

Campfires banned at Oregon state parks

Zach Urness Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

All campfires and open flames are now banned at Oregon's state parks, including those at the coast.

The ban took effect at 10 a.m. Thursday in response to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's declaration of a fire emergency.

"The campfire and open flame ban includes campgrounds, day-use areas, and all areas of the Ocean Shore and beaches," said a news release from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

The fire ban applies to wood, charcoal, and other flame sources that cannot be turned off with a valve, the release said.

Liquid fuel stoves or cooking devices that can be turned off with a valve are permitted, but cannot be left unattended.

The ban is meant to avoid any accidental fires on parks property that would further tax limited firefighting resources, officials said.

"We understand this is an inconvenience for campers, especially those

The fire ban applies to wood, charcoal, and other flame sources that cannot be turned off with a valve, the release said.

who might not see the immediate need for local fire restrictions," said MG Devereux, parks department deputy director. "We appreciate the public's patience and their willingness to help protect our natural areas."

The fire ban is expected to last at least one week, but will be evaluated based on weather, resource conditions and input from Oregon Department of Forestry and other state and local fire officials.

Visitors planning a trip to a state park should check for up-to-date information about fire restrictions at <http://bit.ly/2uLzdwY> or by calling the state parks info line at 800-551-6949.

Off to vote: Anti-sanctuary state initiative qualifies for ballot

Connor Radnovich Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Voters will decide the future of Oregon's long-standing sanctuary state status in November after an initiative challenging the law qualified for the ballot July 17, according to the Secretary of State's office.

The Secretary of State certified that Initiative Petition 22 had 97,762 valid signatures — 86 percent of the signatures submitted and more than the 88,184 required to qualify for the general election.

The initiative aims to remove a 31-year-old statute prohibiting Oregon law enforcement agencies from arresting individuals whose only crime is violating federal immigration law.

The chief petitioners for the proposal are three Republican state representatives — Mike Nearman of Independence, Sal Esquivel of Medford and Greg Barreto of Cove.

Oregonians for Immigration Reform managed the signature gathering.

OFIR was previously successful in helping orchestrate the defeat of Measure 88, a referendum that would have allowed undocumented immigrants to secure driver's cards.

The state Legislature had passed the

law, but Oregon voters rejected it by a margin of 2 to 1.

The Southern Poverty Law Center designates Oregonians for Immigration Reform as an anti-immigrant hate group with ties to white supremacists.

Immigration advocates have expressed concerns that the removal of sanctuary state status could turn local law enforcement into a "deportation force."

It could also make undocumented immigrants more hesitant to call the police, making communities less safe, they said.

In response to IP 22, new political action committee Oregonians United Against Profiling has sprung forth to defend the law, with supporters including: Nike, Oregon Center for Public Policy, Causa Oregon, Columbia Sports-wear and various law enforcement officials.

According to the Secretary of State's office, numerous complaints alleging signature fraud against the petitioners of IP 22 have been sent to the Attorney General's office.

Contact the reporter at cradnovich@statesmanjournal.com or 503-399-6864, or follow him on Twitter at @CDRadnovich

Squatchy's

Continued from Page 1A

He noticed smoke coming off of the trailer while driving through Silverton and pulled over on A Street near First.

"I originally thought I could put it out with the fire extinguisher, but the minute I got out of the truck I realized, that's not gonna work."

The trailer body, along with the attached grill, smoker, and all of the affiliated equipment—refrigerators, slow cookers, and signs—quickly became completely engulfed in flames.

Lorraine was able to unhitch his truck from the burning trailer, but the truck itself sustained heat damage, a scorched body and rear section of brake and taillights, melted completely.

"I grabbed whatever I could think to grab out of the truck, our phones, our cash," says Lorraine, but then, "I just had to stand there and watch it burn."

The Silverton Fire Department responded and was able to subdue the blaze, but the trailer—and the Lorraine's livelihood along with it—was completely torched.

"Unfortunately," says Silverton Fire District Assist Chief Ed Grambusch, "the entire thing was so consumed with fire that there was no discernible source."

He did note that the report rules the fire as non-suspicious.

Though Lorraine expects insurance to cover a portion of the damage, "the amount of loss is going to be way greater than the trailer itself...when you're building a food truck you don't think

about the amount that goes into it...you don't picture it going up in flames."

According to Lorraine, "what we're being told is that we'll have a \$5,000 max on any one item, but anything bolted in or attached to it they count as part of the trailer," which means that all of the affiliated equipment loaded within the trailer—the smoker, slow cookers, and everything else—insurance may not cover.

The news is devastating to the couple. Jason Lorraine was born and raised in Salem, but spent 20 years in the Army, stationed in Texas. He served 4 tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, before eventually retiring in 2016 and moving home, with his family, with plans to start a barbecue business.

"Our whole family built it and worked on it, it's a family owned business."

Both of his daughters have also enlisted, Kelsey, 19, in the Air Force, and Courtney, 18 in the Army. Courtney leaves for basic training next week.

"Now, we're left without a trailer or any way to make money and the time frame to build a trailer and get it inspected or anything," Lorraine laments, "it would take months."

Friends of the business have launched a Go Fund Me campaign with a \$25,000 goal to help offer some relief from what Lorraine anticipates the shortfall to be between the insurance coverage and the actual cost of replacing the destroyed equipment.

For now, the couple is debating how to move forward, whether that's with a new truck, a brick-and-mortar restaurant, or something else, perhaps even including a Squatchy's pop-up or guest-chef style temporary home.



This is what remains of Squatchy's BBQ truck after it caught fire on July 15.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SQUATCHY'S BBQ

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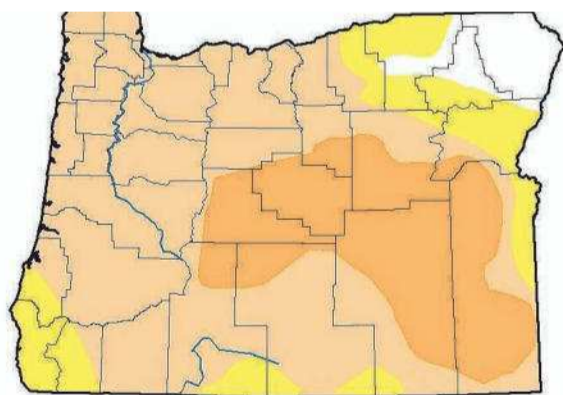
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Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast details.

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USDA NWS IOWA

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Eighty percent of Oregon is now in drought, according to the US Drought Monitor. PHOTO COURTESY OF US DROUGHT MONITOR

Drought

Continued from Page 1A

May and June were two of the hottest and driest months on record in the Willamette Valley, according to meteorologists at the National Weather Service.

July hasn't been much different. The average temperature in Salem has been 86 degrees this month, well above the average of 82.2, said NWS meteorologists.

As a result, 95 percent of Oregon is classified as "abnormally dry," 80 percent is in moderate drought and 25 percent is in severe drought, the Drought Monitor said.

"The month of May really started us down this path, with very hot and dry weather, that mostly continued into June," NWS meteorologist Matthew Cullen said.

"Looking forward, we're expecting extremely hot and dry conditions that look likely to continue into late July," Cullen said.

One result of the abnormally hot and dry temperatures has been wildfire.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared a statewide wildfire emergency on July 20 due to the number of fires burning across the state.

Currently, there are nine large wildfires or complexes burning across the state, and more than 150 small ones, according to numbers from multiple agencies.

The last time Oregon was this dry on the drought monitor scale was November of 2015, the tail-end of one of the state's worst droughts on record.

And it's probably not going to change anytime soon.

"For the next few weeks, we're leaning toward hotter and drier than normal weather," NWS meteorologist David Bishop said.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors writer, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 10 years. He is the author of the book "Best Hikes with Kids: Oregon" and "Hiking Southern Oregon." He can be reached at zurness@statesmanjournal.com or (503) 399-6801. Find him on Twitter at @ZachsORoutdoors.