



# BLM NEWS RELEASE

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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 immediate release: May 9, 2012

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## **BLM Issues Updated Guide for Cooperating Agencies**

In keeping with its commitment to working with federal, state, local, and tribal government partners, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released a newly updated *Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners*.

Through offering cooperating agency status, the BLM invites state, local, and tribal governments, along with other federal agencies, who have jurisdiction or special expertise to share their insights so that we can cooperatively formulate land use planning documents that better reflect the needs and conditions of the American people.

“Coordination is a vital part of the BLM’s day-to-day operations. One the most effective ways we coordinate is through the ‘Cooperating Agency’ status, which affords our governmental partners a seat at the table as we work together on land use plans and projects,” BLM Director Bob Abbey said. “The desk guide the BLM is releasing today should help guide activities with governmental partners and provide clearer understanding of the commitment, roles and responsibilities of both cooperators and the BLM as we engage in land use planning and project development.”

The updated *Desk Guide* provides our intergovernmental partners with information they need to help them:

- Decide whether to engage in the planning process as a cooperating agency
- Identify their potential roles in the planning process;
- Suggest ways to build effective working relationships;
- Understand how other statutory requirements, such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), affect the cooperating agency relationship;
- Identify key elements to be included in agreements and memoranda of understanding establishing cooperating agency relationships; and
- Understand the principles of coordination under the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) and how cooperating agency status can improve efforts to coordinate during the land use planning process.

Since the original *Desk Guide* was issued in 2005, the BLM has completed more than 60 Resource Management Plans (RMPs), which guide decisions for every action the BLM takes on

the public land it manages. The new edition of the *Desk Guide* also incorporates recommendations from BLM partners on creating and implementing successful RMPs.

The BLM will distribute copies of the *Desk Guide* to each of the counties in the 12 Western states where the agency manages some 245 million acres of surface lands. The BLM will also provide individual copies of the *Desk Guide* to the states and tribes with whom it works. Copies of the desk guide are also available online at the planning section of the BLM's website: [www.blm.gov/planning/cadg](http://www.blm.gov/planning/cadg).

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. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The Bureau is also one of a handful of agencies that collects more revenue than it spends. In FY 2012, nearly \$5.7 billion will be generated on lands managed by the BLM, which operates on a \$1.1 billion budget. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health, diversity, 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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