

NEWS Release

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

28910 Hwy 20 West • Hines, Oregon 97738 • <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns>
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BLM
Burns District Office

Snow closes upper portion 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 October 30, the gates just above Jackman Park Campground and near Big Indian Overlook were closed, preventing vehicular travel around the entire Loop Road until next spring. Despite the closure, all Steens Mountain area campgrounds remain open and accessible.

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.

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. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.

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