

# The Blue Mountain EAGLE

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## Grant County seniors log worst vaccination rate in the state

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County is at the bottom of the list in terms of vaccinating seniors for COVID-19.

Oregon Health Authority reported last week that Grant County has the lowest rate of COVID-19 vaccinations for people in the 65 and older group than any other county in the state.

Kimberly Lindsay, the county's public health administrator, said she anticipates Grant County's numbers will improve once they report a backlog of second doses, but she wanted to convey to the community that all seniors in Grant County who want the vaccine can get it.

As of March 18, 31.8% of those 65 and older in the county had received the vaccine, according to OHA data. Meanwhile, in Harney County, 46.3% of people 65 and older received the vaccine. In Lake County, 43.2% rolled up their sleeves. In Umatilla, 46.8%; Morrow, 45.7%; Union, 49.5%; Baker, 76.3%; and Malheur, 48.4%.

Lindsay said the county received 800 new vaccine doses and 100 booster doses in a Sunday press release.

On Monday, she said, the county immunized those in eligible groups and those on the county's waitlist.

She said the county is finishing up groups one through seven of phase 1A. Lindsay said, per state regulations, the county cannot move beyond phase 1B, including adults over 18. For now, she said, they are eligible to be on the waitlist.

Lindsay said Oregon Health Authority reported the county would receive 300 first doses and 200 second doses of the Moderna vaccine this week.

She said, assuming the county receives the planned doses, they will hold a vaccine clinic on March 29 and vaccinate those in eligible groups.

Lindsay said the county still plans on scheduling vaccine clinics in Monument, Dayville, Long Creek and Seneca in the future.



Eagle file photo  
**Rebekah Rand, director of emergency management at Blue Mountain Hospital District, fills a syringe with the COVID-19 vaccine at a January vaccine clinic at the Grant County Fairgrounds.**



Contributed photo/Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch Center

The Lionshead Fire is shown burning Sept. 6 on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

## Warm Springs evaluates carbon sequester project in wake of wildfire

### Half of project forest burns in Lionshead Fire

By Michael Kohn  
EO Media Group

Five years ago the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs set aside 24,000 acres of forestland for a project to sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. Last summer more than half of that forest went up in smoke in the devastating Lionshead Fire.

Now tribes, which earned millions of dollars from the California Air Resources Board for the project, are hard at work assessing just how much was lost. Bobby Brunoe, general manager for the tribe's Branch of Natural Resources, so far calculates that 15,000 acres of the project area were lost in the fire. Overall, the Lionshead Fire burned 204,000 acres, of which 96,000 acres are on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

Warm Springs, located 70 miles north of Bend, sells carbon credits earned through California's Cap-and-Trade Program, by protecting its forests so they can continue to capture carbon. The program is a market-based form of regulation that sets an upper limit, or "cap," on carbon

emissions produced by companies in California.

The carbon offset projects can be located outside of California, a policy that opened the door to participation by Warm Springs. Around the country, there are 136 forest offset projects.

According to the agreement, Warm Springs will maintain and build carbon stands within its project area for 100 years. At Warm Springs, the area considered for protection was zoned as "conditional use," a designation that allowed the tribes to log it if they so desired, although it had not been logged before.

Entering the Cap-and-Trade Program was a

natural disasters. Each forest project contributes 10-20% of its total credits into the buffer account, which acts as a sort of insurance.

The project area on Warm Springs that burned, known as ARC260, is located on the east side of Mount Jefferson. The area will be evaluated for damage, said Brunoe, as not all areas of a forest burn the same — parts of a forest may have a light or heavy burn, or no burn at all. In addition, a burned area is not necessarily out of the carbon project as a standing snag can still be counted as carbon.

The verified estimate of current carbon stocks must be completed by a third party within 23 months, according to the California Air Resources Board.

Much of the area where ARC260 is located is currently inaccessible due to deep snow, said Brunoe, so research is expected to start in earnest

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—Bobby Brunoe, general manager for the tribe's Branch of Natural Resources

financial incentive to keep the forest intact and increase its carbon intake capacity. But wildfires like Lionshead throw a wrench in those intentions as the burned trees reverse carbon sequestration, sending carbon into the atmosphere.

### Buffer pool protection

The California program is protected from wildfire events through its "buffer pool" of carbon credits, which are available to use in case forest carbon is lost through wildfire or other

in spring.

"The extent and severity of the fire impact to the Warm Springs carbon project remains unknown and will be under evaluation for the next year and a half, involving detailed forest inventories and modeling," said Brunoe.

Once the evaluation of the forest damage is complete, a determination will be made on how much to reduce the buffer pool.

See Wildfire, Page A18

## Grant County reports second COVID-19-related death

### 81-year-old woman dies in Bend hospital

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

COVID-19 has claimed another life in Grant County.

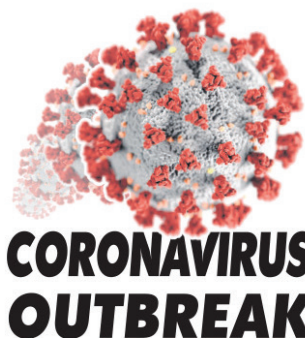
The Grant County Health Department reported Sunday that an 81-year-old woman with underlying conditions who resided in Grant County died at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend on March 19 after testing positive for COVID-19.

According to the health depart-

ment, with 42 cases so far in March, the county is in the midst of community spread.

In a Friday email, Grant County Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay said, if the county's case counts continue to increase, the state will move Grant County into the "moderate" risk category.

According to the Oregon Health Authority's web page, at-home



social gathering restrictions would move from 10 to eight people in the moderate category.

Indoor dining would still be allowed. However, the state would mandate restaurants and bars close at 11 p.m. instead of midnight. Restaurants and bars would also go from a maximum of eight to six per table.

Lindsay said each county gets a "warning week." She

said the state typically publishes the "warning week" on Tuesdays.

"A warning period means that you should move up in the metrics, but you get a two week 'stay of execution' and we will stay in the low level," she said.

She said the new metric level would go into effect on April 9.

If the numbers go below 30 new cases for a two-week period, the county would stay in the low category.

But, she said, if they go above 30, then the county would go to moderate.

