

To: Butts, Sally[sbutts@blm.gov]
Cc: Wootton, Rachel[rwootton@blm.gov]; Simon, Benjamin[benjamin_simon@ios.doi.gov]; Nikki Moore[nmoore@blm.gov]; Fisher, Timothy[tjfisher@blm.gov]
From: Miller, Ann
Sent: 2017-07-14T12:47:06-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: BLM economic snapshots
Received: 2017-07-14T12:47:48-04:00

Hi Sally,

Thanks for all of this information. It is very helpful. Aside from the visitation for the purposes of the National Monuments review (which, with your response, I think we have enough information on at this point), it might be helpful to meet sometime in the future to learn more about the BLM visitation data. We can reach out later on to try to set something up.

Thanks again!

Ann

On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 6:35 PM, Butts, Sally <sbutts@blm.gov> wrote:

One more thing, we'll send the updated "official" spreadsheet tomorrow.
Thanks for your patience, Sally

On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 6:24 PM, Butts, Sally <sbutts@blm.gov> wrote:

Hi Ann,

Thanks for your good questions and sorry for the detailed reply.

Visitor data is imprecise considering the collection methods and especially when dealing with co-managed and new units.

For Sand to Snow National Monument, it is a relatively new designation and the local office has not been able to create an 'office code' assigned to track and report visitation within RMIS (BLM's Recreation Information Management System) for the area. Since RMIS Reports 0 that is what our economic snapshot shows. Within the data call response, the BLM provided visitation tracked for two recreation sites to provide a metric, even though it doesn't show all of the Monument. The response from the data call is copied below:

The BLM uses the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) to report visitor use. Full reporting for annual fiscal year 2017 visitation will not be available until the end of September 2017. Numbers from two visitor contact areas, Big Morongo Canyon and Whitewater Preserve, are available

and is provided under headings iv and vi below.

iii. While specific visitation information to the Sand to Snow National Monument is not available through RMIS at this time, the Palm Springs South Coast Field Office confirms requests for overnight camping at the Whitewater Preserve area have increased by 12 % since designation. Visitation to the Black Lava Buttes unit of the monument increased by 15% since designation.

iv. The Big Morongo Canyon unit of the S2SNM saw a slight increase in visitation since Monument designation than in previous years. Included below are visitor numbers from the Big Morongo Canyon unit, numbers of which are determined through the use of a traffic counter at their main entrance:

2016 - 66,675 visitors

2017 - 45,000 visitors (partial 10/01/2016 to 05/15/2017)

There's a good argument that our economic snapshot could include the above visitor data but we chose to use the RMIS system to be consistent, imperfect as it is. In later years, we'll be able to update the RMIS data and update the economic information.

For Craters of the Moon National Monument the National Park Service provided the information in the data call. The BLM's only national data collection system for visitation with the BLM is RMIS. I have attached the 2016 RMIS report for your review (Visitation Data Craters of the Moon.pdf). For the BLM's economic analysis we reported the information that we have available in our system.

Regarding a definitive visitation number, it is difficult to answer. Federal land managers are continually working on ways to improve our visitation reporting. It is a complex system and there are so many factors that influence visitation and collection, not to mention each site being different. We collect the most complete information we can, but our visitation information is always an educated estimate.

Rachel and I would be happy to chat with you over the phone or come over to MIB and perhaps we could include some of our recreation staff who manage RMIS if that's helpful.

Have a nice evening, Sally

On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 5:16 PM, Miller, Ann <ann_miller@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Hi Rachel and Sally,

I've taken a second look at the visitation data we received for the data call for the various BLM-managed monuments and compared it to this updated spreadsheet that was sent today. There are a number of monuments where the visitation data provided in the data call responses/documentation don't match the visitation data in the spreadsheet. Some difference are small but some are really large. Craters of the Moon FY16 visitation is 3,654 in the spreadsheet and 255,436 in the data call response (I know this one is no longer "under review" but I still want to make sure the information we have prepared for it is accurate). Sand to Snow has visitation levels of zero for all three years in the spreadsheet but the data call response provided visitation estimates for FY13-16. In the cases where there are differences, do you know why these discrepancies exist and which source should be viewed as the "definitive" source? I'm happy to have another phone call tomorrow or next week if that would be easier.

Thanks again for all of your help!
Ann

On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 2:56 PM, Wootton, Rachel <rwootton@blm.gov> wrote:

Hi Ann,
No problem at all. I just found that document and will update it! I'll send it to you as soon as possible this afternoon!

Best,

Rachel

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On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 2:46 PM, Miller, Ann <ann_miller@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Thanks Rachel, and also thanks for taking the time to explain the issue to me today. The Excel file we initially received was the one titled "Official Workbook Economic Contributions of National Monuments and NCAs.xlsx". Do you have a version of this with the updated visitation data? If so, it would be extremely helpful to have that.
Thanks!

Ann

On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 2:05 PM, Wootton, Rachel <rwootton@blm.gov> wrote:

Hi Anne,

Thank you for your email and chatting with us over the phone. As discussed, I've included the updated spreadsheet. This information was used to create the updated economic snapshots on the drive. FY16 visitation information has not changed. Feel free to let us know if you all need additional information or would like it in a different format. I am not sure what spreadsheet you all received initially, but we could certainly put it in that format if need.

Please let us know if you have any questions and thanks again!

Best,

Rachel

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On Thu, Jul 13, 2017 at 1:15 PM, Miller, Ann <ann_miller@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Hi Sally,

I understand that the economic snapshots in the google drive for the BLM monuments under review were updated with revisions to the FY14 and FY15 visitor data. I believe we have the underlying source data for the visitation levels (this analysis of the economic contributions of National Monuments and NCAs had been shared with us separately) and in comparing it to the updated snapshots, I found a handful of monuments where the data presented in the snapshots do not match the underlying data. I confirmed that it is unlikely the that underlying source data has changed since it was shared with us so I think it may be worth checking that the data in the economic snapshots is correct. The issue I found is consistent across a handful of monuments, and it is that the FY15 visitation numbers are being presented in the FY14 box of the snapshot and the numbers being presented in the FY15 box of the snapshot are another number (I can't match it up with anything in the source data we were given). The snapshots that I found this issue with are:

-Canyons of the Ancients

- Carrizo Plain
- Craters of the Moon
- Upper Missouri River Breaks
- Cascade-Siskiyou
- Grand Staircase-Escalante

Thanks

Ann

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