

## Program Overview Transcript

Hello, I'm Richard Hanes, Chief of the Washington Office's Division of Cultural and Paleontological Resources and Tribal Consultation, collectively referred to as the agency's cultural heritage programs.. I've been in the BLM's heritage program since the summer of 1976. I actually started the week that this nation was celebrating its bicentennial – a major point of reflection on the legacy of its first two centuries. I started working with BLM in the Roseburg District of Oregon, but spent most of my career in the Nevada and Oregon state offices before joining the Washington Office.

I'm going to provide a brief programmatic overview to BLM's Cultural Heritage Program that'll include a visual illustration of some of the world-class landscapes and heritage resources BLM manages. In part, this will provide some cinematic context and backdrop for issues that other modules in this series will address in greater detail.

In this presentation, I want to briefly mention our agency and program responsibilities, give you a few program statistics, discuss program objectives, illustrate some of the resources we manage, and discuss what I see as future challenges and opportunities in our program.

BLM currently manages 258 million acres of public lands, mostly in the West. BLM also manages about 700 million acres of subsurface mineral resources. In this course, you'll hear a presentation on the unique challenges and issues that BLM's cultural resource specialists confront in managing our subsurface estate.

BLM encourages visitors to enjoy their public lands and learn about the broad patterns of prehistory and history that shaped our nation. The heritage resources that BLM manages are integral to vibrant communities and have a place in supporting diversified rural economies across the West. One of BLM's roles is to facilitate widening appreciation for heritage resources and to responsibly manage them in a sustainable way.

As you all know, BLM manages the public lands under the principle of "multiple use," so that the public lands and their various resource values "are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people."

A look back to the "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for 1947," which covered the year 1946, the year in which BLM was established through the consolidation of the General Land Office and the Grazing Service, provides some perspective. It is illuminating to find out how many acres BLM managed at the time of its establishment, and an astounding 778 million acres. By the time Federal Land Policy and Management Act (what we refer to as FLPMA) was enacted in 1976, we were down to 474 million acres, only a few years later, we were down to 343 million acres, and today we manage "only" 258 million acres.

The state with the most dramatic drop is Alaska. In 1970, they managed almost 300 million acres, and today they manage "only" 85 million. We will return to these numbers in a little bit.

As an interesting aside, the 1947 report noted that receipts over appropriated expenditures represented a ratio of almost \$5 for every \$1 spent on the operation of both the former General Land Office and Grazing Service.”

To this day, BLM has always been in a situation where the services and products it provides generate a surplus of receipts to the Treasury.

In fact, a look at comparable figures on receipts generated in comparison to the agency’s appropriation some sixty years later showed grazing fees, recreation and use fees, timber sales, mineral leasing and production, and other activities generated over \$3 billion in receipts, half of which was transferred to states as special payments. With an appropriation that year to BLM of approximately \$1 billion, it appeared that BLM generated at least \$3 for every dollar appropriated to the agency.

BLM lands encompass a wide array of physiographic regions and geomorphological landforms, as the following images attest. They encompass extensive grasslands, forests, high mountains, arctic tundra, and deserts.

Such as ...

Arctic Tundra at Alaska’s Tangle Lakes Archaeological District

Sonoran Desert through which the Agua Caliente Trail traverses in southeastern California: in the foreground you can see large cairns along the trail that runs from near Palm Springs to the Salton Sea

Prairies and steppes of the Great Plains including here Pompeys Pillar, where William Clark’s signature, of Lewis and Clark fame, is found

Eroded badlands in the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness in New Mexico

Lovelock Cave in Nevada’s Basin-and-Range province

Alpine Tundra in the lower 48 at Golconda Mine located on the Alpine Loop Back Country Byway in southwest Colorado

The Columbia Basin at the Challis Bison Jump on the Intermontane Plateau

The 5 major fields of responsibility for the heritage programs include: (1) prehistoric and historic cultural resources, (2) paleontological resources, (3) tribal consultation, (4) museum collections, and (5) public outreach and education

The first wave of BLM cultural resource specialists came along between 1975 and 1977, although the very first archaeologist, Alden Sievers, had arrived by 1974. For many years, the number of BLM cultural resource specialists held steady at somewhere between 120 and 140. Then in the late 1990s, the agency received an influx of fire money, and this resulted in perhaps another 15-20 fire archaeologists being added. And then more recently, with passage of the Energy Policy Act in 2005, we’ve seen perhaps another 10-15 positions.

Some 180 cultural resource specialists are actively working in the program by 2010. Many of these cultural specialists wear two or three different hats. Meanwhile, a handful of specialists have also moved into management. BLM also has a very limited number of paleontologists, tribal liaisons, collections curators, and educators.

The Washington Office includes 9 staffers in addition to myself.

A key program statistic often alluded to is the state of basic resource inventory. As of 2010 we estimated 21 million acres of public lands had been formally inventoried for cultural resources constituting some 8% of the surface lands BLM manages.

The 8% figure is very misleading. Let me explain. The inventory figures go back to the first heritage program annual report, which cumulatively covered the early program years of 1970 to 1981. You'll recall from earlier that in 1970 BLM managed 474 million acres, but by 1980, we managed only 343 million acres. So, as you can figure out for yourselves, even with no new inventories, a decreasing denominator (land base) and a stable numerator (acres inventoried) gives the impression that BLM lands have been inventoried at a much greater rate than actually the case. This illusion has continued through time.

This also means we have inventoried some public lands that no longer belong to BLM, lands that were either added to other agencies' oversight such as Death Valley National Monument or exchanged with states or private parties.

Changing land patterns introduces various nuances. For example, an interesting side issue is who has responsibility for managing museum collections that came off what were once public lands.

For those of you who might be interested in knowing how long it would take BLM's roughly 180 cultural resource specialists to inventory the remaining 240 million acres of uninventoried lands, if they did nothing else but inventory (field survey, recordation, and records maintenance), Richard Brook, formerly a stalwart of the cultural heritage program, calculated that it would take some 110 years of hard labor.

The inventory to-date has led to over 328,000 recorded cultural properties of which 425 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 20 are National Historic Landmarks. Over 400 of these 300,000 properties have one or more structures.

Regarding collections made from public lands, BLM curates some 4 million objects in 3 BLM administered repositories and another 8 million in over 140 non-federal repositories.

Now turning to appropriations again. In recent years the Cultural budget through the 1050 subactivity has been around the \$16 million annually

Compared to the \$4.5 million appropriated in 1980, it appears the program has enjoyed considerable growth of funding support – some 3.5 times. However, using an inflation adjustment, the actual growth has been more in like 1.5 times as this chart shows.

Volunteers and partnerships have contributed greatly to the achievements of the heritage program. In 2006 alone, volunteers donated some 127,000 hours worth an estimated dollar value of \$2.5 million. Partnerships, largely through the Challenge Cost Share program, added another \$2 million that year.

Now let's turn to the legally mandated review of proposed development actions on public lands, designed to guard against inadvertent damage to significant cultural resources. This is commonly referred to as Section 106 work, an integral part of the National Historic Preservation Act. As of 2010 we were addressing some 11,000 actions a year, actually down from 16,000 annually in better economic times prior to 2009.

The Heritage program has embraced several key objectives for cultural resources as laid out in the BLM 8100 manual:

- Respond in legally sufficient and professional manner to historic preservation statutes, some of which will be discussed in other modules;
- Manage a cultural resource program according to the principles of multiple use, that is, so that the public lands and heritage resource values "are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people";
- Recognize the potential public and scientific uses, and values attributed to cultural resources, and manage the resources so these values and uses are protected;
- Contribute to land use planning so as to optimize use of cultural resource information and to safeguard opportunities for achieving appropriate uses of cultural resources;
- Protect and preserve representative examples of the full array of cultural resources. Without adequately planning ahead, a scarce type of cultural resource could be mitigated out of existence;
- Avoid inadvertent damage to cultural resources; and
- Further the goals of the current Departmental Strategic Plan as set by each Administration and the corresponding BLM Operating Plan

BLM's heritage resources represent the special places and tangible remains of at least 13,000 years of human adaptation to the land, as well as eons of habitation by plant and animal species, many now extinct. Many great events that shaped our nation were played out on the landscapes BLM now manages.

These landscapes are America's outdoor museum, where artifacts and sites, or even dinosaur tracks, are preserved in place, and where visitors earn their experience through self-discovery. The outdoor museum provides a unique opportunity for the public to explore their heritage in remote and natural settings.

For example ...

The skull of a tyrannosaur.

Spear points crafted by Paleo-Indian hunters in Alaska offer evidence that humans were present in the Western Hemisphere more than 10,000 years ago. At the Mesa Site, located within the Arctic Circle, ancient hunters had a unique vantage point for spotting bison and mammoth.

A Mammoth Tusk from Murray Springs in Arizona

A Utah ruin at sunset

Blythe Intaglio along lower Colorado River in California, managed by the Arizona Yuma Field Office. This picture was taken in 1952 by National Geographic. Oversized intaglios such as this one were made by scraping away the darker top layer of gravel in the desert to reveal a lighter subsurface. The significance of the image, the date of its production, and its creators are unknown—a mystery for the ages.

Approximately 2,500 years ago, the marshes and lakes in northern Nevada hosted plants and animals sought by hunters and gatherers. This duck decoy, preserved in Lovelock Cave, was fashioned from perishable reeds and feathers. It offers a rare insight into ancient cultures of the Great Basin.

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado where ancestral Puebloan builders carefully planned and located this tower some 800 years ago at the very edge of a cliff with defense in mind. This site and others are still places of importance for Pueblo people living today.

Sand Canyon Pueblo ceramics, some 750 years old from Canyons of the Ancients

Tepee rings in Wyoming

A Spanish fort Santa Cruz de Terrenate occupied from around 1776 to 1780. These are the adobe walls that remain.

The Tolar Petroglyph Site, located along a tributary of the Green River in southwestern Wyoming, contains a rock carving of a horse-and-rider. Horses and riders became a popular rock art motif in Wyoming after the horse was introduced into the area in the 1800s. The horned buffalo headdress and the lance and shield suggest the rider is a Comanche warrior.

Along the Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway in Colorado, the Empire Chief Mine at Henson Creek. In the late 1800s, miners in search of silver, gold, and zinc cut a network of roads in this rugged terrain to transport ore by mules. Mined ore was dumped at tipples (where freight cars were unloaded by tipping them) like this one for processing.

The Hanging Flume in Montrose County, Colorado. This 1891 gem was named to the 2006 World Monument Watch list of 100 Most Endangered Places. Brackets supported a six-mile-long hanging flume, which transported 8 million gallons a day for use in separating gold from ore. Suspended above the river, the flume bears witness to the ingenious engineering associated with gold mining.

The Oregon National Historic Trail running west of Independence Rock.

In the late 1800s, Major Eugene Van Patten, a Confederate soldier who served under General Stonewall Jackson, constructed this mountain retreat, which once hosted the infamous Pancho Villa. A doctor converted the retreat to a tuberculosis sanatorium in the early 1900s.

The historic Empire Ranch House forms the centerpiece of the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, designated by Congress in 2000.

The 1893 Turn Point Lighthouse built on Stuart Island in Washington's Puget Sound

Major General George S. Patton established the Desert Training Center in 1942 in the Mojave Desert of California to train soldiers for combat in the deserts of North Africa. This altar is one of three non-denominational worship sites built there.

Through the years we have promoted the stewardship of cultural resources through various initiatives. One important recent initiative was BLM's Our Enduring Legacy, also titled Preserving America: An Enduring Legacy. A major thrust of this initiative is cultural resource enhancement.

Beginning in late 2005, with active BLM management and Departmental support extending to the Secretary of the Interior's level, we launched this effort with an eye towards significantly expanding the proactive management component of the program.

The Enduring Legacy initiative tiered off of the momentum we generated when preparing for the 2006 Antiquities Act Centennial. The vision and objectives laid out in Our Enduring Legacy represented a major milestone in the evolution of our program and has served as a guide for program priorities in following years.

With this initiative, BLM was finally set to showcase its world-class heritage resources—you've seen some of the pictures. BLM was also set to fulfill the ideals of EO 13287 on Preserve America as a means of preserving its heritage resources. I would like to highlight three "takeaways" of the EO:

- It reiterates the government's stewardship responsibilities for cultural resources;
- It compels federal agencies to manage their cultural resources in collaboration with federal and nonfederal partners, including Indian tribes; and
- It directs federal agencies to use its cultural resources to promote economic development, in particular heritage tourism.

As part of Our Enduring Legacy initiative, we saw Preserve America as an opportunity for the BLM and the Department to advance its mission, contribute to the wealth of our nation, and enhance the quality of life for our fellow citizens.

This Enduring Legacy is built on the principle of citizen stewardship – the responsibility of each public land visitor to protect and preserve our heritage for future generations.

Our pitch is that:

- America's public lands, located predominantly in the West, offer an incredible opportunity for education, self exploration, and a glimpse at past lifeways; and
- Gateway communities, adjoining public lands, have a vested interest in protecting the heritage resources on public lands because they're the ones who stand to benefit economically (this is the same message that we've been preaching since we developed our Adventures in the Past program in the early 1990s).

An emphasis on archaeological resources is testament to the fact that 80 to 90 percent of cultural resources on public lands date to the prehistoric era and consequently the majority of our museum collections tilt toward that time period as well.

Specifically, Our Enduring Legacy proposes to accomplish these things:

- Collaborate with partners
- Support sustainable economic development, in particular heritage tourism
- Promote conservation of cultural resources
- Involve citizens in stewardship activities
- Involve tribes in protection of their ancestral legacy
- Expand knowledge of BLM cultural resources and museum collections
- Make cultural resources accessible

With the modest increased funding support of recent years, the program has offered a wider array of opportunities for students, teachers, tourists, and tourism providers, community partners, and Indian tribes to be involved in caring for and promoting heritage sites.

We expanded volunteer, site steward, and partnership programs helping BLM accomplish site stabilization, interpretation, inventory, curation, stewardship, monitoring, research, and more.

More specifically, our priorities in recent years have been to:

- implement stabilization and other physical protection measures at sites appropriate for heritage tourism;
- increase the number of volunteer hours contributed to those activities;
- identify in greater detail BLM collections in non-federal repositories, and catalog, package, and make them accessible for interpretation, education, and research;
- expand and institutionalize site steward and avocational programs and make them statewide in all 11 Western states, increasing the number of sites monitored;

- conduct heritage tourism workshops to develop on-the-ground tourism venues, leveraging BLM dollars with local tourism providers; and
- increase partnerships with Indian tribes, implementing projects to identify and assess places of traditional cultural importance.

Examples of the people, the kinds of endeavors, and related resources highlighted are:

A member of a local tribe and site steward at the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado

Students learning from collections at the Anasazi Heritage Center in Colorado

Rock art at Three Rivers in New Mexico

Rock art motif in Utah

Lowry Pueblo at the Canyons of the Ancients

The ceiling detail in a prehistoric dwelling in Utah

The Mule Canyon Ruin in Utah

Students exploring at the Canyons of the Ancients

The heritage program does face some key challenges in the second decade of the 21st century:

- First, budgets are likely to decline in the near future in actual terms given the difficult national economic climate – not just in the CRM subactivity funds but in other program areas as well that partly support heritage activities.
- Secondly, the accountability quandary – the Executive and the Congress grade all agencies and departments. Since most receive a poor or failing grade, they can easily justify not increasing the agencies' budgets until they improve their performance, a nearly impossible task for some with historically modest level budgets. It's a classic Catch-22 (i.e., we won't give you more funding until you improve your performance, but you can't improve your performance without more money).
- Earlier I mentioned the surge in BLM cultural resource hiring that took place between 1975 and 1977. Many of that generation have already retired, or are one bad hair-day from leaving. A loss in institutional memory concerning the critical early program development years results from this mass exodus.
- The growing number of time consuming and costly law enforcement cases involving violations of Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) have grown in recent years, sometimes involving over 20 defendants in a single case – the workload comes largely unplanned and consequently unfunded placing a drain on agency resources

There are opportunities as well:

- First, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 provided formal statutory recognition to BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). This increased focus on NLCS can partially expand funding capabilities for heritage resource work. However, in economically tough times, we do guard against potentially detracting from work outside NLCS units where equally important and perhaps even more threatened resources can be found.
- Secondly, the 2009 Act also provides greater legal authority for protecting and managing paleontological resources on public lands. This provides a stronger foundation for enhancing the program's effectiveness.
- Third, ties to Administration priorities remain strong in the Heritage realm, including such initiatives as America Great Outdoors, the Youth initiative, managing Treasured Landscapes, and working with tribal communities.
- Lastly, special celebrations often bring a sharp focus on the Heritage program, both locally and nationally. The latter has included such opportunities as the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial, the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial, the Homestead Act anniversary, and the General Land Office commemoration.

Thank you for taking the time to view this module. I hope it helped to elaborate on what are the goals and priorities of the program, some of its history and composition, and challenges we face and opportunities we see in the second decade of the 21st century. I hope you now enjoy the other modules in this series.