

HB 2435 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Agriculture and Land Use

Prepared By: Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/26, 4/2

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Eliminates the sunset on the law that allows guest ranches to be established on lands zoned for exclusive farm use in eastern Oregon.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Requires that an authorized guest ranch that is sited on land zoned for exclusive farm use on or after the effective date of this Act annually report to the county on: the size of the ranch livestock operation; the income the ranch obtained from the livestock operation and guest ranch activities; and any other information the county may require to ensure ongoing compliance. Requires counties to make guest ranch reports available to the public upon request.

REVENUE: No impact

FISCAL: Has minimal fiscal impact

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 3, 'Agricultural Lands,' requires all agricultural lands to be inventoried and preserved by adopting exclusive farm use (EFU) zones. Farm uses allowed on EFU-zoned lands include: raising, harvesting, and selling crops; feeding, breeding, managing, and selling certain animals; and preparing, storing, and disposing of products and by-products raised on these lands. Certain nonfarm uses are also allowed on EFU-zoned lands.

In 1997, the Oregon legislature authorized guest ranches to operate on EFU-zoned land to allow ranchers a means of generating supplemental income by providing ranching experiences to the public. The law limits guest ranches to providing a ranch experience that is incidental and accessory to an existing and continuing cattle, sheep, horse, or bison operation that qualifies as a farm use. Guest ranches have to be established on land that is at least 160 acres in size and the land must contain the dwelling of the livestock operations manager. Guest ranches are limited to providing between four and ten overnight transient rooms with a total maximum floor area of 12,000 square feet. For every increment of 160 acres owned by the ranch, additional allowable overnight guest lodging units and square footage are specified. The maximum allowable units is 25, and the maximum allowable floor area is 30,000 square feet. The ranches may provide or sell food services only for ranch guests or special event guests. Guest ranches are only allowed to provide passive recreational activities that can be provided in conjunction with the livestock operation's natural setting, and are specifically prohibited from providing intensively-developed recreational facilities such as golf courses. The law does not permit guest ranches outside of eastern Oregon, on high-value farmland, or within, or surrounded by, certain federally designated wilderness areas, refuges, or areas of environmental concern.

The most recent sunset expired on January 2, 2018. During the 2018 legislative session, the legislature passed House Bill 4031 to reauthorize the guest ranch use, subject to state and county approval or siting standards, and extended the sunset to April 15, 2020.

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House Bill 2435 would eliminate the sunset on the law that allows guest ranches to be established on lands zoned for exclusive farm use in eastern Oregon.