss company reported sales declines of 2.9 percent for the six months ended in June in its waters division.

Profit margins increased, in part because of falling prices for oil, the feedstock for the company's plastic bottles.

Nestle Waters North America is exploring building its first Northwest bottling plant in Cascade Locks.

The company would tap a spring now used by an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife salmon and steelhead hatchery, drawing 100 million gallons a year to fill bottles of Arrowhead and Pure Life water