

Recess on the winter playground of Eastern Oregon

By JENNIFER COLTON

Eastern Oregon has been touched, blanketed and, in some cases, pummeled with winter weather this season, and the snow has created great opportunities for winter recreation activities. So pack up the kids and head outdoors!

Sledding

One of the best introductions to winter sports is also one of the simplest: sledding! The city of Hermiston offers sledding right downtown with a sledding hill under the "Union High" arch off Northeast Second Street. The hill is at the former school location and fully fenced off from all vehicular traffic. Another designated snow area is in the Umatilla National Forest. Near Tollgate, Andies Prairie – about 26

miles east of Weston or 14 miles northwest of Elgin – is the only designated sledding and winter camping area in the Blue Mountains. Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the sledding area from Dec. 1 through April 1. The Forest Service also maintains the Rose Springs site, 15 miles south of Pomeroy, Washington.

Snowmobiling

If you're looking for something a little faster, and a little more adventurous than sledding, Eastern Oregon has numerous snowmobiling trails, and, during the winter, closed



Anthony Lakes is located just outside of North Powder on the other side of the Blue Mountains. For more information on Anthony Lakes, you can call 541-856-3277 or visit the resort's web page.

Along with Spout Springs, the Umatilla National Forest oversees another ski area in the Blue Mountains: Ski Bluewood, which operates under special use permits and offers downhill skiing from late November through early

April. You can check its website (bluewood.com) or Facebook page for more information and snow conditions.

forest roads are accessible by snowmobile within the Umatilla National Forest – as long as riders are aware of skiers and snowshoers. In the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, the Blue Mountains North and Grande Ronde River Basin Area offer developed recreation sites and trails across the northern Blue Mountains near La Grande. If your family is up for more of a drive, Baker County offers more than 900 miles of snowmobile trails, including many in Sumpter, Halfway and Unity. The U.S. Forest Service does offer motorized recreation use maps for trails and more information for each site. These are available at your local Forest Service office.

Downhill skiing and snowboarding

Although Spout Springs Ski Area is currently closed, there are a couple other nearby options. With the slogan "Same as it ever was," Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort specializes in skiing, snowboarding, and all sorts of winter recreation.

April. You can check its website (bluewood.com) or Facebook page for more information and snow conditions.

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing

Although much of the attraction of cross-country (a.k.a. Nordic) skiing and snowshoeing are the opportunities to travel off the beaten bath, there are designated trails throughout Eastern Oregon forest lands. The Nordic trail systems are marked with blue, diamond-shaped markers and primarily follow existing roads. The 7-mile Horseshoe Prairie trail, 7 miles south of Tollgate, and the 12-mile Meacham Divide trail system, 37 miles east of Pendleton, remain popular. The latter is groomed by the Blue Mountain Nordic Club; details are online at new.onc.org/bmnc.

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CHOOSE CAR SEAT:
BY AGE & SIZE

THE NUMBER
OF PEOPLE
**WHO
THINK**
THEY HAVE
THEIR CHILD
IN THE RIGHT
SEAT.



THE ONES
**WHO
ACTUALLY
DO.**

KNOW FOR SURE
IF YOUR CHILD IS IN THE RIGHT CAR SEAT.



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