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[Briefing NMNCA Program Updates Jan 25 2017.docx](#)
[50thAnniversary-RiversTrailsSystemsActs BriefingPaper Jan 25 2017.docx](#)

Robin,
Here are the updated briefing papers on monuments and the 50th anniversaries for rivers and trails for the Department.

Thanks for sharing these updated versions with Kim Shropshire.

Sally

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ISSUE: BLM'S NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

NATIONAL MONUMENTS AND NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREAS UPDATE

I. KEY POINTS

- On December 28, 2016 President Obama issued two Proclamations that designated the 1.35 million-acre Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah and the 300,000-acre Gold Butte National Monument in southern Nevada. Also, on January 12, 2017 President Obama expanded the California Coastal National Monument by approximately 6,200 acres and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument by approximately 47,000 acres.
- These new monuments and expansions encompass approximately 1.41 million acres managed by the BLM, and nearly 290,000 acres within the boundaries of the Manti-La Sal National Forest managed by the USFS. The new monuments and expansions will protect unique and irreplaceable sacred sites, spectacular scenery, and important desert landscapes.
- These designations preserve current uses of the land, including tribal access and traditional collection of plants and firewood, off-highway vehicle recreation, hunting and fishing, grazing, military training operations, utility corridors, and other valid and existing rights.
- BLM's National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, and Similar Designations (NM/NCA) Program comprises some of the agency's most visited sites. Each year, millions of Americans and international tourists visit these areas to experience the fantastic range of recreational activities these lands provide.
- Some of the most popular activities on NMs/NCAs include hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, off-road vehicle use, horseback riding, target shooting, and boating.
- These areas provide great economic benefits to their surrounding communities. For every \$1 the NM/NCA program receives in funding, it generates approximately \$16 for local economies.¹
- These lands contribute over \$600 million to regional economies each year.
- Excluding Federal employees, the NM/NCA program supported 6,000 jobs as of 2016.

¹ See "Economic Report: National Conservation Lands," Feb. 2017.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- The current budget of the NM/NCA program is \$2.73 per acre. Comparatively, the National Park Service has a budget of \$35.71 per acre.²
- The program's budget has remained nearly flat for several years, despite the addition of millions of acres. This inadequate level of funding reduces the ability of the agency to properly manage these lands, resulting in fewer benefits for the public—decreased recreational opportunities, economic contributions, and community jobs supported.

III. BACKGROUND

National Conservation Lands

- The two monuments will become units of BLM's National Conservation Lands system, which contains some of the West's most spectacular landscapes.
- These lands include 876 federally recognized areas and approximately 36 million acres of NMs/NCAs, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and Conservation Lands of the California Desert.
- BLM's NM/NCA program maintains 23 National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, and Similar Designations that have been legislated by Congress as well as 25 National Monuments that have been designated by Presidents.
- Like all BLM land, NMs/NCAs are multiple-use sites that are open to a wide variety of activities. These include recreation, scientific research, and energy development.
- Each NM/NCA is unique, encompassing landscapes as diverse as lush coastlines, colorful desert canyons, and mountainous tundra, as well as cultural treasures including remnants of America's pioneer history and ancient tribal pueblos. These lands preserve the incredible cultural and recreational legacy of our country.
- The Bears Ears NM protects some of the most significant cultural landscapes in the U.S., including abundant rock art, ancient cliff dwellings, ceremonial sites, and other places important to Native American tribes. To reflect tribal expertise, the Bears Ears Commission has been created to enable tribes to share insight with federal land managers.
- The BLM and USFS will undertake a monument planning process for the two new monuments, including opportunities for public input, according to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and each agency's planning regulations and policies.

² Determined using the NPS FY2016 total budget and total land acres figures.

- Both proclamations also establish local advisory committees made up of interested stakeholders including state and local governments, tribes, recreational users, local business owners, and private landowners.

IV. PREPARED BY: Mark Conley, Acting National Monument & National Conservation Areas Program Lead, 202-912-7172, and Ilana Cohen, Natural Resource Specialist, 202-912-7299
DATE: January 6, 2017

ISSUE: 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILD & SCENIC RIVERS AND NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACTS

I. KEY POINTS

The 50th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System Act and the National Trails System Act falls on October 2, 2018. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed both Acts into law on the same day.

As a result, the BLM manages thousands of miles of rivers and trails protected for their natural, cultural, and recreation values and available for public use.

The BLM manages more miles of congressionally designated National Historic Trails than any other Federal agency, and administers such iconic trails as the Iditarod in Alaska.

The BLM manages the longest river and the shortest river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System: Fortymile in Alaska is 392 miles, and the West Fork Bruneau is 0.4 miles.

On October 2, 1968, segments of the Rio Grande River (New Mexico) and Rogue River (Oregon) became BLM's first Wild and Scenic Rivers, while portions of the Pacific Crest Trail (California, Oregon) became BLM's first National Scenic Trail. The 50th anniversary of these Acts symbolizes the long-term commitment by BLM as a conservation agency and the start of BLM's National Conservation Lands.

The Federal interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trails System Councils, in concert with several major private, non-governmental organizations, are developing strategies leading up to and commemorating this historic event.

The BLM will focus its 50th anniversary strategy efforts on western public lands and waters, public access, and visitor experiences in the spectacular landscapes under its care.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Significant opportunities exist to raise awareness of the Systems through: using social media; engaging youth, diverse publics, and outdoor recreation related industries in local, State, and national activities, events, and legacy projects; and taking positive steps within the BLM to elevate, improve, and sustain these resources.

Challenges include funding and staffing within the BLM for this effort, and the relatively unknown profile of the BLM, especially in the eastern U.S.

III. BACKGROUND

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Act established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, designated the first eight rivers, and provided a process for additional rivers to be added.

Today, the Act protects 208 rivers and over 12,700 miles in 39 states and Puerto Rico. BLM's wild and scenic river management includes over 2,400 river miles and one million acres of land across seven western states.

The Act balances the demands for hydropower, flood control, and irrigation with the need to protect some of this country's most outstanding rivers. The Act's underlying principles are:

- Keep designated rivers free-flowing
- Protect outstandingly remarkable natural, cultural and recreational values
- Allow existing uses to continue where they do not conflict with river protection
- Build partnerships among landowners, river users, tribal nations, and all levels of government.

The National System includes congressionally designated rivers as well as rivers designated by the Secretary of Interior. Within the System, three classifications define the general character of the designated rivers: wild, scenic, or recreational. Classifications reflect natural conditions and levels of development along a stretch of river.

The Act and National System is held as a global standard for river conservation.

National Trails System Act

Today, the National Trails System is larger than the Interstate Highway System in size.

The Act instituted the National Trails System by designating the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the first components, and provided ways for other trails to be added.

The Act provides for outdoor recreation opportunities and promotes preservation, public access, travel, and enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors and the Nation's history.

The law also recognizes the valuable contributions that volunteers and private, nonprofit trail groups make to the development and maintenance of the Nation's trails. In 2015, volunteer hours totaled over 1 million, equating to \$24 million in value, with private contributions topping \$12 million.

The System includes congressionally designated National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails; secretarially designated National Recreation Trails, National Water Trails, and Connecting and Side Trails. The System also promotes rail trail development.

- IV. PREPARED BY:** Deb Salt, Bureau of Land Management, National Trails Program Lead, 406.862.2630; and Cathi Bailey, Bureau of Land Management, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program Lead, 916.941.3122
DATE: January 23, 2017