PART 4

RECREATION AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The Bureau of Land Management's outdoor recreation program is aimed at sustaining healthy land and water resources while promoting appropriate and responsible visitor use of those lands and waters.

The BLM provides resource-dependent recreational opportunities in a variety of settings that typify the vast western landscapes of the 11 public land states. These diverse settings range from the tundra in Alaska to the deserts of the Southwest, and from the old-growth forest of the Northwest to the plateaus and plains of the Rocky Mountain States. Many BLM areas have been recognized by the Bureau, the Congress, or the President, and have been given special designations (as detailed in Part 5 - Preservation of Significant Cultural and Natural Features) to protect the unique and sensitive values of each.

As a national provider of recreation opportunities, BLM focuses on its niche: providing primarily resource-based recreation and tourism opportunities. Visitors' freedom to pursue unstructured recreational opportunities is promoted as long as they accept the responsibility to use public lands wisely and to respect other public land users. Responsible use is encouraged by the BLM and its partners through land use ethics programs such as *Tread Lightly!* and *Leave No Trace!*

Recreation sites, information and interpretative sites, trails, staging areas, and similar facilities are also provided on some BLM public lands to protect resources and to help visitors have quality recreation experiences. At many sites and areas, fees are charged to provide for the maintenance and improvement of those sites and areas. At other sites, generally those public lands without visitor facilities, no fees are charged. Most recreational use on public lands occurs in these non-fee areas. Whether the visitor chooses highly developed recreation fee sites or remote wilderness areas where neither fees nor registration is required, BLM relies heavily on the public land user to protect the land, water, and facilities so that the next person can also have a quality experience. Because some visitors are unfamiliar with outdoor skills and others wish to utilize public lands for special events, BLM also issues special recreation permits to qualified commercial companies and organized groups to conduct their activities on public lands.

The information in the following tables is intended to provide an overview of recreational use and opportunities on public lands. BLM offices are responsible for collecting and maintaining various data relating to the recreation program. Field-level data is aggregated in the BLM's *Recreation Management Information System* (RMIS) data base. Tables 4-1 through 4-3 are summary reports from RMIS. Table 4-1 presents the estimated recreational use data by state; Table 4-2 presents visitor use data by recreational activity at fee and non-fee areas; and Table 4-3 presents reported revenues by state and type of authorization. These tables present a picture of the amount and types of recreational activities on public lands geographically, by recreation sites and dispersed areas, and by fee and non-fee areas.

In addition, special reports have been prepared to analyze the primary and secondary benefits of fish and wildlife on public lands. Primary benefits include consumptive and non-consumptive recreational use related to fish and wildlife, such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. These activities produce secondary benefits to community businesses from equipment sales, services, food, lodging, and

transportation, as well as to state fish and wildlife agencies that manage the animal populations. These benefits related to fish and wildlife, based on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service studies, are interpolated for BLM lands and provided in Tables 4-4 through 4-6. Table 4-4 presents estimated fishing and related expenditures data by state; Table 4-5 presents estimated hunting and related expenditures data by state; and Table 4-6 presents estimated wildlife viewing and related expenditures data by state.