



For America's Heritage

THE PUBLIC LANDS Monitor

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2020 PLF ANNUAL MEETING ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING SEPTEMBER 15-18, 2020

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It is not too early to mark your calendar and plan to attend the 2020 Public Lands Foundation Annual Meeting. This year, it will be held at the Holiday Inn in Rock Springs, Wyoming, September 15-18, 2020. The tentative theme for the meeting is "Wildlife Migration Corridors," with a possible second theme addressing greater sage-grouse issues.

Members of the Board of Directors and others interested in attending the board meeting on Tuesday, September 15, should plan to arrive in Rock Springs on Monday, September 14. Wednesday, September 16, will consist of a BLM tour in the area and an evening barbecue. A full-day meeting to address the theme is planned for Thursday, September 17. A PLF banquet and silent auction will be held that evening. The Board of Directors will meet again on Friday morning through noon, September 18.

The **Holiday Inn Rock Springs** is located at 1675 Sunset Drive, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901. We have reserved a block of rooms at a rate of \$79.00 (plus taxes) per night for either Standard King or Standard Two Queen beds. Please make your reservations early and before the cutoff date of September 1, 2020 by calling **1-307-382-9200**. Be sure to mention the **Public Lands Foundation** to receive the above-mentioned rate. This rate is good two days before and two days after our meeting dates, subject to availability.

This rate does not include breakfast. But, breakfast vouchers can be purchased for \$5.00 per person upon check in or in the morning at the front desk before going to the restaurant. Check In is 3:00 p.m. Check Out is 11:00 a.m. Cancellation must be done 24 hours prior to arrival.

A roundtrip airport shuttle is complimentary at scheduled times. For additional hotel information go to www.holidayinn.com/rocksprings.

Meeting registration and additional information will be provided in the Summer edition of the Monitor. If you have any questions, please contact Beau McClure by email at vpops@publicland.org, or by phone at (623) 587-7883.

The Public Lands Foundation advocates and works for the retention of America's Public Lands in public hands professionally and sustainably managed for responsible common use and enjoyment.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Ed Shepard

The past year has been a year of change for our favorite agency, the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM is going through its biggest change since Reorganization Order No. 3; the establishment of BLM in 1946 from the General Land Office and the Grazing Service. Change can be good when

it is well thought out and done for the right reasons. Unfortunately, the current change being implemented by BLM has not been well thought out and it is very questionable if it is being done for the right reasons.

The BLM is moving its headquarters out of the Nation's Capital to Grand Junction, Colorado. Only about 60 employees would remain in Washington, D.C. to carry out the coordination work with the Interior Department, OMB, Congress, and other agencies and stakeholders that BLM works with on a day-to-day basis. The Department claims this will put decision making closer to the ground and the people affected by BLM decisions, and will improve service to public land users. But 97 percent of the employees are already located in the West in state, district, and field offices where the decisions should be made. Most of the BLM's senior leadership will be moved to Grand Junction, including the Director (assuming a Director is nominated and confirmed by the Senate), the Deputy Director for Operations, and most of the Assistant Directors.

While the plan is for the leadership to be in Grand Junction, the remainder of the Washington Office will be dismantled. The Assistant Directors' staffs will be spread across nearly a dozen states, far removed from the Assistant Directors and far removed from their counterparts in other divisions. They will still be doing Washington Office work in their new location, just without the advantage of being in the same location as their interdisciplinary colleagues or

colleagues from other agencies. Does this sound like an efficient and effective way to manage our public lands? It doesn't to me. All of this has been done with little to no involvement of the career staff that could have helped the Department meet goals of efficiency, if only asked. Effects of this ill-conceived plan are many and will be felt by the agency for many years to come.

The PLF has opposed this reorganization from the start. We started by asking that the Department consider the ramifications of BLM being the only land and resource management agency not located in the Washington, D.C. area. We asked that they consider the expertise of their own career people in any reorganization plan, as was done in the mid-2000s when the Management-for-Excellence (M4E) reorganization was successfully accomplished. The PLF was received politely, but largely ignored. The PLF also testified before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee during the FY 2020 appropriations hearings, and many of you wrote letters to your members of Congress. We increased our efforts when the reorganization plan was released on July 16, 2019 and it was clear the headquarters relocation was really a dismantling of the agency. A group of PLF Board members travelled to Washington to meet with Congressional committee members and staff and expressed frustration over the lack of clarity and transparency in the proposal, asking Congress to look into the move and get questions answered before providing further funding.

The PLF and other organizations' meetings with House Natural Resource Committee Chairman Grijalva led the Chairman to call for an oversight hearing on September 10. I testified before the Committee and asked that Congress stop the reorganization or at least predicate it on an independent analysis of its true costs, benefits, and consequences on the management of the public land, employees, and the organization by the Government Accountability Office. Chairman Grijalva has submitted several document requests to Secretary Bernhardt and asked GAO to initiate an investigation into the reorganization. The investigation is currently ongoing.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN (CONTINUED)

Several national media sources have been keenly interested in the reorganization and have interviewed PLF leadership who have explained the implications this move will have on public land management. Independent of the PLF efforts, 30 former Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors and State Directors wrote a letter to Secretary Bernhardt on September 5, with copies to Congress, expressing concerns over the reorganization and the potential consequences.

In early December another group of PLF Board members again made a trip to Washington to meet with Congressional members and staff. The group met with House and Senate members from both parties. In conjunction with this trip, Chairman Grijalva and Vice-chairwoman Haaland held a press conference with former Director Bob Abbey and former Deputy Director Henri Bisson to express concerns over the BLM reorganization plan.

In addition to the information sharing trips, PLF worked to get the story out beyond D.C. Former Directors Abbey and Caswell had a joint opinion piece published in Politico. The PLF ran a full-page ad in Politico, signed onto by several nonprofit groups that supported keeping a BLM presence in Washington. A copy of the full-page Politico ad is included as an insert in this edition of the Monitor. Op-eds written by former State Directors and Assistant Directors were also published in several major newspapers in Alaska, Arizona, Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming.

As you can see, we have been very busy in the past several months trying to keep the BLM headquarters intact. This involved a lot of work by many people from PLF and support from other conservation organizations, professional societies, and sister retiree organizations. We received a financial assistance grant that helped defray the costs of travel and the Politico ad.

Congress did not stop or slow the move as we had hoped. However, the FY 2020 Appropriations Act did not give BLM the added funding requested, keeping funding for the move at the FY 2019 level of \$5.9 million. They also expressed their displeasure with the Department's lack of transparency and

added the following paragraph requiring monthly meetings with the Appropriations committees.

Bureau of Land Management, Reorganization. – The Department has not fulfilled its obligation to fully communicate the organizational and financial details of the reorganization and relocation of the Bureau's Washington, DC headquarters. It has not provided Bureau employees, Congress, agency stakeholders or the general public with adequate information regarding the move. Furthermore, it has not explained how it will sustain its operations and remain an effective land management agency following the anticipated loss of much of its senior management and the expected attrition of its workforce caused by the reorganization. The Department is therefore directed to begin monthly briefings with the Committees on Appropriations on the status of the reorganization, including an initial briefing explaining the Bureau's plan for ensuring continuity of the agency operations and addressing the immediate impacts of likely staff shortages caused by the reorganization.

The reorganization is underway. The office space has been leased in Grand Junction and the relocation of leadership has started. The acting Director announced he would be in Grand Junction starting January 2, 2020. Management directed reassignments have been initiated to move most Washington Office staff to the many State Offices identified in the July 16 reorganization memo. At this time, we don't have firm numbers on how many employees will actually report to their new duty stations, take new jobs, or retire or resign. Many employees have already left the agency and indications are that most Washington Office employees will leave the Bureau.

All of this work could not be done without the support of PLF members and other retirees that contributed many hours of service to our organization. The PLF operates on a small budget and much of this work could not have been done without the generous donations made by dozens of PLF members and friends. Thank you!

The PLF will continue to monitor the reorganization and stay active on this issue. We ask that members remain vigilant and let us know of any issues that you notice arising from the reorganization.

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONAL AWARD

JIM STOVALL

MANAGERIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY

The Public Lands Foundation is proud to present the 2018 Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Managerial/ Administrative Category to Jim Stovall, District Manager, Pecos District, Roswell, New Mexico.

Mr. Stovall has served as an integral leader in the BLM's Pecos District for the past 13-plus years. He has guided the offices through Land Use Plan revisions and amendments. He has led the offices to their one-millionth improved acre with the RESTORE New Mexico initiative. He has led the implementation of a new Secretarial Order that allows for the co-development of Oil/ Gas and Potash in a 500,000-acre area in southeastern New Mexico. He has pushed for giant leaps in technological innovation. He has also helped to put agreements in place that have fostered the long-term understanding of cultural resources in the area. During all of this effort, he has promoted environmentally responsible energy development in the busiest oil and gas offices in BLM.

Since around 2010, the Permian Basin has become one of the most active Oil and Gas basins in the United States, leading to a huge increase in Applications for Permit to Drill and Applications for Rights-of-Way in the Bureau of Land Management's Pecos District Field Offices. This increased activity has demanded strong leadership to push for environmentally responsible energy development, while still allowing for the multiple use and sustained yield mission of the Bureau. Mr. Stovall has been critical to the success of the two Pecos District offices over the last 13-plus years he has served as a member of the District management team, and as District Manager for the past five years. During that time, he has created an environment that serves as a model of innovation, work output, and responsible land stewardship for other BLM offices.



Jesse Juen (PLF on left) presenting Award to Jim Stovall with NM State Director Tim Spisak (right)

Mr. Stovall's leadership has proven invaluable as the Carlsbad Field Office has undertaken a revision to its 30-year old existing Land Use Plan. Balancing long-and short-term benefits while managing public lands to best meet the needs of the American people, in a planning area rich with both energy resources, and natural resources (world-class caves, productive grasslands, habitat for unique species, rich cultural resources and heritage) is one of the ultimate land management challenges we face in BLM. Mr. Stovall has led this effort with a quiet confidence, courage, and a belief in his people, through changing political climates and priorities.

Mr. Stovall is a leader who inspires people to do better. As one coworker said of him: "Jim is constantly seeking ways to make one believe they are better than they think they are. Jim's door is always open and he makes you feel welcome at all times."

Because of his commitment to public land management, the Public Lands Foundation recognizes Jim Stovall with its Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Managerial/ Administrative category for 2018.

Edward W. Shepard, President

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONAL AWARD

PAUL SUMMERS

TECHNICAL/OPERATIONAL CATEGORY

The Public Lands Foundation is proud to present the 2019 Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Technical/Operational category to Paul Summers, a hydro-geologist at the BLM National Operations Center, Denver, Colorado.

Paul has had an outstanding 50-year career in BLM and is recognized as a national ground-water expert. Paul is a one of a kind expert in the scarce skill category whose work has had an enormous impact on multiple use decisions. He has quietly fostered a long-lasting appreciation of the importance of ground water-to-water dependent ecosystems in more arid landscapes.

Paul has demonstrated outstanding professionalism in addressing and resolving ground-water supply issues in remote areas of all 11 contiguous western states. The Washington Office has often relied on Paul's expertise; most recently in the development of a BLM Water Resources Manual. When ground water issues emerge in Washington Office business, Paul, as the sole ground water expert in BLM, is typically consulted.

In 2018, Paul provided extensive ground-water expertise to Utah's West Desert District in support of potassium lease development (Mineral Leasing Act). Paul's contributions were critical to the assessment of impacts from pumping of the brines and in developing a hydrologic monitoring operations

plan. Paul has also recently completed a report to document the application of a ground water flow model, which is important in development scenario modeling for Powder River Basin oil and gas production.

Throughout Paul's career and in particular, during the past decade of escalating conflicts between water supply and resource development, Paul has demonstrated steady perseverance in assisting BLM line managers and specialists in improving their analysis and decisions that are complicated by the interplay of use authorizations, drought, climatic variation, and evolving water regulations.

Paul Summers' contributions to BLM multiple use analyses and alternatives

have added value, technical rigor, and validity to BLM decisions and to the long-term sustainability of lands administered by BLM. In his modest and quiet manner, and with the heart of a teacher, Paul has quietly fostered a long-lasting appreciation throughout BLM of the importance of ground water to water dependent ecosystems in more arid landscapes.

Because of his commitment to public land management, the Public Lands Foundation recognizes Paul Summers with its Outstanding Public Lands Professional Award in the Technical/Operational category for 2019.

Edward W. Shepard, President



Bob Moore (PLF on right) presenting Award to Paul Summers (left)

MY SADDLE BLANKET

By Stu Carlson – Cowboy Poet

Some call it a rag. Others say it's a pad.
Or a welcomed windbreak 'side the trail.
While that blanket's a bond 'tween saddle and horse,
it's my buffer 'gainst raw sleet and hail.

There's many a time it was crusted with frost,
when sacked out dog tired in far hills.
Curled up on cold turf 'side a smoke-driftin' fire,
it held off cruel wind-driven chills.

It's not big and soft like Marriott quilts.
Spread out it won't cover my frame.
And, there's smelly bronc sweat with mold in its
folds.

Odors rancid that time might reclaim.

On extended range outings it shielded me some,
with my feet exposed near that fire.
I'd wake in distress, boot bottoms singed black,
toes toasted 'for I could retire.

That blanket shows wear from rough-risky rides.
Snags exist from cactus and brush.
Scattered burn spots note sparks from past nighttime
fires,
tossed wildly by reckless wind gusts.

Random stinks, stains, and smears reflect countless
rides,
horsebackin' grasslands 'cross our West.
And these worn, rug-like wraps make covers
trailside,
for buckaroos seekin' ground-huggin' rest.

To sack out 'til dawn off's a lost-cause contrived.
One first must be saddle-sore tired.
But, on terrain rocky hard, sound sleep's a daff dream
since that blaze needs be fueled to stay fired.

-sleep well-

Editor's Note: Stu is a member of the Public Lands Foundation, with over 39 years of federal service, and lives in Park City, Utah. He has been a wannabee cowboy poet since retirement. Stu is a 1960 graduate



Stu Carlson, the Cowboy Poet

of the University of Idaho, School of Forestry with a Range option and served in the Marine Corps as a helicopter pilot. His career with BLM included positions in the Range program in the Boise, Vale, and Prineville Districts; was a Realty Specialist in Folsom; an Environmental Specialist in Kanab; and a Planner in the Utah State Office. He completed his BLM career in the Minerals program in the Washington Office and as Deputy State Director for Minerals in the Eastern States Office. Stu has also been a bedside volunteer at the Salt Lake City VA Hospital for over 20 years. We hope to publish some other poems by Stu (the Cowboy Poet) in future editions of the Monitor.

PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION GOALS

- Keep lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in public ownership and open to use by the public.
- Support multiple use management under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.
- Encourage professionalism by BLM employees.
- Increase the public's understanding of and support for the proper management of the public lands.

WESTERN NATIONAL RANGELAND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

By Karen Launchbaugh
University of Idaho

Fifteen FFA chapters and 68 high school students from across Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Washington tested their knowledge of rangeland management in the Western National Rangeland Career Development Event, on November 11-12 in Elko, NV. The event was coordinated by the Western National Rangeland Education Association (WNREA) dedicated to raising awareness of career opportunities in rangeland conservation and management. Sponsors of the event included the Public Lands Foundation, Idaho Rangeland Resources Commission, Idaho and Utah Sections of the Society for Range Management, and rangeland degree programs from the University of Nevada-Reno, University of Idaho, and Montana State University.

"This career event is designed to mimic standards commonly used in the rangeland management profession. Students get hands-on experience with skills and scenarios they may encounter later as working professionals," said Dr. April Hulet, rangeland extension specialist at the University of Idaho. Rangelands comprise nearly half of western North America, making their proper use and management vitally important to communities and economies in western states.

Students competed for awards by learning to identify 81 common rangeland plants, measuring vegetation attributes for livestock and wildlife habitat, calculating an appropriate stocking rate, considering grazing management options and estimating the cost of habitat improvements. "The event really prepares students with rangeland skills including real world math," noted Emily Hale, a BLM employee who assisted the team from Omak, WA.

Dr. Paul Meiman, rangeland professor at the University of Nevada-Reno told the coaches and students, "There are far more jobs than students who graduate with professional range degrees. This is a great profession and we want to identify students who want to work outside to manage these lands for wildlife, livestock, or to restore rangelands and perhaps manage fuel loads to reduce wildfire risk."

FFA member, Logan Ballard, from Wells, NV was named "Top Hand" taking first place and winning the coveted silver buckle. Other top individuals included Kinley Whitmarsh from Hagerman, ID, Jacob Flick from Gooding, ID, and Bryce Pose and Ryan Nelson from Hagerman, ID. Team



Karen Launchbaugh, Professor
University of Idaho

awards recognized Hagerman FFA, ID (1st Place), Wells FFA, NV (2nd Place), and Gooding FFA, ID (3rd Place). Top Rookie teams from Green Canyon, UT and Omak, WA were also recognized.

Several rangeland professionals joined students in the field to describe how the skills they have learned are put into practice. Representatives from natural resource agencies and organizations, including BLM, the Forest Service, and Elko County, described their job duties. Universities offering rangeland degrees, including the University of Nevada-Reno, University of Idaho, and Montana State University helped students explore college degrees that lead to careers on the range. You can learn more about the event at www.wnrcde.org or contact Karen Launchbaugh (WNRRangeEducation@gmail.com or range@uidaho.edu). The 2020 Western National Rangeland event will be in Baker City, OR on November 9-10, 2020 and Karen Launchbaugh would love to hear from any PLF members that may be interested in helping with the event.

Editor's Note: Karen is a Professor of Rangeland Ecology at the University of Idaho and a nationally recognized educator working to attract students to rangeland degrees and secure future careers on western lands. She has degrees in Rangeland Science from North Dakota State University, Texas A&M University, and Utah State University. Karen has expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the PLF for support to the Western National Rangeland event. The WNREA and PLF have common missions to conserve western lands. The WNREA conserves land one student at a time, rather than one acre at a time.

**WILDLAND FIRE-USE DECISIONS
ECOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL
CONSEQUENCES**

By Steve Ellis

(originally published in The Forestry Source, Society of American Foresters)

I once was asked what the more-trying and consequential decisions I had made during my natural resources career had been. What immediately came to mind was not a volatile and emotional issue such as wild horse and burro management, but rather the many decisions I had made quietly and out of the public eye associated with allowing fire to play its natural role on the landscape.



Steve Ellis

These were the many go/no-go decisions I made about what was then called “wildland-fire use” on both general national forest lands and within congressionally designated wildernesses—the sort of decisions that can have tremendous ecological, social, and political consequences. They were decisions that, for the most part, had to be made in a relatively short period of time, sometimes at home on a weekend afternoon, and once while on horseback in the Elkhorn Mountains of Baker County, Oregon. During six rewarding years as forest supervisor of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, I made many such calls.

Variables I took into consideration included how many days before a season-ending weather event could be expected; distance of the ignition from management-unit boundaries; what other fires were burning on the forest and in the region; firefighting resource availability in the event more-active suppression action became necessary; fuel types and the locations of previous burns; and distance to nearby communities and private lands. My goal was to always have both ecological and sociopolitical successes, so that we would keep wildland-fire use in our toolbox. During my tenure on the Wallowa-Whitman NF, I was fortunate to have a talented and experienced fire organization and a solid bench of district rangers who had experience dealing with wildfire. Fortunately, we never had a “go” decision get “out the door,” so to speak, but we did have a few fire-use situations that necessitated more than simply a watchful eye from an aircraft and by our fire lookouts. For the majority of these “use fires,” the primary action we took was monitoring them

once or twice a day from fixed-wing aircraft as they crept through the wilderness or general forest-area landscapes, sometimes flaring up during the peak of the daily burn period or when they moved into a patch of subalpine fir. Ecologically, they reduced fuel loading as they created a mosaic pattern on the landscape. The more such fires we had, the more we could use this tool and the resulting natural fuel breaks. “More holes in the canopy” we sometimes called it. As a result, future wildfires would theoretically be less of a threat to private land and communities outside the wilderness and national-forest boundary.

There were a handful of times we were forced to take more-aggressive suppression action to keep a fire within the prescribed fire-use management area. I recall an instance when we had two early-September lightning ignitions several miles inside the Eagle Cap Wilderness boundary. Both “go” decision fires crept slowly around for several days, with one eventually going out. The other start became quite active one mid-September day when the humidity dropped to an unseasonably low level and a very strong surface wind started blowing from the south. The fire moved several miles in a long, linear pattern, and actually breached the wilderness boundary before a fast-moving cold front came in and winds shifted out of the north to lay the fire back on itself. This cold front was accompanied by a season-ending moisture event. On the day this fire made that long linear run, aerial retardant and helicopter bucket drops proved mostly ineffective at knocking down the head of the fire. Spotting was an issue, especially in subalpine fir. This “nail biter” for

a day ultimately never breached the national-forest boundary, and essentially, produced a long, linear fuel break for management of future fires.

A late-August multiple-lightning ignition in Hells Canyon necessitated engagement of an experienced wildland fire-use team, and eventually, of a Type-2 incident-management organization based in Riggins, Idaho, to keep this natural fire within the intended management zone. It’s when naturally caused fires burn onto lands on which use is not intended that sociopolitical failures can occur. When this happens, the potential of losing fire-use authority may well become reality. This never happened to me in the six years I made extensive use of this tool in designated wilderness, primarily because I carefully considered the variables listed earlier. It also helps to have wildland-fire experience during one’s career, a basic understanding of meteorology, and knowledge of what fire does in various fuel types and topography. On this fire, I authorized both chainsaw and retardant use in a few parts of the Hells Canyon Wilderness to successfully keep the fire within the intended fire-use management area. Helicopter bucket dips from the nearby Snake River also helped. We used this burn to minimize the spread of another fire in the same area a few years later.

With all the development that continues to occur in the wildland-urban interface, use of this tool can become a riskier venture. I found during my career that forest-management practices that reduce stand density and ladder fuels, combined with controlled underburning, are very helpful in reducing the wildfire threat to communities. The wise use of all these tools will help ensure healthy, sustainable forests—and the communities that depend on them—for the many uses the public values.

BLM LEADERSHIP

With the continued changes in the leadership positions of BLM, we would like to again provide an update on the current BLM Leadership, including the State Directors that provide the day-to-day on-the-ground management for our public lands. The following are the current Deputy Directors and the

State Directors for each of the BLM State Offices:

Deputy Director, Policy and Programs	William Perry Pendley
	<i>Exercising Authority of the Director extended to April 2, 2020</i>
Deputy Director, Operations	Michael Nedd
Alaska State Office	Chad Padgett
Arizona State Office	Raymond Suazo
California State Office	Karen Mouritsen
Colorado State Office	Jaime Connell
Eastern States Office	Gary Torres (<i>Acting</i>)
Idaho State Office	John Ruhs
Montana State Office	John Mehlhoff
Nevada State Office	Jon Raby
New Mexico State Office	Tim Spisak
OR/WA State Office	Jose Linares (<i>Acting</i>)
Utah State Office	Anita Bilbao (<i>Acting</i>)
Wyoming State Office	Duane Spencer (<i>Acting</i>)

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Voting for the PLF 2020 Officers and Board Members was completed in December and we want to thank all members who voted either on-line or by the mail-in ballot inserted in the Fall edition of the *Monitor*.

As of January 1, Mary Jo Rugwell is a new Director-at-Large, Anna Steele is being replaced by Jenna Whitlock as PLF State Representative for Idaho, and Geoff Middaugh has recently been replaced by Barron Bail as PLF State Representative for Washington. We thank Anna and Geoff for their commitment to the PLF and BLM over the years and we look forward to their involvement from time to time in the future.

We also want to welcome Jenna, Mary Jo, and Barron to the Board. As many of you know, Jenna has already taken a leading role, along with Ray Brady, in arranging a “fly-in” to DC to address the relocation of the BLM Headquarters Office to Grand Junction, Colorado. Mary Jo also played a significant role in that effort. Barron Bail was a recent appointment to the Board by PLF President Ed Shepard and approved by voice vote of PLF Board Members during a recent conference call.

In addition, the National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) has voted to accept our

invitation to have an ex officio seat on the Board. The NAFSR has identified Jim Caswell, former BLM Director, as their representative for this position.

Thanks to our new Board Members and to all who have served, and those who continue to serve, the PLF and support the proper management of lands administered by BLM.

MEMBER'S FORUM

Our Member's Forum, an online communications tool, is up and running! It's an exclusive benefit hosted on our website only for PLF members. As with most new things, we're just getting started and we need YOU to help add content and get the conversations started!

The Welcome Forum provides the forum rules, explains how the Member's forum works, and what you can do with it. There are links to videos on how to use the forum.

The BLM and Land Management Issues Forums are places to ask questions and discuss topics on those matters.

The PLF Forum is the right place to discuss matters about our organization, raise questions about the Member's Forum, or other matters for the Board of Directors to consider.

In addition, you can create your own Member's Profile and share as much or as little as you want about yourself with other PLF members. You can also update your contact information with PLF here. You may send messages between members as well. You'll also find a PDF file with a Member's Directory that will be updated periodically. To access the Member's Forum, use the login button on

the upper right corner of our website's homepage at www.publicland.org. Use your email address and password on file with us. If you need to create a password or have lost your password, click on "Forgot Password" and follow the instructions. If you need assistance, contact George Stone at gstone@publicland.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

The PLF has an active presence on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. We post our own news content and share noteworthy articles from reliable news sources every 24-48 hours. We concentrate on Facebook and Twitter where we have our largest audiences called "followers." Even if you don't use social media, you can view our posted content on our website's homepage at www.publicland.org in the lower left "From Our Social Media" corner. Why are we on social media? There are many reasons, but the main one is that it plays a critical role as a component of PLF's communications with our members and the public. Social media is interactive – which can be good and bad! As of the end of 2019, we have over 1,300 Facebook users who follow us, and 900 Twitter followers.

Our Facebook posts normally reach 200-400 users. However, our posts have reached larger audiences since July when the BLM reorganization became a major topic of interest.

Periodically, we run ads on Facebook to improve our outreach. We did so in December in conjunction with our full-page ad in POLITICO on the BLM reorganization and Headquarters relocation. Our ad ran for a week. We reached 14,800 targeted Facebook users with the ad accounting for about half of that total, with 668 users clicking on the link to our website's special BLM reorganization

page and resulted in over 1,300 "engagements," meaning "likes," comments, shares, or some other action. One of the benefits of social media is that it generates some useful data that PLF can use to improve our outreach. For example, we can learn which topics are of most interest to our audiences and adjust our content accordingly. If you want to follow us on social media, look for PLF as follows:

Facebook: @publiclandfdn
Instagram: publiclands
LinkedIn: Public Lands Foundation
Twitter: @PublicLandFdn

IN MEMORIAM

The PLF is committed to never forgetting the dedicated employees of BLM who have left us. We do so on our website's Memorial Wall and by publishing names of those who passed away in the Monitor. If you have a death to report, please email us at obits@publicland.org, preferably with a link to or copy of an obituary. In addition, we know that many of our Facebook followers are also members of the separate "Remembering BLM" private Facebook group. Please be aware that the private Facebook group is not affiliated with the PLF. You can rely on the PLF to keep you informed of topical news on the public PLF Facebook page, our website, other social media sites, and the Monitor newsletter.

Note: Putting together the Memoriam list in the Monitor and maintaining the Memorial Wall on the PLF website takes a lot of work by PLF volunteers. If you find errors, or if you know of something we may have missed, we apologize, and will correct the record. If you have concerns, please let Ray Brady know at rbrady@publicland.org.

Donna Marie Bailey-Kock on October 10, 2019, in Soldotna, AK. Donna moved from Montana to Anchorage, AK in 1965 and worked for many years with BLM in Alaska before retiring.

Kenneth Beckstrom on August 6, 2015, in Santa Clara, UT. Ken was a Range Conservationist for 38 years in Elko, NV and St. George, UT.

Robert Thomas Berasi on November 16, 2019, in Salmon, ID. Bob earned a Forestry degree from Hawking Technical College, Ohio and moved to Salmon, ID in 1981 to work with the U.S. Forest Service. His last 17 years were with BLM.

Richard Burkholder on February 2, 2019, in Lakewood, CO. Dick joined BLM as a Realty Specialist in the MT State Office in 1959 and also served in the ID State Office in that capacity. He worked at the Denver Service Center from 1974 until retirement.

James Ronald Cox on October 22, 2019, in Las Cruces, NM. Ron attended New Mexico State University and received a Master's Degree in 1970. He served in the Soil Conservation Service, BIA, and BLM, retiring in 1995.

Max C. Dolato on November 15, 2019, in Salem, OR. Max served as a Marine during World War II and was a firefighter, smoke jumper, and a graduate of Montana State University. Max worked for BLM for over 30 years.

Philip Joseph Engleman on September 29, 2019, in Hanksville, UT. Philip received a degree in Mechanics from Dixie College, UT and joined the Air Force in 1986. After discharge he served in the reserves for six years at Hill Air Force Base, UT. He worked for over 16 years at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Halls Crossing, and Bullfrog, before moving to Hanksville, UT and working for BLM. He was due to retire from BLM in January 2020.

Erick V. Kaarlela on December 6, 2019. Erick began his career with the Geothermal Office of the Conservation Division of USGS in the mid-1970s and transferred to BLM with the minerals merger in 1983. He ended his career with BLM in the Washington Office, Division of Fluid Minerals.

Michael Lucero on October 16, 2019 in Cheyenne, WY. Michael attended the University of Wyoming and was the BLM Wyoming EEO specialist.

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION?

Please help us keep our records current. It's easy to do by updating your profile on the Member's Forum at www.publicland.org or message us at info@publicland.org.

IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

Virginia Frances Lee Main on October 8, 2019, in California. Ginny moved to Alaska from Tacoma, Washington in 1956 and worked at the Alaska Native Hospital in Anchorage before working for and later retiring from BLM.

James Lee McCullough on November 6, 2019, in Prattville, AL. James was drafted into the U.S. Army in December 1948 and served for over 30 years as a helicopter and fixed-wing pilot, including service in Vietnam and Korea. Following his retirement from the Army in February 1979, he flew helicopters for the BLM Alaska Office.

Sam McReynolds on December 6, 2019. Sam was the former Chief of Information Technologies in the BLM Wyoming State Office. He worked for BLM from 1977 until his retirement in 2011 in both Grand Junction, CO and in Wyoming.

Martin Shreve Phillips on November 24, 2019, in Riverton, UT. Marty graduated from the University of Michigan in 1963 with a degree in Wildlife Biology and began a 30+ year career in wildlife protection with the Missouri Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Service, and BLM. In July 1985 he became a BLM Special Agent in Charge in Utah, working closely with the U.S. Attorney's Office conducting investigations and assisting with prosecutions of wildlife cases, until his retirement in 1997.

Robert D. Rheiner on November 3, 2019, in Bakersfield, CA. Bob graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University, TX with a degree in Forestry and enjoyed a 34-year career with BLM. He held positions in Colorado, Idaho, Washington DC, California, and ultimately retired as the BLM Associate State Director of Oregon/Washington. He retired in Bakersfield, CA and continued to volunteer with BLM, aiding in the restoration of the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse in Cambria, CA.

Ronald R. Rochna on November 6, 2019, in Cove, OR. Ron began his federal career in 1969 with

the Forest Service in Waldport, OR in the wildfire program and moved to the BLM Salem District in 1979. He transferred to the Boise Interagency Fire Center in 1989 before retiring. He was an expert in Class A foam use in structural and wildland fire applications.

Larry Rex Scofield on November 5, 2019, in Falls City, OR. Larry earned a Masters degree in Wildlife Biology at the University of Massachusetts and worked for six years for the State of Massachusetts Fisheries Department. Larry moved to the Oregon coast in 1977 and began a 20-year study of the spotted owl while working for BLM. He worked in the Salem District and mentored many interns and seasonal biologists and botanists who later became career professionals with BLM, the Forest Service, and the State. He retired from the BLM in 1999.

John Stephen Scull on October 28, 2019, in Sacramento, CA. John served in the Marines, with two tours of duty in Vietnam. He retired from the BLM in 2009, with 37 years of federal service.

David L. Simons on July 4, 2019, in California. Dave attended the College of the Siskiyous and worked for the Forest Service in the fire program in the McCloud Ranger District, Shasta Trinity National Forest, CA. He moved to the BLM Rawlins District, WY in 2002 as a NEPA planner and retired in 2015 from the BLM Cascades Field Office in Salem, OR after 45 years with the federal government.

Linda Wemhoff on December 5, 2019, in Emmett, ID. Linda worked at the warehouse at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise processing orders for supplies and equipment in support of fire operations for 30 plus years.

Richard Widmar on December 7, 2019, in Oklahoma City, OK. Rich was a Cadastral Surveyor for the Eastern States and NM State Offices, retiring as the BLM Indian Lands Surveyor in Anadarko, OK.

DONATIONS

As part of the PLF efforts to address our concerns regarding the BLM reorganization plan and the Headquarters move, the Board set a goal to raise \$10,000 by the end of 2019 to cover travel and other costs associated with our advocacy, outreach, and education work. We are pleased to report that we exceeded our goal and raised a total of \$10,895 to support our efforts. We thank those members, including an anonymous donor, who provided donations to this cause.

STOP BLM MOVE CAMPAIGN

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You can make a designated donation by credit card on our website at www.publicland.org, or by check sent to the Public Lands Foundation, P.O. Box 7226, Arlington, VA 22207. In your transmittal, please make sure to mention that your donation is for the George Lea Founder's Scholarship or for the Student Congress Fund. Remember, if you are making a donation in memory of someone who has passed away, you can designate your donation to go to one of these funds. The PLF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization. Your donations are tax-deductible to the maximum extent permitted under the law.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BLM REORGANIZATION

I have been following the relocation of BLM offices from Washington, D.C. to western locations with interest, having spent four years of my BLM career in the Washington, D.C. office (1972 to 1977). Generally I support PLF's position opposing the restructuring and relocation.

In the Fall edition of the *Monitor*, pages 16 & 17, there were six reasons listed as to why the effort is not a good idea. The first reading found me nodding in agreement, mostly based on my experience in the Washington Office. Then there was the classic "wait a minute"! In examining the six reasons from a different angle, they seem to be more Bureaucratic unhappiness with having to move and a lot of "maybes" about terrible things that "might" happen. If I read them right, there are no specific disasters that will occur on the actual on-the-ground BLM activities. I do not think the mineral leasing, mineral sales, and locatable mineral programs will be adversely affected. I do not think the grazing program will be affected. I see no changes in the existing lands, realty, and r/w program. I can't see where our responsibility for wildlife habitat will change. The wild horse and burro program will be a challenge wherever offices are located. This list of BLM regular duties under FLPMA could go on and on with about the same comments. Unless our arguments in opposition can be reframed from unhappy bureaucrats having to move someplace else, to include specific problems and issues that will only occur because of the reorganization and relocation, our arguments are hollow.

If movement west is such a good idea, the effort should be Department-wide, with other agencies undergoing the same kind of reorganization efforts. I assume this has not happened. What I sincerely hope does not happen is that an attitude will develop that "this will never work", and worse, "we should do everything we can to make sure it doesn't". If this occurs, the BLM has lost its excuse

to exist. The agency becomes more concerned with serving itself rather than serving the public.

What we should be most concerned with is what the delegation of authority will look like and to who does it exist, if not why, and how to make sure that western decisions are made by western people out west. I hope instead of the horror story I've outlined above that there will be a positive response by BLM managers to roll up their sleeves and make this work. Because I believe it can. We may have one of the best career opportunity periods in BLM for a long time, with the opportunity for bright eyed, bushy tailed, aggressive, go getters, to jump in to make BLM work in a different world. Thanks for taking the time to let an old man get something off his chest.

David Walter, Cheyenne, WY

The Monitor is what we make it and we encourage you to provide Letters to the Editor or provide other reviews and comments on articles included in your newsletter. It is important to hear from our membership, and if you like something or don't like something, let us know. If you do send an email to the Editor, don't be surprised if it winds up as a Letter to the Editor in the next edition of the Monitor. Please provide your comments to rbrady@publicland.org. In addition, members are encouraged to use the bod@publicland.org email address to communicate with the PLF Board.

The Monitor generally reflects ongoing PLF activities, events, updates, awards, and information on former BLM employees. We encourage articles and discussions of issues by posting quality content that also provides a positive exposure of the goals, objectives and mission of the PLF. However, we need to take some precautions when posting information to the newsletter and other forms of social media to ensure appropriate rules of behavior. In keeping a positive experience for our members, we reserve the right to publish only comments, photos, and other material deemed appropriate by the PLF. We intend on maintaining a friendly and professional tone in the articles in the Monitor and any postings of Letters to the Editor.

245 MILLION REASONS TO SAVE THE BLM



Bob Wick, BLM

CONGRESS: STOP SECRETARY BERNHARDT FROM DISMANTLING THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The BLM cares for 245 million acres of public land, more than any other federal agency. And it's one of the few agencies that raises more money than it spends. Recently, political appointees in the Department of the Interior have taken steps to dismantle the agency by sending its top leaders and senior specialists to scattered locations in the West, with no public or employee input. This plan only weakens the BLM and its ability to manage the public lands for all Americans. Without a seat at the table in Washington, DC, public lands will be on the menu.

The Public Lands Foundation joins a long list of public land stakeholders who oppose the plan to dismantle the BLM. This land is yours, let's keep it that way.



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