

Special Events and Programs

Battling Weeds is About Education, Partnerships, and Lots of Hard Labor

Eradicating weeds takes lots of determination, helping hands, and keen eyes, and that is exactly what BLM's "weed warriors" are bringing to the job. It is estimated that weeds (nonnative invasive plants) are spreading at a rate of over 4,600 acres a day on Federal lands alone. Volunteer assistance is essential in battling this invasion. Take "the Tammywhackers" as an example. In 1999, this group assisted in mapping invasive tamarisk trees along the 14-mile Gunnison River corridor in the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Study Area and Special Recreation Management Area in Colorado. They then mounted an all-out attack on the hardy "tammies," laboring hard for two days chopping and applying chemical control. They did a great job and vowed to return to continue the fight against tammies in the future.

College students also are getting involved. BLM launched a pilot program in 1999 to employ student interns to battle the weed problem by developing and implementing community-based

education and volunteer programs. BLM's Fort Ord, California, Management Area, hosted the first two Student Conservation Association (SCA) interns under the program. These students organized an extensive weed education and "train the trainer" program that served to implement the field component of the Invasive Weed Education Plan, Within Our Grasp. They organized a "War on Weeds" symposium and spoke to over 2,400 people and personally visited 28 different local school and community groups with a one-of-a-kind education program. Additionally, they led local volunteers in weekend weed eradication efforts. The goal of the project is to put in place community programs that will be self-sustaining after the interns leave. The pilot effort was so successful it is being replicated in Cody, Wyoming, where the preliminary reports indicate it is taking off "like a weed."

Also in California, the Lassen County Special Weed Action Team (SWAT) and the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office organized the first county weed pull day, the culmination of "Lassen County Weed Week." SWAT is a consortium of more than two dozen local, state, and



Cub Scouts in California joined the Lassen County Special Weed Action Team (SWAT) to help pull weeds.

federal agencies; Lassen College students; boy scouts; private organizations; and individuals working to control noxious weeds in northeastern California. Donning sturdy gloves and toting plastic bags, volunteer teams fanned out across the campus of Lassen College to pull invasive weeds. The effort resulted in a pile of 60 weed-filled garbage bags, and a greater awareness in the community of the problems caused by these unwanted plants.



Volunteers pulled weeds at the Lassen County Special Weed Action Team (SWAT), Susanville, California.

National Public Lands Day: Local Events Deliver BIG Results

National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is an annual event begun in 1994 to encourage volunteerism to improve and enhance our nation's public lands. The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEETF) is the national coordinator for NPLD events, which have grown in number from nine sites in 1993 to 186 in 1999, 39 of the latter on BLM lands.



National Public Lands Day volunteers helped to construct a shelterbelt electric fence to protect young trees and shrubs at Montana's Altman Confluence site.

In 1999, for example, (then) Acting BLM Director Tom Fry and U.S. Representative Sam Farr pitched in to help at Fort Ord on California's Monterey Peninsula, where volunteers painted tables, restored trails, pulled weeds, and planted native seeds. Gamlin Lake, Idaho, benefited when volunteers constructed



National Public Lands Day volunteers constructed a buck and pole fence to restrict OHV use in and around historic mining operation in Copper Globe Mine, Arizona.

one mile of trail and planted 1,000 trees and shrubs. Elsewhere in Idaho, 15 concrete Historic Oregon Trail markers were installed or relocated. At the Dripping Springs Natural Area in New Mexico, three hiking trails were hardened and improved for better handicap accessibility. BLM-sponsored NPLD sites in Utah enlisted over 170 volunteers, who participated in projects ranging from graffiti removal to trail construction and stabilization. The list of NPLD 1999 accomplishments is as varied as the public lands resources themselves.

From Alaska to Florida, NPLD 1999 volunteers generously contributed their talents to improving, enriching, and conserving the irreplaceable natural and cultural treasures on the public lands. All told, in 1999, 25,000 NPLD volunteers performed work with an

estimated value of \$5 million in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. But NPLD's beneficial effects do not end with the day: successful events foster public lands stewardship and encourage volunteer service throughout the year.

A Memorandum of Understanding among BLM, NEETF, and the Public Lands Foundation was signed in May 1999. The instrument serves to formalize relationships and NPLD responsibilities among the three entities.



National Public Lands Day volunteers at Pohick Bay Regional Park in Virginia helped stabilize a trail near the bay.

Holter Dam Volunteer Campground Host Receives Departmental Award for Bravery

Tom Evans, a volunteer campground host at the BLM Butte (MT) Field Office's Holter Dam Campground, recently

received the Department of the Interior's Citizen's Award for Bravery for his daring attempt to save two young women whose car had plunged into the Missouri River.

Just after midnight on July 19, 1998, Mr. Evans saw the car veer off the road near the campground and then roll into the river. He responded swiftly and decisively; after asking others to call for help, Mr. Evans dropped his boat into the river and rowed toward the women's partly submerged car. Though the car kept moving in the swift current, Mr. Evans and two other men were able to pull the women from the vehicle and get them to shore. Sadly, both women died at the scene.

Mr. Evans was honored with the Citizen's Award for Bravery for the outstanding courage he displayed in endeavoring to save the women's lives. Only two of these Departmental awards are given each year; the awards are intended to honor private citizens who risk their lives to rescue an on-duty Departmental employee or any other person on Department of the Interior property.

Hot Time, Summer in the Cities

In 1999, BLM's Eastern States Office and several partners, including the Greater Metropolitan Urban League, hosted the third annual "Environmental Camp Out," a Washington, DC, "Wonderful Outdoor World" (WOW)



Overnight camping for inner city school kids was sponsored by Eastern States, the Urban League, and other partners.

event. Forty inner-city kids had an unforgettable camping experience in Prince William Forest Park near Dumfries, Virginia. While enjoying the great outdoors, the children learned urban "Leave No Trace" ethics and traveled the stations of "Pathways for Fishing." The highly successful event was made possible by the work of numerous volunteers, many of whom joined the kids on their overnight adventure.

BLM Milwaukee (WI) Field Office volunteers contributed to the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood Restoration Project, one of the largest volunteer efforts to ever take place in an individual Milwaukee neighborhood. BLM volunteers were the first to start the ball rolling in the plan to restore this community; over 300 volunteers joined the effort to clean up the neighborhood and to plant trees.

On National Public Lands Day, the nation's newest Urban Tree House was dedicated at Lynden Hill in Midtown Milwaukee. America's Outdoors, a Federal partnership among the BLM, Forest Service, and National Park Service, sponsored activities that included a ceremonial tree planting, tree identification walk, nature scavenger hunt, and area cleanup. With continued volunteer support, the Tree House will thrive as a community center for environmental education through hands-on experience.

Wild Things, I Think I Love You!

Since the inception of the BLM Volunteer Program in 1982, volunteers and hosted workers have assisted with nearly all the job functions associated with the BLM Wild Horse and Burro

Program. Most of the work has been concentrated within BLM's 200 Herd Management Areas (HMAs), located in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming, encompassing close to 33.2 million acres of public lands. In these areas, volunteers have assisted in maintaining healthy herds (comprising more than 47,000 wild horses and burros) and a natural ecological balance on the range.

Herd management areas often encompass remote, harsh country. Working under extreme conditions poses challenges for the hundreds of volunteers whose primary tasks are monitoring of both the land and the herds, assisting with removal of excess animals, and preparing animals for adoption. Other volunteers assist with actual adoptions, which take place at about 100 temporary



At an Outdoor Recreation Fair cohosted by BLM and the Arizona Public Lands Information Center, a volunteer used his formerly wild burro—adopted from BLM—to help teach children about public lands.

and permanent adoption centers around the country each year. Some volunteers help with compliance checks, animal training, assistance to new adopters, public outreach at events, and titling animals to adopters. In 1999, nearly 14,000 hours of work performed by some 420 volunteers benefitted the Wild Horse and Burro Program. An additional 66,000 hours of work were performed by 31 Colorado State Penitentiary inmates, who helped to tame and halter break these living legends of the Old West.

Bad Boys Gone Good

Public lands offer many youth and prison inmates the opportunity to learn new skills and to carry out community



Members of "A Grassroots Aspen Experience," a nonprofit organization that focuses on providing youth at risk alternatives and strategies for success volunteered two days of river cleanup on the San Miguel River in celebration of National Rivers Week.

service projects, giving them the chance to identify new and constructive directions in their lives. For instance, during National Rivers Week, members of A Grassroots Aspen Experience, a non-profit organization that provides alternatives and strategies for success to at-risk youth, volunteered for two days on a river float to help cleanup the shoreline of the San Miguel River. The teens were mainly from the East, and really enjoyed their time in the "Wild West."

The Maclaren School (McKay Cottage) is a youth corrections program that has supported the Fishermen's Bend Recreation Area and the entire BLM Salem (OR) District since 1988. The crews of young people and supervisors visit the District's parks twice a week, from October through March, with supervisors guiding their charges through heavy or intensive labor projects. The Maclaren crews have contributed an estimated 24,000 hours of work over the last dozen years.

At the Medford (OR) District's Provolt Seed Orchard, Jackson County inmate crews and community service staff worked nearly 3,000 hours under a formal agreement between Jackson County Corrections and the BLM Medford District. These crews completed work projects that the Seed Orchard

would not normally have been able to accomplish, such as orchard cleanup and maintenance, irrigation, tree maintenance, and fire hazard reduction.

The Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area of the Montrose (CO) District worked with the Delta Correctional Facility Work Crew, whose members worked a grand total of 170 days in 1999. Under the supervision of a BLM hosted worker, the hard-working crew performed a wide variety of services benefitting several BLM resource programs. Primarily, crew members performed trail maintenance and relocation work on the Ute Trail within the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area. They also maintained recreation sites and participated in a number of site rehabilitation projects, sign installation projects, and trash cleanups. The work crew also assisted with the care of trees and other plantings along the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail.

Seven inmates assisted Colorado State Penitentiary's Wildhorse Inmate Program by contributing over 22,000 hours in saddle training of wild mustangs adopted by the public. The Elk River Conservation Camp, a minimum-security California Department of Corrections facility, sent six work crews that worked 10,000 hours clearing fire breaks for the Arcata Field Office. Some 144 Cassia/Minndooka County, Idaho,

inmates provided over a thousand hours of work on recreation site maintenance projects. In Idaho Falls, volunteers from the Saint Anthony Juvenile Hall picked up litter on a dispersed recreation area called Red Road.

Beach, Lake, Creek, and River Cleanups

From the West Coast of California to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, children and adults alike joined together to clean up the public lands. The beautiful King Range National Conservation Area on the coast of northern California benefited from the ninth annual Adopt-A-Beach and Coastal Cleanup. In addition to performing cleanup activities, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students from Mattole Elementary School put up a new mural at the Mattole Campground and participated in science activities. At a distant shore along the California/Arizona border, the Lake Havasu's Adopt-a-Shoreline cleanup enjoyed its fourth successful year.

In Oregon's Medford District, the twelfth annual Jenny Creek Volunteer Work Project became part of the sixth annual National Public Lands Day in September. This local event has become an anticipated day when families and groups of volunteers of all

ages have a chance to “give something back” to their public lands. A number of volunteer projects were completed to make fencing more wildlife friendly, protect sensitive areas, provide or improve wood duck and songbird nest boxes, remove old fence and metal debris, restore stream channels, and improve habitat for fish by placing wood and rocks in the stream. Young children were naturally attracted to the fish habitat project as it provided ample opportunities for them to throw rocks in the creek. In addition, Boy Scout Troop #7 upgraded a segment of the Grizzly Peak Trail.

Also in Oregon, the seventh annual Rogue River Cleanup in May brought more than 200 volunteers prepared to hike the banks or take to the river in boats to collect trash. By the end of the day, they had collected approximately 50 cubic yards of trash (about five dump truck loads, including 300 tires). BLM employee volunteers provided drop sites for the garbage which was then transported to a dumpster and recyclable piles at the Rand Recreation Site. The Oregon Guides and Packers Association assisted with the cleanup by providing available spaces on several crafts for “boatless” volunteers.

In the heart of Colorado, the Montrose BLM recreation crew teamed up with the Montrose County Partners Organization for a river cleanup trip in honor of National Rivers Week. The young participants (ages 7-17) helped clean and mark campsites and pick up trash along the Escalante to Dominguez section of the Gunnison River. Along the way, the group learned about the ecology of the Gunnison River and discussed river management issues such as tamarisk invasion, endangered fish habitat preservation, and recreation use impacts.

Colorado’s eighth annual Arkansas River Cleanup/Greenup in May attracted 350 volunteers who contributed 2,100 hours to remove more than 25 tons of trash. This is down from 35 tons the previous year, which proves people are beginning to get the message not to litter the Arkansas River! The volunteers also planted 30 cottonwood and ponderosa pine trees along the riverbanks. This event’s great success is due to the generous contributions of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association, the Colorado Lottery, several local businesses, and many individuals.

Volunteers to the Rescue, Wildlife Says, “Thanks!”

The public lands provide habitat for more than 3,000 species of animals, as well as thousands of plant species across the Western United States and Alaska. Large animals such as elk, bighorn sheep, caribou, deer, and moose share the public lands with hundreds of species of small mammals, waterfowl, fish, raptors, reptiles, and songbirds. BLM relies on volunteers to assist with habitat improvements as well as monitoring and inventorying the many and diverse animals and plants found on the public lands.

Volunteers in Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming provided valuable data on raptor populations and nest occupancy and success in 1999. Raptors are birds of prey such as eagles, hawks, and falcons. In addition, volunteers from Hawk Watch International assisted BLM with the Goshute Raptor Project in Elko, Nevada. Their work included scientific research, data collection, and monitoring. The crew also completed wilderness study area surveillance work.

A great diversity of wildlife is found at the San Pedro National Riparian Conservation Area (NRCA) in Arizona. This 50,000-acre riparian area in the desert Southwest is home to more than

100 species of breeding birds, and it provides habitat for another 250 species of migrant and wintering birds. The American Bird Conservancy has recognized this area as a Globally Important Bird Area. The nonprofit “Friends of the San Pedro River” provides support to BLM in its stewardship of the San Pedro NRCA. The Friends conduct interpretive and guided trail hikes, maintain the grounds, assist with bird banding, and complete various additional tasks that enable the BLM to protect and showcase the San Pedro River and its wealth of resources.

Volunteers also play an important role in improving and maintaining fish habitat at Lake Havasu. The Lake Havasu Fisheries Improvement Program is a cooperative partnership with other land and resource agencies and an army of volunteers. This group continues to improve the public fishing access and fisheries habitat of this “sportsman’s paradise” on the Arizona/California border which attracts some four million visitors each year.

Big game species on the public lands are highly valued by sportsmen and other wildlife enthusiasts throughout the country. BLM relies on dedicated volunteers to improve habitat for these species such as desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, and elk. For example, in

Nevada, 21 volunteers from Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn, Mule Deer Foundation, and the White Pine Sportsman spent two days constructing three water catchments (guzzlers) to implement the White Pine County Elk Management Plan. The Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada organization provided the aprons. A backhoe was also loaned for use in the project. Among the volunteers were the Administrator of the Nevada Division of Wildlife and the Chairman of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

Let's Recreate in the Great Open Spaces

The public lands provide visitors with a wide array of recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, boating, off-highway vehicle riding, mountain biking, and birding. The BLM manages vast resources to support these diverse pursuits: more than 200,000 miles of fishable streams, 2.2 million acres of lakes and reservoirs, 6,600 miles of floatable rivers, over 500 boating access points, 69 National Back Country Byways, and 300 Watchable Wildlife sites. The agency also manages over 4,500 miles of National Scenic, Historic, and Recreational Trails, in addition to thousands of miles of

multiple-use trails available for motorcyclists, hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

From the solitude of the southern California deserts, to the roaring waters of Alaska's mighty rivers, to the mountain trails of Colorado, volunteers are working long and hard to enhance the recreational opportunities available to the public. In 1999, some 8,151 volunteers put in 392,454 hours of labor valued at \$5.6 million. In fact, over 40 percent of all volunteer time recorded in 1999 benefited the BLM's recreation programs.

Volunteers did everything from serving as campground hosts to staffing boat launch sites, visitor centers, and historic sites. They also helped BLM monitor visitor use, collect data, provide information and maps, explain rules, do maintenance and cleanup, open and close facilities, issue permits, collect fees, provide emergency assistance, build displays, direct traffic, and generally keep BLM facilities running smoothly. Without these loyal and trusted volunteers, BLM would not be able to provide the high quality of service that has been noted in recreational satisfaction surveys.

Many campground hosts return year after year to greet old friends and to

keep the campgrounds safe and inviting. Campgrounds on public lands in Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah depended on volunteer hosts in 1999. In Arizona, volunteers at Long Term Visitor Areas help BLM manage over 15,000 acres of public lands and issue more than 11,000 permits to the public.

In addition, BLM has joined with other federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations to offer “one-stop shopping” visitor information in a number of locations, including Arizona’s Public Lands Information Center, the Arizona Strip Interpretive Association, the Eastern Idaho Visitor Center, and Alaska’s Coldfoot and Yukon Crossing Visitor Centers. These centers all benefited from partnerships and volunteer service.

Caves Are Us

Caves are abundant on BLM lands, and require special management attention to provide for visitor safety and wildlife habitat. The National Speleological Society and its local grotto chapters and other volunteers provide BLM with assistance in inventorying, monitoring and protecting caves and related resources on the public lands. The Idaho Cave Survey group mapped and

inventoried numerous cave sites, including some that were unknown to the Idaho Falls District staff. They also installed informational and directional signs in caves for speleologists and the general public.

The Part Time Grotto, a Wyoming Bighorn Basin-based caving group, contributed more than 100 hours removing trash and graffiti painted on cave walls in the Spirit Mountain and Spence Caves. They also modified the entry gate at the Spirit Mountain Cave to allow bats access to inner cave passageways. The group helped guide a special tour of Horsethief Cave for Wyoming congressional aides and recruited members of the Gem State Grotto to travel from the Boise, Idaho, area to help with gate construction. The Part Timers also have been very cooperative in assisting BLM with monitoring cave usage and suggesting ways to improve cave management in the Cody, Wyoming, BLM management area.

Can You Dig It?

BLM manages thousands of archaeological and historic resources on the public lands and relies on volunteers for assistance with protecting and managing these sites. Volunteers assist

with inventory, monitoring, protection, and actual excavations and studies to determine the prehistoric environment.

In New Mexico, The Taos Field Office coordinated with the Santa Fe Northwest Advisory Council (SNAC) and Steven Post from the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) in the investigation of a predicted Oñate-era (late 16th or early 17th century) camp located on BLM-managed lands along the proposed route from La Cieneguilla to San Juan Pueblo. SNAC volunteers provided 400 hours in this effort, which included inventory of metal objects located with metal detectors. Even though this early historic camp was not located, the goal of involving the local community in an archaeological investigation was met. These volunteers will become proponents of proactive cultural resource management in the Santa Fe area well into the future.

SNAC volunteers also put in over 2,000 hours on the Archaic Sites Project, an archaeological inventory of about 1,700 acres of BLM lands in the Buckman Road/Santa Fe Ranch area northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico. This was a professionally supervised, volunteer archaeological inventory that focused on identifying the pre-Puebloan cultural resources on the 18,000 acre tract. Supervised by staff

of the Museum of New Mexico, the volunteers included members of the surrounding community interested in the archaeological resources of the area. The primary project goal was to identify cultural resources within 16 study areas distributed across the tract. Ultimately, 14 areas were examined, totaling 1737 acres of surveyed space and yielding 115 archaeological sites. This project greatly enhanced BLM's knowledge of the archaeology of the area, and will form a good data base for the management of the cultural resources of the area.

In Alaska, The Fairbanks Field Office ran two field archaeology projects in 1999 through a cooperative field school run by the Department of Anthropology of the University of Alaska. In the first project, students spent two months mapping and excavating several small sites near Galbraith Lake on the North Slope of the Brooks Range. The field school was offered as a standard course through the University, which took care of advertising and ran the archaeological dig as a means of providing experience and training to students in archaeological field techniques. BLM provided logistics support in the form of camp equipment and transportation to and from the site, provided communications from the remote location, and made a BLM vehicle available to the crew while they

were on site. Sites excavated were on BLM-managed lands, and the crew stayed at a BLM-managed campsite.

In the second project, a recent graduate and a current graduate student from the University documented historic features along a portion of the Davidson Ditch. The Ditch was constructed in the 1920s to transport water 60 miles to important gold mining areas north of Fairbanks. The students walked 20 miles of the ditch, carrying Global Positioning System units and recording all flumes, penstocks, cabins, headframes, siphons, and other features they encountered. As a result of their work, BLM now has an accurate map of the upper one-third of the ditch, based on GPS locations and including drawings and photographs of features. Over 60 individual features were documented along the 20-mile section of the ditch. BLM provided the GPS equipment, a satellite telephone for communications, transportation to and from the area, and computer equipment to convert GPS data to maps. The project was also supported by a small grant from the Alaska Gold Rush Centennial Task Force.

Arizona's longstanding Site Steward program continues to provide volunteers who monitor sites and report on evidence of looting or damage. Other volunteers provide guided tours at sites,

public outreach, and education.

Archaeological site records have been verified and corrected, and a database established through volunteer efforts.

Green Thumbs Help Botanists

Volunteers with a "green thumb" are helping BLM care for thousands of plant species growing on public lands throughout the country, from eastern Florida to western Oregon.

In Florida, volunteers are restoring native plants to Jupiter Inlet. Starting in 1997 and continuing through 1999, students of the Jupiter Community High School's Environmental Research and Field Studies Academy participated in National Public Lands Day events with the BLM's Jackson Field Office. During this time they removed exotic plants, planted over 250 scrub oaks, potted over 7,500 mangrove seeds, and salvaged 50 young mangrove plants. They also removed trash, monitored tortoise burrows, and continued their frequent on-site monitoring and nurturing of the plants.

Members of the Colorado Native Plant Society contributed over 100 hours collecting and mounting hundreds of plant specimens provided by the Rocky

Mountain Herbarium in 1999 in Colorado. The specimens will be placed in the Montrose District Herbarium for use by all interested individuals.

At BLM's Elko, Nevada, Field Office, some 45 volunteers worked an estimated 360 hours putting the finishing touches on a native plant arboretum to be used for environmental education. This work was done as part of National Public Lands Day.

The Sprague and Provolt Seed Orchards in Medford, Oregon, rely on a variety of volunteer assistance every year both in the orchards and the greenhouse nursery. In 1999, volunteers at the Sprague Seed Orchard contributed 1,049 hours while volunteers at the Provolt Seed Orchard put in 1,960 hours. Two hosted volunteers at the Sprague Seed Orchard performed security work by providing a presence at the orchard, doing facility and perimeter surveillance, and responding to security alarms. In exchange, the orchard provided these volunteers a place to park a mobile home. Volunteers also include people who regularly work in the greenhouse nursery; a retired BLM employee who builds, maintains, and inventories bird boxes each year at Sprague; an Eagle Scout who maintains and inventories bird boxes at Provolt; and high school students who earned

community service credits volunteering much of the summer in the Sprague greenhouses.

BLM also attracts scholars who are interested in conducting research on the public lands. For example, Dr. Helmut Mayrhofer of the Botanisches Institut, Graz, Austria, the world authority on calcareous lichens, worked for a week with the Idaho State Office botanist. There, he assisted with training and shared his expertise on the identification and ecology of calcareous microlichen of Birch Creek in both the Salmon and Idaho Falls Field Office areas. He also collected plant material to be used in classical taxonomic studies and in molecular analysis. Many of the plant collections Dr. Mayrhofer made in the Birch Creek area are new to science and it may take several years to determine their identity.

Loving Care Results in Fitting Tribute to Wildland Firefighters

A monument honoring thousands of firefighters and support personnel—past, present and future—was dedicated at a ceremony held May 25, 2000, at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), in Boise, Idaho, the Nation's management and logistical support

center for wildland firefighting. The monument was conceived, developed, and paid for primarily by private wildland firefighter donations. NIFC employees and scores of local volunteers have provided hundreds of hours of labor since 1995 to assist in building this tribute to the efforts and sacrifices of wildland firefighters.

The monument covers about one acre and features three bronze statues representing firefighters on a wildland fire line. It also features a waterfall and native vegetation. Plaques honoring firefighters who gave their lives are located throughout the monument.

Volunteers played a major role in the development of the monument. They planted native shrubs and trees, installed a sprinkler system, and constructed a fence around the area. The volunteers also return each year to maintain the area.

BLM's Deputy Director, Nina Hatfield, focused on the importance of interagency cooperation in wildland firefighting efforts. "The yellow shirts (of the firefighters) cover the agency identifiers," Hatfield said. "The spirit of the monument lives in the many volunteers and contributors who came together to make it a reality."

Toiling on Vacation and on National Trails Day

The American Hiking Society (AHS) sponsors the Volunteer Vacations program to support trail work on public lands throughout the country. BLM is one of the sponsors of this program, which allows intrepid, paying vacationers to participate in work trips to challenging trail sites. In return for sponsorship, BLM gets an enthusiastic crew of several adults who contribute a week of valuable labor to a specific on-the-ground project, each led by a skilled AHS trail crew boss. For example, the Lander (WY) Field Office utilized an eight-person crew of retired Midwesterners, who worked for an entire week in Sinks Canyon, just west of Lander. They developed an improved trail route, built drainage crossings, and installed trailhead signs. In 1999, BLM hosted a total of eight AHS Volunteer Vacations projects, through which 85 individuals performed hundreds of hours of volunteer labor.

BLM also worked with AHS to coordinate numerous National Trails Day events in 1999. For example, the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Association (COPMOBA) held its annual trail maintenance day on the Dry Creek Loop Trail, a segment of the Tabeguache Trail just west of Montrose. Association members replaced vandalized

signs, picked up trash, and maintained water bars along the trail. Another Colorado event was hosted by the North Fork Trails Network (NFTN) on the Young's Peak Trail near Crawford. The trail, which had been damaged by heavy rains, was repaired and rerouted by the group with the help of BLM Recreation staff.

Two Canon City, Colorado District volunteer groups received the Outstanding Trail Sharing Award at the 14th National Trails Symposium in Tucson, Arizona. The Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen and the ATV Quad Dusters were given this award for their innovative and successful joint efforts and contributions to trails. The Clubs often work together on BLM projects and have constructed and maintained 20 miles of trails and packed out 33,000 pounds of trash from the back country and along 155 miles of county roads. This unique partnership between two diverse user groups continues to foster a sense of respect for each other and other trail users.

Celebration of National Trails Day this year in Canyon City found volunteers working at Ecology Park. This event was cosponsored by BLM and the Colorado Lottery. Work concentrated on rebuilding 200 yards of trail, including the resurfacing of 1/4 mile of trail.

Teaching Outside the Classroom

Volunteers regularly contribute to BLM environmental education programs, helping to teach both kids and adults about natural and cultural resources on the public lands. For example, the Anchorage (AK) Field Office hosted approximately 2,000 sixth-graders during the 1999 Outdoor Week, an annual, volunteer-supported event that has been held for the past 24 years. Special event instructors from many Federal agencies contributed their expertise, helping kids learn field techniques in such areas as gold panning, stream flow measurement, and water-quality sampling. Elsewhere in Alaska, volunteers contributed thousands of hours to environmental events at BLM's Campbell Creek Science Center in Anchorage and at the Northern Field Office in Fairbanks; they taught grade-school children about the interrelationships among plants, water, wildlife species, and other components of the environment.

In Colorado's Uncompahgre Field Office, 150 fourth-grade students from local communities enthusiastically participated in the annual interagency Norwood Environmental Appreciation Day. Students toured 10 stations, each emphasizing an environmental topic such as rangeland health, sustainable

forestry, watershed preservation, and Leave No Trace. Volunteers contributed to all aspects of this day of learning.

As part of their independent study work, several Utah State University student volunteers participate in the day-to-day operation of Pariette Wetlands, a 9,033-acre wetlands project managed by the Vernal (UT) Field Office. In 1999, students conducted extensive mapping, maintained water flows into wetland areas, and constructed nesting platforms for waterfowl.

In 1999, volunteers in the Butte (MT) Field Office's Canyon Ferry Eagle Program hosted public viewings of the four-week fall gathering of bald eagles. More than 8,000 visitors braved cold, autumn temperatures to view this annual spectacle and participate in volunteer-hosted eagle education programs. And, at the Vale (OR) Field Office's National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, the Trail Tenders partnered with BLM and Baker County/Union County schools to teach K-5 students about Oregon Trail history and Native American skills. Volunteers staffed 12 education stations and offered students the opportunity to use computers, scanners, and digital cameras to create websites.

Some Special Kids Enjoy a Day on the Trinity River

In August 1999, the Redding (CA) Field Office hosted more than 40 seriously ill children and their families on a 10-mile trip down the Trinity River, followed by an afternoon of games and food. The float trip, initially a joint proposal of BLM and the Redding medical community, quickly blossomed into a huge volunteer effort involving people from all across northern California. Local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies donated guides, boats, food, prizes, and—most important—loads of time to make this a great day for some special kids.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt Joins Volunteers on the Missouri

BLM-Montana's Upper Missouri Wild and Scenic River volunteer program relies greatly on the dedicated volunteers who return each year to serve as campground hosts and river ranger interns. The residents of Fort Benton, Montana, embrace BLM and its volunteers as active contributors to community summer activities, which bring in considerable tourism revenue. In June 1999, Secretary Babbitt took a boat ride on



Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt joined BLM volunteers building a fence at Munroe Island along the Upper Missouri Wild and Scenic River, Montana.

the famous Missouri, and worked with volunteers at Cow and Monroe Islands repairing fencing, building fire pits, and generally cleaning up the areas.

Recognizing Our Volunteers—Past and Present

In addition to nominating extraordinary volunteers for BLM's national-level "Making a Difference" Awards, BLM field offices also show their appreciation to volunteers through special recognition programs and gestures. For example, in Alaska, certificates and thank-you letters were sent to all 1999 volunteers; each volunteer with more than 80 hours of service also received

a specially designed certificate and a T-shirt, and some volunteers received awards from the BLM team members for whom they worked.

BLM's California Desert District Office and the Friends of Jawbone Canyon cohosted the third annual Moose Anderson Days trash cleanup. This weekend-long event commemorates the late Mark "Moose" Anderson, a former member of the California Off-Highway Vehicle Commission, who enthusiastically supported and promoted off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation in California. Each year, Moose Anderson Days volunteers, including many OHV enthusiasts, remove huge amounts of trash from this desert canyon, and are recognized via on-site feasts, OHV tours, and commemorative "Moose" apparel. In 1996, BLM's Jawbone Canyon Visitor Contact Station was dedicated in Moose's memory.

In 2000, the Casper (WY) Field Office mourned the loss of Volunteer Coordinator Hal Boyd. Since 1992, Hal had been providing the office with reports on changes in federal legislation and analyses of the effects of those changes on public land programs such as cultural resources, grazing, and minerals. BLM Nevada Volunteer Program Coordinator John Eric Chappell also passed away in early

2000, after having donated his time to BLM for more than 30 years. Over the last eight years of his service, John helped to provide leadership to the BLM Nevada Volunteer Program, served as project manager for several major volunteer projects, helped to develop the Nevada State Office Learning Center, and initiated a BLM summer intern program for high school students around Nevada.

On a happier note, in 1999, the Vale (OR) District Office and its National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center hosted/cohosted a Volunteer Banquet, Volunteer Faire, Volunteer Field Trip, and Volunteer Recognition Week. The “Dusty Ruts” Banquet

recognized Center volunteers for their services and contributions. The Trail Tenders took the lead role in the Volunteer Faire, a Baker City volunteer recruitment event that also provided BLM an opportunity to showcase the wonderful work of current local volunteers. In 1999, Oregon volunteers who donated at least 40 hours of service to BLM were treated to an educational field trip that included stops at the Tarnastlikt Cultural Center in Pendleton and the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles. Finally, during Volunteer Recognition Week, the Interpretive Center, in conjunction with the Oregon Trail Regional Museum, sponsored a dessert social for Center volunteers.