



# BLM NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • Washington, D.C., Office • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Land Management  
For release: January 9, 2015

Contact: Jeff Krauss  
(202-912-7410)

## **BLM Director Highlights Agency Accomplishments in 2014** *Progress Seen on Host of Public Land Priorities*

WASHINGTON – Capping a year of progress for public land priorities, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Neil Kornze today highlighted major accomplishments of the BLM in 2014, including major steps forward for energy, conservation, and public engagement.

“Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the professionals at the BLM, last year saw some remarkable successes for the responsible management of our nation’s public lands,” said Kornze. “These accomplishments underscore the importance of public lands to the American people. I could not be prouder of our work this past year and look forward to a very productive 2015.”

Kornze identified significant progress in a number of priority areas, including:

- Providing an economic boost to Western communities;
- Institutionalizing responsible renewable energy development;
- Enhancing conventional energy opportunities and management ;
- Building lasting partnerships for meaningful conservation;
- Enhancing the connection between the American people and their public lands; and
- Improving the way the BLM does business.

A summary outlining the BLM’s major milestones from 2014 is [available here](#).

Last year, the BLM announced that public lands under the bureau’s management had contributed \$107 billion to the U.S. economy in fiscal year 2013. During that time, public lands and resources managed by the BLM supported more than 440,000 jobs throughout the country.

In renewable energy, the BLM built upon its impressive legacy of clean energy development with its first successful solar auction. As a result of the work done under the Western Solar Plan, projects proposed in solar energy zones are being permitted in months instead of years. “In 2014, the BLM delivered on the promise of the Western Solar Plan, achieving better environmental outcomes while providing industry with a more predictable, streamlined process,” Kornze said. “The advance planning and stakeholder outreach of the Western Solar Plan has proved to be a win-win approach for responsible solar development on public lands.”

The BLM Director also identified progress in conventional energy development and drew special attention to the agency’s strengthening of its oil and gas inspection efforts. Domestic production

from Federal onshore oil and gas wells accounts for 11 percent of the nation's natural gas supply and 5 percent of its oil. The Bureau offers millions of acres for lease each year and has already approved nearly 6,000 drilling permits that are ready for immediate use by industry. "The BLM is proud to be part of America's resurgence in oil and gas. We are working with partners in states all across the country to ensure that development takes place in the right places and is done safely and responsibly," Kornze said.

Also of note, Kornze cited progress in a number of conservation efforts, including increased rangewide protections for the Greater Sage Grouse and new additions to the National Conservation Lands. "Our field and district office teams do extraordinary work," Kornze said. "Because of the strength of their relationships in communities across America, we made major strides in 2014 in providing meaningful protections for sage grouse habitat and other critical landscapes."

Kornze also stressed the importance of connecting Americans of all ages to their public lands. "In 2014, the BLM took important steps forward in engaging with the public," Kornze said. "Through new efforts like our Planning 2.0 initiative, the BLM is finding ways to make our planning efforts more efficient and more meaningful for the public." The BLM also stepped up its efforts to get information out to the public using popular online tools like Google Maps, Facebook and Tumblr.

Kornze predicted further progress on these priorities for 2015. "In the year ahead," Kornze said, "the same principles that have guided our work in the past – thoughtful stewardship of our nation's resources; meaningful collaboration with stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels; and using the best science and technology available – will help us take great strides."

For a full list of bureau announcements from the year, please visit the [BLM Newsroom](#).

**The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2013, the BLM generated \$4.7 billion in receipts from public lands.**

###