

Question and Answer Part 1

D. Ballenger: At this point, we would like to open it up to you, and answer any of the questions that you may have. So if you have a question, or a comment for us, please give us a call, send us a fax or send us a text or email. Dial us toll-free at 877-862-5346. Or fax us at 602-906-5701. Or send us an email or a text to BLM_TC_telecast@blm.gov.

A. Bobo: So, I have heard you all mention several times about the importance of monitoring. And with decreasing budgets and small staffs, can you give us some helpful hints on ways to monitor?

J. Jones: You bet, Anthony. As I said earlier, it's always a challenge. There's never enough time for us to do the entirety of our jobs. So I really do rely heavily on other staff members while they are out there in the field doing their work. Also, law enforcement, and volunteers. We have folks that like to participate in-- whether it's a running race or a mountain bike race. We sign them up as volunteers and get the inside scoop of the logistics for that particular event. When I'm out in the field doing other duties, I also try and keep my eyes out for permittees at various trail heads and locations, try and document that, and then in addition to monitoring their use out on the field, you can use it to compare with their post use reports at the close of the season.

D. Ballenger: Anthony, can you tell us about how the revised handbook discusses interagency passes?

A. Bobo: Yes, actually we have an entire chapter that talks about the interagency passes, Chapter 3, and it outlines the way that we are to use the passes and how to order the passes and all of those types of things. So chapter 3, if you are interested in the interagency passes addresses that.

D. Ballenger: Great. We have a question from Nevada. And this question says, if we issue a five-year permit, and the permittee puts on the event in year one or two, but then takes a year off and comes back on year four or five, should the permittee be paying the annual permit fee in year three? It's my understanding that the permittee must pay the annual permit fee even if they do not have the event. Would this be correct?

J. Jones: Yes, indeed, that would be correct. Chapter 1 in the revised handbook on page 1-17 does talk about the annual validation of permits. As part of the annual validation, we require that the permittee has paid the annual fees, they've completed their post-use report for the prior year, that they've submitted any applicable bonds, current insurance and/or licensing, as well as having received an acceptable performance rating for that prior year. So, yes, you are correct.

D. Ballenger: Great. We have one more question from the field. Will the-- and this is from Utah. Will the Washington Office or the N.O.C. be working to create RMIS reports to extract SRP data? Currently the BLM does not have the ability to run reports on the data entered on SRPs.

A. Bobo: That's a good question. That sounds like a Dave Baker question.

D. Ballenger: It is a Dave Baker question. Dave Baker is our RMIS expert working at the NOC. We might have to get back to you on that. I see we have your name and address here, and we'll get back to you on that question. Thank you.

A. Bobo: So how about let's discuss a little bit about multiyear permits and what are the benefits of having multiyear benefits and can they be terminated before it expires? It kind of touched on it, on the question you had-- what was it Nevada or-- but what are some of the benefits of having those multi-year permits?

D. Ballenger: Jen, would you like to start this one off?

J. Jones: Sure, you bet. I think we are fortunate to have the ability to issue multiyear permits in order to efficiently process, utilize our staff, hopefully monitor what have you, because these permits are discretionary in nature, if there's adequate cause or concern, we certainly have the ability to make the decision to cancel those permits at any given time, even if it's on year three of a ten-year permit. Honestly, I think efficiency is the best part of the multiyear permits. You get the paperwork and you process it. If there are changes in the operations, whether it's an event or commercial use or organized group, they can resubmit their operating plan at any time and update that file with those changes, but ultimately, we are saving ourselves some time and some paperwork.

A. Bobo: I remember the discussion yesterday that we were having and you talked about also the NEPA and not having to do that every year or whatever.

J. Jones: That's a great point. I had a call a couple of weeks ago and somebody was asking about whether or not we have to complete NEPA each year on a multiyear permit and that is part of the paperwork efficiency is, say, we do a programmatic environmental assessment for a particular use or permit, there's no need to revisit that NEPA document, unless changes occur.

D. Ballenger: Great. I see that we have a call from Zack in Elko. Zack, are you there?Z

Zack: Yes, I am.

D. Ballenger: Good morning.

Zack: Yeah, I have a question that goes along with the other NEPA question. Outfitters and guides, for example, when they're doing a 10-year renewal and they don't usually hunt in wilderness study areas, but in the case the game runs into it or they get a tag where they can hunt in that area, what kind of NEPA adequacy does that meet? Usually we would do a CX, but does that rise to the EA level?

D. Ballenger: Zack, a quick clarification there. Is-- are they being-- are they just pursuing the game into the area or is that part of their permitted area of use overall?

Zack: It's not part of their permitted use.

D. Ballenger: But they may just pursue the game there?

Zack: They may just pursue the game into the wilderness study area or wilderness.

D. Ballenger: Okay. Great. Thank you. Good question. Have you experienced this one, Jennifer?

J. Jones: I think that's a great question, Zack. Thanks. In order to be on the safe side I would probably recommend looking at that initial proposal in an environmental assessment and including that wilderness adjacent or wilderness study areas that the game may possibly travel into. As we know, with wildlife, they don't see those boundaries and I think probably it would be safest on the onset to look at it through an environmental assessment and do your wilderness I.M.P. and proceed accordingly. If they don't utilize the W.S.A. or the wilderness, you are still on the safe side. That would be my suggestion, if at all possible.

D. Ballenger: Great. Thanks. Well, don't hesitate to call in, fax, or email us. Anthony, did you have another question or a comment that you wanted to make?

A. Bobo: I think I have another question.

D. Ballenger: Okay.

A. Bobo: What kinds of things do we not issue SRPs for?

D. Ballenger: Do we not issue SRPs? That's a great question. We wouldn't issue an SRP if it was not in conformance with our land use plan, if it wasn't covered by the activity level management plan. We don't issue SRPs for military exercises and we wouldn't issue an SRP if we are not able to mitigate potential resource damage or dangerous to public health and safety.

J. Jones: If I could tag along with that, we had a question as to when it may be appropriate to sponsor or co-sponsor an activity and therefore not require a special recreation permit. I would like to just mention to the audience there that it is appropriate to sponsor and/or co-sponsor

events if there's, indeed, a direct benefit to the public lands. If we can utilize that effort to accomplish a management objective, and great examples would be things like the National Public Lands Day projects, maybe a river or a trail cleanup type situation.

D. Ballenger: Great. I see that we have another question from the field. This question says: My question is are we supposed to be entering our permits in LR2000 and keep LR2000 updated like the lands cases? Good question. Are you guys familiar with?

J. Jones: To the best of my knowledge, LR2000 is strictly for the lands program. I have never entered any special recreation permits in there. I think perhaps an example in which you may enter something into LR2000 would be a special recreation permit that does have a filming component with it. And that would be that separate 2920 or lands permit issuance.

D. Ballenger: Yeah.

J. Jones: So for the most part, I would say, no, but with specific examples you may end up doing so or your land staff may.

D. Ballenger: Great.