



A family fishes for trout at the pond at the Seventh Street Complex in John Day

Eagle file photo

## Oregon closes recreational hunting and fishing to non-residents to limit travel amid COVID-19 restrictions

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is closing recreational hunting, fishing, crabbing and clamming to non-residents due to concerns about travel to Oregon to participate in these outdoor activities. Such travel could spread the virus and put more of a burden on Oregon's rural communities, according to a press release.

As of April 10, non-residents may no longer participate in these activities in Oregon. The restriction extends until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and it is deemed safe to travel into Oregon. This order does not apply to anyone living in Oregon for less than six months who has not yet established residency.

Some states, including Washington, have closed hunting and fishing to limit the spread of the virus. While seasons remain open in Oregon (except for Columbia River salmon/steelhead fishing), resident hunters and anglers should not be traveling to participate. ODFW is hearing concerns from rural communities about people visiting to hunt and fish and placing additional burdens on these communities' limited resources.

"Rural communities are concerned about the potential impact of COVID-19 on medical and emergency services, search and rescue and their citizens. Some have asked us to close seasons to reduce travel," said ODFW Direc-

tor Curt Melcher. "We would like to keep seasons open to give locals an outlet during this difficult time, but that doesn't mean it's OK to travel to these communities. Stick close to home and fish at your local lake, pond or river and do not go crabbing or clamming unless you live on the coast, and then only to places where access is still open."

ODFW monitoring has shown that, while Oregonians are still participating in fisheries, clamming, shed hunting and wildlife viewing, it is in significantly lower numbers and that the majority of participants are doing it close to home and practicing social distancing. "We appreciate that many Oregonians are taking the Stay Home, Save Lives order seriously," added Melcher.

ODFW field staff monitoring participation in the field have seen out of state license plates and out of state angling and shellfish licenses in use. Staff are also fielding numerous calls from non-residents inquiring about plans come to Oregon to hunt or fish.

"ODFW believes this action restricting non-residents will help local communities enforce the restrictions on out-of-state travelers violating the order, and putting local resources and residents at risk," said Melcher. "We appreciate everyone's understanding at this difficult time and look forward to seeing you outdoors again in the future when this passes."

ODFW anticipates there will be

opportunity for non-residents who have already purchased a 2020 license to participate in hunting, fishing or shellfish opportunities later in the year. ODFW will refund non-resident spring bear and spring turkey tags and reinstate preference points for spring bear hunters. Contact [odfw.websales@state.or.us](mailto:odfw.websales@state.or.us) or 503-947-6101 to arrange for a refund.

Non-residents interested in applying for a fall controlled hunt may still apply online at <https://odfw.huntfishoregon.com/login> and the deadline to apply remains May 15.

Oregon residents who do choose to hunt, fish, crab or clam are reminded to:

- Stay close to home rather than traveling far. The Governor's Executive Order says hunting and fishing are OK, but to limit travel.
- Practice social distancing and stay 6 feet away from anyone who doesn't live in the immediate household, including when outdoors.
- Check access as the area may be closed. State parks are closed, counties have closed some parks and boat ramps, beach access is closed in some areas and national forests and BLM lands have closed recreation sites.
- Stay home if sick.
- Carry needed supplies to minimize non-essential stops — including buying licenses and tags online instead of making a trip to a license sale agent if possible and bringing all needed food, water and sanitization supplies.

## OSAA cancels all remaining spring activities

Blue Mountain Eagle

Per Gov. Kate Brown's announcement that Oregon schools will be closed to in-person learning for the remainder of the school year, the Oregon School Activities Association has cancelled all remaining spring activities and state championships, according to a press release.

"Today's heart wrenching decision is difficult for all members of the OSAA family," said Peter Weber, OSAA executive director. "We empathize with students and school communities, especially our graduating seniors, but recognize that these cancellations will allow our collective focus to remain where it's most needed at this time — on the health and safety of all Oregonians."

"We had maintained hope for an abbreviated spring season to help bring a sense of normalcy to these uncertain times," continued Weber. "Now more than ever we need to apply the lessons learned through participation in education-based activities — teamwork, sacrifice, resilience — and play our role in adhering to the public health guidelines. We all look forward to the day when we play again."

Current OSAA policies prohibiting the use of school

facilities and coaches from organizing or directing workouts and practices remain in effect until further notice. The OSAA Executive Board will meet in the coming weeks to discuss policies for summer activities, along with academic eligibility concerns for fall 2020 that have been expressed by member schools and families. The OSAA and our member schools are currently awaiting guidance from ODE on credit attainment for ninth-through 11th-grade students through the state's Distance Learning for All initiative.

Visit [osaa.org/coronavirus](http://osaa.org/coronavirus) for OSAA policies, plus health and safety resources, related to COVID-19. Included on this page are all memos and media releases from OSAA regarding this situation since early March, along with a series of frequently asked questions.

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**Thank you**  
everyone who supported Lake Creek Youth Camp, through the Pistol Raffle and donations. We are hoping to reschedule our Benefit dinner and auction next month.

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Hello Grant County,

I hope you are all doing well, and I really hope this will be over soon!

These are strange times for us all. I am proud of the way we are helping each other out. Grant County people really know how to take care of each other!

If you haven't liked our Facebook page(Grant County Oregon Chamber of Commerce), please do! We try to post and share information that might be interesting and helpful during this time. We also have a Grant County – Support Local BINGO game posted on there. So far, only two people have played, and both have won \$25 Grant County Greenbacks. Congratulations to Shiloh Burton-Harper and Heather Rookstool!

The Grant County Chamber is the Community Manager for John Day for the XXXII Cycle Oregon Classic – Ride the Painted Hills bicycle ride this September. We are signing up groups to help with the various volunteer positions for the event. They are volunteer opportunities that will raise money for your organizations and groups. If your organization or group is interested in helping and earning some money, please call me at the Chamber. Currently, I am there in the mornings until about noon. If I'm not there, please leave a message and I will get back to you.

Take care, everyone. Stay Well!  
Tammy Bremner  
Manager, Grant County Chamber of Commerce

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