



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Signs Revised Historic Preservation Agreement That Enhances Tribal Consultation and Public Participation

For Immediate Release

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Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Bob Abbey signed a revision to the BLM's national programmatic agreement (PA) Feb. 9 that clarifies how the agency consults with Tribes and other consulting parties on activities that may affect historic properties.

“This revision reinforces the BLM’s practice of respecting our unique relationship with Tribes and carefully considering their views and concerns through consultation,” said Abbey. “As the BLM examines proposals for activities on public lands, this revised PA will help us preserve the historical and cultural foundations that make the public lands special and vital.”

The PA has three signatories: the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO). Abbey, ACHP Executive Director John Fowler, and NCSHPO President Ruth Pierpont all signed the PA this morning at the ACHP’s quarterly business meeting in Washington, D.C. The original programmatic agreement was signed in 1997. A copy of the signed revision and questions and answers can be downloaded at [this link](#).

The PA governs the agency’s activities on federal, state and private lands that may impact historic properties, including those historic properties of traditional religious and cultural significance to Tribes. It allows efficient consultation between the BLM and State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs). The PA is authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). That law requires BLM to consider, plan for, protect, and enhance historic properties that may be affected by its actions.

The revision emphasizes the requirement for the BLM to consult with Tribes in the context of an ongoing government-to-government relationship, to obtain their views on the potential impacts on resources of significance to Tribes, and encourages the development of tribe-specific consultation protocols. It authorizes the BLM to maintain protocols with SHPOs that establish a more efficient alternative Section 106 compliance process, but institutes a requirement for tribal consultation and public comment on BLM-SHPO protocol revisions. It also adds the BLM national tribal coordinator to the BLM Preservation Board. That board advises the BLM on policies and procedures for NHPA implementation.

While the revision enhances the consultation role of Tribes, it does not apply to Tribal lands.

The BLM announced the revision in December 2011. The current revision was developed with the two other signatories following an extensive process of outreach and consultation with tribes and other stakeholders which began in August 2008.

The BLM manages more land - over 245 million acres - than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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