



THE PUBLIC LANDS Monitor

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT HISTORY PROJECT

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The PLF and BLM representatives met on November 17, 2022 at the Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center as part of a renewed effort to establish the BLM History program in partnership with PLF. The PLF was represented at the meeting by Courtney Lyons-Garcia, George Stone, and Kit Mueller. This effort seeks to capture, organize, and better understand BLM's long history. The BLM has diverse and abundant historical materials that have never been systematically inventoried, catalogued, or organized. Many of these materials are currently not available for public review or even BLM staff use. Many unique and interesting objects are also stored, sometimes unintentionally, in personal office spaces, field office displays, and even some BLM retiree's homes. In addition, through a Memorandum of Understanding with BLM, the PLF maintains an historical archive of personal papers, photos, documents, and other memorabilia of former BLM employees, researchers, and the general public at the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix, AZ. The PLF has a goal to scan and link these archive materials to a database records system that would enable a viewer to pull up the materials on the PLF website and access the records. The PLF is looking for BLM support and assistance to continue this archive project.



BLM History Project Meeting

***l to r:* Scott Foss (BLM), Jeff Krauss (BLM), Hilary Zarin (BLM), Courtney Lyons-Garcia (PLF), George Stone (PLF), Kit Mueller (PLF), Gordon Toevs (BLM), and Bob Casias (BLM)**

the America 250 initiative, a multiyear effort to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States. This effort, is being led by the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, created by Congress, and it's supporting nonprofit the America 250 Foundation. The PLF, BLM, and the Commission entered a partnership to formally celebrate BLM history during the commemoration period, with ample media coverage.

Sporadic publications have been authored in the past on the history of BLM, such as *Opportunity and Challenge – the Story of BLM* and *The BLM and American's Public Lands*, but updates have not kept pace with current additions to BLM's rich history. The BLM has not had a historian for several years and efforts to preserve the history have languished as a result. The BLM recently hired Hilary Zarin, a trained cultural anthropologist with many years of experience working on heritage projects, to lead this effort to establish the BLM History program. The goal is to stand up the BLM History program as part of

The Public Lands Foundation advocates and works for the retention of America's Public Lands in public hands professionally and sustainably managed for responsible common use and enjoyment.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I want to begin by wishing all of you a Happy New Year. I hope your holidays were enjoyable and you were able to spend time resting and recharging for 2023. We spent the holidays at my son's home in northern Virginia with him, my daughter's family and, two of my sisters. While we all ended up with a cold virus, the time we were able to spend together was precious.



Mary Jo Rugwell

The entirety of the PLF was shocked and saddened by the sudden passing of Past President and valued colleague Henri Bisson. As the Chair of the Development Committee, Henri led the charge, along with his Committee members and our Executive Director, to research and make connections with entities who support PLF's advocacy mission. Excellent work has been done, but a great deal of work remains. Henri's passing leaves a very big hole in the PLF organization and the Committee. We will need the energy, ideas, and support of our membership to bring Henri's vision for the Development Committee to fruition. I believe that is one tangible way we can honor his memory.

The PLF, in partnership with the National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) and the Andrus Center at Boise State University, sponsored another very successful Student Congress during the first week of October in Boise, Idaho. The theme for this Student Congress was Wildland Fire. I want to

acknowledge the efforts of Mike Ferguson, Jenna Whitlock, Elaine Zielinski, Jim Caswell and their team for all they did to make this event so outstanding and meaningful for the participants. Thanks also to Courtney Lyons-Garcia, PLF's Executive Director, for all her work on the complex logistics required to make this happen. Unfortunately, Mike had an accident that prevented him from attending, but other team members stepped up to fill the void.

Early in 2023, Scott Florence will direct a PLF membership drive with the assistance of our Executive Director and State Leads. While this group has graciously agreed to do the heavy lifting for this very important project, all of us have a responsibility to reach out to former colleagues to encourage them to join. The PLF is 35 years old, and its existence is more important now than it has ever been. If we are to sustain the organization for the next 35 years, we must attract new members. Please join me in reaching out to those you know who share a passion for the public lands and invite them to join us.

The PLF has a lot of important work to do. While we now have a part-time paid Executive Director, Courtney is extremely busy, and many tasks are still accomplished by a small subset of our membership. Please consider volunteering to help. You can reach out to any member of the Executive Committee to discuss where your talents could best be utilized.

Additionally, we welcome input from our members. Please feel free to call or e-mail anyone on the Executive Committee with suggestions or feedback. Thank you for your membership and talk to you again in the spring.

PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION GOALS

- Keep lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in public ownership and open to use by the public.
- Support multiple use management under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.
- Encourage professionalism by BLM employees.
- Increase the public's understanding of and support for the proper management of the public lands.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings and Happy New Year! The PLF is hitting the ground running as we start 2023. However, we were saddened by the news of the sudden passing of Henri Bisson on January 16, 2023, who was leading our Development Committee work to raise funds for our advocacy initiatives. Henri will be deeply missed and our thoughts are with his family in these difficult times. Our advocacy work will continue in Henri's memory.

As part of the Development Committee's work we have developed an advocacy outreach pamphlet highlighting five priority issues that are critical to the future of the BLM. These priority issues are Rebuilding the BLM, Public Land Access, Public Land Recreation, Special Areas Management, and Renewable Energy for the Future. We will be in Washington, D.C. this year to meet in person with Congressional offices on these priorities as well as partnering with other groups to amplify our voice. PLF's advocacy work is central to our mission and we hope you will support us in these efforts.

We are also in the final stages of production of the 2022 Student Congress Report, written by the student participants. A group representing the Student Congress, including Betsy Black (Northern Arizona University) who was chosen by her peers as their representative, will present their findings on wildland fire management to Department of the Interior, BLM, and U.S. Forest Service officials in the next couple of months. We could not have had such a successful Student Congress without the support of each person who took time to make a donation to this program. We thank you!

Finally we are launching a membership drive this month. The work of the PLF and the pursuit of our mission to keep America's public lands in public hands needs the support of a robust membership. I encourage each of you to think about retirees or current BLM employees that you know who have not joined us. Ask them to follow us on social media, check out our website, and join us, or buy them a gift membership!

We look forward to the work before us in 2023 and hope you can join us in our fight for our public lands!

ELECTION 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our annual election for PLF Officers and Board Members was completed in December 2022. The slate of candidates for 2023 was circulated to all members and voting was completed by either on-line or mail-in ballot. Over 200 ballots were submitted by the voting deadline. All candidates on the ballot approved by the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting in September 2022 were approved by members of the PLF. Their names and positions appear on page 1 of this edition of the Monitor.

The PLF currently has vacant State Representative positions for Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, and New Mexico, after the recent requests by Jenna Whitlock (ID) and Jesse Juen (NM) to step down from their State Representative positions. We thank them for their volunteer service and they are to be commended for their outstanding contributions to the PLF. A special thanks also goes to all Board members for their continuing commitment to the proper management of public lands administered by BLM and keeping public lands in public hands.

The PLF Executive Board decided to not refill the vacant State Representative positions until recommendations from the Committee Restructuring Working Group are provided to the PLF Board. The Committee Restructuring Working Group was formed in response to discussions at the Annual Meeting in September 2022 in Grand Junction, CO.

The Working Group is assessing the optimal way to structure the PLF Board and its Committees to carry out our goals and objectives. The Group's work builds on past Board strategic planning decisions, our mission as articulated in the PLF Bylaws, and member comments from past surveys. The Group will identify problems with how the current Board and Committee structure are functioning and recommend solutions to the Board. The Working Group members include George Stone (lead), Beau McClure, Don Simpson, Barron Bail, and Courtney Lyons-Garcia. The Working Group held its initial meeting in January and expects to complete their work and seek Board approval of recommendations in time for the 2024 Board elections.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The PLF is conducting a membership drive unlike any it has attempted before. Our purpose is to enlist as many people as possible to join us in protecting the future of BLM administered public lands. It does not matter whether you are a retired, former or current BLM employee, or someone who really cares about public lands. If you care about ensuring these lands remain in public hands and are managed sustainably for all their many uses based on the best science available, join the PLF. If you wish to have a voice in the policies, decisions, and future regarding how these lands are managed, then the PLF is the organization for you!

This is an opportunity to leverage your personal interest, experience, or expertise in working for BLM to advocate before Congress, present and future Administrations, and the public for sound management practices, robust budgets, and modernized regulations. As a member of the PLF, you can help preserve the history of public land management in this country by adding to the holdings of our historical archives. You can keep updated on national issues or help us prepare or update our position statements. Through PLF membership, you will be able to connect with current and former BLMers or meet and catch up with them at various events sponsored by the PLF.

In addition, there is an opportunity to impact future public lands managers by volunteering to assist or supporting our investment in educating young adults through the PLF George Lea Scholarship program or the John Freemuth Student Congress. All members are encouraged to actively participate in our various committees focused on national land management issues, legislation, fund raising, or awards and special events.

If you are an existing member, we encourage you to reach out to a family member, friend, former colleague, or current BLM employee to join the PLF or renew their membership. If you are not a member,

we encourage you to visit our website at www.publicland.org. There you can find out more about who we are and what we do. You can also click the membership banner and join us on our journey!

GEORGE LEA FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are again being accepted for the 2023 George Lea Founders Scholarship and available on the PLF website under the Programs/Scholarships link. The PLF each year awards two \$5,000 scholarships to deserving college students pursuing degrees aligned with BLM public land resource programs.

Applications must be submitted by e-mail to dstout@publicland.org on or before March 31, 2023. The PLF in 2022 received 38 applications for scholarships from students at 18 colleges and universities in 10 western states.

MATTHEW PODOLINSKY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE 2021

Matthew Podolinsky, a recipient of the George Lea Founder's Scholarship in 2021, gave presentations on October 21 and 22, 2022 at the Annual Conference of the Arizona Site Steward Program in Yuma, Arizona. The Arizona Site Steward Program has several hundred volunteers who monitor and report on the condition of archaeological sites on public lands, including lands administered by BLM. Matthew's presentations focused on the effectiveness of moral-appeal and threat-appeal site signage at reducing damage at rock art sites. His studies recommend replacing current signs with more moral-appeal messaging and investing in future research to preserve rock art sites. Matthew received his Master's degree in Anthropology from the University of Utah and is currently employed at the Utah State Historic Preservation Office. His thesis described his research on ways to improve the protection of prehistoric rock art, through more effective public outreach methods.

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION?

Please help us keep our records current and ensure we have your current e-mail address on file.
Message us at info@publicland.org, call at 703-935-0916.

**OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONAL AWARD
TECHNICAL/OPERATIONAL CATEGORY
JEFF CUNDICK**

Joe Kraayenbrink, representing the PLF, presented the Outstanding Public Lands Professional Employee Award – Technical/Operational Category to Jeff Cundick, former BLM Minerals Branch Chief, Idaho Falls District at an award presentation in Idaho Falls, Idaho on January 9, 2023. The award citation follows.

The Public Lands Foundation is proud to present the 2022 Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Technical/Operational Category to Jeff Cundick, Minerals Branch Chief, Idaho Falls District, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls, Idaho.

As leader of the BLM's largest and most complex non-energy leasable minerals program, Jeff Cundick, has demonstrated outstanding professional performance while addressing major projects of broad public interest nationally. He has lead efforts to complete four Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) and approved site-specific, environmentally appropriate mine and reclamation plans required for phosphate mines to operate in a sustainable manner in southeast Idaho within the last four years. Completing these EISs and issuing well thought-out sustainable mine and reclamation plans is critically important to ensuring a continuing supply of phosphate for the nation and the world. Phosphate mines in southeast Idaho generate 22 percent of the Nation's and two percent of the world's supply.

Because phosphate mines are located on surface lands managed primarily by the U.S. Forest Service, Cundick developed and implemented a "Service First" agreement to enhance planning and communication, government efficiency, and reduce costs of mine oversight to the taxpayer. In addition, Cundick played a key role in modernizing phosphate mining practices to prevent selenium contamination, including developing caps and covers to place over mine waste rock to prevent infiltration and subsequent transport of contaminated water. These efforts have saved potentially tens of millions of dollars in



Award Presentation – Joe Kraayenbrink, PLF, Jeff Cundick, Mary D'Aversa, BLM Idaho Falls District Manager (l to r)

cleanup actions and have also resulted in affected waters being removed from Idaho's Clean Water Act listings.

Cundick is considered the BLM's top expert in non-energy leasable minerals, phosphate mining, and mining permit oversight. He is well respected by colleagues throughout the agency for his willingness to share his knowledge and mentor others. His best practices and environmental monitoring and adaptive management programs have been adopted in agencies and BLM offices around the country, furthering the BLM's contribution to sustainability and leadership in this field.

Cundick has demonstrated sustained dedication to "make a difference" by working proactively with private industry and stakeholders to adapt phosphate mining practices and align them with advancing scientific knowledge and evolving public expectations.

Because of his commitment to public land management, the Public Lands Foundation recognizes Jeff Cundick with its Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Technical/Operational Category for 2022.

Mary Jo Rugwell, President
September 20, 2022

**OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONAL AWARD
MANAGERIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY
JEREMY CASTERSON**

Peter Bierbach, representing the PLF, presented the Outstanding Public Lands Professional Employee Award – Managerial/Administrative Category to Jeremy Casterson, former BLM Field Manager in the Upper Snake Field Office, Idaho Falls District at an award presentation in Missoula, Montana on January 5, 2023. The award citation follows

The Public Lands Foundation is proud to present the 2022 Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Managerial/Administrative category to Jeremy Casterson, BLM Field Manager, Upper Snake Field Office, Idaho Falls District, Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Jeremy Casterson has demonstrated outstanding professional managerial performance by leading proactive efforts to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, conserve important wildland habitat, enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, and maintain working landscapes. His successes include the development of the Sand Creek Desert Vegetation Management Plan, the South Fork of the Snake River Fee Program, and the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Area Management Plan.

The key to Casterson's success in addressing these issues is his ability to develop highly effective partnerships with other federal, state, and local government agencies; non-governmental organizations; and private landowners and to collaborate with them to develop practical solutions that stakeholders will accept.

Casterson's efforts to develop the Sand Creek Desert Vegetation Management Plan, the South Fork of the Snake River Fee Program, and the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Area Management Plan demonstrate his sustained dedication to make a difference by recognizing problems and opportunities and moving to take action to address them. These efforts were not initiated in response to an application from a project proponent or a lawsuit filed by



Award Presentation – Peter Bierbach, PLF Director-at-Large and Jeremy Casterson (l to r)

a dissatisfied party; they were initiated because Casterson identified needs and opportunities to enhance public land management within his Field Office and secured and allocated resources to address them. It illustrates his strong and sincere belief that by working together, people with many different interests and perspectives can agree on a common vision for a large landscape across ownership boundaries.

Casterson views development of projects as opportunities not only to address important natural resource issues, but also to develop and enhance his employees. His staff have thrived under his leadership. Jeremy Casterson's philosophy of public land management is rooted in the conviction that when people with different viewpoints and backgrounds sit down at a table, shake hands, look each other in the eye, and then get to work, the outcome will be constructive.

Because of his commitment to public land management, the Public Lands Foundation recognizes Jeremy Casterson with its Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Managerial/Administrative category for 2022.

Mary Jo Rugwell, President
September 20, 2022

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE

The PLF continues to monitor Congressional legislation, Federal rulemaking activities, and Executive Orders pertaining to the Department of the Interior, BLM, and public lands management. The PLF, as an advocacy organization for the public lands, is actively engaged in providing our perspectives on a wide range of issues including the annual BLM appropriations, any program oversight hearings, proposed amendments to FLPMA and other major statutes affecting public lands management, and proposed regulations regarding BLM resource programs. Reviewing legislation and proposed rules and preparing comments and testimony, when appropriate, is an important part of our advocacy work. We will update our Legislation and Regulations webpage on our website under the “Advocacy” link and provide updates in the Monitor on significant actions.



Photo by Ray Brady

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13990 PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESTORING SCIENCE TO TACKLE THE CLIMATE CRISIS

STATUS: Signed by the President on January 20, 2021.

SUMMARY: Section 2 of the EO requires the review of regulations and policies for reducing methane emissions in the oil and gas sector. *The BLM on November 28, 2022 announced the publication of a Proposed Rule on venting and flaring to address the waste of natural gas and reduce methane emissions from oil and gas operations on Federal lands.* Section 4 of the EO requires the Secretary to place a moratorium on implementation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program in Alaska and conduct a new and comprehensive analysis of the potential impacts of the oil and gas program. *The BLM on August 4, 2021 published a Notice of Intent to prepare a supplemental EIS for the ANWR Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program and a Draft EIS is expected to be released soon for public review and comment.*

PLF POSITION: The PLF will be closely tracking these actions and providing comments during any public comment period, as appropriate.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14008 TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AT HOME AND ABROAD

STATUS: Signed by the President on January 27, 2021.

SUMMARY: Section 207 of the EO requires the Secretary to review renewable energy siting and permitting processes on the public lands and increase renewable energy production on the public lands. The Secretary on January 12, 2022 announced the signing of an interagency MOU to improve Federal agency coordination and streamline reviews of renewable energy projects on public lands. The BLM on June 1, 2022 announced the release of reduced acreage rental rates and megawatt capacity fees for wind and solar energy authorizations on the public lands. *The BLM on December 8, 2022 published a Notice of Intent to update the 2012 Solar Programmatic EIS for the western states and potentially identify additional solar development areas. Public scoping meetings are currently being held. The Draft EIS is expected to be released in Summer 2023 and the Final EIS in Spring 2024.*

Section 208 of the EO requires the Secretary to pause new oil and gas leases on the public lands pending completion of a comprehensive review and reconsideration of Federal permitting and leasing practices and whether to adjust royalties associated with coal, oil, and gas resources extracted from the public lands. The Department of the Interior on November 26, 2021 released its report on Federal oil

and gas leasing and identified reforms that should be made in the program. *The BLM on October 6, 2022 announced a proposed oil and gas lease offer of 10,123 acres in New Mexico and 251,087 acres in Wyoming. The BLM on November 21, 2022 also announced a proposed oil and gas lease offer of 63,603 acres in Nevada and 31,808 acres in Utah. These lease sales will include new terms consistent with provisions required under the Inflation Reduction Act (P.L. 117-169) signed on August 16, 2022, that includes increased minimum royalty rates (16.67 percent), increased minimum bids (\$10 per acre), and increased rental rates (\$15 per acre after nine years). The BLM also issued IM 2023-008 on November 21, 2022 that implements the provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act.*

PLF POSITION: The PLF will be closely tracking these actions and providing comments during any public comment period, as appropriate. The PLF prepared a Position Statement that provides recommendations for improvements in the oil and gas leasing program. The PLF has also prepared a Position Statement on solar and wind energy development on the public lands. These Position Statements are available on the PLF website.

MODERNIZING ACCESS TO OUR PUBLIC LANDS ACT (MAPLAND ACT) P.L. 117-114

STATUS: Approved by Congress and signed by the President on April 29, 2022.

SUMMARY: The MAPLand Act requires the Federal land management agencies to publish within the next four years digital online maps of public lands and information on access to public lands, including easement acquisitions. This legislation and passage of the Dingell Act in 2019 (P. L. 116-9) provide tools to address public land access issues and an opportunity for the public to nominate parcels of land for acquisition to improve access to public lands.

PLF POSITION: The PLF supported both the Dingell Act and the MAPLand Act. The PLF recently updated a Public Land Access Position Statement that is available on the PLF website and provides additional recommendations for addressing public land access issues. *The PLF is also closely tracking a court case in Wyoming that involves public land access to checkerboard lands, commonly referred to as "corner crossing".*

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT – P.L. 117-58

STATUS: Approved by Congress and signed by the President on November 15, 2021.

SUMMARY: The Infrastructure Law contains several provisions that fund BLM initiatives. *The BLM on August 18, 2022 announced \$1.1 million in contracts to plug orphaned wells in Utah and California. The Secretary of the Interior on January 10, 2023 signed Secretarial Order 3409 that established an Orphaned Wells Program Office, in the Office of the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget, to ensure effective, accountable and efficient implementation of the Infrastructure Law's \$4.7 billion investment in orphaned well cleanup. The BLM on September 21, 2022 announced the initial funding of a \$10 .0 million five-year project under a cooperative agreement with the Nevada Division of Wildlife to restore wildlife habitat and reduce wildfire risk. The BLM on September 27, 2022 announced the award of a \$1.0 million grant to the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District in Alaska for placer mining restoration work in the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River and Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. The BLM on October 17, 2022 announced \$3.8 million for 17 habitat restoration, watershed health, and hazardous fuel treatment projects with the Utah Department of Natural Resources.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF supports increased funding for BLM to address major issues impacting the public lands, including wildland fire and fuel treatment projects, ecosystem restoration projects, orphaned well clean up, and clean energy demonstration projects on the public lands. The PLF will be tracking funding provided by the Department for BLM projects on the public lands.*

MINING LAW REFORM – 1872 MINING LAW

STATUS: A Federal Register Notice was published March 31, 2022 by the Interior Department. Senator Heinrich (NM) introduced legislation (S.4083) and Congressman Grijalva (AZ) introduced legislation (H.R.7580) on April 26, 2022. The Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act is pending Congressional action. Congressman Amodei (NV) introduced the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act (H.R.3240) on May 14, 2021 which is also pending Congressional action.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Interior announced the formation of an Interagency Working Group to gather information and develop recommendations for improving the Federal hardrock mining regulations, laws, and permitting processes. The Federal Register Notice also invited public comments to help inform the efforts of the Interagency Working Group.

PLF POSITION: The PLF on April 24, 2022 provided the PLF Position Statement, in response to the Notice, on recommendations for amendments to the 1872 Mining Law. The PLF and the National Association of Forest Service Retirees on August 29, 2022 provided joint supplemental comments on the hardrock abandoned mine lands (AML) program in response to a Interior request for comments. The PLF also participated in the Public Listening Sessions with the Interagency Working Group on July 19, 21, and 26, 2022. The PLF Position Statement and supplemental AML comments are available on the PLF website.

BROADBAND INTERNET AND TRANSMISSION REGULATIONS – 43 CFR PART 2800

RULE STATUS: *A Federal Register Notice of Proposed Rule was published on November 7, 2022.*

RULE SUMMARY: *The Proposed Rule includes changes and updates to cost recovery for right-of-way (ROW) applications, vegetation management requirements for ROW authorizations, and broadband internet additions to the ROW regulations.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF is reviewing the Proposed Rule and will provide comments as appropriate.*



Communications Tower, BLM photo

METHANE REGULATIONS 43 CFR PARTS 3160 AND 3170

RULE STATUS: *A Federal Register Notice of Proposed Rule was published on November 28, 2022.*

RULE SUMMARY: *The Proposed Rule includes provisions to reduce the waste of natural gas from venting, flaring, and leaks during oil and gas production operations on Federal and Indian oil and gas leases. The Proposed Rule describes the reasonable steps that operators of Federal and Indian oil and gas leases must take to avoid the waste of natural gas and would also provide for royalty payments of any waste of natural gas.*

PLF Position: *The PLF is reviewing the Proposed Rule and will provide comments as appropriate.*

GRAZING REGULATIONS 43 CFR PART 4100

RULE STATUS: *On January 17, 2020 BLM announced the intent to prepare an EIS to consider proposed revisions to the grazing regulations to improve and streamline the grazing permit process, improve the administration of grazing permits, and also potentially consider the adoption of outcome-based grazing authorizations. The BLM intends to release a Draft EIS and proposed rule in 2023.*

RULE SUMMARY: *The proposed revisions are intended to update, modernize, and streamline the current grazing regulations and provide for greater flexibility in land and resources management. The BLM seeks to improve land-use planning and grazing permitting procedures, strengthen controls to prevent unauthorized grazing, enhance environmental protections, and improve public input opportunities.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF on February 24, 2020 provided comments to BLM in response to the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS to support proposed revisions to the grazing regulations. The PLF on June 18, 2020 also co-signed a collaborative letter with other organizations to BLM providing comments on proposed revisions to the grazing regulations. The PLF will continue to track the development of the proposed regulations and provide comments as appropriate.*

HAM RADIO
BY GEORGE STONE, CALL SIGN WA1JQC

Participating ham radio operators (hams) throughout the U.S. are taking their equipment outside, setting up portable antennas, and using portable power equipment to make contacts on the air. So far, 375 locations on BLM-managed lands have been activated by hams in Colorado, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. Examples include national monuments, trails, national conservation areas, recreation management areas, historic preservation sites, and interpretive sites.

The Parks on the Air (POTA) program is a ham radio program that supports international portable amateur radio operations and promotes emergency awareness and communications from national/federal and state/provincial level parks. It succeeds the National Parks on the Air program launched by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), national ham radio organization, that celebrated the National Park Service's centennial anniversary in 2016. Hams from across the country activated in national parks, promoted the agency, and showcased amateur radio to the public. The 2016 program was so popular that a group of hams wanted to continue the fun and coordinated a way to continue the program.



George Stone (PLF) and Rich Kennedy
Ham operators on location in Virginia

Whenever hams activate a park or other location, they register their plans on the web so that other hams know when, where (on what frequencies), and how (what radio modes) to use to make a contact. The Parks on the Air website at parksontheair.com lists and displays a map of active locations. There are award incentives for hams to activate their stations (activators) and for other hams (hunters) to make contacts with them. Most hams now use computers, software, and digital logs to control their radios, and to verify and confirm radio contacts.

I have been a licensed ham operator since 1968 and recently activated the Lake Frederick State Fishing Lake location in Virginia, along with my neighbor, Rich Kennedy, K3VAI, and Tom Sherwood, KW4CW. After setting up our portable gear and antenna, we operated on the shortwave bands for an hour using one of the digital radio modes called FT8. We made 38 contacts in Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, France, and Spain in addition to reaching ham operators throughout the U.S.

Are you an active ham? I would like to contact you! Are you interested in the hobby and getting licensed? You don't need to learn the Morse code anymore! Contact me or visit the ARRL website at www.arrl.org to learn how. Let's get the PLF and BLM lands on the air!

BLM LEADERSHIP

With the continued changes in the leadership positions of the BLM, we would like to provide an update on the current BLM Leadership, including the State Directors that provide the day-to-day on-the-ground management for the public lands. The following are the current Deputy Directors and the State Directors for each of the BLM State Offices:

Director	Tracy Stone-Manning
Deputy Director, Policy and Programs	Nada Culver
Deputy Director, Operations	Michael Nedd
Alaska State Office	Steven Cohn
Arizona State Office	Raymond Suazo*
California State Office	Karen Mouritsen
Colorado State Office	Doug Vilsack
Eastern States Office	Mitchell Leverette
Idaho State Office	Karen Kelleher
Montana State Office	Sonya Germann
Nevada State Office	Jon Raby*
New Mexico State Office	Melanie Barnes
OR/WA State Office	Barry Bushue
Utah State Office	Greg Sheehan
Wyoming State Office	Andrew Archuleta

*Ray Suazo, Arizona State Director, and Jon Raby, Nevada State Director, were announced in November 2022 as winners of the 2022 Presidential Rank Awards. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 established the Presidential Rank Awards Program to recognize career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) for exceptional performance over an extended period of time. Both Ray Suazo and Jon Raby were recognized in the category of Distinguished Executives within the Department of the Interior.

REMEMBRANCE – LES ROSENKRANCE

BY ED SHEPARD

Les Rosenkrance passed away on September 26, 2022, at the age of 81 years. Les will be remembered for his outgoing personality, his sense of humor, and his willingness to mentor and help develop the employees that he worked with. He will be best remembered for his concern for the safety and well-being of wildland firefighters. Les was born in Pocatello, ID and raised on the family ranch in Mackay, ID where he returned after his retirement from the BLM in 2000.

Les started his Federal career in wildland fire as a smoke-jumper for the U.S. Forest Service in McCall, ID in 1961 and continued jumping through 1968. During that time, he jumped over 50 fires. Les served in assignments in Anchorage, Tok, and Fairbanks, and Washington, D.C. In 1976, Les moved into man-



Les Rosenkrance

agement and served as Resource Area Manager in Fairbanks, District Manager in Safford, State Director for Arizona, and BLM Director of the Office of Fire and Aviation at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, ID from which he retired in 2000 after 31 years with BLM.

Les was well known for his work in wildfire management, at the state, federal, and international level. Following the tragic loss of 14 firefighters on the South Canyon Fire in Colorado in July 1994, Les was

assigned to lead an interagency investigation team to determine the causes and to begin the process of improving procedures to prevent future tragedies. This investigation kicked off studies to reduce risks to firefighters and improve their safety. Following this assignment, Les was assigned to lead the BLM's National Office of Fire and Aviation. While in this position he worked to implement the findings from the South Canyon Fire investigation. He also advocated to include rural fire associations as an integral part of BLM's wildfire system recognizing that they are often the closest resources when a fire starts. He worked diligently to provide training and equipment so that the rural associations could quickly and safely respond to fires. Many of the ideas that Les advocated for became part of the National Fire Plan.

Les also believed that the U.S. should share our experiences with other countries facing similar wildfire threats and that U.S. fire managers could learn from the experiences of other countries. He participated in several initiatives to encourage international sharing, including international symposiums and firefighting exchanges with New Zealand and Australia, Russia, and Canada and Mexico.

As a manager, Les was recognized for his work to build working relationships with other state and federal agencies and NGOs to improve the conservation of public lands. In 1986 he was presented the Conservation Award by the Arizona Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Les was a member of the PLF and the National Smokejumpers Association. He was presented the PLF Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in 1999, while he was Director of the Office of Fire and Aviation. Les made a difference, not only in his long career of natural resources management, but in the welfare of employees throughout the BLM and his sensitivity to the people affected by wildland fire.

NEW MEMBERSHIP FEES

The PLF Board of Directors in August 2022 approved an increase in the annual dues for a Regular member and a change in the membership categories to simplify the annual dues structure. These changes in membership dues became effective on January 1, 2023. The simplified PLF annual membership dues structure is on the back page of *The Monitor*.

Please note, PLF members who have set up automatic payment of dues for Regular memberships will need to reset their auto payments at the increased \$50 annual dues level. This can be done on the PLF website whenever your current membership expires. The PLF cannot automatically make these changes, as this change needs to be done directly by the account holder. Please contact George Stone at gstone@publicland.org if you have membership questions.

IN MEMORIAM

Henri Bisson on January 16, 2023, in Tucson, AZ. Henri was a U.S. Navy veteran. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a BS degree in Forest Resources and earned an MS degree in Watershed Management from the University of Arizona. He came west in 1974 to start his career with BLM as a Forester in the Redding District in California. Over the next 34 years of public service as a career employee of BLM, Henri served in a series of increasingly responsible positions - land use planning and environmental analysis work in the Grand Junction and Montrose District Offices in Colorado; District Manager in Phoenix, Arizona and later in the California Desert District; Special Assistant to the BLM Director in Washington, D.C.; Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning in Washington, D.C.; State Director in Alaska; and, finally, two years in the BLM's Washington Headquarters Office as Deputy Director for Operations and the Secretary of the Interior's Senior Advisor for Alaska Affairs. He retired from BLM in 2009. Henri served as President of the Public Lands Foundation for three years; served on the Advisory Council for the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership; was on the Board of Directors for the Sonoran Institute (AZ) for three years, and was presented the PLF Lifetime Service Award in 2016.

Stanley Harold Bronczyk on October 24, 2022, in Anchorage, AK. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Forest Management and served in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps. After his military service he moved to Phoenix, AZ and began his 35 year career with BLM. He worked in Reno, NV and Anchorage, AK and held a variety of positions including Branch Chief over the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and Alaska Statehood Act.

Spence William Cowley on October 17, 2022, in Arco, ID. He attended Idaho State University and began working as a rookie wildland firefighter for BLM in 1999. He continued working for BLM for 23 years and ended his career as a Prescribed Fire and Fuels Technician.

Rosemarie "Rose" Lyn Cunningham on October 23, 2022, in Anchorage, AK. Rose worked as a Computer Programmer, Applications and Data Analyst, Data Administrator, and Project Manager for BLM,

Department of Defense, National Weather Service and the U.S. Geological Survey.

William Paul Curtis on October 18, 2022, in Provo, UT. He attended Utah State University and received a Bachelor's degree in Range Management. He worked for BLM as a Range Conservationist for 32 years, 30 years of which were in the Monticello, UT office.

Jennifer Davis-Fair on April 29, 2022, in Clinton, MD. Jennifer worked in the BLM Washington, D.C. office for many years.

Margaret "Peggy" Forbes-Crowl on December 31, 2022, in Colorado Springs, CO. Peggy attended Blair Business School and started her 13 year career with BLM in Canon City, CO in 1977. She worked in the Lands and Realty division and retired in 1990 as a Realty Documents Examiner. After retiring she returned as a volunteer.

Boyd Melvin Holt on December 26, 2021, in Colorado Springs, CO. Boyd served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in Architecture and spent his career as a Civil Engineer with BLM in Grand Junction, CO.

Donald Clay Koenig on October 30, 2022, in Birmingham, AL. Don graduated from the University of Colorado with a Bachelor's degree in Geology and was a U.S. Navy commissioned officer. He worked for BLM in Alaska as a geologist and retired in 1995.

Jane Gray Mangus on November 5, 2022, in Anchorage, AK. Jane graduated from Pennsylvania State University with Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism. Jane first worked as a technical writer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, then worked for many years as a writer/editor for BLM Public Affairs in Alaska. She retired in 1993.

Henry "Hank" A. McNeel on November 15, 2022, in Billings, MT. Hank served in the U.S. Army. Hank was a weed scientist for BLM and received numerous awards for his work in controlling weeds. He spent time in Russia while working for BLM as part of an international team studying weeds. He also served on the Yellowstone County Weed Board from 2006–2021. Before working for BLM, he worked for

IN MEMORIAM *(CONTINUED)*

the Forest Service and was County Agent in Rupert, ID and also worked for the University of Idaho as head grounds keeper.

Roy Herman Oliver on October 26, 2022, in Lewistown, MT. Roy served in the U.S. Navy and attended Eastern Montana College and the University of Montana. Roy worked for the BIA, IRS, and BLM retiring from BLM in 1995.

Eleanor Caroline Pfeifer on November 14, 2022, in Albuquerque, NM. Eleanor began her career with BLM in 1978 in Albuquerque, NM and retired from there in 1992.

Lester Kenneth Rosenkrance on September 26, 2022, in Mackay, ID. Les graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in Range Management. He started his career with BLM in Idaho Falls, ID as a Range Conservationist and in the following years worked in Anchorage and Tok, AK; Washington, D.C.; Safford and Phoenix, AZ; and Boise, ID. At the time of his retirement in 2000, Les was the BLM National Director of Fire and Aviation.

John Duane Tabb on December 25, 2022, in Springboro, OH. Duane graduated from Colorado State

University and was a U.S. Army veteran. He had a 33 year career with BLM working in Denver, CO; Santa Fe, NM; and Washington, D.C. He retired in 1996.

Michael "Mike" Albert Taylor on December 2, 2022, in Phoenix, AZ. Mike graduated from New Mexico State University in 1975 and spent his professional career with BLM. He began his career in Roswell, NM as a wildlife biologist/surface protection specialist. He was an Area Manager in Yuma, AZ; Branch Chief for Renewable Resources in the AZ State Office; District/Field Manager in Phoenix; and Deputy State Director for Resources in the AZ State Office. He retired in 2011.

Ronald Steffen Trogstad on September 28, 2022, in Vernal, UT. Ron was in the National Guard and on active duty with the U.S. Army in Fort Lewis, WA in 1960 – 1961. He worked for the Forest Service as a Wildlife Biologist on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Salt Lake City and then BLM as the District Wildlife Biologist for the Salt Lake District. He continued his BLM career as the District Wildlife Biologist in Canon City, CO; State Wildlife Biologist in the Utah State Office; Chief of Resources and later as the Area Manager in the Vernal District Office, UT.

The PLF is committed to never forgetting the dedicated employees of BLM who have left us. We do so on our website's Memorial Wall and by publishing names of those who passed away in the Monitor. If you have a death to report, please e-mail us at obits@publicland.org, preferably with a link to or copy of an obituary. You can rely on the PLF to keep you informed of topical news on the public PLF Facebook page, our website, other social media sites, and the Monitor newsletter.

***Note:** Putting together the Memoriam list in the Monitor and maintaining the Memorial Wall on the PLF website takes a lot of work by PLF volunteers. If you find errors, or if you know of something we may have missed, we apologize, and will correct the record. If you have concerns, please let Ray Brady know at rbrady@publicland.org.*

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The PLF continues to request donations to support the George Lea Founder's Scholarship fund. We hope members will make a special contribution to the scholarship fund. The PLF awarded two \$5,000 scholarships this year to deserving students. The fund needs to be replenished to be able to continue to offer these scholarships each year.

You can make a designated donation by credit card on our website at www.publicland.org, or by check sent to the Public Lands Foundation, P.O. Box 7226, Arlington, VA 22207. In your transmittal, please make sure to mention if your donation is for the **George Lea Founder's Scholarship, Student Congress Fund**, or the **Executive Director Fund**. Remember, if you are making a donation in memory of someone who has passed away, you can designate your donation to go to one of these funds. The PLF Board also recently approved the establishment of a **PLF Endowment Fund** to support the long-term purposes and mission of the organization. The PLF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization. Your donations are tax-deductible to the maximum extent permitted under the law.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The National Conservation Lands are with us, and we need to embrace them, and the staff assigned to protect, conserve, and restore them. I say this in a rebellious tone because BLM is treating this conservation system like an undeserving stepchild. It is not. I believe BLM was honored with the responsibility of caretaking these special places – national monuments, national conservation areas, wilderness and WSA's, national wild & scenic rivers, national historic trails, and numerous other designations.

BLM's webpage about the National Conservation Lands states there are "over 900 units covering about 35 million acres." It also states the system is twenty years old – not sure where that number comes from. I worked at Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument for 15 years; it was established in 1996 (that's 26 years ago). However, it wasn't until 2009 that legislation codified the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) into law in S.22 - The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act (that's 13 years ago).

I heard Secretary Babbitt state that he envisioned "a new conservation system for the 21st century", one not based on the older NPS model. He imagined a system whereby the lands would remain undeveloped (we know we cannot make more wild places and BLM certainly can't fund more O&M), where BLM employees and their families would live in the surrounding rural communities (unlike national parks), where the local rural communities would provide the focal point for tourism through business and services, and where the economic model

of demand fuels supply (private sector driven rather than federal government concessionaires).

This is occurring near all the NMs and NCAs. Of course, there are varying opinions – it's the West! But the "old school/old culture" of BLM, along with a dysfunctional organizational structure that does not adequately support NLCS units, serves to undermine the laws (Proclamations, S.22) that take PRECEDENCE over FLPMA in managing these units. Did you know that? Do most BLM employees know that? Look it up if you don't believe me.

I was heartened to see discussion in the last PLF Monitor about a mentoring program. Many NCL managers are young and have little to no BLM or other public lands management experience. We need to support a future-thinking approach to these issues. They need to form a BLM cadre to support each other, and they need better training – as managers of people and of the landscapes to which they are responsible. I recently spoke to a new NM manager who told me there wasn't a formal BLM training for managers any longer. Unacceptable! I hope they were just uninformed.

I realize that human nature prefers routine; it makes us feel in control of our lives and our future. We like to do things "the way we've always done them". But population is increasing and demands for all resources are intense. Public lands are not just recreational playgrounds or resource extraction jackpots. They provide so much more.

I'd like to see more discussion about BLM's National Conservation Lands in the Monitor.

Carolyn Z. Shelton, Utah

The Monitor is what we make it and we encourage you to provide Letters to the Editor or provide other reviews and comments on articles included in your newsletter. It is important to hear from our membership, and if you like something or don't like something, let us know. If you do send an e-mail to the Editor, don't be surprised if it winds up as a Letter to the Editor in the next edition of the Monitor. Please provide your comments to rbrady@publicland.org. Comments should be limited to no more than 500 words in length. In addition, members are encouraged to use the bod@publicland.org e-mail address to communicate with the PLF Board.

The Monitor generally reflects ongoing PLF activities, events, updates, awards, and information on former BLM employees. We encourage articles and discussions of issues by posting quality content that also provides a positive exposure of the goals, objectives, and mission of the PLF. However, we need to take some precautions when posting information to the newsletter and other forms of social media to ensure appropriate rules of behavior. In keeping a positive experience for our members, we reserve the right to publish only comments, photos, and other material deemed appropriate by the PLF. We intend on maintaining a friendly and professional tone in the articles in the Monitor and any Letters to the Editor.

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