



For Immediate Release
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Miller's Landing and Gopher Gulch Land Acquisitions

The Bend Park & Recreation District has been working for some time to acquire two separate and important pieces of riverfront land for future generations. Though district funding would not support the appraised price for both, partnerships, community support and grants have resulted in both land purchases.

The first property, Miller's Landing, is a 4.7 acre parcel on the east bank of the Deschutes River downstream from the Colorado Avenue bridge. The Trust for Public Land obtained an option to purchase the property for inclusion in the Bend Park and Recreation District's park system if they could raise 1.8 million dollars by December 31, 2010. TPL allocated \$250,000 from the Patsy Collins Fund, the district contributed \$850,000 and a \$250,000 grant from Oregon State Parks was awarded. In addition, a tremendous response from the private individuals contributed over \$350,000 to the purchase of this historic riverfront parcel near the center of town.

At the same time, the district was in a separate discussion with private owners Ed and Dee Elkins on the potential purchase of 122.3 acres of the former Gopher Gulch Ranch as a future regional park. Gopher Gulch Ranch is located north of Awbrey Butte between OB Riley and the Deschutes River. In 2005, the land was valued at \$8.7 million, but in December 2010, due to current low land prices, the negotiated sales price became \$2.75 million. The district

board of directors approved the purchase of the Gopher Gulch Ranch at its December 7 board meeting.

With the Gopher Gulch purchase price finalized, the district is now able to close the funding gap that remains on the Millerø Landing project.

Both land parcels will be important to future generations as Bend continues to grow. Millerø Landing will provide improved river access for boating and fishing, a link in the Deschutes River Trail connecting the Old Mill District to downtown Bend and on-bank support for the proposed Colorado Street Dam Paddle Trail improvements.

Gopher Gulch includes natural areas and trail opportunities similar to those found in Shevlin Park. "The park and recreation district's purchase of the Gopher Gulch parcel is the fruition of a long held dream of Vince Gennaø that some day we will be able to walk or ride on the Deschutes River Trail from Mirror Pond in downtown Bend all the way to Tumalo," said Bruce Ronning, district planning director.

"We have saved for the opportunity to take advantage of the historically low land prices," said Don Horton, BPRD Executive Director. "We may not have an opportunity to make purchases of this significance again for a long time. Thanks to the contributions of TPL and the many donors, both land acquisitions were possible this year. It is a reason to celebrate."

For more information contact Don Horton, Executive Director, on his cell phone at 541-280-0475.

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