

Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and  
Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management  
Office of Communications  
*Working as One to Serve Central Oregon*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Skeleton Cave Opens July 27 and August 31**

*BEND*--Skeleton Cave will be open to the public this Sunday, July 27th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Entrance to the cave will be monitored by Wanderlust Tours and Deschutes National Forest employees. The cave will be open free of charge, and people can explore the cave on their own.

Skeleton Cave was gated in 2006 and closed to year-round public use in 2007 due to previous vandalism of cave resources and disturbance to the Townsend's big-eared bats living within the cave. The bats are a Forest Service sensitive species in decline throughout the western U.S.

The public is reminded to wear sturdy shoes, bring two sources of light, and to pack out all food and water. The round-trip walk is relatively easy and takes approximately one hour.

Dogs, smoking, glass, alcohol, human waste, and destroying, defacing or removing any cave feature are prohibited in Skeleton Cave and all other caves in the forest.

Skeleton Cave is located northeast of Forest Road 18, or China Hat Road, approximately ten miles southeast of Bend. Vehicles are not permitted on the last quarter mile of the access road to the entrance.

Private tours are available from May 2<sup>nd</sup> through October 14<sup>th</sup> by Wanderlust Tours.

The cave will also be open to the public on August 31<sup>st</sup>, the last Sunday of the month.

For more information contact Les Moscoso at 383-4712 or Julie York at 383-4785.