

Sharing the outdoors

By Craig F. Eisenbeis
Correspondent

I receive a tremendous amount of feedback from my hiking columns. Most often, it's something like, "Wow, I didn't know about that hike," or "Thanks for telling us about..." Nearly as often, however, readers ask me to share an outdoor experience that they think other people would enjoy.

I also get some good-natured ribbing about giving away someone's favorite "secret" hike, and even the Forest Service gets a little snarky when I write about off-trail destinations. But I've never had anyone seriously suggest I shouldn't write about trails at all because of not wanting other people to be out there in the woods.

Until last week, that is. Someone took me to task for contributing to overcrowding on the trails and said that I shouldn't be telling people how to get to these places. Well, I'll be quick to concede that I don't like crowds, either (which is why I most often hike alone or with just one or two friends). Most of us live here because of what the Sisters area has to offer, and, personally, I like the idea of sharing the outdoors with others.

In this era of greedy CEOs and people who want to build walls around our country, I suppose I shouldn't be surprised to see people who don't want to share. I can't help but be reminded of an incident from my youth. A family from California moved into our neighborhood when I was 11 years

old. By the time I was in high school, their car sported a bumper sticker that said, "Save Oregon for Oregonians." This phenomenon of proprietary unwillingness to share is hardly a new one.

Still, I would rather shine a light on the people with more generous hearts. The first that comes to mind is the man who introduced me to Robinson Lake, a destination that I had never heard of. It's a "very spiritual place," he told me. He shared that he had proposed to his late wife and spent many precious moments there with her.

His wife died of cancer more than 20 years ago, but he still goes to Robinson Lake to honor her memory. He wanted me to write about it so others could share in what he considers a special place.

Then there was the reader who had a fond memory of Yapoah Lake from decades ago and asked for my help in finding it again. She wanted to share the experience with others by leading her hiking group to the lake and suggested that I could write about it to reach even more potential hikers.

Finally, there is one other category of readers — whose number is steadily increasing — that I hear from. I've lost count of the number of people who have thanked me for my articles and explained that they are no longer physically able to reach these places. They tell me how much it means to them to be able to vicariously relive memories of their favorite hikes.

So I will continue to share what we are so fortunate to have in our own backyard.



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

The new bridge at the Brooks-Scanlon Road won't create a pinch point.

New bridge caps Whychus project

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

A new pedestrian bridge now spans Whychus Creek at the old Brooks-Scanlon Road. The installation of the bridge on September 22 capped a major restoration project on Whychus Creek.

The new 125-foot span not only improves pedestrian access; it's also a better structure for the creek. There are no center piers on the new bridge, so it won't pile up debris in heavy flows and become a pinch-point on the stream.

The project really got its start last spring with the removal of the Pine Meadow Ranch dam. PMR agreed to the removal and received assistance in establishing a new diversion point, along

with more efficient irrigation systems that take less water from the creek.

That allowed the Forest Service to launch a re-engineering of about 176 acres of woods along Forest Service Road 16 south of Sisters. Now that Whychus Creek runs unfettered by irrigation dams, work crews spent the summer helping Mother Nature create new, more natural stream channels and creating in-stream habitat with logs and gravel to make miles of stream more hospitable to fish.

The work closed this stretch of creek south of town to public access through the summer. With the bridge installation, that closure has been lifted and folks can explore a new and improved Whychus Creek riparian area.

Sisters salutes...

• Lena Vogelgesang wrote:

My husband and I moved to Sisters Thanksgiving 2013, and I joined Sisters Athletic Club shortly after our son was born that following July.

This place brings me joy and contentedness, while pushing me physically to exceed my own boundaries and expectations.

Khiva's Circuit Class on Mondays at noon is outstanding! She is SO creative with the machines and variety in her workouts that I am constantly challenged. She's also attentive and hands-on with members, exhibiting patience and understanding yet gently encouraging us to dig a little deeper and go a little farther than we thought we could.

Richard's spin classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays are dramatic and ever-evolving. I appreciate how he really engages and does the class alongside us thereby raising the standard of endurance. His taste in music runs the gamut and his selection is quite fun and invigorating.

This has been an embracing community and we keep coming back due to the high character of the staff and the members this place attracts.

Tate has kept the bar high and maintains excellence in all he does from the small details to the big-picture ideas.

Thank you so much.

Common Sense Tip

FOR PEDESTRIANS

MAKE EYE CONTACT.



Sometimes, drivers may not notice you, so look to their eyes — they can say a lot about a person's intentions. And walk on!

Walk Safely. The Way to Go. Transportation Safety — ODOT