

**Notice of Exchange Proposal
Rock Creek Ranch, Inc. Land Exchange
OR-60154**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, Bureau of Land Management, Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738.

Notice is given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering a land exchange with Rock Creek Ranch, Inc., Gary Miller. BLM would acquire an approximately 233.25-acre parcel of property located north of Mann Lake through the exchange of an equal value of Federal land. The Federal and non-Federal lands are described in Exhibit A. The exchange is being considered under the authority of Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716), as amended.

In considering a proposal for a land exchange, a determination must be made that the public interest will be well served. A public interest determination will be made through the Environmental Assessment (EA) process that will be prepared to analyze this proposal. The proposal involves blocking Federal landownership patterns, acquiring areas of important wildlife habitat with the potential for casual recreational activities, improving management capabilities of both non-Federal and Federal lands, and reducing the potential for conflicting land uses within the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA).

The exchange proposal has been evaluated and is consistent with the provisions of the Land Tenure Adjustment Plan Amendment and EA for the Andrews and Drewsey Management Framework Plans, September 1987, the Andrews Management Unit/Steens Mountain CMPA Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, and the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000, P.L. 106-399, October 30, 2000 (114 Stat. 1655). The plans allow the Federal land to be considered for conveyance in voluntary exchange for land with higher public and resource values.

The Federal land is zoned Exclusive Farm Range Use-1 by Harney County. This designation is intended to preserve and maintain agricultural land. Upon conveyance of the Federal land it will be assembled into the existing operation of Rock Creek Ranch, Inc., and managed for agricultural purposes, consistent with Harney County zoning ordinances.

The proposed exchange will be completed based on equal value as determined by market value appraisal. The Federal and non-Federal lands are described on the attached Exhibit A. The Federal land has been segregated from appropriation under the public land laws. The exchange would be made subject to valid existing rights.

Interested parties may submit written comments concerning the proposed exchange including notification of any liens, encumbrances, or other claims relating to the land being considered for exchange to Dana Shuford, Burns District Manager, at the above address. In order to be considered in the environmental analysis of the proposed exchange, comments must be in writing and postmarked or delivered within 45 days of initial publication of this notice. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Holly Griebel LaChapelle at (541) 573-4501.

Comments, including names, street addresses, and other contact information of respondents, will be available for public review. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to request that BLM consider withholding your name, street address, and other contact information (such as Internet address, FAX or phone number) from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. BLM will honor requests for confidentiality on a case-by-case basis to the extent allowed by law. BLM will make available for public inspection in their entirety all submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses.

Dated: _____ Signed: _____
Dana R. Shuford, Burns District Manager

Exhibit A

The non-Federal land considered for exchange is described as follows:

W.M., T. 31 S., R. 35 E.	sec. 31, lot 4, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.	154.08 acres
W.M., T. 32 S., R. 35 E.	sec. 6, lots 1 and 2.	<u>79.17 acres</u>
Total Acres		233.25 acres

The Federal land considered for equal value exchange is described with encumbrances as follows:

W.M., T. 33 S., R. 30 E.,	sec. 15, S $\frac{1}{2}$; sec. 22, N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$; sec. 28, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.	1,040.00 acres
	- No active mining claims	
	- ORE-012617, Harney Electric Cooperative (power line)	
	- ORE-018562, CenturyTel of Eastern Oregon (telephone)	
	- OR-47005, CenturyTel of Eastern Oregon (telephone)	
	- OR-59183, Harney County (road)	
	- OR-60128, BLM Federal Road Right-of-Way Reservation	

The following additional Federal land would be used as necessary for equalization:

#1 - W.M., T. 32 S., R. 31 E.	sec. 25, lots 1 and 2, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.	133.71 acres
	- No active mining claims	
	- No encumbrances	
#2 - W.M., T. 32 S., R. 32 E.	sec. 30, lots 1 and 2, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.	<u>237.46 acres</u>
	- No active mining claims	
	- No encumbrances	
Total Acres		1,411.17 acres