Albuquerque District Issues

Keeping the Resource Advisory Council (RAC) in the know

Danita Burns, District Manager

BLM New Mexico Sagebrush Treatments

If you haven't heard today (Sept 22, 2015), the BLM Director, Neil Kronze thanked all the BLM who helped make the Fish and Wildlife Service announcement that the Greater Sage-Grouse does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act a reality.

Is this a great thing? Sure it is. States that don't have the Greater Sage-Grouse did their part by forfeiting some of their program dollars to make this a reality. Taken as a whole, the collaborative, science-based greater sage-grouse strategy is the largest land conservation effort in U.S. history. However, in New Mexico we have completed vegetative treatments to reduce the density of native brush species (juniper, mesquite, creosote and sand sage) as a part of the BLM Restore New Mexico and Healthy Lands Initiatives.

These treatments do not affect Greater Sage Grouse because this species is not found in New Mexico.

The treatments are designed to improve large-scale watershed health by encouraging more herbaceous perennial plant species within the ecosystem. These treatments utilize mechanical, prescribed fire and herbicides as tools.

NM has applied pelleted herbicide to thin sagebrush and other woody species to enhance species diversity with the goal of encouraging a mosaic landscape with edge effects that improve wildlife habitat and watershed and rangeland health.

Other desired outcomes include reduction of potentially damaging wildfires, and to encourage the natural fire cycle back into the system.

So, if you are speaking to someone in the public who mentions that we are killing and thinning the sagebrush and thereby the Sage Grouse, that's not true. We don't have the Sage Grouse in

New Mexico, but we are improving our watershed for many other species. Please take a look at examples of our work in the Socorro Field Office.

This is a photo of sand sage prior to treatment in the Socorro Field Office management area.

This photo is post treatment of sand sage. Note the grasses that are appearing as the sage retreats.

Economic benefits from the BLM

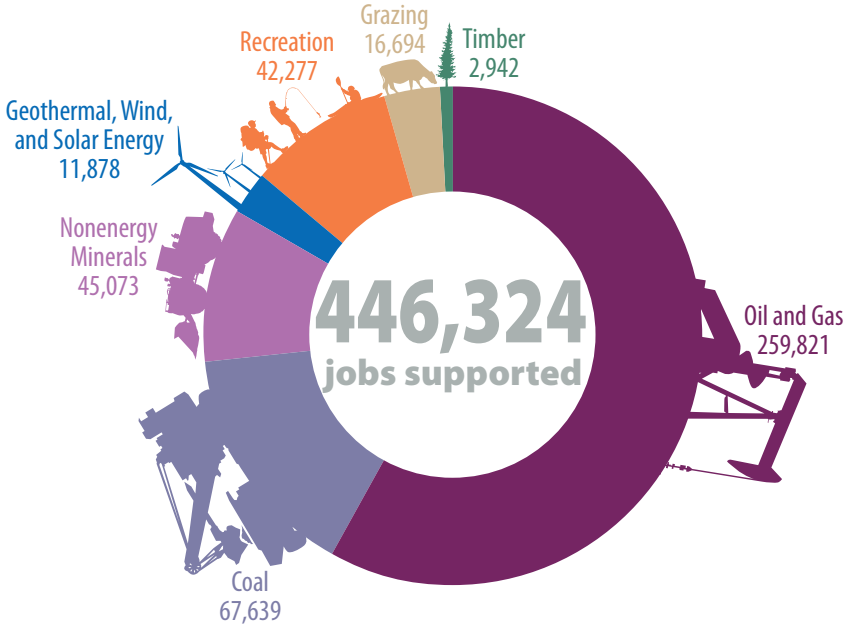
Before you left the meeting last Thursday, we spoke about economics and how we need to get the word out about the good things we do. Here is a PDF from Washington Office that outlines some socioeconomic benefits that the Bureau has and continues to have. This is the first update we are providing to keep you informed of issues between meetings. Please let me know if we are on the right track. Thanks RAC members for all you do!

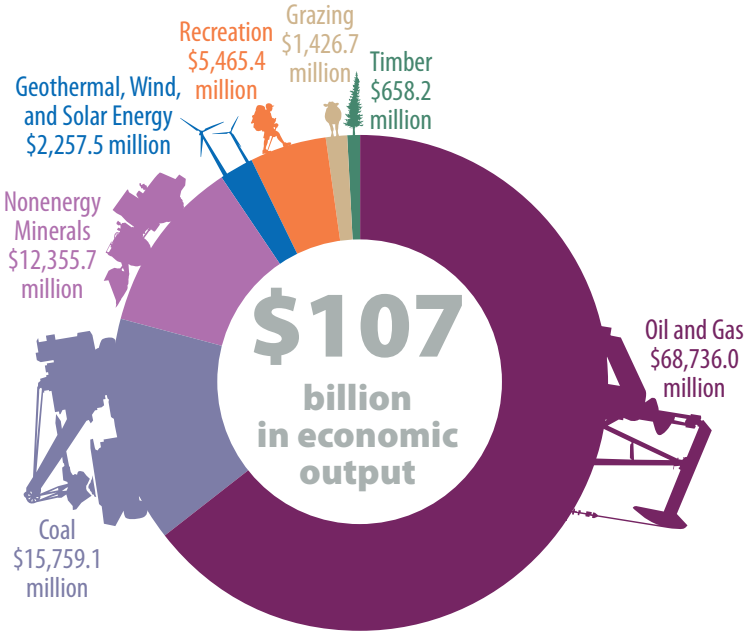
The BLM:

A Sound Investment for America

2014

Economic Contributions from BLM-Managed Lands





Fiscal Year 2013

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers more than 245 million acres of public land, primarily in the West. These lands encompass rangelands, forests, high mountains, arctic tundra, and deserts and are some of America's greatest assets. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of mineral estate.

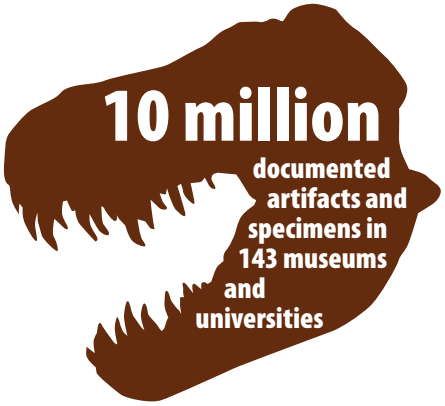
The public lands entrusted to the BLM offer significant benefits to the Nation. The BLM manages these lands to provide energy and mineral resources, recreation opportunities, and grazing and timber resources. The BLM also preserves cultural resources and iconic landscapes and maintains healthy ecosystems that provide clean air, clean water, and habitat for plants and wildlife.

In fiscal year 2013, BLM's management of the public lands supported more than 440,000 jobs and provided $107 billion in economic output throughout the country, while also contributing revenue to the U.S. Treasury. Additional data are available in the 2013 "U.S. Department of the Interior Economic Report" (www.interior.gov/ppa).

BLM

Economic Contributions from Restoration Activities

BLM's investment in environmental restoration and monitoring protects public assets, ensures public health and safety, and preserves and enhances essential ecosystem services. These investments contribute to the economy in the same way as other economic sectors. Restoration projects involve spending in a local economy on services such as construction, reseeding, and environmental consulting and maintaining and hiring additional employees to meet project demands.



Nonmarket Benefits from BLM-Managed Lands

Many of the benefits provided by public lands reflect values that are not captured in economic markets and are therefore difficult to identify and quantify. These nonmarket benefits reflect the value that individuals attribute to experiences of the environment, uses of natural resources, or the existence of particular ecological conditions that do not involve market transactions and therefore lack prices. Examples of some important nonmarket benefits sustained by BLM-managed lands include:

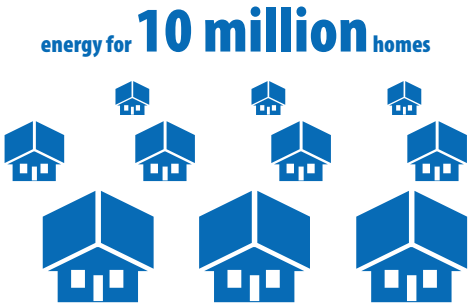
- Sustaining healthy wild horse and burro populations, which are valued as an important part of the culture and landscape of the West.
- Providing opportunities for subsistence hunting and fishing.
- Providing recreational opportunities, which are valued beyond cost in terms of the experience enjoyed by the participant.
- Supporting education and scientific research.
- Regulating water quality and quantity.
- Improving air quality and regulating climate.

Economic Sectors

Oil and Gas: The BLM leases more than 36 million acres of land, from the eastern states to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, for onshore oil and gas production. Wyoming, New Mexico, and Colorado have the largest number of producing leases. Domestic production from 63,000 federal onshore oil and gas wells accounts for **11 percent** of the nation's natural gas supply and **5 percent** of its oil.

Coal: The BLM administers coal leasing on approximately 570 million acres of federal mineral estate, sharing revenues with the states where coal leasing occurs. More than **a third** of the nation's coal comes from federal coal leases, many of which are in Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado.

Nonenergy Minerals: Mineral materials such as sand, gravel, dirt, and rock used in building and construction are vital to local economies, as are minerals obtained through hard rock mining. The value of hard rock minerals is underestimated because the BLM does not have production data from all the states. Nevada produces the highest volume of mineral materials and also produces more than **75 percent** of the gold in the United States and approximately 6.8 percent of the gold in the world.



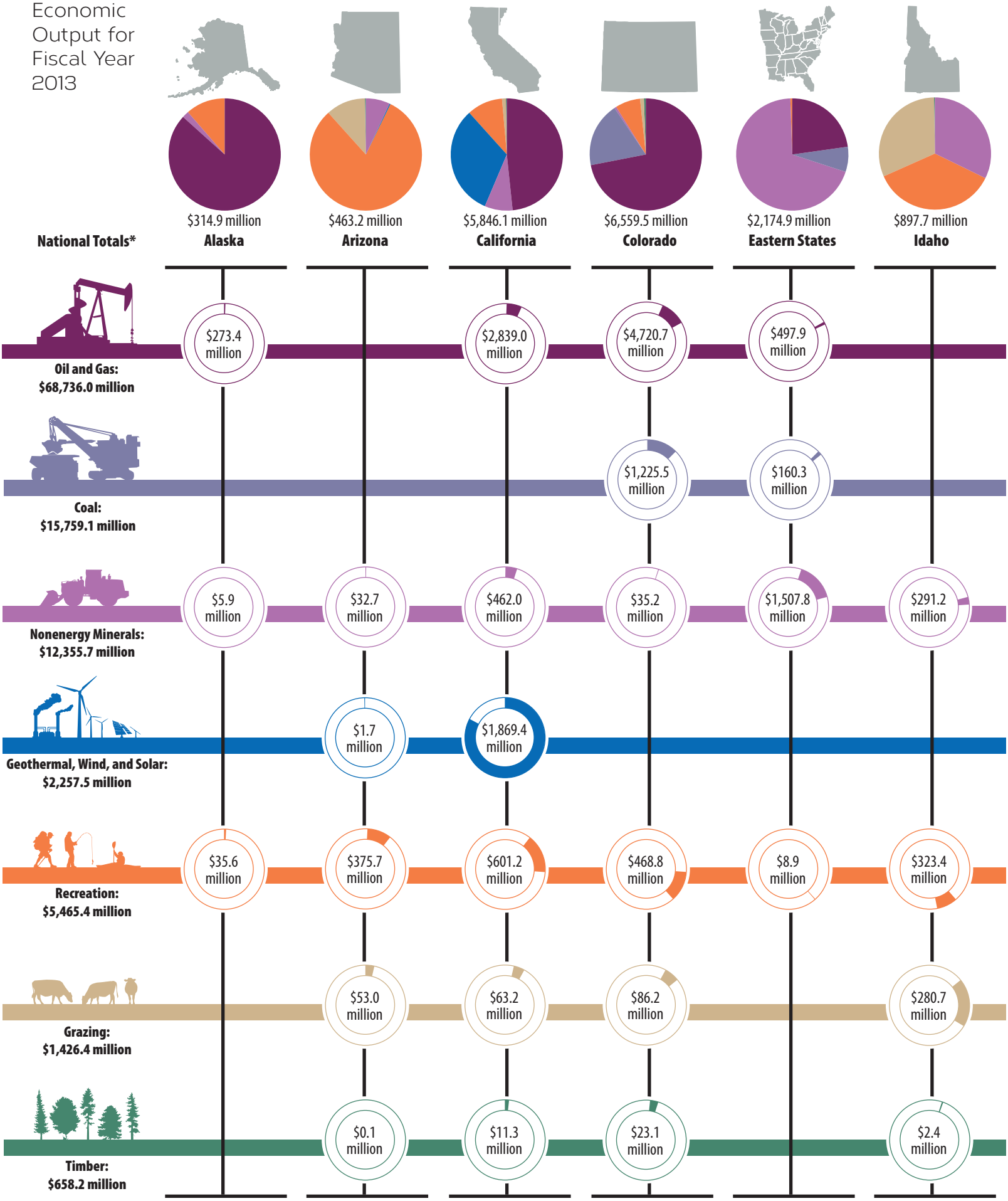
Geothermal, Wind, and Solar: BLM lands provide sites for renewable energy projects and for transmission facilities needed to deliver power from those projects to the consumer. BLM's geothermal leases produce more than 40 percent of our country's geothermal energy. The BLM has approved wind energy projects in Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming and has proposals for about 70 solar energy projects in Arizona, California, and Nevada. These geothermal, wind, and solar energy projects have the potential to supply power for **10 million** homes.

Recreation: People enjoy a wide variety of outdoor adventures on BLM lands. Recreational activities and the landscapes where they occur are vital to the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors. They also contribute significantly to local economies. In 2013, there were more than **61 million** recreation visits to BLM lands, with California, Nevada, and Oregon/Washington having 8 million or more visits each.

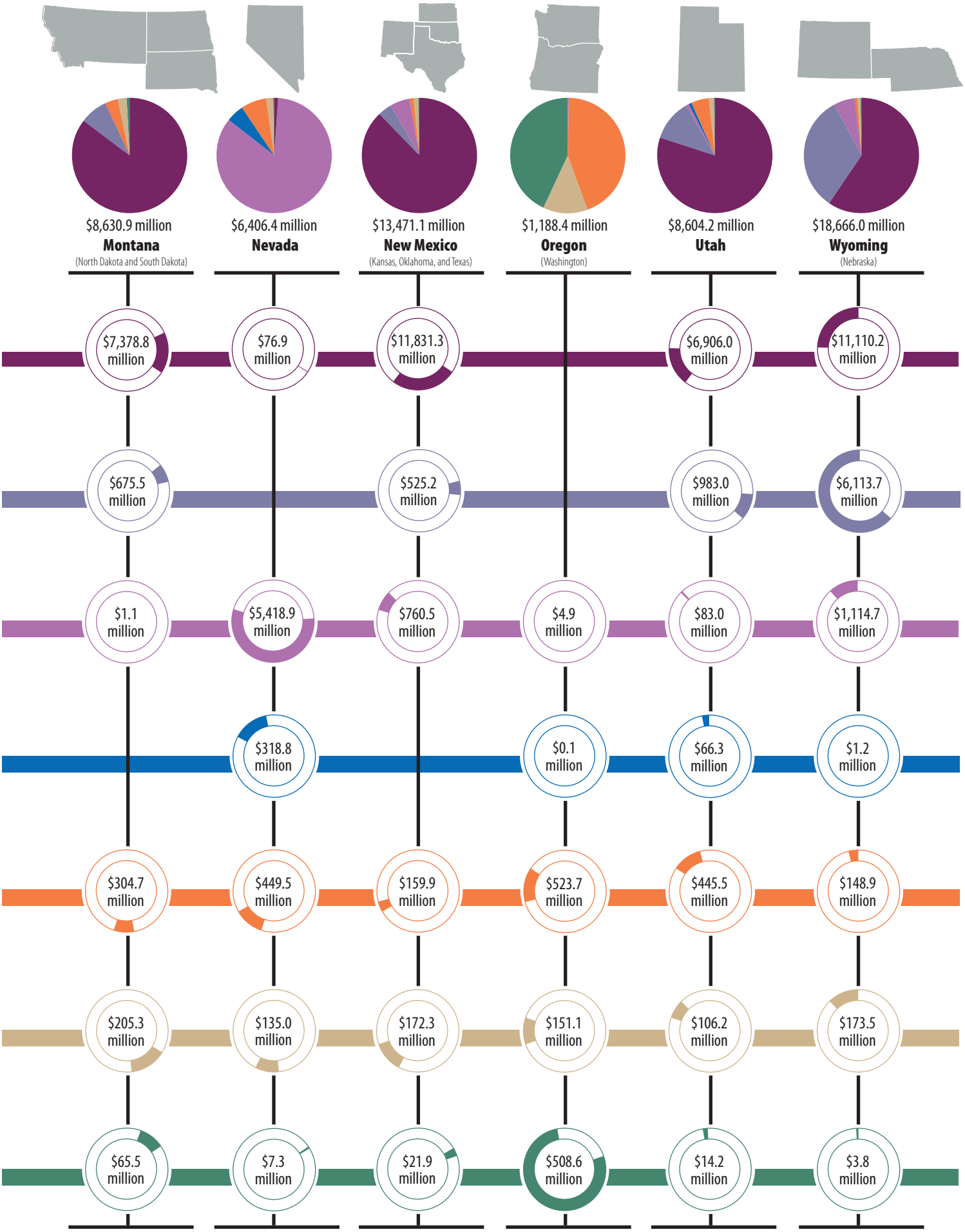
Grazing: The BLM manages livestock grazing on **155 million** acres of public lands and administers nearly 18,000 permits and leases held by ranchers who graze their livestock, mostly cattle and sheep, at least part of the year on more than 21,000 allotments. In 2013, the BLM authorized 7.9 million animal unit months (AUMs).

Timber: One-fourth of the lands managed by the BLM are forests or woodlands, primarily in the Pacific Northwest. Of these, 11 million acres are commercial forestlands that produce traditional forest products such as lumber, plywood, and paper, and **55 million** acres are woodlands that produce poles, greenery, biomass for energy production, and fuelwood for personal use, as well as high-quality wildlife habitat.

Total Economic Output for Fiscal Year 2013



* National totals may differ from the sum of individual state numbers because they take into account activity across state borders and average industry productivity across states.


$8,630.9 million
Montana
(North Dakota and South Dakota)
$6,406.4 million
Nevada
$13,471.1 million
New Mexico
(Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas)
$1,188.4 million
Oregon
(Washington)
$8,604.2 million
Utah
$18,666.0 million
Wyoming
(Nebraska)
$7,378.8 million
$76.9 million
$11,831.3 million
$6,906.0 million
$11,110.2 million
$675.5 million
$525.2 million
$983.0 million
$6,113.7 million
$1.1 million
$5,418.9 million
$760.5 million
$4.9 million
$83.0 million
$1,114.7 million
$318.8 million
$0.1 million
$66.3 million
$1.2 million
$304.7 million
$449.5 million
$159.9 million
$523.7 million
$445.5 million
$148.9 million
$205.3 million
$135.0 million
$172.3 million
$151.1 million
$106.2 million
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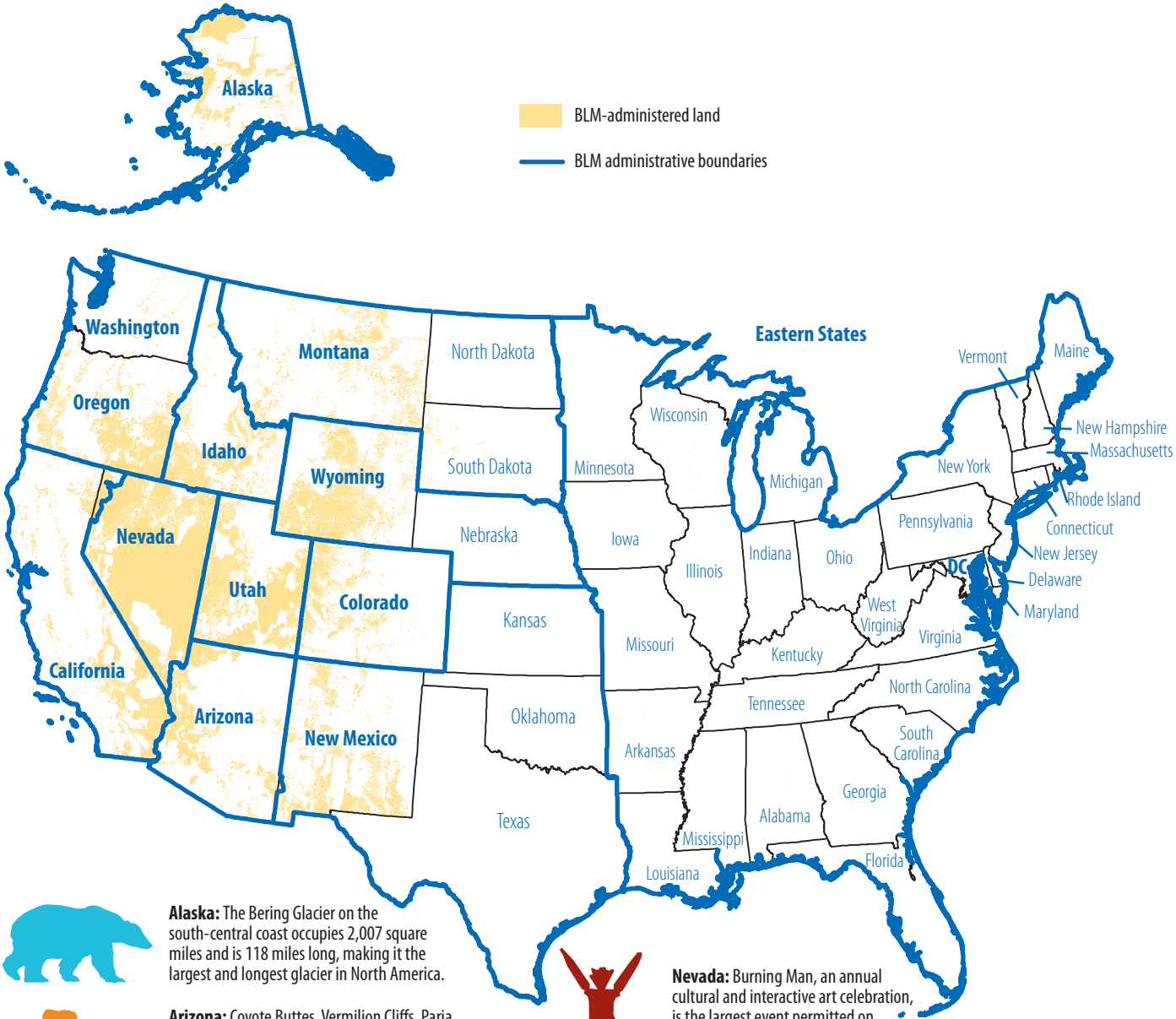
$21.9 million
$508.6 million
$14.2 million
$3.8 million



Alaska: The Bering Glacier on the south-central coast occupies 2,007 square miles and is 118 miles long, making it the largest and longest glacier in North America.

Arizona: Coyote Buttes, Vermilion Cliffs, Paria Canyon, and White Pockets are all remote, rugged geological treasures exhibiting swirled bands of colored sandstone.

California: The Imperial Sand Dunes are an internationally recognized world-class venue for off-highway vehicle enthusiasts as well as a home to rare plants and animals.

Colorado: The Canyons of the Ancients National Monument contains the highest known density of archaeological sites in the nation.

Eastern States: Several small beachfront tracts in southern Alabama provide one of the few nesting areas in the United States for the federally threatened loggerhead sea turtle.

Idaho: The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area contains the largest density of nesting raptors in North America, with 800 pairs of hawks, owls, eagles, and falcons arriving each spring to mate and raise their young.

Montana/Dakotas: Pompeys Pillar National Monument is home to Captain William Clark's signature carved into a sandstone butte along the Yellowstone River in 1806, the only remaining physical evidence along the Lewis and Clark route.

Nevada: Burning Man, an annual cultural and interactive art celebration, is the largest event permitted on BLM lands, covering more than 4,400 acres in the Black Rock Desert and attracting more than 50,000 attendees who temporarily form one of the largest cities in Nevada.

New Mexico: The BLM operates the only federal helium storage reservoir, enrichment plant, and pipeline system (located near Amarillo, Texas) and supplies more than 40 percent of the domestic demand for helium for balloons and medical, space, and defense applications.

Oregon/ Washington: The mighty Doerner Fir is the world's tallest Douglas fir—it towers at 327 feet tall with a diameter of 11.5 feet and is more than 450 years old.

Utah: The Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry near Price contains the densest concentration of Jurassic-aged dinosaur bones ever found, with more than 12,000 bones (belonging to at least 74 individual dinosaurs) excavated at the quarry.

Wyoming: Sweetwater County is a major contributor to the total world production of trona, a relatively rare sodium-rich mineral that is processed into soda ash and used in manufacturing glass, chemicals, paper, detergents, textiles, and food and in conditioning water.

http://blm.gov/f9jd
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July 2014