

Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and
Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management
Office of Communications
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News and Information
For Immediate Release
April 29, 2004

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Bureau of Land Management Offers \$2000 Reward for Badlands Juniper Theft

BEND—In early March of 2004, a Prineville District Bureau of Land Management Law Enforcement Ranger discovered that seventeen old growth juniper trees had been illegally cut from the Badlands, a Wilderness Study Area (WSA) located 15 miles east of Bend. This 32,221-acre WSA is highly valued for its high desert ecosystems, old growth juniper, geologic formations, dry river canyons, archaeological resources and outstanding opportunities for solitude and recreation.

In addition to the theft of old growth trees, a fence was cut and a vehicle was driven off road to haul away the wood. The trees were cut about a quarter mile from Highway 20; one of the trees cut measured approximately three feet in diameter and is estimated to be approximately 1,000 years old.

In response to public concern regarding the illegal taking of the trees and the agency's commitment to bringing those responsible for the theft to justice, the Prineville District Office is offering a \$2000 reward for information leading to the successful prosecution of the individual(s) responsible for the thefts.

Stealing federal property is considered a Class A misdemeanor and is punishable by up to a \$100,000 fine or one year in prison, or both. If the theft is valued at more than \$1,000, the crime becomes a felony, which is more severely punished and could result in federal prison time for a convicted individual(s).

“This is a serious resource crime and we hope that offering a monetary reward will aid us in successfully prosecuting the responsible party,” said Deschutes Area Resource Manager Robert Towne.

Wood thieves illegally cut old growth juniper to make furniture and decorative items. To view a photo of the theft site, visit the Prineville BLM website at www.or.blm/Prineville. To report information associated with the juniper theft, call the Prineville BLM District at (541) 416-6700.

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