



# CONDITIONS REPORT

## High Desert trails, camping, fishing and more

With cooler weather and possible — and much needed — rain on the way, now is a great time to get out and explore the arid High Desert region of Central Oregon.

Even though temperatures are more favorable for a desert hike or bike ride, still bring plenty of water as many places don't have potable water available.

For a full list of conditions updated regularly, please visit [centraloregonexplore.com](http://centraloregonexplore.com)

### HIKING AND DAY USE SITES

• *NOTE: Many of the trails along seasonally closed highways and forest service roads remain open, but can only be accessed by hike, snowshoe, cross country ski or snowmobile due to snow levels. See Forest websites for more details and restrictions.*

#### Deschutes National Forest

- **Bessie Butte Trail:** Open
- **Boyd Cave Day Use Area:** Open
- **Horse Butte Trailhead:** Open; mostly snow free and clear
- **Pine Mountain:** Open

#### Ochoco National Forest

- **Alder Springs Trailhead:** Open; access road open
- **Cyrus Trailhead:** Open
- **Gray Butte Trailhead:** Open
- **Henderson Flat OHV Trail System:** Open
- **Henderson Flat Staging Area:** Open
- **Rimrock Springs Trailhead:** Open
- **Scales Corral Trailhead:** Open
- **Skull Hollow Trailhead:** Open
- **Tam-A-Lau Trailhead:** Open

#### Bureau of Land Management

- **Badlands Rock Trail:** Open
- **Black Hills ACEC:** Open; climbing and geocaching are prohibited

- **Chimney Rock Trail:** Open
- **Christmas Valley Sand Dunes:** Open
- **Cline Buttes Recreation Area:** Portions of Deep Canyon, Fryrear, Maston and Jaguar Road are closed through Aug. 31
- **Crack-in-the-Ground:** Open
- **Derrick Cave:** Open
- **Flatiron Rock Trail:** Open
- **Fossil Lake ACEC:** Open; motor vehicles and fossil collecting prohibited
- **Green Mountain:** Open
- **Huntington Wagon Road:** Open
- **Lost Forest:** Open, vehicles restricted to designated roads only
- **Lower Crooked River:** Open
- **North Fork:** Open
- **Oregon Badlands Wilderness Tumulus Trail:** Open
- **Redmond Caves Recreation Site:** Open
- **Scout Camp Trail:** Open
- **Steelhead Falls Trail:** Open
- **Trout Creek Trail:** South side of trail, including Trout Creek climbing walls is closed through Aug. 31

### OREGON STATE PARKS

- **Cline Falls State Scenic Viewpoint:** Open; expect reduced services; restrooms are closed, portable toilet is on site; maintain social distancing and wear a mask
- **Cove Palisades State Park:**



Bulletin file photo  
Grizzly Mountain looms above the Crooked River National Grassland and Skull Hollow.

#### Smith Rock climbing closures

To protect nesting raptors, the following climbing routes are closed: Cajun Cliff, Victoria Tower, Little Three Fingered Jack, Puddy's Tower, The Monument, Anglin's Buttress, French Tent Rock, First Kiss Area north of Monkey Face and Smith Rock Group NE Face (both towers, above 100 feet). The Canyon Trail near the bald eagle nest is restricted to groups of four or less and noise must be kept to a minimum. See [smithrock.com/seasonal-closures](http://smithrock.com/seasonal-closures) for more information.

Open for day-use and lake access; Crooked River Campground (E Loop) is open, Deschutes Campground and moorage slips will open May 14.

- **Fort Rock State Natural Area:** Open; day-use hours 8 a.m.-8 p.m.; rock scrambling closed in southeast area to protect nesting falcons; cave tours cancelled for 2021
- **Jasper Point:** Open; camping is closed for the season
- **Peter Skene Ogden State Scenic Viewpoint:** Open
- **Prineville Reservoir State Park:** Open; courtesy dock at Powderhouse ramp is not in

use due to low water; no boat moorage in 2021 due to low water; Prineville Resort is closed and no fuel is available for purchase

- **Smith Rock State Park:** Open — limited services; no camping; climbing closures to protect nesting raptors in place until August; park-wide drone ban is in effect.

#### Prineville and Ochoco trails

- **66 Trails:** Muddy
- **Cougar Creek, Independent Mine, Lookout Mountain, Round Mountain, Scotty Creek:** Deep snow; deadfall reported
- **Prineville Bike Park:** Riding Well

#### Maston complex

- **All trails riding well**

#### Redmond trails

- **The Saddle:** Closed for nesting eagles, likely to reopen late fall of 2021
- **All trails riding well**

#### Madras East Trails

- **All trails riding well**

### FISHING

- *Updated at 8 a.m. April 22*
- **Lower Deschutes (Pelton Dam to Columbia River):** 4,930 cfs; redband trout, steelhead, whitefish; trout will continue to be less active through the winter but can be caught on something slow and tasty, steelhead fishing is done as most fish are entering spawning grounds in closed waters
- **Middle Deschutes (Benham Falls to Lake Billy Chinook):** 3,810 cfs; brown trout, rainbow trout; water is high but clarity is good, hatches coming out on warmest part of the day; open year-round for trout, artificial flies and lures only; no limit on brown trout; fishing has been fair for browns and rainbows on rapalas and spinners
- **Crooked River (below Opal Springs):** 1,158 cfs; rainbow trout and mountain whitefish; only fish downstream of Bowman Dam to Lake Billy Chinook; fishing has been good but water remains low; any trout over 20 inches are considered steelhead and must be released, bull trout must be released unharmed and reported to the USFW at [crookedbulltrout@fws.gov](mailto:crookedbulltrout@fws.gov)
- **Prineville Reservoir:** 61% full; rainbow trout, small and largemouth bass, catfish, crappie, crayfish; trout fishing has been fair, good for warm weather species
- **Ochoco Reservoir:** 26% full; rainbow trout, black crappie, smallmouth bass; trout fishing should start increasing with lower temperatures; ramp still likely unusable due to low water levels
- **Haystack Reservoir:** 74% full; rainbow and brown trout, kokanee, largemouth bass, black crappie, bluegill and bullhead catfish; fishing is fair for rainbows on bait, troll and flies.
- **Lake Billy Chinook:** Bull, brown and rainbow trout, kokanee, smallmouth bass; Metolius arm is now open but tribal fishing permit required, kokanee fishing has been excellent

### CAMPING

#### Deschutes National Forest

- **Pine Mountain Campground:** Open; no campfires

#### Ochoco National Forest

- **Cyrus Horse Camp:** Open
- **Haystack Reservoir Campground and Day Use Area:** Open
- **Haystack Reservoir Group Site:** Open
- **Haystack West Shore Campground and Day Use Area:** Open
- **Skull Hollow Campground:** Open

#### BLM — Prineville District

- **Barr Road North Staging Area:** Open
- **Big Bend Campground:** Open
- **Buckhorn Staging Area:** Open
- **Castle Rock Campground:** Open
- **Chimney Rock Campground:** Open
- **Cobble Rock Campground:** Open
- **Lone Pine Campground:** Open
- **Macks Canyon Recreation Site:** Open
- **Palisades Campground:** Open
- **Post Pile Campground:** Open
- **Steelhead Falls:** Open; no potable water
- **Stillwater Campground:** Open

### CYCLING

#### East of Bend trails

- **Dry River Canyon:** Closed through Aug. 31
- **Crooked Arm, Holy Loop, Sand Canyon:** Sandy and loose
- **All other trails riding well**

#### Bureau of Land Management seasonal trail closures

The following Bureau of Land Management trails are now closed through Aug. 31 to protect nesting raptors:

- Millican Plateau OHV Trail System (Route 95 only)
- South side of Trout Creek Trail including climbing walls
- Cline Buttes Recreation Area (portions of Deep Canyon, Fryrear, Maston, Jaguar Road)
- Horny Hollow Trail
- Dry River Canyon
- For more information visit [blm.gov](http://blm.gov)



Makenzie Whittle/Bulletin file photo

Twilight overlooking Haystack Reservoir in June from the South Shore Group Campground.

#### Fire restrictions

Fire danger is currently listed as Moderate in the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests. Fire danger is listed as Low in the Willamette National Forest. Industrial Fire Precaution Level is currently at Level 1 for the Deschutes and Ochoco national forests and the Prineville District — Bureau of Land Management.

### EVENTS

#### Daily tours

- **Lava Cave Tours:** A guided tour of a local lava tube exploring the geologic and human history as well as the ecology of the cave; 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.; \$65 to \$90; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359.
- **Daily Snowshoe Tours:** A naturalist-guided tour through areas around Mount Bachelor. Snowshoes and hot cocoa provided; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1:30-5:30 p.m.; \$65 to \$90; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359.
- **Shoes, Brews & Views Snowshoe Tour:** Snowshoe to a spot in the Deschutes National Forest and sip some locally crafted beers or root beer for those under 21; 1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.; \$65 to \$95; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359.
- **Bonfire Snowshoe Tours:** A naturalist-guided tour near Mount Bachelor out to a small bonfire where snowshoes will be treated to hot libations and a dessert; 7-11 p.m.; \$110; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359.
- **Moonlight & Starlight Snowshoe Tours:** A guided tour on snowshoes in the Cascade Lakes area under the stars; 7-11 p.m.; \$95; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359.
- **Brews & Views Kayak Tour:** A naturalist-guided tour paddling on a calm section of the Deschutes River with a local microbrew or root beer to enjoy afterwards; 1:30-5:30 p.m.; \$65 to \$95; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359
- **Deschutes River Kayak Tour:** Paddle along a tranquil stretch of the river guided by a naturalist; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1:30-5:30 p.m.; \$70 to \$95; Wanderlust Tours, 61535 S. Highway 97, Bend; [wanderlusttours.com](http://wanderlusttours.com) or 541-389-8359

#### Ongoing

- **Big Butte Challenge:** Hikers and runners will summit five buttes in Central Oregon, going at their own pace whenever their schedule allows using a GPS-enabled activity tracker to submit efforts before the deadline; through May 31; \$60; throughout Central Oregon; [go.evvnt.com/752281-1](http://go.evvnt.com/752281-1) or 541-350-4635.

#### Friday 4/23

- **Happy Hour Trail Ride 'n Skills:** The weekly clinic will work on specific skills needed for different biking trails including jumps and corners, technical climbs and descents and more; 4-6 p.m.; \$75; new trail each week, around Bend, Bend; [go.evvnt.com/767660-2](http://go.evvnt.com/767660-2) or 541-728-7878.

#### Saturday 4/24

- **Eighth Annual Bend Bike Swap:** A selection of new and used bikes, kid's bikes, parts, apparel, gear and more will be sold with proceeds going to the Bend Endurance Academy, Commute Options and MBSEF; 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Thump Roastery, 549 NW York Drive, Bend; [go.evvnt.com/770441-0](http://go.evvnt.com/770441-0)

#### Tuesday 4/27

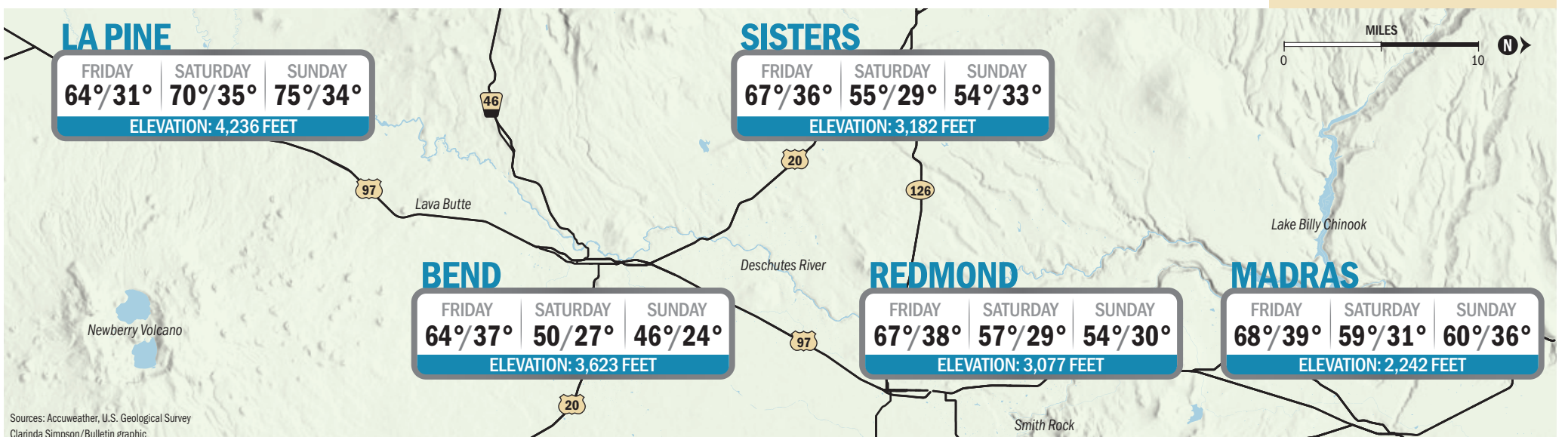
- **Reaching for the Sky — Lessons on Forest Canopies from Science:** During this virtual lecture, Dr. David Anderson, ornithologist and founder of Canopy Watch International, will share recent efforts to grow the art and science of canopy access methods; 3-4 p.m.; online; [go.evvnt.com/766837-0](http://go.evvnt.com/766837-0)

#### Wednesday 4/28

- **Foley Waters Hike:** We will follow lesser known paths with a bit of cross country travel, looking at spring plants, a fraudulent gold mine, and local geology; 9 a.m.-noon; registration required; Steelhead Falls Trailhead, River Road, Crooked River Ranch; [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)
- **Women's Foundational Skills Bike Clinic:** Women new to mountain biking can learn fundamental skills to feel more confident setting up the bike, shifting, braking and navigating small trail obstacles; 5:30-7:30 p.m.; \$75; Seventh Mountain Resort, 18575 SW Century Drive, Bend; [go.evvnt.com/767651-2](http://go.evvnt.com/767651-2) or 541-728-7878.

#### Thursday 4/29

- **Tam-A-Lau Trail Hike:** This guided hike will offer spectacular views of Lake Billy Chinook and the entire Cascade range; 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; registration required; Tam-a-lau Loop Hike, Cove Palisades State Park, Culver; [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)



Sources: Accuweather, U.S. Geological Survey  
Clarinda Simpson/Bulletin graphic