



PHOTOS FROM FAR LEFT:

This octopus-resembling juniper is among the many trees living and dead along the Ancient Juniper Trail. Even a dead juniper tree has beauty to reveal in the Oregon Badlands Wilderness, located 15 miles east of Bend.

David Jasper/The Bulletin

ness is the ancestral land of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Northern Paiute. These are fragile cultural artifacts that you can admire, but not touch. You will also find some of the oldest trees in Oregon, bright displays of desert wildflowers and castle-like rock formations.”

Map Guy and I talked about our lives as we strolled, stopping now and then to admire strangely shaped trees, whose twisted trunks bespeak of the struggle to find water and grow in this harsh environment. Some of the junipers here are several hundred to over 1,000 years old, and even the burned snags here and there rang a somber note of beauty.

Getting there: From Bend, head east on U.S. Highway 20 for about 16 miles, keeping an eye out for Oregon Badlands Wilderness and the Flatiron Rock Trailhead sign, on your left as you proceed down the grade. (Bikes are not permitted, but they are across the highway at Horse Ridge.)

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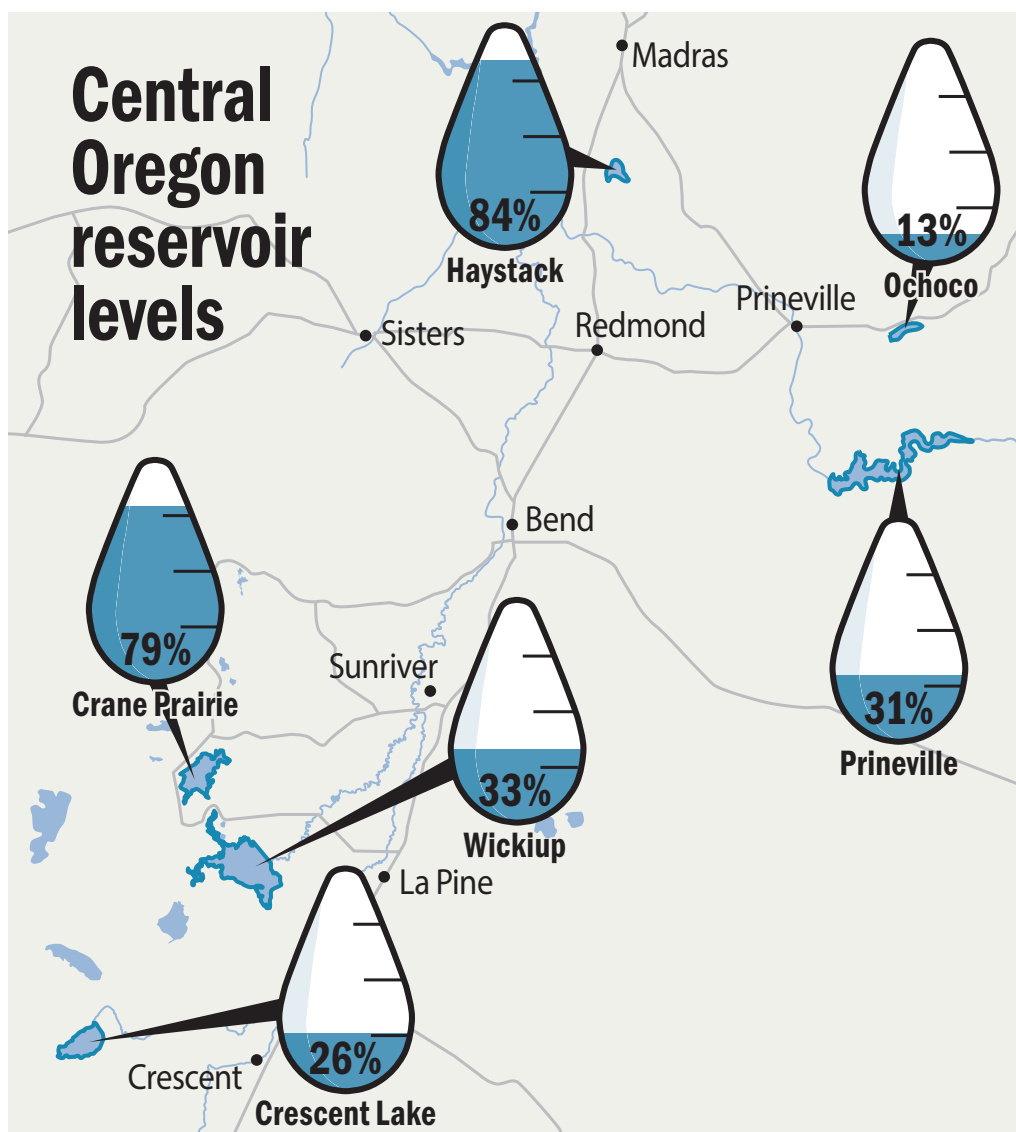
Juniper

Continued from B1

Out of “an abundance of caution,” that phrase we became all too familiar with in 2020, we opted to keep our masks on for the hike, and we set off on the easy, relatively flat Ancient Juniper Trail. Despite the wintertime popularity of the Badlands, and the number of cars you’re likely to encounter in the parking

lot, you’ll probably see few if any people once you set off on foot.

Unless, that is, you take your time and lots of photos of the gnarled junipers of the trail’s name, as we did. And even then, should you encounter other groups, the wide trail affords plenty of room. Be sure to stay on the trail, though. As the Oregon Natural Desert Association says, “the area known today as the Badlands Wilder-



Source: Bureau of Reclamation

Clarinda Simpson/Bulletin graphic

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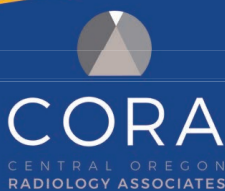
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