

Winter wonderland: Oregon’s Newberry volcanic monument

By **MARK MORICAL**
The Bulletin

TEN MILE SNO-PARK — During the summer and fall, Newberry caldera is teeming with recreation opportunities — hiking, fishing, mountain biking and more. But during the winter, the only way to reach the caldera is by snowmobiling, cross-country skiing or snowshoeing.

The good news is you can drive along Forest Route 21 all the way to Ten Mile Sno-park, which is only 3 miles from Paulina Lake, one of two lakes contained inside the Newberry National Volcanic Monument. That is not terribly far on a snowmobile, but it’s a bit more challenging on skis.

I accepted that challenge and drove 32 miles to the sno-park from Bend last week on an unseasonably warm and sunny winter day. Most of the rigs in the parking lot appeared to be owned by snowmobilers, but no matter.

A multiple-use sno-park, Ten Mile caters to both snowmobilers and Nordic skiers/snowshoers, and at 5,560 feet in elevation, it usually holds sufficient snow. While some corridors within the trail system are shared, skiers have several miles of blue-diamond marked trails that take them deep into the forest.

Newberry caldera has long been one of my favorite places to explore in the warm splendor of a Central Oregon summer. But I had never been there during winter, sort of assuming that it was all frozen, snow-covered and inaccessible.

The thought of reaching that geologic wonderland — with its lava flows, creeks, waterfalls and lakes — on skis was pretty enticing.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Newberry was built into the shape of a broad shield by repeated eruptions over 400,000 years. About 75,000 years ago, a major explosion and collapse event created a large volcanic depression (caldera) at its summit. Newberry last erupted about 1,300 years ago, and geologically recent lava flows indicate that it could reawaken at any time. The USGS is closely monitoring the volcano for signs of unrest.

While I was not all that concerned about getting blown away in yet another Newberry eruption, I was concerned with finding a skiable trail up the edge of the caldera.



Mark Morical/The Bulletin via AP

This Feb. 24 photo shows Paulina Creek Falls, a 3-mile cross-country ski or snowmobile ride from Ten Mile Sno-Park in the Newberry National Volcanic Monument, in La Pine.

Two main cross-country ski trails emanate out of Ten Mile: Paulina View Trail and Ponderosa Rim Trail. Both wind up the mountain through a mixed conifer forest. Ten Mile to Paulina Lake is about 7 miles round trip.

Many wide, groomed snowmobile trails run from the sno-park to the caldera as well. The La Pine Lodgepole Dodgers Snowmobile Club takes care of grooming the snowmobile trails in the area, and the club also built a warming shelter near the sno-park.

I started along the Paulina View Trail, but I soon found the ungroomed trail too unstable and too uneven for my old classic skis. So I took the easy way out and skied along the snowmobile trail, Trail No. 11 to be exact.

Though it was somewhat of a boring straight shot through the woods, I was able to maintain good footing along the snow and never felt as though I might tumble down the hillside.

After 45 minutes or so of skiing, I could hear the sound of rushing water to my left. Paulina Creek Falls was not far.

A junction to the left led me to a viewpoint overlooking the falls, where a protective railing barely protruded through the top of the snowpack.

The right side of the falls was partially frozen, creating an icy ribbon behind a curtain of falling water. Paulina Creek Falls is indeed more spectacular in the winter.

Back on my skis, I returned to the groomed snow and turned onto

Trail No. 1, which is actually Forest Route 21. I could have skied on the road all the way to East Lake, which sits about half a mile due east of Paulina Lake in the Newberry caldera, but I knew I lacked the energy for that.

Ambitious skiers can also continue on the Paulina Nordic Loop, a 2-mile trail on the south shore of Paulina Lake.

The lake was mostly frozen, but I did see some open water near the shoreline. Paulina and East lakes are now open to fishing year-round, so if you can get to them (via skis or snowmobile), you can fish them — but you might need to have your ice-fishing gear.

I stayed along the road until 7,985-foot Paulina Peak popped into view, its snow-dotted slopes

jutting into the blue sky. A group of snowmobilers with snowboards on the back of their sleds had just returned from the peak. The hauntingly steep slopes of Paulina Peak have become popular with extreme skiers and snowboarders looking for some of the most challenging terrain in the region and using snowmobiles to reach the top of the peak.

The return trip back to Ten Mile Sno-park was steep enough for skiing back down Route 21.

A sprawling view of the snow-covered Cascades dominated the horizon to the west as I neared the sno-park to complete the three-hour, 7-mile loop.

Newberry in the winter is just as mesmerizing as Newberry in the summer. Perhaps even more so.

Trophy hatchery trout headed to Eastern Oregon

Willow Creek Reservoir to get 1,500 rainbows

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

Willow Creek Reservoir will be stocked with 1,500 extra large rainbow trout in April and May as part of an enhanced trophy trout pilot program created last year.

The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife has raised an additional 10,500 trout ranging in size from 1 to 3 pounds, which will be released in five lakes and reservoirs later in the spring.

State Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, worked with ODFW to establish the program during last year’s legislative session. The program was written into a budget note at the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, which Smith served as co-vic chair.

The goal is to help boost the economies of rural communities that depend on hunting and fishing for tourism dollars. Willow Creek Reservoir, located east of Heppner, was chosen as one of two fishing holes in Eastern Oregon under the program’s first year.

Another 4,000 trout will be released in May and June at Phillips Reservoir in Baker County.

Trophy trout will also be stocked at Garrison Lake in Curry County; Trojan Pond in Columbia County; and Timothy Lake in Clackamas County.

ODFW defines trophy trout as those weighing 1 pound or more. They make up a small portion of the 2 million catchable trout that the department releases every year.

Fishery managers believe that raising a higher

“Fishing ... continues to be a favorite activity.”

— **Curt Melcher**, ODFW director

percentage of large fish at hatcheries could help spur interest in fishing across the state.

“Fishing has been and continues to be a favorite recreational activity for many Oregonians,” said ODFW Director Curt Melcher in a statement. “The trophy trout pilot program will allow us to support the industry, support rural economies and provide something new and exciting to generate enthusiasm.”

ODFW plans to expand the program next year by producing 25,000 trophy rainbows and releasing them in more locations. Those have not yet been determined.

Rick Hargrave, deputy administrator of ODFW’s Information and Education Division, said the program will be paid for out of the department’s existing budget. Anglers will not see an increase in fees.

Rep. Smith said better fishing opportunities will attract more people to rural Oregon towns, including Heppner, who will stop to buy gas and eat at local restaurants.

“In a small way, it’s economic development,” Smith said. “It’s going to be a good project for south Morrow County.”

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U.S. House backs bill to boost hunting, fishing on public lands

By **MATTHEW DALY**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House on Friday approved a bill to expand access to hunting and fishing areas on public lands, extend protections for the use of lead bullets in hunting and strip wolves of federal protections in four states.

The bill also would let hunters import 41 polar bear carcasses shot in Canada before they were declared threatened in 2008 and allow limited imports of ivory from African elephants.

The bill was approved, 242-161, and now goes to the Senate. Twelve Democrats joined 230 Republicans in favor of the measure.

Supporters said the bill would protect and expand the rights of sportsmen to hunt, fish and enjoy other recreation on public lands.

“Washington bureaucrats don’t understand that federal lands can be used in multiple ways,” said House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. “By overregulating, these bureaucrats do a lot of damage to our fishermen, shooters and outdoor enthusiasts, stopping perfectly legal and safe outdoor activities. Washington regulations should enable access (to public lands), not stop it.”

Opponents said the bill would roll back important protections for wolves and other wildlife and undermine international efforts to combat ivory trafficking.

“This legislation would open up our most pristine protected lands to road-building, motorized vehicles and other activities that undermine the explicit intent of the Wilderness Act,” said Gene Karpinski, president of the League of Conservation Voters.

The bill waives crucial environmental reviews for decisions affecting hundreds of millions of acres of federal lands, diverts funding meant for conservation and threatens to increase the amount of lead poisoning of birds and other wildlife, Karpinski said.

The bill also contains a provision to remove gray wolves in the Great Lakes region and Wyoming off the federal endangered list. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has long said that

wolf populations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Wyoming have all recovered enough to return responsibility for managing the animals to the state.

The agency has made several attempts to take wolves in the four states off the endangered list but has been blocked by federal courts. The House bill bars further court challenges.

Wolves are well-established in the western Great Lakes and Northern Rockies after being shot, poisoned and trapped into near-extinction in the lower 48 states in the last century. Altogether, their estimated population now exceeds 5,000.

Animal protection advocates contend the wolves’ situation remains uncertain and have sued repeatedly over more than a decade to block efforts to remove them from the Endangered Species Act.

Drew Caputo, vice president of the environmental group Earthjustice, called the House vote unfortunate. If enacted, the legislation “could prove devastating for the recovery of wolves in the continental United States,” Caputo said.

Officials oppose potential Douglas fir monument

ALBANY (AP)—Local officials say they strongly oppose a proposal by environmental groups that would create a Douglas fir National Monument in western Oregon.

A coalition of environmental groups would like to designate nearly 500,000 acres in Linn and Marion counties as a national monument. That would

include most of the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management land in Linn County, said county commissioner Will Tucker, plus nearly 50,000 acres of private land if it becomes available for purchase.

“This is very scary that this is being proposed,” Tucker told the *Albany Democrat-Herald*.

But creating the

monument wouldn’t mean any additional regulations on state or private land unless it was acquired by the federal government, according to conservation lobbyist Andy Kerr. He said a national monument designation would draw tourists to the area.

“They will spend money locally while they are enjoying the forest,” he said.

SKI REPORT

Spout Springs
Tollgate, Ore.
CLOSED

Anthony Lakes
North Powder, Ore.
New snow: 3”
Base depth: 68”
Conditions: Overcast, moderate winds

Ski Bluewood
Dayton, Wash.
New snow: None
Base depth: 65”
Conditions: Groomers in good shape, all three lifts open on weekends.

Ski Fergi
Joseph, Ore.
Weekend status up in air. Visit skifergi.com.

Mt. Hood Meadows
Government Camp, Ore.
New snow: 2”
Base depth: 105”
Conditions: Refrozen snow on the groom. Off the groom it’s hard-pack and rain crust.



SKI AREA

Friday: 5 pm to 9 pm
Saturday: 9 am to 9 pm
Sunday: 9 am to 4 pm
All Holidays: 9 am to 4 pm

Night skiing starts January 1st and is Friday 5 pm - 9 pm & Saturday 5 pm - 9 pm



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