

We have an e-mail question in from Wendy Warren in Montana and her question is: how are you promoting this youth opportunity throughout the rest of the nation?

Do you guys have any insight into that?

>> S. Cohn: Well, you know, I think we have a lot of opportunities, and as Angie mentioned, we've prepared a white paper here that is available for anyone to look at, and, again, it's just our approach to how we looked at how we wanted to both diversify our organization and attract youth and recruit and retain youth.

It's going to look different in every place, but there's a lot of opportunity out there, through the Bureau's Youth Initiative, America's great outdoors, all of our program funding, both in the NLCS program as well as our youth and partnerships programs.

There's lots of opportunities, I think, to take the funding -- the limited funding that BLM has and to leverage it with our partners who have an interest in seeing us accomplish similar goals.

For example, the partnership that we formed with the local workforce board, their task is to

provide meaningful work experiences for youth leading towards employment.

We have a need to recruit youth into land management careers.

So we had a natural sort of meeting of the minds.

I think that those kinds of opportunities exist anywhere in the nation, and it's just a matter of each office figuring out what they want to work on and the path that they want to develop, and then developing those.

I think the Washington Office has been very supportive of us through the Executive Orders program, and the Office of Civil Rights, and I think that those resources are there for people that want to develop their own initiatives locally.

>> L. Thomas: Thanks, Steve.

>> A. Bullets: As far as the simple question of promoting our Youth Initiative, our senior leadership in Arizona made a presentation to the executive leadership to the State Directors, and we had several calls from State Directors after that, immediately after that, asking us, what is

it that you are working on?

How are you doing these things?

Well, at that time we didn't have the white paper.

So several of our management within Arizona got together and decided to sit down and write a white paper and figure out exactly what is it we were doing and have it on paper.

So since then we've had several State Directors that have contacted us, asked us, we've sent out the white papers, and we're happily -- we will do that for anyone who has that interest.

>> L. Thomas: Thanks for the question, Wendy.

That was a great question.

In regards to the white paper, that was another question that we had from joy in California, how can you get a copy of the white paper?

What is the best process?

Should they e-mail you, Steve?

>> A. Bullets: Call me, e-mail me.

We will happily send it to you.

We were earlier thinking how we could get it on our national intranet so people could actually download it.

If you e-mail me with your e-mail address, I will gladly send it to you.

That's easy to do.

>> L. Thomas: We have another question from Katherine Kitchel: what funding sources have you been able to leverage in developing these great partnerships in Arizona?

>> S. Cohn: I can talk about that.

As I mentioned before, initially what really helped us sort of get started was funding through the Executive Orders program.

This is funded out of Washington.

We found out about that program actually through one of our state leadership team conference calls on a Monday morning.

Steve from Washington talked about the program, explained what it could be used for, and we then used that funding in two ways.

We used it to both help get our partnership going with Phoenix College to develop the certificate program and we also received funding through the Executive Orders Program to help us get started working with the local workforce board and the

student conservation association to develop our Workforce Investment Act youth crew partnership. That's one Avenue.

Another source of funding that's been extremely helpful to us has been through the Youth Initiative itself, and the hands on the lands program, other youth initiatives, Youth Initiative funding have helped us in -- particularly in our River Pathways program.

That was started with a hands on the lands grant. We were also very fortunate in the state that our State Director, Jim Kenna really liked the program, wanted to support it, and he helped us also to leverage additional MLR funding that we could piece all these bits together and really get that River Pathways program off the ground.

So I think it's very important for the local offices to work very closely with the state offices and Washington, and if we all work together, we can leverage those individual pots of money and really start to build something that has enough critical mass to get these programs off the ground.

>> L. Thomas: Thank you, Steve.

And thank you to Joy and to Katherine for your great questions.

We're going to do one final question and then we're going to wrap up the question and answer segment.

This question comes from Donald, and this question is: it is exciting to hear of the pathway you've developed in Arizona.

Do the Arizona state BLM or district offices home or participate in career fairs where other state BLM representatives could come and meet some of these young individuals?

>> A. Bullets: I think Juan could answer that.

Juan very instrumental is going out to job fairs.

>> J. Ledezma: I've been to a few of the job fairs and done some public speaking there.

I've been to one at Phoenix College and the other one for the rotary club of northern Phoenix.

So we spent -- also met with the then State Director and I've met a few State Directors and, yes, it's a fun time.

>> L. Thomas: Great.

Great job.

Final question, and this comes from Deena Wilson, California: Are the BLM employees teaching the college courses they're doing or is a government employee -- is it government employees or some adjunct faculty?

>> S. Cohn: I can talk to that.

That's a really good question.

Well, in one of the classes I actually taught it, a public policy class at Phoenix College, an evening class, and it was really fun to be able to teach that because I could speak from my experience as a public servant and it made it very real for the students.

In the case of our River Pathways program, Cody Carter, one of our wildlife biologists has been working directly with the teachers in the classroom to develop the curriculum and also to implement the program in the field.

In another case, we talked about this earlier, Dean Fernandez, our wildland firefighter, has been teaching that -- the course at Franklin High School since 2003 in the classroom.

And so I think it helps our Youth Initiative get

off the ground when we support our employees to get out into the field with students and into the classroom with students, and I think it does the take time but I think that the long-term benefit of that is immeasurable.

I think we will really begin to resonate in the community, and as a consequence we will begin to attract very motivated, very talented, diverse youth to the BLM.

>> L. Thomas: Thank you, DEENA for such a wonderful question.

Now we're going to take a 15-minute break.

When we come back we'll have another panel of BLM employees who will offer their perspectives and examples about the benefits of diversity to BLM and we'll be hearing about the advantages of diversity from BLM's top New Mexico and Arizona leadership.

So there's a lot more coming up.

We'll see you in a few minutes.