



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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President Proposes \$1.2 Billion for BLM in Fiscal Year 2016

Request Underscores Administration's Commitment to Renewable and Conventional Energy Programs, Sage Grouse Conservation, National Conservation Lands, and BLM Foundation

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- President Obama today requested \$1.2 billion in appropriations for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management for Fiscal Year 2016. The request for BLM's operating accounts represents an increase of \$91.4 million above the 2015 enacted level. The proposal includes strategic investments that underscore the Administration's continuing strong support for facilitating and improving management of increased energy production, conserving sage-grouse habitat in the West, strengthening BLM's National Conservation Lands, and establishing a BLM Foundation to foster public partnerships that support BLM's missions.

"The Bureau of Land Management is proud to play a central role in our Nation's economy through energy development, recreation, grazing, timber, and conservation activities," said BLM Director Neil Kornze. "We greatly appreciate the support of the President and Congress in helping us take important steps forward in responsible and robust energy development, and in properly managing some of America's wildest places."

The BLM delivers significant economic benefits for communities across the Nation. Each year, lands under the Bureau's management contribute over \$100 billion in local economic activity and support more than 440,000 jobs. In the last fiscal year, the BLM generated over \$5 billion in receipts from public lands, benefiting State governments and the U.S. Treasury.

The President's 2016 budget continues the BLM's tradition of serving the American public by focusing on the following priorities:

Supporting and Modernizing Management of Increased Energy Production – In the past six years, the BLM has worked to facilitate a clean energy revolution on public lands, approving scores of utility-scale renewable energy generation and transmission projects. The agency has also supported record oil production from public lands through the approval of thousands of new wells each year. The BLM works closely with partners across the country to ensure development of renewable and conventional energy occurs in the right places and that projects are managed safely and responsibly. The President's budget proposes significant investments for improving how the BLM leases, permits, and inspects oil and gas wells, including updating regulations to reflect current industry practices and putting needed technology in the hands of BLM employees. The 2016 budget for oil and gas management activities from all sources represents an increase of \$29.1 million over the 2015 enacted level. The additional funding will make the BLM faster and smarter about responding to management issues, public concerns, and the needs of industry. The

President's budget reflects a new approach to provide resources to the field by proposing to strengthen BLM's inspection program by charging a fee comparable to that charged for offshore development. The new fee is estimated to total \$48 million in 2016, which will provide a program increase of \$6.9 million for these activities, while enabling the BLM to be more responsive to industry demand and changing inspections workload.

Restoring Sage Grouse Habitat through Partnerships and Collaboration – To ensure the long-term viability of sage grouse and the continued vitality of western economies, the BLM is leading an unprecedented, collaborative west-wide effort to update and strengthen management of sage grouse habitat. Key collaborators include western governors, state wildlife agencies, counties, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Forest Service. The President's 2016 budget request includes a total of \$60 million, an increase of \$45.0 million over the 2015 enacted level, for implementing the Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy to enhance sage steppe conservation and restoration across the landscape. These funds will allow the agency and its many partners to take meaningful steps forward on restoring rangelands, minimizing the threat of wildfire, controlling invasive plants, and improving riparian areas.

Supporting the BLM National Conservation Lands, American's Newest Conservation System – The President's budget includes an \$11.2 million program increase for the BLM National Conservation Lands, which celebrate their 15th anniversary in 2016. This investment will address high-priority needs in conservation areas, including providing basic support for recreation and visitor services. While National Conservation Lands represent only a small portion of the lands managed by the Bureau, one-third of all visitors to BLM lands visit these special areas. This investment will help to ensure these untamed places remain a legacy for all future generations.

Establishing a BLM Foundation – In connection with his budget request, the President is sending to Congress several legislative proposals, including one that would establish a congressionally chartered non-profit foundation for the BLM. A foundation would strengthen the BLM's connection with the public by helping link Americans to their public lands through an organization that would raise and spend private funds and foster constructive partnerships in support of the BLM's mission. The foundation would operate in a manner similar to that of the National Park Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the National Forest Foundation.

In addition to this year's budget priorities, Director Kornze applauded the hard work of BLM employees across the country. "The BLM has a unique and broad mission. Our duty is to find the right balance between multiple-use and sustained-yield," said Kornze. "I am incredibly proud of the hard work done by BLM's employees across the West and across the Nation. They make tough decisions every day and they work tirelessly to ensure that the agency is engaging with and listening to our partners and the communities that we serve."

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. With a total workforce of over 10,000 employees, 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 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.

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