



Trip Summary

SECTION: OWYHEE RIVER - ROME TO BIRCH CREEK

DIFFICULTY: CLASS III - IV; BEGINNERS TO ADVANCED

AGES: 10 YEARS OLD AND UP

SEASON: APRIL - MAY (CALL OR SEE WEBSITE FOR MOST CURRENT DATES)

LENGTH: 5 DAYS (52 MILES)

Few people have had the pleasure of exploring one of the country's true multi-day whitewater gems, the Owyhee River. This pristine and remote Wild and Scenic river trip takes us on a true wilderness journey through the dramatic desert canyons of southeastern Oregon. The Owyhee, known as Oregon's Grand Canyon for its striking similarity to the canyon country of the Southwest, contains thrilling class III-IV rapids, an abundance of wildlife, and amazing riverside. Mix all of this with stellar archeological sites and hot springs, and this trip contains all of the ingredients to create one of the world's great river journeys.

Meeting Location

We will meet at the Owyhee River put-in in Rome, OR. Specifically, we will meet at the BLM campground. It is located on the Owyhee River where highway 95 crosses the river.

See driving logistics on the following pages for specific details and directions.

Meeting Time

At the Rome launch site, we will provide a simple breakfast at 8:00. Look for a small table with breakfast eats, as well as our guides in Wet Planet gear.

Please plan to arrive at the Rome launch site no later than 9:00 (**it's mountain time**), with your gear sorted and ready to go into the dry bags we'll provide (duffle bags work great for this). There are restrooms available to change into your wetsuit and river gear.

General Trip Itinerary

EXACT CAMP LOCATIONS AND DAILY RIVER MILEAGE WILL VARY WITH WATER LEVELS AND RIVER CONDITIONS.

Day 1: The First Morning

The trip meets at the Rome Launch Site/ Put-In. We'll pass out waterproof dry-bags, help you with packing your gear for the trip, and make the final preparations for our river journey (packing boats, rafting orientation from your guides, handing out river gear) before heading downstream.

The trip starts with a nice float from our Rome Valley launch until we enter the first of many gorges. Look for Golden Eagles' nests high on the canyon walls. Lunch on our first day will be riverside, before entering the first canyon. After running great rapids such as Bullseye and Upset, we'll arrive at our first camp in time to enjoy a hike or simply relax and listen to the river pass by before preparing a delicious evening meal.

Days 2-4: River Days

Each day we will follow a similar routine. In the morning you will be awakened by the sunlight creeping down the canyon walls toward your tent and the rich smell of morning coffee and tea. After enjoying a hearty breakfast, we'll pack up our personal gear, load the rafts, and ready ourselves for another amazing day on the river. We'll encounter thrilling rapids and enjoy the Owyhee's incredible canyon scenery, with opportunities for side hikes or relaxing soaks in natural hot springs. Each day we will find a nice riverside lunch spot to replenish the energy levels for more river adventure. In the early afternoon it will be time to choose one of the many unique and beautiful camps the Owyhee has to offer. Many of the camps offer great hiking opportunities for those interested. In places like Jackson Creek, Chalk Basin and Green Dragon Canyon you'll find colorful side canyons, stunning waterfalls, and scenic ridgelines with amazing views of the river below. After dinner it's time to revel in the adventures of the day, tell stories by the fire, or drift off to your personal star-gazer's paradise.

Day 5: River/Take-Out

We start our final day on the river in the usual style, with a tasty breakfast before breaking camp and loading the rafts. On our way downstream, we'll enjoy a leisurely pace as we drift toward our take-out (either Birch Creek or Leslie Gulch, depending on road & weather conditions). Once we arrive, we will de-rig the rafts and load the equipment onto our shuttle vehicles. Before we leave, don't forget to toast the river for yet another amazing descent of this whitewater gem! Your vehicle will be at the take out, so put on some dry clothes and enjoy the spectacular scenery on the drive home.

We will be off the river around lunch time. You're welcome to enjoy one last lunch with us at the take-out before saying "goodbyes".

What We Provide

- All meals from breakfast on the first day of the trip through lunch on our last day of the trip
- Rafts and guides - obviously!
- All camping gear not listed in the packing list: group gear, kitchen equipment, tents, sleeping pads, camp chairs
- River equipment: personal flotation devices (PFD), helmets, paddles
- One Large dry-bag and one small dry-bag for packing personal clothing and items
- Group beverages: water, orange juice, lemonade/gatorade, coffee, tea, cocoa, hot cider

What You Are Responsible For

- Transportation to Rome, OR before your trip and back home from Birch Creek or Leslie Gulch, OR after your trip
- Reservations for lodging the night before your trip the night after your trip (if you need lodging)
- Personal clothing and miscellaneous gear for the river trip (see the included packing list)
- Personal beverages (see Beverages information under "Packing Info")

Where to Stay

Our Owyhee River rafting adventure begins when you meet your guides at the Owyhee River launch site, in Rome, OR. Your guides will have a light breakfast ready for you. Most river runners choose to camp at the launch site the night before their trip. We recommend this option. The launch site is a BLM campsite, with toilets and water.

Depending upon your travel arrangements, you may wish to stay in a lodging facility the evening before your trip. The closest small town is Jordan Valley, OR, which is 32 miles east of Rome.

Jordan Valley Lodging

- Basque Station Motel: 541.586.2244

For a larger selection of lodging options, Burns, OR is 105 miles west of Rome (don't confuse this with Burns Junction). There are multiple lodgings options in Burns.

The closest large city is Boise, ID, which is 115 miles north of Rome.

Please note: there is very little cell phone reception around Rome and Jordan Valley. The closest gas stations to Rome are roughly 30 mins driving in either direction.

Travel Insurance

Sometimes stuff happens. We highly recommend that you purchase travel insurance to guard against life's surprises (unexpected late cancellations, travel delays, medical emergencies, etc.). Past Wet Planet guests have reported good experiences using Travel Guard (www.travelguard.com) and Travel Insurance Services (<https://select.travelinsure.com>).

Getting There

Our Owyhee trip will be meeting at the Rome Launch Site/Put-In, which is roughly 32 miles west of Jordan Valley, OR. The launch site is on the Owyhee River, where Hwy 95 crosses the river at Rome; there is not much else around, so it is not too difficult to find. Simply search Google maps for Rome, OR.

The exact Google map location for the put-in campsite is: 42.836206, -117.621179

From Portland

Take I-84 East. Take exit 16 and turn right on 238th. Continue on NE 242nd, left on Burnside, and then continue on US-26 E for 129 miles. Right on OR-126 W, then left onto Hwy 20 E for 102 miles. Take 78 E for 90 miles, then left on US-95 N for 12.5 miles. Rome launch site will be on the right hand side. Allow 6 hours and 45 minutes.

From Boise

Take I-84 West towards Ontario. Take exit 35 for Northside Blvd. Turn right onto Northside Blvd. Take a left at W. Karcher Rd, continue onto Sunnyslope Rd and then onto ID-55 S. Take a Left at US-95 S. Follow US-95 S for around 77 miles, the Rome launch site will be on the left hand side. Allow 2.5 hours for the drive.

Arriving by Plane?

The nearest airport is in Boise, ID (115 miles from Rome), which is serviced by most major airlines. Car rentals are available at the Boise Airport - there is no public transportation from Boise to/from the river.

Vehicle Shuttle

While you are on the river, you will need to have your vehicle shuttled to the take-out point by our shuttle service. This convenient service allows you to arrive at the take-out with your vehicle and personal items waiting, saving you many hours of out-of-the-way travel to return to the launch site. The shuttle fee is approximately \$200 per vehicle. You will pay the shuttle fee directly to the shuttle service at the start of the trip (bring cash), but we will take care of facilitating and arranging the service.

* Please provide us with the make, model, color and license plate information for your vehicle at least one week prior to the trip.

Getting Back Home

Our Owyhee trip will be taking out at Birch Creek Ranch or Leslie Gulch (depending on weather & road conditions - check with us pre-trip). All personal and rental vehicles will be at the take-out with all of your personal items so you can get on the road from the take-out instead of having to be shuttled back to Rome. The directions back from both take-out options are the same.

For the Google Maps location for the take-out, search either Birch Creek Historic Ranch or Leslie Gulch Boat Ramp (depending on weather and road conditions).

From Birch Creek to US-95 N Junction:

- Follow the gravel road all the way out to US-95 (you can follow the Wet Planet vehicles).
- 4-wheel drive is required.
- Allow about 1 hour 20 minutes.

From US-95 N Junction to Portland:

- Take a left onto US-95 N
- Follow signs to stay on US-95 N, about 53 miles
- Merge onto I-84 W towards Ontario
- Stay on I-84 for about 370 miles, this will take you into the city center or connect you to I-5 or I-205. Allow about 7 hours and 15 minutes.

From US-95 Junction to Boise:

- Take a left onto US-95 N
- Turn right at ID-55 N
- Follow signs to stay on ID-55
- Merge onto I-84 East towards Boise. Allow about 1 hour and 30 minutes.

From US-95 Junction to Seattle:

- Take a left onto US-95 N
- Follow signs to stay on US-95 N
- Merge onto I-84 West stay on for 200 miles
- Take exit # 179 onto I-82 W toward Umatilla/Kennewick. Stay on I-82 for 142 miles.
- Merge onto I-90 West and stay on for 107 miles.
- This will meet up with I-5. Allow about 8 hours and 20 minutes

From US-95 Junction to Tri-Cities:

- Take a left onto US-95 N
- Follow signs to stay on US-95
- Merge onto I-84 West, stay on for 200 miles.
- Take exit # 179 onto I-82 W toward Umatilla/Kennewick. Allow about 5 hours.

Packing List

While we provide all group camping equipment and meals (including tents, sleeping pads, and camp chairs), you will need to provide clothing and personal gear for off the river and at camp. Below is a suggested packing list to use for your river expedition.

Always be prepared for changing weather! Appropriate clothing on a multi-day river trip is important for both comfort and risk management. While on the river, we could experience warm sunny days, cold rainy days, or anything in between. We need to be prepared for all possibilities. When planning for your trip, try to use the “layering system”. By bringing clothing that can be worn under or on top of others, in layers, you will have the flexibility to adjust to a variety of weather conditions. Make sure that you have warm layers made of synthetic materials (not cotton), such as polypropylene, capilene, or wool. Cotton does not keep you warm when it is wet!

For river travel, we will provide you with river clothing: wet suit, booties, paddle jacket; helmet and PFD (personal flotation device). We will also provide a dry bag (like a large waterproof backpack) to protect your belongings from the water.

- Warm sleeping bag (available for rent for \$25)
- Rain jacket & pants (available for rent for \$25)
- One pair of shorts for camp and hiking
- One or two t-shirts
- One set long-sleeved light clothes (for sun and/or camp)
- Pants for camp (can be same as above)
- Synthetic thermal underwear layers (top & bottom)
- Down or synthetic jacket (puffy and warm, but compressible for packing)
- Fleece or pile top & bottom for camp (top can be pullover or jacket)
- Fleece pullover or jacket to wear on the river, under your paddle jacket
- Swimsuit
- One pair waterproof shoes/booties (for off river if it is raining)
- One pair lightweight hiking shoes (for off river in good weather - can be same as above)
- Wool or polypro/capilene/fleece socks (stay away from cotton)
- Neoprene socks to wear under booties on the river
- Shade hat/visor (baseball cap)
- Warm hat and gloves for camp
- Thin wool or synthetic hat for on river under helmet
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing
- Sunscreen and chapstick with SPF
- Insect repellent
- Sunglasses with securing strap
- Water bottle with securing strap (1 liter minimum, more if hiking)
- Headlamp / flashlight & extra batteries
- Personal medications
- Toiletries (keep to a minimum)
- Small hand/face towel (optional)
- Optional Rental - Wet Planet Comfort Kit:** sleeping bag, rain jacket, rain pants, small camp pillow, ground sheet (\$40)

Adult Beverages: You will need to provide your own alcoholic beverages. Please, no glass. There are good canned micro-brews out there, and other beverages can be transferred from glass bottles to plastic containers. We will have a cooler to keep beverages cold.

Optional Items: Sandals or flip-flops, binoculars, diary, sketchbook, a good paperback book, camera, paddling jacket & pants, small travel pillow, musical instrument.

All rafting gear, group camping equipment, and meals are provided!

How to Pack

During the river journey, your personal gear/clothing will be packed in dry-bags provided by Wet Planet. A large dry-bag containing items you only need at camp will be packed away during the day. A smaller day-bag containing items such as sunscreen and an extra layer will be accessible while on the rafts. You will receive your dry-bags on the first morning your trip and have a chance to pack them before your adventure begins.

We suggest packing your personal gear in a small, lightweight duffel bag. This can be useful for organizing your belongings inside your dry-bag. Any luggage not going on the river with you, such as suitcases, can be placed in the Wet Planet gear truck if you do not have your own vehicle. It will be there waiting for you at the end of the trip.

Available to Rent

Trying to avoid traveling with a bulky sleeping bag? Heading to the desert after your river trip and hoping to leave your rain gear at home? We have the following personal gear available to rent to make your packing easier:

- Comfortable synthetic sleeping bag - \$25
- Rain gear: rain jacket and rain pants - \$25
- Wet Planet comfort kit: sleeping bag, rain jacket, rain pants, small camp pillow, ground sheet (small tarp used to keep belongings out of the sand) - \$40

Beverages

Wet Planet will have coffee and tea ready for you first thing each morning. Water and lemonade/punch/gatorade will be available throughout the day. At dinner, there will be hot drinks available (hot cocoa, hot cider, tea), as well as a bottle of wine for the group.

If you would like additional personal beverages at camp, such as soda, beer, wine, liquor, etc., you're welcome to bring your own. We will have a cooler with us to put beverages in. No glass bottles; broken glass and rafts don't mix! Soda comes in cans, there are some good canned micro-brews out there if PBR isn't your thing, wine should be in bags/boxes, and other adult beverages can be transferred from glass bottles to a plastic container before taking them on the river.

Gratuities

Your guide team will work hard to ensure that your river experience exceeds your expectations. If you had an amazing trip and feel that your guides did an amazing job, post-trip gratuities are an appreciated way of saying "thank you." Tips commonly range from 5 to 15 percent of the trip cost, but should always be based on your satisfaction, financial comfort, and personal attitudes about gratuities. It is common to leave gratuities with the lead guide at the end of the trip, and they will distribute it among the team.