

# McKenzie Pass closed; winter recreation begins



## INTO THE OUTDOORS

BY JAYSON JACOBY

Highway 242, which winds over the lava fields at McKenzie Pass east of Eugene, is probably the most scenic road to cross the Cascades.

Designated an historic highway, this narrow road follows a route pioneered by 19th-century settlers searching for a way to bring cattle from Central Oregon to the Willamette Valley.

It winds through old-growth Douglas Fir on the west side, climbs in switchbacks up Deadhorse Grade — named back in the old days when a horse supposedly dropped dead on its spiraling ascent — and traverses the impressive basalt lava flows through the pass before dropping down to Sisters. The brilliant fall colors of the maple and alder groves of the west slope are unrivaled in Oregon.

But unlike most state high-

ways, the McKenzie Pass is closed in winter because of the difficulty in keeping it plowed of snow, and because the Clear Lake cutoff allows Eugene area motorists to cross the mountains on the Santiam Pass without having to first drive to Albany or Salem. This year, the route closed the last week of October, one of the earliest closings ever.

However, the bad news for scenery-seeking motorists is good news for the hiker, snowshoer or cross-country ski enthusiast. Past the snow gate at White Branch Youth Camp, nine miles from the Highway 242 junction with Highway 126 from Eugene-Springfield, is a bonanza of winter recreational opportunities.

To get to the snow gate, drive east of Eugene on Highway 126 along the McKenzie River. Two miles past the McKenzie Ranger Station, which is on the right side of the road, turn right at the McKenzie Pass junction, which is well-marked with signs alerting motorists to the snow closure.

The two easiest — and most popular — trips from the snow gate are the three-mile hike to the two Proxy Falls, and the five-mile trip to Linton Lake.

The trailhead to Proxy Falls is about two miles up the highway from the snow gate. Start looking for the sign on the right side of the road when you come to the large lava flow, also on the right side.

The trail leads through the lava flow, then into deep forest, before splitting. The trail to the left leads a few hundred yards to Upper Proxy Falls, the right fork leading to the lower falls.

Despite sharing the same name, these are quite different falls. The upper cascade shoots off a lava ramp 150 feet overhead, passing under several logs that have fallen across the creek before continuing downstream. It is a rather misty falls without a single, channeled flow.

The lower falls, though, plunges 200 feet in a more powerful jet. On clear winter days, the sun's rays filter through the trees and glitter spectacularly on the white

snow.

The round trip distance from the snow gate, visiting both falls, is about six miles.

About 1.5 miles past the Proxy trailhead is Alder Springs Campground, and the level, one-mile trail to Linton Lake. This trip is beautiful in any weather — a pure white, sparkling meadow where the lake sits or a silent opening among the trees during a snow-storm.

Linton Lake was formed when a lava flow from the nearby Cascade crest dammed White Branch Creek, backing up the waters to form a 70-acre lake.

The lake is an eight-mile round trip from the snow gate.

Both trips are moderate in difficulty when there's little or no snow. But later in the year, when the snow level drops below these elevations — about 2,000-3,000 feet — they are much easier on snow shoes or cross-country skis. The most ambitious goal is the trip to McKenzie Pass, which is about 13 miles from the snow gate, gaining 3,000 feet in elevation. This

trip should only be undertaken by those experienced in back-country winter travel as it would likely require some snow-camping.

Another winter attraction is the White Branch Youth Camp, which can be reached by a dirt road that takes off at the large parking area on the right side of the road at the snow gate. This is a small snow-play area featuring a sledding hill. More information on the camp can be acquired from the McKenzie Ranger Station.

Although the past two weeks have seen the snow level drop to the level of the Proxy Falls-Linton Lake area, this week's warm rains will have melted the snow. It is possible that the McKenzie Pass highway will be opened the three miles from the White Branch snow gate to Alder Springs and the Linton Lake trailhead, where there is a second gate.

Hikers wanting to avoid the longer trip by driving to the respective trailheads should inquire with the Oregon Department of Transportation for current openings on the highway.

## Burwell dropped from lineup to recuperate from injury

Sophomore tailback Sean Burwell, Oregon's leading rusher the last two seasons, will not play Saturday when the Ducks visit Arizona State, Oregon coach Rich Brooks said Monday.

Burwell missed two games earlier in the season with an

ankle injury and has played in Oregon's last four games despite the effects of the injury.

"Sean's condition has deteriorated the last couple of weeks, and we're doing him a disservice by playing him," Brooks said. "When I watched Donovan Moore run with a screen

pass late in the Stanford game, I realized how much speed Burwell had lost."

Burwell gained 300 yards in rushing and accounted for 456 all-purpose yards in Oregon's first two games, but he has rushed for only 170 yards since returning. Burwell ranks 12th

on the Ducks all-time rushing list with 1,439 career yards and is currently 17th nationally in all-purpose yardage with a 138.2-yard average.

Moore, the walk-on junior who started in Burwell's absence, will take over as tailback against the Sun Devils.

## Hockey team pleased with trip

By Doug Carter  
Emerald Contributor



Most teams wouldn't be too pleased with a weekend featuring one win and two losses, but that is not

the case with the Oregon club hockey team. Despite some misfortune in the Bay area, the team has drawn more positive than negative conclusions about the trip.

"I think we really proved our depth this weekend," Captain Scott Brown said after three games in as many days with only 14 of the 22 roster players making the trip. "I thought we'd be tired and sore on Sunday morning, but we came out and gave (San Jose State) a good game."

It turned out to be a great game, with San Jose State prevailing 7-6 in overtime. The Ducks, finding themselves on the ice just 10 hours after beating California 2-1, fell behind early 3-0.

After rallying to tie the game at three, Oregon took a 6-4 lead midway through the final period before letting San Jose State back in it. With the score tied at end of regulation, the teams agreed to play a sudden-death, five-minute overtime.

Two minutes into the ex-

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## SEAROAD

The  
Chronicles  
of Klatsland

URSULA K.  
LE GUIN

AUTHOR OF ALWAYS COMING HOME AND THE DISPOSSESSED

Ursula K. LeGuin is the much-honored author of more than fifteen novels, approximately sixty short stories, poetry (including chapbooks and three collections), seven books for children (one a winner of the National Book Award), criticism (including two collections), and screenplays.



# SEAROAD

## CHRONICLES OF KLATSLAND

— BY URSULA K. LeGUIN  
AUTHOR OF ALWAYS COMING HOME

Searoad is a sandy track that runs between the town of Klatsland and the Pacific Ocean. Along Searoad you can meet the people who live in the little town and the people who come to stay for a night or a week's vacation in one of the motels — Hanna's Hideaway, the White Gull, and the Ship Ahoy. If you turn east, inland, off Searoad you might come to Lily Heme's little house on Hemlock Street, where she brought up her illegitimate daughter, or you might find your way to Bill Weisler's pottery above the creek, or you might get a good lunch at the Dancing Sand Dab.

If you went there in 1898 you might not find much but a few muddy streets, a lot of spruce trees, and a herd of elk; but then they built the Exposition Hotel, in 1906, where young Jane Heme fell in love with the manager. And all through the twentieth century you'll find a Hambleton running Hambleton's Market, on Main.

If you follow Searoad north you'll come to Breton Head, where Virginia Heme lives now. South, you'll pass the Inman house on the way toward Wreck Point. But if you turn west from Searoad across the dunes you'll find only the long, long beach where the rain women walk and the foam women blow in the wind, at the continent's edge, the beginning of the sea.



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