

NEWS Release BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

28910 Hwy 20 West • Hines, Oregon 97738 • <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns>
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WINTER WEATHER CLOSES UPPER SECTION OF STEENS MOUNTAIN LOOP ROAD

HINES, Ore. – Changing weather patterns and recent snowfall closed the upper section of the Steens Mountain Loop Road for the winter season. Effective November 18, the gates just below Jackman Park Campground and Big Indian Overlook were closed, preventing vehicular travel around the entire Loop Road until next spring.

Despite the closure, all Steens Mountain area campgrounds except Jackman Park remain open. Deep snow may prevent some travelers from reaching Fish Lake Campground at times. South Steens and Page Springs Campgrounds are still fully accessible, but have been winterized. Page Springs will be the only campground open throughout the entire winter season, with reduced fees of \$4 per vehicle per night.

Remember - when recreating this time of year, your chance of finding someone in trouble or having trouble yourself is an ever present danger. For your safety:

- check weather reports and find out about road and access conditions *before* starting your trip;
- stay on designated, maintained roads and avoid wet, muddy or snow-drifted areas;
- be prepared for sudden changes in weather conditions, especially on Steens Mountain where snow can fall year round and blustery winds can create impassable snow drifts within minutes;
- always start your trip with a full tank of fuel;
- let someone at home know where you plan to go and when expect your return;
- do not rely on phone service for emergency communication; and
- pack survival gear in your vehicle or on your person.

In the coming weeks, snow levels are expected to drop into the lower elevations, eventually resulting in closure of the remaining portions of the Loop Road for the winter. As snow accumulation increases, winter recreation opportunities including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and limited snowmobiling on Steens Mountain will be available by permit from BLM.

For current road and access conditions on Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered lands in Harney County, call the Burns District BLM Office at (541) 573-4400.

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