

NEWS Release

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BLM
Prineville District Office

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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BLM Seeking Public Review and Comment on Draft Plan for John Day Basin

PRINEVILLE- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Prineville District today released for public review and comment a Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for the John Day Basin. The document will provide future direction for managing approximately 456, 600 acres of BLM-managed public lands located in parts of Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Umatilla, Grant, Wheeler, Jefferson, and Wasco Counties in Oregon. Copies of the Draft RMP/EIS can be downloaded from the project website and are available at the Deschutes Public Library in Bend, Oregon, and the Grant County Library in John Day, Oregon. The document is also available at the BLM offices in Prineville and Portland.

“The intent of the planning process is to develop a collaborative environment with the tribal, public, state, and local officials to make reasoned and informed decisions for management of the public lands in the John Day Basin”, said Christina Welch, Central Oregon Field Manager.

The John Day Basin Draft RMP/EIS analyzes five management alternatives for BLM-administered lands within the planning area, particularly as they relate to three key management issues: Landscape health, Access and Transportation, and newly acquired lands on the North Fork John Day River.

The BLM Prineville District is seeking public comments on the draft planning document throughout the 90-day comment period that begins on October 31, 2008 and runs through January 29, 2009. Comments can be submitted by mail to: BLM Prineville District Office, John Day Basin RMP/EIS, 3050 NE Third Street, Prineville, OR 97754; email to John_Day_Basin_RMP@blm.gov; on-line on the project website at www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/plans/johndayrmp; or, in person at one of the following public meetings:

- November 12 Forest Grove, Forest Grove Senior Center, 2037 Douglas Street, 6:00-8:00 pm
- November 14 Bend, Bend High School Cafeteria, 230 NE 6th Street, 6:00-8:00 pm
- November 18 Fossil, Fossil Middle School Gym, 404 Main Street, 6:00-8:00 pm
- November 19 Mitchell, Mitchell High School Cafeteria, 340 SE High Street, 6:00-8:00 pm
- November 20 John Day, The Out Post Restaurant, 201 West Main Street, 5:00-8:00 pm

Background: The John Day Basin contains approximately 456,600 acres of BLM-administered lands, including about 44,000 acres of lands that were acquired along the North Fork John Day River as part of the Oregon Land Exchange Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-257). The newly acquired lands along the North Fork John Day River are not covered by an existing plan. The Oregon Land Exchange Act required the BLM to manage certain lands acquired “...for protection of native fish and wildlife habitat and for public recreation.” The John Day Basin RMP/EIS will also revise and consolidate three RMPs (each with one or more amendments) that provide current guidance within the John Day Basin: The Two Rivers Resource Management Plan (1986), the John Day Resource Management Plan (1985), and the Baker Resource Management Plan (1989). The impetus for revision is based on the need for consistent direction across this landscape (including the North Fork) and new information provided by the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project.

About the BLM: The BLM manages more land – 258 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 subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM’s multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

