

Meet the Instructor:

Hi. I'm Tina McDonald, a recreation planner by title and the program manager for the Recreation Mgm Information System or RMIS. I've worked for the BLM for 17 years, with part of that as being a volunteer and part of it as a temporary. I started my career in Carlsbad, New Mexico as the recreation planner there. My career has taken a lot of twists and turns. I have worked with the Wild Horse and Burro Program, I've been the environmental education and interpretive specialist at the Colorado State Office, and I've also been the recreational operation lead at the Colorado State Office for five years where I was responsible for most all the major recreation programs.

One of the projects that I completed that I'm most proud of is working with the Bureau of Reclamation and the BLM state engineers and the reclamation staff on completing accessibility evaluations on about 36 of our recreation facilities, which has brought a better understanding and awareness to the field on what needs to be done to have a facility accessible. I've been on the RMIS team since 2001. Part of that time I was just a team member, and then starting in 2003 I was given the national responsibility of the program, plus the team lead. I love to be outside and I enjoy hiking and camping and downhill skiing and exploring and traveling or anything that's out there and I've been doing quite a few long-distance training walks like marathons and marathons and a half, which is good for your heart. I'm very excited for you to view and see what the team has accomplished by developing and producing this training. I know that if you take the time to view

the modules it will help you with your job and it will be a benefit. Thank you and enjoy.

Introduction:

Welcome to the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) introduction training. I'm Tina McDonald, the program manager and team lead of a great team. I remember my first experience with RMIS. I worked in Carlsbad, New Mexico as a recreation planner. I didn't know a thing about RMIS or how to collect visitation per the system. It was a desktop database system with floppy disks. I hadn't had any training, but I just did my best. Both RMIS and I have come a long way. Hopefully after completing this training, you won't have the same experience I did.

As a recreation planner, you have many responsibilities within your field office. One of these responsibilities includes reporting your recreation data into RMIS. This training will help you with completing that responsibility. The RMIS program is a management tool to report number of visits, types of activities, permits such as special recreation permits, partnerships and agreements, and other recreation data such as off-highway vehicle acres, management plans, and area designations.

Objectives: The objectives of this introduction training is to have you become familiar with the background on recreation data reporting, how RMIS is structured like your field office, and give you highlights of each of the training modules.

Recreation data reporting: Some of you may feel like you've had to report recreation data since maybe the Stone Age, but really we didn't have to write on rocks. No, it hasn't been that long. The first paper form was in the early 1970s. The recreation planner would fill out a standard form and mail the information to the next level up. Most of these records are long gone. The first computer-based system of RMIS was in the early 1980s. It was a desktop system using floppy disks. The information was mailed to the next level up, combined, and then mailed again. Finally in 1999, RMIS was moved into the world of the web. There were several large problems, mainly timing out issues, losing data, and not being able to use the back button. The latest improvement was implemented in 2006. The system is faster, no timing out or lost data, and of course, you can use the back button.

Here are some questions you might want to ask yourself. What's the future going to hold for recreation data? What changes will you experience during your career? One thing is certain. Whether it's visitor use, reporting the different types of activities and off-highway vehicle use, or special recreation permits and partnership information, recreation data will always need to be collected and reported. Here is a pretty simple way to think about recreation data. In this model there are three parts. The first part is data collection. Methods vary widely, and some can cost a lot of money. The data collection is external to RMIS, and depending on your method of collection will determine the accuracy of your data. You'll learn more on data collection during the training. The second part is data input. RMIS is like a data warehouse for your collected data. The

majority of the training modules cover how to complete data input. The third part is data extraction such as reports and queries. These are used to obtain information for planning efforts, data requests, document reports, and to answer data calls. You'll learn about reports in the standard report module.

#### Office Structure:

Now let's talk about how RMIS is structured to reflect your field office. The important thing to remember is part of the recreation database should be set up the way your field office is structured, which comes from your resource management plan or RMP, or other activity-level plans. I'm going to cover the office page, the resource management area or RMA page, and the site page. Here's an example of an office with three special resource management areas or SRMAs and one extensive resource management area, ERMA. Since the resource management areas are determined in your RMP, they should all be listed with information about that RMA, such as is it a special or extensive area. Other important information is the OHB acres and their designation. This information is used for reporting via the Washington office and should be kept up to date. Within your resource management areas are sites. Here are several sites within an SRMA example. The sites should be listed if you want to keep track of visits or if they're part of a management plan. The site page is also where all the visits will appear even for SRPs, rivers, roads, trails, and area designation.

#### RMiS Journey:

I'll tell you, developing this training has been an adventure, a very fun adventure with a great cast of instructors to guide you along. The online training includes eight modules from basic to advanced information. There are two options for accessing modules, either the NTC's Knowledge Resource Center (KRC), or with DOI learn. If you access from the KRC website, you can take part for all of the modules. Now I'd like to introduce you to your Tour guide, Charles. Charles is going to take us on an adventure tour bus for a journey through an overview of each of the eight modules. So let's jump on the adventure tour bus and begin our journey.

Log-in data collection and estimating: You'll learn the basic log-in and all the navigation buttons. You may not know it, but RMIS has a help page you'll learn how to access and use. Here's the web address: <http://rmishelp.blm.gov>.

There's also a link on the RMIS log-in screen. Some of the modules may require you to do some data input exercises. You'll use the RMIS training database.

You can practice without changing any of the live data. Notice the color of the training database is a purplish color. It's different than the live database, which is a green background. The web address for the training database is

<http://rmis.webst.blm.gov>. You'll also learn the different methods for collecting data and estimating visitor use. We all know this is a challenge in some areas of our field offices. Hopefully, after taking this module, you'll get some good ideas to help you with data collecting.

Recreation sites are one of the main components in RMIS, and oh the sites you'll see along the way. Everything to help you learn about the different types of sites

in RMIS and how and when to create a site. Each site needs a formula. You'll learn how to create a formula.

Entering visits: Here's where you put it all together. Also, if you need to edit your site information or move to a different RMA, this will all be covered. Many of you may not be familiar with the journal function. Your training journey will show you how and when to work with the journal.

Special recreation permits: We will take you into this exciting world of special recreation permits. This module covers how to create an SRP, creating the all-important formula, copying a formula to the master list, entering visits from post-use reports, and editing, copying, and finding journal entries.

Formulas: You've heard a lot about formulas during our journey, but visitor activity, average hours, percentage of participants, what does this mean? No worries. In this module you'll learn all that and more, such as how to create and edit a formula, the different methods for counting, the corridor concept, which is your linear resources like roads, rivers, and trails. You'll develop a formula from observation data. How the master formula list can be helpful, especially if you create more than one formula, like for seasonal use. You'll even get a little philosophy lesson on two theories of counting visitor hours.

Corridors: Rivers, roads, and trails, oh my. If you've always been curious or not quite sure on how to work with corridors in RMIS, after taking this module the corridor concept won't be a frightening experience. You just need to stay on the adventure bus to find the answers. At the end of the corridor journey, you'll have learned how to create a corridor and the segments for rivers, roads, and trails,

creating the all important formula and applying two segments, and adding the visits to the segments.

So far along our adventure journey we've covered five modules. Let's continue our journey into the wilderness, wilderness study areas, and other area designations. RMIS has the function to report visits within area polygons. You'll learn what are area designations in RMIS, how and when to create, edit, and delete area designations, creating this segment or segments and their formulas, and of course adding visits to the segments.

Partnerships and agreements: There's more to partnerships and agreements than just a handshake, and they seem to be getting more important to the bureau every day. During this module you'll learn the purpose of entering partnerships or agreements, the different types in RMIS, what it takes to create and maintain your partnership or agreement, and what information is included in RMIS.

OK. We're almost to the end of our adventure journey. So, after entering all your office's data, how can you retrieve? By learning about standard reports. RMIS has about 60 standard reports. You'll learn there are several categories to choose from, different types of information depending on your needs, and output options available to you.

Summary/Benefits:

Well, we've made it to the end of our adventure journey, and I'd like to introduce the instructors, which are all part of the RMIS team. Tammy Torres from Taos, New Mexico, Larry Ridenour with the Birds of Prey in Idaho, Jed Bodsforth with the Las Vegas Field Office, Gregg Morgan from the Roseberg, Oregon Field

Office, yours truly, and Mr. Peacock, who has made appearances on some of our introduction tapes.

RMIS training benefits: You'll see the benefit after you complete the RMIS training modules, either from the KRC or the DOI learn. You'll be able to track visitor use by site, area, and activities, report off-highway vehicle acres and designations, track your special recreation permits, respond to GAO and OMB requests, track agreements, partnerships, and volunteers, generate reports for documents, provide facts and information to your manager, and impress your friends with the knowledge on BLM's recreation statistics and trivia. In summary, you've become familiar with the background on recreation data reporting. It really wasn't written on rocks. How RMIS is structured like a field office. You've gone on a journey through each module, and now you're ready for your own adventure. Thank you and enjoy your RMIS training adventure.