

Owl Creek Ranch: A Legacy of the American West

Nestled in the heart of Crook County, Oregon, Owl Creek Ranch has a rich history dating back to the late 1870s when pioneers first settled the land. The earliest documented record of the ranch comes from survey notes dated April 1877. In 2004, a large poplar tree near the ranch house fell, revealing through its growth rings an estimated age of approximately 130 years—a living testament to the ranch’s enduring legacy.

Spanning 120 acres of privately owned land, Owl Creek Ranch is surrounded by a 2,200-acre Bureau of Land Management (BLM) grazing allotment on three sides and the scenic Prineville Reservoir State Park on the fourth. Towering rocky cliffs frame the landscape, which gained prominence in the mid-20th century for its rich deposits of agate. Notably, in 1949, the largest agate ever mined—a remarkable 1,200-pound specimen—was unearthed here, securing its place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The ranch boasts approximately 40 acres of fertile hay fields and has supported cattle, sheep, horses, and even U.S. Government mules for over a century. A natural spring supplies the property with fresh water year-round, ensuring the sustainability of both livestock and the land.

In 2005, Eric and Kim Bush acquired the property from the long-time owners, the Carey family. Previously known as the Carey Ranch, the couple embarked on an extensive restoration, revitalizing the land and transforming it into what is now known as Owl Creek Ranch. Their vision included a complete remodel of the main residence, the removal of aging structures, and the construction of modern facilities. Today, the ranch is home to a thriving herd of Black Angus cattle and some of the finest Arabian horses in Central Oregon.

The main house is situated at the entrance of a striking rock canyon, a local landmark long referred to as “Owl Hollow.” From this dramatic landscape emerges Owl Creek, a seasonal stream that meanders through the heart of the ranch before flowing into Prineville Reservoir, just half a mile from the homestead.

Owl Creek Ranch stands as a testament to resilience, vision, and the enduring spirit of the American West—a place where history, nature, and ranching heritage seamlessly converge.