The BLM's Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services

BLM Workplan Fiscal Years 2003-2007
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

"Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility, it is a public value…Our duty is to use the land well, and sometimes not to use it all. This is our responsibility as citizens, but more than that, it is our calling as stewards of the earth."

President George W. Bush

"Our nation's cultural and natural resource are important parts of our heritage. Preserve America will promote historic and cultural preservation and encourage greater public appreciation of our national treasures….Our land is the foundation upon which the American story is written."

First Lady Laura Bush

"Whether you're hiking, biking, canoeing, or camping – exploring the outdoors is a part of the American life."

Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton

Freedom

My own childhood included neither public lands nor freedom. In the part of the world where I grew up lands belonged to kings or emperors or nobles or to the state. As for freedom, it was something my generation only dreamed of. I still remember standing in the pre-dawn darkness, surrounded by the acrid, autumnal smell of decaying deciduous leaves, and asking my friend Al Bearce where I could legally hunt. "Anywhere you want," he said, his arm circumscribing the unseen countryside, "it's all public lands." I was astounded. Anywhere I want?

Stephen G. Maurer

It is often said that the great western lands of the United States, and the values they stir, define the spirit of America. If this is so, then the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) open spaces embody this spirit. Open space and places imbued with diverse cultures continue to have the strongest pull on visitors to the BLM public lands. Perhaps it is because here they can touch the spirit of America once again, or perhaps because it is here they remember their origins. While meeting the people, visiting the BLM places and developing partnerships, visitors are reminded of the grand multiplicity that enriches our country and gives us strength, resilience, and flexibility as individuals, and as a nation.

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

The following pages describe the BLM's Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services for these great western lands; for the open spaces, heritage, wildlife, and adventures treasured by an ever-increasing number of visitors.
This document is essentially a corporate statement of commitment to the American public. It is, in fact, a service delivery plan for delivering benefits to the American people and their communities. Also, it is important to note that this strategy is indicative of a distinct shift from a traditional activity-based approach to management, to managing for specific individual, social and economic benefits.

Within the lines of these pages, you will find three primary goals. These are:

- **GOAL 1 -** Improve Access to Appropriate Recreation Opportunities on Department of the Interior (DOI) Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters.
- **GOAL 2 -** Ensure a Quality Experience and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources on DOI Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters.
- **GOAL 3 -** Provide for and Receive Fair Value in Recreation.

Specific objectives, and concrete milestones and actions further describe each goal.

Far more important, you will find a blueprint for a future that will define and perhaps present the most salient legacy our future generations can receive....a public land legacy that acknowledges the simple enjoyment of being alive and being in the outdoors.

You will find that this strategy engages PEOPLE, enhances PLACES, encourages PARTNERSHIPS and elevates the idea of PUBLIC SERVICE. In summary, implementation of this plan will provide:

- Enhanced access
- Higher quality and more opportunities for outdoor recreation experiences
- Increased educational opportunities
- Increased access to authentic experiences
- More opportunity for self determination (freedom of choice and a variety of experiences)
- Safe and healthy sites for all populations
- Exceptional value and benefits for the public's time and taxes
- Assistance in sustainable economic diversification that is both ecologically and socially responsible
- Healthy links to an increasingly urbanized west

The demographics of the **PEOPLE** that the BLM serves are changing. The ways in which people use their public **PLACES**, the activities in which they participate, and the benefits they derive, are changing as a result of evolving values and interests and advances in technology. Shifting **ECONOMICS** strongly influence the sustainable nature of communities and small business often dependent on outdoor settings and activities manages by the BLM. These dynamics result in multiple challenges that ultimately compound the BLM's ability to effectively respond to these changes.

The BLM shares extraordinary landscape stories with the American public. Although the BLM manages for many different uses, the vast majority of the American public's interaction with the BLM and their public lands is through recreation pursuits. They come to raft the rivers, hike the trails, and ride the back roads and trails. They fish, they hunt, they hike, they ride, they float, and they camp. They visit heritage sites, National Monuments, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness, National Trails and National Conservation Areas. The BLM public lands are often seen as the last tangible vestige of the Old West and the vast open spaces that forged the American character. Each trail writes a book and each place is a chapter.

Our multiple use **MISSION** is to serve the diverse outdoor recreation demands of visitors while helping them to maintain the sustainable conditions needed to conserve their lands and their recreation choices. Our **VISION** is to provide the services that will open up new opportunities for people to recreate responsibly in their great outdoors. Our **GOAL** is to provide opportunities for environmentally responsible recreation.

The BLM serves over 290,800,000 Americans, by acting as their public land steward for one eighth of the continental Unites States. The extraordinary size of this uniquely American public estate combined with the vast diversity of the BLM outdoor recreation/tourism settings, or "habitat", attract over 70 million visitors. BLM manages these settings, which range from primitive to urban habitat; each meeting a specific set of visitor preferences. Each can be quantified and measured. Shifts in visitor preferences from primitive to motorized, or from motorized to urban habitat, can be mapped and measured and thus correlated with other federal, state and private suppliers. Correlating existing outdoor recreation/tourism habitat supply with visitor preferences and demand, allows the BLM to provide the best value for the American public by more seamlessly partnering with other suppliers. The BLM public lands visitors are drawn to what has been characterized as "the remnants of the American Frontier" (National Geographic, 8/01); each visitor seeking the outdoor recreation/tourism habitat mix that inspires their visit and makes it unforgettable.

The populations of eight of the 12 western states that comprise this "remnant of the American Frontier" have grown over 50 percent during the last 25 years with the largest growth centered within urban areas. By the time a contemporary 16-year-old girl reaches the age of 50, the population of the United States will have doubled. Approximately 50 percent of her peers will reach the age of 100, or greater (FERMATA, Inc.). These extraordinary population demographics and their reciprocal dramatic increase in visitor numbers will also produce many new types of visitors, each generating many new variations of future outdoor recreation demand.

The mixture of BLM-managed resources interwoven with small-town communities is reminiscent of the Old West, and often characterizes the BLM public lands. Most notably, this is what seems to transport people back to a simpler time and place where, escaping the confines of city life, they can reconnect with the rural countryside and perhaps even their own rural roots. This applies to visitors as well as to those who, increasingly, have chosen to live in proximity to public lands. The profound nature of this natural resource-community interface applies whether people come just to relax and restore, or to stimulate and recharge themselves. The BLM public lands and local communities are inseparable, and both enrich the human spirit and improve one's quality of life in countless ways.

In order to preview the basic themes inherent within the *BLM's Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Service*, it is useful to reflect on the words of several Americans that are deeply vested in their public lands outdoor recreation experiences. Their words will guide us through a summary of this blueprint for the future, and help focus on the benefits to be derived. Below are the feelings, remarks, observations and direction given by several Americans that describe their expectations, pleasures, concerns and passions for public lands. Within the context of their words, you will find a summary of the BLM's strategy. This clear linkage is possible because this strategy has its roots firmly grounded in extensive input from the American public. In turn, this strategy is the BLM's response. As you will find, it speaks directly to the deepest intent, as expressed by the following BLM public land owners. (From: *Land That We Love - Americans Talk About America's Public Lands*; 2002.)

After reading their perspectives, please move forward to the complete text of the BLM's Priorities, beginning on page 14, and define your own actions and direction.

Gateway Communities and Heritage:

Remnants of all the American lives that came before us lie close to the surface. Indians, Asians and Europeans alike were drawn to the West, all searching for a place to be free. The dust of their dreams settles into our bones, enveloping us in that timeless landscape. Strong, stouthearted Westerners are molded by the land in its image, sometimes harsh, but always true.

Lisa T. Cresswell – Archeologist

Over 4,136 communities with a combined population of 22 million people are located within just one-half hour drive just 25 miles of the BLM public lands, while a combined population of 41 million people lives within 200 miles of those same lands. Approximately 40 percent of the BLM public lands are located within a day s drive of 16 major urban areas in the west. Nine of the 12 western states with extensive BLM public lands are among the fastest growing in the United States.

Recreation and tourism are big business and significant economic drivers, identified as one of the top three industries within all 12 western states. Outdoor recreation, nature, adventure and heritage tourism are the fastest growing segments of the travel and tourism industry, and the BLM open spaces have it all. Investment in the BLM Recreation Program and National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) will help support sustainable economic growth, assist with diversifying and stabilizing local communities, sustain domestic tourism, provide valuable community amenities and attract businesses, protect sensitive resources, and improve the quality of life for both visitors and residents. Conservatively estimated, the BLM public lands directly account for $35 to $55 billion in economic benefits, supporting over 25,000 jobs and thousands of businesses. Outfitting, guiding and the tourism industry depend on access to and availability of the BLM public lands. These dynamics speak directly to the President's Executive Order 13287, Preserve America, by encouraging both preservation and economic return. These and other numerous opportunities exist to encourage providing for and receiving fair value in recreation interests.

Accessibility and Monitoring:

These public lands are part of a priceless American heritage. America is distinctive in her commitment to preserving her land for generations of Americans and millions of world visitors. I believe we must preserve this beauty and make it accessible to as many people as possible.

James V. Hansen – Chairman, House Resources Committee

The social and economic context within which the BLM public lands are managed has changed dramatically over the last several decades...with visitor use more than doubling in the last decade. Once isolated BLM public lands now literally comprise the backyard for millions of Americans; many of whom are newly arrived in the west. Lands historically managed for resource commodities must now meet additional demands for open space, recreation opportunities, habitat, celebration of heritage, watershed…examples of shifting priorities in a rapidly changing social landscape. These conditions demand the creation of a comprehensive travel planning and management approach that examines both legal and physical public access as well as the need for monitoring and adjusting, as access needs change.

Visitor Service:

I love the empty desert, the clarity of the light, the deep shadows, the sky too blue for words. I cannot imagine what it might be like if there were not wild places where people…even incompetent outdoorspeople like me…could go to lose themselves in the elemental world. We are nourished by the beauty and silence of such places, they make us better, they give us something we lack. We need such places, all of us, even the amateurs and bumblers and fools, even those who like me, don't deserve such loveliness, such mystery, such grace.

Brady Udall - Writer

Over 70 million visitors enjoy the BLM destinations, while outdoor recreation contributes approximately $55 billion, annually, to the western United States economy. This growing influence is fundamentally changing the role for public lands in the western United States. Over 95 percent of Americans participate in some form of outdoor recreation on an annual basis. Whether the BLM's domestic and international visitors are motivated by seeing more wildlife, touring heritage areas, enjoying expansive scenic vistas, finding a quiet place to muse or to experience outdoor challenge and adventure, it is the BLM's National Recreation and Visitor Services professionals that work to provide for their successful and safe visit.

Outdoor recreation and leisure activities are a major part of the lifestyle of millions of Americans and international visitors and a major supporting component of the quality of life, health, and economic vitality for thousands of western communities. The BLM public lands play a lead role in providing these outdoor recreation benefits. Stakeholders and constituents want the BLM to invest in the future by:

- Providing interpretation, environmental education and information services
- Engaging communities in the development and implementation of recreation and visitor services
- Building, supporting and sustaining partnerships and leveraging resources
- Defining, researching and documenting social and economic benefits
- Conserving, collaborating and cooperating; all in the service of conservation

Quality of Life and Urban Interface:

Of all the great gifts America has given the world...the strains of jazz, medical advancements and baseball, among others, it seems to me that the legacy of public lands is undoubtedly the greatest of all. In the simple notion that some areas should be set aside...is at once so elemental and so radical that one can hardly imagine existing in a world deprived of the sanity these publicly-held areas provide.

Barry Scholl - Writer

Overall, population growth, along with the popularity of an expanding variety of outdoor recreation activities and benefits, is creating an unprecedented demand for outdoor recreation opportunities, areas, facilities and services. It is increasingly clear that work, to many people, is no longer the end goal in life, rather it is the means to an end. Lifestyle, it would seem, is very important to people living and working in western landscape settings. For many, this privilege of proximity to the BLM public lands is the reason for living and working where they do. A primary concern associated with this tremendous growth is potential degradation of natural and cultural resources. On the heels of declining resources inevitably comes degradation of the visitor experience due to congestion and user conflicts as well as decline in economic sustainability and overall quality of life.

Partnership and Stewardship:

The public lands have been and will continue to be contested space because they are public, a result of our republic which itself is a contestant dance between federal and state, public and private. Noted author Wallace Stegner once called the American West our "native home of hope." But he challenged Westerners to learn from their history…and become "a society to match its scenery." The ultimate contest is an individual one, to decide whether we will continue owning the present or begin acting for the future, for a society to match the grandeur of our public lands.

Dr. David Rich Lewis - Historian

Recreation is the face of the BLM. Over 80 percent of public contacts and transactions are conducted through the Recreation Program. Nearly one half of all the BLM volunteer hours are recreation related, exhibiting full compliance with the intent of the President's "Freedom Corps" initiative. About two thirds of the BLM's partnerships reside in the Recreation Program with over 500 partnerships nationwide. Recreation Challenge Cost Share projects exceed $1.7 million annually. The Recreation Program is a leader in generating and leveraging more grants, alternative funding and in-kind support. In fact, for every dollar that the Congress of the United States invests in the BLM's Recreation Program, an $8 equivalent of value is returned to the American public, in both services and opportunities. The Recreation Program is responsible for hundreds of special and outreach events, annually. Recreation interests have the highest percent of contact with the voting public and the strongest history of partnering as a fundamental management strategy. This experience, this history is fundamental to a future committed to successful partnership benefits and outcomes.

Health and Safety:

When the craziness of the human world begins to wear away at the fabric of my being, when there are too many people moving too fast, making too much notice, I take off for red rock country. In the silence, time slows, thickens, becomes as palpable as sandstone. Deep time is etched in these canyon walls. It puts, my life, our lives, in perspective.

Debra Threedy – Attorney & Teacher

We live in a time of great stress, and an accelerated pace which results in an anxious sense of time poverty. This phenomenon substantially increases the need for places of contemplation, rest, and renewal. In addition, increased concern regarding effective ways to improve the American population's overall physical health are prevalent, and the BLM public lands are expected to become part of the solution. Together, communities and the BLM can work with schools, health officials, hospitals, insurance companies and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to find effective resolutions to contemporary health/wellness issues.

The BLM now manages almost eight times as many recreation sites as it did 25 years ago, greatly increasing costs for maintaining healthy and safe operations. While attempting to accommodate staggering increases in recreation use, the BLM has consequently incurred the resulting costs for the maintenance and operations of a significant number of special areas and facilities.

Interpretation and Environmental Education:

I looked for major landmarks, shapes and rivers....Walking quietly back towards my car in the twilight, I thought, no, you can never go back. But you can visit. And that's what public lands are to me...places I can go back to wherever I want, to whenever I want. When everything else in life is upside down, public lands are always right-side up.

Stephanie Gomes - Journalist

Many can find their way to nature, but don't know where they are or when they got there, what they are seeing or even how to care for what they see and love. The role of outdoor ethic programs such a Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! is critical to visitor benefits and visitors' ability to learn how to create a sustainable experience. In survey after survey, environmental education is repeatedly named as a primary expectation for a rewarding visitor experience. Numerous demographic and trend data verify this need. Interpretation is a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings in the resource, rendering it critical to long-term land ethic development, retention and meaningful visitor experiences.

As you move forward into the details of the BLM Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services, take the time...better yet, take the personal responsibility to: step forward, define your own role and actions within it's guidance and framework, and make this exceptional vision for outdoor recreation service available to all BLM public lands visitors.

PART II - WORKPLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The real worth of any strategic plan is measured by the level of public acceptance of the results achieved from implementation. A plan is of little benefit if significant progress is not reached and there is no individual or group accountable for reporting accomplishments and progress. With this in mind, the leadership of the Recreation Program collaborated and recommended that BLM pursue the formal establishment of a Recreation and Visitor Services Advisory Team (RVSAT). The RVSAT would serve as an advisory team chartered under the Washington Office Assistant Director Renewable Resources and Planning (WO-200). The 12 State Recreation Leads, the Group Manager - National Recreation Group, and one representative each from the Engineering Advisory Team and the National Landscape Conservation System would be the "core" members of the RVSAT. Participation and support from other BLM managers and staff would be requested from time to time to address issues, communicate ideas and otherwise assist with team-related functions.

As a fully sanctioned team, the RVSAT would have three principle charges. The first of these would be to recommend means of improving the BLM's Recreation and Visitor Services programs and activities. The second charge would be to provide advice to BLM management by serving as the focal point for identification of recreation- and visitor services-related issues and coordination of recommendations for management consideration. The third charge would be to report annual Recreation Program accomplishments to BLM management and staff as well as to constituents.

Once chartered and established, the RVSAT would be the lead to address implementation and make recommendations for:

1) specific assignments for action prioritization, coordination and implementation;

2) benchmark target dates for action initiation and/or completion;

3) resources, including funding, to bring about action accomplishment;

4) program monitoring, evaluation and adjustment; and

5) accomplishment tracking and reporting.

PART III - BLM'S PRIORITIES (Goals, Objectives, Milestones and Actions)

GOAL 1: Improve Access to Appropriate Recreation Opportunities on Department of the Interior (DOI) Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters (DOI Draft End Outcome Goal REO.1).

OBJECTIVE 1: Establish a comprehensive approach to travel planning and management.

Milestone 1: Address comprehensive travel management through the land-use planning process and through statutorily required planning efforts to improve access and recreation opportunities and experiences.

Actions:

1. Complete area and road/trail designations and determine travel management objectives for road and trail systems through the land-use planning process (giving priority attention to high-use or special areas and time-sensitive planning efforts).
2. Issue improved guidance for a comprehensive travel planning/management process which: a) includes but goes beyond OHV designations; b) addresses proactively all motorized, mechanized and foot travel; c) does not limit the plans to recreational use, but addresses all forms of public lands transportation - particularly where time-sensitive land-use plans are involved.
3. Upgrade the BLM's inventory and monitoring capabilities through use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) applications to travel management. Establish GIS data standards for areas and roads/trails. Provide training in the use of GIS and GPS technology as it applies to travel management.
4. Identify and pursue rights-of-way (ROW) agreements covering public access to the BLM public lands to improve recreation-related opportunities as well as enhance access for other management purposes.
5. Develop simple, effective and efficient monitoring plans and methods to measure the effectiveness of travel planning and management.

Milestone 2: Improve on-the-ground travel management operations and maintenance programs to sustain and enhance recreation opportunities and experiences, visitor access and safety, and resource conservation.

Actions:

1. Establish maintenance standards for trails and conduct condition surveys to document maintenance, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation needs.
2. Implement the best management practices available to systematically address travel management (e.g., signs, maps, maintenance, equipment, construction, reconstruction, field presence, law enforcement, and education).
3. Monitor and evaluate social outcomes and environmental conditions on and along trails and associated areas influenced by trail-related visitation.

Milestone 3: Improve signing, mapping, and travel information and education for BLM public lands visitors.

Actions:

1. Develop guidelines to improve both the quality and consistency of visitor access and travel information including websites and all print media (maps, brochures and other publications).
2. Develop a BLM travel management website to provide management guidance and information on shared technology, networking, training opportunities, applied science, grants, challenge-cost share and alternative funding opportunities, etc.
3. Continue working cooperatively with other governmental agencies and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners in developing collaborative recreation-related websites (e.g., Recreation One-Stop Service and Volunteer.gov).
4. Provide consistent public access signing and information, and develop travel management sign standards.
5. Continue to support education and outreach programs like Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace to foster outdoor ethics and stewardship.

Milestone 4: Implement comprehensive travel management through national strategies for motorized, mechanized, and non-motorized recreation.

Actions:

1. Establish a Bureau Trails and Travel Management Team to share information, develop guidance, prioritize actions and make recommendations to BLM management. The team should focus on issue identification and coordination of recommendations for managing roads, trails and travel-related matters of all kinds.
2. Continue to implement the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) strategy including its periodic review/update as appropriate, and develop specific guidance for the management of snowmobiles, personal watercraft and other emerging motorized technologies.
3. Develop an implementation plan for the National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan.
4. Develop an action plan for non-motorized/non-mechanized modes of travel. This action plan would support horseback riding, hiking, climbing, caving, floating, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding and similar recreational activities. Undertake cross-link processes to coordinate and align all Workplan action items into annual and out-year budget priorities.
5. Prepare an "umbrella" recreation access document that incorporates and integrates with other program guidance (within a single document) the overall strategies and action items set forth in the: a) National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on the Public Lands; b) National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan; and c) proposed non-motorized/non-mechanized action plan.
6. Develop a specific strategy to rejuvenate and enhance the National Back Country Byway Program.
7. Develop guidance for implementation of the National Trails System Act including national recreation trails, rail trails and national scenic and historic trails.

Milestone 5: Expand and pursue partnerships, sources of funding and guidance for transportation and travel management.

Actions:

1. Develop a national "public roads" policy as a planning component of BLM's transportation system. Provide formal responses to the Federal Highway Administration on BLM's public roads policy intentions, and coordinate and develop internal policy specific to public roads as an element of the transportation system.
2. Improve guidance, information and training on opportunities to obtain Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21; with draft reauthorization titled the Safe and Flexible Transportation Efficiency Act of 2003 or SAFTEA) funding and facilitate partnership opportunities for transportation enhancements, recreation trails programs and state trails grant programs.
3. Collaborate with other federal, state, and local governmental agencies as well as NGOs, individuals and volunteers to identify partnerships for accomplishing trails-related activities. Use available legal instruments, such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and cooperative and assistance agreements, to partner with these non-BLM entities in accomplishing specific field work.
4. Continue to actively support and develop the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP). In cooperation with other federal, state, and local governmental agencies as well as NGOs and individuals, support trail operations and maintenance, and restoration and training program development and implementation.
5. Work with partner organizations such as the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the Western Governors' Association (WGA) to pursue proposals for alternative sources of funding for public access and transportation and travel management infrastructure (e.g., development of an initiative to access surplus funds in BLM's Repair of Damaged Lands account).

GOAL 2: Ensure a Quality Experience and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources on DOI Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters (DOI Draft End Outcome Goal REO.2).

OBJECTIVE 1: Manage public lands and waters for enhanced recreation experiences and quality of life.

Milestone 1: Shift the management emphasis of the recreation program from an activity-based approach to one which focuses on recreation experiences and benefits.

Actions:

1. Update overall recreation program policy and guidance to reflect outcome-oriented experiences and benefits (e.g., preference and attainment measures) to meet the DOI's End Outcome Goal REO.2.
2. Coordinate, through a Recreation and Visitor Services Advisory Team, the efforts of both permanent and ad-hoc committees/teams sanctioned to deal with recreation and visitor service issues. Ensure consistent implementation of established policies and guidance through such committee/team coordination.
3. Support and collaborate with local governments and service providers in adjoining communities to produce recreation opportunities for visitors and local residents to achieve health and fitness goals and quality of life benefits from the public lands.

Milestone 2: Improve the accuracy and consistency of BLM's visitor use data.

Actions:

1. Improve the accuracy and consistency of BLM's visitor use estimation procedures through development of specific site and area sampling plans and data collection policies.
2. Develop a national strategy to improve visitor and socio-economic research capabilities, and conduct an independent forum to identify existing social and economic research gaps/needs specific to the BLM.
3. Develop recreation experience/benefit attainment and visitor service satisfaction measures, and conduct surveys to support DOI/BLM output and outcome measures, evaluate performance and allocate resources. Provide better information in response to Fee Demonstration Project Congressional Reports and Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).

4. Continue to develop and apply accepted economic models such as Sonoran Institute's Economic Profile System (EPS) for planning, supporting communities and documenting recreation/tourism benefits.
5. Increase emphasis on social and economic research through the BLM's established Science Advisory Board and through other research organizations and science partnerships.
6. Complete a Post Deployment Review (PDR) for the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) program and update the RMIS according to documented PDR recommendations to improve data management, reporting, website-based capabilities and overall system capacity.
7. Create a "one-stop-shop" warehouse/website for storage and dissemination of research information and data collected from efforts conducted on the BLM public lands.

Milestone 3: Assess visitor and community resident preferences for recreation experiences and quality of life outcomes such as public health and fitness and physical education.

Actions:

1. Develop visitor and community surveys.
2. Complete a visitor/community survey handbook to provide guidance for conducting focus groups and visitor and community surveys.
3. Complete an applications handbook for experience/benefit outcome management to provide guidance in applying focus group and survey results to recreation management, marketing and monitoring.
4. Implement visitor and community surveys in priority areas such as designated components of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), high-use areas, and gateway communities.

Milestone 4: Identify and map essential landscape settings to meet public preferences and recreation-related experience expectations.

Actions:

1. Reemphasize currently available, but not consistently used, planning and management tools like the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), Visual Resource Management (VRM), Visitor Capacity Framework (VCF), and Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) through provision of additional training and policy guidance.
2. Integrate ROS, VRM, and LAC into the land-use planning process and appropriate recreation planning, engineering and facility design.

Milestone 5: Integrate management functions to provide opportunities for the public to obtain their desired recreation experiences and quality of life.

Actions:

1. Collaborate with all recreation and visitor service providers including federal, state, and local governmental agencies and private sector stakeholders including NGOs.
2. Integrate visitor services and marketing guidance.
3. Inventory and assess both the natural and built environments at the landscape level and integrate the information with the BLM's land-use planning system (e.g., VRM, ROS, LAC as appropriate) to support and facilitate time-sensitive and community-based planning efforts.
4. Implement compatible resource, facility and visitor management actions appropriate to the settings required to produce desired experiences and quality of life outcomes.
5. Implement distinct marketing actions for specific sites and attractions, including development of experience/benefits-based recreation brochures.
6. Work with the hospitality industry to add appropriate content to BLM public lands marketing messages.
7. Develop social and environmental monitoring indicators and standards geared toward benefits-based management.
8. Monitor the effectiveness of management and marketing actions implemented to deliver prescribed setting conditions and to produce the targeted experience and quality of life outcomes.

Milestone 6: Improve workforce efficiency and employee capability, and provide adequate training opportunities in recreation and visitor services.

Actions:

1. Conduct a workforce analysis emphasizing critical skills gaps, staffing needs, and outsourcing opportunities/alternative workforce options.
2. Complete a Recreation Program Training Needs Assessment to identify the highest skill and knowledge needs for employees.
3. Develop and implement a five-year recreation and visitor services training strategy to strengthen employee capabilities and provide access to educational, skill-building programs.
4. Provide training and course improvements for skills needed to bring about a shift from activities-based to experience/benefits-based recreation management, and to promote customer satisfaction as a desired outcome of public lands visitation.

OBJECTIVE 2: Enhance and expand visitor services, including interpretation, information and education.

Milestone 1: Connect the visitor to natural and cultural resources, through enhanced interpretation, education and information.

Actions:

1. Implement the national strategy for strengthening the BLM interpretive program, giving specific emphasis to expanding partnerships and working with cooperating associations (i.e., guidance provided in Handbook H-8362-1, Working with Cooperating Associations).
2. Update and implement the BLM's national strategy for environmental education (1995 version).
3. Improve existing, and develop new, strategic plan performance and outcome measures for visitor satisfaction, including interpretation and information elements. Evaluate accomplishments to track performance.
4. Improve and expand visitor satisfaction and customer surveys to incorporate more interpretive, education, and service-related elements.
5. Improve website-based, one-stop service "shopping" opportunities. Strive to provide consistent electronic information, for both customers and employees, in all available website-based products such as interpretive/environmental education program websites, Recreation One-Stop Service, Volunteer.gov, and other on-line services offering recreation-related information.
6. Provide guidance on cost/benefit analyses, assessment considerations and project evaluation criteria for development and maintenance of new or proposed visitor centers and/or major recreation facilities.

Milestone 2: Improve the accuracy, appearance and consistency of visitor information.

Actions:

1. Develop a strategy for administering a comprehensive sign, map and brochure program (in coordination with the Bureauwide identity/image strategy and workplan effort).
2. Develop and improve signs at selected high priority areas (such as components of the NLCS and heavily-visited recreation sites/areas.)
3. Develop comprehensive guidance and technical support for the design, fabrication and acquisition of signs, and promote both sign consistency and appearance quality on a Bureauwide basis.

Milestone 3: Emphasize and improve outdoor ethics and stewardship through education.

Actions:

1. Encourage and support field staff to participate in outdoor ethics training for the public (including training in Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace programs).
2. Partner with the recreation and tourism industry to encourage support of the Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace programs.
3. Continue supporting special outreach projects as well as major state and national initiatives including the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration: 2003-2006, American Frontiers Educational Project and Trek, Wonderful Outdoor World (WOW), National Public Lands Day, National Trails Day, Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace programs, and other similar public awareness-building efforts.
4. Incorporate outdoor ethics and stewardship principles into interpretation and education media, resource use stipulations, brochures, maps, and similar print media.
5. Collaborate with external groups in identifying best practices for outdoor ethics and stewardship.

OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure public health and safety, and improve the condition and accessibility of recreation sites and facilities.

Milestone 1: Provide accessible programs and facilities at developed recreation sites.

Actions:

1. Revise and implement the national strategy for accessibility (to include policy and training).
2. Complete accessibility evaluations at all major recreation and visitor facilities and enter baseline date into the Accessibility Data Management System (ADMS).
3. Require development of action plans, based on completed ADMS evaluations, to set acceptable levels of access for each site or facility evaluated. Determine funding needs and a strategy for corrective actions identified - including action plan implementation schedules for correcting specific access deficiencies.
4. Require accessible design/review as a component of all new construction projects and facility retrofits.
5. Develop recommendations and implement a process to effectively integrate data and/or streamline coordination among ADMS, RMIS, and selected facility management data systems.

Milestone 2: Increase law enforcement presence, or establish/improve other means, to ensure public safety and security in support of recreation visitors.

Actions:

1. Improve law enforcement capabilities through an expanded ranger program. Promote use of collaborative/cooperative law enforcement agreements with other federal, state and local governmental agencies as appropriate. Emphasize training for, and the developing and networking of, utilizing funding alternatives and options for collaborate/cooperative law enforcement efforts.
2. Increase visitor contact presence, resource patrols and information availability to improve voluntary compliance with rules and regulations and to reduce illegal activities. Employ, where appropriate, the use of non-law enforcement personnel (seasonal employees, volunteers such as campground hosts, contracted firms, and other alternative workforce options) to help achieve regulatory compliance and resource protection.
3. Develop a monitoring strategy to detect illegal recreation activities and establish action plans that will, when implemented, reduce or eliminate inappropriate activity.
4. Update existing, and develop additional, national Supplementary Rule Criteria and guidance to clarify rules and increase penalties.
5. Provide safety training for employees and volunteers with field public contact responsibilities. Focus this training on risk management and hazard/safety awareness.

Milestone 3: Manage and maintain recreation sites and facilities to acceptable operational standards, with priority given to reducing the backlog of identified deferred maintenance projects.

Actions:

1. Improve annual maintenance capabilities at developed recreation sites to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance projects.
2. Develop criteria and strategy to better identify and address deferred maintenance projects at the BLM's highest priority recreation facilities. Coordinate with engineering to conduct recreation site and facility condition assessments and ensure that recreation operational funding is directed to highest priority sites and facilities.
3. Ensure accessibility and energy conservation requirements are incorporated into all new construction projects and facility retrofits. Update project engineering and design requirement and review procedures.

Milestone 4: Meet public health standards and complete needed improvements to critical public drinking water and sewer systems.

Actions:

1. Identify critical water and/or sewer system deficiencies at developed recreation sites and facilities through conducting regularly scheduled Compliance Assessment- Safety, Health and the Environment (CASHE) audits.
2. Eliminate or mitigate, promptly, all identified deficiencies/problems related to public drinking water and sewer systems.
3. Through consistent monitoring, meet all water quality standards for every potable drinking water supply system provided. Conduct regularly scheduled drinking water sampling/testing as required by federal, state and local regulation.

GOAL 3: Provide for and Receive Fair Value in Recreation (DOI Draft End Outcome Goal REO.3).

OBJECTIVE 1: Provide fair value and return for recreation through fee collection and commercial services.

Milestone 1: Deliver consistent national fee policies, information, research, guidance and legislation.

Actions:

1. Develop and coordinate, through the National Interagency Fee Council, consistent national fee policies, guidance, legislation and fee program efficiencies.
2. Formalize a BLM National Fee Committee to ensure consistent program implementation, appropriate use of fees revenues, and coordination with the National Interagency Fee Council.
3. Develop responses and guidance to implement Office of Inspector General (OIG) and fee program evaluation recommendations for improved management of the Fee Demonstration Project program.
4. Continue fee program evaluation, and monitor program improvements and innovation.
5. Develop a BLM intranet website on fee program information and best management practices.
6. Establish training modules to improve consistent and efficient fee program innovation, implementation and appropriate use of fee revenues.

Milestone 2: Be responsive to public requests for recreation-related services by using the permit process to accomplish management objects.

Actions:

1. Issue final Special Recreation Permit (SRP) regulations and related Instruction Memoranda (IM) guidance to facilitate consistent application and implementation of the regulations.
2. Issue final supplemental guidance to expand commercial permit length to a period "up to 10 years."
3. Finalize and publish an SRP handbook for field reference.
4. Conduct SRP training for consistent policy implementation.
5. Provide additional guidance for consistent and fair policies for Recreation Permit monitoring, fee assessment, cost recovery and use supervision for commercial and special recreation events.

Milestone 3: Be accountable to the public on fee program benefits and accomplishments.

Actions:

1. Develop and distribute an annual publication (and develop associated talking points) highlighting fee program accomplishments from a national perspective. Encourage State Offices to develop and distribute an annual publication addressing state-specific fee program accomplishments (providing greater project detail than that highlighted in the national annual publication).
2. Work with public affairs to develop messages and implement delivery methods related to the benefits and accomplishments of the fee program to the public (e.g., website-based information, standardized brochure templates and formats, state-specific accomplishments, individual site reports, etc.).

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Milestone 4: Improve and expand outsourcing options to deliver recreation services through the use of concessions, contracts and leases.

Actions:

1. Develop assessment criteria that can be used during the land-use planning process to identify reasonable/realistic concessionaire and contracting opportunities.
2. Develop and provide concession and contract management training to realty and recreation specialists.
3. Promote and set parameters for the use of outsourcing as a viable alternative to SRPs. Recognize that outsourcing is a business, facilities and alternative workforce management tool.

Milestone 5: Review and establish policy for clear and consistent signing and information at recreation sites and facilities where fees are charged.

Actions:

1. Coordinate fee sign recommendations with the National Sign Committee.
2. Issue IM guidance on clarifying policy and providing clear and consistent fee area signing.
3. Work with the BLM's National Sign Center in Rawlins, Wyoming to develop and provide "generic" fee area signage.

OBJECTIVE 2: Encourage and sustain collaborative partnerships, volunteers and citizen-centered public service.

Milestone 1: Evaluate and expand opportunities to participate in Challenge Cost Share (CCS) and Cooperative Conservation Initiative (CCI) projects.

Actions:

1. Assess the competitive allocation system for evaluative criteria, and for the fair and equitable distribution of available funds.
2. Review and revise, as appropriate, CCS policy to ensure long-term support of successful partnerships.
3. Justify and pursue "new money" to fund CCS projects by documenting BLM success "stories".

4. Include the CCS concept as a component of the USDA Forest Service/National Forest Foundation's Partnership Resource Center (PRC) website.
5. Encourage BLM to look for alternative funding resources to assist in program development (i.e., other governmental agency grants such as those provided by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Park Service (NPS), etc.).

Milestone 2: Engage and sustain volunteer participation.

Actions:

1. Improve access to information about volunteer opportunities (i.e., Volunteer.gov).
2. Increase volunteer program support, coordination, and development with emphasis on existing volunteer programs.
3. Document and market volunteer program accomplishments.
4. Develop a "white paper" on the BLM-sponsored "Outdoor Corps" initiative to encourage and promote volunteerism and public service for improving outdoor recreation opportunities. Identify and promote the linkage of this BLM-sponsored initiative to the President's " Freedom Corps" initiative.)
5. Develop, implement and evaluate Program Elements and workload accomplishment measures for volunteer program management.

Milestone 3: Sustain and increase partnerships and collaboration in recreation and visitor services.

Actions:

1. Establish community liaison and partnership program responsibilities in state and field offices to foster, promote, and otherwise support collaborative partnership efforts and opportunities with communities.
2. Participate with other governmental agencies in the USDA Forest Service/National Forest Foundation's Partnership Resource Center.
3. Support and participate in the inter-Departmental conference on partnerships scheduled for November 2003 (Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship).
4. Develop and initiate a BLM-sponsored "Recreation Summit" with recognized stakeholders and partners having a vested interest in recreation and visitor services.
5. Expand the community and partnership series through the National Training Center (NTC) training programs (e.g., Community Economic Assessment (Partnership Series), Sonoran Institute's EPS, and the BLM's People in Planning training course).
6. Conduct or facilitate national, regional, state and local visitor services collaborative workshops to promote partnerships and coordination of visitor services delivery, training and research.

Milestone 4: Emphasize and support collaborative public outreach, awareness events, and programs that promote public service and stewardship.

Actions:

1. Continue to support events that emphasize collaborative outreach and public awareness such as National Public Lands Day, National Fishing Week, Great Outdoors Week, National Trails Day, National Tourism Week and the National Heritage Signature events of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration: 2003-2006.
2. Refine and capitalize on new Program Element (performance measures) and target accomplishments that document the extent, benefits and effectiveness of agency public outreach efforts.

OBJECTIVE 3: Encourage sustainable travel and tourism development with gateway communities and provide community-based conservation support for visitor services.

Milestone 1: Develop collaborative relationships emphasizing sustainable* practices with the international and national tourism industry and gateway communities.

[*The term sustainable, as it relates to rural, natural and cultural tourism, covers seven key elements which, considered together, define it. Thus, for purposes of this Workplan, sustainable practices: a) contribute to conservation of biodiversity; b) nurture the well being of people; c) include an interpretive/learning experience; d) involve responsible action on the part of tourists and the tourism industry; e) stress local participation, ownership and business opportunities - particularly for rural populations; f) emphasize delivery of goods and services to small groups by small-scale business; and g) focus on low consumption of non-renewable resources.]

Actions:

1. Formalize and expand relationships with international, national, state and local tourism professional organizations (including, but not limited to, Western States Tourism Policy Council (WSTPC), state and local tourism boards, Circle of State Advisors (COSA) in partnership with the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial: 2003-2006, NACo, and WGA).
2. Assess and document existing tourism project activity and success stories by state.

3. Develop interdisciplinary plans focused on sustainable management practices which foster long-term tourism opportunities on the public lands, and implement actions to enhance the social and economic viability of local populations and gateway communities.
4. Expand the BLM's partnership framework beyond project cooperation by collaboratively engaging other principal recreation providers, particularly key local government agencies and service provider businesses, as managing partners with the BLM in specific recreation management areas where each partner affects or determines recreation opportunity production.

Milestone 2: Develop sustainable visitor service projects with international, national, state, local and tribal tourism departments and gateway communities' tourism programs.

Actions:

1. Provide technical assistance to gateway communities.
2. Develop incentive programs that encourage tourism industry development of conservation/land ethic visitor information.
3. Host regional workshops and similar idea-sharing meetings or conferences, in concert with the tourism industry, to promote the seamless delivery of visitor services.
4. Develop collaborative projects with local communities and the tourism industry to protect, preserve and restore important BLM public lands attractions.
5. Emphasize and expand BLM's unique role in protecting the character, custom and culture of the American west. Evaluate the USDA Forest Service "Heritage Tours" program for BLM application, and market heritage resources such as ranches, mining camps, ghost towns, and similar heritage resources.

Milestone 3: Develop a collaborative strategy to assess socio-economic benefits of recreation and tourism with local governments and private industry.

Actions:

1. Improve internal expertise and capability to assess socio-economic benefits related to recreation and tourism.
2. Develop or integrate training opportunities to increase skill/knowledge and application of socio-economic principles to recreation-related programs.
3. Quantify and document socio-economic benefits derived from recreation and tourism attributable to BLM public lands.
4. Expand use and application of available tools, such as the Sonoran Institute's EPS in conjunction with local communities and BLM planning efforts.

5. Improve accuracy and consistency of BLM's visitor use estimation procedures through the development of area and site sampling plans and policies.
6. Initiate customer and market-based socio-economic benefit analysis and research capabilities.

Milestone 4: Assess the need for, and develop if found appropriate, a BLM-administered system of National Recreation Areas.

Actions:

1. Establish, through a Recreation and Visitor Services Advisory Team, an ad-hoc committee tasked to develop recommendations for a BLM-administered system of National Recreation Areas that would be supported by local and gateway communities and constituents having a vested interest in establishment of such a national system.
2. Prepare a "lessons learned" report that assesses the use, benefits and viability of Administrative, Executive and Congressional special designation options.

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Bureau of Land Management

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