



The Ranger's Corner

Ian Reid
Sisters District Ranger

It has been awhile since the last Ranger's Corner. Too long I reckon.

The 35-day partial government shutdown threw a wrench in our public outreach efforts as well as many other projects. But we hit the ground running and picked up right where we left off in late December. As winter reminds us it's not done yet, with recent record-breaking snowfalls, we are ramping up for another busy field season.

Heavy snow brings both blessings and curses. While it protected the soil on our four active timber sales this winter, deep powder complicates public access to many popular areas including recreation access points. Please be fully prepared to spend multiple nights anytime you venture out on public lands in the winter. Also, remember to contact the ranger station if you are requesting authorization for snow plowing on the national forest as it must be conducted in a way to prevent damage to infrastructure.

One touching story that was overshadowed by the furlough timing was the voyage of the Capitol Christmas tree — the People's Tree — that made the long journey from our neighboring Willamette National Forest eastward, retracing the Oregon Trail, to its final destination on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol. Only the second tree to have been selected from Oregon, it passed through Sisters in early December, en route to whistle stops in Bend and other Oregon cities before first climbing over the Blue Mountains then the Rockies.

Making the event even more special was its hand-picked security detail including Sisters Ranger Station's own Law Enforcement Officer Fred Perl. Officer Perl informed me the assignment was one of the highlights of his long career getting to connect with people from all walks of life across our great nation.

Recently, we have hired our new permanent fire employees to be stationed in Sisters as well as a fresh batch of quality seasonal employees who will report for duty in spring and early summer. I am always impressed by the skills and credentials of the applicants interested in our positions. We do have one seasonal

position left in developed recreation and some openings for 16- to 18-year-olds on our Youth Conservation Corps crews stationed in Sisters and throughout Central Oregon. Please inquire with our front desk for details if interested.

Speaking of recreation, we are planning several upgrades to our recreation facilities this year including the Peterson Ridge and Whychus Overlook trailheads and the Indian Ford trail bridge. And if you get a chance check out the work we completed last fall at Canyon Creek Campground on the Metolius River including an accessible, barrier-free toilet and campsite. Or take a brisk walk on the Sisters Ranger District's first official snowshoe trail; the Peak View trail accessible from upper Three Creek Snow Park. We couldn't implement many of our recreation upgrades without our committed partners including Sisters Trails Alliance.

In order to hear from the public we serve, the Sisters Ranger District will be hosting an open house on the evening

of April 11 at the Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire Hall in Sisters. More details will follow but please save the date as an opportunity to meet with Forest Service employees and ask questions or give feedback about current and future projects. We will be close to implementing the Highway 20 public safety project then and will have staff on hand to discuss details of this project and many others.

Finally, I had the honor, along with other USFS employees, to attend the celebration of life for Jefferson County Senior Deputy Dave Blann last week. Deputy Blann was an amazing public servant and true friend and partner of the Deschutes National Forest and Sisters Ranger District. Our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and co-workers, including his search and rescue team. The legacy of David-7 will live on in Camp Sherman, the Metolius basin and, to quote Blann, "from deep in the puckerbrush" of the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness.

Skier dies in tree well at Mt. Bachelor

A 53-year-old Oregon City man died at Mt. Bachelor on Friday, March 1, after falling into a tree well.

According to the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, Deschutes County 911 received a call from Mount Bachelor at about 3 p.m. regarding a skier found in a tree well west of the Northwest Chairlift. The skier was unresponsive and ski patrol was attempting to resuscitate the skier with CPR. The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, Bend Fire Department, Sunriver Fire Department, and U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement responded to the scene. A LifeFlight helicopter was dispatched to the scene, but had to turn back due to

weather conditions.

The skier was identified as Kenneth Brundidge of Oregon City. Brundidge, an experienced skier, was skiing with companions in the area west of the Sparks Lake Run. The party became separated and after a short time of looking for him, his companions notified Mount Bachelor Ski Patrol who started searching for Brundidge. A short time later, Brundidge was found by another skier who flagged down ski patrol; resuscitation efforts were started, but were ultimately unsuccessful.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office encourages skiers and snowboarders to use extreme caution in deep snow and ungroomed terrain.

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