



January 18, 2019

Hello Owyhee River Enthusiasts!

The news is very good! I can say that I am more than cautiously optimistic for this year's Owyhee River rafting season – especially with regard to April and early May trips. As of today we are at 99% of average snow water equivalent. SWE is the amount of water contained within the snowpack and is the value we are most concerned with. For instance, there is 29" of snow at South Mountain in Idaho. That translates into 7.2" of water (SWE). While 29" is 100% of average depth, 7.2" is only 86% of average SWE, so the current snow is a bit drier than usual.

A little historical perspective is useful for looking forward. Over that last 26 years there have been 15 years where SWE was either greater than, or not more than 10% less than today's value. For 12 of those years we had full rafting seasons and were able to run trips through the end of May. For the remaining 3 years, we ran out of water in early to mid-May. There is a significant amount of precipitation in the forecast for the Owyhee drainage in the next few days, so with a little luck (and if temperatures stay low) we'll be over 100% of average by next week.

While current conditions and historical comparisons seem to suggest that we'll have a good rafting season, 26 years of trying to predict the Owyhee has taught me to proceed with caution. Still, the forecast is good enough that booking trips in mid to late May is less of a crapshoot than it was a month ago. If you are "on the fence" for booking an Owyhee trip this year, I would suggest getting your reservation in soon. When word gets out that the Owyhee rafting season is looking good, remaining trips tend to fill up quickly.

Here's a current run-down of trips.

April 4 – 8 Spaces Available  
April 11 (Naturalist Ellen Bishop) – Sold Out  
April 18 (Geologist Kyle House) – **2 Spaces Available**  
April 25 (ONDA) – Sold Out  
May 2 – Sold Out  
May 9 – Lots of Availability  
May 16 – 9 Spaces Available  
May 23 – 10 Spaces Available  
May 30 – Lots of Availability

Special Note: Waitlists have shrunk to one or two people for April 11<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The waitlist for ONDA's trip on April 25<sup>th</sup> is still pretty long. Due to recent cancellations there are 2 spaces available on the Geology trip.

## Links

[List of Owyhee River Trips](#)

[Owyhee Photo Gallery](#)

[Make a Reservation for the Owyhee](#)

Don't hesitate to call or email if you have questions or would just like to chat about the Owyhee.