Media Release

4/6/2020

A reminder to “Do The Right Thing” as the weather becomes favorable

As of April 4, 2020, Skamania County has 2 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 39 tests have been conducted.

The Skamania County Sheriff’s Office partnered with more than a dozen federal, state and local agencies in and around the Columbia River Gorge to encourage outdoor enthusiasts to “do the right thing” and comply with public health directives to stay home and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Those agencies have temporarily closed lands and water access to adhere to state executive orders. Despite the closures, visitation to public lands has remained high as people converged at parks, sites and trails.

Agencies in and around Skamania County contacted dozens of recreationalists over the weekend and issued citations to many of them. Agencies wish to remind the general public to “do the right thing” and respect the closures, which are put in place to best protect the health and safety of the public.

- Because of the high density of visitors, it simply isn’t safe for people to visit lands or for employees to maintain sites in the Columbia River Gorge while we are in midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Respect closures.
- Don’t circumvent closures by “bushwhacking through the backcountry” right now, as you are taking unnecessary risks that may put a strain on local law enforcement and medical resources. The Gorge has steep slopes and drop-offs as well as unstable rock formations that create off-trail hazards.
- Visiting public lands while facilities are closed leaves impacts on human health and the environment, as trash and human waste accumulates on the landscape. Each small action has a magnified effect when millions of visitors come, as they do each year in the Gorge.
- Don’t use creative access points to trails to get around closures – ad hoc parking creates other hazards for motorists and blocks access by emergency services.
- Remember, this is temporary. Trails and destinations will eventually reopen. Help everyone by doing the right thing for right now.

The Skamania County Sheriff’s Office’s wishes to warn residents within the county of an uptick in potential scams. These scams related to COVID-19 can present in any of the
following means. If you, or someone you know believes they are subject to a COVID-19 related scam, please report the scam to the U.S. Department of Health 24-hour hotline: **800-HHS-TIPS** or contact the Skamania County Sheriff’s Office.

- Robocalls purporting to offer respirator masks with no intent on delivery
- Fake Covid-19 related apps and websites that install malware or ransomware
- Increase in phishing emails asking for donations or other monetary contributions allegedly going toward Covid-19 response/relief
- Social media scams fraudulently seeking donations or claiming to provide stimulus funds if the recipient enters their bank account information
- Sales of fake testing “kits”, cures, “immunity” pills and protective equipment
- Fraudulent offers for free Covid-19 testing in order to obtain Medicare beneficiary information which is used to submit false medical claims for unrelated, unnecessary, or fictitious testing or services
- Prescription drug schemes involving the submission of medical claims for unnecessary antiretroviral treatments or other drugs that are marketed as purported cures for Covid-19

The Skamania County Chamber of Commerce and Skamania EDC will host a free Business Resource Zoom Meeting on Wednesday, April 8 at 1:00 pm. Hear updates on project and programs offered by the Chamber and EDC and learn more details about the Paycheck Protection Program and other funding resources available under the CARES Act with Gregory Price of the Small Business Development Center. Question and Answer time is scheduled as well.

To participate: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/339037105?pwd=dm10cWY4STdrUk1uRE5mQldNS3dEQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/339037105?pwd=dm10cWY4STdrUk1uRE5mQldNS3dEQT09)

Or use one of these numbers to call-in: (253) 215-8782 OR (301) 715 8592

Meeting ID: 339 037 105

Password: 004360

Skamania County Community Health is busy with Public health COVID-19 work but also continues to serve the community with Mental Health and or Substance Use Disorder issues. We see patients in person and by phone and or Zoom and the psychiatrist is here via telehealth twice a week. We ask that people call in advance for an appointment. Feel free to call SCCH with questions at 509-427-3580
SCCH has experienced a slight increase in anxiety and depressive symptomology as would be expected in this situation.

Here is great CDC behavioral health information for children and adults.