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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

November 23, 2004

In Reply Refer To  
1115 (650)P

EMS TRANSMISSION 11/30/2004  
Instruction Memorandum No. 2005-034  
Expires: 09/30/2006

To: ADs, AFOs  
From: Director  
Subject: BLM Volunteer Program National Strategy 2005-2009

**Program Area:** Volunteer Program.

**Purpose:** This Instruction Memorandum (IM) formally establishes and transmits the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Volunteer Program National Strategy 2005-2009. The strategy was approved and adopted by the BLM Executive Leadership Team (ELT) at its September 20, 2004, meeting, and published in October 2004.

**Policy/Action:** Implementation of the actions set out in the attached strategy is to begin as of the date of this Instruction Memorandum.

As the Bureau faces the growing challenge of accomplishing more work with a level labor force, volunteers can—and *must*—play a key role in helping to maintain the health and productivity of the public lands. They should be considered an essential component of BLM's team of human resources.

I ask that all State, Center, and Assistant Directors make necessary resources available to fully implement the new BLM Volunteer Program National Strategy. Such resources are to include, but are not limited to:

- BLM resource program staff time for orientation, training, and supervision of volunteers;
- allowance of time for State/Field Office volunteer coordinators to perform coordinator functions;
- allowance of time for State/Field Office members of the BLM Volunteer Program Adjunct Team (VPAT) to perform required advisory and other functions for the BLM Volunteer Program;

- integration of volunteer program planning and State and Field Office budgets and budget directives/advises.

Accountability standards for the Volunteer Program are contained in the new National Strategy. Annual accounts of strategy implementation progress will be provided to the ELT, and are called for at the State Office-level.

**Timeframe:** The attached strategy will serve to guide the BLM Volunteer Program for the period FY 2005-2009.

**Background:** Since 1981, volunteers have played an important role in helping the BLM achieve its multiple-use mission. In 2003 alone, for example, BLM volunteers contributed more than 1.5 million hours of their time, valued at over \$25 million. Their contributions were equivalent to the work of approximately 800 full-time agency employees.

BLM's previous Volunteer Program National Strategy was produced in 1995 and updated in 1999. The Department of the Interior's 2003 re-launching of the Take Pride in America (TPIA) program, which allows for many unique approaches in Federal volunteer program management, provided impetus for the development of an enhanced BLM Volunteer Program National Strategy in 2004.

To help shape the future of its Volunteer Program, BLM hosted a workshop for Volunteer Coordinators, Field Managers, and several volunteers from February 18-20, 2004, in Phoenix, Arizona. Approximately 30 attendees came from every BLM State to lead the development of the updated BLM Draft Volunteer Program Strategy. Several then continued as post-workshop "Team Leads" in the further development and refinement of the strategy's Goals, Objectives, and Actions.

For your convenience, specific State and Field Office "Action Items," excerpted from the full strategy document, have been summarized on the attached chart. Please *do not* rely on this chart alone; refer to the complete strategy for details and target dates for specific "Action Items." Please note that VPAT assignments are *not* highlighted in this chart.

**Impact on Budget:** Integration of volunteers into BLM management programs is a cost-effective means of expanding the Bureau's capabilities.

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Signed by:  
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Authenticated by:  
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2 Attachments:

- 1 - BLM Volunteer Program National Strategy 2004 (32 pp)
- 2 - Summary of Goals, Objectives, and Actions: State/Field Office Responsibilities (2 pp)

October 1, 2004

## BLM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM NATIONAL STRATEGY 2004: SUMMARY OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS WITH COLOR-CODING FOR LEAD

Key:

■ = State/Field Office responsibility

### GOAL 1: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND RECOGNITION

**Objective 1:** Expand the BLM volunteer workforce by 2 percent per year for 5 years.

- 1. Recruit through [Volunteer.gov/gov](http://Volunteer.gov/gov), ensure timely postings/responses, coordinate with State networks.
- 2. Launch a nationwide volunteer recruitment campaign to target various audiences.
- 3. Develop a ListServ for communication and information sharing among BLM volunteer coordinators.
- 4. Launch high-visibility, targeted efforts to promote [Volunteer.gov/gov](http://Volunteer.gov/gov).

**Objective 2:** Increase the rate of volunteer retention.

- 1. Showcase the progress of local volunteer projects, highlight volunteer contributions.
- 2. Provide special incentives for long-term volunteers and incorporate into State action plans.

**Objective 3:** Recognize volunteer service and accomplishments.

- 1. Institute State/Field volunteer award programs where they do not currently exist.
- 2. Request that the Department increase the limit on non-monetary volunteer awards to \$250.
- 3. Regularly recognize BLM volunteers through the Take Pride in America program.

### GOAL 2: PLANNING AND BUDGETING

**Objective 1:** Integrate Volunteer/Partnership programs into the BLM budget.

1. Emphasize the message that “planning for volunteers” is essential.
2. Direct Field Offices to identify the use of volunteers/partners in budget and planning documents.

**Objective 2:** Prepare State Volunteer Program Action Plans for each BLM State Office.

- 1. Involve volunteers and partners in plan development to ensure that plans are collaborative in nature.
- 2. Identify State and Field Management Team “champions” to ensure realistic and responsive plans.
- 3. Use BLM Volunteer Manual to guide plan development and to guide annual plan reviews/updates.

**Objective 3:** Educate BLM staff on the budget process as related to Volunteer Program.

1. Prepare and distribute budget process fact sheet to all volunteer coordinators; identify volunteer-related program elements; incorporate budget into BLM Basic Volunteer Administration course.
- 2. Include volunteer component in yearly budget orientation to all staff; incorporate into budget packages.

### GOAL 3: VOLUNTEER/STAFF ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

**Objective 1:** Ensure that BLM staff working with volunteers receive training.

- 1. Require volunteer coordinators/other staff to attend BLM Basic Volunteer Administration course.
- 2. Create adaptable training module for BLM managers and resource specialists.
- 3. Develop an online refresher course for all who work with volunteers.
- 4. Determine depth of BLM Pathways course on budget as related to volunteers. Enhance if needed.

**Objective 2:** Ensure that volunteers are prepared and equipped.

- 1. Provide volunteers job/project orientation, including description, safety training. Use manual

guidance.
■2. Develop and include a Risk Assessment Analysis with work descriptions. Make forms available online.
<b>Objective 3: Update BLM volunteer training/orientation materials.</b>
1. Evaluate adequacy of existing materials.
2. Update BLM Volunteer Intranet with forms/examples. Solicit Field orientation/training materials.
3. Update BLM Volunteer Handbook.
4. Develop new content checklist for volunteer record files.
<b>GOAL 4: INTERNAL PROGRAM SUPPORT</b>
<b>Objective 1: Enhance management awareness of the BLM Volunteer Program.</b>
■1. Make presentations on program to ELT, SMTs.
■2. Make presentations at Field Office all-employee meetings.
■3. Create fact sheet and other products for managers.
4. Update managers' guide to BLM Volunteer Program.
<b>Objective 2: Designate a volunteer coordinator in every BLM Field Office.</b>
■1. Ensure that coordinators' EPPRs reflect time allocated for the BLM Volunteer Program.
<b>Objective 3: Provide employee incentives/recognition for work with volunteers.</b>
■1. Incorporate appropriate resource specialist incentives into State action plans.
■2. Incorporate appropriate resource specialist recognition into State action plans.
<b>Objective 4: Market the BLM Volunteer Program internally and externally.</b>
■1. Showcase success stories and best practices with a variety of tools.
■2. Highlight BLM volunteers in presentations at professional meetings.
■3. Internally market existing program web tools using a variety of outreach tools.
4. Create new products for internal promotion campaign.
■5. Work with BLM Public Affairs to promote success stories in a variety of news media.
<b>Objective 5: Fully utilize national and local volunteer events.</b>
■1. Hold at least one TPIA project/event per Field Office per year. Integrate into State action plans.
<b>GOAL 5: RECORDKEEPING</b>
<b>Objective 1: Establish an organized, comprehensive recordkeeping system.</b>
■1. Ensure that volunteer coordinators keep required information on volunteers/groups.
■2. Conduct annual audits of volunteer coordinator records.
3. Develop a program element or special code for hours spent in volunteer program management.
<b>GOAL 6: PARTNERSHIPS</b>
<b>Objective 1: Increase BLM's ability to work with partners.</b>
■1. Share State partnership examples for Field Offices to use as models. Post on volunteer Intranet.
■2. Work with resource specialists to pursue desired volunteer-related partnerships.
■3. Establish a State mentor team to assist Field Offices in developing desired partnerships to meet goals.
<b>Objective 2: Where appropriate, create interagency "volunteer centers."</b>
■1. Assess appropriateness of establishing centers in particular areas; develop establishment guidelines.
2. Research and post volunteer center resources, contacts, suggestions on volunteer Intranet.