

NEWS Release BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

3050 NE Third Street - Prineville, Oregon 97754 - www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
For immediate release: **October 24, 2012**

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Prineville BLM Proposes John Day River Boater Fee

Central Oregon – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Prineville District Office is proposing a new boater special recreation permit fee (SRP) for the Wild and Scenic sections of the John Day River between Service Creek (River Mile 157) and Tumwater Falls (River Mile 10). The fee would apply to day and overnight trips (floats) during the peak use season of May 20 to July 10 and would begin in 2014.

Currently, there is no fee to obtain a permit to float the John Day River. With this proposal, BLM is analyzing three fee options: a continued “no fee” option, a \$10 option (reduced services) and a \$15 option (full services). The proposed fees would be per person per launch, for an overnight trip up to 14 days in length, or half the rate per person per launch for a day-use trip. These fees would not apply to people using the 1-mile stretch at Priest Hole or for playing around in inner tubes, fishing float tubes, air mattresses, or similar devices.

BLM is considering implementing boater SRPs to maintain the services that users expect and to add improvements, such as adding garbage dumpsters and improving boat launches. Increased funding will help protect and enhance the outstanding remarkable fish habitat and recreation values of the Wild and Scenic River through continued monitoring, cleanup and safety.

If the BLM does not add a fee, the agency would continue to maintain all the existing vault toilets and launch sites, although river float patrols and cleanup would be reduced from 64 to 16 workdays. Visitors could expect a 50 percent reduction in law enforcement, less ability to assist County officials in emergency response, and no patrols below Cottonwood Bridge. No dumpsters would be installed at Clarno and Cottonwood and there would be no funding to maintain or improve boat launches. For visitors who don't think a reduction in service would be noticeable, as an example of current service, BLM staff cleaned up over two tons of garbage that accumulated in just six weeks at Priest Hole this year.

Although the fee wouldn't begin until 2014, we are asking for public opinions now. We'd like to hear more than just a “vote” for or against a fee. The public can help us by telling us reasons for supporting or objecting to a fee, or how they'd like to see a fee used. BLM is also working with our Resource Advisory Committee (a local committee that can advise the BLM on land use decisions), our local counties, and our State to come up with a recommendation and decision for fees.

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Comments on this fee collection proposal by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: BLM_OR_PR_JDRiver_Study@blm.gov with "fee proposal" in the title
- Fax: 541-416-6798
- Mail: Prineville District BLM, Attn: John Day Fee Proposal, 3050 N.E. 3rd Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

More information and copies of the fee proposal are available in the Prineville Field Office at the above address and online at <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/johnday/boat-fee.php>

About the BLM: 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.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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