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Oregon raft, kayak fees could increase to \$17

Zach Urness
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Oregon Marine Board has proposed increasing fees on rafts, kayaks and other non-motorized boats in an effort to improve boat ramp facilities and access statewide.

Currently, non-motorized boaters must purchase a \$5 invasive species permit for crafts 10 feet and longer, often with a \$2 processing fee. The price would increase to \$17 per year under Senate Bill 47, which will be considered this session in the state legislature.

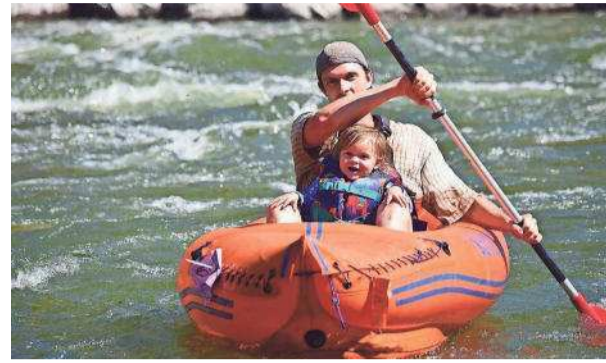
The new revenue would go into an account that distributes money to local governments for waterway projects the state says are badly needed.

Boaters 14 years and under won't need the permit and it could be transferred between boats. A \$5 per week opinion will also be available. The permit would be required on all rivers, lakes and reservoirs — any "boatable waterway."

The legislation is the latest attempt by the Marine Board to find a way to both serve and bring in money from the state's increasing population of rafters, kayakers, drift boaters and stand-up paddlerboarders.

Fees on motorboats have long paid for boat ramps and waterway facilities in Oregon. But beginning around 2011, the number of non-motorized boats began to rise, crowding access points and leading to frustration between the two groups, officials said.

See **BOAT FEES**, Page 2A



Kayaks and rafts over 10 feet long would need a \$17 permit under a plan being considered by the state legislature. ZACH URNESS / STATESMAN JOURNAL



An aerial view of a solar farm owned by Volcano Solar, LLC on 35th Avenue NE in Keizer Tuesday January 15, 2019. DAVID DAVIS AND KELLY JORDAN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Oregon adopts strict rules for solar farms

Companies can build dual-use farms on high-value soil

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission didn't shut the door on new solar farms being built on high-value farmland Friday, but it did allow counties to choose if they could be built under significant restrictions.

The commission voted to adopt temporary rules that apply statewide to no longer allow construction of photovoltaic solar power generation facilities — commonly referred to as solar farms — on soils that are determined

Class 1, Class 2, prime or unique soils.

But if a solar developer can determine a dual use, such as beekeeping, of a solar farm on high-value farmland, they can choose to build on 20 acres if a county allows it.

Marion County in March 2018 changed its codes to prohibit building solar farms on high-value farmland.

There are 289,383 acres of farmland deemed high value in Marion County that will be off limits to new development unless the commissioners change the rules to allow dual-use solar farms.

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Who's performing at the 5th annual Salem Winter Brewfest?

Abby Luschei
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's a special year for Salem Winter Brewfest, because the four-day festival turns 5 years old this year.

Taking place under heated tents on the Capitol Mall, the event will feature local brews, ciders, food and musical talent from the Northwest, Wednesday, Jan. 30 to Saturday, Feb. 2.

Organizer Jason Unruh, said it's hard to believe Winter Brewfest is hitting the 5-year milestone.

"It feels like yesterday that we started," said Unruh, the executive director of the Hoopla Association. "We just want to grow."

The Hoopla Association created Salem Winter Brewfest in 2015 to provide Mid-Valley residents with

a big event after the holidays "when there isn't a ton to do."

It's intended to be one big party with an array of beverages, where live entertainment is just as important as the beers.

The lineup for this year's Brewfest features five acts who all performed at the event in 2018. Bringing back the same acts was intentional, Unruh said, because each one fits the event's atmosphere.

The talent hits all the benchmarks for the organizers: good musicians who are entertaining and take the job seriously.

"For any good party, you just need good music, good drinks, good company, and a good atmosphere," Unruh said. "We strive to be strong in all of those

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Silverton honors top volunteers of the year

Christena Brooks
Special to Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Winter is awards season, from the Grammys to the Oscars, and the atmosphere of appreciation is reaching Silverton too, at the 48th Annual First Citizen Banquet.

It's ironic, but hardly unusual, that this year's First Citizens, recognized for their volunteerism, are more accustomed to giving awards than getting them.

"I always try my best to stay out of the spotlight," said Kevin Palmer. "We typically do stuff behind the scenes."

"I'm an award giver-outer," added his wife, Stacy Palmer. "Being in this position is funny."

For years, this married couple has helped host the annual banquet, respectively organizing and emceeing so Silverton's most active volunteers could be recognized. Now they are the guests of honor themselves.

Kevin, 56, was born in Silverton, while Stacy, 51, moved here from California when she was in the sixth grade. As youngsters, they both watched their mothers volunteer in local clubs and statewide organizations. In fact, Kevin's mom was Silverton's initial First Citizen, while Stacy's still works with her today.

Stacy's grandfather operated the Leprechaun Room, a downtown bar she said had a "rowdy" reputation that operated in the basement below now-shuttered O'Brien's Café.

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Kevin and Stacy Palmer. STATESMAN JOURNAL

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