



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BLM news

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Salem District, 1717 Fabry Road SE, Salem, Oregon 97306

Release No. **09-06**
Contact: **Joe Ashor**
541-574-3100

Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area. P. O. Box 936, Newport,
Oregon 97365 (541) 574-3100

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2006

Yaquina Head Lighthouse Restoration Completed

NEWPORT - The light in the Yaquina Head lighthouse is again operating and the 134-year old historic landmark, midway along the Oregon Coast, will soon be reopened to visitors. This follows a complete, first-ever, top-to-bottom exterior historic restoration. The nearly 1 million dollar project was funded by a special Congressional appropriation to the Bureau of Land Management. The principal restoration contractor, Abhe and Svoboda, of Prior Lake, Minnesota, began work in December, 2005.

The 93-foot tall lighthouse, Oregon's tallest, recently emerged from the scaffolding and protective shrink-wrap that surrounded it for six months with a new "old look". "The primary purpose of the project was to preserve the classic structure and restore it to the same condition and appearance as when it was completed by the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1873," said Yaquina Head Manager Joe Ashor. The brick tower and adjoining oil house remain white. The wood trim, formerly green, is now grey. The metal work at the top of the tower, including the parapet and the lantern roof, and the upper and lower iron belt courses are now black.

The restoration effort focused on repairing or replacing heavily eroded cast iron pieces at the top of the tower. Nationally prominent metal smith Alex Klahm, of St. Petersburg, Florida, supervised that work and supplied authentic iron and bronze castings to replace the most severely damaged parts. Countless coats of paint applied over the years were removed from all exterior metal and mortar. A new mold and mildew resistant, state-of-the-art paint has been applied.

The lighthouse's original, first-order fixed Fresnel lens, had operated continuously as an aid to navigation since its inauguration on August 20, 1873. During the restoration, the lens was shrouded and wrapped in a protective covering. The Coast Guard operated an auxiliary lamp atop the scaffolding. The Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Team in Coos Bay, Oregon, has relit the Fresnel lens. "The light is brighter than ever," said Ashor, "because it shines through 24 brand new panes of tempered, optically flat glass installed in the bronze frames of the lantern room."

“This project has been a major milestone in helping us return the lighthouse to its former glory”, said Ashor. “More restoration work is planned. The windows on the south side of the oil house, that were bricked in over 40 years ago, will be reinstalled and the interior of the oil house will be restored,” he said. The Friends of Yaquina Lighthouses, formerly Yaquina Lights Inc., has committed funds to assist the BLM in accomplishing the work. “But we need the individual help of our visitors to make these things happen”, said Ashor.

The lighthouse will be officially reopened to the public on Saturday July 1st. BLM rangers and volunteer hosts will again be offering the popular lighthouse tours. Costumed tours will be offered from 9:00 to 11:30 AM and interpreter assisted tours will be available from Noon - 4:00 PM. New this year, twilight tours of the lighthouse will be offered Saturdays throughout the summer from 7:00 - 9:00 PM, beginning July 15th.

The Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area will be open every day from sunrise to sunset. For more information about these and other activities at Yaquina Head, contact the BLM at 574-3100 between 8 AM and 4 PM daily, or visit the Yaquina Head web site at www.blm.gov/salem/yaquina/index.htm.

- END -

Note: Includes photo of newly restored lighthouse

**Press Interviews and Photo Opportunities: Monday, June 26th, 1:00 -3:00.
Contact Joe Ashor at (541)574-3142.**

