

ATTENTION: OUTDOOR OR TRAVEL EDITOR

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 10, 2009**

**PUFFIN WATCH IS PART OF A FIREWORKS-FREE INDEPENDENCE DAY
CELEBRATION IN CANNON BEACH**

During the Independence Day holiday weekend, Cannon Beach, Oregon hosts a colorful aerial display unlike most communities. The Great Cannon Beach Puffin Watch July 3-5 is a seabird watching event on the beach that will offer visitors the opportunity to watch nesting puffins and many other varieties of seabirds. The Great Cannon Beach Puffin Watch is part of a fireworks-free Independence Day celebration on Cannon Beach shores that also includes a small town Fourth of July parade and other special events.

While many communities don't enforce state laws prohibiting fireworks on the beach, the City of Cannon Beach has recognized its special enforcement needs related to its surrounding sensitive marine environments and nesting seabirds. Haystack Rock is protected as a state designated Marine Garden and it, along with other offshore rocks on Cannon Beach, is part of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge system.

Spotting scopes will be set up on the beach near Haystack Rock from 6 to 9am and 4 to 6pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 3-5. Visitors will be able to observe nesting puffins on Haystack Rock, the most accessible observation point to watch Tufted Puffins in their natural environment in the Northwest. Many other varieties of birds are also common visitors to the area, including Brown Pelicans, cormorants, Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Black Oystercatchers and Bald Eagles. A free Puffin Watch Passport will be available that provides identification information and a checklist of birds that can be seen in the area.

During the three-day event, the city's Haystack Rock Awareness Program (HRAP) will present a series of interpretive programs on the beach with special guest speakers, including displays of live rescue birds. A complete schedule of events will be available at the HRAP beach station near Haystack Rock during its hours of operation and at Cannon Beach City Hall, 163 E Gower. The schedule will also be posted at www.ci.cannon-beach.or.us.

Other Cannon Beach Fourth of July activities include a hometown parade beginning at 11am from Spruce and Monroe Streets, usually accompanied by a brief military jet flyover. Kids and dogs scramble after treats thrown by parade participants. After the parade, everyone is invited to gather at the Cannon Beach Fire House for free hot dogs and pop. Bring the kids and let them check out the equipment, climb on the trucks, play with the hoses and try to knock down a cone in the parking lot with the hose. There is a prize for those who can do it. At about 10am strawberry shortcake will be available for \$3 on the U.S. Bank porch.

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For information on the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, call (503) 436-8060.