

NEWSRelease

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Hardrock Prospecting Comment Period Extended

Portland, Ore. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced today that it is extending the comment period for the Environmental Assessment (EA) related to two hardrock prospecting permit applications for geological exploration within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest northeast of the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument (NVM). The public comment period for the EA will now run until August 15, 2012.

The permit applications are specific to an approximately 900-acre area, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, north of the Green River and just outside of the Mount St. Helens NVM. They pertain only to mineral exploration at 23 pad sites, each less than 400-square feet, and the use of portable equipment to directionally drilling approximately 63 small diameter (2 to 3 inches) boreholes to recover rock core samples.

This work would take place on or immediately adjacent to existing roads (some of which are currently decommissioned and will require temporary reactivation) and former drill sites (many of which were previously established by a company that held patent to these lands in the early 1980s). Most of the lands are in the blast zone from the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens and were salvage logged and reforested in the 1980s. The total disturbance area for all pads would be less than ¼ acre. Access to these sites would require the temporary reactivation of approximately 1.7 miles of partially closed roads. Additional information about the EA is available online at: www.blm.gov/or/programs/minerals/prospecting

Substantive written comments pertaining to the EA will be accepted at the site shown below using either the built-in comment form or as an email. Comments can also be posted to the addresses shown below:

Email: BLM_OR_Prospecting_EA@blm.gov (Note: an underscore (_) must be placed in each blank space)

Advisory: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be advised 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.

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.

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