

Progress made on building demolition



An excavator removes rubble from the site of the former We Sell Stuff building at 342 S.W. First St. in Pendleton on Tuesday afternoon. The building, which was severely damaged in a fire on Sept. 29, 2019, was torn down over the course of the last several weeks.

Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

National forests close developed recreation sites

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman national forests are temporarily closing all developed recreation sites to align with direction from state governors during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, according to a press release from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The closure applies to campgrounds, trailhead facilities, picnic areas, rental cabins, sno-parks and boat ramps across the shared footprint of the forests in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Forest roads, trails, and general forest lands remain open to the public, but all visitors are urged to practice social distancing.

The three national forests in the Blue Mountains are jointly taking these measures to encourage compliance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance on social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19. The governors of Oregon, Washington and Idaho have called for residents to stay home and avoid any nonessential travel or gatherings. Additionally, these



Photo courtesy of U.S. Department of Agriculture

The U.S. Forest Service has announced temporary closures in the Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests.

closures will reduce potential pressure on emergency services in rural communities. Those who become lost, injured or otherwise in need of assistance, while recreating in the forest, may strain limited search, rescue and health care resources at a time when there are no resources to spare.

“We recognize the

impact that these closures will have on people looking to the outdoors for a respite from these challenging times, but protecting community health and safety is our first priority,” the release said. “This action will significantly reduce risks to forest visitors, employees, volunteers, and contractors from coronavirus.”

While developed recreation sites are closed, the national forests are currently open. At this time, commercial and private activities, such as timber harvest, grazing and dispersed recreation, may continue. All reservations made for forest recreation facilities during the temporary closure will be fully refunded.

State pivots from packets to ‘Distance Learning for All’

Schools expected to submit distance learning plan by April 13

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — Just as local school districts started to distribute work packets for students, the Oregon Department of Education is making another sweeping change to the education system in light of the ongoing COVID-19 school closures.

Acknowledging that students may not return to school facilities before the end of the school year, Colt Gill, the department’s director, announced Monday night that the state was adopting a “Distance Learning for All” model and was expecting all schools in Oregon to submit a distance learning plan by April 13.

The directive comes two weeks after Gov. Kate Brown signed an executive order requiring districts to only provide “learning supports and supplemental services” until April 28, which is still the presumptive date students are supposed to return to school.

Matt Yoshioka, the Pendleton School District’s director of curriculum, instruction and assessment, said the prospect of closing schools for the rest of the year was in the back of district officials’ minds, but the new plan still came as a surprise.

Yoshioka noted that Brown had not yet issued a new executive order extending the school closures and the state had previously assured local districts that they didn’t want to move to distance learning during the shutdown because of the potential for inequity.

InterMountain Education Service District Superintendent Mark Mulvihill has said so often recently that schools are in a constantly changing environment that he thinks it’s starting to become cliché.

“If there’s anything we’ve learned from this pandemic, it’s that plans change overnight,” he said.

Distance Learning for All calls for teachers and other educational staff to reconnect with their students on a regular basis, whether that’s online or by other means,

and monitor student progress from a distance.

Mulvihill said districts in the region had already gotten creative in how they were providing supplemental material, and he was confident K-8 schools would be able to make the transition to distance learning.

He still had questions about how it would work with high schools, where students can earn credits toward high school graduation and college.

Districts are still waiting on guidance from the department of education on how to graduate seniors who have fallen behind on credits due to the closures, despite the department saying it intended to release new rules last week.

While encouraging more interactions between staff and students, the state’s distance learning plan also stresses that districts need to maintain equity between students with internet access and those without.

Yoshioka said the district can rent out plenty of laptops, but one of the problems Pendleton will need to solve with its plan is how to serve students without internet access.

Mulvihill said districts will need to be creative to bridge that gap, with internet-deprived students likely to receive more printed packets and phone calls with staff.

While districts have spent recent years adopting new policies to limit private, unsupervised, one-on-one contact between students and teachers to protect each party from unethical situations and abuse, Distance Learning for All asks districts to revise their policies if electronic and telephonic communication are prohibited.

Yoshioka, who used to give out his home phone number to parents during his teaching days, says staff will still be expected to act professionally when communicating with students.

Mulvihill said the uncertainty with education extends beyond distance learning.

Districts are expected to turn in their applications for Student Success Act funding around the same time they submit their distance learning plans.

Mulvihill said districts won’t know their long-term outlook until the Oregon Legislature meets next year to set an educational budget.

BRIEFLY

COVID-19 confirmed in Wallowa County

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County has its first positive test for COVID-19.

The Oregon Health Authority on Tuesday afternoon reported two new deaths from the coronavirus and 84 new cases statewide. One of the new cases is in Wallowa County.

The OHA announced the

positive COVID-19 test came from a resident in their 40s. The individual is not hospitalized and is isolated while recovering. The state health agency is conducting the investigation including identifying potential contacts.

The person was tested outside of Wallowa County and remains outside of Wallowa County.

Oregon’s total number of confirmed cases rose from 606 Monday to 690 Tuesday.

— EO Media Group

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FINAL NOTICE  
ATTENTION  
ALL PENDLETON ROUND-UP STOCKHOLDERS

We recently tried contacting all of our stockholders to keep coordination with our updated bylaws. We are seeking confirmation from all stockholders in order to validate those stock certificates currently on record.

Deadline will be April 30th, 2020. Please contact our offices at 541-612-3240 to provide us information regarding the status of your stock.



2020 BUTTE CHALLENGE  
5K RUN, 5K WALK AND 10K RUN  
Saturday, May 9th • 8:30am  
All races begin & end at Butte Park  
DRAWINGS!  
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Online registration & race information can be found at [www.ButteChallenge.com](http://www.ButteChallenge.com)  
Register online by April 25th to order a custom technical race T-Shirt.

All proceeds benefit the Hermiston Cross Country program

Thank you for your support!



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