

## **Descriptions of the BLM's 2012 "Partners in Conservation" Award Recipients**

### **Iditarod National Historic Trail Centennial Partnership (Alaska)**

The Iditarod National Historic Trail Centennial Partnership, led by the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, developed and implemented a five-year (2008-2012), public-private commemoration of the 2,400-mile trail's centennial. The partnership organized, sponsored, and delivered a range of innovative programs, including: trail-based K-12 teacher training; education and youth engagement opportunities; rural community grants for trail upgrades; community education efforts, including a 1,000-mile sled dog community outreach initiative; and securing funding to build trail safety cabins and establish public easements on 1,600 miles of the trail.

Partners include the BLM, U.S. Forest Service, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance.

### **Phoenix District Youth Initiative (Arizona)**

The Phoenix District Youth Initiative is a model youth engagement partnership that encourages urban and Native American youth involvement in natural resource career pathways. The partnership delivers a strong continuum of complementary, hands-on certification, environmental education, and employment programs on public lands; natural resource course and degree offerings; and tribal internships. Youth gain valuable work experience monitoring riparian habitats, performing stewardship and conservation projects and participating in field-based science programs. The initiative fosters sustainable youth engagement in the stewardship and conservation of America's natural and cultural heritage.

Partners include the BLM; other Federal, tribal and State agencies; publicly funded workforce investment programs; conservation corps; and non-governmental organizations.

### **Ute Learning Garden (Colorado)**

The Ute Learning Garden is a natural and cultural conservation education program that involves and reconnects Native American youth with traditional cultural practices through ethnobotany, and by engaging elders in the recollection of traditional practices and native plant uses. This knowledge is shared with school groups and the public through an urban garden and docent program in Grand Junction, CO. The garden also introduces diverse audiences to the Ute Indian Tribe's relationship to the landscape on public lands in Mesa County that were their traditional homeland until 1881.

Partners include the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, BLM-Colorado, Colorado Master Gardener and Native Plant Master Programs, Colorado State University Extension, County and State agencies, and local businesses.