

FISHING REPORT

GRANDE RONDE RIVER

The daily bag limit of one hatchery steelhead will continue through the end of the season on April 30. Bag limits were reduced to protect limited numbers of wild fish returning to the Snake River Basin and to ensure hatchery programs meet production goals.

Steelhead fishing has been difficult this year due to the low numbers of returning fish and low flows. However, anglers have been reporting good catch rates as fish are starting to make the final push toward hatchery facilities. It's a good idea this time of year to check flows prior to heading to the river. With warming temperatures and a lot of low snow, we'll likely see the river blow out in the next few weeks.

IMNAHA RIVER

Steelhead have started making their push toward the hatchery facility on Little Sheep Creek and fish should be more available than they have been through the winter. This is the best time of year to fish the Imnaha with more fish available and some wonderful spring days.

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WALLOWA COUNTY PONDS

Ice fishers have found success at Kinney Lake catching rainbows to 16-inches. Fishing should remain good until ice out in the spring. Access can sometimes be difficult when snow drifts over the road.

WALLOWA RIVER

The daily bag limit of one hatchery steelhead will continue through the end of the season on April 30. Steelhead are making their push toward the hatchery facilities and anglers are having good success. Fewer fish are available this year so don't expect big days, though there are enough fish that it's worth the effort of a trip.

Trout and whitefish fishing can remain good through the end of the winter into spring with some larger trout available.

Fishing places away from the typical steelhead holes can result in some nice fish with good catch rates. During the cold months, fishing sub surface with smaller flies is most productive.

—Courtesy ODFW

The Observer & Baker City Herald

Exploring PATRA



Mavis Hartz photo

Hazel and Whitfield Hartz riding the trails at the Pendleton Adventure Trails Recreation Area.

If you are itching to get out and enjoy a little early spring mountain biking Pendleton Adventure Trails Recreation Area, or PATRA, is well worth exploring. This grassroots trail system is on 290 acres of land owned by the City of Pendleton. Historically an area of very weed laden pastureland, sewage disposal and more, the council gave the go ahead for trail construction in 2016 and a number of volunteers and non-profit organizations have been going trail crazy.

PATRA is located just north of the I-84 adjacent to the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport. To arrive, follow Airport Road north and up until Northwest A Avenue turns west at a sign sporting a mountain bike. Pass through the old military wall from 1941, when the area hosted the Pendleton Army Air Base. The airfield is most famous for the handful of characters that participated in the WWII Doolittle Raid on Tokyo, patrolling for submarines off the Pacific coast and training fighter



THE NEXT RIDE

MAVIS HARTZ

pilots. Park in the large prepared gravel parking area sporting an outhouse and soon to have kiosks with maps and information.

PATRA contains almost 20-miles of trails, many of which are named after the individuals who adopted, scratched in, smoothed and de-rocked the route. Since this marvelous boon to Pendleton and the surrounding areas is still in its infancy, not all of the paths are marked or completely beat in. The best way to stay abreast of the trail developments is to download trail specific apps, like Trailforks, Ride with GPS or MTB Project that allow users to map and rate the trails.

I will be focusing on a smattering of trails that touch the outer reaches of the recreation area with Evan, James and Tim's trail and an additional loop through Stem Cell for a fabulous 11.5-mile ride.

Begin with Evan's Trail by exiting to the eastside of the parking area. Appreciate a brief preliminary descent down this open south facing hillside working out the kinks and delight in the view toward the Umatilla River. Drop into a brushy ravine and wake up your legs with a short climb that maxes out with an almost 12 percent grade. Revel in the rest of the 1.5-mile plunge that follows the unit's eastside boundary and swings around the old sewage plant.

Enjoy the following gradual climb and ponder the new age farming of Eastern Oregon. In 2014 the Pendleton City Council signed an agreement with the California based Cypress Creek Renewables for 58 acres of prime sun farm real estate. The power, once collected, is to be sold to Pacific Power, a company established in 1910 and based in Portland. The last year has brought questions about glare and dust to the forefront inciting interesting conversations about the past and the catalyst behind

some of the Federal Conservation Reserve Program decisions. Swoop back into the tree littered hollow for another fleeting downhill before gentle weaving back to the parking area and finishing Evan's Trail.

Leave the parking area to the west on James' Trail. This route is constructed for beginners like James, the son of one of the main trail builders. The trail flows easily out before circling back to the parking area in a sweet little 1-mile loop. At .5-miles charge down the nose of the ridge on Tim's Trail in a flight that zigs and zags like the fighter pilots that trained at Pendleton Field. Withdraw from Tim's Trail at the bottom after 1-mile of gliding fun by turning west onto Stem Cell. The addition of the Stem Cell loop adds three-miles of fun with a gradual climb, topped with a punch little section that then allows for a mile of swift and flowing fun to deposit the rider back onto Tim's Trail.

Tim's Trail then climbs back to the parking area

crossing back and forth a little ravine that adds challenge and feature with short rocky sections and sweeping corners. Treasure the corners sculpted by volunteers from Tri-Cities, Hermiston, Walla Walla, Pendleton and La Grande in impromptu work parties. The cycling-oriented group, Pendleton On Wheels, has been largely involved with the development of PATRA. To show your support, and enjoy a great weekend, register for the 2019 mini CROC online at www.cyclependleton.com. A shortened version of their historically epic Memorial Day Weekend, this one-day ride features the magnificent Cabbage Hill Climb and the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. Lost and Found Youth Group has also been discovering the wonderful world of mountain biking and have been very active in grooming the trails. To earn your berm, keep an eye on the POW or Mountain Works Bicycles Facebook pages to learn when the work parties will be gathering.

Outdoors commentary: Not learning from our past

By Pat Wray

The Albany Democrat-Herald

Ignorance is strength.

George Orwell was right. And that frightening saying from his book "1984" is truer than ever in the realm of natural resource management.

In the halcyon days of my youth we were a strong and happy people. We did the right things for the right reasons. God was on our side. Shielded by our democracy, capitalistic economy, powerful military and limitless natural resources, we were better and stronger than everyone else. But our overwhelming strength was propped up to a frightening degree by our overwhelming ignorance.

We simply didn't understand the long-term impact of our unrestricted extraction of minerals, timber and oil. We didn't realize the implications of our use of the rivers as toilets, the oceans as trash pits, the poisoning of our rivers and lakes and air with chemical runoff and acid from the air.

In the 1950s we still had our heads inserted firmly in the age

of better living through chemistry. Nowhere was our ignorance better illustrated than on military bases in the southern states where we children ran happily behind trucks spraying DDT for mosquitos, laughing as the spray covered our faces. And our parents laughed with us.

Everything changed after Vietnam, of course. Wait a minute — you mean the government has not been honest with us? And then, the ultimate confidence destroyer—we lost. Just like that, the air went out of our balloon.

But even before Vietnam became our personal international quagmire, Rachel Carson yanked us out of our happy insensibility with the publication of Silent Spring in 1962. Her bleak forecast of uncontrolled pesticide use triggered a collective gasp of horror as we realized that chemicals were a double-edged sword. It was a one-two punch: the twin pillars of our lives, government and science, had proven undependable.

In hindsight we responded quickly. We tried to overcome our ignorance and at the same time re-establish our moral high ground in

the environment. Organizations like the Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Nature Conservancy, Natural Resource Defense Council and dozens of others led the fight to protect and conserve our natural resources. And as people became more educated, we made headway, lots of it. We took steps to control water pollution and emissions, we passed laws to protect wilderness areas, we established the Environmental Protection Agency.

Despite the strides we made, increasing pressure on every resource created by the global population boom made our progress inadequate. More aggressive steps were necessary. In recognition, the majority of nations signed the Paris Climate Accord in 2015, committing themselves to a radical reduction in greenhouse gasses in an attempt to hold off the potentially disastrous effects of climate change.

Although late in coming, the Accord was a triumph of need over greed, of cooperation over competition.

But the overwhelming scientific research that made the Accord possible could not stand against the

pure, aggressive ignorance embodied by an amoral autocrat whose personal understanding of the concepts of good and bad, of success and failure, revolve around money. He embraces his own ignorance because knowledge makes decisions more difficult. He encourages the ignorance of others so they will continue to look past his lies and betrayals to see only his promises of more dollars.

He began the process of pulling the United States out of the Accord because it was bad for business. Just as he has systematically defunded and dismantled government agencies designed to protect our environment. Simple decisions, really, if you are not aware that all life on earth is interconnected and the continuation of global warming may well result in the extinction of humanity.

It's pretty obvious at this point that our only hope against this powerful surge of ignorance is knowledge. But in an environment where knowledge is restricted and vilified, it may be that our only hope is hope itself.

