



For America's Heritage

THE PUBLIC LANDS Monitor

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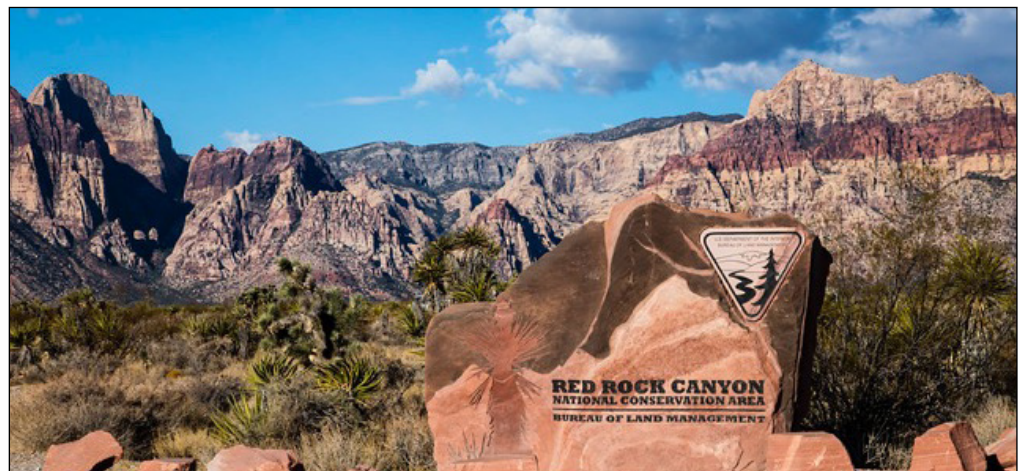
2024 PLF ANNUAL MEETING LAS VEGAS, NEVADA OCTOBER 8 – 9, 2024

Las Vegas is calling you! This year's Annual Meeting will be held at The Orleans Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 8 and 9, 2024.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting will include a Board of Directors meeting from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 8. A barbeque will be held on Tuesday evening at the Red Rock Campground, Kit Fox Site, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It is located at 3293 Moenkopi Road, west of Las Vegas, approximately 15 miles/22 minutes from The Orleans Hotel and Casino. **Famous Dave's** will be catering the barbeque on October 8.

On Wednesday morning, October 9, there will be a general meeting open to the public. The theme for this meeting is **Recreation and National Landscape Conservation System Management**. A PLF Board and Member meeting will be held on Wednesday afternoon from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. It will be followed by a 6:00 p.m. no host bar and a banquet starting at 7:00 p.m. After dinner, we will have our annual Remembering BLM speaker, awards presentations, and our silent auction and raffle.



Red Rock Canyon NCA, Las Vegas (BLM photo)

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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



Mary Jo Rugwell

I hope you are all well and enjoying the summer! We've had a couple of good camping trips early and are looking forward to getting work done around the house for the next couple of months.

I want to begin the column by encouraging you to register now for the Public Lands Foundation's Annual

Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, on October 8-9, 2024. All the details can be found either on our website or in this edition of the Monitor. It promises to be an interesting and informative meeting centered on BLM's recreation program. We need you there to make the meeting a success, so please sign up soon!

I had a lunch meeting a few weeks ago with Dorothy Mackendrick, Beth Stover, and Dwight Fielder of NEWSolutions. This is the company that helps BLM and other Federal agencies by providing temporary workers through the Experienced Services Program. They wanted to discuss ways they could partner with the PLF and agreed to help us by distributing our membership brochure as they recruit for their program.

I am delighted to report that one of our new Board members, Scott MacPherson, has graciously volunteered to assist Margaret by maintaining our membership rolls and doing work on some of the financial software platforms that the PLF uses. Additionally,

Jeff Holdren, another Board member, volunteered to assist with the tracking of legislation and rulemaking affecting BLM. Both jobs are critically important to our success, so I greatly appreciate both Scott and Jeff's assistance.

I recently visited with a new retiree and can confirm for you that the PLF membership brochure is being included in the retirement packages that employees receive as they prepare to retire. This is great to hear!

I want to acknowledge the work of Don Simpson, Ed Roberson, Vicki Herren, and Ray Brady in preparing PLF's response to the Greater Sage-grouse Draft EIS and RMP Amendment. They did an excellent job, and our comments were submitted to BLM on June 10, 2024. A copy of our public comment letter is posted on the PLF website.

I also have good news about PLF's mentoring program. In the last three weeks, I have been contacted by several career employees who are seeking a mentoring relationship with the PLF. Most of those employees are mid-level leaders, but one is an entry level employee new to the organization. I have had introductory calls with all these individuals and have assigned them mentors based on the conversations I had with them. I appreciate Ed Shepard, Ed Roberson, Don Simpson, and Nancy Haug stepping up to participate as mentors. If anyone is interested in serving as a mentor, please email me at mrugwell@publicland.org and I will put you on the mentor list. While I would not say that we are being overwhelmed with mentoring requests, it is a start.

I hope to see you in person in October at the Annual Meeting and I will talk to you again soon.

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 the long-term protection, conservation, and restoration of units of the National Landscape Conservation System, as distinctly unique among the public lands managed by BLM.
- 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.

2024 PLF ANNUAL MEETING *(continued)*

The **silent auction and raffle** on Wednesday evening helps support the George Lea Founder’s Scholarship Program where we give two awards of \$5,000 every year to deserving students in natural resource fields. Tim and Phyllis O’Brien are in charge of this year’s silent auction and raffle. We ask that those of you mailing donated items for the silent auction and raffle to please send them to Tim and Phyllis, so that they receive them by October 1, 2024. Their address is: 6277 Galileo Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89149-1385. If you are attending the meeting, your donation can be brought to the meeting, but please provide Tim and Phyllis, in advance, a description of what you are donating, how it will be delivered, and if possible, the item's worth and a suggested minimum bid. Questions regarding the silent auction or raffle can be directed to Tim at tobrien@publicland.org

Tuesday and Wednesday lunches will be on your own.

ACCOMMODATIONS

To accommodate those of you who would like to enjoy Las Vegas a little longer, we have reserved a few rooms from October 5 through October 12, 2024. This also provides an opportunity to attend the last day of the 2024 John Freemuth Student Congress, on October 10, when the students will be presenting their recommendations on “A Climate Change-Driven Transition To Renewable Energy.” If you intend to participate in the Student Congress closeout on October 10, please let Beau McClure know so that arrangements can be made for your attendance.

All rooms have either one king bed or two queen beds. Only non-smoking rooms are available.

ROOM RATES – All rates are net, per room, per night, allowing for single or double occupancy. Any Deluxe rooms requiring triple or quadruple occupancy will be surcharged \$20.00 per additional person, per room, per night plus tax. (Children age 15 and under, in the same room with parents in existing bedding, are free). All rates are subject to a Clark County room tax, currently 13 percent.

RESORT FEE – The hotel has a **mandatory \$38.99 plus tax**, per room, per day, Resort Fee, which is in addition to the room and tax charges.

Benefits include in-room Wi-Fi, access to the Fitness Center, in-room coffee, in-room safe, unlimited local and 800 calls as well as free Wi-Fi in the Java Vegas Coffee Shop and High-Speed internet Access in the Business Center.

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT – Check-in begins at 4:00 p.m. Check-out time is at 11:00 a.m. At Check-In, all guests will be required to post a valid credit card to secure their individual room accounts and to cover an additional \$100.00 security / damage deposit for standard guest rooms.

FREE PARKING is available, both on surface and in the garage. Valet parking is also free with Service Charge at customer discretion.

HOTEL RESERVATION PROCEDURES – The deadline for making room reservations is **September 9, 2024**. You are encouraged to book your hotel reservations through the PLF website or online using the following Passkey link: <https://book.passkey.com/e/50725137>

You may also call the Hotel’s Room Reservation Department direct at 1-800-675-3267, and **identify yourself as a member of the Public Lands Foundation with Reservation ID: PLFJ24C**. Without this reservation ID, you will not receive the special rate shown above and may be advised the hotel is sold out.

DATE	ROOM BLOCK	NET ROOM RATE	COMMENTS
Oct. 5, 2024 Saturday	5	\$95.00	
Oct. 6, 2024 Sunday	5	\$50.00	
Oct. 7, 2024 Monday	15	\$50.00	Arrival day for Board Meeting attendees
Oct. 8, 2024 Tuesday	25	\$50.00	Board of Directors Meeting
Oct. 9, 2024 Wednesday	25	\$50.00	General Meeting & PLF Board & Member Meeting
Oct. 10, 2024 Thursday	5	\$65.00	Student Congress Closeout
Oct. 11, 2024 Friday	5	\$150.00	
Oct. 12, 2024 Saturday	5	\$150.00	

STUDENT CONGRESS

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
OCTOBER 7 – 10, 2024

RV CAMPGROUNDS – There are a number of RV campgrounds available in the area, including the BLM Red Rock Canyon Campground, RV Park at Circus Circus, and LVM Resort4 near the Silverton Resort.

PLF MEETING REGISTRATION – Please register before the Early Registration Deadline of September 9, 2024. The Registration Form and information for the PLF meeting can be found on the PLF website at www.publicland.org. The Registration Form is also included in this edition of the Monitor. If you have any questions, please contact Beau McClure by email at vpops@publicland.org, or by phone at (623) 587-7883.

SHARE YOUR BLM EXPERIENCES

The Bureau of Land Management will be 80 years old in less than two years (2026). In preparation for this Anniversary celebration, and to build on its historical record, BLM is very interested in doing oral interviews with PLF members during our Annual Meeting in Las Vegas in October. David Howell, BLM Senior Communications Specialist, and/or Leigh Espy, PhD, BLM History Initiative Manager, are planning to attend and do the interviews.

Come join us in Las Vegas, think about what you have experienced during your career with BLM, and share it with David and Leigh.

The sixth biennial Student Congress will be held October 7 – 10, 2024 in Las Vegas, Nevada and will focus this year on the Transition to Renewable Energy on Public Lands. Once again, the PLF is partnering with the Andrus Center for Public Policy at Boise State University and the National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) to host the forum. The Congress is an opportunity for college students who might not otherwise be exposed to public land management and provides the Federal agencies with a valuable youth perspective on public land issues. The PLF received 58 student applications from 37 colleges and universities to participate in this year's session of the Student Congress.

The Student Congress is free for participants. The PLF member support is critical to the Student Congress program! If you would like to support the 2024 Student Congress you can donate on the PLF website where you can also find more information on the event. For further information on the Student Congress feel free to contact Jenna Whitlock at jwhitlock@publicland.org or Mike Ferguson at mferguson@publicland.org.



Nevada (BLM photo)

Registration Form—PLF Annual Meeting
The Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

October 8 & 9, 2024

Date	Event	No. of People	Per Person	Total Cost
	Early Registration (received by September 9, 2024)		\$75.00	
	No Fee for Spouse Registration *			
	Late Registration (received after September 9, 2024)		\$85.00	
Tuesday, Oct. 8	Board of Directors' Meeting (please indicate attendance)			
Tuesday, Oct. 8	Evening Barbecue at Red Rock Campground, Kit Fox Site		\$25.00	
Wednesday, Oct. 9	Morning General Meeting (please indicate attendance)			
Wednesday, Oct. 9	Afternoon Board/PLF Member Meeting (please indicate attendance)			
Wednesday, Oct. 9	Evening Dinner Buffet		\$72.00	
	Remittance Total			

Please Print Name(s): _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ **Phone:** _____

Please indicate any dietary needs such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, allergies, special needs: _____

Please register on-line by **September 9, 2024**, or print this Registration Form and mail it along with your check made payable to the “**Public Lands Foundation**” to Beau McClure, 6510 W. Lucia Drive, Phoenix, Arizona 85083-7406 by **September 9, 2024**. If you have questions, please contact Beau by telephone at 623-587-7883 or by e-mail at vpops@publicland.org.

* Spouses not attending the general meeting do not need to pay the registration fee.

EXPERIENCED SERVICES PROGRAM (ESP) SUCCESSFUL AND GROWING

Since the beginning of the BLM Experienced Services Program (ESP) in 2019, about 250 experienced professionals have contributed over 236,000 service hours of mission-critical work to BLM through the program; and it continues to grow! Many PLF members are active participants in the program, and NEW Solutions (the program administrator and nonprofit partner to BLM) welcomes all members to review new postings, apply, and share opportunities with friends and colleagues.



Results from a survey of enrollees in the Experienced Services Program were overwhelmingly positive, as demonstrated through the survey comments, such as:

"Great way to transition from working full time to retirement. Still feel relevant!"

"I made friends in my career and enjoy sharing what I learned with the next generations of public land employees."

"In this program, I have the luxury of being able to focus on just one or two projects, rather than having the stress of managing a whole program and multiple people..."

"I think BLM ESP is amazing and I'm proud to be a part of this innovative approach to post-retirement employment!"

Given such positive feedback, it's not surprising that 95 percent of enrollees said that they would recommend the ESP to other BLM retirees!

The BLM ESP is a cost-effective way to address the exodus of experienced personnel that many Federal agencies have encountered over the last 10 years, and expect to continue into the near future. The ESP is administered through a Cooperative Agreement between BLM and NEW Solutions. Workers under the ESP have a unique status and are classified as "enrollees" in a Federal work program, not as Federal employees, or employees of

NEW Solutions. Unlike rehired annuitants, enrollees can earn an hourly wage in addition to their full retirement benefits. Enrollees do not occupy a Federal FTE, and Federal hiring rules do not apply. Enrollees in the ESP can work full or part-time, are non-supervisory, and support BLM by working on special projects, backlogs, workload surges, workforce planning, training, and mentoring.

In the last six months, there have been some important personnel changes in the BLM ESP. Mary Huber-Thompson has come on as the new National Program Officer for BLM in Washington, D.C. (mhuterthompson@blm.gov). Mary has a lot of experience in Human Resources and is currently a Resource Advisor for the Business Management and Administration Directorate (AD-700).

On the NEW Solutions side, there have also been some changes. Following Beth Stover's retirement from NEW Solutions in February, Kristopher Jones (kjones@newsolutions.org) has been hired as the new Director of Department of the Interior ESP Programs. Dorothy Mackendrick came on about a year and a half ago as the dedicated Program Manager for the BLM ESP (dmackendrick@newsolutions.org). Dorothy and her team are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the ESP for NEW Solutions. Feel free to email her or call her on 571-267-1694 if you have any questions about the program or are interested in working as an enrollee.

In future issues of the *Monitor*, Dorothy and her team will be posting spotlights on enrollees in the BLM ESP, in addition to program updates. Further information on the program can be found at newsolutions.org.



l to r: Dorothy Mackendrick and Dwight Fielder (NEW Solutions) with Mary Jo Rugwell, President, PLF (NEW Solutions photo)

THE BEGINNING OF BLM – 1946
HOW 486 WORDS CREATED THE NATION’S LARGEST LAND MANAGER
(EXCERPTS FROM BLM NEWS RELEASE OF MAY 16, 2024)

May 16 was an important date in the history of BLM. On May 16, 1946—78 years ago—the agency was conceived on paper, when President Harry S. Truman submitted to Congress “Reorganization Plan 3.” The plan included the proposal to merge the General Land Office and the U.S. Grazing Service to create one agency, the Bureau of Land Management. Fast forward 78 years and BLM today manages some 245

million surface acres of public land for future generations. That’s about one in every ten acres of the United States, not to mention the 30 percent of the Nation’s minerals that are managed on behalf of the American people.



When President Truman issued this simple reorganization plan, it consisted of only 486 words regarding the proposed merger. That merger took effect three months later—on July 16, 1946—and set in motion the process to create an agency that today manages more public land than any other Federal government agency in the U.S. This action dissolved the General Land Office, which got its start more than 130 years earlier, in 1812. It also dissolved the U.S. Grazing Service, which had existed for just 12 years, since 1934. Reorganization Plan 3 also transferred jurisdiction over mineral deposits on lands held by the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior.

President Truman explained the rationale for merging the two agencies in his “Special Message to the Congress Transmitting Reorganization Plan 3 of 1946,” as follows:

The General Land Office and the Grazing Service now divide responsibility for major portion of the multiple-use Federally owned lands now held by the Department of the Interior. The lands under jurisdiction of the two agencies are comparable in character and in use. In some functions, the

two agencies employ the same type of personnel and use the same techniques. Other functions are divided between the agencies so that both are engaged in management of various aspects of the same land. Consolidating these two agencies will permit the development of uniform policies and the integration of two organizations whose responsibilities now overlap. Integration of the activities of the two agencies will make possible greater utilization and thus more economic use of expert skills.

At the time the Reorganization Plan was transmitted to Congress, Truman had only been President for about one year. He became President, after serving for just 82 days as Vice President,



when President Roosevelt died in office in April 1945. The fact that the merger took effect just two months after Reorganization Plan 3 was transmitted to Congress feels like lightning speed! However, while establishing BLM may have been relatively quick

and easy, for the next two years the agency struggled to simply survive, due to difficulties of implementing an organizational structure and securing adequate funding.

The BLM was born of the modest goal of increasing efficiency. Never in their wildest dreams could the developers of Reorganization Plan 3 have imagined that the agency would become what it is today – a steward of some of the most spectacular places in the U.S., a manager of an array of natural and cultural resources, and an organization that many public land stakeholders rely upon for commercial opportunities, conservation of wild landscapes, and outdoor recreation experiences. That is worthy of reflection, and celebration, 78 years after the transmittal of Reorganization Plan 3!

TAYLOR GRAZING ACT – JUNE 28, 1934
(EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND JUNCTION DAILY SENTINEL
OF JUNE 23, 2024)

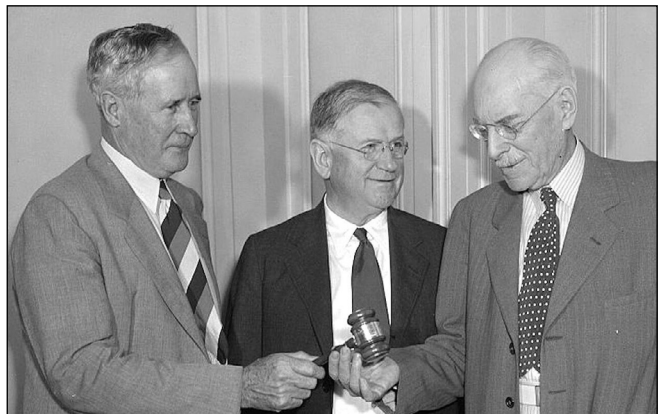
Ninety years ago, on June 28, 1934, the Taylor Grazing Act was signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt. The law, named for sponsor Congressman Edward Taylor of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, was historic. In 1934, public lands were desperately overgrazed, but there was no control of the open range by the government's General Land Office at that time. Ranchers saw little need to limit livestock on the range. Attitudes at that time had sparked massive growth in livestock herds on the public lands. In 1870 it is estimated there were 4.0 million head of cattle and 4.8 million sheep in the West. By 1900, these numbers had exploded to 19 million cattle and 25 million sheep. Existing Federal laws also exacerbated the problems. The 1862 Homestead Act and later bills encouraged people to move into the semi-arid West, adding their livestock to the public lands. These pressures created a clamor for government action early in the 20th century. However, proposed bills to address the problem were repeatedly killed by powerful Western congressman. The Great Depression added still more problems for ranchers, and Western political views began to change.

Congressman Taylor had been working for 15 years to get some sort of Federal regulation of the public range lands. Modeling his legislation in part on U.S. Forest Service grazing rules that had been in place for many years, Congressman Taylor finally won support for his bill in 1934. President Roosevelt threatened to veto the bill over language that defined grazing rights essentially as property rights. So, Congressman Taylor amended the language to say grazing permits would be "safeguarded" as much as possible, but that issuing a grazing permit "shall



Livestock grazing on the public lands (BLM photo)

not create any right, title, interest, or estate, in or to the lands." The law also required a Director of the newly formed Grazing Service be hired to administer the law, and that public meetings be held in each of the ten affected states to inform ranchers of the requirements under the new law. Farrington (Ferry) Carpenter, a well-respected rancher from Hayden, Colorado, and a lawyer who had litigated a number of grazing disputes in the West was appointed by Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes as the first Director of the Grazing Service. (The Nature Conservancy now owns and manages the Ferry Carpenter Ranch Preserve along the Yampa River near Hayden, Colorado as a working cattle ranch that demonstrates conservation practices for streamside and wetland habitats.)



Congressman Edward Taylor, right, received a gavel commemorating the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1939, five years after the law was passed. Handing him the gavel is Richard Rutledge, who replaced Ferry Carpenter as Director of the Grazing Service. In the middle is Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes. (Library of Congress photo)

When Ferry Carpenter held the first public meeting on the new law in Grand Junction, Colorado on September 17, 1934, he had received little direction from Washington on how to implement the law. A large raucous crowd of some 1,000 people attended the first meeting. Over the next four months, Carpenter held 16 similar meetings in ten states across the West. By 1935, two-thirds of the open range was being administered under the Act and local ranchers served on Grazing Advisory Boards to determine appropriate livestock numbers in each grazing district. But Secretary Ickes was furious and wanted primary administration of the Act to come from Washington. He fired Director Carpenter, however, at the urging of Congressman Taylor, Carpenter was reinstated within days by President Roosevelt. Carpenter's relationship with Secretary Ickes remained tense and he was finally forced out in

1938. In 1946, President Harry Truman approved a reorganization, combining the Grazing Service with the older General Land Office into a new agency called the Bureau of Land Management. And in 1995, BLM changed the Grazing Advisory Boards into Resource Advisory Councils to get broader public involvement into the management of the public lands.

Today, BLM administers some 18,000 grazing permits and leases on more than 21,000 grazing allotments and some 155 million acres of the public lands. In FY2022 there were some 8.5 million animal unit months (AUMs) of authorized use from these grazing permits and leases.

ORIENTATION TO BLM 1957 – WYOMING STYLE BY D. DEAN BIBLES, PLF TEXAS

I started the drive to Lander, Wyoming on graduation day in 1957 from Texas A&M where I received both my degree and commission in the U.S. Army. Fortunately, I had met several Wyoming BLMers during my senior year when I attended the Society of Range Management Meeting in Great Falls, Montana. Between my Junior and Senior years, I accepted an appointment in the Soil Conservation Service student program, so I was in the Federal system as an employee. After a few conversations with the BLM staff at the meetings in Great Falls, they offered me a job to start upon graduation, which I accepted.



Dean Bibles

On June 10, 1957, I reported to the BLM Lander, Wyoming District Office as a GS-5 Range Conservationist – with a salary of \$3,680 per annum. Upon arrival over the weekend in Lander, I met with District Manager Rex Colton at his home and he introduced me to Keith Miller. Keith had arranged a room for me near where he stayed, and showed me around that weekend. I was advised to come in Monday morning prepared to spend the week in the field.

On Monday, Rex swore me in and welcomed me into the BLM family. Next, he had me meet the Administrative Officer to sign some employment documents. This is when I was given a handful of gas company credit cards, because in 1957, each company issued their own credit cards... which were not accepted by other companies! My first assignment was heading the halogeton spray crews, which were already in the field, therefore I would need to purchase supplies and pay for repairs, etc. In order to pay for these, I was given a short Form 44 purchase order booklet with absolute instructions to never exceed the \$500.00 limit. Then, was advised how to handle payment for items that exceeded \$500! I was given an example that if the amount was \$750, do not write one for \$500 and one for \$250. Instead write one for maybe \$425 and another for \$325 so it wouldn't appear I had exceeded the limit. After this brief but clear training, I headed out to the field. I drove over to the warehouse / equipment yard where my supervisor, Wandell Elliot, would show me my assigned vehicle, etc.

I was assigned a very old, four cylinder Willys Jeep Wagoneer with no two tires of the same make or wear – hooked to a trailer with a water tank which was already full. I was given brief instructions and explanation of my crew of college students, who had served the previous year on halogeton crews so were pretty well aware of what was needed. Upon getting my Wyoming roadmap, so I could locate Shoshoni, Wyoming, I was instructed to stop at the Esso station and the operator would tell me where I could find my camp and crew!

I soon discovered what others knew ... that my four cylinder Jeep only had three cylinders working! Going up a fairly steep hill, I had to move onto the gravel and into low range, low gear to slowly make



Shoshoni, WY Field Camp - 1957
(Dean Bibles photo)

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it up with the load of water and stay out of the way of the Yellowstone traffic. When I finally crawled into Shoshoni, as promised, I received instructions as to where to locate my camp and crew. With some effort we were able to pull the water trailer onto a hill and run a garden hose down to the trailer so we would have running water. It was important to get the first shower to have water warmed in the garden hose!

I mapped the areas to be sprayed, which was easy to do as the areas sprayed the year before were full of new halogeton! We worked hard and long hours to get as much sprayed as was promised to Congress. (This was a program that was pushed onto BLM because halogeton was seasonally very poisonous to sheep - while most professionals were convinced the halogeton grew mostly in overgrazed areas and that the spraying was serving little purpose other than removing some of the competition to the halogeton.)



Halogeton Spray Operations, WY - 1957
(Dean Bibles photo)

One of our camp sites was near Lysite and Lost Cabin, Wyoming which proved to be an interesting spot. This spot was a gas station/store/post office/bar plus two other bars. We had sage advice from Harry Fenlayson, the number two in the District, not to drink anything except directly out of a bottle! There wasn't a lot of good water or even sanitation up there.

Once the spraying season ended, I took on a number of other tasks including one memorable task of placing a radio repeater antenna on top of an abandoned 110-foot oil platform at the high point in the Sweetwater area at the high point of Crooks Mountain! Trying to hook the antenna to the top with the wind blowing, I seemed to need at least two more hands! Connecting a repeater was important

as we had little field radio capability at that time. Most field employees went to the BLM equipment yard each Saturday to get their vehicle ready for the next week, if one of the single guys personal car was still there Saturday morning, then the rest of us had the job of trying to figure out where to start looking for him.

On one job, as we were repairing the failed Rongis detention dam, which was about 80 miles from Riverton (the closest town), I was to take the jeep up on a nearby ridge at exactly 4:00 PM; climb up on the jeep and hold the five watt radio (we had two in the District). If the office needed to pass a message to us, they would have someone take the other five watt radio to the top of 2nd Street hill in Lander and we could communicate. If they had no message for us... no one would be there! On one occasion, while I was on different assignment, Wandell was at the Rongis detention dam site and could not get the jeep started. So, he started walking and after about 30 miles and onto the Gas Hills dirt road, which was used by uranium miners, he was able to get a ride into Riverton. He did the unthinkable there and made a long distance call into Lander so we could pick him up! Wes Wallace, our Area Administrator at the time, had a thing about long distance calls so he would analyze each office phone record and would require the District Manager to write a justification for any long distance calls!

Being raised on a ranch and doing all kinds of field repairs, like repairing U-joints, paid off after I picked up Wandell in the Dodge Power Wagon and headed to Rongis to tow the jeep back to town, as he was convinced the jeep would require major work. While Wandell went into the camp trailer to make some coffee, I used the Handy Man jack to lift one back wheel of the Jeep off the ground... put it in two wheel drive and third gear - then spun the jacked up wheel to start the Jeep. Wandell was less than happy to learn this method after his long walk!

I met some interesting people in that area and had some memorable experiences. One was on the Copper Mountain Range. Before a railroad or highway was cut through the Wind River Canyon, a stage road crossed into the Big Horn Basin via Birdseye Pass. The stage station with corral was intact and quite well preserved. I met Doug Fuller, an older rancher, near Birdseye Pass. When I first got to his ranch, he seemed to have had a bit of a scuffle with his horse. I think Doug was around 90 years old at the time. He regularly rode the horse into Lysite to pick up mail and groceries which was

about 20 miles. As he started out that morning, the horse had thrown him off so he got back on, and in his words, “rode him hard to and from Lysite to teach him a lesson.” Doug was scuffed up a bit but OK. I was up there looking for section and quarter corners and having little luck, so Doug wanted to show them to me. He took me to one of the small buildings on his property where he had carefully stacked about a half township of brass cap section and quarter posts. He told me that “a while back”, these young fellows were out there and left them out in the weather so he carefully retrieved them, stacked some rocks where they had been and put them inside for safe keeping! I was thinking “a while back” meant two or three years, but I checked the date of the survey and it was 1917, some 40 years earlier! I have no idea if they were ever moved, as at that time it seemed useless to make a big deal

of it. I liked to stop by to visit as he was truly an interesting character.

The Sweetwater area was a spectacular area! I always hated to leave the area before dark as the colors changed constantly as sunset approached. Driving up to Popo Agie Springs and into the forest after work and on weekends or up to Yellowstone National Park was always a nice break. Keith and I sometimes drove up to historic Atlantic City on South Pass on the weekend to have a \$0.65 meal at the Old Carpenter Hotel. Miss Ellen Carpenter’s meals were great and the menu depended on whether her brother, Jim, had caught trout or had other game meat, lamb, or beef. I seem to remember I drove up there for Thanksgiving 1957.

Saturday night often found most of the small staff and their spouses at either Svilar’s or Wagonwheel restaurants in Hudson, Wyoming. As was the case in many of the BLM offices, families became lifetime friends. My sojourn in Lander ended when I had to report for my military duty in Fort Lee, Virginia. After my active duty, I returned to work for BLM in Worland, Wyoming.

The first Halloween I was in Worland, I had a blind date with an amazing woman who was raised on a farm in Kansas. She had taken a job in Worland after earning a degree from Asbury University in Kentucky. We hit it off and Dixie became my wife. Together we began a new chapter in our life story, in BLM towns, and as part of the BLM family across the west and beyond.



Birdseye Pass Stage Station, WY - 1957
(Dean Bibles photo)

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

GEORGE LEA FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP

The PLF has completed the selection of the 2024-2025 George Lea Founders Scholarship winners for the 11th consecutive year. The two \$5,000 scholarships this year were awarded to Nicole Dickan and Morgan Nystuen. Scholarship funds will be applied to tuition and related expenses, beginning in the Fall of 2024.



Nicole Dickan
Sul Ross State University

Nicole Dickan is a Master-level graduate student in Range and Wildlife Management at Sul Ross State University Alpine, TX. Nicole has a strong appreciation for public lands and the work that goes into conserving them. After graduation, she aspires to work as a wildlife biologist for a Federal or state land management agency.

Morgan Nystuen is a Senior studying Geology, and at the same time is in an accelerated Master's degree program in Paleontology at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, in Rapid City, SD. Morgan is passionate about environmental conservation and the protection of natural resources. She looks forward to working for BLM or another Federal land management agency.



Morgan Nystuen
South Dakota School of Mines
and Technology

In addition to their university studies, Nicole and Morgan both have substantial and varied involvements in extracurricular activities at their universities, in their communities, and in their employment while in school.

The PLF received 47 applications for the George Lea Founders Scholarship this year. Applications were received from students at 23 Universities and Colleges in 14 States. Applicants comprised 16 master-, 15 senior-, and 16 junior-level students. Each of the applicants was well-qualified, making for a challenging selection process. Each application was independently reviewed and rated by the PLF selection committee members Connie Stone, Ray Brady, and Dave Stout. Since 2014, 19 different Universities and Colleges have been represented by scholarship winners. Nicole is the second scholarship recipient from Sul Ross State University. Morgan is the first from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

The PLF continues to request donations to support the George Lea Founder's Scholarship Fund. We hope members and other supporters of the PLF will make a special contribution to the Scholarship Fund. The fund needs to be replenished to be able to continue to offer these scholarships each year.

BLM FY2025 PROPOSED BUDGET WILD HORSE AND BURRO FUNDING

On March 11, 2024, as part of the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2025, BLM submitted to Congress a proposed budget of \$1.6 billion to support the management of public lands. This is an increase of \$26.7 million above the 2024 continuing resolution level. The budget request would support an estimated 9,881 full-time equivalent positions in 2025. The PLF reviewed and prepared written testimony on the proposed budget, which was provided to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on March 27th.

The PLF on May 2, 2024 also signed onto a joint letter with the Association of Fish and Wildlife



Wild Horses on the Public Lands (BLM photo)

Agencies and other organizations to Senate and House Appropriations Committees requesting Congress consider lifting the current appropriations language restrictions on the sale of horses and burros.

The BLM Wild Horse and Burro proposed budget is \$170.9 million, an increase of \$23.0 million over the 2024 CR level. The BLM in March 2024 released an updated assessment of wild horse and burro populations on the public lands. This latest assessment estimates there were 73,520 wild horses and burros on the public lands. This was 9,363 fewer animals than had been estimated in 2023 and marks the third year of decline since 2020. However, this estimated population still remains nearly three times the Appropriate Management Level (AML) for the public lands and population numbers will continue to grow at rates of between 18 and 25 percent per year without further controls. In addition, there are some 62,000 horses and burros in off-range holding facilities at a taxpayer expense exceeding \$100 million annually. Since 2004, Congress has included language in the annual appropriations bills that suspends the authority of BLM for selling these animals under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. The PLF supports the funding requests of the BLM for the wild horse and burro program, but believes a combination of funding and new authority is necessary to address the problem of ever increasing wild horse and burro populations on the public lands.

BERRYESSA SNOW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT – CALIFORNIA EXPANSION

The President on May 2, 2024, announced a 13,696 acre public land expansion of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument in the northern California's Inner Coast Range. The Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, jointly managed by BLM and the U.S. Forest Service, was originally established by Presidential Proclamation on July 10, 2015, and now with the new expansion will encompass more than 340,000 acres of public land. The new designation protects an 11 mile long north-south ridgeline that is sacred to the Patwin indigenous people. The proclamation also permanently renames the ridgeline, previously known as "Walker Ridge", to Molok Luyuk, which means Condor Ridge in the language of the Patwin people. Lands within the Monument were designated to protect the rich biodiversity of the area, including relic prairies, riparian habitats, and species endemic to northern California, such as the tule elk. Lands within the Monument have also sustained indigenous people, including the Patwin, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, the Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation, and the Cachil Dehe Band of Wintun Indians. The proclamation directs the Secretary of the Interior to explore co-stewardship agreements within the expansion area, including educational efforts regarding the history of these Tribal Nations.



Berryessa Snow Mountain
National Monument Expansion (BLM photo)

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE



Photo by Ray Brady

The PLF continues to monitor Congressional legislation, 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 update our Position Statements and Letters and Testimony webpages on our website under the “Advocacy” link and provide legislative and regulatory updates in the *Monitor* on significant actions.

MINING LAW REFORM – 1872 MINING LAW

STATUS: A Federal Register Notice announcing formation of a Mining Law Reform Interagency Working Group was published March 31, 2022. The Department on September 12, 2023 released the Final Report from the Interagency Working Group. Senator Heinrich (NM) introduced S.1742 on May 18, 2023 and Senator Cortez Masto (NV) introduced S.1281 on April 25, 2023 to address mining law reforms. Also, H.R. 2925 introduced by Congressman Amodei (NV) is a companion bill to S.1281.

SUMMARY: The Department Report from the Interagency Working Group included some 65 recommendations for improving the mining law program, although many of those recommendations would require Congressional action. S.1742, the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act, would establish a royalty of five percent to eight percent of gross income for hardrock minerals production from mining claims on Federal land, establish a new permitting process for exploration and mining, enact environmental and reclamation reforms to protect special areas from mining, and establish a funding source for remediation of legacy hardrock mining pollution. S.1281 and H.R.2925, the Mining Regulatory Clarity Act, would expand the rights of mining claimants to include various ancillary activities and facilities required to conduct operations related to mining operations, with or without the discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. *Interior has opposed the provisions of S.1281 and H.R.2925.*

PLF POSITION: The PLF on April 24, 2022 provided

the Interagency Working Group a copy of a Position Statement on recommendations for amendments to the 1872 Mining Law. The PLF on March 24, 2023, forwarded to the Interagency Working Group a copy of comments prepared by Bob Anderson on the Small Miners mining claim assessment waiver program. The PLF provided a followup letter to Interior, BLM, and the OIG on December 15, 2023 requesting BLM proceed ahead with the promulgation of regulations to eliminate the discretionary Small Miners waiver program. The PLF will continue to track mining law reform initiatives and provide comments as appropriate.

OUTDOOR RECREATION ACT

STATUS: *The U.S. House on April 9, 2024 approved the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (H.R.6492). The Senate companion bill, America’s Outdoor Recreation Act (S.873), was passed out of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on July 26, 2023 and awaits consideration by the full Senate.*

SUMMARY: *The EXPLORE Act is a comprehensive piece of legislation that aims to enhance recreation access and revamp outdoor recreation opportunities on the public lands. Key provisions of the Act support gateway communities, modernizes technology at recreation facilities, streamlines the permitting process, provides resources to combat park overcrowding, enhances accessibility for individuals with disabilities, promotes recreation for service members and veterans, protects rock-climbing areas and encourages the creation of long-distance bike trails, enhances access, and modernizes and restores campgrounds.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF has not taken a position on the bill but will track progress on final Senate action on the bill.*

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE EIS

STATUS: *The BLM on March 15, 2024 released a Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment and EIS for management of Greater Sage-Grouse habitat on the public lands. The 90-day public comment period on the Draft EIS and Plan Amendment ended on June 13, 2024.*



Greater Sage-Grouse (BLM photo)

SUMMARY: *The Draft EIS considers amendments to 76 BLM Resource Management Plans across the range of Greater sage-grouse and analyzes six alternatives for adjusting specific habitat management actions on BLM-managed public lands. Alternative 1 is a continuation of current management actions under RMPs as amended in 2015. Alternative 2 is a continuation of management actions under RMPs as amended in 2019. Alternative 3 represents the most restrictions on resource uses to preserve Greater sage-grouse habitat on some 69.2 million acres of Priority Habitat Management Areas on BLM administered surface lands. Alternative 4 updates habitat management area boundaries and management actions based on updated information and science that has become available since 2015 and 2019. Alternative 5 (the BLM preferred alternative) considers other potential alignments of habitat management areas and associated management actions to try and balance Greater sage-grouse conservation with other public land uses. Alternative 5 identifies 34.8 million acres of Priority Habitat Management Areas and 23.7 million acres of General Habitat Management Areas for range-wide management actions on BLM administered surface lands. Alternative 6 is the same as Alternative 5, but with the addition of ACECs.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF submitted comments on the Draft Greater Sage-Grouse EIS and Plan Amendment*

on June 10, 2024. Those comments are posted on the PLF website.

SOLAR ENERGY EIS

STATUS: *The BLM on April 11, 2024 announced the release of the Final Rule for solar and wind energy right-of-way authorizations on the public lands under the 43 CFR 2800 regulations. The BLM on January 17, 2024 announced the release of a Draft Programmatic Solar Energy EIS to help streamline and accelerate solar energy development on public lands in the 11 western states. This EIS would replace the existing 2012 Western Solar Plan which only covered six western states. The public comment period on the Draft EIS closed on April 18, 2024.*

SUMMARY: *The Final Rule adjusts rental fees for solar and wind energy authorizations, provides BLM with more flexibility in processing applications for solar and wind energy development in designated leasing areas, and updates criteria on prioritizing solar and wind energy right-of-way applications. The Draft EIS preferred alternative would allocate 22 million acres for potential utility-scale solar energy development across 11 western states, with a Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario of about 700,000 acres.*

PLF POSITION: *The PLF submitted comments on the Proposed Rule to BLM on August 9, 2023. Those comments are posted on the PLF website. The PLF participated in virtual public meetings during the public comment period on the Draft EIS. The PLF also signed onto a joint letter on April 18, 2024 with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and other organizations providing comments on the Draft Solar Energy EIS and concerns over potential conflicts with crucial big game habitats in the preferred alternative of the Draft EIS.*

TRANSMISSION REGULATIONS – 10 CFR PART 900

Status: *The Department of Energy, Grid Deployment Office, on April 25, 2024 announced the release of the Final Rule for Coordination of Federal Authorizations for Electric Transmission Facilities (10 CFR Part 900) and establishment of the Coordinated Interagency Transmission Authorizations and Permits Program (CITAP Program).*

Summary: *The Final Rule aims to significantly improve the Federal environmental review and permitting process for 230-kV and larger electric transmission projects, including BLM on public lands. Under the CITAP Program, the Department of Energy will coordinate a Federal*

interagency process to consolidate Federal environmental reviews and authorizations within a standard two-year review schedule. This Final Rule implements a May 2023 interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expedite the siting, permitting, and construction of electric transmission infrastructure in the U.S. The Secretary, Department of the Interior, was a signatory to the interagency MOU.

PLF POSITION: The PLF did not provide comments on the Proposed Rule published on August 23, 2023, but will be tracking implementation of the Final Rule for major electric transmission applications on BLM public lands. The DOE on April 25, 2024 announced the selection of the Southwest Intertie Transmission Project (SWIP-North) from Idaho to southern Nevada on public lands for the first round of capacity contract applications through the DOE Transmission Facilitation Program. Construction of this transmission project is anticipated to start in 2025.



Transmission Line, CA (BLM photo)

RIGHT-OF-WAY REGULATIONS – 43 CFR PARTS 2800 AND 2920

STATUS: The BLM on April 12, 2024 published a Final Rule on Communication Uses, Cost Recovery Fee Schedules, and Section 512 FLPMA Rights-of-Way (43 CFR Parts 2800 and 2920). The Final Rule became effective on May 13, 2024. The Proposed Rule was published on November 7, 2022.

SUMMARY: The Final Rule addresses right-of-way (ROW) communication site uses; cost recovery fee schedules; and operations, maintenance, and fire prevention plans for powerline ROWs. The communications site portion of the Final Rule requires BLM to grant or deny applications within 270 days; provides for electronic filing of applications; and requires the use of Standard Form-299 for applications. The cost recovery portion of the Final Rule increases the cost recovery fees for minor ROWs; and expands the definition of minor ROWs to

those requiring less than 64 hours of work. The powerline portion of the Final Rule includes provisions governing operations, maintenance, and fire prevention plans and agreements for vegetation and facility management on public lands within powerline ROWs; adds a definition of hazard trees consistent with the U.S. Forest Service's definition; and includes emergency access provisions.

PLF POSITION: The PLF did not provide comments on the Proposed Rule published on November 7, 2022.

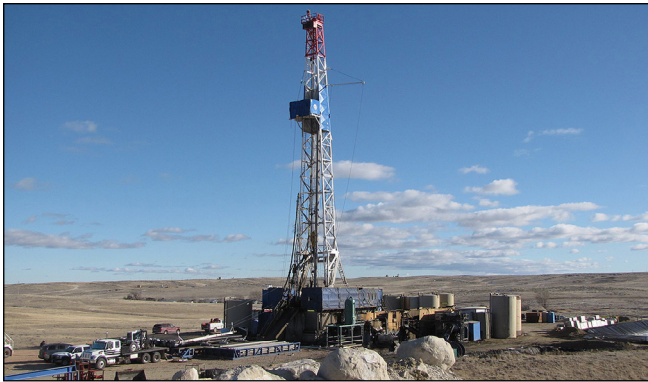
OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS – 43 CFR 3100

STATUS: The BLM on March 27, 2024 announced the release of the Final Methane Rule, or Oil and Gas Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation Rule (43 CFR Parts 3160 and 3170). On April 24, 2024, the States of North Dakota, Montana, Texas, and Wyoming filed a Complaint in U.S. District Court to vacate the Final Rule and seek a decision that the Final Rule is unlawful. The States assert that the Rule violates the Clean Air Act, which reserves the control of air emissions to the EPA and the States, and exceeds BLM's authority under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) and the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act (FOGRMA). The BLM on April 12, 2024 announced release of the Final Oil and Gas Leasing Rule to reflect provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. On May 14, 2024, Senator Daines (MT) introduced a Congressional Review resolution (S.J. Res. 78) to overturn the Leasing Rule provisions under the authority of the Congressional Review Act. That action is pending.

SUMMARY: The Final Methane or Waste Prevention Rule aims to reduce the waste of natural gas from venting, flaring, and leaks during oil and gas production activities on both Federal and Indian leases. The Final Oil and Gas Leasing Rule updates the BLM onshore oil and gas leasing regulations to codify new provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and implement reforms from the Interior Report on the Federal Oil and Gas Leasing Program (November 2021). The Final Leasing Rule increases royalty rates to 16.67 percent, increases rental rates to \$15 per acre, increases minimum lease bids to \$10 per acre, eliminates non-competitive leasing, reduces the nonoperational period for idle wells to four years, increases minimum lease bonds to \$150,000, increases minimum statewide bonds to \$500,000, eliminates nationwide bonds, and includes other provisions to ensure responsible oil and gas leasing and development on the public lands.

PLF POSITION: The PLF submitted comments on the Proposed Leasing Rule to BLM on

September 8, 2023. Those comments are posted on the PLF website.



Oil and Gas Drill Rig – WY (BLM photo)

CONSERVATION REGULATIONS – 43 CFR 1600 (PLANNING) AND 6100 (ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE)

STATUS: *The BLM on April 18, 2024 announced the release of the Final Public Lands (Conservation and Landscape Health) Rule under the 43 CFR 1600 and 6100 regulations. The BLM Director on May 30, 2024, outlined a timeline and steps to implement the Final Rule that became effective on June 10, 2024. The implementation process will include a preliminary suite of BLM guidance developed by interdisciplinary teams and also involve Native American Tribes as co-leads in reviews of conservation projects. A Restoration and Mitigation Team has also been working on developing procedures for implementing the restoration and mitigation leasing system established by the Final Rule. The BLM Director also outlined procedures that BLM State Directors may implement for temporary management of lands nominated for designation as areas of critical environmental concern.*

Considerable controversy has surrounded the intent of this Rule. Congressman John Curtis (R-Utah) introduced H.R.3397, which passed the House on April 30, 2024, that would rescind the Rule. Senator John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) also introduced S.1435, as a companion bill to H.R.3397, and announced his intent to use the Congressional Review Act to void the Rule. Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-Montana) has also proposed adding a rider to the Interior FY2025 appropriations bill to suspend the Rule. The States of Utah and Wyoming on June 18, 2024 filed suit in U.S. District Court of Utah challenging the adequacy of NEPA review in issuance of the Final Rule.

SUMMARY: The Final Rule supports the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in the management of the public lands, restoration of degraded habitat, and applies land health standards to all BLM-managed public lands. This rule incorporates climate resiliency and restoration through conservation and preservation in the management of the public lands pursuant to FLPMA and other relevant authorities. This rule within 43 CFR 6000, which includes Conservation and Preservation, revises existing regulations to prioritize designating and protecting Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and provides an overarching framework for multiple BLM programs to promote ecosystem resiliency on the public lands. *The Final Rule also includes provisions that allow a BLM State Director to place temporary management restrictions on “nominated” ACECs until land use management plans are completed for ACEC areas. The Rule also provides for the use of “restoration and mitigation leases” to support mitigation efforts and promote the protection and restoration of public lands.*

PLF POSITION: The PLF submitted comments on the Proposed Rule to the BLM on June 15, 2023 and those comments are posted on the PLF website.

BLM LEADERSHIP

The BLM on April 23, 2024 announced the selection of David Rosenkrance as the Assistant Director for Energy, Minerals, and Realty Management in the Washington Office. In this role, Rosenkrance will manage BLM’s work on renewable energy, oil and



David Rosenkrance, Assistant Director, Energy, Minerals and Realty Management

gas, mining and minerals, and grants for rights-of-way associated with solar and wind energy development on public lands. Additionally, he will oversee the realty management program, which administers land exchanges and other lands and realty actions on the public lands. Rosenkrance previously worked for BLM, but is currently serving as a Senior Advisor for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Rosenkrance served for six years as the Deputy Regional Forester for the U.S. Forest Service’s Intermountain Region based in Ogden, Utah and as the Acting Director for the U.S. Forest Service’s Minerals and Geology Management program. He also held the position of Associate District Manager for the Northwest District Office in Craig, Colorado. Early in his career, Rosenkrance worked in various engineering roles for BLM in Idaho and Oregon.

Rosenkrance holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Northern Arizona University and a Graduate Certificate in Hazardous Waste Control from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

With the continued changes in the leadership positions of the BLM, we would like to provide an update on the current Leadership of BLM, 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
Principle Deputy Director	Nada Culver
Deputy Director, Programs & Admin	Michael Nedd
Deputy. Director, State Operations	Karen Kelleher
Alaska State Office	Steven Cohn
Arizona State Office	Raymond Suazo
California State Office	Gordon Toevs (<i>Acting</i>)
Colorado State Office	Doug Vilsack
Eastern States Office	Mitchell Leverette
Idaho State Office	Peter Ditton (<i>Acting</i>)
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

ELECTRONIC MAILING ONLY

The PLF has gone to an all digital distribution of the quarterly *Monitor* newsletter to save on printing and mailing costs of our newsletter. All editions of the *Monitor* are distributed electronically to PLF members and are available on the PLF website.

IN MEMORIAM

Jerry Ostrom on May 20, 2024, in Powell, WY. Jerry was a veteran of the U.S. Navy and served as a Navy Seabee as a surveyor. He graduated from Humboldt State University with a degree in Forestry. He started his career with the Nevada Division of Forestry and then went to work for BLM as a land law examiner for Homestead Entry Act claims. He would later work in Nevada, Idaho, and Wyoming in Assistant District Manager positions and retired in 1983.

John Herman Riel on May 26, 2024, in Montrose, CO. John graduated from the University of Nevada with a Bachelor's degree in Forestry and Range Management. He retired after 37 years of Federal service with the Department of the Interior, primarily with BLM. He spent several years in Nevada and Colorado in the wild horse and burro program. He was recognized by the Colorado Cattleman's Association in 2001 as being instrumental in bringing together the disparate interests of the mining, oil and gas, recreation, and livestock industry on the public lands.

Mary A. Jones Woodward-Buckle on April 27, 2024, in Phoenix, AZ. Mary moved from Michigan to Alaska in 1982 and worked for the BLM Alaska State Office in Anchorage. She retired from the Federal government after 25 years of service and moved to Arizona in 2016.

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.



Emigrant National Historic Trail, WY (BLM photo)

DONATIONS*

MEMORIAL DONATIONS			SCHOLARSHIP FUND		
RECEIVED FROM			George Alderson	Tom Allen	Jim Colby
Tom Allen	IN MEMORY OF		Kathy Eaton	Patricia Harvey	Dwight Hempel
Pamela Lyon	Rick Harrison		Linda Hofman	David Jones	John Kwiatkowski
Beau McClure	Ray Jorgensen		Pamela Lyon	Beau McClure	Mat Millenbach
Ed Roberson	Hank Noldan		Skip Renchler	Ed Roberson	Lois Sands
Lois Sands	Mary Roberson		Smith Williams	Maggie Wyatt	Elaine Zielinski
Elaine Zielinski	Ray Jorgensen		Gregg and Mary Simmons		
	Mike Taylor		MEMBERSHIP DUES ABOVE \$50.00		
GENERAL FUND			CONTRIBUTING MEMBER		
Tom Allen	Mat Millenbach	Elaine Zielinski	Ray Brady	Mike Gardner	Jenna Whitlock
Gregg and Mary Simmons					
STUDENT CONGRESS					
Jim Colby	Bill Disbrow	Beau McClure			

One of the most important advocacy programs the PLF engages in each year is the awarding of two \$5,000 scholarships to students who are pursuing a course of study in the natural resources field. Through the continued great efforts of the members of the George Lea Founder’s Scholarship Committee, two very deserving students have been selected to receive this crucial financial assistance for the 2024-25 school year.

Unfortunately, donations to the Scholarship Fund are not keeping pace with the need to fund these awards each year. We hope our members and other supporters of the PLF will respond to the call for donations to the George Lea Founder’s Scholarship Fund to help the PLF continue this important program. Donations in any amount would be greatly appreciated and can be made either online or by check. Please ensure that you earmark your donation for the Scholarship Fund and thank you in advance for your consideration!

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 PLF general fund, the George Lea Founder’s Scholarship, or the Student Congress 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 has also established 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.

** This list reflects donations received during the period of April 1 through June 30, 2024. Donations received after this period will be reported in the next edition of the Monitor.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Prepared by James Kenna, PLF Oregon, and previously published as an Opinion piece in the May 6, 2024 edition of the San Diego Union-Tribune.

As a former BLM California State Director and with a 40-year career in public service working on public lands, I want to commend BLM for announcing on April 18, 2024 the Final Public Lands Rule. Public lands are our shared legacy, and conserving their water, fish and wildlife, and cultural heritage is something we all owe future generations. This Final Rule squarely addresses that obligation. Unfortunately, misrepresentations of existing law and conspiracy theories seem to be getting the attention when it comes to the Final Rule.

The BLM is the largest land manager in our Nation (245 million acres or 40 percent of all public lands). The Final Rule promotes healthy landscapes, abundant wildlife, clean drinking water, and balanced decision-making, consistent with existing law, by providing detailed guidance on how to incorporate planned conservation actions. Basically, the Rule does not prioritize conservation, rather, it places conservation on par with other land uses.

Unfortunately, distortions and fabrications have misrepresented the Rule, and its foundation in law. Most fundamentally, in 1976, Congress pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) clearly established conservation that protects resources like water, fish, wildlife and cultural sites as an expected land use under the BLM's mission of multiple use and sustained yield. Suggestions that taking steps to protect water, fish, wildlife, and cultural sites is a "lock up" are simply wrong. The general leasing authority proposed to support conservation land use is not an invention of bureaucrats. It was created by Congress more than 40 years ago, in 1976.

Conservation on public lands should not be an "us" versus "them" argument. The fundamental question is not whether other land uses, like oil and gas drilling or livestock grazing, will continue to occur. They will. The question is whether we, as a Nation, still believe conserving natural, cultural, and historic resources and providing access to nature for current and future generations is a goal that should be on equal footing with other land uses.

We can do both. In my last position as the BLM California State Director, I helped shepherd forward the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, which directed how public lands can be managed for their shared natural, cultural, recreation, and clean energy production values. Since 2016, some 10 million acres in southeastern California have been managed to protect unique plant and wildlife species while supporting designated special recreation areas and utility-scale development of wind, solar and geothermal energy projects. This was only possible because people were able to work together, use the best available science and data, and make hard decisions. The Public Lands Rule makes this type of balanced management possible for all 245 million acres of our Nation's public lands.

With challenges ahead, a careful, planned approach to managing public lands, one that recognizes the importance of delivering conservation, is now more essential. We will all be well served to avoid the misinformation and conspiracy theories, and to focus on the land stewardship we want for present and future generations. The new Public Lands Rule puts our Nation and future generations on the right path forward.

(Jim Kenna retired as the BLM California State Director in 2015 after 40 years of public service. He is currently based in Medford, Oregon, and serves on the Board of the Conservation Lands Foundation.)



THE PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION IS A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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.

PLF MEMBERSHIP

PLF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Date _____

Amount Enclosed _____

PLF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Regular	\$50
Contributing	\$100
Sponsoring	\$200
Patron.....	\$500