



SOLAR ECLIPSE FAQs

SCIENCE RELATED

What is a solar eclipse?

A solar eclipse is when the moon passes between the earth and the sun, and it can be seen from earth. In a total solar eclipse, like the eclipse in August, the moon will completely block the sun and along the mid-line it should be dark enough to see stars.

When is the solar eclipse?

On August 21, the partial eclipse will begin shortly after 9a.m. in Oregon reaching totality between 10:15 and 10:25.

How long does it last?

The eclipse will arrive slowly – over the course of about 1 ½ hours, much like sunset. At the peak, viewers within the “path of totality” will experience the total shadow for about two minutes, while those on the outskirts will see it for as little as a few seconds. Once the moon starts to move past the sun again, it should take another hour and a half to be fully light again.

What defines the path of totality?

Path of totality is the narrow strip of the Earth’s surface where the sun is completely eclipsed by the moon and stars become visible. The width of this eclipse is approximately 60 miles wide.

Where can you see the solar eclipse?

The solar eclipse crosses 4 continents and 14 states.

First contact is in Oregon. The Lincoln City/Newport area on the Oregon Coast is the first easily-accessible place in the U.S. where the eclipse will be visible. If you want to be the first person to experience totality in the continental U.S., be on the waterfront at Government Point, Oregon, at 10:15:56.5 a.m. PDT.

It will travel at 2,500 mph in a 60 mile wide arc crossing cities like Salem, Madras and Baker City.

Central and eastern Oregon are considered the best sites in the nation to view totality, due to conditions such as dry weather, the potential for clear skies, and low levels of light pollution.



Everybody in the state will see at least a 90 percent eclipse, but to experience the event to its fullest you should be located in the path of totality.

What makes this Solar eclipse special?

The 2017 total solar eclipse will be the first such event visible from the contiguous United States since February of 1979. The next eclipse to cross the United States won't happen until August 12, 2045.

Who and how many people are expected?

The Oregon Office of Emergency Management and Travel Oregon estimate that Oregon will have somewhere between five hundred thousand and one million visitors for this event.

How does the eclipse affect me?

The eclipse will affect travel on major highways throughout most of Oregon from about Wednesday, 8/16 to Wednesday, 8/23.

The numbers of visitors coming into the path of totality may also cause shortages in gas so fill up early and often; have supplies to last a few days, especially medicine; consider that we may have power, internet and cell phone outages; and stay flexible and enjoy this unique event.

SAFETY RELATED

What eye protection should I use?

The only safe way to view the eclipse is through special-purpose solar filters, such as "eclipse glasses" or hand-held solar viewers. Homemade filters or ordinary sunglasses, even very dark ones, are not safe for looking at the sun. To date four manufacturers have certified that their eclipse glasses and handheld solar viewers meet the ISO 12312-2 international standard for such products: Rainbow Symphony, American Paper Optics, Thousand Oaks Optical, and TSE 17.

An alternative method for safe viewing of the partially eclipsed sun is pinhole projection. For example, cross the outstretched, slightly open fingers of one hand over the outstretched, slightly open fingers of the other. With your back to the sun, look at your hands' shadow on the ground. The little spaces between your fingers will project a grid of small images on the ground, showing the sun as a crescent during the partial phases of the eclipse.



How will fire restrictions affect the eclipse?

August is wildfire season in the Pacific NW. This means, wildfires may hamper visibility, travel, and availability of supplies. Plan ahead for basic needs such as food, water, gas for the car and bathroom breaks in case you're stuck in traffic. Stay up to date on wildfire conditions through [InciWeb](#) and campfire restrictions through your local BLM district offices.

Expect a ban on all campfires during the eclipse. No campfires, charcoal grills, smokers, propane campfires, firewood cutting and chainsaw use, fireworks, no explosive devices, smoking outside of vehicles or buildings (except when standing in water).

Fire season is now underway; we ask people to park in areas cleared of vegetation and avoid driving on primitive roads with vegetation down the middle because wildfires can ignite easily in the undercarriage of vehicles. Also, be aware that smoke from other active fires may affect your visibility.

What health related conditions should one be aware of during the eclipse?

In addition to eye safety, other conditions to be aware of include heat stroke and dehydration. Be sure to bring drink plenty of water throughout the day, wearing light colored clothing, and use proper sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher).

LOGISTIC RELATED

What are my camping options during the eclipse?

Two types of camping exist on BLM land: developed and dispersed.

Developed campgrounds offer amenities that vary by location and may include fire pits, picnic tables, a water supply, and a specific area for your tent. Developed campgrounds are generally first come first serve camping with a few exceptions for reservations (via [recreation.gov](#)). All campsites at BLM developed campgrounds are already reserved.

- Dispersed campsites are generally in more remote locations and do not offer any amenities except an undesignated patch of land. Dispersed camping is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Whether in a developed campground or at a dispersed site, you may usually camp in an area for up to 14 days (13 nights) before having to move at least 25 miles from your original spot, and you may not return to that area for 28 consecutive days.

Personal belongings may not be left unattended for more than 72 hours.

For people who dispersed camp, we are messaging the importance of packing out all trash



and proper disposal of human waste. The John Day Fossil Beds area is a coveted location for eclipse viewing and the NPS unit does not offer camping. Many visitors to that area are being directed to BLM and USFS dispersed camping and campgrounds. Most of the BLM land surrounding the Painted Hills unit is within two wilderness study areas and a second large block of BLM land within the Path of Totality is within the Spring Basin Wilderness. We additionally expect extremely heavy visitation on portions of the Lower Deschutes and in campgrounds along the Lower Crooked River.

What should I know about camping on public lands

Reservable sites on public land are booked; however, dispersed camping is an option.

- Call the BLM office in the area of interest and get a map so you can identify public land vs. private land. Always get permission to camp on private land.
- Bring enough food and water to last several days longer than you plan to be there in case you're stuck due to traffic
- Plan to be out in hot, dry conditions – drink lots of water and use sunscreen
- August is fire season and campfire restrictions are in effect in most areas. Call ahead and find out if you can have a campfire. If not, bring a gas/propane cooking stove.
- Take home a great memory of the eclipse, not a memory of a wildfire.

Will my cellphone work during the eclipse?

Two factors to consider with regard to cell service in the path of totality during the eclipse: cell carrier coverage and mobile network bandwidth. A lot of the area within the Oregon path of totality is located in remote areas that do not have cell coverage. With regard to bandwidth, mobile networks can be taken offline completely when the call volume reaches maximum capacity. Mobile carriers instead encourage users to text message each other. If possible, identify analog phones that would be available by location and phone number.

What are the rural community implications?

Large volumes of people are coming to very rural communities and counties that have limited services to begin with e.g. Mitchell, Spray and Monument. Communities that at best have one gas station. Travel in many areas are on dirt roads that may be narrow and suitable only for high-clearance and/or 4WD vehicles. Roadside assistance may not be available and long waits for roadside assistance are likely. People should travel with full gas tanks and carry extra food and water.

We are encouraging people to plan for limited or no timely access to emergency services and challenges getting supplies like gasoline, restaurant food, and potable water.



Watch the weather and traffic updates

If it is cloudy in your location, you will not be able to see the eclipse. Based on conversations with partners, we are not to encourage visitors to change locations based on weather conditions in the days leading up to the eclipse. Last minute changes will only further, what ODOT and others predict, as a potential for major problems on highways. Bottom-line: Do your research, find a good place, get there, and cross your fingers.

For traffic related updates, use tripcheck.com and 511 to stay current on road conditions. For additional emergency information, use 211 for up-to-date evacuation routes, disaster relief, and medical support assistance (See 211.org for local call numbers).

INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

How can I find real-time updates?

On Twitter, use the official Oregon eclipse hashtags for real-time updates:

- #oreclipse #oreclipse2017 #eclipse2017

Recommended internet resources

Oregon Office of Emergency Management

- oregon.gov/oem/

Travel Oregon

- traveloregon.com/

Official BLM Solar Eclipse page

- blm.gov/solareclipse

Recommended fire restriction resources

Unfortunately, there is no single website that encompasses fire restriction information on all lands in Oregon. The following three websites are recommended online resources:

- Inciweb - <https://inciweb.nwccg.gov/state/38/>
- NWCC - <https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/index.aspx>
- Oregon Dept of Forestry - <http://wildfireoregondeptofforestry.blogspot.com/>



REGIONAL BLM OFFICE HOUR UPDATES

Burns District Office

The Burns District Office (28910, U.S. 20, Hines, Oregon) will be open Saturday and Sunday, August 19 and 20, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

No extended (evening) hours on regular business days.

Prineville District Office

Eclipse Information Booth

Date - Time: Wed August 16 - Wed Aug 23 - 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Location: Booth will be in front of the Prineville BLM and Ochoco National Forest Offices (3050 NE 3rd St., Prineville, Oregon).

Staff is available to pass on local fire prevention messaging, camping information, public land safety, any closure information, road conditions, directions, etc. Trash bags will also be available for visitors passing through the area.

Northwest Oregon District Office

The BLM's Three Bears and Cedar Grove campgrounds, located in the Molalla River Recreation Corridor, will be open to first-come first-serve camping Friday, August 18 through Tuesday, August 22. The one-day extension is available to help accommodate visitors planning to view the eclipse on Monday, August 21. The campgrounds are typically open Friday through Sunday, and close each Monday at 11:00 a.m.