



# BLM NEWS RELEASE

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**Bureau of Land Management**  
**For immediate release**

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## **BLM and Sierra Club Announce Winners of the First Annual Veterans Day Essay and Photo Contest for Military Service Members and Families**

(WASHINGTON, DC) – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Sierra Club Mission Outdoors today announced the winners of their first annual Veterans Day Essay and Photo Contest:

- Mt. Shavano Veterans Expedition, Scott Ostrom (Marine Corps)
- How Courage is Bred, Liam Corley (Navy)
- Beauty of Nature, Kami Fluetsch (Navy)

The three winning entries, which include a video essay, a photo essay, and a written essay, will be featured on the BLM and Sierra Club websites and social media platforms, and receive an outdoor support kit from the Sierra Club.

The contest, centered on the theme “What My Public Lands Mean to Me,” encouraged veterans, active-duty military, and their families to submit photos, essays and video about their experiences and memories of time spent outside on America’s public lands. The contest is a part of an ongoing commitment by both organizations to provide the country’s Armed forces with opportunities to get outside and enjoy the beautiful public lands that they have sacrificed to defend.

The BLM and Sierra Club accepted entries from Veterans Day, November 12, thru National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, December 7, at: <http://mypubliclands.challenge.gov>

December 7 through December 14, members of the public voted for their favorite entries through the same website. The entries were then judged by a panel of BLM and Sierra Club employees, including Carl Rountree, Assistant Director of the BLM’s National Landscape Conservation System, and Stacy Bare, Sierra Club Mission Outdoors Director.

As military veterans, Rountree and Bare recognized their own experiences with the public lands in each entry. “In reviewing these submissions, I was inspired and humbled by the powerful and articulate testimonials. Each of the entries highlighted the importance of public lands as a place for connection, encouragement, reflection, and renewal for our brave service members and their families,” Rountree said.

“Selecting winning entries from an amazing group of applicants was difficult,” said Bare. “The passion conveyed by each participant is something we need to share with all America. If I had to pick one theme from these entries, it would be, ‘we fought for this country, now go enjoy it and let it embody your freedom!’”

The three winning entries, along other qualifying submissions, are available at:

<http://www.blm.gov/mypubliclands>

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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