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### **BLM ANNOUNCES COMPETITIVE SOURCING RESULTS**

PORTLAND, March 31, 2004 – Elaine M. Brong, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Oregon/Washington State Director announced today the tentative competitive sourcing study decision of the roads, recreation and facilities maintenance activity in Oregon and Washington. The tentative decision is that the road, recreation and facilities maintenance operations will be retained by the BLM. A final decision to retain the function in-house will be made once interested parties have an opportunity to contest the tentative decision. The expected implementation date is October 1, 2004.

The study is part of a government-wide competitive sourcing program where federal jobs considered commercial in nature are reviewed to determine whether the work might be performed at a lower cost by the private sector. Competitive sourcing is one of a series of management initiatives undertaken by President Bush to improve the efficiency of government. In Oregon/Washington BLM's case, the government and private sector companies were allowed to bid on the road, recreation and facilities maintenance work.

The 15-month study, done in accordance with the A-76 Circular developed by the Office of Management and Budget, encompassed approximately 170 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) units, affecting approximately 219 employees across BLM in Oregon and Washington. FTEs are work hours or partial work hours expressed in terms of their relationship to one whole work year. The interagency maintenance crew in Lakeview, Oregon included 6.8 Forest Service FTE, or 7 employees in the study. The BLM study is the largest to be completed in the Department of the Interior.

As part of the study process, the BLM and Forest Service solicited bids for maintenance work in Oregon and Washington through a nationwide posting in March 2003. Several meetings and tours were arranged to provide additional information to interested private sector companies. In January 2004, when all bids were due, the BLM received no bids from the private sector.

The BLM Most Efficient Organization proposal was accepted and will result in an estimated savings of \$1.8 million annually from labor and equipment efficiencies

Until the appeals process is completed and a final decision is made, it is not known whether permanent government positions will be affected. However, BLM State Director Brong has made a commitment to minimize such losses by maximizing opportunities for early retirement and using other transition programs wherever possible to lessen the impact. "Our talented employees serve American taxpayers with such dedication, truly meriting our best efforts in exploring every possible option available to them," said State Director Brong.