

Wilderness quota will likely do good and bad

Starting some time this year, people will no longer be able to go hiking whenever they want in the Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington and Three Sisters wildernesses.

Wilderness permits will be required and quotas will mean only so many people are going to be allowed.

The worst part about the permit system is that some people may not be able to go at all. Wilderness access could become like an exclusive club.

That's not the goal. But if that's what happens, it could diminish public support for wilderness areas.

The argument is the quotas are a necessary evil to protect the wilderness. They are there to try to keep trails from being overwhelmed by popularity. If you have been on the Green Lakes Trail some days during the summer, you know what we are talking about. Quotas should help preserve habitat. There will be less human waste and trash. And if you do get to go, it will feel more like a wilderness experience.

We don't expect everyone to like it. But there are some things to like about it. The amount people would pay would be low, just \$1 for a day-use permit per person and \$6 for overnight use permits per group of up to 12. At least, those were the amounts announced last year before the decision to postpone the program until 2021. Also last year, the system for reserving the fees was going to go live on April 7 through recreation.gov. It's not clear yet when it will go live this year.

One question we raised about this plan a few years ago is how would it be fair to people with low incomes. Even a low fee is like a regressive tax on families for wilderness access. The Forest Service has plans to make some passes available to people through libraries. And it has been working through partners that it has not named to offer passes to people who are already qualified for low-income programs.

There's no escaping that the new quota system will mean a loss of public access to wilderness. Will it preserve and protect the wilderness enough to make up for that? We hope so.

Should you put a COVID-tracing app on your phone?

Be COVID smart, your phone can play a part.

That's a slogan Oregon State University has used to promote a smartphone-based notification of possible exposure to COVID-19. The OR NOTIFY program hasn't officially been released yet, though it was briefly by accident by Apple. Similar programs are already running in many states and around the world. Oregon is arguably running behind.

Once it is released, should you activate it?

It's up to you, but the state needs as much help as it can to minimize the damage that COVID-19 is wreaking.

Contact tracing is difficult and with the increasing number of people testing positive, it's become more difficult. Do you remember everyone you have come into contact with over the last few days? Do you even know them?

A smartphone app basically uses Bluetooth to track possible contacts. It's optional. You can turn it off and on. It doesn't track your personal information or location. It uses random IDs that change every few minutes to exchange information with other phones. But if you were in sustained contact with a person who reported testing positive in the app, you would get an alert on your phone and information about what to do.

There's much more information about it at covid.oregonstate.edu/exposure. The program is supposed to go live this month. It will only really be effective if people sign up.

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor Gerry O'Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.



THAT'S ONE SMALL STEP FOR A MAN,
ONE GIANT LEAP FOR MANKIND.

My Nickel's Worth

Bad reporting

Read your article headlined "No link found between outbreaks, protest." Quite frankly, I do not believe it because I have no faith in a "politically correct (PC) cancel culture" where if you don't expose to the PC position you are canceled in some way. I don't believe those doing the reporting because they report to or get funded by the government/corporate ideology and a governor would cancel you or at least shame you into submission.

It is a sad state of affairs where ones "facts" depend upon who's ideology you subscribe to. Protesting and rioting is not a higher right than any other human activity so there is no justification for allowing it when those of us want to live our lives and feel we can take care of ourselves without government treating us like dependent children.

— Ralph Shirtcliff, Redmond

Nation has become more diverse

In his recent guest column, Jeff Eager repeats a common refrain from conservatives that the root of Democratic strength among college graduates is the exposure of students to the 'radical left' on campus. He states that "... bit workers, being overwhelmingly college-educated, have been exposed to the increasingly radical campus left in a way that many atom workers have not." This is his only explanation of why the college-educated trend liberal, but the truth is much different.

One of the great benefits of attending college is the exposure that students get to those outside their geographic, ethnic, and income demographics. Most high school students have led relatively sheltered lives with minimal exposure to those outside a narrow demographic. The opportunity to live and speak with students and teachers from a broader background is one of the best reasons to attend college and is a fundamental aspect of a good education.

As Mr. Eager stated, the Republican Party once was "... the party of well-educated, well-off information workers". Maybe what has really changed, as our nation has become more diverse, is the demographics of those who attend college, and that demographic change is what conservatives actually find objectionable.

— Alex Anderson, Bend

Support those who helped us all

This is an end of year love letter to the nonprofits, faith groups, and volunteers in Central Oregon who have shepherded us through a difficult year. Too numerous to call out, they have provided a rich network of support, despite having to reach out virtually and operate under pandemic limitations. Hunger, housing, help with rent, advocacy for social justice and child welfare, concern for the health of our planet, are just a few of the ways they have moved us beyond the past four years of dismal national leadership. In Central Oregon we are blessed with caring and responsible people.

—Janet Whitney, Bend

Oregonians support you governor

Despite the harangues of a couple hundred uninformed, misguided, and radicalized protesters in Salem on Jan 1, I believe the overwhelming message to Gov. Kate Brown and Oregon public health authorities is that the vast majority of Oregonians support the measures taken to control the spread of COVID-19. Oregon's rank as 45th among the 50 states in terms of infection rate is a testament to the success of state policies and the assumption of responsibility in the absence of national leadership.

But the continuation of this performance still depends on the acceptance of proven and medically unanimous procedures enacted by the state. Such procedures, even though mandated, are not 100% enforceable, but we only need review examples where they are either not in place, or have been neglected, to observe soaring contagion, overwhelmed hospital facilities, and rapidly increasing mortality. Most of us do not want that for Oregon.

No system is perfect and business should work with public health services to discover ways to innovate and safely continue their activities. The media reports almost daily examples of these occurrences.

Importantly, this is not a basis for political divide. This is not about Constitutional rights, or the last election. It is about is about defeating the pandemic. We have the knowledge of the methods required to best contain the virus and now the vaccines to suppress it. With some patience and a level of trust there is a rational way forward.

— Donald Fisher, Powell Butte

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GUEST COLUMN

November drug legalization votes: A bad trip, worse policy

BY DR. ART KLEINSCHMIDT

This November, Oregonians voted to dramatically reduce the penalties for possession of "small amounts" of cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, MDMA and other drugs without requiring attendance at treatment, and also voted to permit use of the hallucinogen psilocybin in certain circumstances (the District of Columbia voted in support of a similar psilocybin referendum). As the Deputy Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) — which is dedicated to reducing drug use and treating its consequences by leading, coordinating, developing, and implementing United States drug policy — these votes were alarming, to say the least. As a licensed clinician, these measures are even more concerning, with the potential to build momentum in a direction likely to make the drug epidemic in our country worse.

America has already suffered the consequences of decriminalized addictive drugs. During the late 1990s



Kleinschmidt

in my hometown of New Orleans, doctors franchised themselves by opening a multitude of cash-only pain management clinics throughout the city. Consequently, opioids and other pills flooded the scene. As a reminder, in the early 1990's the nation's overdose was below 10,000 per year.

Oregon's Measure 110 and similar legislation across the country seeks to normalize broad drug decriminalization. Measure 110 decriminalizes "small amounts" of cocaine, methamphetamine, LSD, MDMA, methadone, psilocybin, and heroin. According to this measure, "small amounts" is defined as up to 40 or fewer oxycodone pills, up to one gram of heroin, up to two grams of cocaine, and two grams of methamphetamine. The legal penalties associated with the possession of any of these illicit substances include a \$100 fine, or participation in a health assessment in lieu of the fine. In addition, Oregonians also voted to legalize the use of hallucinogens in Measure 109.

From a clinical perspective, some-



body carrying around the amounts of drugs listed above probably meets diagnostic criteria for a severe substance use disorder (SUD). The word "severe" is a diagnostic specifier that denotes the life-threatening nature of the ailment. President Trump made criminal justice reform a key aspect of his legislative agenda with such measures as the Executive Order on Safe Policing for Safe Communities and the First Step Act. The Trump Administration supports and understands the need to not criminalize this disease, but a better intervention strategy is desperately needed. Especially

since CDC provisional data indicates overdoses have soared to over 80,000.

The dearth of treatment services in the United States is a major problem. According to the National Survey of Drug Use Health (2019), 20.4 million Americans have a SUD, but only 8% received services. ONDCP thoroughly researched this issue and determined that an increase in drug supply inevitably accelerates the need for addiction treatment services. Oregon intends to use a tax on the sale of marijuana to partly fund treatment, but in recent talks with drug policy experts from the West Coast, I was in-

formed that politicians and civic leaders are concerned that addiction treatment services will be in even shorter supply given the anticipated increase in substance use.

I would prefer to see people with a life-threatening disorder be offered an opportunity to earn an expungement by completing a treatment program. This could be achieved through specialty problem-solving courts like a Veteran's Court, Drug Court, or Assisted Outpatient Treatment, a civil court procedure where patients are afforded the opportunity of living a more meaningful life by being remanded to treatment.

The federal government offers numerous avenues for help for those struggling with a SUD such as the Rural Community Toolbox and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) treatment services locator FindTreatment.gov.

We're not going to legalize our way out of the drug crisis in our nation; instead, let's work together to save lives.

■ Dr. Art Kleinschmidt is the deputy director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Visit whitehouse.gov/ondcp for more info.