



For America's Heritage

# THE PUBLIC LANDS Monitor

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VOLUME XXXIII No. 2

SUMMER QUARTER 2020

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## 2020 PLF ANNUAL MEETING

### VIRTUAL

SEPTEMBER 14-16, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the many uncertainties still remaining about its duration, public health, air travel, etc., the PLF Executive Committee decided to cancel the PLF 2020 Annual Meeting in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Instead, we will have a Virtual Meeting using ZOOM technology on September 14-16, 2020. We are looking at approximately two hours for each of the three days.

The PLF Virtual Annual Meeting webpage provides meeting schedules and agendas along with links to our YouTube page where you can watch the proceedings of our meeting sessions. No registration is needed. You can ask questions or post comments while you watch. We will monitor the site and relay questions to speakers. The preliminary Agenda for the Virtual Meeting is as follows:

### Monday, September 14, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Pacific Time

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

- PLF Transition Team presentation to the Board on actions to be considered after the November election
- Hiring of an Executive Director
- Fundraising

### Tuesday, September 15, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Pacific Time

#### GENERAL MEETING—WILDLIFE MIGRATION CORRIDORS & SAGE GROUSE

- Presentation by Dwayne Spencer, Acting Wyoming BLM State Director
- Presentation by Angi Bruce, Deputy Director, Wyoming Game & Fish Department
- Presentation by Bob Budd, Director, Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resources Trust
- Each presentation followed by discussion and Q&As

### Wednesday, September 16, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Pacific Time

- Discussion and decision on PLF name change to BLM Retiree Association
- Other business

The PLF has a limited number of Zoom seats available for members who wish to speak or ask questions using Zoom's sidebar chat feature. To use Zoom, please register on our website's Virtual Annual Meeting page. Zoom seats are available on a first come/first served basis. *(continued on page 3)*

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.

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

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Ed Shepard

**COVID 2020** – Day Whatever. We certainly do live in interesting times. Who would have thought back in January, as we were beginning a new year and a new decade, we'd be spending a lot of the year staying at home and interacting with family, friends, and colleagues through Zoom calls? I had never even heard of

Zoom until March and now it's become the "New Normal". It seems that I'm on a Zoom meeting at least once a week these days. I have to admit, it does work pretty well but, in my mind, it will never replace face-to-face meetings. For now, and maybe well into the future it will be a way of life and how we will conduct our lives, including how we will conduct our Annual Meeting this year (*see more on the Annual Meeting in this edition of the Monitor*).

As this changes the way PLF works, it is having a big impact on BLM and other agencies. Many of the offices remain closed, for the most part, with some opening just to cover field operations. Everyone is working to adopt and keep the agency running, and from what I'm hearing, doing well. I have visited with a couple of BLM employees and discussed how business was working. One employee, a supervisor, told me that employees working from home (now known as WFH) was working far better than he thought it would. He felt that productivity was maybe a little better than in the office, because of fewer interruptions. He said deadlines were being met and there have been few problems with employees being available. Another employee told me that, while WFH has some benefits, she misses her colleagues. I have heard mixed reviews from some of the stakeholders that work with BLM as to how well this is actually working. In the usual BLM way, employees will adapt to get the job done.

As the Covid-19 restrictions begin to ease and Government offices begin to reopen, my guess is that some of the practices that have evolved through the closures will become part of the new way of office life. The offices that we remember will likely never be the same and maybe that's a good thing.

The fire season is picking up and could be a bad one according to NIFC projections. The fire community always has its normal challenges balancing response during severe fire seasons, now they have the added complications of balancing fire response with Covid-19 safety measures. I have talked with some of the interagency fire community leaders and they have developed procedures to balance responding to fires while being cognizant of the additional safety measures needed to protect fire fighters. They are also aware of the concerns of rural communities, with very limited health care, being subjected to large concentrations of firefighters coming in from all over the country and possibly bringing the virus with them. All this will assure that the state and federal wildfire agencies will have their hands full.

In other important news, the White House on June 30 formally submitted to the Senate the nomination of William Perry Pendley as the Director of the BLM. The nomination of Pendley, who has been Acting Director since July 2019, raises serious concerns over the future management of the public lands. The PLF believes that it is extremely important that the Director of the BLM support the mission of BLM under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and have the skills and competencies in natural resource management to lead the agency through the complicated decisions that he or she will be required to make. We will communicate our concerns with Congress during the nomination process.

On a more cheerful note, S. 3422, the Great American Outdoors Act passed overwhelmingly in the Senate on June 17<sup>th</sup> and, possibly by the time you get this edition of the *Monitor* will have passed the House and been sent to the President. This Bill finally makes the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanent and fully funds it at \$900 million. It also authorizes funds to address the large maintenance backlog that has grown on public lands. Despite the bipartisan support for the Bill, it is not without controversy. Many legislators and some stakeholders are weary of adding excessive acreage to the Federal land holdings. I'm sure this law will continue to raise debate as it is implemented in the next several years.

I will close by wishing you all a safe and healthy summer. As Covid restrictions are gradually (or maybe not so gradually) lifted, I hope that you are able to at least partially fulfill your summer vacation plans. Just stay safe!

Registrants will receive an e-mail with the Zoom meeting web address, meeting ID, and password. We recommend that registrants use a computer or tablet with a microphone and webcam assuming a Zoom seat is available. Please mute your microphone when you are not speaking. Optional: You do not have to download and install the Zoom application to participate, but you may wish to do so for a more robust viewing experience. Just sign up for a free Zoom account. The appropriate links are provided in the next column:



<https://publicland.org/news/events/2020-annual-meeting/>



<http://bit.ly/1rmYu9P>



<https://zoom.us/>

If you have any questions, please contact Beau McClure by e-mail at [vpops@publicland.org](mailto:vpops@publicland.org) or by phone at (623) 587-7883.

#### 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.

#### LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP AWARDS – 2020 REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS

Once again the Public Lands Foundation is accepting nominations of a private citizen(s) or group(s) who deserve to be recognized for their sustained contributions at a landscape scale to the conservation and management of public lands administered by the BLM. PLF members and BLM employees are encouraged to submit nominations by August 1, 2020. Winners will be selected by the PLF Board of Directors in September and they will be announced and recognized soon thereafter.

The BLM has a variety of land use plans and projects that are intended to address the use, allocation and improvement of the public lands administered by the BLM. Organizations and individuals outside of government are often the catalysts for demonstrating effective approaches for achieving good stewardship of these lands and resources. Good stewardship may be defined as an ethic that embodies cooperative planning and management of resources by agencies, organizations, communities, and others actively engaged to prevent loss of resources and facilitate their improvement in the interest of long-term sustainability. PLF's Landscape Stewardship Award honors the work done by private citizens/groups who work to advance and sustain community-based

stewardship on a landscape scale that includes, in whole or in part, lands administered by BLM. The focus on landscapes is intended to be broad in nature versus small-scale, local, project-oriented efforts.

The organizations, groups and individuals typically envisioned for this award are those who took a leadership role to address landscape-scale issues. Emphasis is on individual local citizens or groups comprised of people who are typically all-volunteer without paid staff. A good example would be a coalition of individuals or citizen groups joining together to address issues within a certain landscape to bring about improved stewardship. The award is a citation acknowledging the nature and significance of the awardee's achievements.

The nomination form and guidelines can be found on the PLF website at [www.publicland.org](http://www.publicland.org)

Click on "About", then on "Awards", then on "Landscape Stewardship Award / Certificate of Appreciation Recipients". Once there, you will find information about the award, candidates, nomination and selection processes, evaluation factors, and a copy of the nomination form.

Please send nominations by August 1, 2020, by e-mail to [dmari@publicland.org](mailto:dmari@publicland.org).



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## WESTERN NATIONAL RANGELAND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The next Western National Rangeland Career Development Event is currently scheduled to be held in Baker City, OR on November 9–10, 2020. The event is coordinated by the Western National Rangeland Education Association and is dedicated to raising awareness of career opportunities in rangeland conservation and management. Sponsors of the event include 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.

You can learn more about the event at [www.wnrcde.org](http://www.wnrcde.org) or contact Karen Launchbaugh ([WNRangeEducation@gmail.com](mailto:WNRangeEducation@gmail.com) or [range@uidaho.edu](mailto:range@uidaho.edu)). 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. **Karen Launchbaugh would love to hear from any PLF members that may be interested in helping with the event.**

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## 2020 – 2021 GEORGE LEA FOUNDER'S SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Jamela Thompson of Utah State University and Elizabeth Kowallis of the University of Idaho were selected by the PLF to receive the 2020-2021 George Lea Founders' Scholarships.

Jamela is a Master's-level graduate student in the Yocom Fire Ecology Lab at Utah State University. She is researching how fuel treatment effectiveness alters wildfire outcomes and behavior in Utah. Her study analyzes federal agency data from treatments and wildfires in the state,



Jamela Thompson, Utah State University

with the goal of providing management implications of fire. Her experience in ecological restoration, fieldwork, and prescribed fire include working for the Missouri Botanical Garden, The Nature Conservancy, the Student Conservation Association/Americorps, and a private environmental consulting firm. After completing her thesis she plans to pursue her career in ecological restoration, which involves fire (prescribed or wildfire), fuels management, fieldwork, and geospatial analysis related to public land management in the West.

Elizabeth is a Senior-level Forestry major with a double minor in Fire Ecology and Management, and Forest Operations, as well as a GIS certificate. During the academic school year Elizabeth works in a soils lab where she assists PhD and Masters



Elizabeth Kowallis, University of Idaho

graduate students with their projects. She is involved with student clubs such as the Society of American Foresters and the Environmental Science Club. She also spends time on weekends volunteering with the University of Idaho sustainability center and volunteering at the Soil Stewards Farm. After graduation, Elizabeth plans on traveling around the United States, working in different areas. After working for a few years as a silviculturalist, using her GIS certificate to incorporate remote sensing and LiDAR in her work, she hopes to enter graduate school and conduct her own research.

Thirty students from 20 universities and colleges in 13 states applied for the 2020-2021 scholarships, which is the seventh year of the program. Each of the applicants was very well-qualified, making for a challenging selection process. Each application was independently reviewed and rated by the PLF selection committee members Connie Stone, Ray Brady, and Dave Stout.

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## PLF ARCHIVES MATERIALS AVAILABLE

We are excited to announce the availability of over one hundred articles that have been digitized and are now available for viewing by PLF members! This collection includes documents ranging in time from the 1950s to 2010. Note, however, that 38 documents are undated. Highlights from this collection include:

- Interview transcripts of BLM employees conducted by Pat Clason and Cecil Roberts. Many of these were conducted as part of the Centennial Project in honor of the Society of American Foresters around 2000.
- Recollections and oral histories provided by former and retired BLM employees.
- Articles that were published in BLM news publications such as *Our Public Lands*.
- Documents about the history of BLM organization units and various BLM programs.
- Defining Moments – Forty Years in Review by Wayne Winterton.
- Factors Which Influenced and Guided Growth and Evolution of the BLM: 1946-2010 by Glen Collins.
- The Adventures of a BLM PAO (Public Affairs Officer), by Jan Bedrosian.

To view the materials, log into the PLF website and visit our BLM Forum. You'll find a list of the materials in a downloadable PDF file, and a clickable link to view or download the items. To log into our website, you need to have an e-mail address on file with the PLF and a password. If you forgot your password, you can reset it. For assistance, please e-mail [gstone@publicland.org](mailto:gstone@publicland.org).

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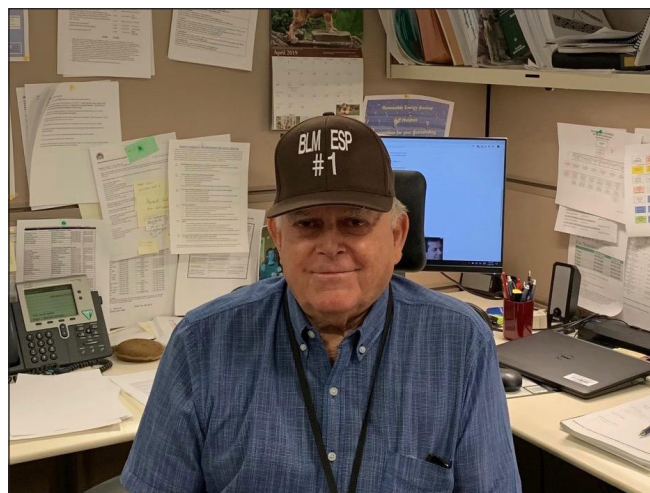
## EXPERIENCED SERVICES PROGRAM

By Dwight Fielder

What if there was a program that allowed BLM to hire experienced workers 55+ to fill critical skills shortages and/or help mentor younger employees? What if that program was flexible enough to accommodate short or long-term needs, with no time limit or hours worked restrictions? What if those experienced workers could be on-board within weeks of identifying the need? That program exists!

Congress granted the Department of the Interior the authority to run an Experienced Services Program (ESP) through a cooperative agreement with qualified, nonprofit organizations. The BLM in February 2019 executed a three-year, \$5 million agreement (the first within the Department of the Interior) with the National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC) – an organization with decades of experience running similar programs for the Department of Labor, EPA, NRCS and the U.S. Forest Service.

The ESP is a cost-effective way to address the brain drain that many federal agencies have experienced over the last 10 years, which is likely to continue into the near future. Workers under this program are NOT federal employees, nor are they employees of the NOWCC. They have a unique status and are classified as “enrollees” in a federal work program. Unlike rehired annuitants, enrollees earn a full salary in addition to their full retirement benefits. They also have liability coverage. Enrollees do not occupy a federal FTE, and federal hiring rules do not apply.



Jeff Holdren, PLF member and ESP participant

How does it work? A BLM office identifies a need for an experienced person to complete work and/or train and mentor a younger professional. They fill out some program paperwork, along with a cost code, and submit it to the National Program Officer for the BLM (see below). A task agreement is issued against the Master Agreement and the NOWCC posts the job on their website (<https://www.nowcc.org/esp-program-blm/>). Most of the time, BLM office will have a retiree in mind for the job and will send that person the link to the job. In some cases, the NOWCC will conduct outreach for the position, when BLM has not identified an individual (or individuals) for the position. Uploading a simple



resume and answering a few online questions is all it takes to apply.

Since the NRCS started their program in 2008, they are now up to about 500 enrollees in the program. The Forest Service started their pilot program in 2016 and they have over 160 enrollees in their program. The BLM currently has over 30 enrollees in the program and issued an Instruction Memorandum (<https://www.blm.gov/policy/im-2020-014>) that opened another round of hiring using FY 20 funds. Jeff Holdren, PLF Virginia, was the first hire by BLM under the Experienced Services Program and is supporting the Lands and Realty office in Washington, DC. Luis Coppa, PLF Virginia, was also recently hired by BLM under the program to support the Engineering and Asset Management programs.

Word is slowly spreading within BLM about the Experienced Services Program, but it is still not widely known. If you are interested in the program, let your local BLM office know. They have information (including Standard Operating Procedures) available to them on their BLM internal sharepoint site found at: <http://bit.ly/BLM-ESP-20>. They can also contact the BLM National ESP Program Officer, Celene Nguyen, at (303) 236-9422 or [cknguyen@blm.gov](mailto:cknguyen@blm.gov). Questions can also be addressed to Beth Stover, Program Management Specialist at the NOWCC, at (303) 238-0497 or [bstover@nowcc.org](mailto:bstover@nowcc.org).

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### WILD HORSES AND BURROS WHAT'S NEXT???

By Tom Allen – PLF Colorado and  
Rex Cleary – PLF Nevada

If the WH&B question is posed in the context of significant change, the short answer is, who knows?

What has not changed?

- Wild horses and burros continue to increase at historical rates.
- Appropriate management level (AML) of 26,770 WH&B.
- Fertility control vaccine PZP remains impractical to use except in unique areas such as the Pryor Mountains in Montana and the Little Book Cliffs in Colorado, where even in those locations it was necessary to gather excess horses.



- Increases in acreage of range destroyed by horses that, due to inadequate precipitation and poor soil, are incapable of rehabilitation.
- Increases in acreage of range destroyed by horses that can only be restored by costly but unlikely funding.
- Increasing displacement of native wildlife by horses and burros.
- Appropriation language prohibiting euthanasia and sale without limitation.
- Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) litigation against most everything BLM proposes to do to manage WH&B and rangeland.
- BLM desire to properly manage WH&B and rangeland resources.

What has changed?

- WH&B populations on the range grew from some 88,000 in 2019 to 95,114 as of March 1, 2020 plus an additional estimated 19,000 new foals
- The BLM budget increased to \$101.5 million, including an added \$21.0 million to gather and hold WH&B. Use of the funding increase is dependent upon submission of a Report to Congress identifying “factors for success, total funding requirements and expected results” to improve management of WH&B.
- Adoptions nearly doubled to 6,026 based primarily on the Adoption Incentive Program (AIP) that pays an adopter \$1,000 to adopt a horse thereby saving about \$24,000 a horse in lifetime care in federal corrals and pastures.
- A slight downturn in the numbers held in off-range facilities; 47,725 now in holding.

- 2020 removals planned at 11,300 versus 7,276 in 2019, translating to an increase in holding.
- Progress in the research trials using a longer acting fertility control vaccine having the potential for preventing pregnancy in mares for three years or longer.

Will the FY 2021 proposal to further increase the WH&B budget by \$15.3 million to \$116.8 million bring about the significant change needed to properly manage WH&B? Most likely it will not. This is because the ever-increasing cost of holding horses for a lifetime will consume the budget. Adoptions and fertility control will be outpaced by new births. Gathers will have to be curtailed as funding is necessarily taken for warehousing the most recent removals. The BLM “Report to Congress: An Analysis of Achieving a Sustainable Wild Horse and Burro Program”, May 8, 2020, provides some insights to the factors for success and their cost.

Analyses discussed in the Report to Congress assume management of WH&B and healthy landscapes in three phases:

- Stabilize on-range population growth over the first 4-5 years.
- Reach AML nationally over the next decade after the first phase.
- Maintain AML in perpetuity.

The Report estimates that the cost of a successful program would have to steadily increase from the proposed FY 2021 level of \$116.8 million to a fifth year cost of \$238.0 million. The BLM qualifies this cost estimate pointing out that advances in as yet undiscovered temporary and long-term fertility control efficacy and duration or humane permanent sterilization methods could significantly decrease program costs. The BLM states that these cost reductions cannot be quantified until these advances are identified and tested. However, every year of delay in resolving this issue only increases the single greatest cost to the program—the care and feeding of increasing numbers of wild horses and burros in off-range pastures and the length of time to achieve AML.

Wherever the Report spoke to additional funding, as it did in eleven separate sections, each time the following statement was necessarily repeated: “The estimates in this analysis are intended to identify to the committees the severity of the program challenges in potential resource terms. These estimates should not be construed to imply Administration

support for particular levels of appropriations for this program beyond FY 2021.”

Back to the beginning — What’s Next??? Will the administration seek funding increases in 2022 such as those identified in its Report to Congress? Will Congress propose a budget anything like that suggested in the Report? Or, will the proverbial can get kicked down the proverbial road again? Past predictions about WH&B numbers and the associated problems have largely turned out to be accurate. Will the dire predictions of starvation and dehydration coupled with destroyed landscapes and a billion dollar price tag on warehousing WH&B change how the public believe the problem should be managed? Who knows?

*Editor’s Note: The BLM Report to Congress is available on the BLM website at [blm.gov](http://blm.gov) under the Programs link, Wild Horse and Burro link, Other Links, and 2020 Report to Congress.*

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### INTERVIEW WITH BOB WICK BLM PHOTOGRAPHER

Interview by Jerry Magee – PLF Oregon  
Video Editing by Zachary Pratt – PLF California

On May 21, 2019, the U.S. Postal Service dedicated the first day of issue of 12 Wild & Scenic River Forever stamps at a ceremony in Tumalo State Park just north of Bend, Oregon. This event was highlighted in the Summer 2019 edition of the *Monitor*. Three of the stamps featured photographs taken by the BLM’s own “Photographer Laureate,” Bob Wick. Bob’s photograph of Steelhead Falls on the Deschutes Wild & Scenic River graced the event program and posters, and played a critical role in the selection of this national dedication site with the Deschutes River and dramatic basalt cliffs as a backdrop.

At the request of the PLF Board, I had the pleasure of interviewing Bob Wick the following morning at Pioneer Park in Bend, Oregon, with the Deschutes River as a backdrop. In addition to providing background stories for the three photographs chosen by the U.S. Postal Service, Bob answered questions ranging from how he first became interested in photography to what he felt were his most memorable experiences photographing BLM lands.

The interview is available for viewing at: <https://youtu.be/Gcvgl4jk3tY>. Zachary Pratt, California, graciously provided his time and intensive effort to edit this video and make it possible to release the video with this edition of the *Monitor*.

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## BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON STATE DIRECTOR BARRY BUSHUE

On June 8, 2020, BLM announced the selection of Barry Bushue as the BLM Oregon/Washington State Director. He replaces Jose Linares who served as the Acting State Director since December 2019. Bushue has a long history as a farmer in Oregon and served as President of the Oregon Farm Bureau for nearly 20 years, as well as Vice President of the American Farm Bureau Federation from 1999 to 2016. He was appointed State Executive Director of the USDA Oregon Farm Service Agency in October 2018. He owns Bushue's family farm in Boring, OR and a retail and agritourism business east of Portland, according to BLM. The BLM Acting Director William Perry Pendley in a statement indicated that "Barry Bushue will be a strong leader in natural resource management in Oregon and Washington. He understands the Pacific Northwest and the importance of the public lands to communities in the region."



Barry Bushue

## BLM EASTERN STATES STATE DIRECTOR MITCHELL LEVERETTE

The BLM on June 23, 2020 announced the selection of Mitchell (Mitch) Leverette as the new State Director for the BLM Eastern States Office. He replaces Gary Torres who served as the Acting State Director since January 2020. Leverette is a 33-year career professional with BLM, working his way up from staff geologist in the BLM California State Office to his last position as Acting Deputy Assistant Director for Energy, Minerals and Realty Management in the BLM Headquarters Office.



Mitchell Leverette

Leverette spent 10 years as the Chief of the BLM Solid Minerals Division in the Headquarters Office. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in geology from the College of Charleston and a Master of Science degree in geology and geochemistry from Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas.

## BLM LEADERSHIP

With the continued changes in the leadership positions of BLM, we would like to again provide an update on the current Leadership of BLM, 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

*Exercising Authority of the Director*

### 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

Mitchell Leverette

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

Barry Bushue

Utah State Office

Anita Bilbao (*Acting*)

Wyoming State Office

Duane Spencer (*Acting*)

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## JOHN FREEMUTH REMEMBRANCE

By Mike Ferguson, PLF Arizona

We all lost a great friend and colleague on May 2. Dr. John Freemuth passed away suddenly from a heart attack. At the time of his death, John was the Endowed Chair of the Cecil Andrus Center for Environmental Policy and Public Lands and a distinguished professor of public policy at Boise State University.

John was known for his "common sense" approach to public policy issues and had a unique ability to balance practical applications with academics. He could address contentious issues in a non-political way that earned him widespread respect and recognition from all who knew him.

His most recognized legacy, however, may be the hundreds of students he taught and mentored



over more than 30 years of teaching. Many of his students became involved in public land management and will carry on his legacy far beyond the State of Idaho.

John was also a great friend of BLM and the Public Lands Foundation. Although his background was political science and public policy, he recognized that “all science is political” and was a huge force in shaping national discussions about many contentious issues such as sage grouse, wildland fire management, and the relocation of the BLM headquarters office.



**John Freemuth**  
Cecil Andrus Center  
Boise State University

Anyone that remembers the BLM Science Advisory Board in the 1990s will remember that John Freemuth was its chair. In this capacity, he was able to take the assignments from the BLM Director and Assistant Directors and structure them into science questions that the Board could address and then take the results and package them in language that was understandable and useful to the decision-maker. In 1999, the Director asked the Board to assist in developing a BLM Science Strategy that would articulate how science would be used in the decision-making process. After several long discussions about the role of science in decision-making, John simplified it for the working group. He said that decision-making was like a 3-legged stool with each leg equal and playing an important role. One leg was social and economic factors, one leg was political factors, and the third leg was science. Each leg was responsible for bringing relevant information and data to the decision-maker who sits on the stool. As with the other two legs, it is NOT the job of science to make decisions but rather to inform the decision-maker to the CONSEQUENCES of alternative decisions. This description of the role of science in decision-making is as true today as when John first taught it to us.

John was a strong advocate for the PLF mission of keeping public lands in public hands and a strong proponent of professional management of those lands by BLM. Many of us really got to know him

through the GLO Symposium in Boulder, CO in 2012. John was a big part of the first PLF Student Congress during that symposium and in each of the three succeeding Student Congresses. John believed in the goals of attracting youth to natural resources and public land management and the idea of providing BLM with input from a youth perspective, which it might not otherwise hear.

In addition to serving as an advisor at each Student Congress, John provided ideas for discussion topics, and reading material, and he encouraged not only his students, but students from other colleges and universities around the country to apply. Much of the success of the Student Congresses is due to John's ideas and in providing high quality students. Not surprisingly, John was involved in helping plan the 2021 Student Congress until it was postponed.

John also helped develop and shape the PLF George Lea Founder's Scholarship program. He helped with the development of selection criteria and provided advice on dealing with university financial aid offices. He encouraged students to apply each year for the Scholarship program and the PLF received eight applications from the University of Idaho and one application from Boise State University this last year.

Over the years, John participated in an untold number of panel discussions and radio appearances related to public land management issues. One of his most recent appearances was at a Congressional hearing in September 2019 on the proposed BLM headquarters relocation.

John leaves an incredibly widespread and long lasting legacy. He also leaves a huge void. Thanks John. We will miss you.

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### **FLOYD KINSINGER – REMEMBERING A BLM RANGE LEGEND**

By Eric Janes, PLF Colorado

Floyd Kinsinger passed away in St. George, Utah on August 17, 2017, but left a lasting legacy with rangeland professionals in BLM and with other federal and state agencies and the academic community. Floyd worked as a Range Scientist for BLM in the Washington, DC headquarters and as the Range Staff Leader at the Denver Service Center, retiring from BLM in 1979. Floyd was an outstanding range ecologist, skilled in facilitat-

ing interdisciplinary collaboration, and he had a major impact on the BLM's rangeland inventory, monitoring and management concepts, and implementation. This short article provides a belated PLF tribute to the life, career, and accomplishments of Floyd Kinsinger.

Floyd was born in Ness City, Kansas and after graduating from Ness City High School in 1943 enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he became a bombardier for naval aviation and served for four years. He graduated from Fort Hayes Kansas State College in 1952 with a B.S. degree in both botany and chemistry and received a Masters degree in 1953. He earned a PhD degree in Range Management from Utah State University in 1957. His PhD dissertation topic was a study to determine the clipping effects on crested wheatgrass root production and root chemistry. Dr. Floyd Kinsinger then accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Range Management at the University of Nevada, Reno, which began six years of teaching and research. He also held a position in the Botany Department of Fort Hays Kansas State College.



Range tour with BLM Director Gregg, Elko District, July 1979 – Floyd Kinsinger in foreground looking left, Director Gregg in background to right.

In 1963 BLM approached Floyd with an offer to join the BLM range staff in Washington, D.C., which Floyd accepted. During this assignment, Floyd was instrumental in developing the Allotment Management Planning (AMP) concept, which was revolutionary at the time, according to George Lea who worked with Floyd in the Range Division. For the first time the Bureau launched into establishment of conservation goals, objectives, and monitoring for each grazing allotment, using the AMP concept.

Floyd transferred to the Denver Service Center in 1974 to become the Range Staff Leader in the Division of Standards and Technology. By 1973 the Natural Resources Defense Council had filed a lawsuit against the Secretary and BLM challenging a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Bureau's livestock grazing program. The BLM had chosen a programmatic approach based on limited range staffing and a shortage of rangeland vegetation inventory and monitoring data. However a court-ordered settlement required BLM to prepare 212 separate EISs within 15 years at a Resource Area level of detail. Floyd was a key adviser to BLM in responding to the NRDC lawsuit and setting the course for the first Livestock Grazing EIS to be prepared for the Challis Resource Area.

More EIS preparations ramped up in 1974-1975 for areas like Colorado's San Luis and the Uncompahgre Valleys. It was becoming more apparent that BLM needed a template for organizing the collection, analysis, and presentation of soil and vegetation inventory data on a large scale and readily available for use in the many EISs which would follow. Floyd soon assembled a team that he would lead in the development of a Soil Vegetation Inventory Method (SVIM) that would systematize the collection of basic data for EIS preparation. Expertise from plant ecologists, statisticians, soil scientists, and range managers was brought to bear on the problem, and a method was released in 1977 originally known as SIM, but soon modified to SVIM. This method would become the first of its kind in BLM to assess vegetation dynamics on rangelands. Site write-up areas were inventoried on grazing allotments across 14 states until 1983 when funding and policy changes caused a partial suspension of its application. However, some Field Offices have recognized great value in continuing to use SVIM in view of the data already obtained.

Floyd was very interested in supporting and mentoring those in the field and in other agencies who were investigating the effects and benefits of livestock grazing systems and vegetation management on rangeland condition, clean water production, and wildlife habitat. Often outside researchers from USDA, USGS, or universities were leading these efforts and Floyd was always willing to lend his support to the BLM personnel working to ensure research was meeting BLM's needs. One professional organization that brought Floyd great satisfaction was the Society for Range Management, for which he served as the 24th President. Shortly after retirement from BLM, Floyd assumed the Executive



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Secretary role for the Society for Range Management headquarters in Denver (1979-1982).

Dr. Floyd Kinsinger will always be remembered as kind, thoughtful, and willing to listen and lend assistance if needed. Floyd was very open to new ideas and interdisciplinary input from the new hires coming into the Bureau in the early 1970s. The PLF is proud to recognize Dr. Floyd Kinsinger as a BLM Range Legend.

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#### **HOW I REMEMBER VIC MCDARMENT AND THE EARLY DAYS OF WILD HORSE OPERATIONS IN WYOMING (1977 TO 1997)**

By Don Schramm, ADM Division of Operations, Rock Springs District (*retired*)

I first met Vic in 1977 when I transferred to the BLM Rock Springs District Office as ADM of Operations. Vic and Buck Mangus were horse wranglers assigned to feed and care for 200 wild horses to be removed by a contractor that fall and were to be contract inspectors during the roundup. This gather was contracted before aircraft was authorized to round-up wild horses. The contractor failed to execute as required and only gathered a few horses. One day the contractor told Vic that he decided not to conduct the roundup and suggested they could go back to the office. Not trusting the contractor, Vic and Buck observed from a remote site and reported the contractor was using a helicopter to run the wild horses. At the time this was a violation of the Wild Horse and Burro Act and not allowed in the contract. Vic handled a very sensitive situation, beyond his pay grade, and gave me complete confidence in his potential to manage future roundups. The contract was terminated, the helicopter was confiscated, and the helicopter contractor fined.

In 1978, Rock Springs was selected as the first BLM office to utilize helicopters to gather wild horses. A roundup crew was organized with District and State Office staff to help Vic and Buck. There were no Instruction Memorandums or other guidelines other than do it in a humane manner, and safety of crew and horses was the priority. Vic inventoried the local horse herds and selected an old wild horse trap site—12 Mile Trap. This was a trap utilized by old-time horse trappers (before the Act) that used small airplanes to herd horses into the trap. Vic was provided a lot of instructions by Frank Robbins and Dick Randell on how they did it in the 50s and 60s. But Vic ignored it all, and stuck to the mission to

conduct the roundup in a humane way and concern for the horses.

Legendary firefighting aircraft contractor Hawkins and Powers Aviation provided the helicopter with Dan Hawkins as the pilot. Day one of the first BLM authorized roundup with aircraft was attended by a dozen media and a national animal humane observer. The first days of the roundup were not so successful as the crew and pilots learned to work together; and there were so many public, media, and photographers around the trap that the horses



**Vic McDarment, BLM Wild Horse Wrangler**

would spook and spill as they approached the trap. One group of horses that did make it inside the trap, ran out the other end where a gate was left open. After repeated attempts with marginal success, Vic was very calm and expressed need to get the public out of there and to move to another trap site. They moved to Desert Springs site and Vic and crew successfully gathered the first of several truckloads of wild horses to be delivered to the new Rock Springs Holding Facility.



Based on experience with a defaulted contractor and success of the first roundup there was a management decision to procure a full time helicopter service for Rock Springs, with the assistance of the Office of Aircraft Services (OAS), and recruit three teams—one with Vic to execute roundups across Wyoming, one to manage the corral, and a staff to promote and process adoptions. Vic prepared the Instruction Memorandums for operations and safety during roundup and corral operations. Safety was the priority for all operations. The OAS assigned chief pilot Ed “Two Tall” Freeman to conduct inspections of aircraft and flight check pilots. Ed was a former Army helicopter pilot who had received the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Battle of Ia Drang during the Vietnam War and portrayed in the movie *We Were Soldiers*.

There was no profit motive with using in-house BLM crews for roundups, as compared to contract roundups. The roundup crews had to coordinate with corral operations for even flow of work to bring horses into the corral for processing and preparation for adoption. There was a high demand for horses for adoption, and smooth processing of the horses at the holding facility was key to make room for more horses from the traps.

Vic and District Wild Horse Specialist John Winters designed the techniques and plan for annual census and monitoring population trends of the

wild horses. The data was tabulated and reported to the District Manager and State Director. There was no GPS equipment, only eyes and maps.

The Rock Springs District was the priority for Wyoming as a result of a District Court decision with a deadline to reduce wild horse populations (Kerr Decision 1979). The first few years were difficult, a new program with inconsistent shoe-string budgets but pressure to remove horses to satisfy the Court, to refine corral procedures, to maintain herd health in the holding facility, and develop an aggressive Adopt A Horse program. Vic and the roundup crew, with management support at all levels, created an efficient and successful roundup operation. The wild horse team continued operations year-round and routinely traveled to assist Montana, California, Idaho, Colorado, and Arizona.

By 1987 the team had achieved the lowest wild horse population in Wyoming and maintained at that level for a few years. In 1997 the team and the OAS helicopter were assigned other work as BLM converted to all contract gathers. This was a productive period and the mission was accomplished as planned, thanks to Vic and the whole Wyoming team in the wild horse program. Vic passed away on April 12, 2020 after a long battle with disease. He requested that his remains be scattered on the Wild Horse range in Rock Springs with all of his cowboy friends and family.

## 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 e-mail us at [obits@publicland.org](mailto:obits@publicland.org), preferably with a link to or copy of an obituary. In addition, we know that many of our Facebook followers are 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](mailto:rbrady@publicland.org)*

**Viola Anna Andrade** on May 1, 2020, in Sacramento, CA. Viola was very proud of her career with the Federal government. She began working at the Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, CA and concluded her over 50 year career as a Land Law Examiner with BLM when she retired in 1992.

**June Alice Bailey** on January 7, 2020, in Tucson, AZ. June worked for BLM for 27 years as a Land Law Examiner and Realty Specialist in Billings, a Training Coordinator at the NTC in Phoenix, and Field Manager in Anchorage and Lewistown, MT.

**James Beaver** on May 4, 2020, in Billings, MT. Jim worked for BLM in Montana for many years, as a wildlife biologist and then the planning coordinator in the Montana State Office.

**Gary Lavon Bliss** on April 30, 2020, in Farmington, UT. Gary graduated from Utah State University and worked for BLM for 40 years.

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## IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

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**John Lloyd Deans** on April 17, 2020, in Provo, UT. John graduated from the University of Utah and joined the FBI upon graduation. He later joined BLM as a Special Agent and assisted with investigations of thefts from archaeological sites. He received the State Archaeologist's Award as Special-Agent-in-Charge with BLM in Colorado. He retired after 20 years of government service.

**Lynn Thomas Fergus** on April 4, 2020, in Mount Pleasant, UT. Lynn earned a degree in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning from Utah State University. He retired from BLM after 30 years as an outdoor recreation planner.

**Frank S. Frymire** on May 13, 2020, in Nampa, ID. Frank was a Human Resources Manager with BLM.

**John Edwin Furrow** on April 27, 2020, in Mullen, NE. John enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958 and served in Panama and helped map much of Central and South America until his discharge in 1961. He joined BLM and worked in Colorado, Wyoming, and Oregon before returning to the family ranch in Mullen.

**James "Jim" Gabettas** on April 12, 2020, in Idaho Falls, ID. Jim attended Utah State University, earning a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management. After graduation, he started his career with BLM in Shoshone, ID and in 1963 moved to Burley where he served as Chief of Resources for the Burley District. He was recognized for his work on BLM national initiatives, including the Johnny Horizon campaign. In 1971 he was selected as the Assistant District Manager of the Boise District and in 1983 was selected as the Assistant District Manager of the Idaho Falls District. After his retirement in 1986, he opened Jimmy's All Seasons Angler in downtown Idaho Falls and shared his love of Idaho's mountains and streams with friends and customers.

**Jeffrey Scott Kline** on June 17, 2020, in West Jordan, UT. Jeff graduated from Utah State University with a degree in Forestry and minors in Computer Science, Biology, and Statistics. He began his career with BLM as a temporary seasonal firefighter and moved on to become a Fire Station Manager in Salt Lake City, an Assistant Fire Management Officer, and a District Fire Management Officer. His final job was as the Air Tactical Group Supervisor until his retirement at the age of 54.

**Joe Jacob Labay** on April 9, 2020, in Palmer, AK. Joe attended Texas A&M graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Range Management. Upon graduation, Joe began a career with BLM that spanned over 50 years. His early career were spent working in the rangelands of New Mexico and Wyoming. In the early 1970s came an opportunity to work in Alaska. During Joe's time with BLM in Alaska, he was primarily involved with the conveyance of federal lands to the Alaska Native Corporations.

**Jeffrey Scott Long** on May 28, 2020, in Idaho Falls, ID. Jeff served in the military as an Airborne MP. After his service he attended Weber State University and earned a degree in criminal psychology. Upon graduation he accepted a job with BLM as a Law Enforcement Ranger in Kanab, UT and later in Idaho Falls, ID. He was also a Deputized U.S. Marshall.

**Victor (Vic) Martin McDarment** on April 12, 2020, in Lovell, WY. Vic was well known to all first-generation BLM staff and managers involved in the Wild Horse and Burro program across the Bureau. Vic started with the BLM Rock Springs District as a wild horse wrangler in 1977 and retired in August 2005 as the Wyoming wrangler leader roundup crew. He planned and executed the first authorized helicopter roundups in 1977-78 and assisted with roundups in other states. The Phoenix Training Center documented the work of Vic and the Rock Springs District in the four part video series, Wild Horses, Tricks of the Trade (1986). Vic was a Vietnam vet with many honors and an elder with the Yokut Tribe, Tule Indian Reservation, CA.

**Philip (Phil) Anthony Medica** on May 3, 2020, in Las Vegas, NV. Phil attended New Mexico State University and earned Bachelors and Masters degrees in Herpetology. He dedicated his life to his love of science, reptiles, and the environment. Post graduation he worked at Brigham Young University, UCLA, and eventually worked for BLM to develop a desert tortoise research program. He continued his federal career as a wildlife biologist with the USGS until he retired in 2013, but remained active as a scientist emeritus and senior ecologist with USGS until his death.

**Larry Gene Morris** on April 20, 2020, in Jordan Valley, OR. Larry worked for many years with the BLM and the Forest Service.

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**IN MEMORIAM** (CONTINUED)

**James Michael ("Mike") Phillips** on May 20, 2020, in Reno, NV. Mike graduated from Utah State University and attended graduate school at the University of Arizona. He served 4 ½ years in the military as a Naval Intelligence Officer and was a veteran of the Vietnam War. After his military service he began his 25-year career with BLM in Idaho and moved to Reno in 1976. He held various management positions with BLM in Reno and Carson City until his retirement in 1997.

**Kenneth Alan Satterfield** on May 20, 2020, in Pocatello, ID. Ken graduated from Utah State University with a degree in Range Management. He worked for BLM for 17 years in Montana, Nevada, and Utah as well as a short stay in Washington, D.C. In 1977 he left the BLM to join the family real estate business in Pocatello.

**Gail Sharon Schaefer** on November 29, 2019, in Corvallis, OR. Gail was the first woman to graduate with a Forestry degree from the University of Minnesota, College of Forestry and upon graduation traveled to Vale, OR for her first job as a member of a Helitack crew fighting wildfires. Gail joined BLM and worked in Medford, Portland, and Roseburg. She was the Resource Area Manager for the Mt. Scott Resource Area and retired from BLM as the Assistant District Manager in the Roseburg District.

**Daniel Dickson Webster** on May 18, 2020, in Boulder, CO. Dan was a graduate of University of Nevada – Reno with a degree in Philosophy and a Master's degree in Geography and Cartography from the University of Wisconsin. He accepted a job with BLM as a Cartographer at the Denver Federal Center in 1984 and left in 2009.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THANK YOU NOTE

On May 30, I was struck by a vehicle while out on a morning walk in Boise. I would like to express my sincerest and heartfelt appreciation to the PLF for all of the love and support shown me. Truly the flowers and cards got me through the hard times. Thank you for your best wishes in my recovery over the next few months.

**Jenna Whitlock, Boise, Idaho**

*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 e-mail 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](mailto:rbrady@publicland.org). Comments should be limited to no more than 500 words in length. In addition, members are encouraged to use the [bod@publicland.org](mailto:bod@publicland.org) e-mail 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 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 PLF. We intend on maintaining a friendly and professional tone in the articles in the Monitor and any posting of Letters to the Editor.*

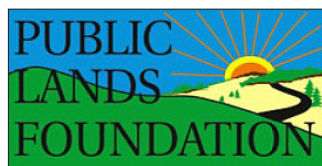
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