



Wallowa County Chieftain, File

A couple keeps cool in the water at Wallowa Lake State Park as watercraft, from paddleboards to jetboats, clog the lake with boaters in September 2020. Most camping rates at the park will not change as the 2021 season opens.

Electric hookup fees to rise at state parks

Regular camping fees stay unchanged

Chieftain staff

SALEM — Wallowa Lake State Park is one of 21 state parks that will see their electric hookup rates increase as they open this spring as campgrounds prepare for the 2021 season, while regular camping rates remain stable, according to a press release.

"Our visitors and staff have weathered a rough 12 months," said Lisa Sumption, director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. "None of us imagined this time last year that we would face a more than two-month shutdown of Oregon State Parks and then reopen under pandemic and safety precautions, fol-

lowed by last September's wildfires that damaged our local communities and several state parks. This February's ice storm also brought down trees and limbs and damaged some facilities in northern Willamette Valley and Columbia River Gorge parks."

Sumption said the OPRD has fewer employees and a revenue shortfall that led to fewer hires, including seasonal staff.

Oregon Lottery revenue and park visitor fees are projected to be down more than \$20 million by the end of the 2019-21 biennium that ends June 30.

Overnight camping rates will remain the same as 2020 rates except for a \$3 increase for electric hookup and full hookup sites in selected parks May 28 to Sept. 6. The electric hookup

rate range will be \$24-\$35 and the full hookup range will be \$26-\$38 per night at 20 other parks. In addition to Wallowa Lake State Park, those include Beverly Beach State Park, Bullards Beach State Park, Cape Blanco State Park, Cape Lookout State Park, Devil's Lake State Recreation Area, Fort Stevens State Park, Harris Beach State Park, Jessie M. Honeyman Memorial State Park, Nehalem Bay State Park, South Beach State Park, Sunset Bay State Park, William M. Tugman State Park, The Cove Palisades State Park, LaPine State Park, Tumalo State Park, Valley of the Rogue State Park, Champeog State Heritage Area, Detroit Lake State Recreation Area, L.L. Stub Stewart Memorial State Park and Silver Falls

State Park.

A temporary, COVID-related surcharge that added up to an additional 30% fee to overnight stays for out-of-state campers ended March 1. All campers in 2021 will pay the same rates. The OPRD plans to open a public discussion about making out-of-state rates a normal part of the overnight stay rate structure.

Some pandemic-related, temporary changes remain in place based on statewide restrictions to group gatherings, including keeping group facilities and hiker/biker camping areas closed. In addition, visitor stays in yurts and cabins are followed by a one-day resting period. The resting day reduces overall availability, but staff uses the time to thoroughly clean the facilities to ensure visitor safety. Yurt and cabin visits in coastal campgrounds require a two-night minimum stay.

The OPRD budget is 44% Lottery Fund dedicated by Oregon voters in 1999 and 2010; 50% "Other Fund" from park visitors, a portion of recreational vehicle registrations and other sources; and 6% federal fund, mainly for heritage-related programs.

For more information about Oregon State Parks and campgrounds, visit stateparks.oregon.gov.

Oregon needs massive infusion of vaccine to meet Biden's goal

By GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon would need up to double the doses of COVID-19 vaccine it currently receives to fulfill President Joe Biden's seven-week sprint to allow all adults to be offered inoculation, Oregon health officials said Friday, March 12.

Gov. Kate Brown and top state medical experts held a press call Friday to say they hoped to meet Biden's timeline, but would move cautiously.

Brown said she welcomed Biden's "audacious announcement."

"I will do everything I can to make it happen," Brown said.

Oregon's current staggered priority groups wouldn't match Biden's deadline until July 1.

States have the central authority over public health and Brown said the present plan would stay in place until there was a guaranteed supply before she would unleash additional demand onto the already strained system.

Oregon officials were only recently told they would receive 200,000 doses per month, up from the previous 120,000 doses.

Asked how much more vaccine Oregon would need to meet Biden's schedule, Allen said it would "require a doubling of those doses."

"It would need to be an increase on that kind of order of magnitude," Allen said. "Maybe 300,000."

Part of the math problem has to do with the vaccines themselves. Until recently, Oregon was only receiving the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, each of which requires two shots given about a month apart.

The state has received the initial shipments of a new vaccine from Johnson & Johnson that requires a single shot.

Brown and Allen both said their caution came from not wanting to set off the kind of policy whip-lash that hit Oregonians in mid-January.

When the Trump administration announced the immediate release of a large stockpile of additional doses, Brown dropped her carefully crafted priority tier policy. She announced everyone in Oregon age 65 and over would be eligible for shots.

Trump officials said within 48 hours that there was no stockpile of new doses.

"This is a deception on a national scale," Brown said at the time.

The governor had to reverse herself and put eligibility restrictions back in place.

Biden said Thursday that he wanted the nation far enough along in its vaccination program to allow for small celebrations of July 4.

"If we all do our part, this country will be vaccinated soon, our economy will be on the mend, our kids will be back in school and we'll have proven once

again that this country can do anything," Biden said.

Though Oregon officials have a much-higher level of confidence in Biden's streamlined transport system and increased manufacturing of vaccine, Allen said supply needed to be on the way first.

"We know the previous administration made previous announcements it was unable to fill," Allen said.

Oregon is currently limiting shots to health workers, residents of nursing homes, educators and day-care workers, and most recently, all residents age 65 and older as of March 1.

The next eligible group can seek shots March 29. It's a long list that includes adults age 45 and older with specific medical issues, agricultural and other food processing workers, homeless people, residents of low-income housing, those displaced by last year's wildfires and wildland firefighters.

Pregnant women age 16 and over were recently added to the group.

OHA has not been able to give estimates on how many people will become eligible on March 29.

May 1 — the date that Biden wants eligibility to be offered to all adults nationwide — is currently listed as adding frontline workers (those who deal daily with the public), those living in multigenerational households and those age 16-44 with certain medical conditions.

Brown's plan calls for everyone age 45 and older to be eligible June 1. On July 1, all adults would be able to seek shots.

Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state's top infectious disease expert, said officials were looking at studies from around the country about school reopenings. Some indicate Oregon's mandate for students to be spaced six feet apart when they return to the classroom could be cut to three feet. No policy change is currently in the pipeline, despite requests to Brown from school districts.

Allen said the vaccination effort involving seniors was going well statewide, though he noted some counties — such as Deschutes — were ahead of the goal to have 75% of eligible seniors inoculated, while other counties lagged behind.

Brown praised the support of Oregon's congressional delegation for Biden's \$1.9 trillion stimulus legislation, which includes \$1,400 direct payments to Americans, aid for COVID-19 distribution, unemployment aid and funds to buttress state and local budgets strained by the pandemic.

Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario joined all House Republicans in opposing the bill, saying it was too expensive and included too much nonpandemic-related spending. The rest of Oregon's congressional delegation — all Democrats — supported the bill.

SUPPORTING WALLOWA COUNTY'S LOCAL AGRICULTURE

WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK OUR FARMERS, RANCHERS & PRODUCERS FOR ALL THEY DO TO MAKE OUR AREA A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

M. CROW & CO. LOSTINE, OR. SINCE 1907
GENERAL STORE

eomedia group
The most valuable and respected source of local news, advertising and information for our communities.

eomediagroup.com

CARPET ONE FLOOR & HOME

CARPETING WALLOWA COUNTY

Supporting Wallowa County Agriculture
Ag Day March 23rd

CARPET • LUXURY VINYL • TILE • HARDWOOD • FURNITURE • AND MORE

800 S. River Enterprise, OR • 541-426-9228 • www.carpetone.com

WALLOWA COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Pet of the Week

BARN HOMES?

WC Humane Society is in desperate need of BARN HOMES for healthy, fixed, adult cats. We have a very limited number of foster homes. YOU CAN HELP! Call WC Humane Society to have ferals spayed and neutered young to prevent spraying. Adopt an adult cat for your Barn and/or BECOME a volunteer FOSTER!

Brought to you by,

Call WC Humane Society at 541-263-0336 for more information
<http://www.wallowacountyhumane.org/>

MAIN STREET MOTORS
Old Fashioned Values Sales & Service