

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act- A Legacy for Users Implementation Plan/Fiscal Year 2009 Program Proposal

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) objective is to improve a selective Public Lands Transportation System that will contribute to a safe and adequate network of roads and trails to improve public access to the BLM facilities and resources. Such a system will also support national initiatives such as rebuilding America's infrastructure, enhancing tourism, and promoting rural economic development.

A major component for achieving the BLM's objective was the administrative designation of Land Management Highway System (LMHS) roads in 1996. This year, the BLM will continue to update the LMHS to incorporate present-day demands on state and county roads that serve the BLM-administered public lands and facilities. Such an update will enhance our ability to meet the challenges posed in the future through working with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), State departments of transportation, and counties.

This proposal outlines the BLM's strategy for a comprehensive approach of joint administrative funding with the FHWA to adequately implement provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) on the BLM-administered public lands.

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- Continue re-engineering the BLM's Transportation System management process to update the policy and procedures to reflect current needs for access to the public lands. A multi-disciplinary team (with input from other agencies) will continue to evaluate current needs and develop new procedures for improving and coordinating the transportation planning process and assessing conditions and road status.
- Continue coordination with the Forest Service and other agencies to improve consistency on transportation planning procedures and on the designation and data needs for the forest highways and LMHS roads.
- Continue coordinating with other partner agencies to use Public Land Highway (PLH) funds to leverage other available funding for priority projects on LMHS roads.
- Continue to gather data for needs analysis for LMHS routes.

- Continue to identify, develop, and coordinate mutually beneficial PLH projects that will improve safety and capacity and promote tourism and economic growth (i.e., interpretation, enhancements, Back Country Byways, trails, scenic, and/or historic easements).
- Continue coordinating additional selective LMHS routes with State departments of transportation, other Federal agencies, counties, tribal governments, and travel-related associations.
- Continue partnerships with Federal, state, and local agencies, tribal governments, and travel-related associations to develop comprehensive plans for access and use of the BLM-administered lands.
- Continue to increase public awareness of tourism and recreation opportunities available on public lands provided by an improved road and trail system.
- Continue to cooperate in the updating of State transportation plans, including providing relevant information about the BLM land use plans.
- Explore how the BLM can better tie urban recreation, aesthetic, and spiritual needs to developmental needs of rural areas.
- On a continuing basis, review and update the BLM transportation plans to better reflect approved activities and access requirements.
- Continue cooperation in the development of statewide plans for implementation of the SAFETEA-LU.

The aforementioned efforts are in addition to other ongoing transportation planning and project development in support of the BLM's mission, agency initiatives, and cost-sharing programs within several Western States. The transportation planning program is integral to satisfying the objectives the BLM has established for not only implementing the SAFETEA-LU, but also preparing for the next reauthorization of the transportation bill.

FUNDING NEEDS

In order to support these activities, the BLM estimates FY 2009 planning and administrative costs to be \$2,200,000. The allocation of this administrative funding is a vital requisite to timely implementation and ensuring that an orderly and effective program is carried out.