



The Quarterly

STEWARD

Montana/Dakotas

Bureau of Land Management

Fall 2012

Boy Scouts, Badges and the Missouri River



Boy Scouts gather in front of freshly redirted Nelson chicken coop. Photo by Todd Williams, Troop #356 Leader

Why would a bunch of Washington state teenage boys come to the middle of Montana to shovel dirt?

That's what Boy Scout Troop #356 from Bothell, Wash., did this past July. The troop traveled for 12 hours from western Washington State to the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument seeking adventure and badge certification. Fourteen boys and eight chaperones floated the Missouri River for ten days, from Fort Benton Canoe Camp to Kipp Recreation Area, while stopping along the way to assist the BLM with several special projects.

The Boy Scouts were seeking two certifications: the Historic Trails Award and 50 Miler Award. In order to accomplish the requirements

for the Historic Trails award, scouts must locate a historic site, research it, and hike or camp along the trail or in the vicinity of the site for at least two days. In addition, they must complete a project related to the historic nature of the site, or develop and implement a public event relating to the site.

Requirements for the 50 Miler Award included covering a trail, canoe or boat route of not less than 50 consecutive miles, during which a minimum of 10 hours of group work are completed on projects such as improving the trail, campsite or area. Without many nearby options, it seemed like heading east to the Missouri River was a natural fit for adventure and service work. The troop leader contacted Brian Woolf,

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BLM-Montana/Dakotas Staff Receive Director's Awards

The BLM-Montana/Dakotas was well represented at the Director's Award presentations in Washington, D.C., October 25.

State Wild Horse Specialist Jared Bybee accepted the Director's Stewardship/Teamwork Award on behalf of the 2012 Pryor Mountain Horse Gather and Adoption Team. Under the able leadership of Bybee, Field Manager Jim Sparks, and Public Affairs Specialist Kristen Lenhardt, the team planned and carried out the tremendously successful Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range gather and adoption.

The Director's Diversity Award went to Tribal Coordinator Mark Sant and EEO Manager Sara Romero-Minkoff. Through their vigorous outreach efforts, the BLM-Montana/Dakotas has substantially increased our Native American student hires, which in turn has increased diversity, enriched our organization, and engaged youth in the stewardship of our public lands. In addition, the Montana/Dakotas team has implemented partnerships that have successfully impacted diverse external communities and built diverse community collaborative partnerships.



Acting Assistant Secretary for Land & Minerals Management Marcilynn Burke, Rangeland Manger Jared Bybee, Acting BLM Director Mike Pool, Acting BLM Deputy Director Neil Kornze. BLM photo



Acting Assistant Secretary of Land & Minerals Marcilynn Burke, Equal employment Manager Sara Romero-Minkoff, Program Analyst Mark Sant, BLM Acting Director Mike Pool, BLM Acting Deputy Director Neil Kornze. BLM photo

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Pryor Gather and Adoption Team members:

Leadership:

Jim Sparks, Field Manager, Billings Field Office
Jared Bybee, State Wild Horse Specialist, Billings Field Office
Kristen Lenhardt, Public Affairs Specialist, Montana State Office
Karan Dunnigan, Field Solicitor

Primary Team:

Ryan Bradshaw, Park Ranger, Billings Field Office
Bill Pickett, Biotech, National Park Service
Donald Galvin, Park Ranger, Billings Field Office
Nancy Bjelland, Wild Horse and Burro Program Specialist, Billings Field Office
Jeff Herriford, Law Enforcement, Billings Field Office
Cassity Bromley, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, National Park Service
Ryan Felkins, National Park Service

Support Group:

Jerad Werning, Maintenance Worker, Billings Field Office
Larry Padden, Natural Resource Specialist, Billings Field Office
Irvin Leach, Fire Management Officer, Billings Field Office
Chad Cullum, Fuels Specialist, Billings Field Office
Sarah Beckwith, Public Affairs Specialist, BLM-Wyoming
Ernest Mckenzie, Wildlife Biologist, Billings Field Office
Paul Green, Equipment Operator, Billings Field Office
Melodie Lloyd, Chief of Communications, Montana State Office
Jay Parks, Wildlife Biologist, Billings Field Office
Kaley Parks, Volunteer
Donna Kaseman, Resource Assistant, Billings Field Office
Carmen Thomason, Fire Education and Mitigation Specialist, Billings Field Office
Matt Dillon, Volunteer
Jamie Bjelland, Volunteer
Kim Parks, Volunteer
Scott Zemke, Budget Technician, Montana State Office
Ted Bailey, Washington Office

Boy Scouts, Badges and the Missouri River, cont.

Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Park Ranger, and Brian jumped right on the opportunity.

Brian worked with archaeologist Zane Fulbright and chose two service projects that highlighted the celebration of the 150th Anniversary

of the Homestead Act. The Middleton and Nelson Homesteads, located along the scouts' projected float areas, needed new dirt on their roofs. In addition, they provided vegetation to the roofs of the homesteads in an attempt to regrow native species so the homesteads would appear similar

to what they did decades ago. The scouts dove right in and accomplished the work exactly as specified.

"We couldn't get this work done without groups like these. These projects can just go for years before we get a chance to get them done and this troop was exceptionally helpful," said Brian. In addition, the scouts re-dirted the Nelson chicken coop, cleaned up campgrounds and assisted with other smaller projects during their journey.

It really was a great win-win situation for the scouts and the BLM. The BLM was fortunate to host such a great group of kids and benefit from their desire for service work. On the flip side, the scouts' hard physical labor in the sun was rewarded with cool dips in the river and a bank of memories never to be forgotten—not to mention two new merit badges for each scout.

*Kari Boyd-Peak
Public Affairs Specialist
Central/HiLine Districts*

Shaping America's History

*BLM commemorates 150 years of
The Homestead Act.*



<http://blm.gov/n8jd>

MCC youth crew works Montana BLM site



Montana Conservation Corps members (L to R) Brett Mocilac, Hannah Hostetter, Nathan Garvine and Seaira Kroes remove sediment covering a walkway at Howrey Island Recreation Area July 18. Various MCC crews have been working in the Eastern Montana – Dakotas District since spring, completing a variety of projects on public lands. Photo by Mark Jacobsen

Howrey Island Recreation Area received some much needed help this year from some Montana teens who volunteered part of their summer to work with the Montana Conservation Corps.

Howrey Island Recreation Area, located a few miles west of Hysham, Mont., received considerable sediment from last year's Yellowstone River floodwaters. Sand and silt were deposited onto the cement walkways of the nature trail, a couple of feet deep in some spots. Considerable stretches of the walkway were completely covered and summertime vegetation has compounded the issue. Old cottonwoods have also fallen across the trail and need to be cut and cleared.

The MCC's "Expedition" members are youth in their mid-teens who are supervised by MCC crew leaders and work under the supervision of BLM Miles City Field Office staff. This year, summer seasonals Hillary Beger and Jaramie McLean fulfilled that role, both of whom reside in Miles City.

The crews lived out of tents at Howrey Island, prepared their own meals and lead somewhat Spartan lives while on the job. No technology, no wireless access, no Facebook, no television.

Crew leaders Forrest Schoessow, 22, from Milwaukee, Wis., and Hannah Hostetter, 23, from Bozeman supervised the Expedition members.



More than a foot of sandy sediment covers the cement walkway at the Howrey Island Recreation Area in Treasure County. Flood waters deposited the material during last year's flooding, completely covering sections of the walkway. Photo by Mark Jacobsen

Schoessow is a student at Ohio State University pursuing a master's in anthropology when he's not in Montana. Hostetter recently graduated from Seattle University with degrees in Environmental Studies and English. She started with the MCC in February.

MCC's Expedition program lasts about four weeks and includes safety training, leave-no-trace principles, logistics and on-the-job orientation. The BLM sees the benefit of dollar stretching on public lands as the crews provide muscle on labor intensive priorities, freeing fulltime staff to tackle other pressing issues.

The MCC is a recipient of a federal AmeriCorps grant focused on community service. The young adult volunteers serve as crew leaders or in Corps-member programs. According to the organization website, all programs focus on the MCC mission: "...to inspire young people through hands-on conservation service to be leaders, stewards of the land, and engaged citizens who improve their communities..."

BLM Recreation Planner Dena Lang oversees the bureau's recreation areas in eastern Montana and is intimately familiar with the maintenance needs of each of them.

"I have been amazed at the amount of work they have accomplished; this group is a very hard-working and highly motivated crew," said Lang. "The work ethic I have witnessed from MCC crews and the BLM recreation seasonals is outstanding. They have accomplished so much in such a short amount of time that we will be able to get a large portion of our work at Howrey Island completed this year."

For more about the Montana Conservation Corps, see: <http://mtcorps.org/>.

*Mark Jacobsen
Public Affairs Officer
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District*

Volunteers Plant Willows along Madison River

“I enjoy the river so much. I don’t mind giving back to it.”

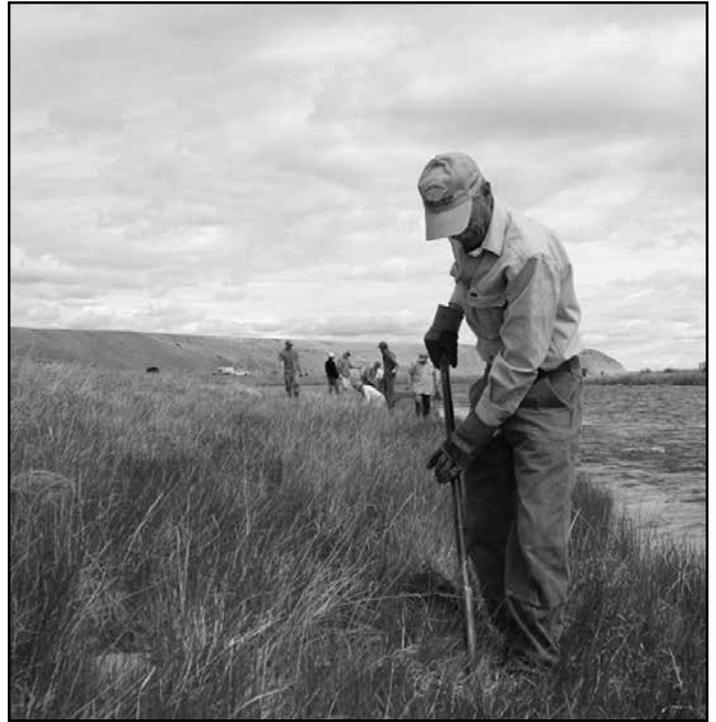
These words from Madison River Foundation volunteer John Stewart summed up the feelings of volunteers from the Dillon Field Office and the MRF as they teamed up to plant 600 willow seedlings along the west bank of the Madison River in southwestern Montana.

Earlier this spring, about two dozen MRF volunteers and eight BLM employees gathered on the upper Madison to plant the seedlings in a BLM pasture bordering the river. The seedlings were purchased from the Montana Department of Natural Resources State Nursery in Missoula. Because the site is near the Wall Creek Game Range--prime winter range for about 3,000 elk--Sandbar willow (*Salix interior*) was selected because it is less palatable to elk and heavy winter browsing.

Since the pasture is no longer grazed by livestock, MRF President Richard Lesner approached the BLM with the idea of restoring the willows



Newly planted willows flourish in the wet riparian soil along the Madison River. Photo by David Early



Volunteers from the Madison River Foundation and BLM dig holes in the rocky banks of the Madison to plant seedlings. Photo by David Early

along the river’s west bank in order to increase biodiversity, stabilize banks and provide shade and cover for fish. The BLM agreed it was a great opportunity to enhance riparian and fisheries habitat on the public’s land next to one of Montana’s most scenic and beloved rivers.

MRF volunteers are a diverse and active group with a common love of the Madison River and the land through which it flows. The organization is made up of people like Liz McCambridge, a retired science teacher and naturalist from Minnesota; Debra and Tony Giannoni, seasonal residents of Ennis from California; Bob Bayley, a semi-retired architect; and John Stewart of Ennis. They may be a diverse group of people, but they all share a passion for wild rivers and wild trout.

When asked why he volunteers to do things like fence removals, willow plantings and other habitat restoration projects, Bayley said, “I love doing things like this. I love wild places, so this is fun!”

*David Early
Rangeland Management Specialist
Dillon Field Office*

BLM-Montana/Dakotas Marks National Public Lands Day 2012



Volunteers construct a fence at Pompeys Pillar National Monument. BLM photo

Volunteers made a big difference again this year during several National Public Lands Day events held across the United States.

Started in 1994, NPLD has become the nation's largest, single-day volunteer event for public lands. It's a chance to educate the public about key natural and historical resource issues, build partnerships, and improve our public sites through stewardship and the hard work of thousands of volunteers. Land managers prepare projects that result in real and needed improvements, and volunteers learn, first hand, the issues that affect recreation areas.

"Events like National Public Lands Day are so important to what we do," said Jeff Kitchens, manager of Pompeys Pillar National Monument. "Giving the public the opportunity to come out and volunteer gives them both a sense of pride as well as ownership for their public lands."

Besides safety briefings related to the projects at hand, many NPLD events also offer short educational programs. NPLD volunteers typically also receive t-shirts, lunch, and a one-time fee-free pass to a recreation area managed by

an agency of the Department of the Interior, along with the satisfaction of a job well done.

About 450 people turned out at 11 different events hosted by the BLM-Montana/Dakotas, contributing more than 2,200 hours toward the improvement of public lands. A summary follows:

Pompeys Pillar National Monument, part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, hosted several events tied to NPLD. More than 80 people of all ages showed up Sept. 29 to help make the Monument more beautiful, accessible, and safe.



A new coat of paint at Lowry Bridge Recreation Area. BLM photo

Participants included BLM staff, local families and organizations, Boy Scouts, the Montana Conservation Corps, and several wildland firefighters. In just one day, they removed old barbed wire fencing, repaired various recreation sites and the boardwalk to the top of the Pillar, picked up trash, installed an information kiosk, removed brush and tree debris piles, and built new post & pole and buck & rail fencing.

"What was special about NPLD and the Pillar this year was the fact that we, in partnership with Pompeys Pillar Historical Association and the Montana Conservation Corps, hosted a large event, one of the first ever at the site," said Kitchens.

Lewistown Field Office Outdoor Recreation Planner Kelly McGill organized a project at **Uhlhorn Trailhead**, about 23 miles south of Lewistown, on Sept. 22. Volunteers from the Judith Basin Back Country Horsemen and a Montana Conservation Corps crew hand pulled and sprayed noxious weeds and installed a new picnic table.

McGill also organized a second event at **Lowry Bridge Recreation Area** on Sept. 26. Located about four miles west of Simms, Mont., Lowry Bridge accesses Sun River and has five campsites, each with a picnic table and fire ring. Volunteers from the Montana Conservation Corps, our Lowry Bridge camp hosts, other local community members and BLM employees installed fire rings, repaired signs and a fence, painted vault toilets, redistributed gravel, leveled a picnic table and removed weeds.

The Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument helped to organize and support the three Sept. 29 NPLD events held at **Decision Point**, **Wood Bottom** and **James Kipp** recreation areas in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, plus the **spring**

river cleanup held in May. About 75 volunteers helped with repairing flood damage and general cleanup.

“It was impressive to see all of the work that was accomplished this year,” commented Brian Woolf, NPLD organizer and park ranger for the Monument. “I received feedback that everyone enjoyed the project work along with the company of such an enthusiastic and supportive group of individuals who are dedicating their time to help manage and protect their public lands.”



Removing an unneeded fence in the Blackfoot Valley. Photo by Jim Sparks

Twenty people removed 2.5 miles of old barbed wire fence during the third **Fence Pull** held in the Blackfoot Valley near Ovando, Mont. The area where the fence was removed is part of the Blackfoot Legacy Project. The Nature Conservancy purchased the land from Plum Creek Timber, and it will soon become public lands administered by



The NPLD Cleanup Crew near Hole in the Wall in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. Photo by Mitch Forsyth

the BLM. Partners include Tangle Free, TNC, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the BLM. The event was organized by Jim Sparks, wildlife biologist for the Missoula Field Office.

The ninth annual **Blackfoot River Cleanup** drew almost 80 volunteers in the form of scuba divers, snorklers, rafters and waders who picked up an impressive volume of garbage from the river and river banks. Started by the Blackfoot Home and Community Club and held the last Saturday in July, the cleanup is supported every year by the Missoula Field Office, with Outdoor Recreation Planner Maria Craig taking the lead.

The South Dakota Field Office observed NPLD May 12 on the **Fort Meade Area of Critical Environmental Concern**. Volunteers planted 125 native shrubs to stabilize, beautify and improve habitat on a steep hill adjacent to some recent road work. In addition, Rangeland Management Specialist Thad Berrett led efforts to remove 1.5 miles of unneeded and damaged three-wire fence. The 41 participants represented the Back Country Horsemen, Meade County road crew, Boy Scouts, city of Sturgis, Women of War, the local homeowners’ association and BLM employees.

“The amount of work and the fantastic attitudes shown by the volunteers was outstanding,” said Bitsy Stiller, organizer and outdoor recreation planner. “The field office could have never done it alone.”



Picking up trash at Matthews Recreation Area. BLM photo

The Miles City Field Office hosted a NPLD project Sept. 29 at **Matthews Recreation Area** near Miles City. About 57 volunteers including Boy Scout Troop 222 pitched in to erect a fence, clean out the storage shed and fire pits, and pick up and haul out 560 pounds of trash. Participants also had the chance to try their hand at throwing an atlatl. Outdoor Recreation Planner Dena Sprandel-Lang organized the project.

Work continued Sept. 29 at **Sundance Lodge Recreation Area** to reconstruct the trail system and upgrade facilities. Organizer Tim Finger, outdoor recreation planner for the Billings Field Office, said the 75 volunteers represented partner organizations Montana Conservation Corps and Audubon Center of Billings, as well as numerous individuals. Located next to the Yellowstone River near Billings, Sundance Lodge is popular for non-motorized recreation.

The Dillon Field Office partnered with the Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited, REI, Great Harvest Bakery, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Conservation Corps and the Madison River Foundation for the **Madison River Cleanup** on Sept. 8. About 38 volunteers collected five truckloads of trash, most of which was exposed and became accessible after the Bear Trap 2 Fire burned through the area this summer. Travis Morris of Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited was the organizer.

Fence projects improve sage-grouse habitat

With the Greater Sage-Grouse on the brink of being listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the BLM is going to great lengths to conserve sage-grouse habitat and populations.

In the spring of 2012, wildlife biologists from the Billings Field Office reviewed literature and guidance to determine what could be done to help these efforts. Adapting livestock grazing plans to allow for more residual cover, improving riparian areas, and ensuring that any other BLM-authorized activities have minimal impacts on sage-grouse habitat and populations has become daily business for biologists and other resource specialists.

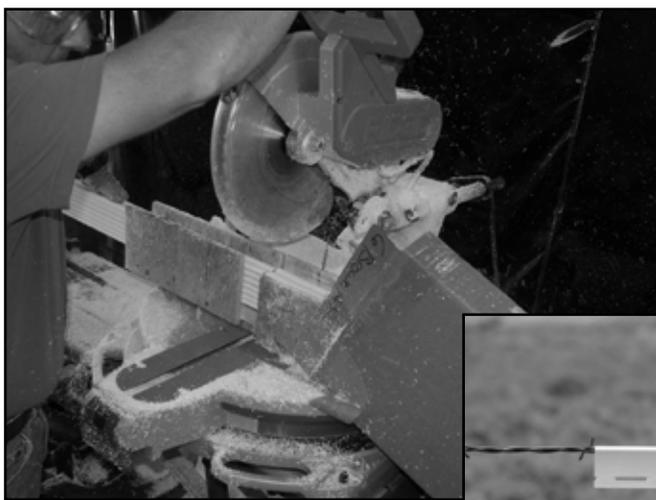
One issue that was evident in the literature is the risk of losing birds to fence strikes. Research done in Oklahoma on the similar “Lesser Prairie Chicken” and in Wyoming on sage-grouse indicates high numbers of mortalities when fences are near high concentrations of birds—for example, near lek sites and winter concentration areas. Leks are areas where birds gather in the spring to perform mating rituals, usually consisting of 10-150 birds concentrated in a relatively small area for a six-week period.

Both Oklahoma and Wyoming studies found success in reducing fence strikes and mortalities by placing markers on the fence wires to help birds recognize the obstacle before flying into them. The Wyoming study actually showed nearly 85 percent fewer fence strikes after fence marking; a clear success.

That brings us to the point. Biologists secured five weeks of Montana Conservation Corps time for the summer of 2012 to get fences marked that were within about 1.25 miles of leks in the Billings Field Office area. The crews consisted of six youths led by two adult crew leaders. After spending many hours “in the shop” cutting 12-foot sections of vinyl siding trim into 3 inch pieces, biologists led the crews throughout Musselshell and Carbon counties, hanging approximately 66,000 markers over about 55 miles of fence.

Although the true outcome of this project is tough to predict, judging from recent studies, the rate of fence collisions in these priority sage-grouse habitats should fall dramatically, not only for sage grouse but also for big game and other bird species.

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Twelve-foot sections of vinyl siding trim were cut into three-inch pieces before crews clipped them to about 55 miles of wire fence in the Pryor Mountains. Biologists hope the fence markers will help greater sage-grouse recognize the obstacle before flying into it, thereby reducing the birds' mortality rate. Photos by Ernest McKenzie

Partnering with BLM:

MCC Youth Perspective

Pouring rain, unending sage brush, and six complete strangers: a perfect way for two crew leaders to get youth excited for the next four weeks.

When the storm rolled in, a Montana Conservation Corps Expedition Crew made up of teens from all over Montana had just begun setting up tents and gear at the base of the Pryor Mountains in preparation for a week of Sage Grouse work with the Billings Field Office. They hustled to put everything up, then huddled together to stay warm and pray that their tents wouldn't blow away. Once the storm subsided, the relieved crew carried on with what they had been doing before the winds hit. So went the first obstacle of the season. Lauren Ficek from Billings recalls, “It really helped us learn to work together right away. It brought us together.”

With group dynamics going well, this new crew had a less than glamorous task at hand, but one that would make a huge difference in the Eastern Montana ecosystem. By simply clipping plastic rectangles to the top wire of barbed wire fences in three-foot intervals, they would prevent sage-grouse from flying into the wire. With the clips in place, sage-grouse mortality rates are expected to drop by up to 85 percent.

“I felt like I was actually doing something worth my efforts. Now I have a new view the conservation of animals. I understand that it is really important,” commented Ficek.

Wildlife biologist Ernie McKenzie took valuable time to incorporate this educational aspect into the project work, always open to questions from the crew.

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Fence projects, continued

In addition to marking fences, the crews worked hard to improve other aspects of the habitat. One crew spent two days hand pulling the noxious weed hounds tongue out of a riparian area surrounding a Yellowstone cutthroat trout stream. Another crew spent a day removing half a mile of woven wire fence. Yet another crew spent a day working on fence improvements at Asparagus Point on the Musselshell River, aiding in keeping neighboring livestock from grazing in the riparian area.

The BLM was pleased with the good attitudes and hard work the MCC put in for us this year!

Following is an article written by one MCC crew leader after their experience improving sage-grouse habitat for the BLM.

*Ernest McKenzie
Wildlife Biologist
Billings Field Office*



A Montana Conservation Corps crew removes an unneeded fence in an effort to improve sage-grouse habitat. Photo by Ernest McKenzie



Dominant males face off to win the girls. Photo by Craig Miller

An MCC Perspective, continued

“So much of the time it’s easy to forget the reason behind the work you are doing and lose sight of the big picture,” stated crew leader Aubrey Tamietti. “He emphasized the significance of the work we were doing which motivated the crew to perform the work well.”

And work well they did. The crew clipped nearly 20,000 markers on barbed wire fences and pulled nearly 20 acres of the noxious weed houndstongue to boot. Despite the long, hot days, Lauren loved the result. “When we saw all of the fences marked, it was pretty big.”

The MCC continues to partner with the BLM all over Eastern Montana to work on various sage grouse-saving projects. For the next session, MCC crews will be marking fences as well as collecting sage brush seeds for future sage re-vegetation projects.

*Maggie Zaback
Senior Youth Crew Leader
Montana Conservation Corps, Eastern Wildlands Region*



The MCC crew poses after a long day of marking fences. Photo courtesy of MCC

Planting the Seeds of Partnership

On a cool spring day at Pompeys Pillar National Monument, the seeds of partnership were sown.

Working to develop a worthwhile Eagle Scout project, Monument staff and Boy Scout Neil Wittorff settled on designing and developing a Firewise garden adjacent to the main visitor parking area. Such an endeavor would give the BLM a place to display Firewise principles and teach about defensible space. It would also offer a great place to showcase native plants important to wildlife like big game and sage-grouse. The final project included a full-sized Firewise garden covering an area roughly 100 feet by 200 feet as well as interpretive signs about defensible space.

Firewise landscaping is nothing new in the West. In the mid-1980s, the Firewise community program was developed with the realization that homes with limited vegetation near them fared better during wildfires. Most homes that burn during a wildfire are ignited by embers or firebrands landing on or in roofs, gutters, vents, etc. Other homes may burn when small flames reach its siding via grass or small vegetation. Firewise principles and defensible space offer landscaping techniques that have been found to significantly reduce a home's chance of burning in a wildland fire.

In early June, BLM staff and several Boy Scouts and their families kicked off the



Eagle Scout candidate Neil Wittorff works on the Firewise garden at Pompeys Pillar National Monument. Photo by Jeff Kitchens

project. These first work days involved laying out weed mats over the large area and an initial planting of more than 100 small plants. The native shrubs, grasses, and forbs were provided by the Special K Ranch and the BLM's Native Plant Material Program. In addition, cottonwood trees planted in the outermost zone of the garden will provide shade and create a visual barrier between visitors and the maintenance area to the east.

From June to August 2012, Montana saw one of the driest summers on record.

Temperatures repeatedly hovered in the high nineties to triple digits and the skies of Yellowstone County were hazy from wildland fires. By September, more than 8.5 million acres had burned in the West, of which more than 950,000 acres were in Montana.

“As the summer moved forward and we watched what was happening regarding fire activity, fire restrictions, and concerns of fire danger, we realized just how important a project like this is as a teaching tool,” stated Jeff Kitchens, Pompeys Pillar Monument Manager.

September 22 was the final volunteer work day for the garden. Along with the Boy Scouts and their families, BLM staff, various fire crews stationed in Billings, and other volunteers came out to help.

“This is a great project to showcase how working together as a team we are creating defensible space,” commented Carmen Thomason, Fire Mitigation and Education Specialist. “The Firewise garden will allow people to see how Firesafe landscaping can create defensible space and still be visually appealing.”

The garden is currently open, although it will be under construction through the spring of 2013.

*By Jeff Kitchens
Pompeys Pillar National Monument Manager*



Boy Scouts, firefighters, BLM staff and other volunteers who helped with the new Firewise garden at Pompeys Pillar National Monument. Photo by Jeff Kitchens

Attention BLM Retirees

The BLM Retirees Association

Stay in touch! The BLM Retirees Association has a social gathering at 11:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of even-numbered months at the Windmill (3429 TransTech Way) in Billings. If you would like to receive email or postcard notifications of these meetings, please contact Alice Slagowski at 406-259-9319 or asluggo@bresnan.net.

The Public Lands Foundation

The Public Lands Foundation (PLF) offers new retirees a free one-year membership. If you're interested, contact one of the Montana PLF representatives: David Mari at 406-538-7121 or dmari@earthlink.net; or Kemp Conn at 406-360-9252 or montanakconn@wildblue.net (please note "PLF" on the subject line).

What is the PLF? It works to keep America's public lands in public hands, managed professionally and sustainably for responsible common use and enjoyment.

The goals of the PLF are to:

- Keep lands managed by the BLM in public ownership and open to use by the public.
- Support multiple use management under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.
- Encourage professionalism by BLM employees.
- Increase the public's understanding of and support for the proper management of the public lands.

Although PLF membership consists largely of retired BLMers, current employees and anyone interested in the goals of the organization are welcome to join.

Retired since May 2012:

Allen P. Edmonds
State Aviation Officer
Montana State Office
Division of Resources
Branch of Fire and Aviation

Deborah K. Johnson
Field Manager
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office
Miles City Field Office

Joan Trent
Sociologist
Montana State Office
Division of Resources
Planning & Biological Resource Branch

Gary E. Slagel
Monument Manager
Central Montana District Office
Upper Missouri River Breaks Nat'l Monument

Tim M. Bozorth
Field Manager
Western Montana District Office
Dillon Field Office

Phoebe J. Patterson
Field Manager
HiLine District Office
Glasgow Field Office

Sandra K. Ward
Land Law Examiner
Montana State Office
Division of Resources
Lands Adjudication Section

Craig K. Flentie
Public Affairs Specialist
Central Montana District Office

Sherri K. Lionberger
Supervisory Land Use Spec.
Western Montana District Office
Butte Field Office
Division of Nonrenewable Resources

William C. Monahan
Natural Resource Specialist
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office
South Dakota Field Office

Edward L. Hughes
Supervisory Industry Economist
Montana State Office
Division of Resources
Solid Minerals Branch

Terry R. Dubois
Information Receptionist (OA)
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office
South Dakota Field Office

Tony L. Thomas
IT Specialist
Montana State Office
Division of Support Services
Info Resource Management Branch

Karen A. Wolf
Safety and Occ. Health Manager
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office

Deborah K. Clark
Production Accountability Technician
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office
North Dakota Field Office
Division of Mineral Resources



Dillon Field Office Crew Swims to Safety

The current was fast and the water was cold, but several employees from the Dillon Field Office braved those elements to better prepare themselves for emergencies.

Earlier in the summer, four recreation staff and two members of the Dillon weed crew participated in Swiftwater Rescue training on the Big Hole River. Working in teams and secured to each other with ropes, the BLM employees practiced pulling swimmers from the river.

Training was provided by Whitewater Rescue Institute, headquartered in Lolo, Mont.

The class prepared Rick Waldrup, Chris McGrath, Ryan Brown, Ron Burnett, Zane Nordahl and Adam LaPierre for working on the Madison River in the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness where the majority of the Dillon Field Office's summer recreational activity takes place. Each year, thousands of anglers, rafters and inner-tube enthusiasts converge on the Madison's legendary waters.

*David Abrams
Public Affairs Specialist
Western Montana District*

Staff members from the Dillon Field Office work together to pull "victims" from the Big Hole River during Swiftwater Rescue Training this summer. BLM photo

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The Quarterly Steward is published every three months by the Bureau of Land Management and distributed in Montana and the Dakotas. It is produced by the Office of Communications, Montana State Office.

Ann Boucher, Editor & Graphic Design

FIRST CLASS
POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PERMIT NO. G-76



<http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en.html>