News Release

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Temporary camping closures announced for Oregon state parks, forests, and wildlife areas

SALEM, Ore. – Three Oregon state agencies will suspend camping to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will accommodate current overnight guests through April 2. Reservations for all state park stays from April 3 to and including May 8 will be canceled and site fees refunded. Before May 8, the department will review the state park campground closure to decide whether it should be extended. The decision affects all individual and group overnight facilities: campsites, yurts, cabins, tepees, and services operated by concessionaires. The suspended service also affects reservations for group day-use areas.

The Oregon Department of Forestry maintains campgrounds in the Clatsop, Santiam, and Tillamook State Forests. Most campgrounds are currently closed for the season, and will not reopen for individual or group use. Year-round campgrounds will close starting on Monday, March 23. All day-use and campground restrooms are temporarily closed due to limited janitorial services. A reopening date for all restrooms and state forest campgrounds has not yet been determined. During this time, trails, forest roads and trailheads on state forestlands will remain open to the public.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is closing its Wildlife Areas to overnight camping effective Sunday, March 22. The closure affects both dispersed camping and established campgrounds. Several wildlife areas are also currently fully or partially closed to all visitors as part of annual seasonal closures to protect wintering wildlife. While camping will be prohibited, wildlife areas that are currently open remain open to visitors for day-use activities including wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting and other outdoor recreation. See the ODFW Wildlife Area Visitor Guide for more information (link at bottom).

State park, forest, and wildlife area camping areas are built into relatively small areas by design. Maintaining social distance is difficult. Working with fewer staff and volunteers is becoming a reality, making it difficult to maintain proper cleaning procedures. To support the state goal of reducing transmission of COVID-19, temporary campground closures are necessary. The details of these actions—such as dates and affected programs—are under constant review and will change as new information develops.

This will reduce long-distance travel for many people, but all state natural resource agencies remind Oregonians that a local outdoor experience can improve our mental and physical health,

especially now. Daytime activities are still widely available and encouraged. The usual reminders, plus the new COVID-19 guidelines, apply:

- Prepare for your visit with the clothing, supplies, and knowledge you need to have a safe visit.
- If you're ill, stay home.
- Cover sneezes and coughs with a tissue (then throw it away) or inside of your elbow.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Wash regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. It's up to you to practice good personal hygiene, and not every place at every park can be kept clean all the time.
- If place is so crowded you can't maintain a healthy social distance—at least six feet—find a different place to go.

Know before you go:

- Travel Oregon travel alerts: https://traveloregon.com/travel-alerts/.
- State park service reductions and closures: https://bit.ly/OPRD-covid.
- Oregon Department of Forestry: https://www.oregon.gov/ODF/
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife: https://myodfw.com/visit-odfw-wildlife-areas

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