PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION
For America's Heritage

THE PUBLIC LANDS Monitor

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2026 PLF Annual Meeting
September 15 & 16, 2026

Editor's note: *Thanks to Tom Allen for taking notes at the Annual Meeting this year. Appreciation is also provided to Rem Hawes for pictures taken during the meeting.*

The PLF 2026 Annual Meeting was held in Phoenix, Arizona, on September 15 and 16, 2026. The Theme for this year's meeting was "Urban Interface and Public Land Management." The General Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 15. The Banquet, awards ceremony, silent auction, and raffle were also held on Tuesday evening. The Board of Directors Meeting was held on September 16.

General Meeting

The PLF President, Mary Jo Rugwell opened the General Meeting session of the Annual Meeting on September 15. The PLF Executive Committee was introduced and appreciation was expressed to all those who worked to organize and prepare the meeting. Mary Jo introduced Leah Baker, BLM Acting Assistant Director, Resources & Planning, to open the session and provide an overview of BLM activities and priorities.

Leah Baker indicated that 2026 has been a remarkable year for BLM and that thinking about public lands and urban interface issues is timely. The BLM is also this year celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the BLM with the merger of the General Land Office and the Grazing Service, and the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The overall mission of BLM has not changed, but new concerns and issues are being addressed. However, with changes in management, implementation of new policies has been somewhat of a challenge. American energy independence remains a top priority of the administration. The BLM intends to expand timber production and forest management on the public lands and update "Good Neighbor" policies similar to Forest Service efforts.

(continued on page 3)

Leah Baker, BLM *(left)* and Mary Jo Rugwell, PLF *(right)*

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

I hope this edition finds you and yours well and enjoying the changing of the seasons. Fall is by far my favorite time of the year even though it seems busier than ever.

Mary Jo Rugwell

The Public Lands Foundation continues its advocacy efforts by reviewing and commenting on proposed rules issued by the Bureau of Land Management. We recently submitted comments on the proposed oil and gas regulations and the proposed waste prevention rule. I want to acknowledge the help of Walt George, Duane Spencer, Ed Roberson, Don Simpson, and Ray Brady (as well as an assist from the PLF Board) in accomplishing this important task.

I am pleased to announce that we have finally filled the long vacant State Representative Board member position for New Mexico. Please join me in welcoming Marcia de Chadenedes to the PLF Board. Marcia had a distinguished career with BLM and is currently involved with the Conservation Lands Foundation (CLF). We look forward to working with Marcia.

Ray Brady and I have had some conversations with CLF recently and will be looking for ways to partner more closely with them in the future. Stay tuned for more details.

The PLF held its Annual Meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, on September 15-16. I want to acknowledge the fantastic job that Beau McClure did in organizing the meeting. It is an incredible amount of work to do this well, and Beau manages to make our meetings stellar every time. Detailed information on the meeting can be found in this edition of the *Monitor*, but I wanted to highlight a few of the happenings.

First, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all the speakers from BLM that honored us with their presence this year. Leah Baker represented the Washington Office, Ray Suazo led the charge for BLM Arizona, and several other excellent presentations really helped the attendees to understand the challenges of managing public lands in the urban interface. The general meeting attendees also were treated to an excellent movie entitled "Trailblazers" during lunch. We had several other speakers from State, Federal, and non-profit partners who helped to provide additional context on the meeting's theme. We were also joined by Kevin DeGraw, one of this year's George Lea Founder's Scholarship winners. It was great to meet Kevin in person, and he added a great perspective to the meeting.

We enjoyed a lovely banquet on Tuesday evening where we acknowledged the winners of PLF's annual awards for the year. The PLF's Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Nancy Haug for the fantastic job she does to highlight the work of PLF on a variety of social media platforms throughout the year. While many of us may not be regular visitors to social media sites, they are an important communication tool, and we appreciate everything Nancy does on our behalf. The Silent Auction and raffle were very successful thanks to the efforts of Elaine Zielinski, Elena Daly, Theresa Currivan, everyone who donated items, and everyone who purchased items. Those efforts resulted in over $2,500 for the George Lea Founder's Scholarship Fund.

The Board meeting on Wednesday hosted some important discussions. I want to just highlight the follow-up items that resulted from those conversations.

1) Tom Allen and Don Simpson will author a transition proposal related to the terms of the President and Vice-President offices for further consideration by the Board at our December quarterly Zoom Board meeting.

2) Tim O'Brien and Jack Placchi will work with Ray Brady on ways to further partner with Friends Groups.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN *(continued)*

3) The Board will revisit Annual Meeting configuration and send out a questionnaire on that topic to the Board.

4) The excellent presentation by Rene Berkhoudt on his team's work on the Little Green Light data base system identified the need for a membership coordinator and someone to take over monitoring the financial systems. Rene also introduced the idea of doing targeted fund raising outreach messages tied to the Public Lands Day calendar. This discussion will be scheduled for the Spring quarterly Zoom Board meeting.

5) It was suggested that an e-Blast be sent out before Christmas to encourage people to purchase PLF merchandise from the Bonfire website.

6) The quarterly Zoom Board calls will need to be scheduled. The location for next year's Annual Meeting will be in Oregon.

Finally, I want to thank Rene Berkhoudt, Bob Casias, Deb Rawhouser, and Scott MacPherson for their efforts in resolving issues with PLF's financial and membership systems. They are still in a monitoring and maintenance phase, but we appreciate all they have done and continue to do on our behalf.

Take care and talk to you again soon!

2026 PLF ANNUAL MEETING *(continued from page 1)*

The BLM issued updated proposed grazing regulations this year and is on track to finalize these regulations in early 2027, with the intent to strengthen cooperative management with the livestock industry. Management of ever-increasing wild horse and burro populations continues to be a challenge for BLM and two-thirds of WH&B program funds are spent on off-range holding facilities. It was mentioned that the Secretary is planning on holding a WH&B Roundtable discussion with various interest groups to seek further ideas on long-term solutions.

Passage of the EXPLORE Act has had a major positive impact on the BLM recreation program and BLM has reduced Special Recreation Permit processing times by 30 percent. In addition, BLM is leveraging "Good Neighbor" policies to support local partnership efforts in recreation management on the public lands.

The unified Wildland Fire Service within the Department of the Interior was established in 2025 and BLM is supporting this effort to improve wildland fire management on the public lands. The BLM is still sorting out the implications of the Congressional Review Act requirements for BLM land use plans and is looking at revising the land use planning process to comply with these requirements. The BLM is also engaged in streamlining the NEPA process for authorizations on the public lands and is leading the Department in expedited reviews. The BLM has seen significant staffing reductions over the past several years, from 10,000+ employees to some 5,700 employees, although most of these positions were shifted to the Department as part of reorganization efforts.

Ray Suazo, BLM Arizona State Director, was introduced as the longest serving current BLM State Director (2012 to present) and provided an overview of urban interface and public land management challenges in Arizona. The BLM Arizona manages 12 million acres of public land and 17 million acres of subsurface mineral estate with a staff of 500 employees. The BLM Arizona manages under the concept of "One Team", where employees are called upon regardless of their location to get the job done. Recreation uses on the public lands in Arizona are expanding, especially around urban areas like Phoenix that has experienced

Ray Suazo
BLM Arizona State Director

urban sprawl. This is especially true with off-highway vehicle use. The Forest Service has closed some recreational shooting areas and that has shifted those uses to public lands. The BLM is working closely with Arizona Game and Fish to respond to this demand. The wildland fire season seems to be longer each year and will continue to be a challenge especially in the urban environment. It will be critically important for BLM to expand our partnership efforts with State and local governments and non- governmental organizations to ensure that we can manage these changes on the public lands.

Daley Burns, Wildlife Program Officer, for the Foundation for America's Public Lands, provided an update on the activities of the Foundation for America's Public Lands to support BLM. The Foundation is focused on three priorities: Recreation Access, Restoration and Stewardship, and Wild Horse and Burro Management. The Foundation has provided 13 grants to BLM and 20 grants to other NGO partners for projects supporting these priorities on the public lands. Funds have been used to upgrade BLM recreation shooting sites, traffic studies in Utah to identify OHV improvements, a fire restoration project in Utah, and a livestock virtual fencing project in California. There is currently a Request for Proposals on the street for drought resilience projects in the Colorado River Basin.

Daley Burns *(left)* and Mary Jo Rugwell *(right)*

Aaron Mayville, Forest Supervisor, Coconino National Forest, **Kriselle Colvin**, Supervisor, Region VI, Arizona Game and Fish, and **Charlotte Overby**, Vice President of Conservation Field Programs, Conservation Lands Foundation, participated in a Panel discussion on Managing Public Lands Around Urban Areas.

Aaron Mayville discussed three areas of issues facing the Forest Service in Arizona: increased OHV Use, Increased Fire Starts, and Management of High Use Areas versus Traditional Uses. The Forest Service is looking at creating a workable permitting system to limit OHV use in some areas. The high number of lightening and visitor fire starts have required year-round campfire restrictions in some areas and road closures and dispersed camping closures in some areas. High use areas on the Forest may require a different look at how to manage those uses, including permitting systems, shuttle buses in some areas, or other management tools.

Kriselle Colvin described the focus of Arizona Game and Fish on the stewardship and protection of wildlife species in the State. Off-Highway Vehicle and watercraft enforcement has been a major effort in the State, as well as wildlife habitat protection and improvement projects. The State relies on Federal and private landowner partnerships to support wildlife habitat priorities and have some 239 conservation partners actively engaged in these efforts.

Charlotte Overby described the work of the Conservation Lands Foundation (CLF) which was formed some twenty years ago in response to the visions of Bruce Babbitt, former Arizona Governor and Secretary of the Interior, to engage local communities and organizations in the protection and management of public lands for future generations. The CLF supports a "Friends Grassroots Network" of some 93 local organizations that exist to assist the BLM in their mission and improve the management of the public lands.

Kriselle Colvin *(left)*, Charlotte Overby *(center)*, and Aaron Mayville (right)

Nina Lindsey, Chief of Grants and Trails, Arizona State Parks and Trails, and **Matthew Nelson**, Executive Director, Arizona Trail Association, participated in a Panel discussion on Off-Highway Vehicles, Trail Inter-connectivity, e-Bikes, and AI Mapping.

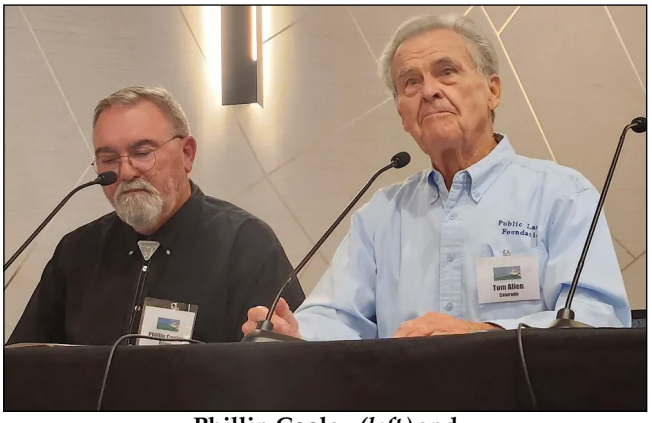
Matthew Nelson *(left)* and Nina Lindsey *(right)*

Nina Lindsey described the work of Arizona State Parks and Trails, with a focus on increased OHV use in the State. The agency is funded through a State gas tax and decal sales for OHVs, plus additional Federal highway funds. Decal sales generate about $4 million per year and are distributed to State Parks and Trails, to Arizona Game and Fish, and to the State Land Department. Arizona has seen a 17 percent increase in OHV use in the past 10 years and an increase in the OHV decal fee is needed to keep pace with this growth. Money is also allocated to ranchers to mitigate for damage to roads, fences and gates, and water sources from OHV use.

Matthew Nelson discussed the work of the Arizona Trail Association and the concept of stewardship. Some public land users treat the public land resources as though they do not own it, when in reality, they are the owners and should be the caretakers. This vision needs to change through responsible stewardship and partnership efforts. Volunteer investments and partnerships are critical in developing and maintaining trails on the public lands. It was noted that recreation has a $14 billion economic impact in Arizona, compared to a $6 billion economic impact from mining. E-bikes made up five percent of total bicycle sales just five years ago and now make up 30 percent of sales nationwide; and 70 percent of the sales in the west.

Lisa Clark, BLM Deschutes Field Manager, Prineville District, Oregon made a virtual powerpoint presentation on urban interface management challenges facing BLM around the rapidly growing area of La Pine, Oregon, south of Bend. Wildfires, dumping, and homeless camping have created high risk pressures for not only BLM, but the Forest Service and State and local governments. Over $1 million has been spent among all agencies cleaning up after improper camping and camping violations are routinely ignored. Homeless people are continuely shifting locations from BLM public lands to Forest Service, State, County, or private lands. The partners in this urban interface management effort are considering limiting all uses in this area to day use only.

Phillip Cooley, BLM Arizona Acting Deputy State Director, Resources and Planning, and **Tom Allen,** PLF, participated in a Panel discussion on Recreational Shooting Challenges and Success Stories. The presenters provided an excellent back and forth discussion on recreational shooting on the public lands. A most notable success has been the construction by BLM in Arizona of several shooting ranges in the Phoenix area. These ranges on public land were a breakthrough for BLM to aid in management of recreational shooting in the area. Background was provided on the Pittman-Robertson Act that has provided over $29 billion in revenue since 1937 from Federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment to support wildlife conservation efforts. The Target Practice and Markmanship Training Support Act has assisted in the development and improvement of public shooting ranges and



Phillip Cooley *(left)* and Tom Allen *(right)*

also encourages both BLM and the Forest Service to work with local communities to clean up trash and keep public shooting ranges open. The Dingell Act provided authority for BLM to lease or permit the use of public lands for shooting ranges and required a public notice and comment process before the closing of any public lands to hunting, fishing, or recreational target shooting. The most recent legislative action was passage of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences Act (EXPLORE Act) that required BLM and the Forest Service to identify the existing location of shooting ranges in each agency field office, those offices that had no shooting ranges, and whether applicable laws or land use plans prevented the establishment of a shooting range where one did not exist. There are currently 12 BLM managed shooting ranges on public lands, 35 leased ranges managed by partners on public lands, and 46 partner owned and managed ranges on former public lands. One item of interest is the issue of "brass pickers" that are creating problems at developed shooting ranges. These "brass pickers" are coming to the ranges to harvest spent brass and resell the brass, which has caused conflicts with shooters who want to pickup the brass to reload and has also caused conflicts of turf wars among the "brass pickers" themselves. This problem has yet to be resolved.

Darrel (Wayne) Monger, BLM Arizona Acting Associate State Director, spoke on the BLM "Borderland Strategy" in Arizona that focuses on providing a secure environment on the public lands, protection from smugglers, and coordination with law enforcement agencies. There are some 4.1 million acres of BLM managed lands within the "Borderland" area and two Border Patrol Sectors that BLM coordinates with in Arizona. Trash from illegals and smugglers is found as far as 80 miles north of the border in the Sonoran Desert National Monument and impacts are also found in Wilderness Areas, Conservation Areas, cultural and historic sites, and other designated lands within the "Borderland" area.

The General Meeting concluded with a PLF banquet in the evening and a silent auction and raffle, which raised a total of $2,500 to support the George Lea Founder's Scholarship Fund. **Maggie Wyatt** and **Tom Allen** also provided "Remembering BLM" presentations to the gathered PLF members, spouses, and invited guests. **Nancy Haug** was awarded the PLF's Volunteer of the Year Award for her work in highlighting PLF work on a variety of social media platforms throughout the year.

PLF 2026 Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Mary Jo Rugwell opened the Board of Directors Meeting on September 16 and thanked everyone who attended the General Meeting on September 15. Special thanks was given to Elaine Zielinski, Elena Daly, and Theresa Currivan who set up the items to be auctioned/raffled during the evening banquet and managed the drawings and finances. Mary Jo also introduced **Kevin DeGraw**, one of the PLF Scholarship winners, who was attending the Annual Meeting this year. Kevin thanked the PLF for the scholarship assistance and indicated the $5,000 scholarship was of significant benefit to his continued studies at Grays Harbor College in Washington.

Debbie Hollen, Chair, National Association of Forest Service Retirees, provided an update on NAFSR activities and shared a handout on accomplishments for the year. Efforts were focused on keeping public lands available for recreation and sustained uses, maintaining a strong fire organization, promoting workforce capacity and care for Forest Service employees, supporting a credible scientific research organization, and increasing connection with NAFSR members and the public through social media outreach. A major focus was engagement with Forest Service leadership on the agency's significant reorganization efforts, following a meeting with the Forest Service Chief and Associate Chief in April 2026. A follow-up all-member meeting was held with the Associate Chief to respond to questions that had been raised by NAFSR on the reorganization proposal. A major new initiative in 2026 is the Employee Care/Knowledge Transfer Program, working with the Forest Service Workforce Development Team, to launch a pilot program to pair experienced NAFSR retirees with approximately 35 new Forest Service supervisors.

The Board of Directors Meeting continued with a discussion of a possible PLF By-Laws amendment on the terms of the President and other officers, the Directors-at-Large, and State Representatives of the organization. The sense of the Board was that there should be a term limit for the President and a limit on consecutive terms served by the President. *Don Simpson and Tom Allen agreed to prepare an issue paper on the proposed By-Laws amendment to discuss at the next quarterly Board meeting call in December.*

The Board approved the appointment of **Bud Cribley** and **Roy Johnson** as new Board members. The Board also later in the meeting approved **Marcia de Chadenedes** as the New Mexico State Representative.

Mary Jo Rugwell provided a copy of the PLF Treasurer's Report and Financial Status, as of June 30, 2026, prepared by **Mark Davis**. The proposed 2027 PLF Budget was not presented for approval at the Annual Meeting, but will be discussed and approved during the December Board meeting call. The PLF's total assets as of June 30, 2026 were $578,757. As of June 30, 2026, total revenues were $18,141 and expenses were $15,317. The PLF is currently financially sound.

Rene Berkhoudt provided an update on the work of the PLF Membership Database Management Committee. The Committee, including **Bob Casias**, **Deb Rawhouser**, and **Scott MacPherson**, has been diligently working on the PLF Membership Database system and resolved the major problems with the system. Problems have been sorted out regarding the data entry process. *A follow-up action item is the need to identify a PLF Membership Coordinator with IT skills.* Questions have also been asked regarding PLF Board member and State Representative access to the membership database, as access is currently not available.

Mary Jo Rugwell led a discussion of membership recruitment, fund raising, and merchandise sales ideas. The PLF is continuing outreach efforts with "Friends" organizations in hopes of attracting interest in PLF membership. A handout of identified "Friends" organizations was distributed during the Board meeting. *Jack Placchi and Tim O'Brien will work with Ray Brady to develop ideas for additional outreach efforts with "Friends" organizations.* There was also a suggestion to consider offering a corporate-like membership to "Friends" organizations that could possibly attract additional interest by individuals to join the PLF as a regular member. The PLF merchandise sales program through ***bonfire.com*** has generated additional revenue for the PLF and it was suggested that we encourage people to purchase PLF merchandise for Christmas gifts and that we also look at the potential to sell PLF Christmas tree ornaments through the Bonfire outlet. *Ray Brady will follow-up on this suggestion.*

Discussions continued on the need for another all-member PLF zoom call as a means to further engage PLF membership in the organization. The consensus was that such a zoom meeting should be held, with an emphasis on keeping the agenda limited to one or two topics. There were also concerns expressed that attendance at the Annual Meeting has declined and it was proposed that a survey be sent to Board members to better understand the issues regarding attendance. *Don Simpson was requested to prepare the survey questionnaire for distribution to Board members.*

Mary Jo Rugwell provided an update on plans for the next Student Congress. The 2027 Student Congress is scheduled for October 4-7, 2027, in Missoula, MT. The tentative theme is, "The New Backcountry: Technology, Access, and the Future of Public Lands Recreation." Grants are being sought from BLM, the Forest Service Foundation, the Foundation for America's Public Lands, NGOs, and corporate sponsors. The planning is on track with Planning Team call-in meetings being held monthly. Outreach to universities will begin in March 2027.

A report on PLF Scholarships and Awards was presented. Two $5,000 scholarship awards were presented during 2026. Those scholarships were presented to **Kevin DeGraw** (Grays Harbor College, Washington) and **Kyla Baldridge** (University of Nebraska). The Board discussed the possibility of offering additional scholarships, but it was the general consensus that the PLF did not currently have the financial resources to afford more scholarships. No Landscape Stewardship Award or Lifetime Service Award was presented this year. The PLF selected **Scott Haight** (BLM Montana) for the Public Lands Professional Employee Award, Managerial/Administrative Category; **Kurt Wadzinski** (BLM Eastern States) for the Public Lands Professsional Employee Award, Technical/Operational Category; and **Pamela Blackmore** (BLM Arizona) for the Public Lands Professional Employee Award, Technical/Operational Category. A follow-up discussion focused on the lack of participation by BLM in the PLF Awards program, not withstanding the considerable outreach efforts on the part of PLF. *Mary Jo Rugwell will attempt to reach out with the BLM Director to see what might be done to invigorate the program.*

The Board meeting concluded with a discussion of the location for next year's Annual Meeting. Oregon was chosen as the preferred location, with the theme for the meeting to be determined. *A schedule for the quarterly zoom Board meetings and the proposed all-member zoom meeting will be distributed by Mary Jo Rugwell.*

ELECTION
2027 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The annual election for Officers and Board Members of the PLF is underway. Current PLF members should receive a notice by e-mail with a link that contains an online PLF ballot for the election. The online ballot should take only a minute or two to complete. There will be no paper ballots provided to members for voting. You may vote for any or all of the National Representatives and for your individual State Representative. Please be sure to vote before **December 15, 2026**.

Please also consider paying your annual membership dues when you complete your online ballot if you have not already paid your annual dues. Thank you for your continued support of the Public Lands Foundation.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

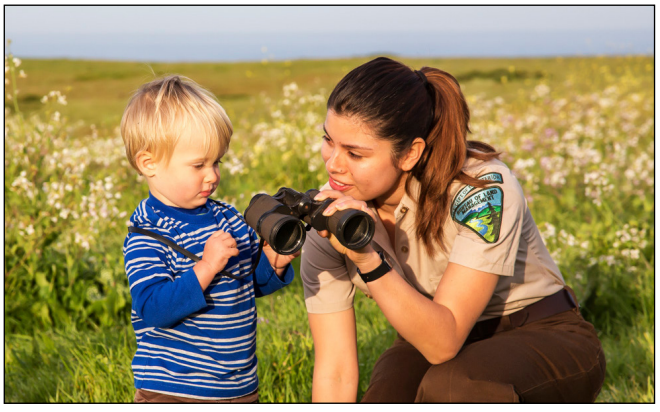
The Bureau of Land Management is celebrating it's 80th birthday this year. The BLM was officially established on July 16, 1946 with the merger of the General Land Office and the Grazing Service as part of President Harry S. Truman's Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1946. The merger had been proposed by Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes in January 1946 to address concerns by Congress over management and funding of the Grazing Service and questions regarding the future of public land policies administered by the General Land Office. The BLM today manages the most diverse landscapes of Federal land in the U.S., providing stewardship to approximately 245 million acres of public land and 700 million acres of Federal mineral estate from the north slope of Alaska to Jupiter Inlet in Florida, and from tundra to old growth forests to desert landscapes. In addition, this year also marks the 50th Anniversary of the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), P.L. 94-579, signed on October 21, 1976.

ADVOCACY IS FOR EVERYONE

The PLF works year-round on advocacy outreach efforts in support of the multiple-use management of the public lands. Our advocacy efforts also include supporting the development of a professional staff of dedicated BLM Federal employees to manage these public lands for all Americans. We pursue this advocacy mission by remaining current on public land issues and preparing Position Statements, and communicating our concerns and recommendations to BLM, the Congress, stakeholder interest groups, and the general public, as well as responding to media inquiries. We also testify before Congress and submit written testimony on budget, legislation, and policy matters affecting BLM, BLM employees, and the public lands. However, our advocacy outreach efforts cannot be successful without the continued grassroots advocacy of our individual PLF members at the local level as well.

The PLF recently provided comments on BLM proposed grazing regulations and oil and gas leasing regulations. The PLF has also provided budget testimony and letters to Congress expressing concerns over BLM budget and staffing reductions that are impacting the ability of BLM to manage the public lands. The PLF also recently provided a letter to Congress that supported the Public Lands Workforce Stability Act (H.R.8523) that would prohibit the reduction in force or involuntary non-performance related separation of employees within the Department of the Interior, including BLM, and employees within the U.S. Forest Service through September 30, 2030. The PLF also recently submitted comments to OMB that opposed the proposed government-wide use of a nondisclosure agreement (NDA) form for use by Federal agencies. This proposed NDA could possibly affect the ability of BLM and other Federal agencies to attract and retain dedicated employees that want to serve the American public.

The above advocacy efforts of the PLF are examples of the scope of advocacy that individual PLF members can also pursue at the local level to broaden the impact and effect of public input on public land policies, BLM funding and staffing concerns, and support for Federal employees. It should be noted that several members of Congress recently formed a bipartisan Public Lands Caucus in the House to stop legislative actions for the disposal of public lands. The Senate also formed a similar Public Lands Stewardship Caucus. In addition, several members of Congress recently formed a Federal Workforce Caucus to serve as a forum to support the civil service system and protect the nonpartisan character of Federal employment. These caucuses provide another opportunity for grassroots advocacy by PLF members with individual members of Congress. Congressional members of these caucuses can be found on the PLF website under the "Advocacy" link.



The PLF encourages all PLF members to be actively engaged in advocacy efforts at the personal level on public land issues, support for resources for BLM to manage the public lands, and support for BLM employees. This grassroots advocacy at the local level can include contacts with your local Congressional members, contacts with members of the Congressional caucuses identified above, and outreach with other organizations interested in public land issues and support for BLM and BLM employees. Organizations engaged in Federal employee advocacy efforts include the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), American Federation of Government Employees, National Federation of Federal Employees, and others that represent specific groups of employees. NARFE is currently tracking legislation related to Federal annuities, Federal pay, Federal benefits, and Federal personnel policies. NARFE can also assist with outreach to members of Congress. NARFE has a National Headquarters office located in Washington, D.C. and ten Regional Offices that can support grassroots advocacy efforts related to Federal employee and retired Federal employee issues. NARFE resources are available at *www.narfe.org*.

Congressional Review of RMPS

The General Accountability Office (GAO) has issued Decisions on several BLM land use plans that the requirements of the Congressional Review Act of 1996 (CRA) apply to BLM decisions and approvals of Resource Management Plans (RMPs). The GAO concluded that a BLM RMP meets the definition of a "rule" and is therefore subject to the submission and review requirements of the CRA. The CRA requires that before a "rule" can take effect, an agency must submit the "rule" to Congress for review. The CRA allows Congress to review and disapprove "rules" issued by Federal agencies. If a Resolution of disapproval is enacted by Congress, then the new "rule" (in this case the approval of an RMP) has no force or effect. Congress has already disapproved several BLM RMPs using the CRA authority and these decisions will have broad implications for all BLM land use management plans, since BLM has not provided decisions and approvals of RMPs to Congress for review since passage of the CRA in 1996.

The PLF submitted a letter on September 8, 2025 to the Senate Majority and Minority Leader requesting that the Senate avoid such Resolutions, as the unintended consequences of invalidating BLM RMPs for millions of acres of public land would be significant. The PLF also requested that Congress amend the CRA to clarify that BLM RMPs prepared under the statutory authority of Section 202 of FLPMA are not "rules or regulations" subject to CRA review. The PLF letter to the Senate has been posted to the PLF website.

A lawsuit filed by Cascadia Wildlands on June 24, 2026 in Federal court in Oregon is now an example of the chaos created by the CRA requirements. This recent lawsuit asserts that a proposed timber sale for the harvest of up to 75.5 million board feet of timber from more than 1,300 acres of public land in western Oregon is legally void since the underlying BLM management plan was never submitted to Congress for review under the CRA. This lawsuit is a direct and foreseeable consequence of the decisions by the GAO to require Congressional reviews of BLM land use plans under the CRA.

Friends Organizations

Local "Friends" organizations support the work of BLM on the public lands. This concept, like the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), was part of then Secretary Bruce Babbitt's vision in 1996 for a successful system of protected BLM lands for the next century. The PLF has highlighted the work of several Friends organizations in past editions of the *Monitor* and plans on highlighting the work of other Friends organizations in future editions. The PLF is currently collaborating with the Conservation Lands Foundation (CLF) and their Friends Grassroots Network to expand our outreach efforts with Friends organizations interested in public land and BLM advocacy issues. The PLF is also considering collaborating with the CLF in a Congressional Fly-In of several Friends organizations to Washington, D.C. in April 2027 to brief various Congressional offices and staff on public land issues and request support for additional BLM funding and staffing resources.

Fund Raising

Our ***Keep Public Lands in Public Hands*** fund raising campaign for 2026 continues. Our fund raising campaign is an opportunity to highlight the legacy and value of our Nation's public lands to all Americans and also celebrate the 250th Anniversary of our Nation. This effort includes the sale of PLF merchandise that can be ordered through a third party vendor at ***bonfire.com/store/public-lands-foundation***. A portion of all sales is returned to the PLF to support our advocacy work for the public lands.

It is hoped that you can support our Fund Raising Campaign during 2026.

GEORGE LEA FOUNDER'S SCHOLARSHIP

One of the most important PLF advocacy programs is the awarding of two $5,000 scholarships to students who are pursuing a course of study in the natural resources field. The PLF continues to request donations to support the George Lea Founder's Scholarship Fund.

We hope our members and other supporters of the PLF will respond to the call for donations to help the PLF continue this important program. Donations in any amount would be greatly appreciated and can be made either online or by check. Please ensure that you earmark your donation for the Scholarship Fund and thank you in advance for your generous contributions!

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 the long-term protection, conservation, and restoration of units of the National Landscape Conservation System, as distinctly unique among the public lands managed by BLM.
- 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.

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION?

Please help us keep our records current and ensure we have your current e-mail address on file.
Message us at *info@publicland.org*

Foundation For America's Public Lands

The Foundation for America's Public Lands was established by Congress in 2017 and formally launched by the Department of the Interior and BLM in January 2022. The Foundation's mission includes raising private funding that can be matched by Federal appropriations to help BLM address public land management issues across the 245 million acres of public land managed by BLM. Information on partnership opportunities with the Foundation can be found on their website at ***americaslands.org***.

The PLF collaborates with the Foundation for America's Public Lands where we have mutual interests and continues our advocacy efforts for BLM and the sustainable management of the public lands. The PLF on March 19, 2026 submitted a letter to Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees that supported a funding increase in the 2027 Interior appropriations bill for the Foundation for America's Public Lands. The PLF also included a request for increased funding in the written testimony provided to the House and Senate Subcommittees on Appropriations for the BLM 2027 budget.

Interior Federal

Since 2017, the Interior Federal Credit Union and the PLF have supported one another's missions. The Credit Union currently offers membership to employees and their families, members, and volunteers of the PLF. The Credit Union in 2024 expanded the partnership to support PLF programs, including the George Lea Founder's Scholarship. The Credit Union makes a yearly donation to the PLF Scholarship Fund and allows individuals in search of membership eligibility a way to join both the Interior Federal and the PLF. *The PLF has added 121 new members to our membership rolls since September 2024 under this partnership effort.*

INTERIOR FEDERAL
CREDIT UNION
STRENGTH. STEWARDSHIP. COMMUNITY.

Interior Federal is the official credit union for the Department of the Interior and has also shown support and assistance to those Federal employees that are being financially impacted by the recent layoffs, terminations, unplanned retirements, and early-outs that are taking place across the Federal government. Additional information on Credit Union assistance can be obtained by calling 800-914-8619 or accessing the Credit Union website at ***interiorfederal.org***.

Electronic Mailing Only

The PLF has gone to an all digital distribution of the quarterly *Monitor* newsletter to save on printing and mailing costs of our newsletter. All editions of the *Monitor* are distributed electronically through e-mail to PLF members and are available on the PLF website.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE

Photo by Ray Brady

The PLF continues to monitor Congressional legislation, rulemaking activities, and Executive Orders pertaining to the Department of the Interior, BLM, and public lands management. The PLF, as an advocacy organization for the public lands, is actively engaged in providing our perspectives on a wide range of issues including the annual BLM appropriations, any program oversight hearings, proposed amendments to FLPMA and other major statutes affecting public lands management, and proposed regulations regarding BLM resource programs. Reviewing legislation and proposed rules and preparing comments and testimony, when appropriate, is an important part of our advocacy work. We update our Position Statements and Letters and Testimony web pages on our website under the "Advocacy" link and provide legislative and regulatory updates in the *Monitor* on significant actions.

APPROPRIATIONS

STATUS: The Interior Department and BLM have proposed a FY 2027 Budget of $830.9 million for the BLM Lands and Resources programs, which would represent a 34 percent reduction in funding from FY 2026. The House Appropriations Committee on June 3, 2026, advanced a proposed FY 2027 appropriation of $1.212 billion for the BLM Lands and Resources programs, which would represent only a four percent reduction in funding from FY 2026. However, even this level of funding is $82.7 million below the FY 2025 appropriation. **The PLF provided written testimony on the BLM FY27 budget on July 3, 2026 to both the House and Senate Subcommittees on Appropriations.**

SUMMARY: The approved FY 2026 Appropriations bill for BLM represented a 2.7 percent reduction in funding from FY 2025 funding levels. However, the FY 2027 proposed Department and BLM budget includes several proposals that would have even greater impacts on BLM. The FY 2027 proposed BLM budget of $830.9 million for the BLM Lands and Resources programs, which represents a 34 percent reduction in funding from FY 2026 and an overall 36 percent reduction in funding from FY 2025. In addition, the FY 2027 proposed Budget would zero out the Cultural Resources program, Wilderness Management program, and Renewable Energy program. The National Conservation Lands program would see a 76 percent reduction in funding and the Wildlife Habitat Management program would see a 77 percent reduction in funding. These funding reductions would result in significant staffing impacts and resource program impacts.

On another front, Senator Bennet (CO) introduced legislation (S. 4455) that would amend the Congressional Budget Act to ensure that public lands are not sold through any fast-tracked process in any future Budget Reconciliation bill. In addition, Congressman Neguse (CO) introduced legislation (H.R. 8523) that would prohibit the use of reductions in force (RIF) or the involuntary non-performance related separation of BLM employees through the FY 2030 budget cycle.

PLF POSITION: The PLF provided written testimony on the FY 2027 proposed Budget on July 3, 2026 to both the House and Senate Subcommittees on Appropriations. The written testimony is posted on the PLF website. The PLF on July 17, 2026 also signed onto a joint letter with other outdoor organizations to Senate and House members supporting reauthorization of the Legacy Restoration Fund under the America Beautiful Act (H.R. 9250 and S. 1547), to continue funding for deferred maintenance and access investments on public lands and waters.

GRAZING REGULATIONS – 43 CFR 4100

STATUS: The BLM on May 12, 2026 published in the Federal Register a Proposed Rule for updates

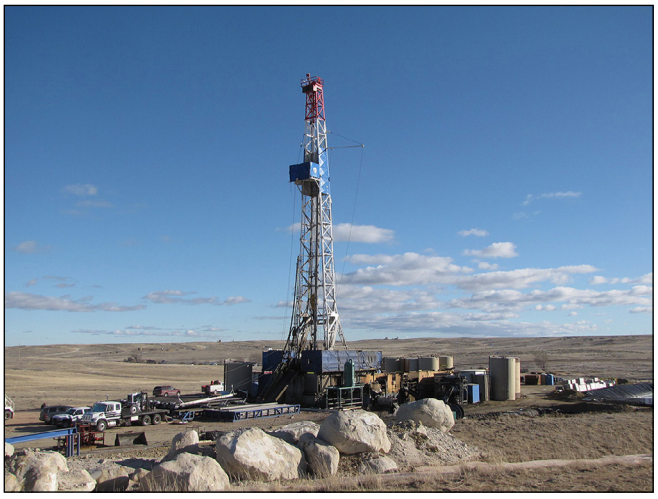
and revisions to the Regulations for Grazing Administration on the public lands (43 CFR Part 4100). **The Proposed Rule is available for public review and comment for a 60-day period and the PLF provided comments on July 13, 2026.**

SUMMARY: The BLM administers its grazing program under the regulations at 43 CFR Part 4100. Those regulations were revised in 1995 and again in 2006. However, elements of the 1995 Rule and the entirety of the 2006 Rule were successfully challenged in court and enjoined by the Tenth and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Because the 2006 Rule remains permanently enjoined, the regulations that are currently in force and which BLM administers the grazing program are those that largely reflect the outdated 1995 Rule. In addition, Congress in 2014 amended Section 402 of FLPMA to address BLM's environmental reviews with grazing permit renewals, providing for the continuation of the terms and conditions of an expiring or transferred permit for which environmental review has not been completed. The Proposed Rule is intended to align the grazing regulations with current best practices for grazing on the public lands, update the regulations consistent with Court decisions and amendments to Section 402 of FLPMA, and to reflect on recommendations from a GAO report on unauthorized grazing in 2016.

PLF POSITION: The PLF supports updating the current grazing regulations at 43 CFR 4100 to reflect the correct rule and current legislation. **The PLF submitted comments on the regulations during the public scoping period submitted comments on July 13, 2026 on the Proposed Rule. The regulation update process will ultimately conclude with the publication of a Final Rule.**

OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS
43 CFR PART 3100

STATUS: The U.S. District Court of North Dakota on September 12, 2024 issued a decision to grant an injunction and halt implementation of the BLM Final Methane Rule or Oil and Gas Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation Rule (43 CFR Parts 3160 and 3170). The Court ruled that the regulation represents a significant impingement of States' rights and targets an area that is already regulated by the Clean Air Act and State laws. The BLM subsequently announced that the December 10, 2025 enforcement deadlines under the Waste Prevention Rule would be delayed until December 10, 2026 and that BLM will reassess the Rule. **The BLM on June 24, 2026 published in the Federal Register a Proposed Rule that would modify the previous methane waste prevention regulations to reduce the methane compliance requirements for oil and gas operators and streamline the royalty determinations on lost oil or natural gas. The Proposed Rule is available for public review and comment for a 60-day period and the PLF provided comments on the Proposed Rule on August 22, 2026.**



Oil & Gas Drill Rig, Wyoming *(BLM photo)*

The Western Energy Alliance and oil and gas industry associations in New Mexico, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Utah on May 15, 2024 filed a petition with the U.S. District Court of Wyoming to invalidate and vacate the BLM Oil and Gas Leasing Rule (43 CFR Part 3100) of April 2024. This rule incorporated provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. **The BLM on June 24, 2026 published in the Federal Register a Proposed Rule that would revise the previous Oil and Gas Leasing Rule to reflect new requirements of legislation and updated policy direction in Executive Orders, including the proposal to reduce minimum bond amounts to those existing prior to the 2024 regulations, and provisions to streamline the BLM oil and gas leasing process. However, Senators Bennet (CO), Padilla (CA), Hickenlooper (CO), Schiff (CA), and Lujan (NM) have introduced legislation that would**

eliminate nationwide bonds and set minimum bond amounts at $200,000 for individual leases and $650,000 for all leases statewide. The Proposed Rule was available for public review and comment for a 60-day period and the PLF provided comments on the Proposed Rule on August 18, 2026.

SUMMARY: The existing Methane or Waste Prevention Rule is intended to reduce the waste of natural gas from venting, flaring, and leaks during oil and gas production activities on both Federal and Indian leases. The existing Oil and Gas Leasing Rule of 2024 updated the BLM onshore oil and gas leasing regulations to codify provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and implement reforms from the Interior Report on the Federal Oil and Gas Leasing Program (November 2021). The existing Leasing Rule increased royalty rates to 16.67 percent, increased rental rates to $15 per acre, increased minimum lease bids to $10 per acre, eliminated non-competitive leasing, reduced the non operational period for idle wells to four years, increased minimum lease bonds to $150,000, increased minimum statewide bonds to $500,000, eliminated nationwide bonds, and included other provisions to ensure responsible oil and gas leasing and development on the public lands. **The Proposed Methane Waste Prevention Rule and the Proposed Oil and Gas Leasing Rule would modify and revise the existing regulations to streamline and reduce the regulatory burdens for oil and gas leasing and development on both onshore Federal lands and Indian leases.**

PLF POSITION: The PLF submitted comments on the Proposed Leasing Rule on August 18, 2026 and the PLF submitted comments on the Proposed Methane Rule on August 22, 2026. The comments on the Proposed Rules are posted on the PLF website. The regulation update process will ultimately conclude with the publication of Final Rules.

BLM LEADERSHIP

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

Director	Stevan Pearce
Principle Deputy Director	Bill Groffy
Deputy Director, Operations	Jeff Krauss *(Acting)*
Alaska State Office	Kevin Pendergast
Arizona State Office	Raymond Suazo
California State Office	Joe Stout
Colorado State Office	Kristen Lenhardt *(Acting)*
Eastern States Office	Mitchell Leverette
Idaho State Office	Meagan Conry *(Acting)*
Montana State Office	Jerry Davis *(Acting)*
Nevada State Office	Justin Abernathy *(Acting)*
New Mexico State Office	Gera Ashton *(Acting)*
OR/WA State Office	Tom Heinlein *(Acting)*
Utah State Office	Christina Price *(Acting)*
Wyoming State Office	Kris Kirby *(Acting)*

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***, preferably with a link to or copy of an obituary. 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.

Emigrant National Historic Trail – WY *(BLM photo)*

William Richards "Rick" Brigham on April 15, 2026, in Clarkston, WA. Rick was a graduate of Humboldt State College with a degree in Wildlife Management. He was one of the early members of The Wildlife Society and helped form the Conservation Unlimited Alumni Association which loaned money to struggling wildlife students. He began his career with BLM in 1963 in Battle Mountain, NV. His career included work in Elko, NV; Phoenix, AZ; and Carson City, NV where he retired in 2004. His work in Phoenix was focused on desert bighorn sheep and he was active with the Desert Bighorn Council and the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society and the construction of big game guzzlers (water catchments). His expertise in developing guzzlers is captured in BLM Technical Note 397 (1997) which became the blueprint still in use today for guzzler development throughout the west. When he moved to Carson City, NV in 1974 there were only 15 desert bighorn sheep on the District; but through his passion, unwavering dedication, and close working relationship with the Nevada Department of Wildlife, there are now over 700 bighorn sheep on nine different mountain ranges in the District. He remained active in The Wildlife Society, The Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, and the Lewis-Clark Wildlife Club after retirement.

Stephen Dale Douglas on August 1, 2026, in Cedar Rapids, IW. Steve attended Colorado State University and Iowa State University (ISU) graduating from ISU in 1975 with a degree in Forestry. He worked for the BLM for 30 years as a Cadastral Surveyor in the Eastern States Office and also worked in the California Happy Camp project office in the 1980's. He retired in 2005.

Dennis Graham on September 18, 2025, in Coos Bay, OR. Dennis was a U.S. Army veteran and graduated from the Oregon Institute of Technology with a degree in Civil Engineering Technology. He initially worked for the U.S. Forest Service in Klamath Falls, OR and in 1972 began his career with BLM as a Facilities Engineer in the Coos Bay District. He retired in 2001.

Matthias "Matt" Kniesel on July 6, 2026, in Baker City, OR. Matt was born in Yugoslavia and emigrated to the U.S. at the age of 8. He was a veteran, received a degree in Biology from the University of Illinois and a Master's degree in Forestry from Colorado State University. Matt began his career with the BLM in 1974 as a Wildlife Biologist in Rawlins, WY and also worked in the Baker Resource Area of the Vale District in Oregon until his retirement. He also did some work in the Denver Service Center, Division of Standards and Technology.

Gordon Austin Knight on July 15, 2026, in Cumming, Georgia. Gordon earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of West Virginia and a post-graduate degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He served eleven years in the U.S. Army Reserve Officer's Corps, including recruiting for West Point and a tour of duty in South Korea. He retired from the BLM in 2001, after a 40-year career in public service. His last assignment was Branch Chief in the Division of Planning and Environmental Coordination in the BLM Washington, D.C. office.

Jon Allen Menten on June 22, 2026, in Coos Bay, OR. Jon graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor's degree in Forest and Natural Resources Management. Jon began his career with BLM in 1979 in Medford, OR as a Forester and later moved to Battle Mountain, NV and Coos Bay, OR where he worked for 20 years. He ended his career in the Washington, D.C. office and retired in 2011.

Steven Lloyd Smith on September 5, 2026, in Sparks, NV. Steve attended Arizona State University and earned a Bachelor's degree in Recreation. He continued his education at Colorado State University and earned a Master's degree in Outdoor Recreation Planning. He began his 42 year career as an Outdoor Recreation Planner with BLM in Sparks, NV. He had an integral role in helping to create the Biz Johnson National Recreation Trail out of Susanville, CA. Steve was one of the main outdoor recreation planners in helping to create the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area outside Las Vegas, NV. He was also on the initial planning committee for the first outdoor event in the Black Rock Desert, that would eventually become the Burning Man Festival. Steve eventually became the BLM Nevada Wildnerness Coordinator and retired from the BLM in 2012. Some of the BLM wilderness training manuals that he wrote are still being used today. He won the Golden Pinecone Award in 2011 in honor of his significant and important environmental accomplishments and his support for legislative initiatives to designate wilderness areas on public lands in Nevada.

Martin (Joe) Zimmer on July 6, 2026, in Boise, ID. Joe was a U.S. Navy veteran and graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in Forest Management. He later earned a Master's Degree in Education from the University of Idaho. He worked for the BLM for 29 years in ever increasing staff and senior management positions. This included positions as a forester in Roseberg, OR; timber manager in Meford, OR; staff forester in Washington, D.C.; District Manager in Coeur d'Alene, ID; District Manager in Boise, ID; and Deputy State Director for Resources in the Idaho State Office. He retired in 1990. After retirement, he taught management skills and facilitated meetings as a consultant and was active in local community activities including Affiliate Associate Professor of Range Management at the University of Idaho and serving on the Guidance Advisory Council for the University of Idaho, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences.

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****.*

DONATIONS*

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

RECEIVED FROM	IN MEMORY OF
L J Porter	Jerry Jessen
Louise Senzel	Irving & Jennie Senzel
Ed Shepard	Matt Kniesel
	Bill Hudson
	Jon Menton

GENERAL/ADVOCACY FUND

Ann Hutchinson
Eric Janes
John Kwiatkowski
Cheryl McCaffrey
L J Porter
Louise Senzel
Ed Shepard
Gregg and Mary Simmons

** This list reflects donations received during the period of July 1, 2026 thru September 30, 2026. Donations received after this period will be reported in the next edition of the **Monitor**.*

You can make a 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 if your donation is for the **PLF General Fund**, the **George Lea Founder's Scholarship**, or 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 has also established a **PLF Endowment Fund** for larger donations to support the long-term purposes and mission of the organization. The PLF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.

You can also make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) directly to the PLF from an eligible individual retirement account (IRA).The PLF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization and your donations are tax-deductible to the maximum extent permitted under the law. **When making a QCD, please advise your IRA account manager to also provide your direct personal address to the PLF so that we can acknowledge your charitable donation.**

The PLF has a fund raising campaign that is running concurrently with the **America250** celebrations during 2026. This effort includes the sale of PLF merchandise that can be ordered through a third party vendor at ***bonfire.com/store/public-lands-foundation***. This fund raising campaign supports the advocacy efforts of the Public Lands Foundation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Obit for Grand Staircase?

With profound heartbreak, we acknowledge decline of care for one of America's special places – the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument (GSENM). With intention, funding, and a skilled workforce, designation of the GSENM in 1996 set the stage for protection, conservation, and restoration of one of BLM's Crown Jewels. Dozens more national monuments and national conservation areas followed as the newly created National Landscape Conservation System, or National Conservation Lands, established by law in 2009.

For two decades following designation, scientists and citizens convened to identify flora, fauna, geology, soils, paleontology, and human cultures that defined this geography. Unique discoveries were made - because the BLM cared to look! Over 650 native bee species were identified. Dozens of dinosaurs were discovered - many not previously known to science. Endemic plant species, not growing anywhere else in the world were identified. And more.

The GSENM established a hybrid government / university model, with staff from both entities working together daily in the field and office – many as BLM employees. Instead of Federal employees attending annual conferences and hearing from scientists, those scientists worked for BLM. The collaboration worked! It was called the Outdoor Laboratory of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

Basic and applied research led to discoveries and management applications at the GSENM and beyond. "Beyond" refers to discoveries like those by Dr. Margie Chan studying fluid movement in the GSENM Navajo sandstone. When NASA showed the first Mars pictures of "blueberry-like" stones, Dr. Chan contacted them to share GSENM research. This led to acknowledging ancient fluid movement on Mars!

The BLM partnered with over a hundred U.S. and global entities: universities, non-profits, Federal and state agencies, and conservation organizations. The BLM created a digital research library with a nearby university to share hundreds of juried, published research papers, plus theses, dissertations, science symposium proceedings and over 400 oral history interviews - all available at no cost to students, researchers and the general public. These papers are available through the Southern Utah University Digital Library at ***www.suu.edu/library/special-collections/grand-staircase***. The BLM also hosted three major science symposiums.

Humans forge deep connections with places, and many believe the GSENM should retain serious protections. I certainly do, based upon 15 years working there and living nearby. If you've been to the GSENM, you know the untamable spirit and magic of this place deserves our attention. Most of the reasons the GSENM was designated are still present, still valid. The Hippocratic oath relates to our care of nature and public lands - abstain from causing harm or hurt.

As humans, one of our strongest attributes is our ability to adapt, and one of our worst attributes is also our ability to adapt. Perhaps we shouldn't pave it, put up a parking lot, then spend millions of dollars to try and restore it. I implore Congress and future administrations to protect this special place.

Born of fire, water, and deep time, shall we be the generation that kills the American experiment called the public lands? I hope not.

Carolyn Z. Shelton
Retired BLM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *(continued)*

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***. Comments should be limited to no more than 500 words in length. In addition, members are encouraged to use the ***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 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 Letters to the Editor.

PLF MEMBERSHIP

PLF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

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Phone _____

E-mail _____

Date _____

Amount Enclosed _____

PLF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Regular $50
Contributing $100
Sponsoring $200
Patron..... $500

THE PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION IS A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION.