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Photo by Jeff Paslay
 A wave of Californians wanting to check out the University has increased the number of people taking summer tours.

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Californians flocking to university

(AP) — Californians are fleeing problems in their state college system and boosting attendance at the University.

Last week, about 300 people toured the campus at a time when guides say tours usually number only about 15 to 20 people. Most of the group came from California, said Jen Ellison, a student guide.

"We had to call other guides in," said Ellison, a senior from Bellingham, Wash.

Numbers from the University's admissions office for 1992 suggest that Californians are applying to Oregon in greater numbers than ever before.

The 1,937 Californians who applied for admission as freshmen for the fall 1992 term, which starts next month, represent a 33-percent increase over the number of Californians who applied last fall, admissions director Jim Buch said. Last year, four out of every 10 students were from California.

Buch said they keep coming, despite tuition increases forced by the Measure 5 property tax limit approved by Oregon voters in 1990.

"Californians know about Ballot Measure 5, but they see it as being their Proposition 13. They say, 'Yes, we did that several years ago,'" Buch said.

"But then they go on to talk about the state's budget problems: 'We're overrun with people — it's no longer happening at a humane scale. It's no longer a good environment to study and live. There doesn't seem to be any solution.'"

The Measure 5 tax limit shifts much of the responsibility for funding Oregon elementary and secondary schools from local property taxes to the state. Without some new tax, state government faces cuts of up to \$1 billion in 1993-95 to compensate, and much of that would come from higher education.

The situation is worse in California, said Steve McCarthy, spokesman for the California State University system.