



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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Bureau of Land Management
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President Proposes \$1.1 Billion for BLM in Fiscal Year 2011 To Protect Resources and Manage Uses of Public Lands

With a focus on renewable energy development, climate change adaptation, and other key priorities, President Obama today requested \$1.1 billion in appropriations for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management in Fiscal Year 2011. This represents an \$8.0 million increase from the BLM's FY 2010 enacted funding level. The President's request reflects his continuing commitment to be prudent with taxpayer dollars while setting priorities for spending.

"Today's budget proposal will advance the BLM's mission of protecting the land's resources while facilitating environmentally sound use of America's public lands," said BLM Director Bob Abbey. "Under this proposal, we can and will meet the challenges facing our agency in today's fast-growing West." Under the President's proposed budget, the BLM will focus on the following priorities:

New Energy Frontier

The New Energy Frontier initiative recognizes the value of environmentally sound, scientifically grounded development of both renewable and conventional energy resources on the Nation's public lands. To encourage and facilitate renewable energy development, the President's FY 2011 BLM budget proposes a \$3.0 million increase that builds on the \$16.1 million increase for renewable energy provided in FY 2010. The funds would be used to complete environmental studies for solar energy projects in Nevada and potential wind energy zones in Oregon and Nevada. In the conventional energy program, the BLM will focus on implementing oil and gas leasing reforms put forward by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar while placing continued emphasis on oil and gas inspections, environmental enforcement, and production monitoring activities. The budget includes a \$2.0 million increase in BLM's Soil, Water, and Air Management program for air quality monitoring that will be targeted to areas with current or anticipated intensive oil and gas development to help BLM ensure that the energy development complies with environmental requirements and minimizes or addresses potential litigation issues.

The Budget maintains BLM's oil and gas management program capacity at current levels, with a \$3.0 million decrease to reflect the completion of specific Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) studies. In addition, the Budget proposes new fees – estimated to generate \$10 million annually – to help offset the cost of BLM's oil and gas inspection and enforcement activities.

Climate Change Adaptation

The Secretary's Climate Change Adaptation initiative recognizes the need to understand the condition of BLM-managed landscapes at a broad level; identify potential impacts from climate change; and develop and implement strategies to help native plant and animal communities adapt to climate change. These efforts are coordinated with other Interior bureaus and other partners through a network of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. The President's proposed FY 2011 BLM budget includes a \$2.5 million increase in support of the Climate Change Adaptation initiative, in addition to the \$15.0 million increase the Bureau received in 2010.

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Treasured Landscapes

The Treasured Landscapes initiative recognizes the need to take a landscape-scale approach to conservation. Through this initiative, the BLM is dedicated to preserving species and habitat; conserving and restoring rivers and riparian areas; and protecting lands of historical and cultural significance.

The FY 2011 BLM budget request makes a major contribution to the Treasured Landscapes initiative with a proposed \$13.1 million increase for high-priority land acquisition projects, for a total of \$37.8 million for high-priority line-item projects. The total of \$37.8 million will add Federal protection to 25,679 acres of lands with key natural and cultural resources.

Youth in Natural Resources

The Youth in Natural Resources initiative recognizes the value of encouraging young people to experience the myriad resources offered by the Nation's public lands and to engage and connect with the land around them. In FY 2010, the BLM received an increase of \$5 million to support programs and partnerships that engage youth in natural resource management; encourage young people and their families to visit, explore, and learn about the public lands; and promote stewardship, conservation, and public service. In FY 2011, the BLM will continue to fund these programs and partnerships, as well as direct \$1.0 million in base funding to support a new public-private partnership program with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Other Funding: the National Wild Horse and Burro Program

Putting the BLM's wild horse and burro program on a sustainable track is one of Secretary Salazar's top priorities. Today the BLM finds itself in the position of needing to gather thousands of wild horses from overpopulated herds on Western public rangelands at a time when public demand for adoptable horses has declined. This has left more than 34,000 wild horses and burros in holding facilities that cost approximately \$35 million to operate out of a FY 2010 wild horse budget of \$64 million.

Taking note of the BLM's holding costs and recognizing the agency's limited management options concerning unadoptable horses, the Government Accountability Office issued a report in October 2008 that found the Bureau to be at a "critical crossroads." In response to this situation, Secretary Salazar announced on Oct. 7, 2009, a new plan to put the BLM's wild horse and burro program on a sustainable track. The strategy emphasizes a combination of aggressive fertility control and the relocation of wild horses to new preserves in the Midwest or Eastern portions of the United States as a means to accelerate the attainment of appropriate management population levels. To advance the Secretary's efforts toward program sustainability, the President's FY 2011 BLM budget proposal requests \$75.7 million for the wild horse and burro program, a \$12 million increase over the FY 2010 level of \$64 million. The budget proposal makes a separate, but related land-acquisition funding request of \$42.5 million for the purchase of land for one wild horse preserve.

Budget Decreases

The 2011 budget funds Administration priorities and reduces funding for lower-priority programs, projects, and activities. Included is a reduction of \$8.2 million for resource management planning; a \$5.0 million reduction in the Oregon and California Lands Management program; a \$13.0 million reduction in the Alaska land conveyance program; elimination of the \$9.5 million Challenge Cost Share program; a reduction of \$600,000 by discontinuing two congressional earmarks in the Management of Lands and Resources account; a total of \$3.8 million in smaller base funding reductions in several programs; management efficiencies totaling \$10.6 million; and a reduction in the construction program of \$5.0 million.

The BLM manages more land – 253 million acres – than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.