

Camping in RVs during winter calls for special preparations

From wilderness backpackers in pop-up tents to campers who find cooking and sleeping in an RV more civilized, winter camping is gaining momentum.

There is nothing quite like having almost an entire campground to yourself to hike, cross-country ski, view nature and enjoy the serenity of the location.

Winter camping takes more prep work than warm weather outings, but outdoor enthusiasts say it's worth it. Just remember: before heading to your favorite campground, check ahead.

Campgrounds in higher elevations often close as early as mid-September until springtime.

Here are some tips to consider before heading to the great — but cold — outdoors.

Before beginning your trip, check with your RV dealer or the many various RV associations for insulating hoses and water sources to properly oper-

ate in freezing temps.

Your RV may be well-equipped but in the winter, prepare for a scenario where you could be stranded due to winter storms. In that case, a portable generator is indispensable.

"A generator can keep the RV batteries topped off and allow you to use the RV furnace and keep your cellphone and laptops charged, something you will appreciate in an emergency," said Dorrance Noonan of A-iPower, a manufacturer of portable power equipment.

Safety First:

- When in a cold or freezing environment, it's natural to want to seal your space tightly to keep out drafts. But, portable generators exhaust carbon monoxide (CO), a tasteless, odorless, and deadly gas. That makes it extremely important to keep your generator running away from your RV with the exhaust pointed in the opposite direction.
- Never run your generator

when you or someone else is sleeping.

- Always have a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector in your RV. This is important not only when using the generator, but in other instances when the lethal gas is present. Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed.

To that end, never use a generator, grill, camp stove or charcoal burning device inside or in any partially enclosed area; keep these devices at least 20 feet from doors, windows, and vents.

- At high levels, carbon monoxide can cause death within minutes. Symptoms of overexposure to carbon monoxide include headaches, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea and confusion.

If you suspect you may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning or your detector

sounds an alarm, head outside immediately for fresh air and call 911.

- Never transport your generator in the back of your RV or your SUV if you are towing a camper. The best way to transport your generator is to have a platform built on the back of your RV.

OSHA recommends that gasoline and other generator fuels should be stored and transported in approved containers that are properly designed and marked for their contents, and vented.

- Before running your generator, always read the owner's manual for proper operation and safety tips.

Choosing a portable generator for your RV:

- The more watts your generator has, the more items you can power at the same time. To know how much you will need, calculate all the wattage requirements of all the accessories you plan to operate on

generator power.

Typically, wattage is listed on the device, on the back or on the bottom. If not, a simple formula for determining watts is multiplying volts x amps. The total will tell you the model of generator you need.

- Another important factor to consider is how long you will be running your generator. The generator run time is found on the generator spec sheet and owner's manual.

Run time is determined at 50 percent load levels and the power used directly impacts the run time. The more power used, the shorter the run time and the sooner you will have to refuel.

"During cold weather camping, you won't need to power your air-conditioner, so a generator with about 2,000 starting watts should suffice," Noonan said. "Typically this is found in inverter generators, which are lighter, easier to transport, and run quieter than the larger portable generators."

Fishing from 1B

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

MID COAST LAKES:

The trout stocking schedule for 2017 is available online and trout have been stocked in some lakes. Fishing for the various warm water fish species will slow as water temperatures cool. There are numerous lakes in the Florence area that can provide good opportunity.

ALSEA RIVER AND BAY: Steelhead

Steelhead fishing is open on the Alsea River and listed tributaries. The river is shaping up after last week's rain. Fishing is slow. Alsea Hatchery is hav-

ing a below average return to the hatchery.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

SALMON RIVER: Steelhead

The Salmon River is open for wild and hatchery steelhead. Fishing is slow.

Wild winter steelhead can be retained on the Salmon River. Daily and annual bag limit on wild winter steelhead are 1/day and 3/year.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

SILETZ RIVER: Steelhead

The river is shaping up after last week's rain. Steelhead fishing is fair. Drift boaters are having fair success from Moonshine Park to Siletz and bank anglers are catching

hatchery fish in the Siletz gorge.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

WILSON RIVER: Steelhead

Fishing was slow on the Wilson last weekend due to high water and marginal conditions. It should be dropping into prime shape by the end of the week and through the weekend. There should be plenty of broodstock hatchery and wild steelhead around, and there have been some big fish coming off the Wilson this year.

All the usual techniques such as side drifting, float fishing, drift fishing, or pulling plugs or divers and bait should be effective.

During high water use brighter colors and larger presentations.

YAQUINA RIVER: Steelhead

The Yaquina River and Big Elk Cr. are open for steelhead. Fishing is fair. Wild winter steelhead can be retained on Big Elk Cr. with a daily and annual bag limit of 1/day and 3/year.

The Yaquina River is open for hatchery winter steelhead. Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

COOS COUNTY LAKES AND PONDS: Trout

A few hatchery male steelhead were stocked into Middle Empire Lake this week to allow anglers for more opportunity.

Fishing regulations for these stocked steelhead in Empire Lakes are just like the trout regulations. Anglers can keep 1 fish over 20 inches per day and only need their fishing license.

Fishing for trout in other area lakes has been slow. Trout stocking in area lakes will start at the end of February/early March.

COOS RIVER BASIN: Dungeness crab, bay clams, rockfish, steelhead

Trout fishing in streams is now closed until May 22, 2017.

Currently all steelhead rivers in the Coos Basin are high and muddy.

The West Fork Millicoma River will be the first river to clear. When water conditions are good, anglers are still catching fish throughout the Coos Basin. Anglers are drifting eggs or corkies along the stream bottom or using a jig suspended under a bobber.

Anglers fishing the South Fork Coos River above Dellwood will need a permit from Weyerhaeuser, which they can pick up at the Dellwood office. In the Coos Basin 1 additional hatchery steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of 3 adult fish harvested daily.

Anglers have been catching a few rockfish and surfperch along the jetties and submerged rock piles.

COQUILLE RIVER BASIN: Crab, steelhead, salmon

Trout fishing in streams is now closed until May 22, 2017.

All of the Coquille Basin steelhead rivers were high and muddy this past weekend.

Anglers have been catching hatchery steelhead at LaVerne Park on the North Fork Coquille River and on the South Fork Coquille River from Powers downstream to Broadbent.

Bank anglers have been plunking with Spin-n-Glos and bait near the town of Coquille. Anglers have had success drifting eggs or corkies. In the Coquille Basin 1 additional hatchery steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of 3 adult fish harvested daily.

Recreational crabbing is open in the Coquille estuary but crabbing is very slow due to the large amounts of freshwater coming downstream.

TENMILE BASIN: Trout, bass, steelhead

Trout fishing in the streams of the Tenmile Basin are now closed until May 22.

Trout fishing in Tenmile Lakes is open all year.

A few steelhead have been reported in Tenmile Creek. Anglers will have success plunking near the acclimation sites or fishing a jig under a bobber. Eel Creek is now open to steelhead fishing.

In the Tenmile Basin 1 additional hatchery steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of 3 adult fish harvested daily.

Largemouth bass fishing has been slow. Anglers are catching bass near structure or on the deep end of the weed lines using jigs or rubber worms.

UMPQUA RIVER, SOUTH: Steelhead

Good numbers of steelhead are being caught up to and above Canyonville and anglers are hooking into a few hatchery fish.

Pay attention to river gages for the South as it has been

high and unfishable a large portion of the time this season.

WINCHESTER BAY: Bottomfish, perch

Fishing for bottom fish in the Triangle and South jetty has been successful.

PACIFIC OCEAN AND BEACHES: Bottomfish, surf perch, crab

Recreational crab harvesting is open along the entire coast from the Columbia River to the California border.

Bottom fishing has been good when the ocean conditions allow.

Recreational harvest of razor clams is closed on the entire Oregon coast due to elevated levels of domoic acid. Harvest of mussels is open on the entire Oregon Coast.

Before any shellfish harvest trip, make sure to check the Oregon Department of Agriculture website for any updates.

Surf perch fishing has been good when ocean swells are small. Surf perch anglers will do the best fishing with sand shrimp or Berkely Gulp sand worms.

OCEAN SALMON

The ocean recreational salmon fishery off Oregon is currently closed. Please stay tuned for updates on the 2017 seasons. Details, including regulations, and more information on ocean salmon seasons.

BOTTOM FISHING

When the weather allows, fishing in the winter months for lingcod and rockfish can be fun and successful. Some anglers that were able to fish last weekend caught limits of rockfish and some lingcod.

PACIFIC HALIBUT

New for 2017 vessels fishing for or retaining halibut will be required to have onboard a functioning rockfish descending device, and use it to descend any rockfish released when fishing outside of the 30 fathom regulatory line.

SHELLFISH

Call the ODA shellfish safety hotline at 1-800-448-2474 before harvesting for the most current information about shellfish safety closures.

Additional information is available from ODA's Food Safety Program at 503-986-4720 or the ODA shellfish closures website.

CRABBING

Ocean and bay crabbing is open coastwide. Bay crabbing has slowed down as it typically does this time of the year.



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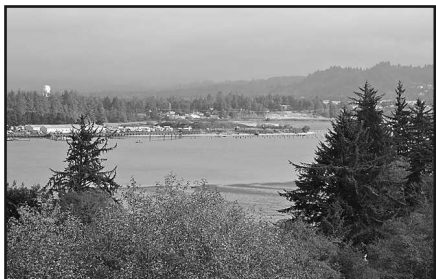


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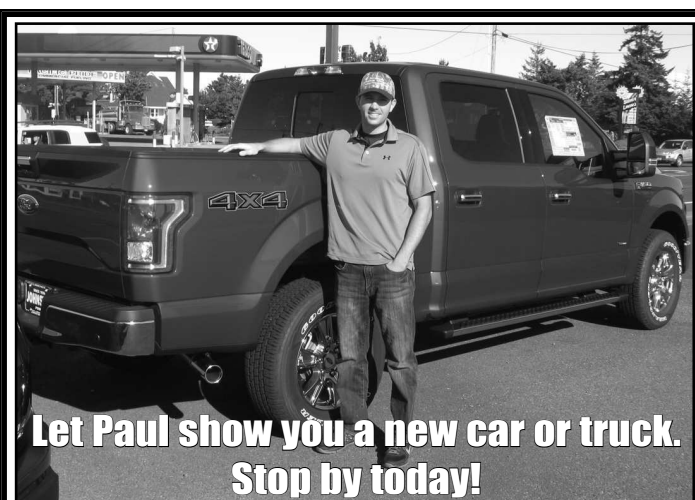
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Input from 1B

grant funding to facility owners.

The Oregon Marine Board invites recreational boaters to complete an online survey and

provide feedback on how to improve the area where you boat.

Boaters can access an online survey at www.boatoregon.com, or go to the survey directly at www.surveymonkey.com/t/GWGC7L6.

The survey will be available online through March 31.

For more information, contact the Marine Board's Facility Section at 503-378-2727.