

# NEWSRelease

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OR-12-32**  
**For immediate release**

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## Oregon and California Lands Act Celebrates 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**PORTLAND, OR** – This year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the O&C Act of 1937. The Oregon and California Railroad Revested Lands, known as the O&C Lands, lie in a checkerboard pattern through eighteen counties of western Oregon. Most of the O&C lands are administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM.) These lands contain more than 2.5 million acres of forests with a diversity of plant and animal species, recreation areas, mining claims, grazing lands, cultural and historical resources, scenic areas, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness. To mark the occasion, the BLM prepared a short online video about the O&C lands that can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/user/BLMOREGON>

“Over the years, O&C lands have contributed to the health of local communities, to meet nationwide forest product needs, to memorable recreation experiences, and to the habitat of fish and wildlife species,” said Mike Mottice, acting State Director.

The history of the O&C lands goes back to 1866 when Congress established a land grant to promote rapid completion of the Oregon section of the Portland to San Francisco railroad. The Oregon and California Railroad company was deeded about 12,800 acres per mile of track laid, providing incentive to complete the railroad. The land grant required the company to sell 160 acre parcels at no more than \$2.50 an acre to qualified settlers. In 1916, Congress took back the title on more than 2 million acres of these lands after the company failed to sell the land to settlers. Three years later, Congress revested 93,000 acres of Coos Bay Wagon Road grant lands due to similar circumstances.

The Oregon and California Revested Lands Sustained Yield Management Act of 1937 put the O&C lands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The lands were classified as timberlands to be managed for permanent forest production, and the timber was to be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principle of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply. The Act also provided for protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities.

The BLM is developing the next generation of land management plans for the six Western Oregon Districts that contain O&C lands. The BLM is gaining the expertise of Counties, State and Federal Agencies, and Tribal Governments through the cooperating agency process to benefit the planning effort. BLM officials encourage the public to become involved in the management of their public lands. For updates on the planning effort, please go to the following website at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/>

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land – the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The Bureau is also one of a handful of agencies that collects more revenue than it spends. In FY 2012, nearly \$5.7 billion will be generated on lands managed by the BLM, which operates on a \$1.1 billion budget. 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, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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