

RECREATION
REPORT

**BAG, SIZE LIMITS
LIFTED AT THIEF
VALLEY RESERVOIR**

Dry conditions in Eastern Oregon and declining water levels in Thief Valley Reservoir have prompted local fish biologists to remove daily catch limits on the reservoir starting Friday, Aug. 10. The reservoir is about five miles east of North Powder, accessible via Highway 237 and Government Gulch Road.

From Aug. 10 to Sept. 30, 2018, the daily bag and possession limits for trout are removed with no minimum size. Harvest methods may include hand, dip net or angling.

Thief Valley Reservoir on the Powder River is currently holding significant water, but the storage level is declining at a rate that would have it all but empty by late August. ODFW biologist Tim Bailey said that removing the bag limit now will give anglers a better opportunity to harvest trout that would die later when the reservoir is drained.

"When the water level reaches dead storage, large numbers of trout get trapped in isolated pools," Bailey said. "Most fish will be stressed in the warm, turbid water and die. In addition, dead storage conditions are not conducive to fishing."

ANTHONY LAKE

Has been stocked with approximately 5,000 trophy-size rainbow trout. Fishing has been very good, but may slow with the recent hot weather.

WALLOWA LAKE

Fishing for rainbow trout has been good. Some surplus production of rainbow trout resulted in additional fish being released.

MOUNTAIN GOATS THRIVING IN N.E. OREGON



Submitted photo

Rock slides are ideal habitat for mountain goats.

Plenty of goats to go around

■ The Elkhorn Mountains near Baker City have supplied goats for several other ranges in Oregon, a program so successful there's no current demand for more goats

By Jayson Jacoby
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Baker County is such an effective nursery for mountain goats that none of Oregon's other ranges needs any of the agile cliff-dwelling animals.

At least not for now. But the Elkhorn Mountains west of Baker City are capable of supplying more goats whenever, and wherever, they're needed, said a state wildlife biologist who helps keep tabs on the herd.

This summer is the second in a row in which state biologists didn't trap any goats in the Elkhorns to supplant existing herds, or create new ones, in steeply pitched section of Oregon, said Justin Primus, assistant district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Baker City office.

During the previous dozen or so years, by contrast, ODFW trapped more than 125 goats at Goodrich Lake in the Elkhorns and sent them to other ranges.

Most of those goats didn't travel too far.

Goats trapped in the Elkhorns have helped bolster populations in the Wal-

lowa Mountains and Hells Canyon, and they were also the seedstock for new herds in the Strawberry Mountains of Grant County and the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness north of Elgin.

The most recent trap-and-transplant operation in the Elkhorns took place in July 2016, when biologists and volunteers netted 27 goats at Goodrich, Primus said.

Most of those goats — 21 — were trucked to the Oregon Cascades, where they were released on the east side of Mount Jefferson on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, Primus said.

The six other goats went to Washington.

Primus said the goat herd in the Strawberry Mountains south of Prairie City has been growing, and because that range isn't especially large, there is no need for additional goats.

Ryan Torland, district wildlife biologist at ODFW's John Day office, said officials counted about 67 goats in the Strawberry range on Tuesday, which would be the highest total ever there.

"They seem to be expanding," Torland said.

Over three years a total



Alex Pajunas/Baker City Herald file photo

Mountain goats in the Elkhorn Mountains near Marble Creek Pass.

of about 80 goats from the Elkhorns were released in the Cascades, about 60 on the Warm Springs Reservation and 20 more on the Deschutes National Forest near Three-Fingered Jack mountain north of Santiam Pass, said Corey Heath, district wildlife biologist for ODFW's Deschutes District.

Heath said the goats are doing well, having spread as far south as Mount Washington, several miles south of Santiam Pass.

During the annual census last week, biologists counted 85 goats in the Central Cascades, compared with 77 the previous year, Heath said. The 2016 count, before the hard winter of 2016-17, showed 105 goats.

Heath said ODFW doesn't have any plans to request more goats from the Elkhorns, although more transplants are possible in the future.

The Elkhorns herd almost

certainly will be able to fill that order, Primus said.

ODFW's annual goat survey in the Elkhorns in late July turned up 295 animals, about the same as the 2017 count, he said.

Biologists also tallied goats from a helicopter for the first time this summer, and that count totaled 305.

"They seem to be holding steady to slightly increasing in the Elkhorns," Primus said.

ODFW supplemented its usual ground count — more than a dozen people hike established routes where goats habitually hang out — with the aerial census because biologists wanted to figure out whether the helicopter yields an accurate count, Primus said.

This year's results — a difference of just 10 animals between the two methods — suggests the answer is yes.

Primus said the helicopter test is part of ODFW's

long-range goal of adding a new mountain goat hunt for the southern section of the Wallowa Mountains. Existing hunts in that range are mainly in the central, northern and eastern parts of the range.

Since 2015, ODFW has set up trail cameras in the southern Wallows to try to gauge the goat population. Primus said the agency would like to augment that data with a helicopter census.

This year ODFW will sell 24 mountain goat hunting tags — eight of them, in three separate seasons, for the Elkhorns. Seven tags are for hunts in the Wallows, with the remainder distributed among the Hells Canyon area (seven tags), the Strawberry Mountains (one tag) and the Wenaha area (one tag).

Mountain goat tags, like big-horn sheep tags, are once-in-a-lifetime controlled hunt opportunities in Oregon.

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COLIN O'BRADY REACHED THE HIGH POINT IN ALL 50 STATES IN 21 DAYS, ALMOST TWICE AS QUICKLY AS THE PREVIOUS RECORD

From the top: Portland man sets record for summits

By Stacia Glenn
The (Tacoma) News Tribune

TACOMA, Wash. — Colin O'Brady set a world record by climbing to all 50 American high points in 21 days, and he did it for you.

Well, partially he did it because he likes to push his body and create challenges, but also because he wants to motivate people to get out in their own backyards and be more active.

"This is about inspiring people in general," the 33-year-old said.

"Hopefully there's a ripple effect of people coming out and doing these things."

The old record was 41 days. The Portland resident stopped the clock at 2:54 a.m. July 19 when he reached the summit of Mount Hood, Oregon's tallest mountain, after 21 days of constant movement.

That was barely a day after he summited Mount Rainier with a 12-hour climb.

O'Brady was deliriously tired. His feet were sore, blistered and covered with tape.

The journey started June 27 on the summit of 20,320-foot Denali in Alaska. He finished a day early, so he changed the original plan and flew to Hawaii to climb Mauna Kea.

From there, he crisscrossed the country.

On his busiest day, O'Brady ticked off six state high points: Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana.

His hardest day was tackling 13,804-foot Gannett Peak in Wyoming, 40 miles up a technical mountain considered to be the ninth most remote in the contiguous United States.

"We both started crying on the summit because it was so hard and emotionally taxing," said Jon Kedrowski, a friend and fellow climber who joined O'Brady for the 10 hardest high points.

O'Brady said he literally screamed when pulling off his mountaineering boots.

But it's the moments spent with strangers who came out to cheer him on or join him on the trail that he remembers the most.

Like the 80-year-old woman in Illinois who briefly hiked with him and said the secret to life is to keep smiling. Or the 67-year-old man in South Carolina who said he'd spent 36 years tending to the same stretch of trail.

"There have been little sparks of energy from a lot of people," O'Brady said.

He first got the idea for the project two years ago, but the need to push himself and encourage people to lead a healthy life goes back to 2008.

While on a backpacking trip in Thailand, O'Brady was severely injured in a fire.

Doctors told him the burns covered 25 percent of his body and he

might never walk again.

O'Brady's response? A vow to complete his first triathlon once he recovered.

He signed up for the Chicago Triathlon in 2009 and stunned the sporting world when he took first place.

He and now-fiancee Jenna Besaw started Beyond 7/2, a nonprofit to raise awareness and money to ensure children and their communities lead active, healthy lives.

O'Brady snagged his first world record on May 27, 2016, when he summited the tallest peak on each of the seven continents and skied to the North and South Poles in 139 days.

He was also the first person to Snapchat from the summit of Mount Everest, attracting 22 million viewers and making a name for himself in the world of social media.

On July 18, he left the Paradise parking lot about 1:40 a.m. to climb Mount Rainier with Kedrowski.

They reached Camp Muir by sunrise and after navigating recent icefall on the standard Disappointment Cleaver route, stood on the summit at 9:20 a.m.

He briefly considered sleeping the night before starting up Mount Hood but changed his mind at the last minute.

Braving 40- to 50-mph winds, the team set out in the dark with the idea of pitching a tent on the summit once the challenge was complete.

His two partners stopped below the summit, but O'Brady sprinted to the top.

Then he settled into a sleeping bag to sleep soundly for the first time in 21 days.

"For the first time in a while, I'm on a mountain and not in a rush," he said in an Instagram story.

"So just taking it all in, enjoying the descent, reflecting on the entire journey. It's been a wild ride. I feel very proud."

