

BLM's "Take It Outside: Children and Nature Initiative" FY 2008 Application & Information

Background: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s "Take It Outside: Children and Nature Initiative" (TIO) program encourages children and families to spend more time outdoors on the public lands, and to encourage and develop stewardship of the public lands. The initiative is designed to consolidate and provide additional agency resources in these important efforts. The TIO Initiative was prompted by a growing national concern that children are spending significantly less time outdoors than previous generations; becoming more disconnected from nature; and increasingly showing the symptoms of an epidemic in childhood obesity. These issues were articulated in Richard Louv's 2005 book "*Last Child in the Woods.*" In response to these growing national concerns over childhood inactivity outdoors, natural resource agency policy-makers are promoting a nationwide effort to encourage children to take part in outdoor activities.

Goals: The Take It Outside: Children and Nature Initiative will coalesce, and, in some cases, expand many of the BLM's programs that successfully engage children and their families in the outdoors. The program also encourages BLM staff to develop new or innovative programs, ideas, or proposals to encourage children to spend more time outdoors on the public lands.

Following are some examples of how funding for this initiative could be used:

- **For Schools:** Enhance outdoor education programs with school partners at a number of locations. For example, the BLM is a strong supporter of "Hands on the Land," a network of field classrooms sponsored by six Federal agencies across the nation. Currently more than 20 BLM sites are members of this network. This effort provides the opportunity to enhance environmental and heritage education programs at field locations reaching children.
- **For Youth Organizations:** Strengthen partnerships with communities, partner groups, and volunteers to offer expanded programs for youth. For example, the BLM enters partnerships with organizations and programs such as Girl Scouts of the USA, the Boy Scouts of America, Kids Fishing Day and Wonderful Outdoor World (WOW), to introduce youth to fishing, camping, and other forms of outdoor recreation.
- **For Families:** Develop promotional materials or websites to promote family friendly outdoor recreation opportunities. For example, construct or add a "Take it Outside: Children and Nature Initiative" webpage on Field Office or State Office websites. The webpage could identify family recreational activities such as hiking, paddling, historical and archaeological interpretive programs, adventure sports, as well as geologic sightseeing and wildlife watching.

How to Apply: Complete and submit the following application to Patti Klein, National Stewardship Coordinator patti_klein@blm.gov by **April 15, 2008**. Applicants may apply for incentive funding amounts of \$1000 - \$5000. For FY08 field offices will be notified of selection by May 1, 2008 and be given a WO charge code to use for the project and assigned a project number.

“Take It Outside” Incentive Funding Application
Due Date 4/15/08

(VERY IMPORTANT: Please name your document using the project title and name of your field office.) (Example: kidsoutdoors – OR080)

- 1. Project Title:**

- 2. Project Description:** *Provide background information and a short summary of the project. Explain how the project meets the provided criteria and the primary objective of engaging children in meaningful and sustained outdoor experiences. Indicate if this is a single year or multi- year project.*

- 3. Project leader and phone number:**

- 4. State/Field Office location:**

- 5. List primary partner organization(s) and role(s) including partner contributions (include both in-kind and funding support provided):**

- 6. Past partnership, project or program successes:**

- 7. Age group or demographic targeted and estimated number of participants :**

- 8. Funding requested:** *Funding may be requested for no less than \$1000 and no more than \$5000, and must be spent or obligated in FY 2008.*

Selection Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Project Scope and Objective.** Does the project support the scope and objective of the program? Does the project engage children in meaningful and sustained outdoor experiences, and/or provide research findings to increase the engagement of children in natural settings? The project must take place primarily on BLM public lands, though inter-agency projects also are encouraged. (20 %)
2. **Project Partners.** Does the project engage Federal and/or Non-Federal partners? An essential element of TIO is the importance of working with partners and leveraging funds. Describe total partner contributions and provide an estimate of the value of their contribution, including contributed funds. (20 %)
3. **Target audience.** Does the project clearly define the audience? How many people will this project impact? (20 %)
4. **Project Impact.** Does the project demonstrate increased understanding and interaction with natural and cultural resources? What is the anticipated impact on the audience or surrounding community? (20 %)
5. **Project Duration and Sustainability.** Is the project a short or long-term project? Does the project address future longevity? (20 %)

Approved TIO projects will be required to have a project number to facilitate accountability and financial tracking. A cap of 10 % is placed on allowable BLM internal overhead charges (P & X codes) against TIO funds. Project accomplishments must be reported by 9/30/2008 to Patti Klein. For FY 2008 field offices will be notified of selection by May 1, 2008 and be given a WO charge code to use for the project and assigned a project number.

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