

Northwest Passage Volume 1, Issue 5 – Summer 2009

Cover

Northwest Passage

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BLM Oregon/Washington

The Bureau of Land Management Magazine for Oregon and Washington

Summer 2009

The BLM's National Ultramarathon Champ Shows Us How To Take It Outside!

Spokane at the Crossroads, a District 25 Years in the Making

Plus! Is the BLM's Johnny Horizon ready to return?

Clear All Obstacles

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Ding! You've Got Mail! A Postcard From Your Community! (Page 14)

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BLM Recycles

[Image of Recycling Symbol]

[Image of BLM Logo]

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[Photo of a Group of Rafters Shooting the Rapids on a River]

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Letter from Edward W. Shepard, State Director, Oregon/Washington, Bureau of Land Management

Welcome friends of the BLM! Can you believe how fast this summer is going? We sure can.

Once summer rolls around, the BLM is thrilled to see our friends and neighbors and honored visitors heading outside to enjoy the breathtaking public lands of Oregon and Washington. And given all our magnificent opportunities for recreation and family outings, you’ll probably see us out there as well. Even Federal employees love to get out on the public lands when they can!

Speaking of enjoying the outdoors, our theme for our summer issue of *Northwest Passage* is “Take It Outside!” This declaration is both a great idea and the official title of our national effort to inspire American youths to actively connect with the public lands in their backyards. In our “Take It Outside” article, we provide helpful information and hints on how you yourself can get involved inspiring young people to enjoy the great outdoors in your own communities.

When it comes to heading outside, there’s one BLM employee who simply can’t get enough. His name is Robert Towne, and he’s a national champion ultramarathoner. What’s an ultramarathoner, you say? Good question. It’s anyone who runs a race longer than a marathon which is 26.2 miles. And Robert, the manager of the BLM’s Spokane District, has been known to run – and win – races over hills and through forests for 30 miles, 50 miles, or more! I think you’ll be as impressed by his accomplishments as I am.

Keeping on the topic of Spokane, *Northwest Passage* often focuses a great deal of coverage on the BLM in Oregon where nine of our ten districts are located. I’m starting to think that coverage balance must have inspired our BLM district in Washington State to get busy writing their own feature about their unique history and exciting future. It’s a fascinating piece about how the BLM in Washington can be found everywhere from the plains in the east to the mountains in the center to the San Juan Islands at the coast. Once you see the photos and read this article, you’ll definitely feel inspired to make the Spokane District your next destination.

But what do you do when you’re ready to take a break and enjoy some summer reading? Just check out our feature on author and BLM retiree Clair Button. Clair has written three mystery novels about a fictional BLM employee who serves the public lands while solving crimes. These are must-read novels for anyone who loves reading a great yarn set on our public lands.

And finally, we return to a topic that’s dear to the heart of the BLM: Johnny Horizon. In 1976, Johnny Horizon was endorsed by President Ford as the leader of America’s “This Land is Your Land” Campaign. In this issue you’ll see vintage Johnny Horizon memorabilia and learn more about one of the historic mileposts in the BLM’s history.

But heck, I think it’s time I headed back outdoors myself. So thanks for reading *Northwest Passage* and we hope you “Take It Outside” this summer!

Edward W. Shepard State Director Oregon/Washington Bureau of Land Management

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Take it Outside!

Volume 1, Issue 5

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Mission:

The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Oregon and Washington, the BLM provides innovative leadership in managing natural resources of the Pacific Northwest.

This Month's Cover

[Reproduction of Magazine Cover Photo]

Professional photographer Scobel Wiggins generously provided this photo for the cover of our Summer Issue of Northwest Passage. Scobel skillfully captured BLM Spokane District Manager Robert Towne mid-jump at the McDonald Forest 50k Trail Run.

Wait. 50K? Isn't that over 30 miles?

Yes.

Running! For 30 miles! Through the trees and up, down, and over hills! (and logs) Most of us won't even drive 30 miles if we can't have our cup holders.

When we asked Robert if he'd ever seen UFOs or anything strange after running that far, he said, "Hallucinations usually happen at night, alone, and many miles into the forest - what a combination when you're freaking out."

Indeed.

To read more about what inspires someone to run as many as 100 miles at a time, check out our interview with ultramarathoner Robert Towne on page 10. He definitely exemplifies the motto, "Take it Outside."

To view other shots from the McDonald Forest 50K, you can see them at photographer Scobel Wiggins' site: scobelwigginsphotography.com.

PHOTO BY SCOBEL WIGGINS

Our Contributors

[Five Photos of Contributors on Image of Corkboard]

1: Writer Candy Harmon marks her inaugural article in *Northwest Passage* with a piece inspired by this issue's central theme: Take It Outside! An author of fiction, Candy used her prodigious prose skills to cover the BLM's efforts in Oregon and Washington to support the national initiative, Take It Outside: Connect with Your Public Lands (Page 6). As soon as she was done with this article, Candy's first question was, "What can I write about next?" As evidenced by her in-depth coverage of how the BLM connects American youth to our public lands, the answer is clearly "Anything!"

2: Campbell, Campbell, Campbell... How does *Northwest Passage* get so lucky that we can almost always rely on Michael Campbell to provide one of his awesomely quirky and fascinating articles? We'll tell you how. Metal! Your humble editors do everything within their power to keep Michael rockin' with his beloved heavy metal so he can focus on his writing. Writing that, in this case, covered one of his favorite cultural icons: Johnny Horizon (Page 26). Will this article help bring back Johnny? Maybe. But for now we're wondering if Johnny is more of a Zeppelin fan or an Ozzy aficionado.

3: Officially, this is *Northwest Passage's* "Summer Issue." But unofficially? It's the "Spokane Issue!" Hailing from the BLM's lone district in Washington State is Scott Pavey, another first-time contributor. In addition to serving the good people of Washington on planning and environmental issues, Scott profiles the Spokane District's rise...to power! This feature (Page 18) is clearly an open challenge to all the other districts to try to do the same. That's right – we're lookin' at you, Medford!

4: This must be the old timer's side of the page because, like Michael Campbell, Megan Harper is one of our most frequent (and favorite) contributors! And in this issue, Megan puts the spotlight on Paul Gammon, a BLM inventor who won a national Department of the Interior Award for devising a completely new way to capture and reuse paint (Page 8). You heard that right - paint! If it's good enough for Picasso, it's good enough for us!

5: Aerial photography expert and cartographer Susan Nelson came down to earth to shoot photos of author (and BLM Retiree) Clair Button. And while she was snapping shots trekking deep into the bowels of Joseph Canyon, Susan chatted with Clair to learn more about the region in which he lives and writes his mystery novels (Page 30). Hey, we've got a mystery for Clair to solve: Why does summer always seem to be over so fast?

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Page 6 – 7 Public Lands Live

[Black & White Background Photo of Child Riding a Horse]

What's In Your Backyard?

The BLM's Take It Outside Initiative reconnects American youth with the nation's largest "playstation:" Our Public Lands.

[Photo of a Youth in a Kayak on a River]

[Photo of Youths Visiting the BLM to Learn about Public Lands]

Thrilling adventures across extraordinary lands!

Over 5,000 species of watchable wildlife living together in harmony!

Roaring rivers descend steep mountains onto open deserts filled with treasures!

Are these scenes from a summer blockbuster? Images flickering on a darkened movie screen?

Nay.

These boundless wonders patiently await you to discover them...in your very own backyard.

[Image of the State of Oregon]

Oregon Is For Lovers (of Public Lands!)

"My backyard," you say? That's right. And if you're wondering how to get there, the Bureau of Land Management just happens to provide an experienced Virgil to help you cross a River Styx of game stations, computers, movies, and high-speed internet.

Your tour guide in search of natural wonderment is Leah Schrod, an environmental education specialist in the BLM's Medford District. Year-round, Leah coordinates a number of programs – many of which are specifically aimed to entice our youth to "get outside" and enjoy all that nature has to offer.

One of Leah's highest profile projects is her role as the lead representative for Oregon and Washington on the BLM's national initiative, Take It Outside: Connect with Your Public Lands. This initiative is an umbrella program providing overarching assistance to groups, organizations, and individuals who share a united interest to inspire America's young people to go outdoors and experience our breathtaking environment.

Take It Outside competes directly with the synthetic adventures of televisions and gaming systems by creating attractive and fun physical quests on public lands and natural areas. Kind of like a completely peaceful World of Warcraft – but set in the actual outdoors!

“Mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health is improved by going outside. Kids can find their own creativity and independence. Gives them a breath of fresh air!” says Leah.

As the Oregon and Washington ambassador for this initiative, Leah is responsible for sharing exciting events with all ten BLM districts located throughout the Pacific Northwest. And because she’s a member of the BLM’s national team, Leah also serves as her region’s voice to ensure Oregon and Washington receive the necessary resources to successfully reach out to local youth.

In fact, Take It Outside provides annual funding to both established and new outdoor recreation projects. These grants help promote, provide transportation, and procure the necessary supplies to attract young people to our public lands. In 2009, 18 applicants in Oregon and Washington received up to \$5,000 – the second highest number of approved BLM projects in the nation.

Okay, sounds good. It’s summer, the weather’s warm, and we’re ready – let’s “take it outside!”

But how can we get started?

Leah explains about a number of events held in conjunction with Take It Outside. In Salem, the BLM partnered with Oregon State University and 4-H to hold five-day Latino Olympic Summer Camps for youth in grades 6 – 12. These camps promoted education in math and science as an avenue to college and future careers in forestry and environmental sciences. And coming up this September near Coos Bay, the Tsalila Education Days bring together over 2,500 students and their teachers for a three-day event to educate them on topics ranging from tribal culture, logging, and pioneer living to wildlife, watersheds, and energy.

These are but a few of the types of programs and events. Everyone is invited to contact Leah to learn more about what’s happening in our own necks o’ the woods!

continues on page 25

Mr. Gammon Goes to Washington

Paul Gammon's Fantabulous Contraption

How one BLM employee's obsession with improving our ecology inspired a midnight dream and a new invention – as well as a Department of the Interior Environmental Achievement Award

By Megan Harper

"It was so simple," says Gammon. "It actually took me awhile to explain the system to people because they didn't believe that it could be so straightforward."

[Photo of a Paul Gammon in Washington DC]

[Image of a Paint Can]

What's it like to stand shoulder to shoulder between the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and an official from the Department of the Interior while a crowd applauds?

Just ask BLM Coos Bay District Haz-Mat Specialist and mastermind inventor, Paul Gammon.

In honor of Paul's invention, an environmentally friendly paint can recovery system, Paul had the rare opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. to accept the Department of the Interior (DOI) Environmental Achievement Award from previous BLM Director Jim Caswell and DOI Assistant Secretary Lynn Scarlett.

"It was an honor to be chosen for the award. When I found out I won, all I could think was holy cow."

But wait, "paint can recovery?" Is that something someone spends time thinking about? Absolutely! Paul's creation was a labor of love for many months.

Each year Coos Bay and other BLM Districts conduct tree marking – the process of selectively applying paint to specific trees prior to thinning or harvest. While this process helps the BLM maintain a healthy forest, it also generates thousands of used spray cans which contain small amounts of paint.

These cans and the paint they contain are designated hazardous materials and must be treated as such. In the past, the BLM collected this paint in 55-gallon drums. And that's when Paul decided it was high time for a new process to safely collect and reuse this material.

So one night around midnight as Paul lay awake, he was struck by inspiration. Jumping up, he snatched nearby pen and paper and set to scratching out his rough design for a new system.

"It was so simple," said Paul. "It actually took me awhile to explain the system to people because they didn't believe that it could be so straightforward."

Receiving the green light from Coos Bay District Manager Mark Johnson, Paul traveled to a local metal shop which constructed the fantabulous contraption which would soon make him famous.

Paul's system is about the size of a refrigerator box and sits in the Coos Bay Warehouse. Each month a contractor operates Paul's invention to puncture used cans and collect the remaining paint. This system collects almost 1.5 gallons of paint every 90 days. And while that amount of paint may not sound significant, the process itself saves the BLM substantial hazardous material disposal fees. And, perhaps more importantly, Paul's mechanism protects employees from exposure to hazardous chemicals.

So what happens to the collected trace amounts of paint? Well, it all turns black, the definition of the presence of all colors once the pink, green, and blue get mixed together. And then this recovered paint is used to freshen up District utility trailers. Nothing is wasted!

So in honor of reducing hazardous treatment costs, protecting fellow employees, and using virtually 100 percent of this paint, Paul received his award and a trip to Washington, D.C., a city Paul had never visited. He took advantage of the opportunity to see the famous sites in our Nation's capitol.

"My favorites were seeing the Arlington National Cemetery and the WWII Memorial. Turns out though, D.C. blocks are a lot longer than Coos Bay blocks. I thought eight blocks on the map wouldn't be so bad, but man, I think we walked about eight miles the first day. The next morning I could hardly stand."

"I enjoyed the people too. They were all really nice, and it turns out Lynn Scarlett has a tie to Coos Bay. It was fun to swap stories."

Recognition of Paul and his recovery system may not be over. He's been nominated for the White House Closing the Circle Award which recognizes outstanding achievements of Federal employees and their facilities for efforts resulting in significant contributions to waste prevention and recycling. And until then Paul can revel in his DOI award recognizing his accomplishments in the recycling world: a statue made of recycled window glass.

The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner

Interview by Matt Christenson

“I’m not sure I’ve ever considered myself athletic. Just determined. I’ve always enjoyed endurance activities like backpacking and biking. Individual activities such as running have a social element but the emphasis is obviously personal and about the challenge.” Robert Towne, Bureau of Land Management Spokane District Manager (& Ultramarathoner)

[Photo of Robert Towne Fatigued After a Long Race]

[Silhouette Image of a Runner]

Ultras are any run longer than the marathon (a marathon is 26.2 miles). The typical distances are 50k, 50 miles, 100k, and 100 miles. Most ultras are run on trails and forest roads,” says Robert Towne, BLM Spokane District Manager and ultramarathoner.

So in honor of his cover on our first-ever “Take It Outside” issue, Robert spoke with Northwest Passage to share his experiences about training, the outdoors, and how winning is sometimes just finishing the race.

Northwest Passage (NWP): At what age did you complete your first marathon? Where was it?

Robert Towne (RT): I ran my first marathon in 1990. I was 38 years old and I ran the Portland Marathon with Russ Buswell. We both worked at the (BLM) Salem District.

NWP: What inspired you to become an ultramarathoner? Did you know other people who were doing them? Or do you think you might have a bit of a wild/crazy streak?

RT: I’ve enjoyed running for almost 20 years and ultras provide a challenge that is very different from the marathon. It’s been said that ultras are all about eating and drinking with a little scenery thrown in. For me, a marathon is a long race where you attempt a fast finish. An ultra is an adventure that you hope you can finish. Due to the duration of the event you need to learn to eat without getting sick, drink appropriately, maintain your electrolyte balance, deal with weather extremes and elevation, learn to run alone at night in unfamiliar territory, and try not to trip on every root and boulder. Plus the community of ultra runners is very welcoming. What’s not inspiring about that!?

NWP: At what age did you complete your first ultramarathon? What, how long, and where was it?

RT: I ran my first ultra in July of 2006 in Spokane. I was a few days shy of my 54th birthday. The race was called Let’s Climb a Mountain and is 34 miles long. The race boasts only one hill - the entire race. You run from downtown Spokane to the top of Mt. Spokane. (2000’ to 5600’)

NWP: After that first one, did you think you'd ever do another one?

RT: Two weeks after completing "Climb a Mt." I ran the Mt. Hood 50 miler. I got lost during the race and added a couple of extra miles. So there I was at Timberline Lodge having run 27 miles with 25 more to go and wondering what I'd gotten myself into. Nine hours after starting, I finished.

NWP: What does your body feel like after you finish an ultra? What about your brain/mind?

RT: My mind usually feels great – that endorphin high times 10. The body? It depends on how hard I ran but usually not so great.

NWP: What inspires you to continue these ultramarathons?

RT: I'm inspired by the continual lessons in living such as dealing with disappointment, perseverance, developing relationships, trust, hope, and discipline. Plus you get to run in really special places. I've completed long distance runs in fifteen states and three countries.

NWP: If you could be a professional at any other sport, which would it be?

RT: A drummer in a rock-n-roll band. I know that is not a recognized sport but it should be.

NWP: Do you think there will ever come a day when you might stop competing in ultras?

RT: In the last year, I was the overall winner at four ultras. I am the USA Track & Field age group National 50 Mile Trail Champion. In 2008, I had the 63rd fastest 100 mile time and the 53rd fastest 100k time in the United States. I hope to keep running and keep the wheels on. I'll be 60 in 3 years and hope to set some course records for the over 60 age group.

NWP: Have you ever had a favorite running partner?

RT: My favorite partner was no one at all. It was nighttime in the Black Hills of South Dakota and I turned off my light and ran by a blood moon and starlight with the mantra of footfalls interlaced by the rhythm of my breathing. It really doesn't get any better.

[Photo of a Smiling Robert Towne Walking Up a Steep Hill]

[Silhouette Images of Runners, Trees, and Birds in an Outdoor Setting Under the Sun and Blue Skies]

To read more of Northwest Passage's interview with Robert Towne (and learn Robert's favorite racing foods...), check us out online at: blm.gov/or/nwpassage

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District Round-Up

From: District Round-Up

To: You

Welcome to News from all the BLM Districts in Oregon and Washington!

Please join us for an update on all of our community happenings!

[Image of an Envelope]

[Image of Postcard]

[Image of an Arrow]

[Photo of a Traffic Light]

[Photo of a Walking Path Sign]

Burns, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/burns

- Run Up the Mountain: A record number of athletes participated in the Steens Rim Run & Walk on August 1 at beautiful Steens Mountain. See steensrimrun.com for results and photos!
- National Wild Horse Adoption Day is coming up on September 26. Stay tuned at our wild horse website! blm.gov/or/resources/whb/index.php
- Oregon's Wild Horse Corral Facility Goes Solar: Speaking of wild horses, the Burns District installed a solar grid at Oregon's Wild Horse Corral Facility. Project supervisor John Bethea – who has been involved in both public and private solar projects since the 1970s – said the facility may be able to garner up to 25 percent of its annual energy from the new unit.

[Photo of Two Horses]

Coos Bay, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay

- District Conservation Award: Glenn Harkleroad, Coos Bay District Restoration Coordinator, recently travelled to Washington D.C. to receive a Partners in Conservation Award from the Secretary of the Interior. The award recognized Glenn for his efforts to develop and promote partnerships at the Coos Bay District and in the local community.
- Critical Environmental Programs: A series of special events began July 11 at the New River Area of Critical Environmental Concern south of Bandon, Oregon. Programs aimed at both youth and adults

include interpretive hikes through the wild coastal dunes, discussions about the area's history, birding, and habitat restoration. For a complete listing of events and information on how to RSVP, the public is invited to visit the Coos Bay District website.

- Riparian Fisheries Challenge Leads to BLM Award: A local partnership was awarded the American Fisheries Society's Riparian Challenge Award for a stream restoration project in the North Fork Coquille Watershed. The project helped provide spawning and rearing habitat for salmon, steelhead trout, and cutthroat trout and is believed to be the largest-scale stream restoration project ever implemented in Oregon.

[Photo of Coos Bay Biologist Dan Van Slyke Accepting the American Fisheries Society's Riparian Challenge Award]

Eugene, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/eugene

- New Eugene Office: The Eugene District's relocation to a new office is now a reality. The current site at 3110 Pierce Parkway in Springfield allows the BLM to collocate with the Willamette National Forest in a building owned by the Oregon National Guard.
- Environmental Education for Students: The McGowan Creek Environmental Science Program completed another successful year at its site located in the Coburg Hills near Eugene. About 500 students from Springfield elementary schools visited the old growth forest site to participate in outdoor education programs on forestry, wildlife, streams, and ponds.
- Wild Horses Adopted: On June 6, eight wild horses were successfully adopted at a Eugene event cosponsored by the BLM's Burns District. Local news media coverage put a spotlight on the BLM's Wild Horse Program.

[Photo of Youths at the BLM Raptor Center]

Lakeview, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/lakeview

- Artwork Promotes Prevention of Vandalism and Littering: The BLM's Lakeview District and the Pacific Northwest 4-Wheel Drive Association recently partnered to educate local fifth grade students on the negative effects of vandalism and littering on public lands. Beginning in May, Breanna O'Connor and Mona Drake traveled to elementary schools across Lake County to present this message to students. Following each discussion, participants were given two weeks to create a poster that represented the information they heard. All artwork was then judged with prizes awarded to the top 17 artists. Anthony Botner and Kristina Gomez were the top two contest winners.
- Demand for Juniper Products Rises Despite Economic Downturn: Much of the western juniper processed by Rehabilitation, Employment and Community Housing (REACH), Inc. of Klamath Falls, Oregon, comes from BLM-managed lands. Lakeview District Manager Carol Benkosky and Klamath Falls Resource Area staff members visited the REACH plant where they learned that this product line began with animal bedding but has expanded to include pallets, utility posts, landscape timbers and mulch,

decking material, engineered flooring, tongue and groove paneling, and many other products. These commodities are manufactured by a permanent workforce that includes individuals with disabilities. Currently, the mill runs two shifts and is considering expanding operations to three shifts to meet the increased market demand for its multiple products. The BLM is committed to searching for ways to increase the utilization of western juniper generated from rangeland restoration and hazardous fuels reduction projects with organizations like REACH.

[Photo of Students Showing Off Award-Winning Art]

Medford, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/medford

- Table Rocks, 30 Years of Partnership: The BLM celebrated this milestone along with the Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and State and local partners – to include recognition for the annual educational program that teaches over 4,500 schoolchildren each year!

Continues on next page

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Prineville, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/Prineville

- Natural Resources Education Program: The Prineville District has developed a comprehensive natural resources education program by focusing on student learning, mentoring, and career progression. In addition, Prineville is also working with local teachers and community members to help provide youth leadership and conservation management skills. As a result of Prineville's programs, students have logged almost 3,000 hours studying local waterways as part of an overall plan to improve riparian areas. Also, 340 elementary school students participated in the Chimney Rock Environmental Education Program on the Crooked River Wild & Scenic River as part of an overarching conservation program.

[Photo of Young People Learning About Water Ecology]

Roseburg, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/roseburg

- Wild Horse Adoption: The BLM's Roseburg District coordinated a wild horse adoption event held at the Holy Spirit Ranch in Rice Valley about 20 miles north of the District office. Cassie Soule, local trainer and participant in the BLM's recent Extreme Mustang Makeover event, presented a brief handling and training demonstration with two of the horses. Four mustangs were successfully adopted!
- Eastwood Outdoor Days: Almost 500 students from every 4th grade class in the Roseburg School District attended a new environmental education program called the Eastwood Outdoor Days. BLM staff from the Roseburg District participated in this week-long outdoor classroom that was entirely dedicated to aquatic education. It was held on the Eastwood Nature Trail and consisted of six educational stations - which taught youth about the salmon life cycle, the water cycle, riparian areas, wetland study, the web of life, and Native American storytelling in an authentic plank house.

[Photo of Kids at the Eastwood Outdoor Days]

Salem, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/salem

- **Painting and Drawing Workshop at Yaquina Head:** Pacific Northwest artist Erik Sandgren will hold a painting and drawing workshop at the BLM's Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area on September 10 to 12, 2009. Registration for this workshop is open for serious learners at all levels. Participants may register for morning sessions, afternoon sessions, or both. For further information contact Katherine Fuller, BLM Park Ranger, Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area (541)-574-3143, or kafuller@blm.gov.

[Photo of Yaquina Head Lighthouse at Dusk]

Spokane, Washington: blm.gov/or/districts/spokane

- **The BLM in Spokane Hosts SCEP Week 2009:** Spokane, like the Salem District, hosted the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) Week from June 22 to 26. Seven students from Burns, Vale, the Oregon State Office, and Spokane began their week with an orientation and a question and answer session with the District's leadership team. The students then spent most of the remainder of the week experiencing work outdoors in the field where they received first-hand opportunities to learn about the challenges associated with managing public lands near an urban area. The students worked closely to learn about BLM project planning, environmental processes, range monitoring, and the biocontrol of noxious weeds.
- **Spokane Partner Receives National Award:** The Lopez Island Conservation Corps (LICC), a youth group and partner of the Spokane District, won the national Take Pride in America award. The awards ceremony took place at the Department of the Interior headquarters in Washington D.C. on July 17. LICC focused its first three years on grassroots efforts to engage island youth in healthy activities throughout the natural world. Their accomplishments include clearing overgrown trails for public use, removing invasive plant species from sensitive wildflower areas to restore land health, and cleaning trash from roadsides and beaches to benefit animals.
- **Spokane Participates at RAP Camp 2009:** Local high school students from Spokane saddled up and headed out to Resources and People (RAP) Camp 2009 at Lake of the Woods near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Spokane District's Cheyne Rossbach introduced students to careers in natural resource management. After learning about processes and philosophies, the RAP participants took on a real-world exercise where they worked together to develop a land management plan to meet multiple needs while also protecting our valuable resources. The students then presented their plan in a simulated public meeting.

[Photo of People in the Forest from the 2009 Spokane Student Career Experience Program Week]

Vale, Oregon: blm.gov/or/districts/vale

- **Vale District Employees are Lifesavers:** A thrilling letter of high praise and thanks for the BLM arrived at the Vale District office. This note came from a group of travelers who had taken a rafting trip down the Owyhee River. These floating visitors had been cruising down the river when their inflatable craft ripped on some rocks leaving them "stranded 18 miles down river—no cell phone reception available." The group began to get worried after finding themselves alone for the next few days with no one in

sight. Luckily, they were overjoyed on the third day to receive a visit from their friendly neighborhood BLM District! A group from Vale led by specialists Dan Thomas and Bill Henry helped these waylaid travelers back to civilization and successfully rescued them! In their letter of appreciation, the visitors told the BLM that they definitely “will be back” because they “fell in love with the Owyhee” – as well as with the BLM.

[Photo of Rafters Shooting Down a River]

[Photo of Road Sign Star]

[Illustrated Map of Oregon & Washington with all ten Districts Identified]

Your Oregon & Washington BLM Districts

Spokane, A District at the Crossroads

Story & Photos by Scott Pavey

[Photo of a Crossroads Sign with Plains and Mountains in the Background]

“The District is at a crossroads,” said Spokane District Manager Robert Towne at an all-employee meeting in October 2008. “The major land exchanges and acquisitions that the District has been implementing over the past couple of decades have been completed. Now it’s time to focus on managing the lands we have acquired.” On April 20, 2009, the District celebrated reaching this milestone, recognizing it as “the Spokane District, 25 years in the making.”

There has been a Government Land Office in Spokane since 1883. But the BLM’s Spokane District today is the result of some very recent transformations.

[Photo of a Crossroads Sign]

Since the late 1980s, the BLM’s Spokane District has prioritized efforts to consolidate public lands – mostly in eastern Washington – through a series of land exchanges and direct acquisitions. As a result, the geography of the public lands in Washington State has changed dramatically in the past 20 years.

Since 1987, the National System of Public Lands in the State of Washington has increased by almost 150,000 acres while over 32,000 acres of public land was conveyed to private ownership. Today the District manages 448,000 acres – with 182,000 or 41 percent – almost half of the total BLM land in Washington State – acquired during the past 20 years.

The District now stands at the crossroads Towne mentioned and looks to the future to determine where the management of these lands and resources should lead.

- How did we get here?

Up through the 1970s, the BLM’s policy was to divest ownership of all Federal public lands in the State of Washington. But in 1980, at the height of the Sage Brush Rebellion (a movement to give control over Federal lands to the states and local authorities), Washington voters told BLM they wanted public lands in their state to remain under federal management.

In the 1980 general election, the State put a measure on the ballot asking voters if the state constitution should “be amended to provide that the state no longer disclaim all rights to unappropriated federal public lands.” Approximately 60 percent of the people and the majority in every county voted no, signaling to BLM that there was strong support for continued federal management of their public lands.

In response to this vote, the Director of the BLM approved a proposal by the District to begin a process of consolidating BLM lands. At this time back in 1980, lands managed by the District consisted mostly of small parcels scattered across eastern Washington - most of which lacked public or administrative access.

- Forging a “New” District

With this new direction in hand along with new District Manager Joe Buesing, who arrived in 1983, the stage was set for change in the Spokane District. “The first step was to develop a Resource Management Plan to provide direction for accomplishing the consolidation,” Buesing said.

For the next several years, the District staff focused on their Resource Management Plan (RMP), and a Record of Decision was signed by the Oregon/Washington State Director in 1987.

Although the RMP provided management direction for use and protection of all BLM-administered resources on public lands in eastern Washington, the main emphasis of the plan was on land tenure and consolidation.

Just as the District was completing the RMP and preparing for implementation, a major setback occurred when the opportunity for exchange of federal lands was put on hold by a court injunction.

In 1981, BLM had begun a major national review of classifications and withdrawals of public lands for the purpose of removing or revoking those that were no longer warranted. In 1985, the National Wildlife Federation challenged this review and revocation program in court.

The US District Court issued an injunction halting the review and suspended related reclassifications and withdrawal revocations. A large amount of the public lands in Washington were encumbered with classifications or withdrawals, many of which were no longer justified, but could not be removed due to the Court injunction. As a result, although the Spokane District completed the RMP in 1987, most of the lands proposed for exchange could not be made available for disposal or conveyance.

The BLM appealed the US District Court decision, and in 1990, the US Supreme Court reversed the decision, lifting the injunction.

Finally, in 1991, more than a decade after the citizens of Washington had told BLM that they wanted continued federal management of public lands in their state, the Spokane District was truly able to begin the process of consolidation.

- Transformation through Cooperation

Although there was direction from the people of Washington and approval from the Director of the BLM to begin consolidating federal public lands in the state, little funding was available to accomplish this task. Thus from 1991 until completion of the most recent transactions in 2008, the Spokane District stretched its limited budget, partnered with organizations like The Nature Conservancy, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and

worked with an independent exchange facilitator to orchestrate major exchanges which would forever change the landscape of eastern Washington.

Working with these partners afforded the opportunity to block up large parcels of high value habitat by acquisition of lands adjacent to those owned or managed by The Nature Conservancy and WDFW.

- The Changing Face of the District

Lincoln County is one example of how much ownership changed. In 1984, there were only about 7,400 acres of BLM in this county. Today the District manages almost 80,000 acres in Lincoln County.

Douglas County is another example; in 1984, the District managed only 37,700 acres but manages 54,300 acres there today.

With the help of a facilitator, the District was able to participate in exchanges in these and other counties involving as many as 20 participants.

As the increase in Federal lands in some counties began to accumulate, some county commissioners expressed concern regarding the potential loss of tax revenue. However, they found that revenues from payment-in-lieu of taxes actually exceeded the amount they had previously received in taxes from these primarily agricultural lands.

Continues on page 24.

[Photo of Yakima River Canyon] with the following caption, "Yakima River Canyon is famous both for its beauty and is endless recreation potential"

[Photo of San Juan Islands]

Sidebar

Islands?! In the BLM's Spokane District?

Detour Detour Detour Detour

Many people are unaware that the Spokane District manages 800 acres of public lands in the San Juan Islands, an archipelago in Northwestern Washington at the entrance to Puget Sound.

Some of these lands have always been in Federal ownership while others were acquired by the District through direct purchase and still others reverted to BLM management when the U.S. Coast Guard relinquished sites previously withdrawn for lighthouse facilities.

In the late 1970s, the Washington Department of Parks and Recreation asked the BLM to grant them a lease to manage some lands in the islands as State Parks. However, local public and several environmental groups were against managing these lands as parks. They felt that, with the existing national park and other state parks on the San Juan Islands, there was enough opportunity for recreational visitors. The locals and environmental groups preferred that the BLM manage the lands to

preserve their natural condition and provide for wildlife habitat. The BLM supported the interests of the locals and environmental groups when, in 1990, it designated two of the largest BLM holdings on the islands as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern to preserve their natural character.

This was one of the first times that the Spokane District had an opportunity to work with environmental groups who were mostly based and interested in western Washington. As a result of its willingness to work with these groups on the San Juan Islands, the Spokane District gained support for most of the major land exchanges in eastern Washington. And in general, the Spokane District has established a congenial relationship by listening to the concerns of conservation advocacy organizations regarding management of BLM land on both sides of the state.

Much of the acquired lands had been heavily grazed by livestock for many years. While some of the previous owners and ranchers managed to stay in business through grazing leases on the now Federal lands, the District was able to simultaneously restore wildlife habitat and wetlands by reducing the amount of grazing that had previously occurred or changing grazing rotations.

Within a short time, the success of the initial land exchanges began to build momentum and support. Backed by county commissioners, environmental groups, and state agencies, the District was eventually able to acquire Land and Water Conservation Funds and make direct purchases of some lands with high value wildlife habitat.

The last of the major assembled land exchanges concluded on October 22, 2008. This marked the end of the era of major land consolidation by the Spokane District, and the start of managing the retained and acquired lands for present and future generations.

- Vision for the District's Future

Upon reaching the crossroads, the Spokane leadership team realized that a direction to move forward was needed to help guide future management and organization of the District. In October 2008, the team began developing a vision for the organization.

Robert Towne discussed next steps with BLM staff at an all-employee meeting in Spokane. "The vision belongs to all of us," Towne said as he solicited suggestions for improvement. Since then, the leadership team has begun to develop a strategy to achieve the vision and also plans to involve a number of other members from the District in the process. One of their main components will be a revision of the RMP that's scheduled to begin in 2010.

Just as the BLM employees in Spokane look forward to this future, so will all Washington State residents. It's an exciting time for the public lands in their communities.

[Photo of Spokane's Scablands] with the caption, "Spokane's beautiful Channelled Scablands have enchanted visitors for millennia"

What's in Your Backyard?

Continued from page 7

And let's not forget that, in addition to Take It Outside, any one of us can serve as an inspiration to a class of elementary school students or scouts or youth group members in our communities who have never experienced the majesty of hiking up a hill or crossing a snow-fed stream. Parents or group leaders can volunteer to take kids outside and witness these marvels of nature. And while we're there, we can also examine today's environmental issues and discuss how we might all contribute to protecting our natural resources in the future.

Either on our own or as part of the Take It Outside: Connect with Your Public Lands initiative, we can all help reconnect today's youth with nature. These children are our next workforce and future decision-makers. And once they've had the opportunity to run, jump, and play in their own public backyard, they'll begin to create fantastic memories and experiences that will connect them to the great outdoors for the rest of their lives.

Our journey merely begins with a trip to nature and the public lands that make up our shared "backyard." So this summer let's take a moment and ask ourselves, "What have we explored today?"

What kind of adventures are available to youth on public lands? Lots!

- In western Washington State, your kids can join The Great Lighthouse Hunt on the San Juan Islands!
- Within the city limits of Eugene, Oregon, check out the West Eugene Wetlands, one of the most endangered plant communities in the nation.
- Explore learning stations and trails fun for the whole family at Oregon's Wildwood Recreation Site near Portland and McGregor Park near Medford.
- Plus get started right now! You can download an awesome BLM Junior Explorer Activity Pack at blm.gov/wo/st/en/res/Education_in_BLM/Learning_Landscapes/For_Kids/junior_explorer.html

You can see more online!

- To discover Fun Adventures and see how you can help encourage youth to explore nature on our public lands, please visit the Oregon/Washington BLM's recreation site: blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/
- And for more about the BLM's Take It Outside initiative, please contact Leah Schrodtt at 541.618.2468 or Leah_Schrodtt@blm.gov or visit the BLM's Take It Outside homepage: blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/children_and_nature.html

[Photo of Two Youths Studying Wildlife at the River's Edge]

[Photo of Two Youths Having Fun Building a Path]

Meet Johnny Horizon

Story by Michael Campbell

“BLM needs a new symbol to represent the importance of caring for the land, such as the old Johnny Horizon...” (Minutes from a 2003 meeting of the BLM’s Northeast California Resource Advisory Council)

WHAT HAPPENS when you’ve run the course, been downgraded to a historical footnote, tossed on the cultural reference trash heap, and relegated to Wikipedia?

Only Johnny Horizon can say for sure, but he has definitely experienced all of these things as a result of the shifting sands of time.

Which has led some folks to ask...

Where in the World is Johnny?

[Illustration of Johnny Horizon Looking Out Over a River and Mountains]

For the uninitiated, Johnny Horizon was cultural icon – well, that might be a stretch. But he did, after all, have his own Presidential Proclamation in 1976 – even if Johnny wasn’t what you’d call a “franchise player.” He was a dash of Clint Eastwood, a pinch of strong-jawed western inventiveness, part silent cardboard cowboy cut-out, a little Mark Trail, and, most simply, a member of the same club as Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl.

Public interest in Mr. Horizon peaked with the 1970s LP (long play) record that Johnny Horizon cut with the well-known Burl Ives giving the listening audience a better understanding about this newly created agency mascot. When posed the question, “Who is Johnny Horizon?” the album answered, “Johnny is a symbolic character representing thoughtful users of publicly owned lands. And he has a message: “This Land is Your Land – Keep it Clean!”

According to National Public Lands News, Johnny began his humble career with the BLM in 1968, when the “Johnny Horizon” program was initiated by BLM to promote public awareness of BLM-administered lands. Several years later Johnny Horizon teamed with such notables as famed folk-singer Burl Ives, country music upstart Glenn Campbell, and psychedelic variety show stars Sonny and Cher. Eventually, under the aphoristic slogan “Do You Care?” the Johnny Horizon campaign used its new-found star power and variety show cred to focus on litter and pollution efforts. In turn the success of Johnny’s anti-litter work begat toys, coloring books, watches, environmental test kits, stamps, and strangely – matches.

Shortly after the hoopla associated with the Nation’s bicentennial in 1976, Johnny Horizon slowly faded into the history books. One would think that with the success of the earlier litter campaigns, celebrity endorsements, a nod from none-other-than President Ford, the dawn of the Federal Land Policy and

Management Act, and the stamp of approval from Peanuts creator Charles Schulz, that Johnny Horizon would be a stable fixture much like that of Smokey Bear. But alas, that just hasn't been the case.

Was Johnny Horizon a victim of his own success? A casualty in the waning days of Disco? Caught up in the pitfalls of agency budgeting? Or was it just his time to hang up his (cowboy) hat?

With successful national campaigns and endorsements from Peanuts creator Charles Schulz and President Gerald Ford, one might think Johnny Horizon would be an icon for the ages.

No one knows for sure. But a 1977 report from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights titled "Sex Bias in the U.S. Code" written by esteemed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg discussed Johnny Horizon by noting "...A further unwarranted male reference appears in 18 U.S.C. §714, which regulates use of the 'Johnny Horizon' anti-litter symbol. According to the congressional reports, this tall lean figure with sports clothes, hiking boots, and a field jacket is 'a representative of a rugged outdoorsman who loves our forests, deserts, mountains, lakes, streams and terrain.' This sex stereotype of the outdoors person and protector of the environment should be supplemented with a female figure promoting the same values. The two figures should be depicted as persons of equal strength of character, displaying equal familiarity and concern with the terrain of our country."

Burl Ives and others continued to push for the expansion of the Johnny Horizon program, but the times they were-a-changin'. Maybe it was just too much for the agency to contemplate a "Jane" Horizon, maybe Johnny needed to be a little more anthropomorphic like his buddy Smokey, or maybe with the emergence of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act it was just time for something new.

Like many artifacts from the past, it's tough to say the exact time, day, or year they ceased to be in circulation. Sometimes there is no retirement party for our beloved friends. Sometimes they just need to make way for the new generation of mascots and symbols. And sometimes, perhaps like Johnny Horizon, they just quietly ride off into the sunset knowing they've done a good day's work.

[Illustrations of Johnny Horizon]

[Photo of the Johnny Horizon/Burl Ives Record]

[Photos of Johnny Horizon Campaign Supporters Burl Ives, Sonny and Cher, and Glen Campbell]

[Photo of the Johnny Horizon Bird Watching Book]

[Photo of a Johnny Horizon Campaign Cartoon]

[Illustration of a River and Mountains]

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A New Chapter

A retired BLM Biologist rewrites his life story as a mystery novelist

By Susan Nelson

[Photo of Author Clair Button] with the caption, “The author drawing inspiration for his next novel at the ‘scene of the crime!’”

[Image of Clair Button’s Novel *Coyote Staircase* Enlarged by a Magnifying Glass]

[Image of Oregon’s Joseph Canyon] with the caption, “Joseph Canyon serves as the setting for Clair’s novels – and for his life!”

[Photo of a Statue of Sherlock Holmes]

Last June, I found myself hiking way down into the dramatic depths of Joseph Canyon in far northeastern Oregon. With each step, I walked deeper and deeper into the setting of the novel,

Coyote Staircase, a mystery starring Tom Kreuger – or rather his alter ego, Clair Button.

In addition to his fame as a published author, Clair is also a retired BLM wildlife biologist turned botanist, just like the protagonist who serves as the main character in his mysteries.

While historical fiction tends to weave actual incidents from history into the lives of fictional characters, Clair’s stories are all the more intriguing because most of his characters (and I mean characters!) are descriptions or composites of former BLM colleagues and people he met on the job. His characters live in settings that come from his life experiences wandering the outback on public lands from Colorado to Arizona to Oregon.

Clair says his 28 years with BLM – in addition to two with the Post Office and another two in the U.S. Army – left him with endless story material. Thus his stories’ settings are based on reality even if his villains and non-BLM characters are fictional.

When I asked Clair if technical writing of reports prepared him for creative writing, he said, “No, not really. It may have given me experience with grammar and vocabulary, but writing environmental assessments and planning documents was stifling compared to fieldwork where you can learn and explore. My coworkers on the other hand gave me a lifetime of one-liners that I have been able to sprinkle throughout the series...”

Clair has created a hero for all BLMers. His protagonist Tom Kreuger is a hands-on scientist who has the ability to annoy his supervisors by skirting the rules. But he continually amazes his cohorts by solving

crimes armed only with his rapier wit, acute curiosity, and an uncanny ability to wield the scientific method.

Clair told me that he wrote his first book, *Cow Cookies*, for himself with no idea that it would lead to another career. After his friends read it, they talked him into getting it published.

Clair has since found that writing for readers other than himself has caused him to change his style. With *Quicksand Plot* and *Coyote Staircase*, he included more characters and moved his hero backward and forward through different periods of his life.

Initially, Clair used a professional editor. Since then, he has relied on the advice of his wife, also a former BLM employee, as well as his colleagues in the Baker City writer's group which he organized after he retired in 2006.

Although Clair had only a vague idea of what he would do in retirement, he knew he'd continue his passion for natural resources. And indeed he has. In addition to his fiction, Clair also manages the website for his local chapter of the Oregon Native Plant Society. If that weren't enough, he takes care of the greenhouse at a local senior center. Plus Clair recently reconnected with other members from his Army platoon in Vietnam. Then just last year he successfully ran for City Council in Baker City where he's since been able to help make decisions involving his local environment. Not to mention publishing three novels!

Clair Button's advice for anyone considering creative writing is to write what you know. But one more immediate suggestion for us is to get to know Tom Kreuger. Clair says he's got two new novels in the works, and I have a feeling we'll all be seeing a lot more of this BLM hero.

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Do You Remember?

That historic icon, Johnny Horizon?

The BLM's mascot by way of John Wayne, Mark Trail, and the greatest stewards our public lands have ever known? Whether you're meeting him for the first time or welcoming back an old friend, please join us inside this issue on page 26. Starting from this autographed photo of Johnny Horizon's buddy, Burl Ives, we'll be taking you back to a vintage period in our history. And between the memorabilia, the celebrities, and the memories, we can try to answer that old question: "Where in the world is Johnny Horizon?"

[Autographed Photo of Burl Ives Saying, "Welcome to Johnny Horizon's Team"]

[Illustrations of Johnny Horizon Saying, "This Land Is Your Land. Keep It Clean!"]