

# Newsbytes

A publication of Bureau of Land Management in California

Issue 237 - 6/27/06



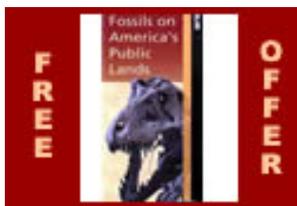
## THIS WEEK IN NEWS.BYTES:

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  - Wildlife trivia question of the week
  - Weed of the week
- Wildfire season
- Land preservation
- Energy
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- Employee profile
- National and/or Department of the Interior items: Wild horse and burro board, more

Also see this issue of News.bytes online at:

<http://www.ca.blm.gov/news/newsbytes/2006/237.html>

## NOT FOR EDUCATORS ONLY:



### FREE: FOSSILS BROCHURE

To help mark the 100th anniversary of the Antiquities Act, we are offering "Fossils on America's Public Lands" -- a free brochure to help you understand more about the importance of fossils and to appreciate public lands that preserve these remnants of past ages.

**THE FINE PRINT:** One to a customer, supplies limited -- offer lasts until supplies run out. These usually go quickly.

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/forms/offers/index.php?issueReq=237>



### **WILDLIFE TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK:**

Which of the following are major causes of a drastic fall in the population of big brown bats?

- (a) Hunting by wildcats
- (b) People disturbing colonies
- (c) Pesticides
- (d) Destruction of habitat
- (e) Vandalism
- (f) Only the human-related factors above
- (g) Getting caught in the hair of slow-moving hikers

-----> See answer near the end of this issue of News.bytes.



### **WEED OF THE WEEK: Leafy spurge...**

...displaces many native species and is very difficult to control once established. It causes severe irritation of the mouth and digestive tract of cattle and may result in death.

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/bishop/weeds/plants/leafyspurge.html>

## **WILDFIRE SEASON**

**"California: First fire of season in Sierra -- 1,200 acres 15 miles from Reno"** (San Francisco Chronicle, 6/26/06)

"Some 200 firefighters aided by three air tankers and a helicopter fought a Sierra wildfire that tripled in size overnight and had scorched nearly 1,200 acres by Monday evening. The fire was burning mainly in Sierra County [California]."

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/06/27/BAG2FJKQ3F1.DTL>

**"Lightning fires scorch Susanville area"**(Sacramento Bee, 6/27/06)

"A lightning storm sparked a fast-moving fire Monday afternoon that forced the evacuation of a 100-home subdivision southwest of Susanville. Residents south of Diamond View School fled as the unnamed fire jumped Richmond Road and burned toward the community of about 9,000 residents."

(Free registration may be required.)

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/california/story/14272088p-15082544c.html>

**"Fire officials urge caution for July Fourth holiday"** (BLM California news release, 6/22/06)

"It takes just a moment of carelessness to start a devastating wild fire." Fire officials are reminding area residents and visitors to use extreme caution with fire, and to heed restrictions on use of fireworks. Possession and use of all fireworks - including those approved by the state of California - are illegal on national forests and public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews70\\_SIFC\\_July4\\_firesafety\\_06.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews70_SIFC_July4_firesafety_06.html)

**"Wildfires flare across region"** (Reno Gazette-Journal, 6/27/06)

"An evening cell of lightning storms sparked 16 wildfires Monday that forced Mound House residents from their homes and some evacuations in Palomino Valley, part of 50,000 acres burning across Northern Nevada....Erratic winds hampered firefighters battling the Balls Canyon

Fire, started Sunday by lightning near the California border and continuing to burn out of control Monday night." Includes photos of fires across northern Nevada and near or in California.

<http://news.rgj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060627/NEWS10/606270360/1002>

**"BLM sets fire restrictions on Northwest California public lands"** (BLM California news release, 6/21/06)

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews68\\_northwest\\_firerestrictions\\_june06.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews68_northwest_firerestrictions_june06.html)

**"BLM fire prevention closure on July 4th at Crowley Lake North Landing"** (BLM California news release, 6/21/06)

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews54\\_CrowleyLake\\_july4\\_fireclosure.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews54_CrowleyLake_july4_fireclosure.html)

**"Bizz Johnson Trail reopens after fire; cause of blaze determined"** (BLM California news release, 6/26/06)

Fire investigators have determined that a juvenile playing with a lighter was responsible for starting a fire that burned last week along the Bizz Johnson National Recreation Trail about two miles west of Susanville. The trail, closed for two days during the fire mop-up and investigation, reopened Saturday afternoon.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews75\\_bizzjohnson\\_reopens\\_june06.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews75_bizzjohnson_reopens_june06.html)

**"Crews make progress on fires, more thunderstorms expected"** (BLM California news release, 6/26/06)

On Sunday alone, the Susanville Interagency Fire Center dispatched ground crews and aircraft to more than a dozen wildland fires, that broke out after thunderstorms developed over northeast California.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews74\\_lightning\\_fires\\_june26.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews74_lightning_fires_june26.html)

**"National fire news"** (National Interagency Coordination Center)

Summary of wildfires nationally, plus links to more information. Updated daily during fire season.

<http://www.nifc.gov/fireinfo/nfn.html>

## LAND PRESERVATION

**"Palo Verde land exchange completed"** (BLM California news release, 6/26/06)

On behalf of the United States public, the BLM has taken title to more than 29,500 acres of private inholdings within wilderness areas in Imperial and San Bernardino counties in exchange for approximately 2,000 acres of public lands in eastern Riverside and Imperial counties

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CDDNews79\\_PaloVerde\\_exchange.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CDDNews79_PaloVerde_exchange.html)



**"Hearst Piedras Blancas Rocks Donated to U.S."** (News.bytes Extra)

The Town Criers of San Luis Obispo County heralded the news, as the Hearst Corporation, represented by Steve Hearst, donated the scenic rocks off the point of Piedras Blancas to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management recently in a ceremony attended by key partners.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/newsbytes/xtra-06/237-xtra\\_piedrasdedic.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/newsbytes/xtra-06/237-xtra_piedrasdedic.html)

### **"Wilderness bill's fate hinges on access"** (Sacramento Bee, 6/26/06)

If a "300,000-acre wilderness bill protecting some of the most scenic lands along California's North Coast passes this year, what made the difference may well have been negotiations that won the endorsement of a Del Norte County supervisor in February....First introduced in 2002, the legislation would declare as wilderness federal lands owned by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service from Napa County to the Oregon border."

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/politics/story/14271772p-15082301c.html>

### **RELATED: "King Range National Conservation Area"** (BLM California website)

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/arcata/kingrange/index.html>

## **ENERGY**

### **"BLM oil and gas lease sale sets record for California"** (BLM California news release, 6/20/06)

The Bureau of Land Management in California received a record \$2700 per acre bid at a recent oil and gas lease sale held in Sacramento. Overall, the lease rights for 31 parcels totaling 19,620 acres were sold competitively for over \$723,292 at the sale. Under federal law, 50 percent of the revenues collected are returned to the states where the oil and gas activity occurs. The parcels were in Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Merced and Ventura counties.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews53\\_oilgas\\_sale\\_results\\_june06.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews53_oilgas_sale_results_june06.html)

### **RELATED: "Landowners get nasty surprise from government"** (Bakersfield Californian, 6/21/06)

"Let the buyer beware. That appears to be the lesson that some landowners are choking down after learning that the federal government has sold the mineral rights for potentially oil-producing earth right out from under their feet....But the split-estate clause is no sneaky trick. When public land is sold to a private buyer, the government may retain the subterranean mineral rights, which can be sold to third parties. That's one of the conditions of title to the land, and it's up to the buyer to acknowledge it before signing on the dotted line...."

(Free registration may be required.)

<http://www.bakersfield.com/102/story/58226.html>

### **RELATED: "Best management practices - Split estate issues"** (BLM national website)

In split estate situations, the surface rights and subsurface rights (such as the rights to develop minerals) for a piece of land are owned by different parties and are said to have been severed. For split estate, mineral rights dominate, or take precedence over, other rights associated with the property, including those associated with owning the surface. Includes links to more information.

[http://www.blm.gov/bmp/Split\\_Estate.htm](http://www.blm.gov/bmp/Split_Estate.htm)

### **"SDG&E, Imperial agree to team up"** (San Diego Union-Tribune, 6/22/06)

"San Diego Gas & Electric yesterday reached an agreement to team with the Imperial Irrigation District to work on the Sunrise Powerlink, a controversial 120-mile power line to bring power into San Diego County.... Experts generally believe the [Imperial Valley]'s hot, sunny climate will allow it to develop significantly more solar and geothermal electric generating projects, which are increasingly prized for their lack of pollution and their renewable nature." BLM would be involved through rights-of-way permits needed for parts of routes across public lands.

[http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20060622/news\\_1b22power.html](http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20060622/news_1b22power.html)

**"Kern files suit over oil wells"** (Bakersfield Californian, 6/26/06)

"The Kern County District Attorney's office has filed a \$1 million lawsuit against a Houston-based energy company and its locally prominent subsidiary, alleging that their employees performed -- and then attempted to conceal -- substandard work in the plugging of local oil wells.... The lawsuit results from an investigation by the federal Bureau of Land Management, which used information provided by a [company] employee acting as a confidential informant."

(Free registration may be required.)

<http://www.bakersfield.com/137/story/59104.html>

## RECREATION ON PUBLIC LANDS

**"BLM increasing visitor information services over July Fourth weekend"** (BLM California news release, 6/27/06)

The Bureau of Land Management announced it will increase visitor information services and law enforcement patrols during the July Fourth holiday period in the King Range National Conservation Area. With July 4 coming on a Tuesday, the BLM expects a very busy period.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews76\\_kingrange\\_july4.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews76_kingrange_july4.html)

**"Bizz Johnson bus shuttle service set for Saturday, July 1"** (BLM California news release, 6/22/06)

A special bus shuttle for the Bizz Johnson National Recreation Trail near Susanville is set to roll Saturday, July 1, freeing hikers, runners and mountain cyclists from having to arrange vehicle shuttles for one-way routes on the scenic mountain trail.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews69\\_bizz\\_johnson\\_shuttle\\_june06.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews69_bizz_johnson_shuttle_june06.html)

**"Rafting rush! Get soaked on Kern River"** (Bakersfield Californian, 6/26/06)

"It's been nearly a decade since the Kern River roared down the river canyon like it is this summer." One river guide says, "guides dream about the high-water years, and this is definitely one of them."

<http://www.bakersfield.com/102/story/59113.html>

**RELATED: "Keyesville Special Management Area - recreation"** (BLM California, Bakersfield Field Office)

By far the most dramatic natural feature of this 7,133-acre parcel is an approximately 3.5-mile stretch of the Lower Kern River Gorge. This white-water river attracts about 12,000 commercial and non-commercial rafters each year.

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/bakersfield/keyesville.html#RECREATION>

**RELATED: "River recreation"** (BLM California, Folsom Field Office)

With water flows running high this year, see where you can log some watery mileage on whitewater runs through the heart of the Mother Lode. Includes links to information on the Tuolumne, Merced, Yuba and American Rivers -- "all steeped in history, spectacular scenery, and heart-stopping rapids."

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/folsom/rivers.html>

**"BLM land closed to shooting to protect public safety"** (BLM California news release, 6/22/06)  
Approximately 240 acres of public land in Amador County in the vicinity of Black Prince Mine Road overlooking the Mokelumne River has been closed to target shooting to protect public health and safety. Residents and the sheriff's office reported that target shooters were aiming in a southerly direction at targets set on a berm. The residential area at Skull Flat in Calaveras County on the other side of the Mokelumne River is in the line of fire and well within the maximum range of the firearms used.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews56\\_Amador\\_shooting\\_closure.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CCNews56_Amador_shooting_closure.html)

## HEADLINES AND HIGHLIGHTS

**"BLM teams up with federal health agency to provide arsenic information"** (BLM California news release, 6/21/06)

The BLM has joined forces with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to provide information about health risks resulting from exposure to arsenic after BLM discovered high concentrations of arsenic in the areas of Randsburg and Johannesburg, located in northwestern San Bernardino and northeastern Kern counties.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CDDNews75\\_agencies\\_provide\\_arsenic\\_info.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/CDDNews75_agencies_provide_arsenic_info.html)

**"BLM advisory council calls for review of road closures: meeting held Saturday"** (Ridgecrest Daily Independent, 6/25/06)

"The Bureau of Land Management Desert District Advisory Council...voted unanimously to recommend the formation of a technical review team to review administrative closures of off-road vehicle routes in the Kern County portion of the local resource area. The issue arose when California Association of Four-Wheel Drive Clubs Chair John Stewart told the council that the routes in the West Rand Mountains were administratively closed in March 2002."

<http://www.ridgecrestca.com/articles/2006/06/25/news/news00.txt>

**"A change of heart in Desert Springs?"** (Palm Springs Desert Sun, 6/27/06)

"Leaders from Desert Hot Springs said Monday they could rescind their decision to be the lone holdout from an ambitious regional conservation plan for the Coachella Valley. Whether the change of heart comes in time to extend a related deal that provides permits needed to build in the habitat of an endangered lizard remains to be seen. The fallout from both the city's decision and lizard deal could have a big impact on builders, landowners and the future of wildlife from the Banning Pass to the Salton Sea...." BLM is a partner in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

<http://www.thedesertsun.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060627/NEWS07/606270318>

**"Group offers to buy Area 51"** (Redding Record Searchlight, 6/21/06)

"Along with more than a dozen written protests to the trade of 'Area 51,' the federal Bureau of Land Management has received an offer from a group that wants to keep hiking boots and mountain bike tires on its trails....In April, the BLM Redding field office announced it would swap the parcel, which is crisscrossed by 5.2 miles of trails, for 566 privately held acres in the Trinity River watershed that are upstream of important salmon rearing habitat." BLM is currently reviewing protests to that decision.

(Free registration may be required.)

[http://www.redding.com/redd/nw\\_local/article/0,2232,REDD\\_17533\\_4790548,00.html](http://www.redding.com/redd/nw_local/article/0,2232,REDD_17533_4790548,00.html)

**"County may appeal plan to export Honey Lake Valley water to north Reno"** (Lassen County News, 6/20/06)

Company plans to pipe water from Northeast California, to supply new homes north of Reno. "The Bureau of Land Management filed a record of decision approving the Environmental Impact Statement on Wednesday, May 31 for the project pipeline to cross federal lands. The county has a 30-day window to appeal the ROD approval to the Interior Department."

[http://www.lassennews.com/News\\_Story.edi?sid=3362&mode=thread&order=0](http://www.lassennews.com/News_Story.edi?sid=3362&mode=thread&order=0)

**"Franklin Logging wins BLM Widow Peak timber sale"** (BLM California news release, 6/20/06)

The company bid \$251,395 for an estimated 1.1 million board feet of white fir in the Widow Peak area about eight miles northwest of Bieber in Lassen County.

[http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews67\\_widowpeak\\_timber\\_sale\\_results.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/news/2006/06/nr/NCNews67_widowpeak_timber_sale_results.html)

**"Current job openings - BLM California"** (USAJOBS website)

Current listings include budget technician, park manager, natural resource specialist and several firefighting jobs.

<http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/a9blm-ca.asp>

**"A long way around; Rockslide on road to Yosemite forces agonizing commutes"** (San Francisco Chronicle, 6/25/06)

"The slide has been only a minor inconvenience for tourists flocking to Yosemite by the thousands....But Highway 140 is the only direct route between Mariposa and Yosemite. Hundreds of people work at one end and live at the other, and its closure has turned a trip they could make in under an hour into a slog that can take almost three and winds 200 miles or more through the Sierra. It has disrupted lives, split up families and prompted even some lifelong residents to think about moving away."

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/06/25/BAGATJK5CU1.DTL>

**RELATED: "Merced River"** (BLM California, Folsom Field Office website)

The rockslide is affecting Merced River access by road and by raft. Check here for more information - with a link to updates at the Incident Information System.

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/folsom/merced.html>

**"Trinidad Commission approves cellular addition, recommends moratorium"** (Eureka Times-Standard, 6/22/06)

The "Trinidad Planning Commission voted 4-1 to approve the permits necessary for U.S. Cellular to add to its cellular equipment on Trinidad Head....with specific reference to a finding noting that if the U.S. Bureau of Land Management does not make a decision within 90 days as to whether or not the city has complied with the conditions of the land's 1983 transfer, the application will be approved."

[http://www.times-standard.com/fastsearchresults/ci\\_3966920](http://www.times-standard.com/fastsearchresults/ci_3966920)

**RELATED: "City council gets passed cellular 'hot potato'"** (The Eureka Reporter, 6/23/06)

Some residents question "whether or not the city has complied with conditions of the land's 1983

transfer" from the BLM, by allowing cell phone towers. Assistant city planner says, "decisions relating to the communications towers have been challenged or questioned in the past and now, almost 10 years later and without any substantiation, the city must presume the existing site is legal and process the permit application under that assumption."

<http://www.eurekareporter.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?ArticleID=12399>



### **EMPLOYEE PROFILE: Dawn Napier...**

...is the contact representative in BLM's Arcata Field Office, responding to a myriad of requests from the public for information regarding public lands within the area -- but call her "Dusty." "My family is big on nicknames," she says. Read more in this week's News.bytes Employee Profile.

[http://www.ca.blm.gov/news/newsbytes/profiles/napier\\_dawn.html](http://www.ca.blm.gov/news/newsbytes/profiles/napier_dawn.html)

## **NATIONAL AND/OR DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ITEMS**

### **"BLM sets meeting of National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board for July 17 in Salt Lake City; Bureau also calls for nominations to Board"** (BLM national news release, 6/21/06)

The board will discuss issues relating to the management and protection of wild horses and burros on Western public rangelands. Nominations for three positions on the nine-member board -- representing the categories of natural resource management, livestock management, and wild horse and burro research -- should be submitted to the BLM by July 14.

[http://www.blm.gov/nhp/news/releases/pages/2006/pr060621\\_whb.htm](http://www.blm.gov/nhp/news/releases/pages/2006/pr060621_whb.htm)

### **"When Americans speak"** (Sacramento Bee, 6/23/06)

Editorial: "On June 13, new Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne announced a new draft of the rules that restores the consistent 90-year history of policies that emphasize keeping our national parks unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations as well as for our own time. This is a major victory for public participation."

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/opinion/story/14270835p-15081595c.html>

## **WILDLIFE TRIVIA answer**

(f) Only the human-related factors above. Although some animals prey on bats, "relatively few animals consume bats as a regular part of their diet."

**SOURCE:** "Reasons for decline " (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/bats/threats.htm>

**RELATED:** "Common misconceptions about bats" (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

"Although bats may occasionally fly very close to someone's face while catching insects, they do not get stuck in people's hair. That's because the bats ability to echolocate is so acute that it can avoid obstacles no wider than a piece of thread."

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/bats/miscon.htm>

**RELATED: "Bat facts"** (Smithsonian Institution)

Answers some of the questions most often asked of the National Museum of Natural History

<http://www.si.edu/RESOURCE/FAQ/nmnh/batfacts.htm>

Photos available online at University of Michigan Animal Diversity website:

[http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/pictures/Eptesicus\\_fuscus.html](http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/pictures/Eptesicus_fuscus.html)

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