

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) removal of Network connections supporting Forest Service (FS) data transport and inter-agency coordination.

BACKGROUND: As a reaction to Cobell instruction and a pending Office of Inspector General (OIG) security inspection, National Information Resources management Center (NIRMC) directed that non-BLM access to and transit of the BLM network be stopped by 18 June 2006. This action effectively:

1. Severely reduced shared access of data stored on the BLM network; and
2. Forbid other FS use of the BLM network as a transit vehicle to access the FS network.

DISCUSSION:

- This action by NIRMC is the result of repeated network intrusions by OIG in response to judicial direction as an outgrowth of security lapses highlighted during the Cobell proceedings.
- Oregon State Office (OSO) OR-955 coordinated with FS/other agency users prior to network access removal resulting in FS personnel, at interagency sites, being required to purchase limited commercial internet services at remote sites to access the FS network.
- The FS responded in-kind, limiting and/or eliminating BLM's ability to reach the BLM network across FS systems from remote sites.
- A small number of programs/servers were able to remain accessible to inter-agency personnel in order to continue on-going programs. These exceptions to security policy were coordinated on a case-by-case basis after a thorough architecture review and risk analysis.
- This issue was briefed to Larry Benna during his July visit to the OSO with the recommendation that BLM/FS should begin moving to a mutually supportive network architecture, allowing both agencies unlimited access to other agency resources in order to support on-going projects and Service First operations.
- Scott Macpherson, WO-500 (acting Deputy CIO) was tasked to stand-up a working group to identify all the issues required to overcome to support inter-agency network resource sharing with FS. Diana Rech (Colorado CIO) and Lloyd Gilham (Oregon/Washington CIO) are designated co-chairs of the working group. Personnel from BLM WO/FS WO/NIRMC/DRM/NIST have been identified by name to provide expertise to resolve this issue.
- The first meeting is being coordinated by WO-500 to place the appropriate level of emphasis on this effort. Date is currently To Be Determined.

RECOMMENDATION: Provided for information purposes only.