

Your Oregon Guide

Today's lesson: Oregon factoids

Portlanders love their parks. Portland Parks and Recreation Department manages more than 200 parks. Forest Park is the largest wooded, natural city park in the U.S. Covering 5,124 acres, it has 74 miles of trails, and 100-plus bird and animal species. Mill End Park, with a diameter of only 24 inches, is the world's smallest park.

Oregon is one of the fastest growing wine-producing regions in the world. There are 462 vineyards in state, 47 within 100 miles of Portland.

Oregon's 262 miles of beaches and dunes are open to the public. You can (if you have lots of time and energy) hike the entire coast except for 42 miles of headwalls (sheer cliffs).

Mt. Tabor, in southeast Portland, is the only extinct volcano within a city in the U.S.

Portland is home to the largest independent bookstore in the world, Powell's City of Books at 1005 West Burnside.

Saturday Market is one of the largest open-air craft markets operating continuously in the country. Get there from MAX at the Skidmore Fountain stop.

No pennies needed. Oregon does not have a sales tax.

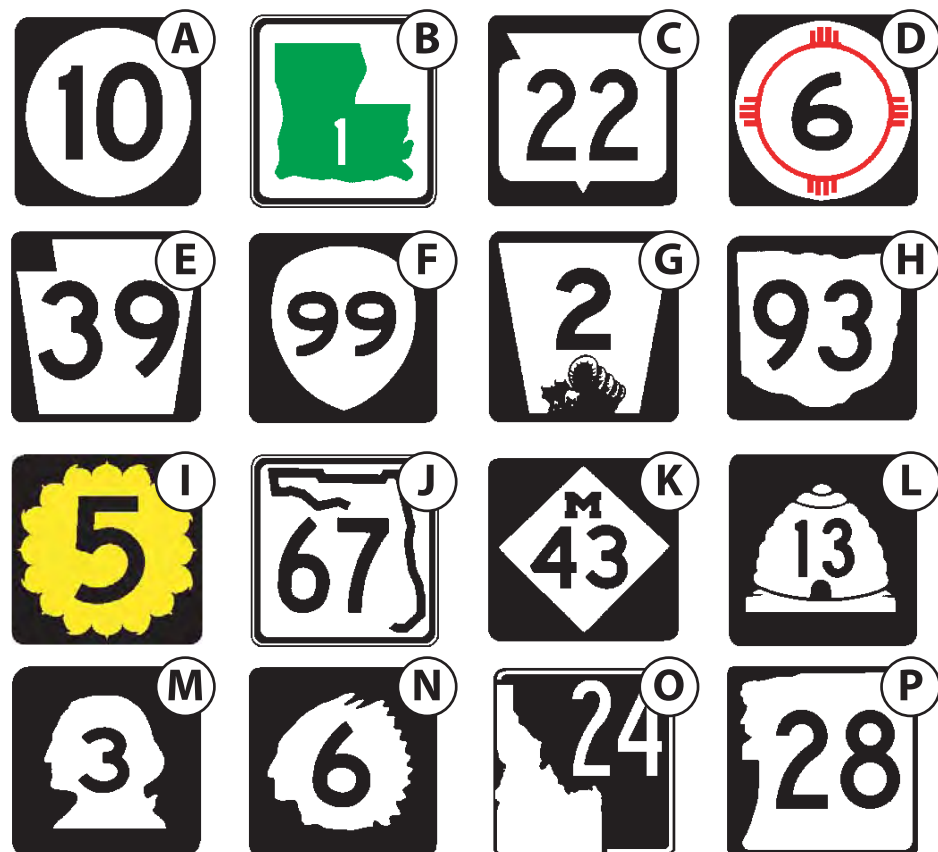
No pumping your own gas. Oregon is one of two states that does not permit self service stations. New Jersey is the other.

Skiing at Mt. Hood Timberline is almost a year-around activity. The high-speed Palmer lift begins operations each spring and it whisks skiers close to the summit.

Diversions

The state I'm in

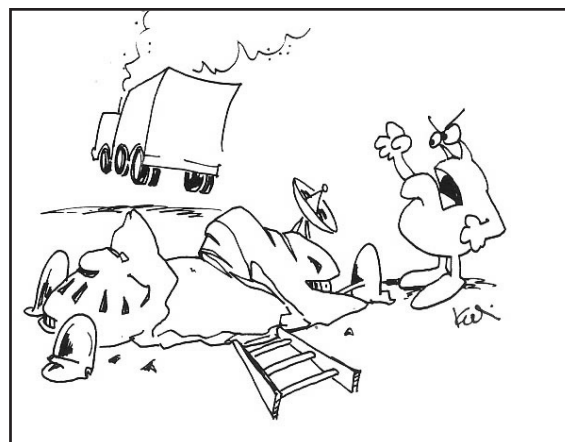
While the shields for the interstates and U.S. highways are constant throughout the country, each state has its own unique route marker for state highways. Match each state highway shield (A-P) with its corresponding state (1-16).



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|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Kansas | 6. Utah | 12. Ohio |
| 2. Washington | 7. Oregon | 13. Wisconsin |
| 3. Nebraska | 8. North Dakota | 14. New Hampshire |
| 4. Louisiana | 9. Delaware | 15. New Mexico |
| 5. Pennsylvania | 10. Michigan | 16. Idaho |
| | 11. Florida | |

Puzzle Answer

1. I, 2. M, 3. G, 4. B, 5. E, 6. L, 7. F, 8. N, 9. A, 10. K, 11. J, 12. H, 13. C, 14. P, 15. D, 16. O



Close encounters of the I-70 kind.



Today's Schedule

- 7 – 8 a.m.**
Delegate Breakfast
Oregon Ballroom 201 and 202
- National Cooperative Highway Research Program – Room A109
- 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.**
Standing Committee on Highways Presentations and Discussions
Oregon Ballroom 203 and 204
- 10:30 – Noon**
Standing Committee on Highways Council on Operations Business Meeting – Room B112
- Standing Committee on Highways Council on Project Delivery Business Meeting – Room B117
- Noon – 1:30 p.m.**
Trade Fair Opening and Lunch
Exhibit Hall A
- 1 – 5 p.m.**
Standing Committee on Highways
Oregon Ballroom 203 and 204
- Transportation Futures Committee
Room B114
- 2:45 – 3:15 p.m.**
Afternoon Break
Oregon Ballroom Foyer
- 5 – 6 p.m.**
Route Numbering Committee
Room A103
- 5 – 7 p.m.**
Reception and Legacy Award Presentation in the Trade Fair
Exhibit Hall A

Weather Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy.
High: 64 Low: 45
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny.
High: 64 Low: 43

AASHTO DAILY NEWS

Friday, October 27, 2006

Rosarians welcome AASHTO executive



John Horsley, AASHTO executive director, is greeted by the Royal Rosarians at the Portland International Airport. The Royal Rosarians are the official greeters and ambassadors of goodwill for Portland.

Projects given vision beyond pavement

A 1988 Baltimore conference entitled "Thinking Beyond the Pavement" created a new lens through which state DOTs can view their projects, one that considers the total context within which a transportation project will exist.

The sponsors of that conference, AASHTO and FHWA, have been working jointly since that time to ensure that Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) are part of every state DOT's approach to project delivery.

Building on a peer information-exchange in early September, Thursday's CSS Strategic Planning meeting was an opportunity for all the states to participate in the development of a strategic plan for implementing CSS in each DOT.

The meeting, moderated by CSS Task Force Chairman Neil

Pederson, helped shape a vision of where CSS could be in the next two or three years

With an aggressive agenda, the hard-working delegates identified the desired qualities of CSS and discussed the next critical steps to help mainstream it into all transportation agencies. The participants drafted four strategic goals that will advance the state of the practice:

- Evaluating and modifying all national standards, policies and guidance to facilitate CSS
- Making a case for CSS
- Supporting leadership and coalition-building
- Facilitating training

By day's end, the group prepared a recommendation for Monday's meeting of the Board of Directors about how CSS can continue to be supported by AASHTO.

Oregon Spotlight

You'll say cheers
to Oregon Wine Country

With nearly 500 wineries in the state, many within a 45-minute drive of Portland, wine from Oregon is growing in popularity.

A favorite Oregon escape is a visit to Oregon's wine country. A 45-minute trip on OR 99W southwest of Portland leads to Yamhill County, the epicenter of Oregon's wine industry.

Many wineries are clustered around Highway 99W near the towns of Dundee, Newberg, Carlton and McMinnville. Tasting rooms are nestled among vineyards, rolling hillsides and lovely views of Oregon's coastal range. Our weather patterns, combined with the 45-degree latitude we share with Burgundy, France, create conditions that allow northwest Oregon winemakers to shine. Locally owned and operated, our wineries and vineyards produce some of the country's best Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Syrah and Chardonnay.

Tasting rooms are easily accessible and are open most days of the week. Fall is crush time in the vineyards, with winemaking activities in full force. Visitors have an opportunity to see, hear and smell the process, and even visit with the winemaker.

Treat yourself to a uniquely Oregon experience that you're likely to remember long after that special bottle of wine is emptied.

FYI

Technology tours highlight the latest

Two technical tours on Saturday highlight Portland's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and ODOT's Innovative Partnerships Road User Fee Pilot Program.

Portland's Intelligent Transportation Systems Tour
Portland State University's ITS Laboratory – program integrates existing and new technologies in innovative ways to save lives, time and resources in our multimodal system.

ODOT Incident Response Trucks – Each vehicle is equipped with a GPS vehicle locator used to match nearby resources to incidents, a laptop computer, cellular and radio communication, and on-board variable message signs. The goals of the program are congestion reduction, motorist assistance and improved on-scene incident management.

TriMet "Smart" Bus with GPS system – Smart buses allow real-time arrival information. TransitTracker™ monitors the location of buses and trains, so riders know exactly when their ride is coming

ODOT Region 1's Transportation Management Operations Center — Visit this state-of-the-art facility completely upgraded in 2006.

Innovative Partnerships Program: Road User Fee Pilot Program Tour

In 2001, the Oregon Legislature authorized the creation of the Road User Fee Task Force (RUFTF) to examine alternatives for replacing Oregon's gas tax as the primary source of revenues for repairing, maintaining, and building Oregon's roads, for several reasons.

- the gas tax has not kept pace with inflation;
- voters have opposed increases in the gas tax; and
- the fuel efficiency of new vehicles, especially hybrids and alternative-fuel vehicles, continues to increase, resulting in less gas tax paid.

After 16 months of meetings, research, and discussions, RUFTF is focusing on a mileage-based charge as a replacement to the gas tax because it is a user-based, fair, simple, and affordable way to generate revenue, based on actual miles traveled in Oregon.

ODOT is testing RUFTF in a pilot program in Portland, which began in March 2006 and will last one year. Now at the halfway mark, ODOT's mileage fee pilot program tests several key aspects of charging a per-mile fee at the pump in lieu of paying the state gas tax. Volunteers of the one-year pilot use a mileage-counting device for in-state travel and purchase gas at select service stations in northeast and southeast Portland.

Based on the results of the pilot program, ODOT will draft model legislation for the Oregon Legislature to consider, beginning in 2009.

On this tour, you will see both a test vehicle and the equipment at work at a specially outfitted service station where you will walk through the program.



Left: A mileage counting device mounted to the dashboard.
Right: A transmission device located in the rear of the vehicle reports the mileage at refueling.

Oregon Spotlight

The Columbia River Gorge



The Columbia River Gorge abounds with scenic beauty and history.

The Columbia River Gorge is a spectacular river canyon cutting the only sea-level route through the Cascade Mountain Range. It is 80 miles long and up to 4,000 feet deep. The north canyon walls are in Washington state and the south canyon walls in Oregon. For a driving tour of the Gorge, drive the Historic Columbia River Highway (HCRH).

The best views of the Gorge are from Crown Point State Park/Vista House, built in 1918. The area serves as a rest stop, an observatory and a memorial to Oregon's early pioneers. Vista House was closed for four years for extensive restoration. It reopened to the public in 2005. Reach Crown Point/Vista House via the Bridal Veil exit from Interstate 84 eastbound, and then head west on the HCRH.

Heading east on the HCRH from Vista House, you will drive through a mossy rain forest. A series of figure-eight loops gently drops you 600 feet. In just five miles, you will see Latourell, Shepperd's Dell, Bridal Veil and Wahkeena falls.

The main attraction, Multnomah Falls, is a two-tiered, 620-foot waterfall. A trail from the Multnomah Falls Lodge (1925) climbs to the Simon Benson Bridge across the lower cascade, then zigzags to the top.

For a longer excursion, continue on to The Dalles via I-84 eastbound. Don't miss the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles before heading back to Portland.

Staff is here to serve

Not sure where you should go or how to get where you're going? Need a last-minute item? Look for one of the ODOT staff wearing the forest green conference shirt and we'll help you find what you need. Or, come to the Registration table located on the main level. If we can't come up with the answer, we'll find someone who can. We're here to serve!

Technical group
proposes new name

The Technical Implementation Group (TIG) is recommending a name change to better reflect its success. The TIG, formed in 2000, will become the Technical Information Program (TIP) if the recommendation is approved by the Standing Committees on Highways. The SCH will have the final say on whether the group can change its name to Technical Information Program (TIP).

"The TIG isn't just a group of people," said Keith Platte, AASHTO engineering program manager. "It doesn't reside in just a group." The name change is intended to better reflect progress since the group's inception in 2000. The group encourages state DOTs to use new technology to save money and time and to produce a better product.

The motion for the name change came Thursday as the group met to review the outline for a guidebook that would help states forward their innovations to the TIG.

Committee members noted that the TIG has grown into a program. The group meets regularly to review submissions regarding new innovation submissions. It has developed into more of an oversight committee. The goal is to highlight the program and its successes, such as pre-fabricated bridge components, which are now used nationwide for faster construction, less disruption to traffic and better quality control in the product.

The TIG, as a program, recognizes that it often takes eight to 10 years before a new technology gets into the system on a national level. The goal is to support new technology that proves successful in the states.

