

Idaho BLM In Action

March 2008 Edition

Idaho

BLM



From the Washington Office

Ken Salazar Confirmed as 50th Secretary of the Interior

Pledges openness, high ethical standards and respect for scientific integrity

Washington DC - Ken Salazar, a fifth-generation Coloradan who served as the state's U.S. Senator, Attorney General and Director of Natural Resources, was confirmed today by a unanimous vote in the U.S. Senate to become the 50th Secretary of the Interior.

"I am honored to have been chosen for this position and look forward to working with President Obama on our nation's energy and natural resource challenges," Salazar said. "I will be a strong and forceful advocate for the wise stewardship of our nation's land and water resources, I will help us build a clean energy economy for the twenty-first century, and I will work to restore the integrity of the nation-to-nation relationship with our Native American communities."

"My first priority at Interior is to lead the Department with openness in decision-making, high ethical standards and respect for scientific integrity," Salazar emphasized. "I will work for a more proactive and balanced stewardship to protect our national parks and open spaces, restore our Nation's rivers, resolve our water supply challenges and address the challenges faced by our Native American communities."

Salazar called President Obama's energy imperative "our moon shot" for energy independence, saying "A national energy policy that includes conservation, expanded renewable sources and wise, responsible use of conventional fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas, will create jobs here in America, protect our national security by reducing America's dangerous dependence on foreign oil, and confront the dangers of global warming."

Salazar, who has vigorously advocated the expanded use of clean, renewable energy technologies, will oversee 500 million acres of public lands managed by Interior that include some of the nation's largest sources of wind, solar and geothermal energy. He will lead a Department with 67,000 employees and an annual budget of about \$18.6 billion, including annual and permanent funding.

Read the full news release [here](#).



From the Washington Office

Department of Interior, BLM Participate in National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week

Invasive weeds can impair wildlife and fish habitats, reduce the diversity of natural resources

Washington Office - U.S. Interior Department and Bureau of Land Management officials will join stakeholders from across the country next week in Washington, D.C., to raise public awareness about the environmental and economic impacts of invasive plants on private and public lands in the United States.

The Tenth Annual National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week, which takes place on February 23-27, is organized by the Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition, a Washington-based organization dedicated to increasing awareness about invasive weed problems and related research and management needs. The week-long event will focus on preserving the nation's natural heritage from the ravages of weeds. "In the continental United States, weeds are estimated to have destroyed 126 million acres of land," said BLM Acting Director Ron Wenker. "The worst of the invasive weeds are spreading at a rate of 15 percent a year all across the country, resulting in an economic impact of \$34.7 billion annually." Invasive plants, such as cheatgrass, have increased the frequency and intensity of wildfire in many areas. Another invasive species, tamarisk, also known as saltcedar, has invaded riparian areas throughout the West. This invasive shrub, which thrives in arid climates, soaks up hundreds of gallons of water each year and pushes out other plants that provide native habitat for birds and animals.

"Invasive weeds can impair wildlife and fish habitats, reduce the diversity of our natural resources and dramatically reduce crop yields," said Lee Van Wychen, director of science policy for the Weed Science Society of America. "National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week gives land managers, scientists, and educators a chance to share their knowledge and concerns with public policy makers so we can slow the spread of invasive weeds."

The week's events will include a reception on Wednesday, February 25, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. ET on Capitol Hill to honor the contributions of individuals and groups that have done outstanding work in invasive weeds management. Throughout the week, Department of Interior and other Federal agency officials will hold meetings with National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week attendees on invasive species issues. The Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition kick-off session begins Monday, February 23, at the Four Points Sheraton (1201 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.).



Public Land News and Actions

Jarbridge and Shoshone FO Range Staff Graduate From Leadership Idaho Agriculture Training

Training provides rewarding opportunity to expand BLM's outreach

Twin Falls District Office - Idaho BLM Jarbridge FO Range Technician Pattie Courtney and Shoshone FO Rangeland Management Specialist Codie Martin recently graduated as members of the 29th class of Leadership Idaho Agriculture (LIA). This is the first time in the program's history that Idaho BLM has been represented in this statewide leadership development training.

Altogether, there are four week-long sessions that occur once a month from November to February in Moscow, Pocatello, Twin Falls and Boise. Class members include staff from Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, USDA Rural Development, Farm Service Agency as well as a county weed superintendent, farmers, ranchers, and loan officers.

During the January session in Twin Falls, Courtney and Martin were chosen to be panel members at February's Idaho Agriculture Summit in Boise to discuss the pros and cons of "Biofuels – Food or Fuel?" Their public speaking and effective presentation styles training were put to the test as they spoke about this issue and defended their positions before a wide audience of Idahoans.

Courtney commented, "This has been a life-changing experience for me; it is so rewarding when one of my fellow classmates, who is a farmer in eastern Idaho, says he has gained a new respect for government agencies because of his experience with us in this class. Our participation in LIA has served to reach a whole new audience for Idaho BLM. I would highly recommend this experience!"



News Conference Announces Launching of New Statewide "Be Outside" Initiative

Creates boundless opportunities for Idaho's youth to experience nature, become next generation of land stewards

Idaho State Office - In late January 2009, Idaho BLM State Director Tom Dyer attended a news conference to launch a new statewide initiative called "Be Outside." On the horizon, this initiative was developed by the Idaho Children and Nature Network (IDCNN) to connect children with nature. The network is a coalition of Idaho organizations, private businesses, health organizations and government agencies interested in promoting the many benefits of outdoor activity. Like BLM's "Take It Outside" initiative, the network's primary objective is to create boundless opportunities for Idaho's youth to experience nature and become the next generation of land stewards, while improving the health of children, families and communities.

Learn more about *Children in Nature*.



Public Land News and Actions

Idaho Falls Associate District Manager Receives *Outstanding Public Land Professional Award*

Critical member on team that established Snake River ACEC and Henry's Lake ACEC

Idaho Falls District Office - Karen Rice, BLM Idaho Falls Associate District Manager, has received the Outstanding Public Land Professional Award from the Public Lands Foundation (PLF), a national conservation organization. The award was presented at an Awards Ceremony held in the BLM Director's Office in Washington, DC on January 15, 2009.

"We are pleased to present Ms. Rice with this award in recognition of her many years of service in management of public land resources," said PLF President George Lea. "Karen Rice has proven herself, time and time again, in preserving habitat and conserving open space along the South Fork of the Snake River and Henry's Lake Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)."

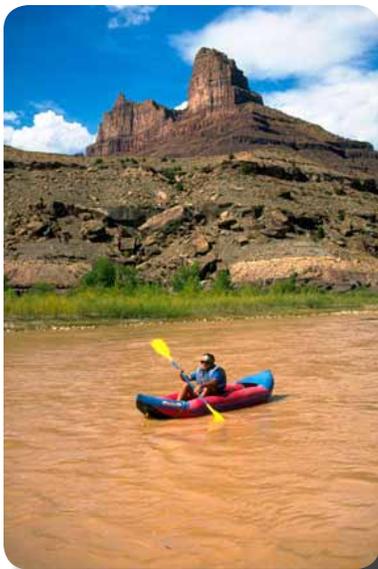
Through her leadership a collaborative group of regional and national conservation organizations and private land owners in the ACEC areas was formed; together they have secured thousands of acres in conservation easements and fee title acquisitions from willing sellers adjacent to the ACEC areas.



BLM, other *Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative Partners Leverage Resources in Lean Budget Times*

Agency partners work together to provide recreational information and services to better serve the public

Idaho State Office - Many agencies in Idaho including BLM are increasing their ability to share resources as state and federal funding becomes increasingly scarce. This year, Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative (IRTI) partner agencies will more than triple the amount of money they combine in an effort to achieve common goals, stretch dollars, compound effectiveness, and give Idaho citizens and visitors more.



This is not new or additional money. These are existing funds that the agencies routinely use for providing and managing recreation and tourism opportunities. By determining where the agencies' missions overlap, each can accomplish more for less. In addition to the economic practicality, working together allows these agencies to provide information and services that better serve the public.

IRTI Coordinator Vicki Jo Lawson says "Idaho has a multitude of land management agencies and recreation providers whose roles can be confusing to the public. Recreationists and tourists don't care who manages a campground or wildlife area, they just want to camp and see wildlife."

To accommodate needs such as these, IRTI has facilitated a number of efforts, including: a statewide campground directory, a statewide scenic byway system, a statewide wildlife viewing guide, a statewide public information campaign on responsible use of off highway vehicles, and an annual conference on recreation and tourism. New projects in 2009 include statewide efforts to connect children and nature and to provide statewide online trail and recreation maps.

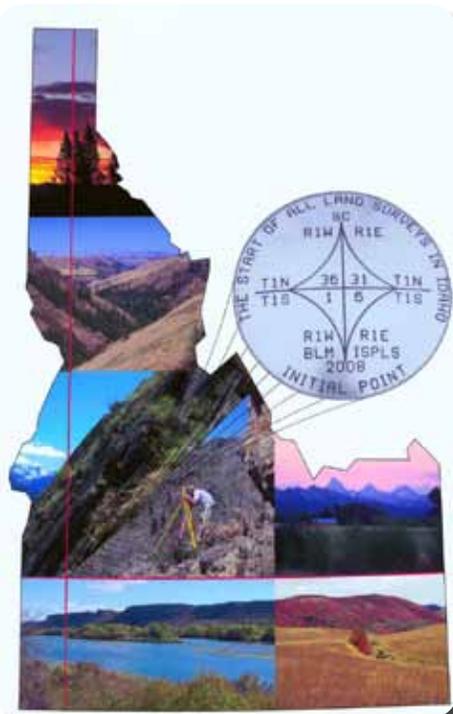
Public Land News and Actions

Initial Point Re-Dedicated During Annual Professional Land Surveyors Conference

Historic point of interest is place of origin for land surveys, basis of reference for Idaho land

Idaho State Office - Idaho State Director Tom Dyer recently headed a distinguished list of speakers at the rededication ceremony to commemorate the remonumentation of the Idaho Initial Point. The rededication was held during *BLM Day* at the Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors (ISPLS) annual conference in Boise. The conference honored the volunteers from ISPLS, Ada County Highway District, U.S. Navy Seabees, National Geodetic Survey and BLM who participated in the remonumentation endeavor. The remonumentation was guided by federal authority Assignment Instructions from the BLM Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Idaho for documentation and inclusion in the official public land records kept by the BLM.

The Initial Point was established in 1867 as the place of origin for all land surveys and serves as the basis of reference for all land descriptions in Idaho. It's located on a scenic vantage point on top of a small butte south of Kuna and is registered in the Western Heritage Byway as an historic point of interest. The volunteers replaced the missing monument with a stainless steel cylinder embedded into a concrete observation deck. They also refurbished the observation deck and railings and added a brass plaque.



Aided by photos and videos, the rededication speakers presented the history, purpose and importance of the Initial Point and the work done by volunteers. The more than 250 attendees included Meridian Mayor Tammie DeWeerd, Nathell Oates, great granddaughter of Lafayette Cartee, Surveyor General of the Idaho Territory in 1867, and other local officials.

During the conclusion of the ceremony, Remonumentation Committee members signed the distinctive and colorful official "Remonumentation of Initial Point" plat to certify their faithful performance of assigned duties. The plat will be filed in BLM's public land records system and can be viewed and retrieved online [here](#).

See the Remonumentation of Initial Point plat [here](#).

BLM Community Outreach

Salmon FO Geologist Conducts Annual Presentation on Geology, Abandoned Mine Lands

82 youngsters learn about uses of minerals, abandoned mine safety

Salmon Field Office - Idaho BLM Salmon FO Geologist Dennis Krasowski recently presented information on the many uses of minerals and abandoned mine lands. This annual event, accomplished in cooperation with the USFS Salmon-Challis NF, was presented to 82 youngsters from the four second-grade classes in Salmon.



Salmon FO Manager Steve Hartmann said, "The BLM appreciates the opportunity to speak with the second graders of Salmon about the benefits and uses of minerals and the safety issues associated with abandoned mines. Educating our youth about our natural environment leads to positive community stewardship, safety and active involvement in the management and use of public lands. Thanks to Dennis and Dave for speaking to the kids and making this kind of activity a priority."

"Educating our youth about our natural environment leads to positive community stewardship, safety and active involvement in the management and use of public lands."



BLM Public Room Representative Hosts ISU Professor and Students

Group learns about process of obtaining surveying notes, other land status information

Idaho State Office - Public Room Contact Representative Paul Richardson recently gave an ISU professor of Geomatics and four of his students a tour of the public room. During the tour, the group learned about the process of obtaining surveying notes and other information on land status information provided by BLM to the public.

BLM public room contact representative Paul Richardson said, "I think this was a great learning experience for me and the ISU students/staff. Anytime a customer can sit down directly with a government agency such as the BLM and have an open dialogue it's a win-win situation for both sides. The students now have a better understanding on what services the BLM can provide and I have a greater understanding on what services they require. The students and the professor asked numerous questions and were amazed at the amount of information that was available through the BLM public room and websites. Mr. Levitt stated that the tour will most likely become a regular part of his class. This was an experience that I will definitely remember and look forward to many more in the future!"



"Anytime that a customer can sit down directly with a government agency such as the BLM and have an open dialogue, it's a win-win situation. This is an experience I will definitely look forward to in the future."

BLM Community Outreach

Smokey Bear Greet Special Olympians During Traditional Fundraising Run

Event includes 10 Special Olympics athletes from around world, 118 police officers from each state and other nations

Twin Falls District Office - Smokey Bear was invited to a special luncheon hosted by Con Paulos Chevrolet, Pontiac and GMC Auto Dealership in Jerome, to honor the athletes participating in the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games Final Leg Law Enforcement Torch Run. Smokey Bear greeted the athletes as they arrived, and was met with hugs, high fives, and an impromptu rendition of the Smokey Bear song. The Run wound its way around the Magic Valley as a fundraising tradition supported by law enforcement officers. The event includes 10 Special Olympics athletes from around the world who were accompanied by 118 police officers from each state and other nations.



BLM Employees Volunteer at Special Olympics World Winter Games

Life-changing event wasn't all about winning, it was about finishing

Idaho State Office - Idaho recently hosted the Special Olympics World Winter Games the week of February 9, and many Idaho BLM employees volunteered at the various associated events. At the games, athletes from around the world competed, made friends and demonstrated their abilities. This prominent world-stage event included a venue at the Sun Valley Resort, which is located on lands managed by the BLM and FS.

Deputy State Director of Communications Cheryle Zwang said, "I worked as time and scoreboard keeper for the Novice Alpine races up at Bogus Basin. I loved seeing the athletes celebrate their accomplishments! It wasn't all about winning; it was about finishing. It was truly a life changing experience in many respects. One athlete fell and couldn't get his ski back on so he literally crawled across the finish line with this huge smile on his face."

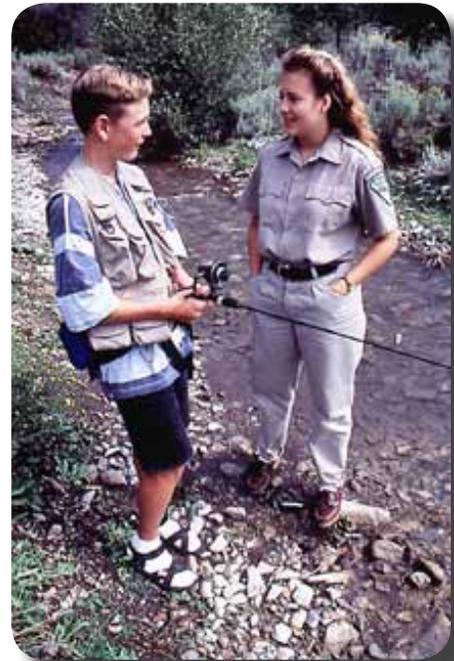


Another volunteer for the event, Deputy State Director for Resource Sciences Susan Giannettino said, "I had a blast working the cross country ski venue at the Special Olympics. What struck me was the diversity of the athletes; young and old, from all over the world with significantly varied levels of skill. It was an amazing and rewarding experience."

What's New on the Web

Idaho BLM Recruitment

If you're seeking a job opportunity in BLM Idaho, check out this site to explore BLM career paths, learn about current Idaho vacancies/student opportunities, discover reasons to join the organization and learn more about the areas where the BLM field offices are located.



Idaho Birding Trail

BLM and its partners recently collaborated with Idaho Fish and Game to create the Idaho Birding Trail guidebook and website. The Idaho Birding Trail (IBT) is a network of sites and side-trips that provides the best viewing opportunities to see birds in Idaho. With 175 sites and about 2,000 miles of trail, the birding trail represents a collection of bird watching hotspots, diverse habitats, and a glimpse of Idaho's rich natural heritage.



Volunteers

Volunteering is Fun! The Idaho BLM relies on volunteers to help accomplish important work on our public lands. In 2007, over 1000 volunteers contributed to approximately 47,500 hours helping Idaho BLM valued at \$926,725. Idaho BLM uses volunteers in many capacities and with a wide range of skills and interests. You can work individually, or as part of a group, and projects can be one-day commitments or short- and long-term adventures.



What's New on the Web

Take it Outside

The Bureau of Land Management's *Take It Outside* Initiative was prompted by a growing national concern that children are spending significantly less time outdoors than previous generations; becoming more disconnected from nature; and increasingly showing symptoms of an epidemic in childhood obesity. In response to this problem, BLM and many other Federal agencies are taking on the challenge of attempting to reconnect the Nation's youth and families with the many benefits of spending time outdoors.



Environmental Education

Come and learn many ways to explore BLM's 11.7 million acres in Idaho. There is information on our natural and cultural resources, materials and tools for teachers, contacts for volunteering on your public lands, and fun things to do with the entire family.



Heritage Education

Do you enjoy learning about Idaho's past? Students of all ages are welcome to explore the historic and archaeological sites on our BLM. Travel with peoples of the past on our historic trails. Visit places where our first citizens lived or passed through today's Idaho. Get a glimpse of the Old West in our historic mining towns. Information and tools to explore Idaho's past are available here.

Wildland Fire Education

We're dedicated to teaching everyone, both young and old, about wildland fire in Idaho. Idaho has so many different areas; rangeland, forest, cities and high desert, we want to help everyone understand wildland fire and how it works, why it's necessary, and how it helps Idaho's ecosystems. Fire is a natural part of Idaho, but sometimes, we have to put it out. Why? Sometimes, we have to start fires. Why? That's something you'll learn through visiting this site and the other sites below. We also want you to know how wildland firefighters operate and the interesting details of wildland fire suppression.



Fire and Aviation

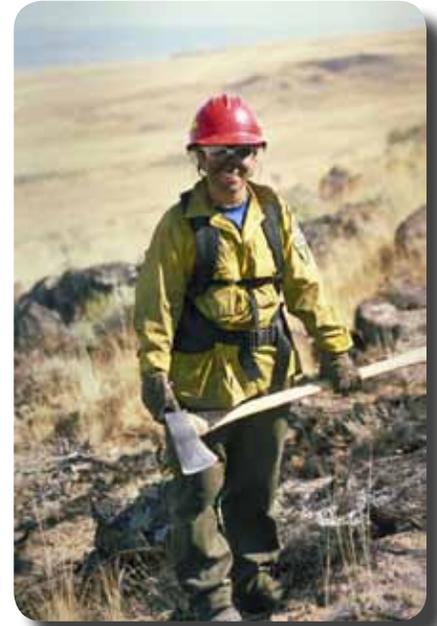
Twin Falls District Fire and Aviation Hosts Open Houses, Receives Record Number of Applications

Open houses are a great avenue to help people learn about the various positions within the fire program

Twin Falls District Office - For the past several years, the Idaho BLM Twin Falls District Fire and Aviation staff has hosted open houses in Burley, Shoshone and Twin Falls to orient potential fire recruits for the upcoming fire season. This year, the open houses attracted about 150 people.

“These open houses are a great avenue to help people learn the various positions available within the fire program and decipher the application process,” said Fire Operations Supervisor Steve Loucks. “The open houses seem to attract more and more people every year; it’s become quite a success.”

As a result of the open houses, Twin Falls District received nearly 1,000 applications, which is a record number of applications for the Jarbidge, Burley and Shoshone Field Offices. The fire recruitment staff has been busy reviewing the applications and interviewing potential new recruits. Many of the open positions will be filled by staff who had worked previous fire seasons, leaving about a half-dozen positions open for the Jarbidge FO and three or four for the Burley FO.



Fire Resistant Plants Available at Home and Garden Show in Twin Falls

Plants usually have high water retention, provide less fuels in fire, contain no oil, leave small amounts of litter in yard

Twin Falls District - Through a partnership with the Twin Falls District and the Mid-Snake Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), students in the Shoshone High School Agriculture and Plant Science Department raised 280 fire resistant plants in 2008. These plants were available on a first-come, first-served basis during the Home and Garden Show at the College of Southern Idaho Expo Center in Twin Falls in

February 2009. The fire resistant plants were germinated in the Shoshone High School greenhouse. They include species from the approved list of fire resistant plants published by the Idaho BLM Twin Falls District and usually have high water retention, provide less fuel in fires, contain no oil and leave small amounts of litter in the yard. Examples of fire resistant vegetation in Idaho include willow, oak, maple and aspen.



Species available at the Home and Garden Show ranged from ground-covers and vines to perennials and shrubs. “We have a great partnership with the RC&D,” said BLM Fire Management Officer Chris Simonson. “This program provides a good opportunity for the students to learn about the fire resistant nature of these plants and the importance of this type of landscaping in the south central Idaho desert.”

More information on protecting and landscaping homes in the wildland/urban interface [here](#).

Fire and Aviation

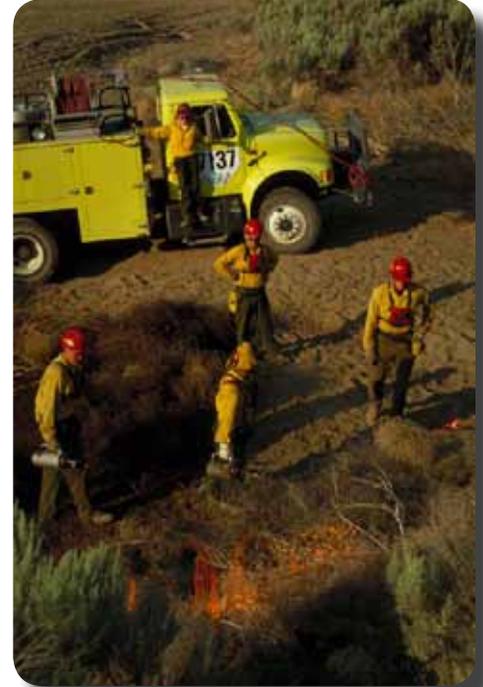
Coeur d'Alene District BLM Partners with Community for Fire Simulation

Exercise provides opportunity for fire suppression cooperators to get together and work out issues before fire

Coeur d'Alene District Office - The Idaho BLM Coeur d'Alene District recently worked on a new Assistance Agreement with Sagle Rural Fire Department to provide assistance with a wildland fire simulation in Bonner County. The simulation objectives are to bring all of the fire suppression, land management agencies and emergency services together to simulate a potential fire scenario. The simulation is planned to begin at normal dispatch locations, and firefighters will be locally dispatched to a simulated fire event in Sagle Fire Protection boundaries.

As the scenario unfolds, the simulated fire spreads to involve several homes, lands managed by the BLM and lands protected by the Idaho Department of Lands. Ultimately, the objective will be for the Initial Attack resources to call for and transition with a Type 3 Incident Management Team. Communications among the firefighters, dispatch, law enforcement, Idaho Department of Lands, BLM and Forest Service are designed to replicate challenges to accomplish with an actual mobile scenario. In addition, the local county mitigation group, aptly named "BONFIRE", is planning to use the simulated fire as an opportunity to educate local homeowners on the merits of hazardous fuels reduction.

Coeur d'Alene District Fire Management Specialist Lonnie Newton said, "Fire management in the Wildland Urban Interface inherently becomes so complex in our communities that any opportunity for our fire suppression cooperators to get together and work out issues ahead of time will benefit us when we are needed."



BLM is using Community Assistance, Ready Reserve funding to facilitate the scenario and is scheduled to begin in June 2009. The BLM Boise District has already completed five sessions of the 2009 Ready Reserve Wildland Fire Simulation Training.

BLM Employees in the Spotlight

Upper Snake FO Employee Selected as Idaho's Rangeland Management Specialist of the Year

Guenther's powerful work ethic and professionalism recognized throughout Idaho

Upper Snake Field Office - Glen Guenther from the Idaho BLM Upper Snake FO has been selected as BLM's Rangeland Management Specialist of the Year for Idaho. The BLM recognized Guenther during the reception of the Society for Range Management's 62nd Annual Meeting and Trade Show on February 8, 2009 in Albuquerque, NM. His work ethic and professionalism are recognized throughout Idaho. He has effectively guided the grazing permit renewal process since taking over responsibility for the range program in 2001. Under his leadership, the Upper Snake FO fully processed all grazing permits before the 2009 congressional deadline.

Upper Snake FO Manager Wendy Reynolds said, "Glen's leadership is recognized not only by his peers but by the grazing communities that he serves. His emphasis on stewardship of the land has been reflected in the success of our rangeland management program within our field office."



Law Enforcement Association Raises Funds to Assist BLM Family through Illness

Idaho Falls employees raise over \$8000 to assist colleague in need

Idaho Falls District Office - The BLM Law Enforcement Association recently presented Idaho Falls District Law Enforcement Ranger Jeff Long with a check for \$8,355 to help his family through his severe illness. The Law Enforcement Association raised the funds by selling raffle tickets for a P-229R.40 caliber Sig Sauer handgun, which was generously donated by the manufacturer.

Idaho State Office Special Agent-in-Charge Loren Good said, "It was extra special to receive the donation from the very company that makes firearms that BLM Law Enforcement Officers carry on the job every day. Long expressed his appreciation not only to his brothers and sisters in law enforcement, but to all of his BLM family. He is one of our own, and it was refreshing to see so many people chip in and make the fundraising effort a success."



Due to inclement weather, Special Agent Good, State Staff Ranger Keith McGrath and BLM Law Enforcement President Ruben Conde made the presentation to Long by conference call in the presence with District staff.

Idaho Falls District Manager Joe Kraanenbrink said, "The Law Enforcement Association's initiative to take on this fundraising effort on behalf of Jeff Long is truly a representation of the professionalism and care fellow law enforcement officers take when *one of their own* is in desperate need. Besides the association's leadership for this remarkable effort many non-law enforcement individuals donated to this need."

BLM Employees in the Spotlight

Cottonwood FO Natural Resource Specialist Lynn Danly Inducted into Hall of Fame

Employee devoted to eradication of invasive and non-native weed species in Idaho

Cottonwood Field Office - Idaho BLM Cottonwood FO Natural Resource Specialist Lynn Danly was recently inducted into the Idaho Weed Control Association's 2008 Hall of Fame. The honor was presented during the 8th Annual Idaho Weed Conference held in Nampa, ID, where Danly was recognized for her devotion to eradicate invasive and non-native weed species in Idaho and for being a pioneer for the BLM in promoting the use of biological control agents.



Danly has provided assistance on several rehabilitation projects in the Cottonwood FO and supervised a Challenge Cost Share project with Oregon State University to study the impacts of yellow starthistle on Spalding's catchfly, a threatened wildflower. Danly has also worked cooperatively with The Nature Conservancy on several weed projects in Hells Canyon.

She has a passion to combat weeds and has lead the Tri-State Cooperative Weed Management Area for many years. Danly is very knowledgeable about plant materials and has worked closely with the University of Idaho and BLM botanists to increase their knowledge of appropriate plant materials for the Hells Canyon area rehabilitation efforts.

Danly said, "I have enjoyed working with and learning from great folks as we try to come up with strategies to deal with the noxious weed threat. It seems the more I learn the more questions I have, but I truly enjoy interacting with folks concerned about the same things."



Idaho's Julia Gower Receives Award for Range Study Site Analysis Poster

Gower's initiative helps keep up with growing workloads and higher demands for using science daily

Challis Field Office - Julia Gower, GIS Specialist for the Challis Field Office, received second place for the annual poster contest at the Idaho GIS meeting in January 2009. The topic of Gower's poster is her Range Study Site Analysis, which can help range staff identify suitable areas to establish monitoring sites. The analysis focuses on inputting parameters and weighting them to generate suitability products in GIS that can be used as a tool to facilitate monitoring site selection.

Challis Field Manager Dave Rosenkrance said, "Julia's initiative in utilizing GIS for more than *just maps*, is exactly what BLM needs, to keep up with growing workloads and higher demands for using science in every day decisions."

