

Special Recreation Permits

Indicator: Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) active during Fiscal Year 1999 by BLM field office. SRPs are issued for commercial, competitive, organized group activities and events, and special area events. These are recreation activities that occur on the public lands such as river rafting, outfitters and guides (including hunting, fishing and ecotourism) organized bike racing, and off-highway vehicle (OHV) events. This map does not show permits issued for individual non-commercial use.

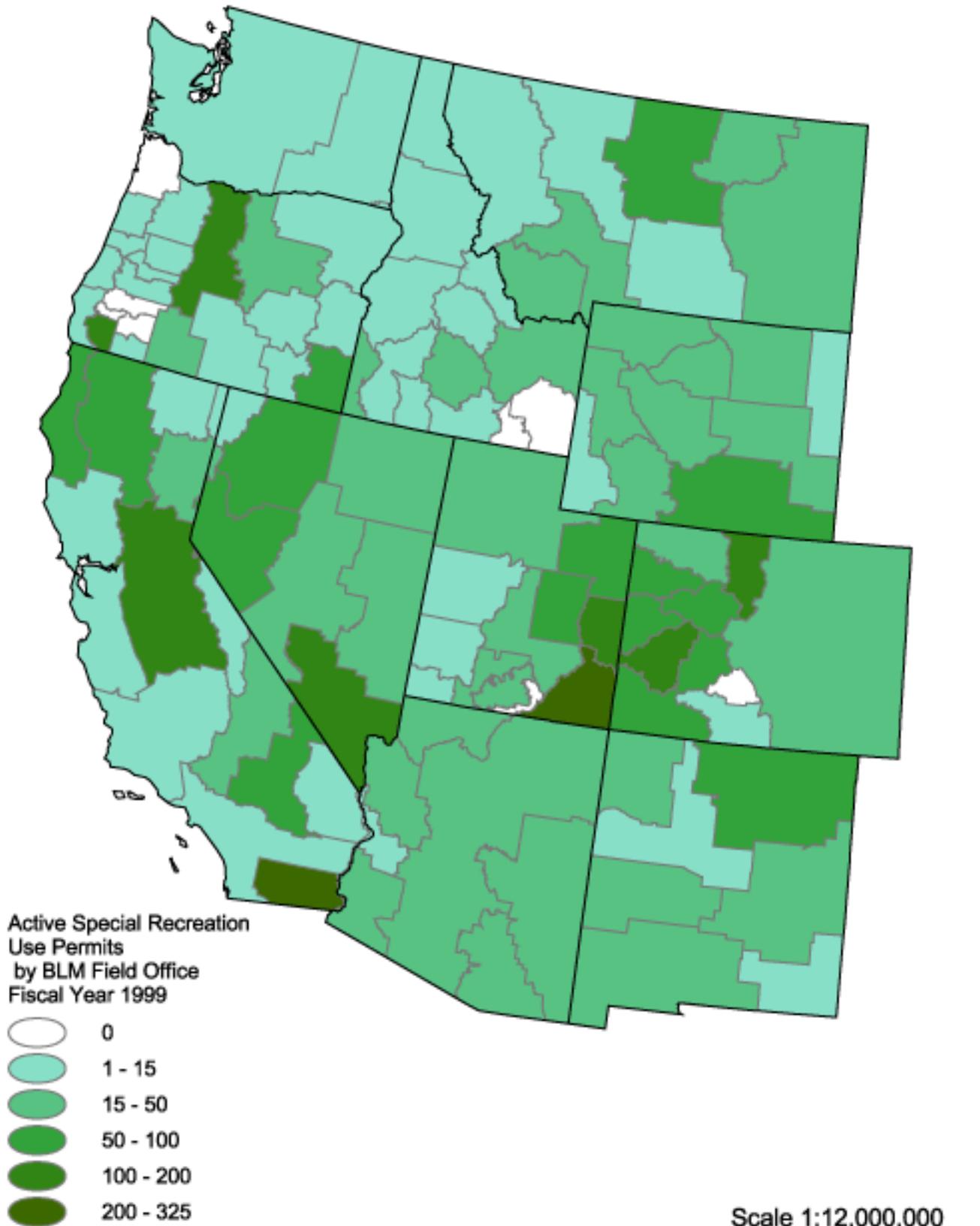
Key Findings: This is a direct measure of permitted recreation use. This is also an indirect indicator of the total recreational use of the public lands, most of which does not require a permit. However, where rivers are at carrying capacity (as established by plan), for example, there can be no more rafting permits issued. Some of the areas with the largest number of SRPs (over 200) reflect the popularity of river rafting and competitive OHV events.

Limitations: The data have not been normalized against the amount of public land in each field office. Therefore impacts are generally proportional to the number of SRPs within any single area, with the notable exception of where carrying capacities for any activity have been reached. Most recreational use does not require a permit, therefore the map may greatly under- or overstate actual usage for any one area. River areas, such as along the Colorado River where river rafting is popular, may have their impacts concentrated along the river corridor. Areas with zero permits may reflect loss of data due to a recent database rehost.

Source: BLM Recreation Management Information System (RMIS). The data are updated on at least an annual basis by individual field offices. The database is centralized and located in Phoenix, AZ, and maintained through a web-based application using the BLM's intranet. SRPs in this database represent the most reliable source of data available for recreation use on the public lands. Other records within RMIS are in need of cleanup or more frequent updating.

Comments: Impacts from recreation are positive in that it can help support local economies, increase public awareness and understanding of land management issues, and provides psychological benefits to individuals. Negative impacts may include increasing soil erosion, vegetation damage, and noise due to OHV use and other motorized forms of transport. Increased human presence can disrupt wildlife breeding habits and fragment wildlife habitat.

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