

For Immediate Release

Contact: Scott Pavey (509) 536-1200
Release No.: OR130-FY2011-0003

Fishtrap Lake Target Shooting Emergency Closure

Spokane, WA – On October 12, 2010, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued an emergency closure order prohibiting recreational shooting and target practice on approximately 5,290 acres of public land in the Fishtrap Lake Recreation Area. This area is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Spokane, Washington, near the town of Sprague. This closure will be in effect until further notice.

The emergency closure order prohibits recreational shooting and target practice on BLM-administered public lands that are located east of the Sprague Highway Road (County Road #9315), starting at the northern end of the area and continuing south to the livestock fence that is located just southwest of the Farmers Landing trailhead. A map of the closed area is available at the Spokane District Office at 1103 N. Fancher Road, Spokane Valley, WA, on the internet at www.blm.gov/or/districts/spokane, and on kiosks throughout the affected area.

In recent years, an increasing number of residents and visitors have expressed concern about target shooting in or near areas where other activities were occurring at Fishtrap Lake Recreation Area. The BLM has responded by enforcing Federal regulations which prohibit shooting across roads, trails, bodies of water, and toward areas where people are camped, picnicking, or otherwise gathered. Despite efforts by the BLM, potentially dangerous situations involving recreational shooting and target practice have increased as the number of visitors to the area has grown. In recent weeks, this dangerous situation has escalated tremendously. The intention of the emergency closure is to immediately provide for public safety while the BLM considers more long-term solutions.

The BLM began considering options to resolve this issue two years ago and solicited comments from the public regarding a proposed supplementary rule that would create a permanent closure. Since then, the Spokane District has begun a revision of its resource management plan (RMP) and has determined that the RMP would be the best forum for developing a long-term solution. However, the BLM does not anticipate completion of the RMP revision until 2012.

-BLM-

About the BLM: The BLM manages 245 million acres of public land known as the National System of Public Lands. The lands are primarily located in 12 Western states, including 75 million acres in Alaska. With a budget of about \$1 billion, the bureau 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.

###

