

Umpqua winter pile burning begins

ROSEBURG, Ore. – The Umpqua National Forest began pile burning operations on Tuesday, Oct. 12 and will continue operations throughout the winter as conditions allow.

The Forest estimates that pile burning operations will cover 1,510 acres, including:

- 450 acres on Cottage Grove Ranger District
- 600 acres on Diamond Lake Ranger District
- 10 acres at the Dorena Genetic Resource Center
- 150 acres on North Umpqua Ranger District
- 300 acres on Tiller Ranger District.

Piles consisting of tree branches, needles, and small logs have been constructed across the forest

from timber harvests, fire suppression and repair actions, and hazard tree removal. Burning these piles is intended to remove excess fuel and reduce the risk of uncontrolled wildfires.

Pile burning will be conducted by trained wildland firefighters with approval from the Oregon Department of Forestry Smoke Management Office when weather conditions are suitable for smoke dispersal.

Those in the forest should be aware of pile burning operations and see smoke.

For more information about the Umpqua National Forest, call 541-957-3200 or visit www.fs.fed.us/r6/umpqua.

Gardening education and advice is needed now more than ever and the OSU (Oregon State University) Extension Master Gardener program is training new community educators in 2022, who will help provide advice and support for Oregon's growing community of gardeners.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener program educates Oregonians about the art and science of growing and caring for plants in 27 counties across the state.

Due to the COVID pandemic, training new

OSU program offers 'Master Gardener' training

Master Gardeners was put on hold for 2021 — but that doesn't mean organizers took a year off.

Organizers have updated and redesigned how to deliver the program, making it accessible to more Oregonians and more reflective of community needs for training a new cohort of gardening education volunteers.

Master Gardener volunteer training is conducted by local county OSU Extension offices, with support and guidance by the statewide office. Master Garden-

er trainees will be able to access online classes and participate in local, in-person workshops.

Fees for the training program have been slightly reduced, and many local Master Gardener Associations are making scholarships available to partially cover the costs of training.

In Lane County, weekly online courses will run from Jan. 31 through March 31, followed by outdoor hands-on workshops between April and June (various dates).

The cost of the Master Gardener Volunteer

training is \$200 tuition plus a \$150 refundable deposit (deposit refunded upon completion of MG volunteer commitment).

To apply, go to the OSU Extension Service Lane County webpage extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/lane/become-master-gardener-volunteer and download the application form, call 541-344-5859 for assistance, or drop by the OSU Extension office at 996 Jefferson St. in Eugene.

The application deadline is Nov. 15, 2021.

HISTORY from A1

Tapping into local resources like the Cottage Grove Historical Society and the Cottage Grove Museum, members put together a script.

"We wrote the narrative of it and worked it out — but found out it's a lot harder to make," Lawn laughed. "We were going to start with, like, three- to five-minute videos, and now they're going to run about eight to 10. It's hard to get all that information in a short span."

Currently, only one video about covered bridges is available online.

Hosted by local theater actor Kory Weimer, the virtual bridge tour recounts a brief history of Oregon's covered bridges before directing viewers through a scenic trip by Dorena, Stewart, Mosby Creek, Curran, Chambers and Centennial covered bridges.

"It was designed to kind of pro-

vide information that even local residents could get on and go, 'Okay, that's, that's kind of cool,'" said Lawn, who also directed the video.

The other videos will feature the Historic Downtown District and the historic northwest neighborhood and are currently in the editing process.

By the end of the month, Lawn said he aims to wrap up filming for another video about biking on the Row River Trail as well.

In a separate promotional project, there's also been some new color added to downtown.

City of Cottage Grove staff recently completed the installation of the Cottage Grove Heritage Banners in the Historic Downtown District. The banners were commissioned by the Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce to promote three of the city's heritage offerings to tourists and residents.

Representing three seasons, a green spring banner features the Chambers Covered Bridge, a blue

summer banner features the Cottage Grove Armory and a bright, red fall banner features the Cottage Grove Museum.

The banners are a seasonal feature, though, coming down when the downtown Christmas lights go up. Following Hearts on Main Street in February, the banners return for the tourism season.

"So just when tourists come to town, it's going to be a little more art and just another step toward beautification," said Lawn.

Lawn was excited for the opportunity to work with locals on the project. The banner images of Cottage Grove heritage sites are original watercolor paintings created by local artist Heather Endicott specifically for the project.

"I cannot stress enough the value of working with local talent on these projects and the help we receive from strategic partners like the City of Cottage Grove, all of the local museums and societies, local sponsors and Travel Lane County," he said.

Production was local, too, us-

ing Dirt Cheap Copies.

The project was funded by a grant from the Lane County Cultural Coalition and volunteer efforts of the Chamber's Tourism Committee.

There are other items on Lawn's tourism wish list. Lawn is planning to attend a presentation on traveling with hearing loss in order to find new ways to accommodate people the hearing impaired. He said he would also like to see recognition of native peoples in the area.

"You know, not have our heritage start at 1853. Have it go back a little further," he said.

New projects will ideally broaden the scope and availability of what Cottage Grove has to offer.

"That's kind of our goal with the tourism committee is to bring people into town to stay a little while checking everything out," Lawn said. "The bottom line is Cottage Grove is a real gem ... We may take it for granted, living here with what we have. Hopefully, people that lived here a long

time can learn a little more, and definitely we can have people come and visit and see what a great community it is."

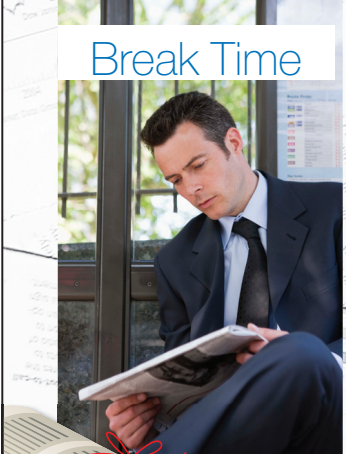
The tourism committee is also hoping these projects will pay off for the 2022 World Athletics Championships in Eugene next July.

"We want to have a lot of forward-facing opportunities for people to check out Cottage Grove and see what it's about and have some blogs and digital opportunities for them to explore a little more," said Lawn. "So, in the perfect world all our efforts, brochures, videos, the banners and even more will be in place for hopefully a more robust tourism season in 2022. We'll see how that all plays out, but definitely take advantage of that the opportunity with eyes on Lane County for the World Athletics games to make sure Cottage Grove is part of that exposure."

The covered bridge virtual tour is available on the Chamber's website at www.cgchamber.com.

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