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NEWS RELEASE

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Galice Access Road to be Closed in Both Directions Due to Rock Falls

Medford -- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Galice Access Road (BLM Road 34-8-36), from mile post #4.4 to mile post #8.9, will be completely closed on Thursday, December 21 for public safety. This closure will be at about four miles after the turnoff from the Merlin-Galice Road (at the community of Galice, Oregon) to the nine mile marker. Recent rainfall has caused saturated soils and rock debris to fall across the roadway.

Last week the BLM sent out corrected information related to a different segment of BLM Road 34-8-36 that was previously closed at mile post #12.4 at the intersection of Forest Road #23 and BLM Road 34-8-36. This segment of the road on mile post #12.4 was closed and the gate was locked on December 6, 2006 by a Josephine County Sheriff's deputy on contract with the BLM.

Two BLM closure gates will prohibit access to the Galice Access Road above and below the slide area. Public warning signs will also be posted.

At this time, BLM managers expect the Galice Access Road to remain closed throughout the winter and estimate that it may reopen in the spring of 2007 pending removal of the rock slide.

The Galice Access Road has been open and closed to the public repeatedly over the years with an extensive history of rock falls and large rock slides. In February 2002 and again in November 2002, the Galice Access Road was twice blocked by a landslide from heavy rains at milepost 4.6. Again in 2003, winter storms caused a major landslide again at mile post 4.6, and the slide was of such magnitude that it could not be removed in that year. This roadway was not open to the public for the majority of the 2003 to 2005 season due to the extensive slide conditions.

For public access to the Burnt Ridge Road, Chrome Ridge Road and Bear Camp Road, the Serpentine Springs/Peavine Road is the alternate route around the slide. The Peavine/Serpentine Springs Road is not snow plowed and may be closed due to snow. The public is asked to please check with your local BLM or USDA Forest Service offices before traveling these roads, as they are often impassible due to snow in the winter.

Forest Road 23 – The Bear Camp Road is currently impassable due to snow and ice conditions in the winter.

The BLM manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. 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, and cultural resources on the public lands.

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