



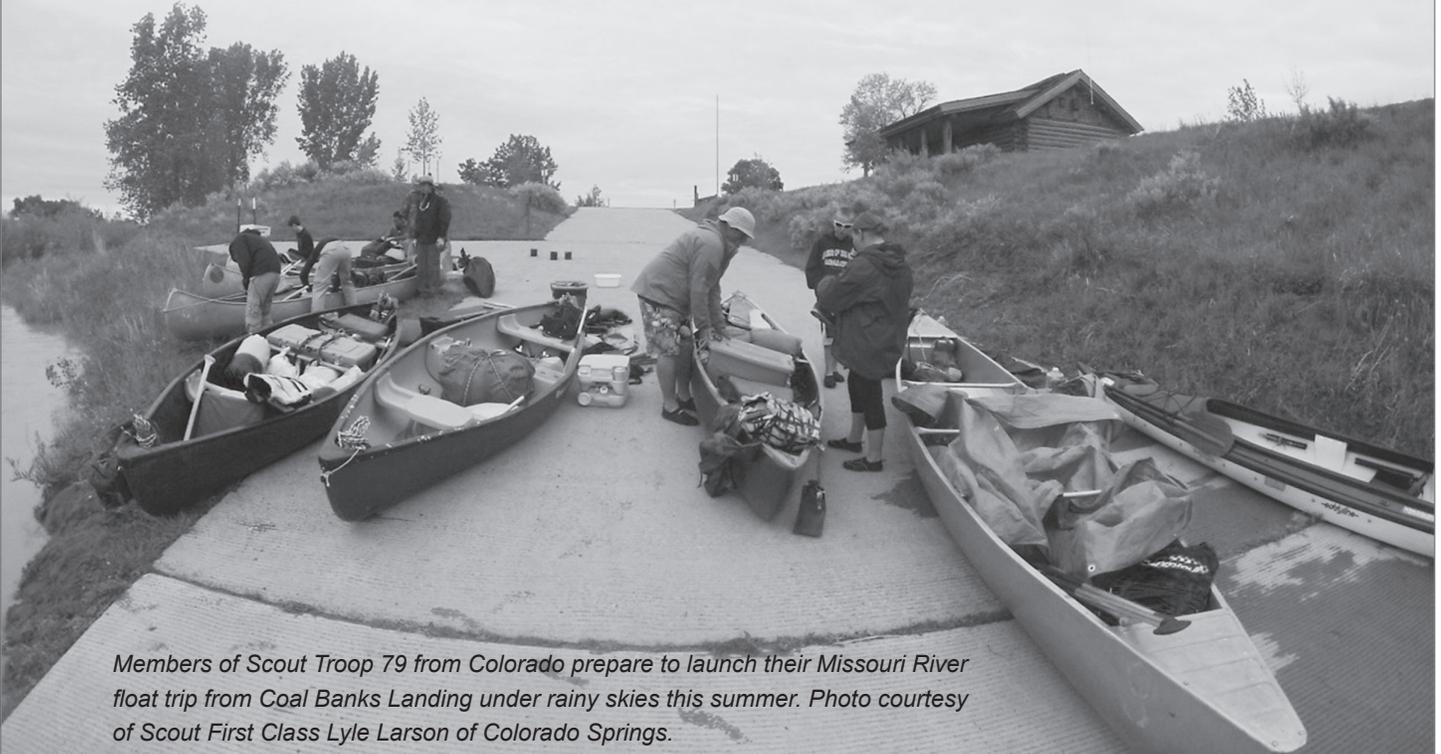
STEWARD

Montana/Dakotas

Bureau of Land Management

Fall/Winter 2013-14

Soggy Scout Trip Ends Well



Members of Scout Troop 79 from Colorado prepare to launch their Missouri River float trip from Coal Banks Landing under rainy skies this summer. Photo courtesy of Scout First Class Lyle Larson of Colorado Springs.

Members of the BLM team from the Central Montana and Hilina Districts helped a group of Colorado Boy Scouts from Troop 79 safely navigate the rising waters of the Missouri River during a canoe trip June 3-7.

Troop 79's trip happened to occur as the Missouri River drainage basin received a significant amount of rain fall, according to Lewistown Field Manager Geoff Beyersdorf. Some areas recorded a total of 15 inches over several days.

Daniel Knox, a volunteer adult leader with Boy Scout Troop 79 at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., commented on the assistance they received from the BLM team.

"These outstanding government employees and volunteers went far out of their way to ensure a safe and worthwhile trip for a Boy Scout troop from my home state of Colorado, and demonstrated a degree of selflessness and dedication that evidently is indicative of all the BLM personnel we encountered," he stated.

Knox, a retired Air Force officer, has been involved with Scouting at installations in multiple states. He explained that Troop 79 is fairly small and lacks the funding and equipment larger troops have.

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From the State Director's Desk

Hi, everyone,

This is my maiden voyage into regular feature columns for the Steward. Thanks for taking the time to read along and share my passion for the public lands of the Montana/Dakotas.

As I write this, we are picking up where we left off before the government shutdown. It was a rough couple of weeks, but we're glad to be back and serving the American public.

I am also delighted to be back from my detail to Washington, D.C. Serving as the acting Deputy Director for Operations for almost 6 months was a great experience, but it's good to be home.

While in D.C., I gained a new perspective on the work the BLM does nationwide, and even more respect and appreciation for the great work we do here in Montana and the Dakotas.

With only about 700 employees, the BLM manages more than 8 million surface acres and 47 million mineral acres in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. Our multiple-use mission directs us to manage these lands and resources for everything from energy production and livestock grazing to recreation and forest health – all with an eye on keeping these lands and resources in good condition for future generations.

This is no small task. It's even more challenging given the current realities of less funding and fewer people. Our budget was reduced by 7.5 percent in fiscal year 2013 and we expect another 5 percent cut in FY14. Throw in some high-profile, heavily scrutinized programs and the challenge becomes even more daunting. It's not an easy time to be a public servant.

So how are we moving forward? The BLM way – one step at a time with an eye on the horizon.

Working with our leadership team, I have set our Top 10 priorities to help us focus our efforts. If you haven't looked at those lately, you can find them at <http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/info/newsroom/top10.html>.

This list represents some tough choices. As much as we'd like to do it all, some of the lower priority work may not get our attention as we concentrate on these top priorities. It's frustrating, but I would rather see us continue to make good progress on select projects and programs than to address every last task poorly.

We'll continue to focus on activities such as energy production -- or "powering our future" as Secretary Jewell puts it -- land use planning, maintaining sound fiscal health, and of course, the safety and well-being of our employees and the visiting public.



Jamie E. Connell

BLM Montana/Dakotas State Director

We'll also continue to look toward the future by promoting conservation, partnerships, and youth involvement in public lands stewardship.

In all of this, let's be honest. Be honest with the public about our current budget and staffing situation, and be honest with ourselves about how much we can reasonably accomplish with fewer dollars and people. Some things will take longer to accomplish or simply will be left undone.

And BLMers, remember to enjoy your work and what brought you to the BLM in the first place. Maintaining a passion for public land and resource management will help us find those innovative solutions that so often arise when the "normal" channels are closed – it's that entrepreneurial spirit that I know lies within all of us.

Thank you for always put forth your best effort. It shows. I look forward to seeing more stories that highlight your commitment to public service and your dedication to quality land and resource management. We'll also feature some of the year's best accomplishments when the winners of the State Director Award are announced later this year.

Thank you for taking the time to review this biannual summary of the great work being done here in the BLM Montana/Dakotas.

A handwritten signature of Jamie E. Connell in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style and matches the name in the caption above.

LYNX LINKS:

Missoula wildlife biologist studies connection between lynx and hares

Patryce Caye raised a relescope to her left eye, squinted into the lens, and surveyed the lush alpine meadow near Marcum Mountain in northwest Montana. What she saw through that handheld device might just make a difference in the survival of at least two species of mammal: the Canada lynx and the snowshoe hare.

“I’m measuring the horizontal cover of vegetation,” the Salish Kootenai College student explained. “The amount of canopy cover is important to the snowshoes as a defense and escape from predators.”

Caye was in the midst of a summer-long project as an intern with the Missoula Field Office as part of a novel pilot program called the Tribal College Partnership. The program not only helps the BLM increase its diversity but also provides an opportunity for students to work on viable field studies and earn college credit hours.

The data Caye collected during her time in the field is just one piece of a puzzle which wildlife biologists from the BLM, the U.S. Forest Service and the University of Montana have been studying for a number of years: what effect, if any, does climate change have on the decline of snowshoe hare populations? And how does that impact the Canada lynx, listed threatened under the Endangered Species Act? The relationship between lynx and hare—predator and prey, diner and dinner—is complex and intertwined.

“The loss of snowshoe hares would be devastating to Canada lynx,” said Jim Sparks, wildlife biologist with the Missoula Field Office. “Hares are the primary prey for lynx, amounting to 96 percent of the biomass in the lynx diet in Montana.”

The Missoula Field Office has been working with John Squires of the U.S. Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Research Station since the 1990s on a comprehensive study which examines the connections between hare loss and lynx populations.

More recently, Sparks also reached out to Dr. Scott Mills of the University of Montana’s Wildlife Biology Program. Mills noted that his collaboration with Sparks started in 2011 and he only wishes it could have begun sooner.

“I wish we had found an opportunity to work together years earlier because he is so knowledgeable, so deeply committed to science-based wildlife management, and so easy to get along with,” Mills said. “Through Jim, the BLM has funded a project with me that both builds on my long-term snowshoe hare research, especially on questions related to climate change and seasonal coat color, and also covers new ground in determining how various restoration treatments in larch stands might be compatible with or even improve snowshoe hare habitat. Quite simply, this

project would not have been possible without Jim and his BLM colleagues,” he added.

Mills said he doesn’t have reason to believe hare populations are necessarily in decline in the West, but he does often wonder whether coat color mismatch due to decreased snowpack will lead to a decline in hare numbers.

“This is truly a wide-open scientific question, and the reason why this long-term, field-based project is so important,” he said. “Collaboration with Jim and the BLM is playing an essential role in this work.”

One option for survivability of hares whose coats are out of synch with seasonal backgrounds is to seek out dense vegetation for concealment. That’s where Caye and others studying vegetation growth come in.

“Pre-commercial thinning is an issue with snowshoe hares because it reduces hare forage habitat,” Sparks said. “I thought it would be interesting to study the effects of pre-commercial thinning in young western larch, a deciduous conifer, on snowshoe hares and the effects of climate change.”

In addition to measuring canopy cover, the Missoula Field Office team has been live-trapping hares and equipping them with very high frequency (VHF) collars to locate and evaluate movement and habitat use prior to, during, and after thinning.

This type of research helps BLM field managers address potential environmental effects of land management activities on these species—especially when it comes to preparing NEPA documents in this groundbreaking project.

“The variable density thinning/pre-commercial thinning in western larch is one of a kind,” Sparks noted. “Snowshoe hare and western larch have never been studied together before.”

*David Abrams
Public Affairs Officer
Western Montana District*



John Squires of the U.S. Forest Service and Jim Sparks of the Missoula Field Office collect data from a lynx trapped in the Garnet Range in western Montana in 2010. BLM Photo

Illegal Dump Site Reclaimed

The hot tub may have been the biggest piece of garbage Anna Courtney found at an illegal dump site just outside of Livingston, but it wasn't the most surprising. That dubious honor belonged to the entire set of encyclopedias scattered across the ground.

"Somebody didn't want to learn today," Courtney quipped as she picked up another handful of litter and stuffed it into an already-overstuffed sack. Shotgun shells were scattered all around her feet like bright bits of confetti.

Courtney, a soils technician, was one of nine employees from the Butte Field Office who spent several days this summer cleaning up the three-acre site on Harvat's Flats, less than a mile from I-90. It was a daunting task—especially since crews of BLM workers, as well as volunteers from the Livingston community—had been doing the same thing for years.



Anna Courtney, a soils specialist with the Butte Field Office, helps clean up an illegal dump site near Livingston, Montana, Aug. 13. Photo by David Abrams



BLM Archaeologist Carrie Kiely (right) and others bag trash during a day-long dump site cleanup near Livingston, Montana. Photo by David Abrams

"This place has attracted dumping since before 1987, when I first came here and saw it," said John Sandford, a natural resource specialist with the Butte Field Office. "In the early 2000s, a career seasonal employee and I cleaned up the site, and took one or two loads to the dump. We also coordinated with the county to have an abandoned van removed from the site."

Sandford remembers posting a "No Dumping" sign. But six months later, the garbage had accumulated again.

This year, the clean-up crew hauled 12 tons of materials to the Livingston transfer station, about four miles away.

As she took a break from bending and stooping in the late-summer heat, Courtney ran through an itemized list of what the BLM crew had collected over the past two days: "A shopping cart, animal carcasses, roofing shingles, a TV, random pairs of shoes, and a beer keg—empty, of course." She shook her head as she looked around at the ground which sparkled with broken glass.

"I'm surprised by how much there is," she said. "Originally, I thought I'd

grab one or two people from my office to get the job done. And then I came out here and I was like 'Whoa!'"

The dump is "an attractive nuisance," said Corey Meier, supervisory land use specialist with the Butte Field Office. "We're determined not just to clean it up, but to decommission it from further use."

Plans call for the BLM to re-contour and re-seed the site, remove the approaches off the adjacent county road, and put up a fence with the assistance of the neighboring land owner.

The BLM is not closing off public access to the site, however.

"People can still hunt out there and do everything they used to do—just not dump," Meier said.

So, those people looking to get rid of an unwanted hot tub will now have to find a new place to abandon it.

*David Abrams
Public Affairs Officer
Western Montana District*

Miles City BLMer rescues girls from river

Two sisters swimming in the Yellowstone River were saved by a BLM employee when they were carried downstream by the swift river current Aug. 4.

According to a local report the girls, aged 10 and 14, were playing in the Yellowstone when they got into deep water and were overcome by the strong flows and pulled into the deeper part of the river channel.

According to Miles City Fire and Rescue Capt. Cameron Duffin, the girls were carried almost a mile downstream before being rescued.

BLM Miles City Range Technician Justin Hanley and his wife Carolina live near the Seventh Street Bridge where the incident occurred. He was alerted to the situation Sunday afternoon by the actions of the girls' frantic grandmother as she ran across the nearby Roche Jaune fishing access parking lot. The grandmother was carrying another child on her hip and was headed to households in an effort to get assistance when the Hanleys spotted her from their front room.

"Carolina could see that something wasn't right and that we'd better check it out," said Justin.

After conversing with the woman, Justin ran to the river's edge with his wife. He soon spotted the victims and sprinted downstream along the south bank and onto the flood dike to get ahead of them.

"They were holding on to each other, each pushing the other up out of the river to get a breath; like a teeter-totter," said Justin.

By the time Justin was parallel to the girls, he had left his clothes in a pile on the dike and was on a bank section bolstered by concrete rip-rap. At that point he knew he had to go in, he said, and "kind of belly-flopped into the water," painfully catching his hip on the submerged, jagged edge of a concrete block. He back-stroked into the main channel.

"I felt the current grab me; it was strong enough to flip me back on my front," he said. Reaching the sisters, Justin grabbed both and headed back. Both girls were exhausted he said, noting that he too, was about to reach his limit. The older sister had aspirated water and was weak. She soon went unconscious.

As Justin made incremental progress towards the bank, he continually felt for the bottom but found only deeper water. After what seemed like forever, a combination of current and Justin's one-arm stroke got them to where he could occasionally feel gravel and push closer toward the shallows and the rescue personnel who were atop the dike. Justin and the conscious younger sister were completely spent at that point and shallow water came none too soon.

Justin recalled standing in the shallows catching his breath as he listened to the resuscitation efforts on the 14-year-old, out of sight, up on the dike.

"It seemed like forever," he said. He remembers people urging "Breathe! Breathe!" and finally hearing the welcome sound of the girl retching, breathing and coming to.

Both victims were whisked to the local Holy Rosary Healthcare unit via ambulance and the 14-year-old was transferred to a Billings medical facility. The 10-year-old was later released, tired but otherwise uninjured.

Every year, reports of would-be rescuers who themselves become statistics are a reminder of how dangerous river rescues can be, especially without a lifejacket. First responders and others who have had training can vouch for the fact that actually "going in" is the last resort--which may account for the reluctance of the paramedics who stayed on shore, even while Justin was struggling in the shallows to deliver the girls.

As for Justin, he knows full well the risks and dangers of the Yellowstone.

"It makes my hair stand on end," he said, as he recalled how deceptively strong the river's current was as it gripped him when swimming to the sisters. "I've seen that river take a whole live tree, pull it completely under till it disappears and then see the same tree come shooting out of the river way down stream."

But when asked what he was thinking, he was matter-of-fact.

"If those were my kids, I'd want someone to rescue them," he said.

And for two young sisters who again have their whole lives ahead of them, that makes all the difference.



Justin Hanley currently works as a Fire Fuels Range Technician at the BLM Miles City Field Office. Born and raised in Columbus, Mont., Justin's early years found him moving around the central-eastern part of the state with his family and involved with the ranching lifestyle.

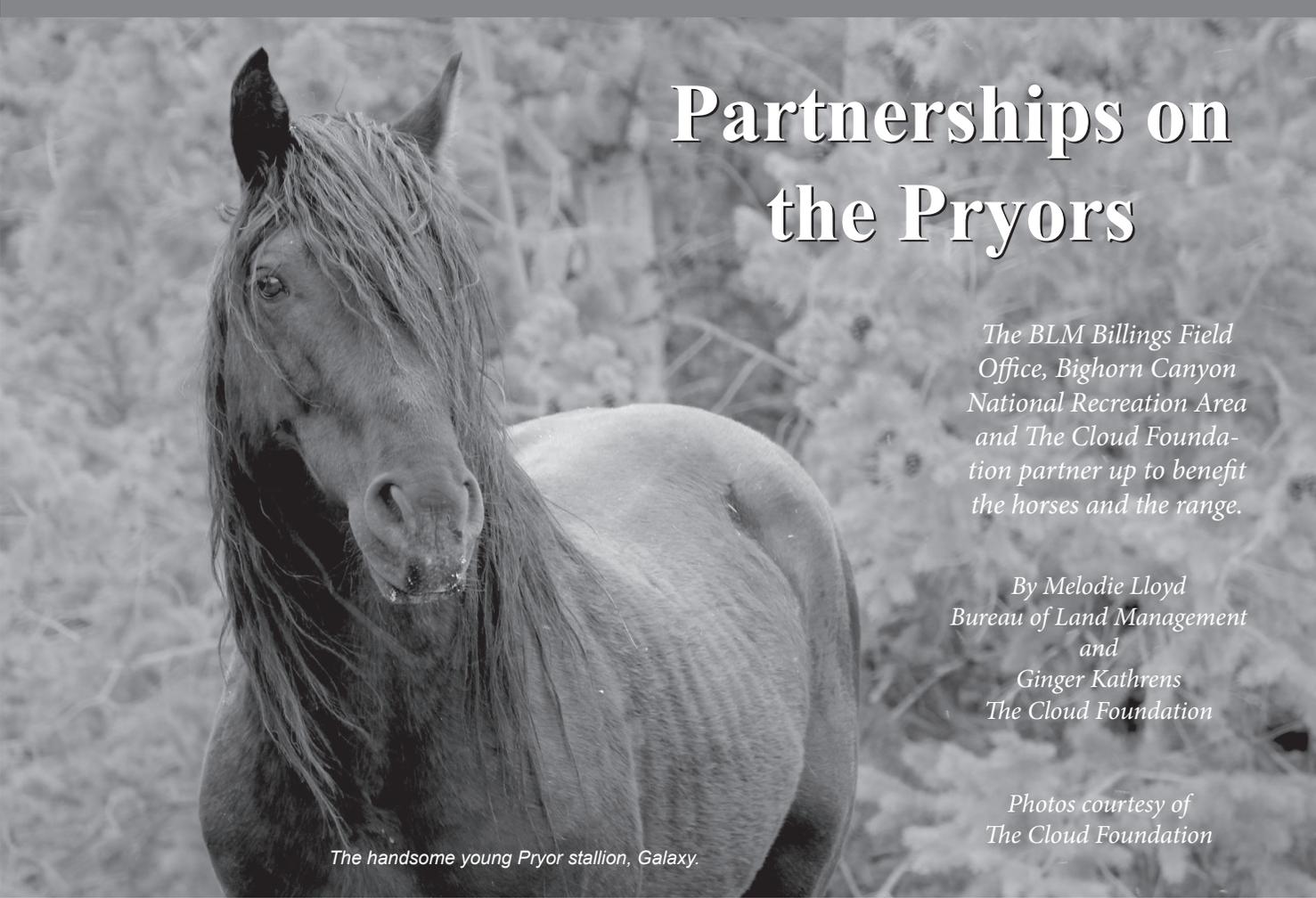
Justin started with the BLM (Miles City) in 1990 as a Firefighter Type 2. To date his assignments have included Crew Boss, Incident Commander Type 3 and Division Group Supervisor. Traveling on assignment and the constantly changing work environment associated with Fire appeal to him. He lives in Miles City with his wife, Carolina, and two children ages 11 and 8.

"He's the youngest old-timer I've ever met," said Assistant Fire Management Officer Scott McAvoy as he recalled the years spent working with Justin. "He's definitely been brought up "old-school" with the ranching environment."

McAvoy stated that Justin is always willing to help complete projects --no matter which department they fall under- and excels in field work.

"He's one of those guys you can call and he'll make himself available to help; he's never afraid to put in long hours and is all about getting things done," said McAvoy.

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



Partnerships on the Pryors

The BLM Billings Field Office, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area and The Cloud Foundation partner up to benefit the horses and the range.

*By Melodie Lloyd
Bureau of Land Management
and
Ginger Kathrens
The Cloud Foundation*

*Photos courtesy of
The Cloud Foundation*

The handsome young Pryor stallion, Galaxy.

The Bureau of Land Management always makes a big deal of volunteer contributions and for good reason. Last year in the Montana/Dakotas BLM, 1,089 volunteers across our three-state area contributed 41,056 hours valued at nearly \$900,000. The costs incurred to the BLM for that significant effort was \$60,418. As the BLM works to find effective ways to continue fulfilling its role as steward of the National System of Public Lands and the resources they hold, that's a pretty darn good investment.

The spirit of public lands stewardship in 2013 remains strong in the Montana/Dakotas. We've established a tradition of successful volunteerism and partnerships on the popular Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range south of Billings, Mont.

As a part of the BLM's National Wild Horse & Burro Management Strategy, the BLM is working locally with the National Park Service (NPS) and the Cloud Foundation on the use of the

fertility control vaccine Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP), or ZonaStat-H, which is administered to control the herd's size and reduce the number of pregnancies.

NPS employees Cass Bromley, Bill Pickett, and Ryan Felkins administered 37 of the 60 doses given this past spring to the Pryor mares and fillies, whose range includes a portion of the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. In FY2012, NPS staff administered about one-half of that year's PZP applications. The Billings Field Office entered into a Service First agreement with the NPS in early July 2013 to acknowledge that agency's valuable assistance to the BLM in caring for the Pryor Mountain herd.

The BLM welcomed a new partner this spring. The adept volunteer efforts of the Cloud Foundation's Effie Orser, Lauryn Wachs, and Ginger Kathrens contributed to the successful completion of this year's fertility treatments in record time. The trio worked in concert with two BLM employees, Ryan Bradshaw and Jerad Werning, who were darting

wild horses elsewhere on the Range.

In about one week's time, the Cloud Foundation volunteers applied 11 treatments which, according to State Wild Horse & Burro Specialist Jared Bybee, is an excellent treatment rate. Their volunteer efforts are a superb demonstration of combining the public's passion with the Bureau's mission to positively benefit the well-known Pryor wild horse herd.

Ginger shared her recent darting experience on a beautiful Montana May day in the Pryors:

"That's Limerick," I told Effie as she, Lauryn, and I quietly climbed out of the UTV. "She's a two year-old filly on our list."

The flashy two year-old black eyed us innocently then went back to grazing with her mother and the rest of the band led by the dashing young stallion, Galaxy.

The “short list,” provided to the Cloud Foundation by the BLM, contained the names of a dozen or so females that had to date remained elusive to the darters.

Most were relatively easy to dart because most Pryor mustangs are accustomed to frequent human visitors. We are of no particular interest to them, which is a perfect set-up to document their natural behaviors and, in this case, dart them with the vaccine.

Effie mixed up the booster shot of PZP and filled the small dart destined for Limerick’s hip. Loading the dart into the X-Caliber rifle, Effie walked away from the UTV in an arc pattern while we walked the other way, acting as the “distraction unit.”

Once Effie was within about 100 feet she carefully aimed and fired. The filly jumped forward, startled, as the dart landed dead center on the side of her hip and then bounced out after emptying. She trotted a few steps and stopped, but within a minute was back to grazing as if nothing had ever happened.

If the effort is successful, Limerick will not foal next year.

Once again, the BLM benefits from its dedicated volunteers and invaluable partnerships. In turn, the Pryor wild horses will see less stress on themselves and the range they call home. The NPS continues to provide visitors with an enhanced experience and realizes an increased ability to better manage the natural resources found in the diverse landscape setting of the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. And the Cloud Foundation comes away with a deep sense of satisfaction that they are helping the BLM manage wild horses on the range with the hope of one day balancing reproduction and mortality, thus reducing or potentially eliminating future removals.

“We are proud to be working with the BLM, and we hope our partnership with them will continue and may set an example for the management of other wild herds throughout the West,” said Ginger. The BLM Montana/Dakotas hopes so too.



The Cloud Foundation volunteer Effie Orser moves toward a Pryor mare in order to dart her with the fertility control vaccine PZP. She successfully hit the horse in the hip, but the startled mare quickly resumed grazing as if nothing had happened.



This foal is part of Cloud’s band and was born to an 8-year-old dam called Feldspar. The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range/Territory EA and HMA Plan identified 5- to 10-year-old wild horses to be maintained as the breeding core of the herd, therefore the current Fertility Control Prescription allows mares in this age class to produce foals while treating all other ages annually.

BLM Employee named to the Montana Weed Management Advisory Council

Kenny Keever was recently selected to join the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council as the representative for biological control and research perspectives.

Keever, the invasive plant specialist for the Havre Field Office and Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, takes the place of Jim Story.

Biological control of noxious weeds involves identifying insects and plant pathogens from a plant's native range, ensuring they will only attack the target plant species, and finding ways to establish them in high numbers in problematic areas where the size of infestation or environmental conditions make it impossible or cost prohibitive to address.

"It's truly an honor to be a part of this council," Keever said.

Keever has served as the chair of the Montana Weed Control Association's Integrated Weed Management Committee and currently serves as the interim chair of the Montana Biological Weed Control Working Group.

Keever's history with biological control of noxious weeds spans over two decades and began when he was in high school. In the early 1990s the BLM partnered with his high school vo-ag program to collect and send out leafy spurge red headed stem borers and flea beetles.



Kenny Keever, invasive plant specialist for the Havre Field Office and Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, was recently named to the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council. BLM photo

According to Keever, the introduction and expansion of invasive plants across the western states is one of the most challenging issues land managers face.

"Montana has led the charge against these alien invaders for decades, in part thanks to the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund," he explained.

As overseer of the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund, the Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council is tasked with reviewing applications, hearing applicant testimony, and providing recommendations to the Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture for final funding approval.

The Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant program was established by the 1985 Montana Legislature to provide funding for the development and implementation of weed management programs. It also provides for research and development of innovative weed management techniques including biological control, and supports research and education projects.

The grant program is designed to assist counties, local communities, researchers, and educators in their efforts to solve noxious weed problems in Montana.

The program provides assistance in the form of a 50 percent cost-share, with landowner matching funds, for herbicides and commercial application to participating landowners in a local cooperative weed management area.

Other types of projects involve noxious weed education and research, including non-chemical research and demonstration projects.

Keever stated, "I look forward to seeing the innovative projects and ideas folks from Montana are using in their weed programs and maybe even apply some of that to our public lands in north-central Montana."

*Jonathan Moor
Public Affairs Officer
Central & HiLine Districts*

SCOUTS, continued from p. 1

"As a result, we often cannot raise enough money for our Scouts to attend the formal Scout summer camps held throughout the United States. This year we decided we could probably do just as well by taking our boys on a five-day canoe trip down the Missouri River following the path of Lewis and Clark," he added. "We saved up and did yard work to raise enough funds to cover food and gas, and scouted out some cheap camping sites en route."

Troop 79's plan was to canoe from Coal Banks Landing to James Kipp Recreation Area.

Knox is the Deputy Chief Security Officer of the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver. "Knowing there were fellow Department of the Interior and BLM professionals on the river who would be very interested in ensuring a safe and productive trip, I also contacted as many of them as I could to garner the information we needed. In the process, we found exceptional support."

Troop 79 experienced an uneventful drive June 2 to James Kipp where they dropped off their end-of-trip vehicle. After they left the vehicle, however, the rain started and persisted throughout the three-hour drive to Coal Banks.

The rain did not relent until June 4. Temperatures in the low 40s, 25 mile-per-hour winds and a swelling river compounded the situation. With wet tents and wet sleeping bags, Troop 79's misery index was high.

"This is where the support went far above the expectation," Knox continued.

Bub and Tinker Sandy, volunteer campground hosts at Coal Banks, helped Troop 79.

Knox described how the scene unfolded.

"When they came to work Monday morning and saw the mess we had, they immediately offered to open up the visitor center to the boys and put sawhorses up by the heaters to dry out the gear. Tinker found the *Lord of the*

Rings trilogy in her RV and put it on the screen, pulled the benches in from outside, and herded the boys in like the teacher she used to be.”

Mark Schaefer, the supervisory outdoor recreation planner and river manager for the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, applied his efforts to aiding Troop 79.

“With Mark’s blessing, they even opened up the visitor center to us Monday night, allowing the boys a dry place to sleep while the rain and wind continued.”

While the boys dried themselves and their gear, Bub helped the troop leadership adjust their plan to adapt to the conditions and delays.

According to Knox, the scouts of Troop 79 had not traveled to Montana from Colorado to back out because of a little rain. “Our Colorado Scouts are generally tougher than the average boys anyway,” he said.

As time and the weather conditions developed, debris began washing into the river from tributaries. Schaefer periodically called Troop 79 with river updates. Finally, for safety reasons Schaefer recommended the troop leadership not take the boys further than Judith Landing.

“He also recommended I retrieve my truck at James Kipp before it became a submersible vehicle as they had already closed the roads south of there for flooding,” Knox mentioned. “Unfortunately, we found the northern roads closed when we tried to get to Kipp, resulting in yet another dilemma.”

Time and options were rapidly dwindling for Troop 79.

Schaefer offered to help retrieve Knox’s truck and park it in Judith Landing.

Brian Woolf, the park ranger at the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, provided a safety brief to the scouts prior to the start of their canoe trip the morning of June 4.

Woolf also discussed his job for the benefit of some of the older boys.

The canoe trip down the Missouri River gave the boys of Scout Troop 79 a glimpse of the vast untamed expanse Lewis and Clark experienced while exploring the North American continent in search of the North-West Passage.

“Two days later Mark found us on the river while on his way to Kipp and ensured we were doing well,” Knox stated. “We finished our journey on Thursday, arriving at Judith Landing to find the truck there as promised, with the boys singing some battle song from *Lord of the Rings* that old dads evidently aren’t cool enough to know.”

With the truck pre-staged at Judith Landing, Troop 79 saved a day of travel. They adjusted their itinerary opting to drive and stay at Coal Banks one more night before heading to the Little Big Horn Battlefield the following morning.

In a letter to Jamie Connell, the state director for BLM Montana/Dakotas, Knox wrote, “We could not have had such a safe trip, if we would have been able to continue at all after the rain, without the completely selfless support and encouragement of your incredible staff and employees on the river.”

Schaefer expressed the modest humility of a man with a true servant’s heart in response to the high praise. “It’s just what we do,” he said. “We take pride in our customer service. We would do the same thing for anyone.”

Knox also gave accolades for the assistance provided to Troop 79 by Joseph Nardinger, the field staff law enforcement ranger for the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument; John Edwards, the field staff law enforcement ranger for the Lewistown Field Office; and Connie Jacobs, director of the Missouri Breaks Interpretive Center.

“While we consider it our job to help young boys along the path to being honorable men, husbands, fathers, and citizens, it is people like you and yours that make our job easier,” Knox added.

According to Knox, the scouts now put BLM employees “in the same category as John Wayne and Chuck Norris for cool points (Mr. Schaefer gets extra cool points for being retired Air Force); a not insignificant honor from these boys.”

*Jonathan Moor
Public Affairs Officer
Central & HiLine Districts*



The visitor center at Coal Banks Landing offered a welcome respite for Scout Troop 79 as central Montana received record amounts of rain during their planned float trip this summer. Photo courtesy of Scout First Class Lyle Larson of Colorado Springs.

Eastern Montana BLM dinosaur tours Japan

“Jane” -- the most complete juvenile T. rex yet found -- was the centerpiece of the “World Dinosaur Exposition” this summer at the Kyocera Dome in Osaka, Japan.

Earlier this year, Scott Williams, field researcher and head preparator of the Burpee Museum in Rockford, Ill., and Director Maureen Mall hand-delivered a portion of Jane’s upper left jaw. The piece would be on loan for the duration of the exhibit.

“This year they (event organizers) wanted to do an expo with Jane as the star,” said Williams. “They purchased a cast of Jane but they were interested in getting her left maxilla because of its interesting pathology...that Jane might have been bit by another juvenile tyrannosaur.”

Jane’s maxilla has attracted the attention of both stateside researchers and Japanese expo planners because of tooth-inflicted punctures which have provided new theories about juvenile theropod (meat-eating dinosaur) interactions.

Williams said that he didn’t think event organizers were serious about the Jane exhibit until representatives arrived on the museum’s doorstep to discuss their proposition. The group spent a day talking about how the Jane exhibit would be situated at the Kyocera Dome.

“They already had plans with the whole exhibit mapped out where Jane would be, the location of the case and things like that,” said Williams. “I emailed Doug and Greg and said, ‘I don’t know if this is even possible or not...has this been done before?’”

“Tirara” poses for a photo op with a young admirer at a baseball game at the Kintiyō Stadium, as part of promotional events for the World Dinosaur Exhibition held at the multi-storied Kyocera Dome in Osaka, Japan. The mascot was inspired by the real-life T. rex “Jane” who was excavated from BLM-administered lands in Eastern Montana.

Jane served as a centerpiece exhibit at the expo held July 13 through Aug. 25.



Jane, so named after a Burpee Museum benefactor, straddles the Kyocera Dome in this advertisement for the 2013 World Dinosaur Exposition held in Osaka, Japan, this summer.

As Williams began working through the approval process with Miles City Field Office Lead Archaeologist Doug Melton and Montana/Dakotas State Office Paleontologist Greg Liggett to get a portion of the original jaw --which is the property of the people of the United States—to Japan, he was a bit hesitant. But after the exhibition company’s references checked out, adequate security was addressed and the insurance was covered, things came together.

“Once we had the official letter from the BLM saying all the stipulations were met, it was fairly painless,” he said.

Part of those stipulations included hand-delivering the fossil.

The original bone was on display with the full-sized replica of Jane’s complete skeleton as well as a big-as-life, animatronic, fully-feathered and colorful version of the young T. rex. The feathered rendition of Jane was also the centerpiece of the exposition’s website banner where Jane straddles the Kyocera Dome amongst other dinosaurs.

As if that isn’t enough, Jane was also the basis for a kid-friendly “Japanimation-type” character named Tirara --who served as the tour guide for the event and featured in commercials and baseball game promotional events. The mascot even sports a “scar” on the left side of its snout, much like Jane.

“The Japanese love their dinosaurs,” said Williams. “The very first weekend of the exhibit they had over 10,000 visitors to see the exhibit and Jane. It was really humbling and exciting for me to see so many people who are so excited --all age groups-- about dinosaurs and especially about Jane, Ekalaka’s favorite daughter.”

Mark Jacobsen
Public Affairs Officer
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District

Employees on the Move

NEW TO BLM MONTANA/ DAKOTAS

Lee J. Baldwin
Western Montana District
Administrative Support Assistant

Heidi L. Jones
Miles City Field Office
Legal Instruments Examiner

Jonathan C. Moor
Central Montana District
Public Affairs Specialist

Jill M. Nannenga
Glasgow Field Office
Rangeland Management Specialist

CONVERTED WITHIN BLM

Dustin J. Crowe
Billings Field Office
Rangeland Management Specialist

REASSIGNED WITHIN BLM

Christopher J. DeVault
Montana State Office
Petroleum Engineer Technician

Sarah L. LaMarr
Missoula Field Office
Fish Biologist

Jane Buechler
Montana State Office
Legal Instruments Examiner

Crystal L. Jahner
North Dakota Field Office
Production Accountability Technician

Paul W. Kelley
North Dakota Field Office
Supvy. Natural Resources Specialist

Amelia L. Savage
North Dakota Field Office
Natural Resource Specialist

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IT Specialist (SYSADMIN)

John E. Grau
IT Specialist

Lynne M. Martin
IT Specialist

Kathryn M. Ruckman
Computer Assistant

Tammy J. Watts
IT Specialist

Corrine L. Wilson
IT Specialist (CUSTSPT)

Armando DeAnda
Supervisory IT Specialist

Park L. Richard
IT Specialist (SYSADMIN)

Troy T. LaFleur
Telecommunications Specialist

Christopher A. Tavenner
IT Specialist (INFO SEC)

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Montana State Office
Contact Representative

Christopher W. Robinson
Miles City Field Office
Hydrologist

Kipper S. Blotkamp
Dillon Field Office
Forester

Brittney I. Linford
Montana State Office
Contract Specialist

Timothy D. Kammerzell
Montana State Office
Transportation Assistant

Joshua Jackson
Missoula Field Office
Forester

Donald Herauf
North Dakota Field Office
Supvy. Engineering Tech (Petroleum)

Nicholas R. Plovanic
Central Montana District
Supvy. Range Technician (Fire)

Adrienne M. Lipka
Malta Field Office
Rangeland Management Specialist

Christopher J. DeVault
Miles City Field Office
Supvy. Engineering Tech (Petroleum)

LEFT BLM MONTANA/DAKOTAS

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Montana State Office
Budget Technician

Jennifer E. Tilzey
Montana State Office
Human Resources Specialist

Melissa J. Christensen
Missoula Field Office
Fish Biologist

Alyson N. Piwowar
Dillon Field Office
Forester

Laurie R. Mills
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District
Administrative Support Assistant

Daniel E. Lopez
North Dakota Field Office
Petroleum Engineer

Daniel P. McMaster
Central Montana District
Lead Range Tech (Lead Wildland
Firefighter)

RETIRED

Donna J. Degner
Montana State Office
IT Specialist (DATAMGMT)

Steve A. Brandenburg
Central Montana District
Information Technology Specialist

Asko I. Virtanen
Montana State Office
IT Specialist (SYSADMIN)

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.

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