



THE REGION'S HUB FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Each week in this section, you will find the area's most complete guide of what's open and closed; outdoor activities and events; top picks of places to explore; conditions of hiking and biking trails, fishing holes, water flows, camping spots, parks and more — as well as features from outdoor writers and field experts.



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin
A mountain biker rides down a singletrack trail during an outing near Horse Butte (background) on April 10.

Don't spring too far ahead

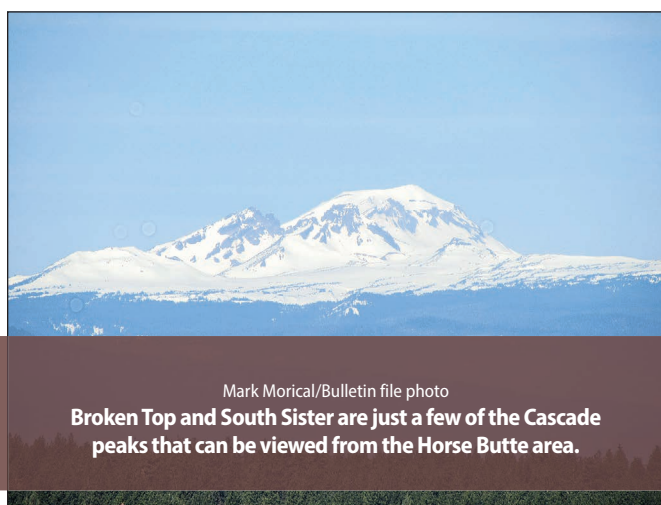
Some mountain biking areas don't fare too well in the summer heat;

NOW is time for Horse Butte

BY MARK MORICAL
The Bulletin



Driving up Century Drive to go snowboarding at Mt. Bachelor on Sunday morning, I noticed the parking lot at the Cascade Lakes Welcome Station — where the Catch and Release, C.O.D. and Ticket to Ride trails all meet — was nearly full. But we'll have all spring and summer to ride those trails. This time of year, I like to get a few more weeks out of the trails east of Bend, before they become too sandy and dusty by summertime.



Mark Morical/Bulletin file photo
Broken Top and South Sister are just a few of the Cascade peaks that can be viewed from the Horse Butte area.

Horse Butte, southeast of Bend, is an ideal mountain biking option through late April and well into May. The relatively flat and nontechnical nature of the trails near Horse Butte provides a great way to ease into the season for those riders who spent most of the winter skiing and snowboarding rather than mountain biking.

Last week, I made the short drive to the Horse Butte Trailhead.

The Coyote Loop Trail and Arnold Ice Cave Trail (Trail 63) form a loop of about 10 miles that can be ridden in either direction. I started out on the Arnold Ice Cave Trail to ride the loop clockwise.

See **Horse Butte** / B9

It's Earth Month: Consider volunteering in area parks, trails

BY KIM JOHNSON
For The Bulletin

My family has a litter habit. Not the bad behavior, tossing-trash-out-the-car-window kind. This is more like a treasure hunt and maybe plays a small role to help take care of the places that we wander and explore. It's our way to give back to the places that help keep us sane and healthy.

It's not something we plan really, but the high-energy dog is almost always with us when we hit the parks, trails or forest, and our walk supplies always include several dog poop bags for cleaning up after her. It's easy to use an empty bag for picking up any bits of trash we find along the way. Thankfully, the bag is not often full after a visit to most Bend parks and trails.

April is Earth Month and a good annual reminder of the importance of tak-

ing care of our favorite outdoor places. Getting involved can be as simple as grabbing a bag and picking up a few pieces of litter on your next walk, or doing something more organized and signing up to be a volunteer to help care for the parks and trails in our community.

Take on a one-day project

Small groups from clubs, schools, churches, businesses and even families can help with seasonal landscape maintenance projects, such as raking out planting areas, pulling weeds or spreading bark mulch. These are generally two or three hours and go a long way to not only beautify the park, but also support keeping moisture around trees and plants and reduce the need for other weed-management measures.

See **Volunteering** / B10



Volunteers gather at Riley Ranch. Park hosts use two-hour weekly shifts to monitor the park and remind visitors of rules. Submitted photo