

MAKING A Difference

BLM

BLM's 2008
VOLUNTEER
Annual Report



From the DIRECTOR



DEAR BLM
VOLUNTEERS—

I am pleased to present the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Volunteer Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2008. This publication presents highlights of a winning year for our BLM volunteers: working individually, in teams, and in partnerships, for days and even months at a stretch, you contributed more than 1.2 million hours of time and talent in 2008. That's equivalent to the work of more than 650 full-time agency employees. This publication can only begin to capture the breadth of contributions that you made to BLM last year.

In these days of pervasive technology, sedentary pursuits, and economic uncertainty, BLM finds itself on the leading edge of two of America's most pressing challenges: reconnecting our nation's children, young adults, and families with their natural environment and maximizing opportunities for youth internships and employment on public lands. Luckily, we are blessed with 256 million acres within the National System of Public Lands, which offer premier possibilities for learning, employment, recreation, physical exercise, tranquility, and a renewed sense of awe. And of course, BLM's mission work—preserving treasured landscapes, improving the health of forests and rangelands, sustaining native species, guarding our fragile biological and heritage resources, and supporting economic activities through BLM's forestry, grazing, and energy/minerals programs—is always at the core of what we do.

With such a full plate, it's obvious that BLM staff, deeply committed though they are, cannot possibly carry out all the day-to-day agency responsibilities and pursue new initiatives alone. We gratefully rely on the help of interested citizens such as you, who believe in our mission, who love the public lands, and who are willing to volunteer time and energy in a spirit of cooperation. We think you'll be amazed—at yourselves!—when you read about the BLM volunteer accomplishments described in the next few pages. Whether in the short term or over the long run, what you do matters.

In a March 2009 essay for TIME magazine, President Obama wrote about the importance of service at this "defining moment in history," saying:

... While our government can provide every opportunity imaginable for us to serve . . . it is up to each of us to seize those opportunities. To do our part to lift up our fellow Americans. To realize our own true potential by hitching our wagon to something bigger than ourselves.

Luckily, our outstanding BLM volunteers are way ahead of the game. Thank you, on behalf of all BLM employees and all Americans, for your valuable service to BLM.

Robert V. Abbey

Director, Bureau of Land Management





Selected HIGHLIGHTS by BLM Program

RECREATION

GLENNALLEN, AK: Six American Hiking Society members participated in the 2008 Volunteer Vacations program, donating approximately 600 hours to trail repair and rehabilitation efforts on the 0.25-mile Gulkana National Wild River portage trail. Some 1,500 visitors use the portage trail each season to carry river gear around narrow Canyon Rapids.

TUCSON, AZ: A volunteer group of high school students from Wellesley, Massachusetts, along with their church's youth group leaders, worked a total of 125 volunteer hours in one morning to remove trash along unauthorized foot trails and adjacent washes. The participants cleaned up over 2.5 miles of trail, collecting 54 bags of trash.

REDDING, CA: The Redding Foundation and the McConnell Foundation contributed \$250,000 in 2008 to build over 15 miles of hiking trail and two trailheads. Hosted workers toiled for more than 4,000 hours to make this project a success. Mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers now enjoy a trail system that extends for more than 30 miles.

GRAND JUNCTION, CO: As part of the Hilltop Experiential Learning Project (HELP), crews of at-risk youths spent 1 day a week during the spring and fall constructing new trails and maintaining existing trails. They contributed 543 hours of service in 2008, completing the "Kids Meal" beginner's mountain bike loop and repairing several deteriorating trail sections with high-quality rock work.

CARLSBAD, NM: A group of volunteers, including Carlsbad High School's Chihuahuan Desert Lab students, constructed a new trail along the Black River on National Public Lands Day.

The unique Black River seems to sink and reappear within the gypsum of the Castile Formation in the area; the resulting pools serve as desert oases that attract a variety of wildlife.

VALE, OR: For National Public Lands Day, the Vale District gathered skilled volunteer cavers to inventory caves and determine the locations of "significant caves" in need of management, as required by the Cave and Karst Resource Protection Act of 1988. Interested members of the public were also provided tours and presentations related to cave resources.

LORTON, VA: National Trails Day activities at the Meadowood Special Recreation Management Area included corridor clearing and pruning on the Meadowood trail, trail construction, and a 3-mile hike through the property.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

BISHOP, CA: On National Public Lands Day, the Bishop Field Office staff held a native plant education and plant sale event in cooperation with the California Native Plant Society and the University of California White Mountain Research Station. Meanwhile, volunteers removed invasive Russian thistle from a previously closed and unauthorized hill climb north of Bishop.

MONTROSE, CO: Volunteers conducted a bat survey and capture and recorded echolocation calls from 13 bat species, including 2 species listed on the field office's Sensitive Wildlife Species List. Coordinated by BLM biologists, this extensive inventory covered 40,000 acres in the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness and Gunnison Sage Grouse Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The data will be used to develop a bat protection plan.

JUPITER, FL: On National Public Lands Day, almost 100 volunteers contributed to a variety of projects, including mulching of a planting project from last year's NPLD event, removal of exotic plants, and general tract cleanup. Trash and removed vegetation completely filled two large dumpsters.

SNAKE RIVER BIRDS OF PREY NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA (NCA), ID: Snake River Raptor Volunteers helped to construct water catchments in the NCA to support nest trees for Swainson's hawks, a "watch list" species. These hawks are common in farmlands surrounding the NCA, but have been less so within the NCA because of the scarcity of trees.

FARMINGTON, NM: Four 2,250-gallon wildlife water guzzlers donated by the Devon Energy Corporation were placed on BLM lands near Navajo Lake to improve wildlife habitat. Employees of the oil and gas company also volunteered to install the guzzlers, which now provide water for songbirds, deer, elk, and mountain lions, among other animals.

RAWLINS, WY: The field office hosted a Seeds for Success program in cooperation with Chicago Botanical Gardens interns. Two interns collected seeds from various plant species for the London Botanical Gardens, which is working to gather and store seeds from every plant on earth. The interns also assisted BLM biology staff with a host of other activities, logging over 1,500 hours on these projects.

WILD HORSES & BURROS

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER, CO: Sixteen volunteers from the University of Missouri's Alternative Spring Break program donated 278 hours to various maintenance and fencing jobs in the Spring Creek Wild Horse Herd Management Area and at the Bradfield Bridge Campground.

BURNS, OR: In 2008, 41 volunteers contributed over 5,500 hours for the benefit of wild horses. Their time was spent promoting mustangs; giving presentations and demonstrations; writing stories, books, blogs, and news articles; mentoring new adopters; completing compliance checks; fostering orphaned foals and horses awaiting reassignment; helping at and hosting adoption events; providing basic gentling training; advertising events and

animals in need of homes; and even opening their own stables to "just one more" wild horse desperately in need of a home.

WILDERNESS

EL CENTRO, CA: On National Public Lands Day, four Border Patrol Explorer Scouts and three Scout leaders assisted BLM staff members in picking up trash within the Valley of the Moon area in the Jacumba Wilderness, 30 miles west of El Centro. The volunteers hauled out enough trash to fill two pickup trucks.

RIDGECREST, CA: At China Garden Spring along the Darwin Falls Wilderness boundary, nine National Public Lands Day volunteers worked with BLM staff to rebuild an earthen retaining wall for a koi pond, improve access-road drainage, remove dead cottonwood trees, and clean up a large pile of metal debris from an abandoned millsite. In all, they filled two trailers and two pickups. Members of the community of Darwin are also working with BLM to develop an interpretive panel for the site on the history of China Garden.

RIPARIAN/WATERSHED

YUMA, AZ: The Colorado River in the Yuma area benefited from several cleanups during 2008, including: the 2-day "Reverse River Run" sponsored by the volunteer group Amigos del Rio, National Public Lands Day work on an interpretive trail in the Oxbow Campground, and a Boy Scout project in which 77 volunteers removed 12 tons of debris.

MCINNIS CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA, CO: Centennial Canoe Company, a BLM permittee, initiated a 3-day volunteer project on the Gunnison River at the mouth of Dominguez Canyon. Partnering with crew leaders from Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and BLM-Grand Junction, 46 volunteers cut and sprayed tamarisk, planted and caged cottonwood trees (to prevent beaver damage), and reinforced river access trails.

MEDFORD, OR: With record high temperatures and the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River flowing at its highest capacity, nearly 250 people came out to volunteer at the Noxious Weed Education and Removal/16th Annual Rogue River Clean-up Day. They scoured the river's bed and



banks, cleaned up 10 cubic yards of discarded garbage, 20 tires, a shopping cart, and even a kiddie pool. In addition, they destroyed invasive plants, including Scotch broom, Dyers woad, and close to 10,000 star-thistle plants.

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT (GSENM), UT: Working closely with the GSENM hydrologist, a retired U.S. Geological Survey specialist and his wife helped to reestablish a stream monitoring program at the Monument to gather information on the Escalante Drainage. They arranged the lab so that data could be properly processed, and the entire program was set up so that other volunteers and staff would be able to conduct stream monitoring as well.



CULTURAL/HISTORICAL

BILLINGS, MT: Four graduate students archived and cataloged some 10,000 artifacts at the Billings Curation Center, gaining valuable experience while helping make the Center's collection more accessible.

ELKO, NV: More than 60 California Trail Center volunteers from numerous organizations provided a total of 1,302 hours of service, assisting Trail Center staff with school programs, a "Trail Days" celebration, public meetings, and displays at two separate Nevada State tourism meetings.

ELY, NV: Thirty-seven National Public Lands Day volunteers contributed 185 hours to the improvement of a 0.15-mile portion of the Silver State Trail, which leads to a historic Civilian Conservation Corps water guzzler within the White Rock Range Wilderness. The group installed four steps on the existing trail and conducted some minor restoration.

ST. GEORGE, UT: In 2008, 50 Color Country Site Stewards spent 725 hours gathering archaeological and paleontological site condition information to help BLM identify at-risk sites and take appropriate action to protect important heritage resources. Site stewards also cleaned up litter, installed signs, reported violations, and assisted BLM archaeologists in conducting field surveys, documenting new sites, and completing data recovery projects.

NEWCASTLE, WY: A Passport in Time project focused on surveying unexplored areas surrounding the Little Missouri Antelope Trap, a prehistoric/historic antelope trapping complex consisting of drive lines and pit traps made of juniper logs. Project volunteers intensively surveyed a sizeable area of the trap landscape that had not been previously investigated. New discoveries included juniper drive wings and rare pottery fragments in the habitation areas associated with the hunting structures.

ENERGY/ MINERALS

BILLINGS, MT: After 42 years of service to BLM, a retiree returned as a volunteer to conduct compliance checks on abandoned well locations, which was one of his responsibilities before he retired. His remarkable ability to find abandoned wells has greatly decreased search time spent by BLM staff.

RENO, NV: More than 70 extremely dangerous abandoned mine shafts near the central Nevada communities of Lida and Gold Point were backfilled during 5 days of volunteer work in 2008. The Nevada Mining Association recruited industry volunteers and arranged for the loan of a large bulldozer, a truck to transport it, and an equipment operator from a regional mine. Fuel for the equipment was also donated. The Nevada State Office, working with the Nevada Division of Minerals, provided overall coordination and planning.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION/ INTERPRETATION

ANCHORAGE, AK: In 2008, the Friends of the Campbell Creek Science Center raised more than \$68,000 in donations, grants, and in-kind contributions, allowing more than 1,800 students to attend 40 Center programs "on scholarship," bus transportation included. The all-volunteer Friend's Board of Directors contributed over 700 hours of service in 2008.

FT. BENTON, MT: In only its second year of operation, the Missouri Breaks Interpretive Center hosted approximately 700 students at 54 interpretive programs. Largely prepared and presented by volunteers, the programs addressed topics such as area history, wildlife, and geology. In all, the Center's 11 volunteers donated a total of 2,643 hours in 2008.

EUGENE, OR: The Willamette Resources Education Network contributed more than 2,500 hours of service in 2008, providing 189 environmental education presentations for 6,400 visiting schoolchildren and their teachers at the West Eugene Wetlands.

CASPER, WY: During 2008, the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center opened its doors to 4,816 children from various educational institutions. Center volunteers worked with BLM staff to welcome school groups, furnish educational packets, and provide orientations and guided tours of the facility.

ROCK SPRINGS, WY: Elders from the Northern Ute, Eastern Shoshone, and Northern Arapaho Tribes met at the White Mountain Petroglyph Site to discuss its importance to their tribes. The discussions were filmed in preparation for a "virtual site tour" for use online and in schools.

OTHER

MONTROSE, CO: Seven volunteers assisted staff from BLM's Uncompahgre Field Office and the U.S. Forest Service's Ouray Ranger District at the front desk of the Public Lands Center. Supervised by the office volunteer coordinator, the volunteers dedicated 884 hours of their time to answering questions for the general public, routing phone calls, assisting with filing, and operating the Center bookstore.

BOISE, ID: At the Idaho Initial Point—established in 1867 as the reference basis for all Idaho land descriptions and now a registered "historic point of interest"—volunteers from several organizations replaced the missing monument with a stainless steel cylinder embedded into a concrete observation deck. They also refurbished the observation deck and railings and added a brass plaque. An official "Remonumentation of Initial Point" plat is now filed in BLM's public land records system.



SALT LAKE CITY, UT: One volunteer contributed his technical expertise to help BLM maintain the dozen or so permanent climate recording stations that are placed throughout the state. His work included maintenance as well as data collection and compilation. He helped BLM to standardize the data collection and programming at each station, which will enhance the ability to share the data with other organizations, most notably the Utah State University Climate Center and the Western Regional Climate Center. He even rebuilt a solar panel at one station, saving the government thousands of dollars in replacement costs.

SPECIAL EVENTS

"MAKING A DIFFERENCE" NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS—BLM presented eight "Making a Difference" Awards for outstanding volunteer service/program leadership in 2008. The honorees were: "Nick's Interns," King Range National Conservation Area, CA; The Sea Ranch California Coastal National Monument Taskforce, CA; Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, CO (various sites); Joanne and Don Murray, NV (various sites); Kathy and Bruce Salsbury, Lake Valley Historic Townsite, NM; Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN), Eugene, OR; Cindy Oster, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, UT; and BLM employee Paul Tanner, Amarillo, TX. Photos and winner profiles are available on the BLM Volunteer Program website at www.blm.gov/volunteer.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY—In 2008, National Public Lands Day engaged the services of an estimated 100,000 volunteers in projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. locations overseas. BLM provided nearly 10,000 volunteers at 127 sites in 18 states, generating millions of dollars in enhancements to BLM public lands and facilities. More information on National Public Lands Day is available at www.publiclandsday.org.



NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION SYSTEM

Volunteer contributions to units of BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) are highly valued and vitally important to achieving mission goals. In fiscal year (FY) 2008, volunteers contributed 344,064 hours to NLCS lands, including national monuments (NMs) and national conservation areas (NCAs), wild and scenic rivers, national scenic and historic trails, and wilderness and wilderness study areas. These hours are included in the figures in the charts presented in this report.



Community support for the mission of the NLCS and BLM is reflected in the hundreds of people who volunteered their time at such sites as the Desert Discovery Center, located within the California Desert NCA and pictured at left. The NCA was the beneficiary of a phenomenal 103,178 hours of volunteer labor in FY 2008 alone.

Volunteer Activity for Fiscal Years 2003-2008

Year	Total Hours	Value to BLM (\$)	Work Years ²	Value of 1 Work Hour (\$) ³	Value of 1 Work Year (\$)
2008	1,202,257	24,345,704	668	20.25	36,450
2007	1,285,678	25,083,572	714	19.51	35,118
2006	1,346,674	25,277,121	748	18.77	33,786
2005	1,292,859	23,323,176	718	18.04	32,472
2004	1,506,365	26,436,706	837	17.55	31,590
2003	1,553,014	26,696,311	863	17.19	30,942

¹ The 2008 volunteer program was accomplished at a cost of \$1,226,646, for a return of about \$19.85 for every \$1.00 expended.

² 1 work year = 1,800 hours

³ The value of volunteer contributions is calculated annually by Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org), a national leadership forum committed to volunteerism and citizen action. The dollar figure is based on the latest data available for the average hourly wage for nonagricultural workers as published in the yearly *Economic Report of the President*.

Summary of BLM State Office Volunteer Contributions, Fiscal Year 2008

State	Hours	Value (\$) ^{1,3}	Work Years ^{2,3}	Number of Individuals
Alaska	11,416	231,174	6	132
Arizona	123,355	2,497,939	69	3,170
California	232,885	4,715,921	129	9,504
Colorado	172,354	3,490,169	96	3,933
Eastern States	25,641	519,230	14	611
Idaho	33,800	684,450	19	2,024
Montana/Dakotas	34,678	702,230	19	876
New Mexico	140,641	2,847,980	78	1,425
Nevada	138,079	2,796,100	77	2,019
Oregon/Washington	181,335	3,672,034	101	3,780
Utah	83,380	1,688,445	46	2,757
Wyoming	24,313	492,338	14	530
Natl. Interagency Fire Center	360	7,290	<1	3
National Operations Center	20	405	<1	1
Totals³	1,202,257	24,345,705	670	30,765

¹ Based on a rate of \$20.25 per hour, as calculated by Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org)

² 1 work year = 1,800 hours

³ Totals may be slightly off as a result of rounding

National Volunteer Totals for Fiscal Year 2008

Program	Volunteer Hours ¹	Donated/Hosted Worker Hours ¹	Total Hours
Recreation	504,064	97,527	601,591
Biological Resources	77,123	21,813	98,936
Wild Horses and Burros	36,968	88,670	125,638
Cadastral Survey	1,406	0	1,406
Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas	23,774	11,893	35,667
Riparian/Watershed	26,016	12,362	38,378
Cultural/Historical	104,495	4,272	108,767
Minerals	2,007	3,034	5,041
Support Services	35,348	11,974	47,322
Environmental Education/ Interpretation	83,798	22,306	106,104
Other	19,482	13,925	33,407
Total²	914,481	287,776	1,202,257
Funds Expended	720,244	506,402	1,226,646
Value of Work^{2,3}	18,518,240	5,827,464	24,345,704

◀ ¹ The term "volunteer," as used in the rest of this report, includes "donated/hosted workers." Volunteers work for BLM without being paid. They donate their time and, in some instances, equipment and money to assist BLM with a variety of jobs. Donated or hosted workers, on the other hand, are paid by another organization but work for BLM at no charge. Hosted workers made up about 24 percent of the total volunteer time in 2008.

² Based on a rate of \$20.25 per hour, as calculated by Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org)

³ Totals may be slightly off as a result of rounding.

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Cover: Fountain Valley School volunteers reroute eroded portions of Colorado's Powerline Trail, located within the remote Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area.

For more information on the BLM Volunteer Program, including a list of partner organizations cited for special acknowledgment by our State and Field Offices, please visit our website at <http://www.blm.gov/volunteer>.

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