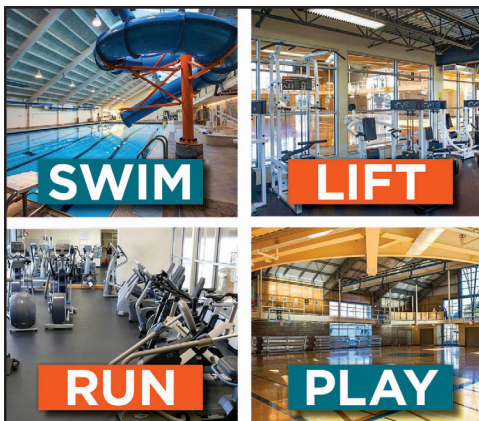




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ALEX DERR

These tides are the regal deal

With the first round of winter's king tides approaching, volunteer photographers are invited to help capture their effects in the Oregon King Tides Photo Project.

This citizen science activity aims to document the highest reach of the year's highest tides, the first set of which will hit the Oregon Coast from Monday, Nov. 25, to Wednesday, Nov. 27.

This is the 10th year that Oregon has participated in this international citizen science effort. The project is sponsored by the CoastWatch Program of the Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition and the Oregon Coastal Management Program of the Department of Land Conservation and Development, along with local partners.

The international project began in Australia, where the highest tides of the year are known as "king tides." These tides arrive when the sun, moon and Earth are in alignment, causing a stronger than usual gravitational pull.

Anyone with a camera can participate. At high tide on any of the three project days (the timing of which varies, depending on location), find a safe spot to observe the tide in relation to the land, snap photos and post them online. More information on the



GREGORY H HENTON

project, a link to tide tables and instructions for posting photos can be found at www.oregonkingtides.net.

King tide photos can be taken anywhere affected by tides, whether on the outer shoreline, in estuaries or along lower river floodplains. Photos showing high water in relation to infrastructure such as roads, bridges and seawalls can be particularly striking, and reveal where flooding problems threaten. But shots of marshes or other habitats being inundated, or coastal shorelines subject to flooding and erosion, are also useful.

The goal of this long-term citizen science project is to document the highest

reach of the tides on an ongoing basis, for comparative study over a period of many years. Photographers who participated in past years are urged to return to the locations from which they took earlier King Tide photos so as to track the tides in that location over time. Photographers are also urged to return to the same locations to take comparison shots at ordinary high tide.

While the King Tides Photo Project can help to identify areas that are currently threatened by flooding, the more important purpose is to gain a preview of sea level rise. The king tides, while extreme today, will become the "new normal" as sea level continues to rise, and storm surges increase, due to climate change. Gaining a glimpse of tidal inundation likely to become common decades into the future will benefit planners, resource agencies, conservationists and coastal citizens in preparing for these changes.

Photographs from past years of the King Tide Photo Project can be viewed on the project's Flickr site, www.flickr.com/groups/oregonkingtides.

For more information about this event or the King Tides Project, contact Jesse Jones, CoastWatch volunteer coordinator, at 503-989-7244 or email jesse@oregonshores.org.