



## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **TABLE ROCK HIKE SEASON SPRING 2006; BLM and THE NATURE CONSERVANCY WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO OFFER TWO SEPARATE INTERPRETIVE HIKING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Medford, OR, March 23, 2006** – Wildflowers are beginning to show their color, vernal pools are buzzing with life, spring time is returning to the Southern Oregon landscape, and it is once again time for the annual spring Table Rock guided hike season. From April 1 through the first week in June, the Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and The Nature Conservancy are offering to the public two separate interpretive hiking opportunities, one on the weekdays and one on the weekends.

#### **Group, weekday hikes:**

Various school and community groups have been guided by BLM employees to the summits of both Upper and Lower Table Rocks for over 20 years. Groups of 10 individuals or more and of all ages are welcome to sign up for these free, interpretive hikes. Participants enjoy spectacular views of the Rogue Valley, Siskiyou and Cascades while learning about the unique natural and cultural history of the Table Rocks through interactive hike activities and a variety of related stories. Guides are available Tuesday through Friday. Hikes usually begin around 9:00 a.m. and last around four hours. Our schedule is filling up fast so please reserve a day as soon as possible. For more information contact:  
Leah Schrodt, Project Coordinator, at (541) 618-2468.

#### **Weekend Spring Hike Series:**

The Nature Conservancy and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will offer to the public their annual series of guided, educational walks on the Table Rocks in April and May. This popular hike series, which is being offered for the eighteenth year, promises a spectacular view of the valley, a natural wildflower display, and expert interpretation from local specialists of the natural and cultural history of the area. Anyone from the community is welcome to sign up for these hikes. There is no fee to participate, but **reservations are required: call the BLM Medford District Office at (541) 618-2200**. Participation is limited to 30 individuals per hike.

Participants in both the weekday and weekend hikes should dress for the weather and should bring a lunch and something to drink. There is no drinking water at either Upper or Lower Table Rock. Restrooms are available at both trailheads. To help protect this special place and its inhabitants, dogs are not allowed on the trail. The hikes range from three to five miles roundtrip along a moderate grade trail, and last three to five hours.

### **Weekend Hike Schedule:**

- Saturday, April 1 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Spring in Bloom*. Join **Alex Maksymowicz** of the Siskiyou Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Oregon, to study and enjoy the valley's beautiful native flora.
- Sunday, April 2 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *A Sea of Wildflowers*. Hike with **Sean Smith**, a botanist in the SOU Environmental Education Graduate Program, and examine the amazing diversity of the plant world.
- Saturday, April 8 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Go Native!* with urban forester and horticulturalist **Tal Blankenship** and learn about the benefits of growing native plants including their wildlife value and beauty.
- Sunday, April 9 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Biodiversity in our Backyard*. **Molly Sullivan**, SW Oregon Stewardship Coordinator with The Nature Conservancy, will describe the remarkable features that make this preserve one of Oregon's "Last Great Places".
- Saturday, April 15 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Living with "Titanakh"*. Come discover the unique cultural history, ethnobotany, and ecology of the Table Rocks with BLM Naturalist **Leah Schrodt**.
- Sunday, April 16 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Kids on the Rocks..* Join **Deborah Littell**, BLM interpretative staff, on a *Family* hike to the top of Upper Table Rock. This is a general information hike suitable for all ages. Topics will include plant and flower identification and the cultural history of the area. Bring water, your lunch, and your curiosity!
- Saturday, April 22 10:00am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Wildflowers Abound*. **Barbara Mumblo**, Botanist on the USFS Applegate Ranger District and Native Plant Society of Oregon member, will lead a wildflower walk for interested members of the public.
- Sunday, April 23 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Healing Herbs*. **Michael Altman**, Herbalist, along with **Karen Wennlund**, Clinical Herbalist from the Center for Natural Healing, will lead a hike discussing the many medicinal values of local plants.

- Saturday, April 29 10:00am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Plant Neighborhoods*. **Marcia Wineteer**, Botanist with the BLM, will lead a hike that focuses on the spring wildflowers and native plant communities of the Table Rocks.
- Sunday, April 30 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *When Continents Collide*. More than 200 million years of Earth history is revealed in the rocks of southwest Oregon. Join petroleum geologist **Len Eisenberg** on a walk to hear how our part of the State, including the Table Rocks, was shaped by quiet seas, colliding continents, and volcanic activity.
- Sunday, April 30 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Islands in the Sky*. **Chris Reyes-Bucher**, local author of "The Tables Rocks of Jackson County: Islands in the Sky", will discuss the many outstanding features of this local landmark.
- Saturday, May 6 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Spectacular Wildflowers*. Join Native Plant Society's **Lusetta Nelson** to experience the remarkable diversity of wildflowers during their peak season!
- Sunday, May 7 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Legacy of a Landmark*. Come join local naturalist and educator, **Beth Franklin**, to learn about the intriguing natural and cultural history of Table Rocks.
- Saturday, May 13 8:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Up With the Birds*. **Bob Quaccia, Vince Zausky, & Tom Phillips** of the Audubon Society will lead a birding hike that will also include general natural history and some wildflower identification. Bring your binoculars!
- Sunday, May 14 10:00 am: LOWER TABLE ROCK *Happy Mothers Day!* Bring your mom out for a beautiful day of hiking with BLM environmental educator **Erin Himmel**. Enjoy spring wildflowers and valley vistas while learning about the mothers of the plant and animal world.
- Saturday, May 20 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Layers of Time*. **Bill Elliott**, Assistant Professor of Geology at Southern Oregon University, will describe the geological features observed along a hike to the wildflower-covered top of this ancient lava flow.
- Sunday, May 21 10:00 am: UPPER TABLE ROCK *Look, Listen, Learn...* Explore the natural history of Upper Table Rock with Naturalist **Kristi Mergenthaler**: Learn about obscure and no so obscure plants, imitate bird songs, and look for animal signs and tracks.

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The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land – 261 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation.