



Using BLM Land for Events

Any individual or group conducting commercial activities and business on federally or state-managed lands must obtain a special use permit from the agency managing the land on which the business is being proposed. For agritourism, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands are the most common public lands in question.

Furthermore, anyone charging a fee to lead, guide or assist an outdoor recreation activity on public lands must also be registered with the Marine Board (503.378.8587, 435 Commercial Street, Salem OR 97310) as an outfitter/guide. Both the BLM and U.S. Forest Service require proof of a guide registration before issuing a permit.

To gauge if you need a permit for your agritourism operations, consider these questions.

- Will your event be held on public lands?
- Will you be rafting a river that requires a permit?
- Will you be traveling in a designated wilderness area?
- Will you advertise?
- Will you charge a fee?
- Do you expect to make a profit on the event, or is the fee purely to cover expenses?
- Will there be a competition?
- Will you mark a course for an activity?
- Will you be expecting vehicles at your event? (How many?)
- Is anyone being paid to organize, lead or participate in your activity?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you need a permit from the BLM.

For all uses requiring a Special Recreation Permit, you must apply to your local BLM office at least 180 days prior to your event. Contact your local BLM office directly for more information.

Why is a permit needed?

The permit process is intended to identify any potential land-use or resource conflicts that may arise; identify applicable procedures, permits and special conditions needed to protect resources and public uses; achieve a common understanding between the agency and the applicant about the objectives of the activities; and identify time frames, limitations and responsibilities.

In addition, fees generated by the commercial use of lands managed by the federal government are returned to the U.S. Treasury as revenue.

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TYPES OF PERMITS

Commercial Use

Commercial use is defined as recreational use of public land and related waters for business or financial gain. When any person, group or organization makes or attempts to make a profit, receive money, amortize equipment or obtain goods or services as compensation from participants in recreational activities occurring on public land, the use is considered commercial.

Examples: Outfitters and guides, jeep tours, horseback and wagon-train rides, cattle drives, educational tours or uses and photography associated with a recreational activity.

Competitive Use

Competitive use means any organized, sanctioned or structured use, event or activity on public land in which two or more contestants compete and either: 1) participants register, enter or complete an application for the event; or 2) a predetermined course or area is designated.

Examples: Off-Highway Vehicle races, horse-endurance rides, mountain bike races, rodeos.

Special-Area Use

Special areas are areas officially designated by statute (law) or secretarial order.

Examples: Camping in Oregon and Washington, floating many BLM-managed rivers, backpacking in primitive areas, hiking in wilderness areas in Oregon and Washington.

Organized-Group Activity

Organized-group activity permits are for noncommercial and noncompetitive group activities and recreation events.

Examples: A large scout campout, a fraternity activity, a large family reunion, an educational tour or use, or a dual-sport event.

Vending

Vendor permits are temporary, short-term, nonexclusive, revocable authorizations to sell goods or services on public land, in conjunction with a recreation activity.

Examples: T-shirt sales in conjunction with a raft race, a hot-dog stand at a motocross event, firewood sales in a BLM campground, and shuttle services.

To obtain a permit, complete the form found [here](#). Use the instructions found [here](#).

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