

NEWS Release

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

28910 Hwy 20 West • Hines, Oregon 97738 • <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns>
Contact: Tara Martinak (541) 573-4400 • Release No. OR-020-09-03 • November 26, 2008

BLM
Burns District Office

CHANGES IN STORE FOR RADAR HILL OHV AREA

HINES, Oregon – After decades of mostly local use, the resource damage and intrusion on nearby private property have reached an all-time high at the popular Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) play area near the Radar Base in Hines. A few physical changes are in store to help bring the area back to what it was years ago.

Long time Harney County residents remember riding the roads and trails below the Radar Base in their youth, and now watch and hear stories of their children and grandchildren enjoying the same experience. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Natural Resource Specialist Fred McDonald said, “We recognize this is a fun, easy and accessible place for OHV users, and that it’s been a favorite play area for a long time. The majority of the area will remain open and available, but we do need to make some changes.”

The major and most notable change? Large boulders placed across roads and trails on or leading to private property, and across areas where excess resource damage is evident. McDonald said, “There are about 22 miles of routes in the play area and only about 5 of those miles get heavy use. A small portion of that heavy use has been on private property and will no longer be available.” Temporary signs showing public and private land boundaries were also installed in various locations.



Brett Page, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner played a key role in moving the bouldering project forward, first by applying for and receiving grant money for labor and equipment and then creating a partnership with a local OHV club, the Harney County High Desert Wheelers. The High Desert Wheelers have adopted Radar Hill as the focus for their club and hope to help BLM with maintenance and improvements to the area in the future. The Burns BLM Maintenance Organization was instrumental in completing the project and will continue to be a major asset.

While the boulders and new boundary signs are the most evident and recent changes, BLM has actually been working in the area for several years, maintaining the primary OHV staging area, providing visitor contacts, and removing garbage. Garbage dumping on Radar Hill is a consistent problem. In September, BLM partnered with the High Desert Wheelers and removed nearly 3,000 pounds of scrap metal, trash and other debris.



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BLM Law Enforcement Officer George Orr said, "Not only is trash dumping illegal, it's just plain disgusting and disrespectful." What most people don't realize is that it's fairly easy to find the culprits. "In Oregon, fines for dumping garbage on public land can reach into the thousands, depending how much you leave. Along with that, you get to clean up your mess."



Fines are also applicable to trespassers and anyone tampering with public boundary markers, or the large boulders in this case. McDonald said, "We're really hoping people can respect the nearby property owners and stay away from closed routes."

New and frequent visitors to the area are encouraged to walk around or take a slow ride along regular trails and roads to become familiar with which areas are now closed. Page added, "It's important to figure out where the boulders are placed before you start your ride. We don't want anyone coming up on a row of rocks at 40 miles per hour." Small maps showing open routes in the area will be available for free in January 2009 at the BLM office.

Future plans for the Radar Hill OHV area include cleaning out the existing drainage features to help minimize erosion, increasing signage and adding an information kiosk for user education.

For more information, contact Brett Page at (541) 573-4534.