

Summary

Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park is a popular weekend getaway for residents in the Boise area. Rather than driving down Interstate 84, we will take a road less traveled to Bruneau, Idaho Highway 78, following the Snake River on one side and the Owyhee foothills on the other.

The ride starts out in West Boise, and rolls south to Kuna Road. Passing a few farms, the ride is quickly in Kuna, our first stop of the day. From Kuna, The ride continues west, then south and west through the farms of southern Ada and Canyon Counties until joining up to Idaho Highway 45.

A few short miles on Idaho 45 leads us down a short hill to the Snake River. This is Walter's Ferry. On the North side, there is a small convenience store. On the south side of the river, Fish and Game has established a parking area for fishermen, and a Historical marker describes the Ferry service that used to run across the Snake River.

From here, we turn left to head East on Idaho Highway 78. A few farms pass on both side, with some views of the Snake River canyon. Quickly though, the farms become fewer and fewer, and we start a gradual climb through the Owyhee foothills into Murphy. The small town of Murphy is notable as the county seat of Owyhee County. There is a small convenience store to refuel at, which is a good idea since the next services of any kind are 30 miles away.

Outside of Murphy, you continue to climb, reaching the highpoint of the ride. There is a sharp downhill, then another uphill, though the road looks harder on the elevation profile than what it really is. After this, there is a long, slow downhill almost all the way to Grandview. The highway in this section is far away enough from the Snake River such that all you can see is high desert. Much of the area is in the Snake River Birds of Prey area, so there aren't even fences besides the road. Few other places will you find such wide open country.

Grandview is a modest sized community that straddles the Snake River. At the main intersection leading into Grandview from Highway 78, there is a gas station with a convenience store. Should you venture up the road to the North, you certainly will find more services.

After Grandview, the scenery changes as you come up to C.J. Strike Reservoir to the North of the highway. Idaho Power has a hydroelectric facility here, and the Reservoir is popular with local boaters.

After C.J. Strike, you enter the small town of Bruneau. There is a small convenience store if you need a drink. Follow Highway 78 through town as it veers to the North. Here, you will find an unpleasant surprise- a two mile long hill that gains 400 feet. While steep, once you get over the hill, you speed down the other side to the turnoff for Bruneau State Park.

Watch for the turnoff to the east. If you get back to the river, you went too far. Heading east for two miles, you then turn south into the actual park. You will wind your way around past the visitor's center and in another mile come to the old campground. Check the board for the campsite number and pedal in. Day one is complete.

Waypoints

WAYPOINT	MILES	ELEVATION	SERVICES
Boise Cloverdale/Fairview	0.0	2648 ft	Start of Ride
Kuna	13.8	2690 ft	Convenience Store, Restrooms
Walter's Ferry	32.9	2262 ft	Convenience Store
Murphy	43.1	2784 ft	Convenience Store
Grand View	73.6	2429 ft	Convenience Store
Bruneau	93.3	2561 ft	Convenience Store
Bruneau State Park	100.9	2552 ft	Campground, Water, Restrooms

Departing Boise

As of time of writing, we are still arranging the exact departure point where participants will be able to park their cars from the weekend and we will start the ride from. We will depart from somewhere in the West Boise/Meridian area, and will notify participants when the location is available.

We plan to depart Boise at 8:30 AM, so please plan to arrive between 7:45-8:00 AM to store your gear for the trip to Bruneau.

Overnight Facilities

Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park

Tent Camping on a grassy area. The camping area has shade trees and picnic tables covered by a shelter. Hot showers and flush toilets are located nearby. Central water is also available. We have already made reservations for our group, so cyclists do not need to make their own arrangements.

Riders do need to provide their own camping supplies. Upon registration, we will send out a checklist of items to bring, but the essentials are a tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad and a lantern or flashlight.

More information: <http://www.idahoparks.org/parks/bruneaudunes.html>

Things to Do

Bruneau State Park Astronomical Observatory

24" Reflector Telescope (Largest telescope available for public use in the western US)

Admission fee is \$3. Friday and Saturday nights only. More information available at

http://www.idahoparks.org/parks/bruneau_observ.html.

Three Days of Bruneau

Saturday, May 29, 2004

Boise – Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park

100.9 Miles



