

**MILLER: USFS still plans to sell HQ property in Sisters**

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and context.

“The community of Sisters is very demanding because it cares a lot,” she said. “And that’s a really good place to be.”

The passion for the surrounding forest and for the community is also reflected in the quality of personnel she has worked with on the District, Miller reflected. She noted that she has worked in districts where she might get two or three applications for an open position. In Sisters, she typically gets 20 to 30. The competition to come to the Sisters Ranger district is fierce, and that results in top-quality personnel and a strong culture.

“The people in the office are great,” she said. “High-quality people who are really smart and really care about each other.”

Miller started her career on the Bear Springs District on the Mt. Hood National Forest — unofficially — in 1975, the year she graduated from high school. She was hired as a work/study intern, counting trees in clear cuts.

Raised in Maupin, Miller

“played on the forest all the time growing up.” The philosophy of multiple use resonated with her and a career with the U.S. Forest Service seemed a natural fit. Her start at Bear Springs affirmed that.

“Bear Springs was a special place — just like Sisters is,” she said. “They were good bookends for me.”

Miller and her husband Richard — whom she met while studying forest management at Oregon State University — plan to stay in Sisters and enjoy the forest as users rather than managers. They look forward to having time for summer recreation for the first time in decades. And some travel in the U.S. is also in the plans.

She leaves the Sisters

District facing several important issues. Fire always looms large, and she believes that Fire Management Officer James Osborne has that critical factor well in hand, with lots of support from other agencies.

The question of trails — particularly a paved trail — remains to be hashed out. Miller would like to see a deep and through community discussion around the topic.

“I don’t know what that discussion is going to look like,” she said. “I don’t know where that is going to land.”

Miller wishes she could have seen through the proposed sale of the current Forest Service headquarters property along Pine Street and the construction of a new headquarters facility, but she recognized

that that process is likely to take years to complete.

“The community of Sisters is very demanding because it cares a lot. And that’s a really good place to be.”  
— Kristie Miller

Looming closer on the horizon is the potential impacts from a massive influx of people to the region to view a total solar eclipse on August 21. Central Oregon is one of the best places to experience the phenomenon, and Miller and

other officials expect tens of thousands of people to descend upon the region.

“It’s going to be a game-changer for everyone,” she said.

There’s essentially no way to manage potential impacts like that of 500 people ascending Mt. Jefferson and the like. She told *The Nugget* that her advice for managers is to prepare “to manage the mess.”

Who will be in charge in August remains to be seen. No interim or permanent Ranger has yet been tapped for Miller’s position. Given that it is Sisters, there will likely be plenty of candidates eager to take on a challenging yet satisfying job — the one with which Miller closed out a long and satisfying career.



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