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BLM in the Spotlight

BLM Colorado Sage-grouse Conservation Efforts

*By Deanna
Masterson, Public
Affairs Specialist*

Sage-grouse are the largest grouse found in North America and were first described by Lewis and Clark during their expeditions. Colorado is home to both the Gunnison and greater sage-grouse.

In Colorado, the BLM manages 46 percent of the state's greater sage-grouse habitat and 49 percent of the state's Gunnison sage-grouse habitat.

The BLM works closely with many state and federal agencies and local constituent groups to define conservation strategies for both of these species.

BLM Colorado is a signatory to the Range-wide Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (2005) and the Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Statewide Conservation Plan (2008). Both plans were developed in partnerships with multiple agencies and stakeholders in an effort led by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The plans each outline extensive guidance for species management to address conservation issues, local population maintenance and connectivity of sagebrush habitats.

In addition to these partnerships, BLM Colorado coordinates sagebrush projects and weed treatments to enhance greater sage-grouse habitat.

BLM Colorado is currently incorporating conservation strategies for

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both species into land use plan revisions and, in turn, using these strategies to prioritize local projects.

We are continuing to monitor and implement habitat conservation measures for both the Gunnison and greater sage-grouse in Colorado.

Look for us Soon on Facebook and Twitter

*By Vanessa Delgado,
Public Affairs
Specialist*

The Bureau of Land Management Colorado will soon be joining the wide world of Facebook and Twitter where we will post regular updates on recreation and volunteer opportunities, energy development, conservation areas, and so much more.

This step is actually one of many BLM Colorado will embark on to provide better, up-to-date information to the public. In fact, BLM Colorado recently launched a YouTube channel to share videos of some of our stellar places in Colorado to visit.

Many people don't know who the BLM is – let alone what we do. We want to change that! By extending our reach in the community, we hope to provide better information to the public about public lands in Colorado.

Please stay tuned for more updates as our Facebook page and Twitter account are expected to be up soon!

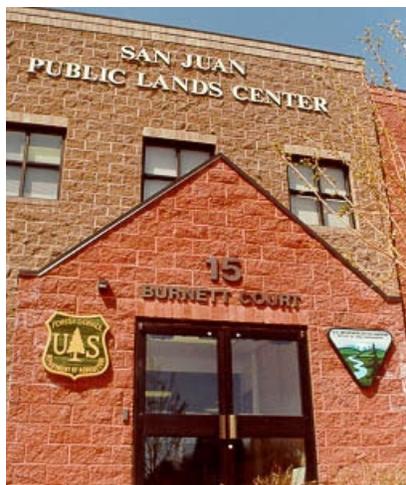
Click here to visit us on YouTube: www.youtube.com/BLMCOLORADO.

Visitor Information Specialists Tune Up in San Juan

*By Ann Bond, San
Juan Public Lands
External Affairs*

DURANGO - The San Juan Public Lands Center held its annual Visitor Information Workshop on May 12th to facilitate information sharing between public and private front-line visitor specialists in southwestern Colorado.

"When I first started in 1999, we had front-desk staffers who had never been to the campgrounds and locations on



Employee Spotlight

Judy Ann Files

Judy Ann volunteers for the Montrose BLM/USFS visitor center front desk. Her friendly personality, helpful attitude, and exceptional knowledge of the local hiking, biking and wintertime recreational opportunities significantly improve customer service in the visitor center.

Judy Ann spends hundreds of hours surveying public lands by foot and mountain bike, and enjoys making contact with visitors who are enjoying the area public lands. She answers questions and provides information and directions to help visitors enjoy the area's outstanding recreational opportunities, while helping educate visitors about land use ethics. Judy Ann has also lent her time and administrative expertise to assisting the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA) staff. The BLM recently awarded Judy Ann with the 2009 Volunteer of the Year Award. In addition to her work with the BLM, Judy Ann volunteers with the Montrose Library, the UNCOM Fiscal Board, and the U.S. Forest Service. Judy also does trail work with the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Association (COPMOBA).

Judy Ann is a retired teacher and outdoor enthusiast who understands and supports the mission of the BLM and the importance of management practices and education efforts that focus on improving public land health. Her passion for the public lands is readily apparent to all who meet her.

public lands where they were directing visitors," said San Juan Public Lands Visitor Information Specialist Art Sanchez. "I felt we needed a way to ensure our staff was more familiar and knowledgeable with our area, facilities, policies and procedures."



The first San Juan Visitor Information Workshop held in 2001 was targeted to United States Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and San Juan Mountains Association front desk staffers. Over the years, the San Juan invited others to participate, including the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado State Parks, and area visitor centers and chambers of commerce. This year, the several dozen participants attending were allotted time to present those activities, events, and points of interest for 2010 that they wanted disseminated by other visitor-information providers.

The popular course, "Public Lands 101: Learning about the Forest Service & BLM lands," presented information on travel management, campground concessions, stimulus projects, legislative proposals, and planning. USFS/BLM staffers also presented updates on campgrounds, roads and trails, river rafting, available permits, wildfire, archaeology, law enforcement, multiple uses, safety, information hotlines, and important Web sites and phone numbers.

The agenda also featured presentations on the BLM Anasazi Heritage Center and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, San Juan Mountains Association, Mesa Verde National Park, and Durango to Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad.

The San Juan Public Lands Center is a Service First office that the BLM and Forest Service share as a way to better serve our public users.

In the News

[Forest Service will reinforce law of the land](#) (5/12/10) - The U. S. Forest Service wants people to know that law enforcement officers are out there—as in, the agency has officers on the ground in the Gunnison National Forest to enforce travel regulations and other forest rules.

[Interior secretary calls for splitting up agency overseeing offshore drilling](#) (5/11/10) - Interior Secretary Ken Salazar will propose splitting the agency that regulates offshore drilling in half, in a bid to improve safety regulation in response to the ongoing oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, an Interior official said Tuesday morning.

[Teaching youth to care about public lands](#) (5/10/10) - Tom Adamson, a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) forester, talks about

Ask BLM

Q: Which Formative Era(c. 400 BC-AD 1,300) culture is represented in northwest Colorado?

A: The Fremont Culture.

The Fremont are especially defined by:

- The use of stone masonry and adobe to construct dwellings and cliff-sheltered granaries.
- The growing of domesticated maize (corn), but with a greater apparent reliance on native Chenopodium and Amaranthus seeds.
- Unique rock art styles prominently featuring trapezoidal-bodied anthropomorphs, infrequently mirrored in trapezoidal ceramic figurines.
- Unique styles of moccasins, ceramics, and basketry.



Gold Belt National Scenic Byway

tree health as we stand at the trailhead to Cow Gulch in Kremmling. Tom is here to talk to students from West Grand High School about his job — to ensure future generations have trees by studying and managing the forest on BLM land.

Christo to visit Upper Arkansas River Valley (5/10/10) - SALIDA, Colo. (AP) — Artist Christo plans to visit the Upper Arkansas River Valley this month to thank supporters of his proposed "Over the River" project, which would involve suspending a total of about six miles of fabric over sections along a 40-mile stretch of the Arkansas River.

Recent Press Releases

- [BLM oil and gas lease sale nets \\$426,322 \(5/13/10\)](#)
- [Fruita Third Graders to Scramble Through Devil's Canyon on Environmental Scavenger Hunt \(5/12/10\)](#)
- [Sheep Creek Road Closed for Upgrades \(5/11/10\)](#)
- [New Fireworks Rule Proposed for Public Lands \(5/10/10\)](#)
- [BLM's Northwest Resource Advisory Council Meets May 13 in Rangely \(5/3/10\)](#)
- [BLM Proposes Plan to Reduce Wildfire Threat Near Paonia \(4/30/10\)](#)
- [BLM Seeking Comment on Coal Lease Modification Near Paonia \(4/30/10\)](#)
- [BLM seeks public comment on natural gas well-development proposal south of New Castle \(4/28/10\)](#)

Hot Topics

BLM and energy industry work together to promote firefighter safety

By Lynn Barclay

Rifle, Colo. – The third annual Wildland Firefighters Oil and Gas Safety Summit last month drew about 100 participants. Firefighters from county, state and federal fire units across the state met at the Colorado Mountain College in Rifle.

"The goal of the summit is to ensure the safety of the public, industry workers and firefighters when wildfires impact the oil and

Places to Visit

Gold Belt Tour National Scenic Byway

Location

Scenic driving route connecting the towns of Cañon City, Florence, Victor, Cripple Creek, and Florissant, Colorado.

Description

The Gold Belt Tour takes travelers along a historic, narrow-gauge railroad bed, an old stage road, and county roads. Designated a BLM Back Country Byway, the route itself is often breathtaking, as are views of Pikes Peak and other mountain scenery. The byway retraces the historic travel routes connecting the Cripple Creek and Victor Mining District, once known as "The World's Greatest Gold Camp." The three legs of the 131-mile loop route include Phantom Canyon, Shelf, and High Park Roads. The Shelf Road Recreation Area offers excellent opportunities for rock climbing, horseback riding, and hiking.

Directions

The byway is located one hour southwest of Colorado Springs or west of Pueblo, Colorado. From the north, it can be reached from U.S. Highway 24; the southern end can be reached from U.S. Highway 50. The three legs of the byway can all be reached from U.S. Highway 50 in the vicinity of Cañon City.

Visitor Activities

Scenic drives, bird watching, wildlife viewing, plant viewing, geologic sightseeing, historic sites, fossil viewing, hiking, mountain biking, picnicking, interpretation, and rock climbing.

Special Features

The Florissant Fossil Beds National

gas fields," said Doug Paul, education and mitigation specialist with the Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit. "This is an annual event we hold in cooperation with the oil and gas industry."

In addition to oil and gas field safety orientation, conducted by Garner Harris, zone fire management officer with the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit, and hydrogen sulfide training, a new session on powerline safety was presented by the White River Electric Association. The information shared at this summit helps keep responding firefighters safe and aware of potential hazards associated with the energy industries.

Attendees also participated in a wildland fire and gas field scenario. This provided an opportunity for firefighters to work through the response process.

The Summit is co-sponsored by Rifle Fire Protection District and Williams Production.

"Williams is pleased to support and participate in this important annual conference," said Kevin McDermott, safety coordinator for Williams. "We have a strong commitment to ensuring that our operations are safe and continually work with outside agencies to ensure their safety should they respond to an emergency that involves our facilities."

"Since 2007, we have been sharing the safety practices that we use here in western Colorado with other firefighters," said Paul. "These practices are now common standards used nationally by wildland firefighters."

The free event was sponsored by the Colorado Mountain College, Garfield County, Rifle Fire Protection District, Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management, White River Electric Association and Williams Production.

Monument, located on Teller County Road 1 just south of Florissant, and features petrified redwoods and fossils of 35-million-year-old insects and plants. The Garden Park Fossil Area, on Garden Park-Shelf Road six miles north of Cañon City, has yielded an abundance of dinosaur fossils. And the Indian Springs Trace Fossil Area on Phantom Canyon Road north of Florence contains 460-million-year-old tracks, trails, and burrows of arthropods.

The tour also provides highlights from the gold mining era of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Several historic mining towns are located on the route. Cripple Creek, a National Historic Landmark, can be reached by traveling 24 miles west of Colorado Springs on U.S. Highway 24, then turning south on State Highway 67 for about 19 miles. Victor, with a National Historic District in its downtown area, is five miles south of Cripple Creek on State Highway 67.

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