

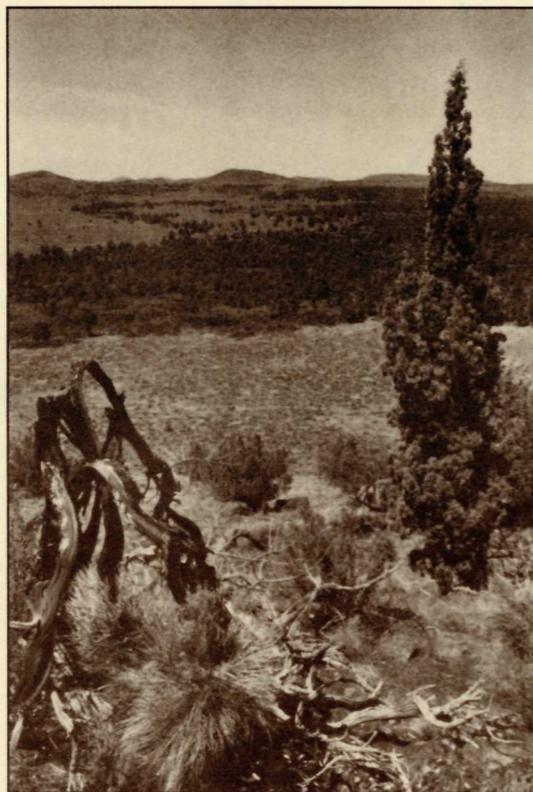
Lakeview District  
1000 Ninth Street S.  
P.O. Box 151  
Lakeview, Oregon 97630



Bureau of Land Management

## Christmas Valley

### National Back Country Byway



Lakeview District

## Oregon's Back Country Byways

The BLM's Back Country Byway program resulted from a Presidential Commission study which showed that 43 percent of Americans regard driving for pleasure as their favorite recreation activity. For those with the time and desire to turn off the beaten track onto a country road, Oregon's Back Country Byways provide access to a diversity of landscapes and attractions just waiting to be discovered. BLM's byways will meet this demand for pleasure driving, enhance recreation experiences, and better inform visitors about the values of public lands.

### Christmas Valley Back Country Byway

The Christmas Valley Back Country Byway includes paved and unpaved roads suitable to conventional passenger cars, as well as unpaved segments requiring high ground clearance

#### Highway 31 Junction to Fort Rock

Beginning of Tour.

#### Fort Rock Cave

Beggarheel Butte is the site of Fort Rock Cave, where in 1938, Dr. Luther Cressman discovered sagebrush sandals and other artifacts over 9,000 years old.

#### Homesteading in Oregon

Homesteaders drawn to eastern Oregon found a different lot than in the lush Willamette Valley. When the crops died, so did the fortunes and dreams of most of the early settlers in this valley. In 1938, Congress passed the Bankhead-Jones Act, which revested the land to Federal ownership. Many old fencelines and dying buildings mark the desert, evidence of failed dreams.

#### Deer Winter Range

In a cooperative effort of the Forest Service, BLM, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, critical winter habitat is preserved for over 30,000 deer.

#### Fort Rock State Park

Fort Rock was formed some 5 to 6 million years ago when volcanic material erupted through an existing lake in an explosive burst of steam and molten rock, leaving behind a ring of material, or maar, as evidence of the initial explosive event.

#### Town of Fort Rock

First settlement in the Ft. Rock area traces to 1905. Basic travel services are provided. The Fort Rock Historical Society began work in 1989 on a museum to relate the history of the area.

**Guide Supplement** - Six miles east of Ft. Rock the Byway continues due east on Lake County Road 5-12. Road 5-10 turns south toward Christmas Valley. At the end of the blacktop paving the route turns north to follow road 5-12 as a gravel road.

#### Devils Garden Lava Flow WSA.\*

The Devils Garden Lava Flow was designated as a Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in November of 1980. Most of the lava in the flow is pahoehoe lava, which leaves a relatively smooth surface as the lava cools. In the center of this flow is an area which the lava did not cover, known as the Devil's Garden.

#### Derrick Cave

Located 8 miles north of the Byway and near the Deschutes Forest boundary, a short spur road leads to Derrick Cave. This cave is a large lava tube about 30 feet high and one-quarter of a mile in length.

#### Junction with Sinks Road

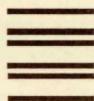
Turn east on Lake County road 5-12B.

#### Squaw Ridge Lava Flow WSA

The majority of lava in this area is "AA" lava, which has a very sharp, blocky appearance.

#### Green Mountain

The Byway turns south on BLM road 6109 C to ascend Green Mountain. \*\*\*\**This road is not recommended for vehicles with low clearance!* An alternate route is to take County Road 5-12B until it meets County road 5-14 C. \*\*\*\*



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- **Green Mountain Fire Lookout.** The view from the fire tower is spectacular, and you are welcome to visit. Please do not disturb the lookout if fire operations are in progress.

- **Green Mountain Camp.** This small camping area does not have water or sanitary facilities. The lookout **does not** have water or sanitary facilities for campers.

#### Four Craters Lava Flow WSA

The four distinctive cinder cones give this WSA its name.

#### Crack-in-the-Ground

The crack is nearly two miles long and 40 feet deep. It was formed when a layer of basalt deposited from earlier eruptions collapsed during the four craters eruptions 1,000 years ago.

#### Fossil Lake/Sand Dunes/Lost Forest alternative loop

##### Fossil Lake\*

Ten thousand years ago flamingos, mammoth and other pleistocene animals roamed the shore of the lake. Ancient relatives of today's salmon swam in the waters. The area is closed to motor vehicles. You may walk through the area and observe fossils. Federal law prohibits collection of vertebrate fossils without permit.

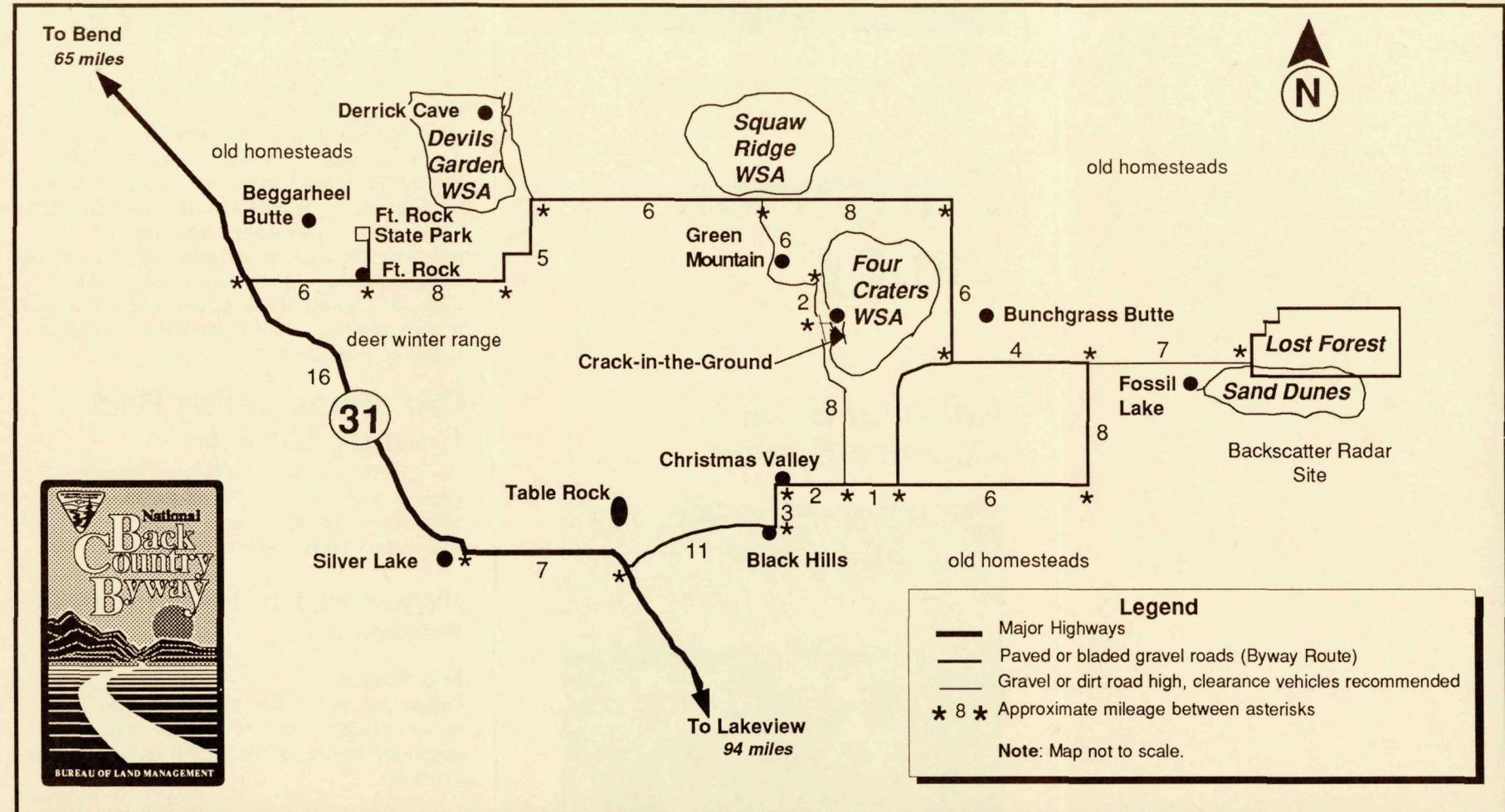
##### Sand Dunes\*

The dunes reach heights of over 60 feet. Although within a 16,000 acre WSA, about 10,000 acres of dunes remain open to vehicles. Outside the dunes, vehicle use is restricted to roads or trails posted as open to travel.

##### Lost Forest\*

The Lost Forest Research Natural Area(RNA) contains the remnant of an ancient pine forest that existed thousands of years ago. The unique sandy soils trap moisture required to support ponderosa growth. Vehicle use is limited to designated roads to protect the forest.

**\*Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's).** ACEC's are established where special care must be taken to preserve the land or provide for safety. Management plans are subject to public review when prepared or revised.



#### Backscatter Radar Site

This radar site is used to detect low-flying aircraft approaching the U. S. from the Pacific.

#### Christmas Valley

Gas, food, lodging, and airport services are available. The main economic activity is agriculture. Diatomaceous earth is also mined and processed as an absorbant.

#### Black Hills

The unique soils of the Black Hills support two rare plant species, Snowline cymopterus, *Cymopterus nivalis*, and Cusick's buckwheat,

*Eriogonum cusickii*. These two rare plants are protected by the BLM within a vehicle closure of the Black Hills to protect their habitat. Both plants are low growing perennials which grow in exposed soils.

#### Table Rock

This formation is a basalt volcanic core surrounded by a maar very similar to Fort Rock.

#### For further information contact:

**Bureau of Land Management  
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