

Outdoor Rec / Local

Red Cross urges community preparedness actions pre-eclipse

The American Red Cross is urging community members who live in, near or plan to travel into the path of totality during the eclipse to stock up on emergency preparedness supplies now. Specifically, the Red Cross is recommending assembling an emergency preparedness kit for your car and your home.

With one million visitors expected to come to Oregon to view the eclipse on August 21, travelers could be stuck in traffic for hours and people who live in the path of totality may face a supply shortage with the influx of people.

It is essential to have emergency supplies on hand and ready now, days ahead of the eclipse event.

The Red Cross recommends having the following items in your car:

- Ensure your vehicle has a full tank of gas
- Bottled water—one gallon, per person, per day. Use heavy plastic bottles made for water storage.
- Non-perishable food items (power bars, canned food, a manual can opener)
- A flashlight
- A battery-powered radio
- A first aid kit
- Daily vital medications
- Supplies for an infant or children if applicable
- A multi-purpose tool
- Personal hygiene items including toilet paper
- Cell phone chargers
- Extra cash in small denominations (\$1 or \$5)
- Comfort items like toys, games, coloring books for kids, etc. to pass the time if there are delays
- Blankets or a sleeping bag
- Maps of the area (printed copies)

- Jumper cables
 - Emergency contact information written out on a card to keep in your wallet
- The Red Cross recommends having the following items at home:
- Water—one gallon, per person, per day for a minimum of three days
 - The supplies included in your car kit in greater quantities (for a minimum of three days):
 - Supplies for your pets if applicable
 - View a full Red Cross kit list here: www.redcross.org/PrepareGuide.
- How the Red Cross is preparing:
- The Red Cross is coordinating with local emergency agencies along the eclipse viewing path to ensure collective preparedness for any contingency.
- This planning is a standard part of our regular

collaborations with local emergency management officials with regard to large-scale, public events.

If requested by local authorities, the Red Cross is prepared to shelter and feed those who might be displaced by disasters, residential fires, wildfires, or other events.

As part of normal Red Cross readiness posture, supplies such as cots, blankets and water are already pre-positioned across this area and the country.

In addition, more volunteers and resources are on standby in case they are needed. Cellular service could be impacted by the large number of people visiting the region.

If networks go down, the Red Cross will use ham radio or top-priority emergency cell channels to communicate.

Forests prepare

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Human-caused wildfires are a significant concern, given the extreme fire danger across eastern Oregon and the expected increase in campers and visitors for the upcoming solar eclipse. To address this concern, the national forests have activated a National Interagency Wildfire Prevention and Education Team to assist with fire prevention awareness in the days before and during the upcoming solar eclipse. The team will be staffing information centers throughout the three national forests to provide critical fire prevention messages and visitor information. Several information boards will also be placed throughout the forests to provide key information, including maps and pertinent regulations, as well as fire prevention information.

“We anticipate that many individuals traveling to view the eclipse may not be aware of the current wildfire danger,” said April Phillips, Fire Prevention Team Leader. Eastern Oregon hasn’t had significant rainfall since June, so any spark can start a wildfire.

The Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests are now at the peak of fire season. The fire danger rating is EXTREME across the three forests and Public Use Restrictions banning campfires and chainsaw use are in effect. Forest officials ask the public to obey campfire restrictions and forest rules, avoid parking on or driving on dry grass, and be sure there are no chains dragging from vehicles. While this is a celebratory event, visitors must leave all fireworks at home if they are visiting public lands, because it is illegal to discharge or even possess fireworks on public lands.

Most remote areas have limited services, facilities and wireless coverage. Please plan ahead and contact one of the national forest offices to make sure you have the latest information, know the regulations, and come prepared with the right supplies before heading into the forest. Office hours may vary by forest leading up to, and during the solar eclipse.

No bag limit at Thief Valley Reservoir beginning Aug. 16

Dry conditions in Eastern Oregon and declining water levels in Thief Valley Reservoir have prompted local fish biologists to remove daily bag and possession limits on the reservoir starting Wednesday, Aug. 16 until Sept. 30, 2017.

Size and harvest method

restrictions are also lifted so anglers will be able to take any size fish with a rod, a net or by hand.

Thief Valley Reservoir on the Powder River is currently holding significant water, but the storage level is declining at a rate that would have it at ‘dead storage’ level by the middle

of September. ODFW biologist Tim Bailey said that removing the bag limit now will give anglers a better opportunity to harvest trout that will die later when the reservoir is drained.

“When the water level reaches ‘dead storage,’ large numbers of trout get

trapped in isolated pools,” said Bailey.

“Most fish will be stressed in the warm, turbid water and die.

“Conditions when the reservoir is at ‘dead storage’ are also not conducive to the harvesting of fish,” he concluded.

ODFW to take out two wolves

ODFW confirmed another depredation by the Harl Butte wolf pack. ODFW intends to remove an additional two uncollared wolves (not pups) from this pack to limit further livestock losses.

Note the Harl Butte wolf pack is larger than originally estimated. ODFW has found evidence of at least eight wolves remaining in this pack, not including three pups.

Two weeks have passed since ODFW first announced plans to lethally remove wolves from the Harl Butte wolf pack due to chronic depredation.

ODFW removed two non-breeding members of the Harl Butte wolf pack last week. (One 33-pound wolf pup of the year was unintentionally captured and released.)

During the past two weeks, the radio-collared wolf in the pack, the breeding male, has been monitored closely to determine if he and other members of the pack altered their behavior and location. Removal of the two wolves, increased human presence in this area and continued use of non-lethal deterrents by livestock producers did not result in a significant change in the pack’s behavior.

ODFW will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this next removal and livestock producers will continue non-lethal deterrents including daily human presence, removal of any potential attractants, and hazing.

In a different pack, the Meacham pack, on the morning of 8/13/17 an employee of the livestock producer found a dead 550 lb. calf within a 4,000 acre forested pasture. Wolf depredation was suspected and ODFW investigated that afternoon. The eight month old steer was found on its back with the left front leg removed, all internal organs gone, and muscle tissue missing from the ribs, flanks, and front of upper hindquarters. It is estimated that the calf died on or about the evening of 8/11/17.

These injuries are adequate to confirm this incident as wolf depredation likely by wolves of the Meacham Pack.

ODFW test drops juvenile trout

Thousands of juvenile trout were airlifted to the Wallowa Mountains last week by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to supplement the fish populations of lakes within the 361,000-acre Eagle Cap Wilderness.

The Eagle Cap Wilderness has some of Oregon’s most beautiful mountain lakes, including the state’s highest lake, Legore Lake, at an altitude of 8,950 feet. More than 40 lakes in the Eagle Cap are over 7,000’.

“The extreme conditions involved in maintaining healthy fish populations in a landscape above 7,000 feet has its own challenges,” said Jeff Yanke, ODFW district fish biologist in Enterprise, adding, “but anglers have consistently told us that fishing is one of the recreational experiences they expect when they go to the wilderness.”

ODFW stocks Eagle Cap Wilderness lakes by helicopter every two years. The stocking program is paid for with federal Sport-fish Restoration Program dollars, which is funded by a 10 percent excise tax on the sale of fishing equipment. In this way, ODFW seeds off-the-beaten-track lakes with rainbow trout that will hopefully grow to become the eight inchers that anglers legally retain.

The challenges juvenile trout face in the high mountains are considerable. First there is the long fall from the aerial stocking device (ASD) or “shuttle” underneath the helicopter to the cold waters of the high lake. In some of those lakes, the rainbows may encounter

eastern brook trout, which were stocked in the high lakes decades ago and are a voracious predator. Freezing cold water is another factor in the high lakes that can take a toll.

One way to improve survival rates is to start with larger fish. Fish biologists have long known larger fish are better able to withstand the forces of nature than smaller fish. However, larger fish also take up more space, which means fewer of them will fit into the two-gallon containers

on the helicopter shuttle that ODFW uses to transport fish to the high lakes.

This year ODFW’s Enterprise office began testing three sizes of rainbow trout to see which one may fare better with the presence of brook trout in Oregon’s highest lakes. The control group, raised to a target size of 2.5 inches, is similar to what ODFW has released into the high lakes in the past and most commonly used for aerial stocking in other locations. This year two larger sizes:

3- and 4-inch rainbows – were also tested to see if there is any improvement in survival rates as the result of using larger trout. This part of the study will be completed in three to four years.

One of the concerns was that larger fish might suffer more severe injuries when they hit the water after a 70-foot free fall because their bodies have more surface area to injure. Preliminary results indicate all three size groups have high post-drop survival rates.

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