

Activity: Challenge Cost Share

SUBACTIVITY SUMMARY (\$000)

	2002 Actual Amount	2003 Estimate Amount	Uncontrollable & Related Changes (+/-) Amount	Program Changes (+/-) Amount	2004 Budget Request Amount	Inc(+) Dec(-) from 2003 Amount
\$(000)	0	18,973	0	+2,000	20,973	+2,000
FTE	0	0	0	0	0	0

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The BLM's Challenge Cost Share program supports the Resource Protection and Recreation mission goals from the Department's Draft Strategic Plan by leveraging funds with partners to complete monitoring and inventory of resources, implementing habitat improvement projects, developing recovery and land use plans, protecting cultural resources, and providing enhanced recreational experiences. Key intermediate outcome goals include creating habitat conditions for biological communities to flourish, improving information and assessments used for decision-making, and reducing and managing risks to cultural and heritage resources.

The BLM established the CCS program in 1985 with a congressional appropriation of \$300,000 for wildlife management to be matched by private sector funding or in-kind services. Since 1985, the BLM has expanded the CCS program from the Wildlife Management program to include the following management programs: Rangeland, Riparian, Fisheries, Forestry, Cultural Resources, and Recreation Resources. Annually, \$9.2 million of the Bureau's budget, including \$200,000 from the Oregon and California Grant Lands Appropriation, is used by BLM State and field offices for CCS projects.

The number of partners that participate in public land management is growing each year. The



Partners may match Bureau CCS funding with cash, materials, or in-kind work. Pictured, volunteers assist with a re-seeding project.

BLM list of national-level resource conservation partnerships exceeds 100. Many of these partnerships contribute matching funds to the CCS program either directly or through local chapters in each State. In addition to the national-level partnerships, challenge cost share projects often receive funding from State agencies such as fish and game departments, heritage programs, forestry divisions, oil, gas, and mining divisions, colleges and universities, local companies, livestock permittees, and local clubs.

The Bureau's CCS program has been extremely successful in leveraging millions of Federal dollars with private and State funding for conservation efforts, benefiting resources on BLM-administered public lands. The current program solicits partnerships and partnership funding through a variety of the Bureau's resource management programs such as Rangeland Resources, Fisheries, Wildlife, Threatened and Endangered Species, Cultural Resources, and Recreation.

In addition to the benefits to the public lands and resources, this program has developed goodwill, better communication, collaborative and cooperative working partnerships with a variety of people and organizations. Examples of partners include State fish and game, transportation, and mining associations; Quail, Trout, and Ducks Unlimited; Bat Conservation International; U.S. Golf Association; Chevron; and many others.

2004 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2004 budget request for Challenge Cost Share (part of the Cooperative Conservation Initiative) is \$20,973,000.

Examples of projects that may receive CCS funding in 2004 include:

- The largest and northernmost site of dinosaur remains are located at the Liscomb Bone Bed in Alaska. Alaska has requested funding to assist with recovery and recordation of the site.
- Heron Island in Arizona has been a major nesting site for great blue herons. Habitat loss and degradation has resulted in the need to construct artificial nests. The artificial nests are still productive; however they are in poor shape and need to be replaced. Fifteen to 20 nests will be replaced. Partners for this project include Audubon Society, Arizona Game and Fish, California Fish and Game, Partners in Flight, Boy and Girl Scouts, and FWS.
- The San Sebastian and San Felipe Creek Complex has been selected by California to be the focus of riparian restoration during 2004. Salt cedar grows on 1,200 acres of habitat within the complex, which provides habitat for the endangered San Sebastian pupfish and the endangered Yuma clapper rail. In 2004, a portion of the salt cedar will be eradicated. Partners include the Sierra Club and the Center for Biodiversity.
- In Colorado, Garfield and Eagle Counties, Colorado State Parks, and the Colorado Department of Transportation will partner with the BLM to implement approved recreation travel management decisions including signing of open and closed routes, rehabilitating closed routes, and providing visitor use information.
- The Nevada Rock Art Foundation will partner with the Bureau to monitor and document the rock art condition, as well as install protective measures.
- New Mexico will conduct breeding bird and southwestern willow flycatcher surveys at five established riparian locations on BLM-managed land. Long term data on species diversity and relative abundance of flycatchers and other species of concern are needed to determine

status and develop management strategies to maintain viable bird populations. Partners include Hawks Aloft and New Mexico Game and Fish.

- In Oregon, a permanent plot of Cooks lomatium (federally proposed for listing) will be monitored at three sites. The Institute for Applied Ecology will perform the monitoring and prepare reports. Baseline documentation of the trend of this rare plant is critical to managing its habitat and potentially delisting this species in the future.
- Statewide, the BLM and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources will monitor vegetation compositions on key big game areas. The health and vigor of big game populations is closely tied to forage quantity and quality. Monitoring data will be used to develop management strategies for big game populations.
- Wyoming BLM will work with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and University of Wyoming to conduct aerial surveys for bald eagle winter roosts. This information is required under the terms and conditions of formal FWS Section 7 consultation to protect bald eagles and associated habitats.

2002 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Bureau is currently developing information regarding CCS projects that were funded in 2002; examples of projects completed include:

- The Arizona Strip Field Office, in cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Arizona Mule Deer Association, and the Chicago Botanic Garden Internship program conducted a complete inventory of over 180 wildlife water developments on public lands within the Arizona Strip. Wildlife water developments were field inspected and global positioning system locations were recorded. Where possible, repairs and maintenance were performed and the developments restored.
- In Idaho, an estimated 4,800 people attended the annual Coeur d'Alene Eagle Watch Week. Throughout the week, visitors are educated about bald eagles through short lectures and viewing sites.
- The San Juan Preservation Trust in Washington partners with the BLM to work with visitors to the Lopez Island ACEC and conduct bird monitoring surveys. The San Juan Preservation Trust provides volunteers and the BLM provides all required equipment and supplies. This partnership was established in 1991. Without this partnership, BLM would not be able to collect this important data.



The Sheldon Mountain Wildlife Water Development in Arizona was a CCS partnership project with the BLM Safford Field Office, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Quail Unlimited.

- In Utah, the relationship between the threatened Utah prairie dog, rangeland seedings, and grazing intensity were studied through a partnership between Utah State University, Syracuse University, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Iron County, and the BLM.

2003 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE ESTIMATES

In 2003, the CCS Activity is a newly-established budget activity that requested funding in a single budget line item for CCS programs previously funded in other budget activities and subactivities. Through partnerships at all levels, the BLM put the Secretary of the Interior 4 Cs (conservation, through cooperation, consultation, and communication) in action.

Projects submitted for CCS funding must strive to achieve a match ratio of 1:1 or greater of non-Federal to Federal dollars or in-kind or material contributions. Overall, the Bureau will achieve a 1:1 or greater sharing ratio. A cap of 10 percent is placed on allowable BLM internal charges against CCS funds. All projects meet the terms and conditions of national selection criteria. A total of 339 projects were selected by a multi-disciplinary team to receive funds in 2003. Following is a brief description of the types of projects that may be funded:

- The western Arctic caribou herd ranges over 140,000 square miles in Northwestern Alaska. During the 1970's, the population experienced a rapid decline. Since that time, monitoring indicates that the population has stabilized and may be starting to decline. Funding will allow the Western Arctic Caribou Working Group to continue to monitor populations of caribou. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is a partner with the BLM on this project.
- Paleontologists and volunteers from the Mesa Southwest Museum, Southwest Paleontological Society, University of Arizona, and Graham County Historical Society Museum will continue assisting the BLM Paleontology Program Coordinator to inventory and collect vertebrate fossils on public land. These significant fossil beds contain the remains of mammoth, horse, camel, tortoise, dinosaur, and many other animals.
- The Payne Ranch Native Grass Restoration project in California involves restoration of wildlife habitat by planting locally-collected and raised perennial native grass seed in areas formerly dominated by noxious weeds, such as yellow starthistle and medusa head. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is partnering with the Bureau to complete this project.
- Annually, the Canyons of the Ancients NM in Colorado and the Anasazi Heritage Center partner to monitor 1,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas, stabilize one site; curate 10,000 objects, and provide outreach to many National Monument visitors.
- The BLM, Idaho Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep signed a memorandum of agreement to cooperate in the restoration of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep to the Hells Canyon Area. This project would allow the transplant of animals along with intensive monitoring and research into limiting factors, such as diseases.

- Montana BLM has partnered with the Bitterroot Restoration Corporation to provide a statewide method of identification, mapping, and monitoring of Montana riparian and wetland areas. Bitterroot will maintain a database for the management of riparian and wetland information.



The Canyon of the Ancients National Monument offers plenty of CCS opportunities for public outreach and recordation of archaeological objects.

- New Mexico BLM is partnering with Auburn University and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to conduct research on factors that might be linked to declines in lesser prairie chicken populations.
- In Nevada, the BLM, Northeast Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Nevada Division of Forestry, and Gibbs Ranch will reconstruct six miles of riparian protection fences and maintain irrigated meadow habitats along Marys River. Work will also include continued irrigation of the meadow, ditch maintenance, hay harvest, and noxious weed treatments.
- Along the Oregon Coast, western snowy plover numbers are down to 100 birds. CCS funding will be used to place predator exclosures around nests, develop other predator control methods, reduce recreation use conflicts, and assess management effectiveness. This project is supported by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, The Nature Conservancy, FWS, and U.S. Forest Service.
- CCS funding will support inventory and monitoring needs associated with the Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle (Federal candidate for listing) and Welch's Milkweed (Federal-threatened) in Utah. All work would be completed through volunteers from Randolph Macon College and private contractors. This project is part of the conservation strategy and agreements of the Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle.
- In Wyoming, the impacts of oil and natural gas development on mountain plover breeding and productivity will be studied. This study will provide the BLM and industry with recommendations for mitigating impacts to mountain plovers or avoiding them altogether. Partners include the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, FWS, and U.S. Geological Services.

JUSTIFICATION OF 2004 PROGRAM CHANGES

2004 PROGRAM CHANGES

	2004 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
\$(000)	20,973	+2,000
FTE	0	0

The 2004 budget request for the Challenge Cost Share program is \$20,973,000, a program change of +\$2,000,000 from the 2003 requested level.

Challenge Cost Share, (+\$2,000,000) – Increased funding in the BLM's CCS program will help improve the health of watersheds and landscapes, sustain biological communities, and protect cultural and heritage resources while expanding partnership opportunities and leveraging funds. The number of potential and willing partners for CCS projects continues to grow and is only limited by funding available for funding matched projects. For example, 940 projects (totaling \$34 million) were submitted by BLM State, Center and field offices for 2003 funding consideration. Increased CCS funding will be leveraged and directed to improve public land health through on-the-ground restoration and habitat improvement projects.

Following are examples of projects that may receive CCS funding in 2004 with increased funding:

- The Gulkana River in Alaska is designated as a National Wild and Scenic River and it is the major spawning grounds for Copper River chinook and sockeye salmon. These fish stocks support large recreational, commercial, cultural subsistence, and personal use fisheries. The construction of a fish counting tower by the BLM and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game will allow for more accurate estimates of the spawning populations of chinook and sockeye salmon.
- Little is known about breeding habitats of the many neotropical migratory songbirds that breed and nest in southeast Arizona. During 2004, the BLM will partner with the National Audubon Society to establish a monitoring avian productivity station in the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.
- California BLM's Sacramento River Bend Area of Critical Environmental Concern is becoming increasingly popular for hikers, equestrians, and river-based recreationists. Funding would allow the BLM in partnership with the California State University to develop access portal points with signs, improve trails and sanitation facilities, and restore riparian habitat.
- In Colorado, the Gunnison sage grouse was identified as a new species in 2000 and the Gunnison Basin was identified by the American Bird Conservancy as an Important Bird Area in 2001. Implementation of this project will increase herbaceous understory in upland

nesting and early brood rearing habitat by brush mowing and interseeding 600 acres. Project partners include BLM and the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

- Idaho BLM is interested in the archaeological information associated with the Lower Salmon River Canyon. During 2004, BLM will partner with Oregon State University, U.S. Forest Service, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, University of Idaho, and Idaho Power Corporation to collect and interpret data on the area's archaeological chronology, geoarchaeological context, and paleoenvironmental history. This project will greatly improve the BLM's ability to predict where archaeological sites exist.
- BLM Montana will implement the Big Hole River Grayling Restoration Plan. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Montana Council of Trout Unlimited, Montana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, BLM and others would partner to reintroduce grayling into historic habitat, monitor populations, develop brood stock, and restore fisheries habitat along the Big Hole River.
- The Nevada Natural Heritage Program maintains a database of fish, wildlife, and plants, including Nevada BLM sensitive species. This information is especially important to the Bureau when approving land use plans, granting right-of-ways, authorizing grazing permits, approving applications for permits to drill, etc. It provides immediate access to the BLM regarding locations of threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. The BLM and Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources partner in this effort.
- The white-tailed, Utah, and Gunnison's prairie dogs are located in isolated colonies throughout the Colorado Plateau. Populations of these prairie dogs are declining as the result of land use conversions, disease, and poisoning. Prairie dogs also provide habitat for other special status species, including black-footed ferret, mountain plover, ferruginous hawk, and burrowing owl. The BLM, Utah State University, Center for Disease Control, and U.S. Geological Survey are partnering to meet the objectives of the Black-footed Ferret Recovery Plan. Work will include population monitoring, mapping, small mammal trapping, dusting with insecticide, and investigating the effects of recreational shooting on prairie dog populations.