

Calendar

All local school sporting activities have been canceled through the remainder of the school year.

ODFW REGIONAL FISHING REPORT

www.dfw.state.or.us/RR

ODFW IS PUTTING THE WEEKLY RECREATION REPORT ON HIATUS FOR A FEW WEEKS.

In the meantime, all fishing and hunting seasons remain open as scheduled Except for the Columbia River, which will remain closed to salmon and steelhead fishing through at least May 4.

ODFW continues to urge hunters, anglers and others recreating outside to stay close to home, keep your social distance, and travel safely.

ODFW will resume its weekly updates when conditions improve. Thank you for your patience, and stay safe!

County stresses physical distancing in parks

Lane County Parks is urging visitors to do better at physical distancing when they are in county parks. There has been a marked increase in park visitors as the weather has improved, and several visitors have been observed not maintaining appropriate distance from others.

“We know how much people love our parks and love to be outside here,” said Lane County Park Manager Brett Henry. “But it is just as important to observe physical distancing here as it is in the grocery stores.”

A few things to keep in mind if you plan to head to a park:

- Keep your distance. Pace yourself so that you can maintain at least 6 feet (ideally more) of physical distance between yourself and other hikers. Be polite and take turns at narrow or busy spots.
- Parks are not a place to gather right now. Getting outside to exercise and experience the outdoors is important to our physical and mental health, but it is not okay to meet friends or gather in groups to hike together right now. Stick to members of your own household and keep your distance from everyone else.
- Vary your times. Consider visiting or walking/hiking at non-peak times to reduce your likelihood of encountering crowds.
- Consider keeping your dogs on leashes at all times. Some parks, Howard Buford Recreation Area (Mt. Pisgah) included, have off-leash trails or areas for dogs. Please consider keeping your pet leashed right now to better maintain physical distance. (Fido may be friendly, but if you have to separate him from another hiker’s dog or from other hikers that means you’re not keeping appropriate physical distance.)
- Park safely. Do not park your vehicle alongside roads to access county parks – it creates a safety hazard for you, other drivers and road users.



PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

Sadie Olson, a senior at EHS, not only won last year’s 1A discus state title, but also participates in basketball and volleyball for the Elks.

Keeping an open mind despite closures

By NICK SNYDER
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When things go awry, perspective is key.

Businesses have closed — many permanently — public facilities are largely shuttered, millions have either lost their jobs or shifted to working from home and students find themselves home-bound and idle months before summer vacation would typically begin.

A change in perspective can’t fully solve any of these issues, but it can certainly help finding light in the chaos. Elkton High School senior Sadie Olson is but one example of this.

Over the last several weeks Olson, like millions of students across America, has seen her school close its doors to day-to-day operations and sus-

See **OLSON 2B**

Corps closes Dorena, CG Lake sites



PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

Lakeside Park at Cottage Grove Lake, seen here hosting last summer’s Tri at the Grove triathlon, is one of several local sites closed late last month by the Army Corps of Engineers.

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Despite the recent spate of sunny weather, local outdoor enthusiasts are watching their recreation opportunities dwindle as COVID-19 concerns continue to shut down many public use areas.

Effective March 30, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made the decision to close all Oregon recreation sites, including local favorites Cottage Grove Lake and multiple sites around Dorena Reservoir. The shutdown comes as previous warnings had gone unheeded and many locations remained busy with

visitors.

“The health and safety of all visitors, partners, employees and their families is our top priority,” said Melissa Rinehart, the Portland District chief of natural resource management. “We recognize the challenges this may cause our recreation users and local communities, and thank everyone for doing their part to help prevent the spread of the disease so we can return to normal operations as soon as possible.”

For local would-be recreators in Cottage Grove and the surrounding area, it is indeed a challenge as the Corps manages

all of the sites around Cottage Grove Lake as well as Harms Park boat ramp, Bake Stewart Park and Schwarz Park at Dorena, rendering many of these local destinations unusable for the time being.

“All the recreation areas are closed, including the boat ramps and all the Corps-managed lands around the reservoirs and the Corps of Engineers has posted a restriction,” said Christie Johnson, park ranger and outreach specialist for the Corps’ Willamette Valley Project.

“We also have the ability to work with local law enforce-

See **CORPS 2B**

Oregon closes recreational hunting and fishing to non-residents

ODFW is closing recreational hunting, fishing, crabbing and clamming to non-residents due to concerns about travel to Oregon to participate in these outdoor activities. Such travel could spread the virus and put more of a burden on Oregon’s rural communities.

As of Friday, Apr. 10 at 11:59 p.m., non-residents may no longer participate in these activities in Oregon. The restriction extends until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and it is deemed safe to travel

into Oregon. This order does not apply to anyone living in Oregon for less than six months who has not yet established residency.

Some states, including Washington, have closed hunting and fishing to limit the spread of the virus. While seasons remain open in Oregon (except for Columbia River salmon/steelhead fishing), resident hunters and anglers should not be travelling to participate. ODFW is hearing concerns from rural communities about people

visiting to hunt and fish and placing additional burdens on these communities’ limited resources.

“Rural communities are concerned about the potential impact of COVID-19 on medical and emergency services, search and rescue and their citizens. Some have asked us to close seasons to reduce travel,” said ODFW Director Curt Melcher. “We would like to keep seasons open to give locals an outlet during this difficult time, but that doesn’t mean it’s

OK to travel to these communities. Stick close to home and fish at your local lake, pond or river and do not go crabbing or clamming unless you live on the coast, and then only to places where access is still open.”

ODFW monitoring has shown that while Oregonians are still participating in fisheries, clamming, shed hunting, and wildlife viewing it is in significantly lower numbers and that the majority

See **ODFW 2B**

OSAA cancels all remaining activities

The cancellation includes spring sports, practices and state championships

Per Governor Kate Brown’s announcement earlier today that Oregon schools will be closed to in-person learning for the remainder of the school year, the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) has canceled all remaining Spring activities and state championships.

“Today’s heart wrenching decision is difficult for all members of the OSAA family,” said Peter Weber, OSAA Executive Director. “We empathize with students and school communities, especially our graduating seniors, but recognize that these cancellations will allow our collective focus to remain where it’s most needed at this time - on the health and safety of all Oregonians.”

“We had maintained hope for an abbreviated Spring season to help bring a sense of normalcy to these uncertain times,” continued Weber. “Now more than ever we need to apply the lessons learned through participation in education-based activities – teamwork, sacrifice, resilience – and play our role in adhering to the public health guidelines. We all look forward to the day when we play again.”

Current OSAA policies prohibiting the use of school facilities and coaches from organizing or directing workouts and practices remain in effect until further notice. The OSAA Executive Board will meet in the coming weeks to discuss policies for summer activities, along with academic eligibility concerns for Fall 2020 that have been expressed by member schools and families. The OSAA and our member schools are currently awaiting guidance from ODE on credit attainment for 9th-11th grade students through the state’s Distance Learning for All initiative.

Visit <http://www.osaa.org/coronavirus> for OSAA policies, plus health and safety resources, related to COVID-19. Included on this page are all memos and media releases from OSAA regarding this situation since early March, along with a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) designed to answer the most common questions we have been receiving.

More information will be communicated via <http://www.osaa.org/> as it becomes available.