

ODFW braces for drought

Fish stocking changes and possible emergency regulations are expected

March and April of 2021 were among the driest spring months since the 1890s. Many streams are already at 25 percent of the flow that is typical for this time of year, with flows usually seen in early summer observed in April on some southern Oregon streams, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

ODFW is bracing for a serious drought as summer arrives, with the entire state being impacted. Currently, 72 percent of the state is in severe or extreme drought status according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

"Unfortunately, we are likely looking at a very tough summer and fall ahead for fish," Shaun Clements, ODFW Deputy Administrator for Inland Fisheries. "It's possible that ODFW may have to take emergency actions to protect native fish populations due to the drought."

"Please try to be flexible with your fishing plans this summer as we get through this drought," continued Clements. "Our weekly Recreation Report is the best source of information on conditions and any emergency regulation changes due to drought."

Some of the emergency actions that could occur are:

-Trout stocking changes. The stocking schedule may change at short notice due to water conditions. Changes may not show up in the stocking schedule so see the Recreation Report for the latest information.

-Early release of fish: Low flows/high temps at hatcheries may force early

release of salmon, steelhead and trout being raised.

-Emergency closures/regulation changes: Certain areas may be closed to angling to reduce stress on vulnerable fish populations already struggling due to drought; bag limits could be reduced, or seasons shortened; "hoot owl" regulations may close fishing earlier in the day.

-Bag limits may be removed: In areas without sensitive fish populations, bag limits may be removed so surviving fish can be harvested rather than left to die in low water.

-Fish relocation: While rare, it's possible ODFW will salvage fish and move them to a different waterbody.

Any regulation changes will be posted in the "Recreation Report / Fishing Report" by fishing zone, so don't forget to always check the for the latest regulation change report before fishing.

On days when temperatures soar, anglers can do their part to reduce the stress fish are under:

-Fish early in day when water temperatures are cooler.

-Look for trout in deep, high elevation lakes or shaded streams near headwaters. These places are often cooler.

-Use barbless hooks so you can release fish easily and land fish quickly. The longer the fight, the less likely the fish will survive if released.

-Keep the fish in the water when you unhook it and cradle the fish upright until it revives enough to

swim away.

-Use your judgement. If conditions where you want to fish seems especially severe (low, hot water), consider fishing somewhere else where water conditions are better.

"Due to climate change, droughts are expected to become more frequent and more severe. ODFW scientists are working to identify cold water refuges, support flow restoration projects and improve habitat where possible to mitigate the effects of climate change on fish." For more information, see the agency's climate change policy.

"There are things we can do to help ensure our iconic species can weather these droughts," Clements said. "By protecting and restoring the most important habitats to provide cool, clean water, we give them a fighting chance."

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Ione's Fourth of July celebration is a go

The Ione Fourth of July Celebration will be happening this year on Sunday, July 4. All activities will be subject to the COVID restrictions imposed by the state at the time of the event.

The committee is currently looking for food and craft vendors who would like to have a booth. The vendor fees are being waived this year, but everyone will still need to fill out the necessary paperwork to be a food or craft vendor. For more information or to sign up, email Heidi Nelson at henny.pennie@gmail.com and include 'Ione Fourth of July' in the subject line.

The day will start off with a 5K walk/run at 7 a.m. and a hearty Fireman's Breakfast from 7:30-10:30 a.m. The Good Old Fashion Cruz-In car show registration starts at 11 a.m. For more information on the Cruz-In please contact Loyal Burns at 541-422-7512.

The parade starts at 1 p.m. followed by live music on the stage starting at 2 p.m. Musical acts will

start with Luke Basile and Jamie Nasario from 2-3 p.m., then the Cory Peterson Band from 3:30-4:30 p.m. After a brief break, during which there might be a talent show, the two main bands will take the stage.

The opening act, Colorblind, is a classic rock cover band from the Tri-Cities and will take the stage at 6:30 p.m. The headliner, Stompin' Ground, a high-energy, country rock band, also from the Tri-Cities, that headlined the 2019 celebration, will take the stage at 8:30 p.m.

The entire day of fun builds up to a firework spectacular, shot off the hill overlooking Ione. Bring your lawn chairs, set up your spot in the city park and spend the whole day right there.

The complete schedule of events is still coming

together and will be made available on the Ione Fourth of July Facebook page and other places as time allows. "We are hoping this event gives all of our area towns a place to come together and celebrate with their neighbors," says organizer Heidi Nelson. "We are keeping the publicity local so the turnout may be lower than in years past; this is by design. A lower turnout makes it easy to meet any pandemic restrictions that are in place at the time of the event."

This year's event is made possible by a grant from the Morrow County Unified Recreation District. Visitors of all ages are welcome. Dogs will not be allowed in the park. To stay up to date on activities, follow the Ione Fourth of July page on Facebook.

Ione Community Church
470 E Main Street, Ione

Summer worship at 10:00 AM
Sunday Mornings



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-Jeremiah 29:13
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