

# Education, Interpretation, and Youth Engagement

*National Strategy*  
2013–2018







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## From the Director



I am pleased to present the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Education, Interpretation, and Youth Engagement Strategy for 2013–2018. This Strategy underscores the BLM's commitment to the concept of shared stewardship. We know that the health and productivity of the public lands depend on citizens who are informed and willing to assist us in protecting and restoring America's natural and cultural legacy. Strong education, interpretation, and youth programs are essential to our efforts to engage citizens in the work we do on behalf of the American people.

These programs help foster meaningful connections between people and their public lands, expand citizen understanding of our complex multiple-use mission, and inspire conservation stewardship and service.

BLMers have traditionally engaged partners as part of the way we do business. The goals and objectives outlined in this Strategy can help the bureau strengthen those partnerships and reach out to new and diverse audiences as well. This will be particularly important as we seek to expand awareness of resource careers and establish pathways to careers for youth from all backgrounds. In fact, by pursuing the goals outlined in this Strategy, the BLM is making an investment in the future. Education, interpretation, and youth engagement will lead to the next generation of conservation leaders who will be responsible for America's public lands for years to come.

States should feel empowered by this Strategy to build on their successes and their existing programs. I urge all BLM staff to review the goals and objectives and to consider steps that can be taken at your organizational level to achieve them. By raising the profile of education, interpretation, and youth programs and committing ourselves to using these programs as important management tools, this Strategy will help to ensure that the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands are sustained for present and future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Pool". The signature is stylized and fluid.

**Mike Pool**  
Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

# Vision

**Education, interpretation, and youth programs are essential for the BLM to achieve its mission of sustaining the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands. The BLM's expansive land holdings are significant resources for engaging people of all ages in learning about the interconnections among people, cultural heritage, and the natural world. Through learning, play, and work, individuals forge connections to their public lands and find personal inspiration. Young people, engaged from an early age in learning and recreation on the public lands, often go on to become active stewards and conservation leaders.**



# Guiding Principles

**COLLABORATION** We embrace collaborative approaches, working with partners, volunteers, and communities in all aspects of our programs.

**DIVERSITY** We acknowledge cultural diversity and regional differences in perspective in developing our programs and materials.

**SOUND SCHOLARSHIP** Our programs and materials are based on sound scholarship, research, and scientific methods.

**BEST PRACTICES** We share best practices and resources with all levels of the organization in the planning and implementation of our programs.

**LIFELONG LEARNING** We provide opportunities for lifelong learning starting at the preschool level and continuing through adulthood.

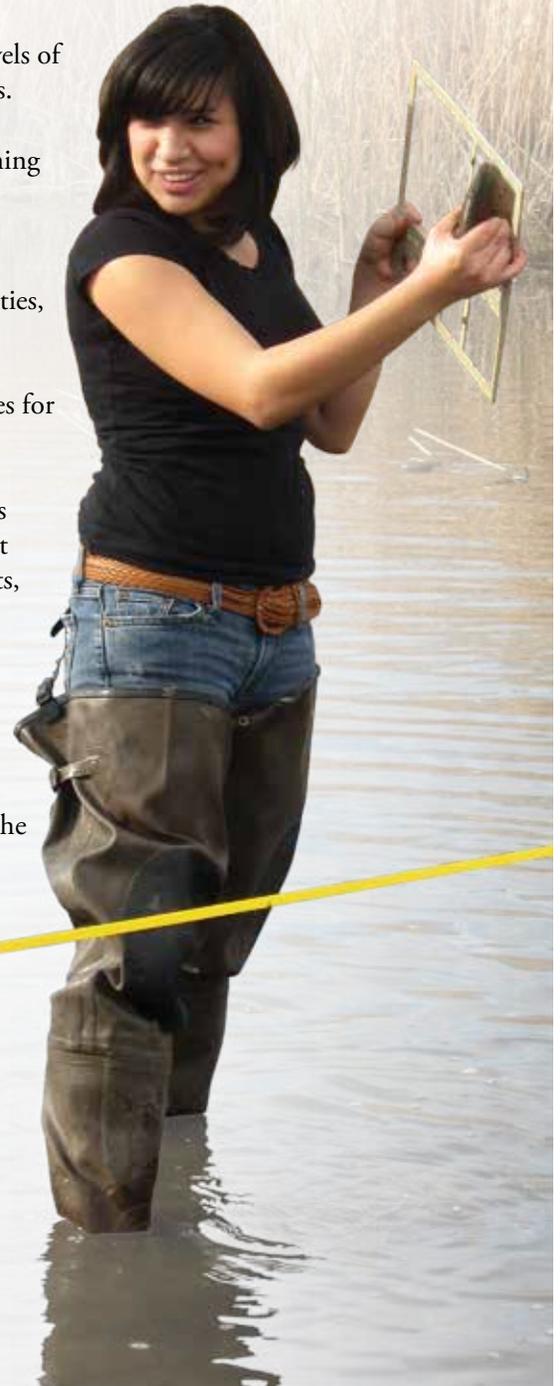
**ACCESSIBILITY** We strive to make our programs accessible for all visitors regardless of their backgrounds, cultures, ages, languages, abilities, and needs.

**CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT** We encourage and provide opportunities for active stewardship of public lands.

**HANDS-ON LEARNING** We believe that hands-on learning enables people to be active instead of passive learners, allowing them to extract meaning and understanding through in-depth experiences with objects, resources, and ideas.

**CHILDREN AND NATURE** We support opportunities to connect children and nature.

**INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE** We promote, support, and reward innovation. We take pride in our work and are committed to the pursuit of excellence.



# I. PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

## Foundational Elements

The BLM is already pursuing a broad range of education and interpretation activities and has been routinely engaging youth in stewardship and work to achieve the bureau's land management objectives. Education, interpretation, and youth engagement are important tools for land managers. The time has come to raise the profile of these efforts and to institutionalize them as BLM programs that support our mission.



### ◆ GOAL 1: Programmatic Foundation

*Establish a strong programmatic foundation for education, interpretation, and youth engagement throughout the bureau.*

For education, interpretation, and youth programs to be implemented and sustained successfully, a strong foundation needs to be in place. That foundation includes staff with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, policies that ensure program quality and consistency, and sustained funding along with partnership support.

#### Objective 1: Roles and Responsibilities

*Articulate staff roles and responsibilities related to education, interpretation, and youth programs throughout the BLM.*

Many education, interpretation, and youth program efforts have been undertaken by individuals on their own initiative as their workload permits or as collateral duties. To realize the full benefits of these programs and activities, the BLM must designate staff at all levels to provide leadership for planning and coordinating education, interpretation, and youth programs.

#### Objective 2: Policy and Guidance

*Provide overarching policy and guidance that clearly delineate the role of education, interpretation, and youth programs in supporting the BLM's land management mission and that assist BLM staff with effectively and efficiently implementing these programs.*

As with every program, clear and consistent policies must be in place to integrate education, interpretation, and youth engagement with BLM resource management objectives, to meet legal requirements, and to ensure excellence.

#### Objective 3: Funding and Partnership Support

*Establish a systematic approach to identifying and focusing resources for education, interpretation, and youth programs.*

Education, interpretation, and youth programs are long-term investments in the future of the BLM. They cannot be ad hoc, intermittent efforts, but instead require time to develop and refine. Sustained funding and partnership support are critical to success.

# I. PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

## Communication

Education, interpretation, and youth programs play a critical role in raising awareness of the value of public lands and in engaging youth and the public in their stewardship. Through these programs, the bureau can promote safe and enjoyable visitor experiences, encourage participation in volunteer projects, and inspire community involvement in decision-making as well as young people's interest in careers. Taking advantage of rapidly evolving communication tools, staff at all levels should identify and use media that are appropriate for the audiences that the BLM needs to reach. Our partners, too, can play an important role in communicating with diverse audiences, identifying their particular needs, and helping to expand our reach.

### ◆ GOAL 2:

#### Information Sharing

*Disseminate information about education, interpretation, and youth programs and share program accomplishments with internal and external audiences.*

All employees should be informed about education, interpretation, and youth programs and about their value as land management tools. With policies and systems in place, all employees can be communicators to the diverse audiences that the BLM should be reaching.

#### Objective 1: Internal Audiences

*Maintain effective internal communication and coordination.*

By improving information sharing about education,

interpretation, and youth programs within the BLM, the bureau will be able to replicate those programs that have proved successful and will be able to meet public expectations for consistent quality programs.

#### Objective 2: External Audiences

*Maintain effective communication about education, interpretation, and youth programs with diverse external partners and stakeholders.*

Audiences and communication methods are constantly changing. By developing a comprehensive plan and using a variety of materials and media to communicate about education, interpretation, and youth programs, the BLM can ensure that partners, stakeholders, and the public are being reached and heard.

#### Objective 3: Data Collection and Reporting

*Establish a system for data collection and reporting on education, interpretation, and youth programs.*

Particularly in times of shrinking budgets and competing demands for limited resources, managers, stakeholders, and partners need to see the value of investing in education, interpretation, and youth programs. Such returns on investment can be conveyed most clearly by collecting accurate data and reporting regularly on program accomplishments.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Education

Education programs at the BLM enhance the public's environmental and heritage literacy and its understanding of land management issues. Through both formal and nonformal programs, youth and adults learn about natural and cultural resources and about the BLM's mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands. They also learn how they can become involved in that important mission as volunteers or as part of the next generation of conservation leaders.

The BLM's goals for school programs focus on strengthening the signature Hands on the Land (HOL) network of outdoor classrooms and Project Archaeology, which provides teaching materials and professional development opportunities to educators nationwide. HOL and Project Archaeology are long-term efforts with demonstrated benefits that are sustained in large part by valuable partnerships.

BLM offices at all levels also work with partners to provide myriad other opportunities for students and teachers to use the public lands as laboratories for learning. These field-based experiences can build proficiency in Science, Technology, Engineering,

and Mathematics (STEM) fields and encourage the development of critical thinking skills that are essential to resource management. To ensure that BLM education programs meet the needs of managers, educators, and other stakeholders, the Strategy outlines steps to ensure that well-trained staff and partners, equipped with the best resources, are developing and delivering programs and materials.

In addition, outreach to people of all ages at both the national and field levels, including visitors and others, helps the American public increase their understanding and appreciation of the role of public lands in their daily lives. The Strategy identifies goals and objectives that will better coordinate these outreach efforts across all levels of the bureau.

#### ◆ GOAL 3:

##### Development of Education Staff

*Strengthen the capacity of BLM staff and partners to develop and deliver quality education programs.*

Whether supporting the use of public lands as outdoor classrooms, delivering a classroom presentation, leading a field trip or afterschool program, developing materials that meet the needs of teachers and students, or helping to educate the public about natural and cultural resources, BLM staff, volunteers, and partners who work with learners of all ages need to possess the knowledge and skills that will make them valuable partners in education.

##### Objective 1: Core Competencies

*Establish core competencies for staff and partners who work on education programs.*

Establishing core competencies for individuals involved in education programs ensures quality programs that meet the needs of students, teachers, and resource managers.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY



### ◆ GOAL 4:

#### Public Education Programs

*Increase knowledge and understanding of public land resources and land management challenges, as well as appreciation of the opportunities available on public lands to learn about broad-based themes, such as energy development and climate change.*

BLM offices at the national, state, and field level offer a wide variety of products and programs to help learners of all ages increase their understanding of public land resources and land management challenges. Targeted education products and programs inform the public and engage them in the responsible use of natural and cultural resources. Products and programs range from topic-based printed materials to annual events and national celebrations. Through these efforts, the BLM raises awareness of public lands and instills a sense of stewardship for our nation's natural and cultural legacy.

#### Objective 2: Training

*Identify available training and work through partners to develop and deliver additional education program competency training as needed.*

A well-trained staff is critical to the success of the BLM's education programs. Training needs to be offered not only to staff but also to a wide range of volunteers and partners who assist with BLM education programs.

#### Objective 3: Tools, Resources, and Best Practices

*Identify and promote existing educational tools, resources, and best practices to BLM educators, volunteers, and collaborating partners to facilitate the development and delivery of quality education programs. Develop additional tools and resources as needed.*

Appropriate tools and educational resources are essential for high-quality education programs.

The BLM's programs and messages are not limited to audiences that staff and partners reach on a personal basis. It is increasingly important for the BLM to reach audiences throughout the nation so that the American public can understand and appreciate the role of public lands in their daily lives. The BLM works toward this end through social and other media, and with the assistance of numerous partners. Education staff members work with staff from resource programs and the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) to identify key audiences and broad-based themes as well as partners who can assist in education efforts.

#### Objective 1: Priority Themes

*On an annual basis, identify priority themes for education about BLM resources and provide guidance to the field on using and developing programs and materials that address these themes.*

Highlighting priority themes at the national level and correlating them with state priorities will create a cohesive educational program at all levels of the bureau.

## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Objective 2: Product and Program Evaluation

*Evaluate the effectiveness of all education products and partnerships.*

Evaluation of products and partnerships will lead to improved efforts at all levels.

### ◆ GOAL 5:

#### Hands on the Land

*Expand and enhance the BLM's Hands on the Land program.*

Hands on the Land is a national network of outdoor classrooms on public lands. HOL sites develop education programs in partnership with local schools and communities in a way that can foster connections to nature, expose students to issues confronting 21<sup>st</sup>-century land managers, and create broad-based community support for the BLM. HOL outdoor classrooms also provide field-based opportunities that address the Department of the Interior's "Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education and Employment Pathways Strategic Plan" and other departmental and national youth initiatives. Additionally, HOL programs are a meaningful way to introduce students to natural resource careers, helping create the next generation of conservation leaders and ensuring that the nation's public lands are managed and conserved for future generations.

Since the program's inception in 1999 the number of BLM HOL sites has grown from 2 to 50. The best HOL sites deliver high-quality, sustained educational programming that introduces students to resource management issues. They also serve as centers for educational excellence in the BLM that share resources, expertise, and best practices with the other members of the HOL network. By enhancing the quality of programming at existing sites, improving networking among HOL sites, and increasing participation, Hands on the Land will become the standard for quality education in the BLM. The Hands on the Land Working Group, an interdisciplinary team composed of staff from all levels of the bureau, has been established to represent the needs and perspectives of the field and help the BLM realize this goal.

### Objective 1: Program Expansion

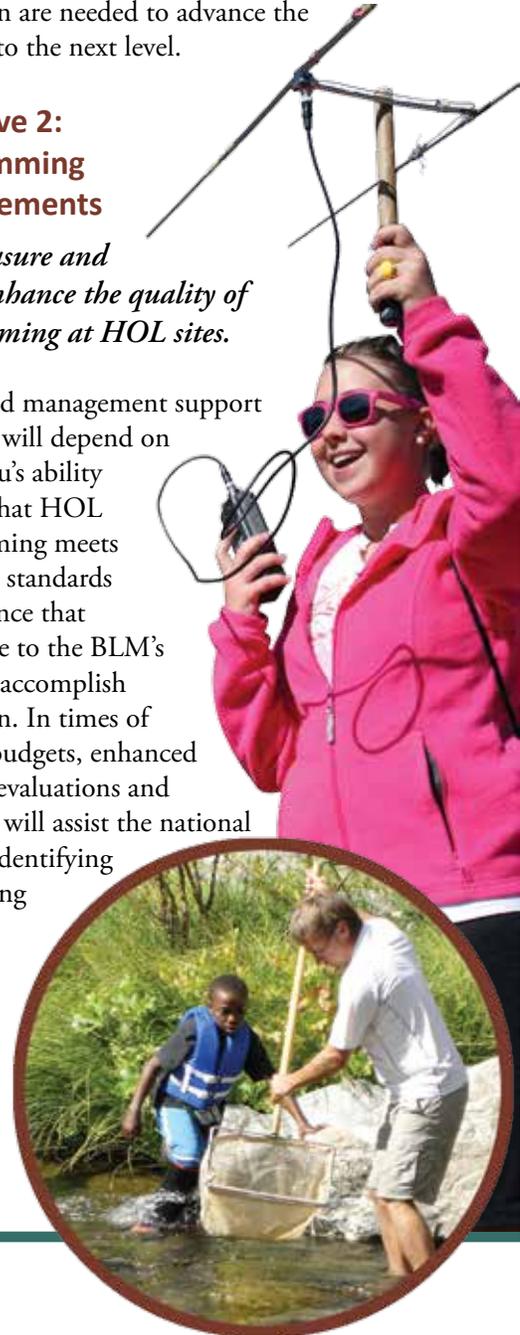
*Through enhanced communication and support, build greater awareness and understanding of the HOL program and provide a pathway to participation that will increase the number of BLM HOL sites.*

Although HOL was established more than a decade ago and there are currently 50 HOL sites in the BLM, considerable confusion remains about the purpose of the HOL program. Greater clarity about what the HOL program is, how new sites can join the program, and how the program can help the BLM accomplish its mission are needed to advance the program to the next level.

### Objective 2: Programming Enhancements

*Measure and enhance the quality of programming at HOL sites.*

Continued management support for HOL will depend on the bureau's ability to show that HOL programming meets identified standards of excellence that contribute to the BLM's ability to accomplish its mission. In times of reduced budgets, enhanced program evaluations and reporting will assist the national office in identifying outstanding programs for future funding and support.



# II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY



### Objective 3: Networking and Interactivity

*Improve networking and interactivity among HOL sites.*

Many outstanding programs and materials have been developed by HOL sites and their partners. Sharing these resources and the expertise involved in developing them will reduce redundant

efforts, encourage best practices, and ensure that all participants have the tools they need to be effective.

### ◆ GOAL 6: Project Archaeology

*Continue strong support for Project Archaeology as the BLM's signature heritage education program.*

Project Archaeology is an educational program dedicated to teaching scientific and historical inquiry, cultural understanding, and public land stewardship ethics, specifically, the importance of protecting our nation's rich cultural resources. The program was founded in 1990 by the BLM to satisfy, in part, protection mandates spelled out in section 10(c) of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. The primary audiences are formal educators of grades 3–8 and informal educators in museums, visitor centers, youth groups, afterschool programs, and other youth education organizations. Through Project Archaeology, the BLM has provided strong leadership for agencies and individuals undertaking historic preservation education throughout the nation as mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act.

Project Archaeology is a public/private partnership and currently operates as a joint program of Montana State University (MSU), Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and the BLM. The Project Archaeology

Strategic Plan developed in partnership with MSU and the National Project Archaeology Network of State and Regional Programs guides daily program operations, including general program organization and support, production and distribution of educational materials, assessment of learning outcomes, and general program evaluation. The BLM contributes to the national Project Archaeology program by providing heritage education staff dedicated to assisting partners with program operations and financial support as feasible. Continued direct support for this proven program will help to ensure that the public appreciates the importance of protecting our cultural and heritage resources.

### Objective 1: Leadership and Support

*Provide continued leadership and support to Project Archaeology programs at all levels.*

Establishing and maintaining state and regional Project Archaeology programs requires strong leadership and support from the BLM.

### Objective 2: BLM State Programs

*Establish a Project Archaeology program in each BLM state in support of archaeological stewardship education for educators, students, and family learners throughout the state and/or region.*

As the BLM's flagship heritage education program, Project Archaeology is an important tool for managers in developing cultural understanding and promoting stewardship of cultural resources.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Interpretation and Youth Engagement

With more than 245 million acres of land under its management, the BLM offers ample opportunities for visitors to connect with America's public lands. Through personal and non-personal interpretation, BLM staff and partners facilitate connections between visitors and the bureau's natural, cultural, and recreational resources, facilitating public appreciation of the complexity and value of the lands that the BLM manages.

The BLM has dedicated employees, world-class visitor centers, and outstanding natural and cultural resources to share with visitors. However, the interpretation program and its staff across the bureau have suffered from a lack of dedicated funding; a decentralized approach; inconsistent messages; out-of-date or nonexistent interpretive plans; and a scarcity of readily available quality training for employees engaged in interpretive activities.

The interpretation program will focus on building strong partnerships, using new media, and enhancing interpretation throughout the bureau through well-trained staff, up-to-date interpretive plans, consistent and readily identifiable core messages, and program evaluation, thereby fostering appreciation for the resources and helping to forge strong connections between people and their public lands.

The BLM also realizes the importance of beginning to establish those connections at an early age. While many children first encounter the public lands through class field trips associated with formal education programs, BLM's Take It Outside! program provides children and families with opportunities to explore, learn about, and play on their public lands. Having reached tens of thousands of young people since its inception in 2007, Take It Outside! is a critical component of the BLM's efforts to reach new and diverse audiences with core messages about the benefits of pursuing healthy lifestyles on America's public lands.



#### ◆ GOAL 7:

##### Development of Interpretation Staff

*Strengthen the capacity of BLM staff and partners to develop and deliver quality interpretive programs and products.*

Professional and competent staff and partners are essential to developing, producing, and presenting personal and non-personal interpretive programming, products, and media for visitors.

## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Objective 1:

#### Core Competencies

*Establish interpretive core competencies for staff and partners who work in interpretation and other programs.*

Establishing core competencies for individuals involved in interpretation clarifies work standards and ensures quality programming that meet the needs of managers as well as the expectations of visitors.

### Objective 2:

#### Training

*Identify available training and work through partners to develop and deliver additional competency training as needed for staff, volunteers, and partners who work in interpretation.*

A well-trained staff is critical to the success of the BLM's interpretation program. Training needs to be provided not only to staff but also to a wide range of volunteers and partners who assist with BLM interpretation.

## ◆ GOAL 8:

### Interpretive Programming

*Strengthen and enhance interpretive programming throughout the BLM.*

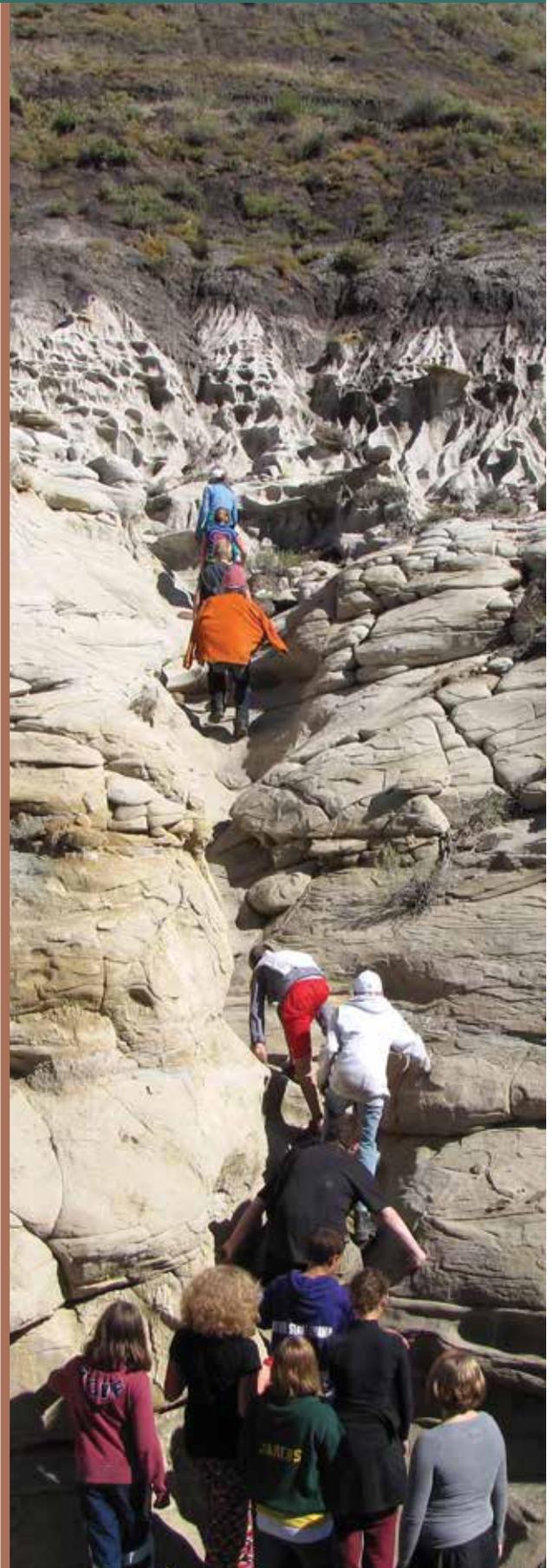
Strong and well-planned interpretive programming provided by staff and partners will provide visitors with factual, up-to-date information and core messages promoting understanding of and appreciation for America's public lands and the BLM's important role in managing them.

### Objective 1:

#### Core Messages

*Provide the public with consistent core interpretive messages about the BLM.*

Core messages can set the BLM apart from other land management agencies by clearly and concisely identifying the bureau, stating its mission, and explaining why public lands are important.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Objective 2: Interpretive Plans

*Develop and implement five Visitor Experience/ Interpretive (VE/I) plans per year over the next 5 years for BLM units that have more than 10,000 visitors per year.*

Interpretive planning ensures that essential public land values and experiences are accessible to visitors and that facilities and media are designed to accomplish visitor use and resource protection goals.

### Objective 3: Partnerships

*Expand the BLM's capacity to develop and deliver quality interpretive programming through the use of trained partners.*

Diverse partners trained in interpretive skills are vital to provide essential services for visitors, provide links to local communities, and broaden the reach of the BLM in interpreting the public lands.

### Objective 4: Program Evaluation

*Through evaluation, measure and enhance the quality of programming at interpretive sites.*

By evaluating the design and implementation of local and national interpretive programming, the BLM can identify areas for improvement and, ultimately, realize its interpretive goals. The information collected and reported is critical to clarifying the value of the program to managers and stakeholders.

### ◆ GOAL 9:

#### Youth Engagement: Take It Outside!

*Expand and enhance the Take It Outside! program.*

Take it Outside! (TIO) is the BLM's flagship youth engagement program. It was established to help ensure that children, youth, and families have access to outdoor experiences on public lands. TIO stresses health, family, fun, and stewardship and connects young people and families with their public lands, while fostering future generations of public land stewards. The BLM established Take It Outside! in 2007 to emphasize and facilitate efforts to connect children and nature. Since then tens of thousands of children and their families have been able to pursue healthy outdoor recreation activities on the public lands. Hundreds of partners have also been involved in TIO, helping the BLM expand opportunities for new and diverse audiences

to experience and connect with their public lands. The field has embraced the TIO concept, contributing regular stories to the "TIO Tuesday" feature of The BLM Daily. By clarifying the TIO brand, promoting sustainable models, and expanding outreach to partners, the BLM will continue to connect increasing numbers of children and families with America's public lands.



# II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

## Objective 1: Core Messages

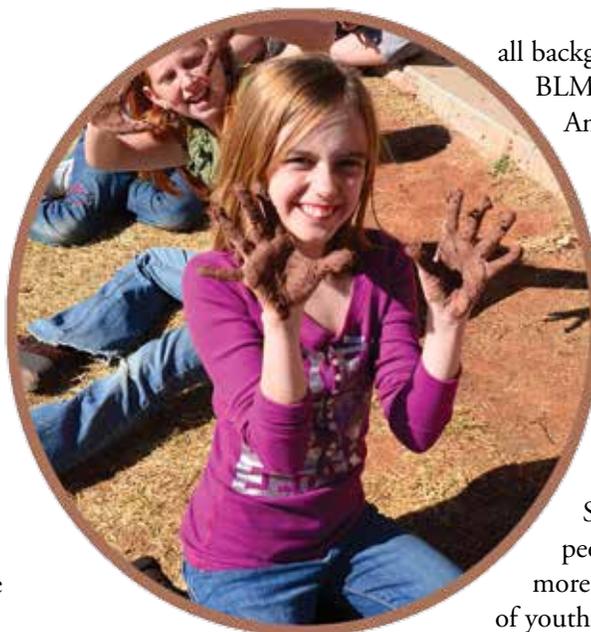
*Establish core messages and incorporate them into all Take It Outside! activities, communications, and marketing.*

By incorporating core messages into all Take It Outside! activities and communications, the TIO brand can be fully established across the bureau and with the public.

## Objective 2: Program Growth

*Increase the number of TIO opportunities provided to youth and families by at least 10 percent over the next 5 years.*

Outdoor experiences provided by TIO can promote healthy lifestyles and spark interest in learning more about the natural world—the first step to developing public land stewards and future natural resource professionals. By engaging greater numbers of youth from

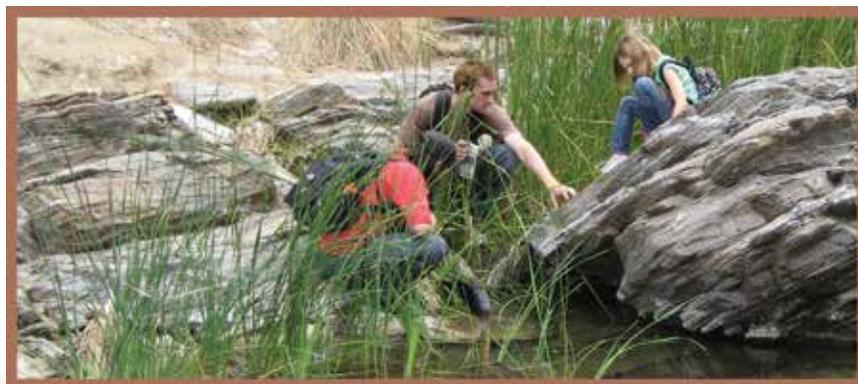


all backgrounds in TIO activities, the BLM can increase awareness of America's public lands.

## Objective 3: Program Evaluation

*Evaluate the effectiveness of TIO programs and recognize excellence within the program.*

Successfully engaging young people in TIO activities involves more than just counting the number of youth involved. TIO programs need to be evaluated to ensure that the BLM is successfully promoting health, family, fun, and public land stewardship. Evaluation can also identify best practices and successful models that can then be replicated more effectively across the bureau.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

### Career Pathways

The BLM's programs for teens and young adults build on youth education and engagement programs—from outdoor classrooms in the Hands on the Land network to recreation and volunteer opportunities provided throughout the school-age years. A continuum of such experiences should nurture lifelong stewardship ethics and may generate interest among young people in pursuing careers in natural and cultural resource management.

The BLM has long served as a model for student employment programs, recruiting youth from diverse backgrounds to work for the bureau. Field offices have routinely worked with local and national youth corps and other partners to engage youth in project-based work experiences. With the launching of the Secretary's Youth in the Great Outdoors initiative in 2009, these efforts became part of the department-wide effort to establish the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps. The BLM is working with federal and nonfederal partners to develop innovative models for creating career pathways for youth from all backgrounds. These efforts are critical to the future of the bureau. They help ensure that a diverse and highly skilled workforce will be prepared to take the reins as the next generation of conservation leaders.



#### ◆ GOAL 10:

##### Teen/Young Adult Opportunities

*Provide opportunities for teens and young adults to strengthen connections to the outdoors.*

The BLM's current education and engagement programs provide myriad opportunities for elementary- and middle-school-age children to learn about and experience their public lands. These programs spark curiosity and establish connections to the public lands. To build on those connections and create pathways to careers and lifelong stewardship, the BLM needs to provide teens and young adults with opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities, from recreation to field schools to in-depth volunteer projects.

#### Objective 1:

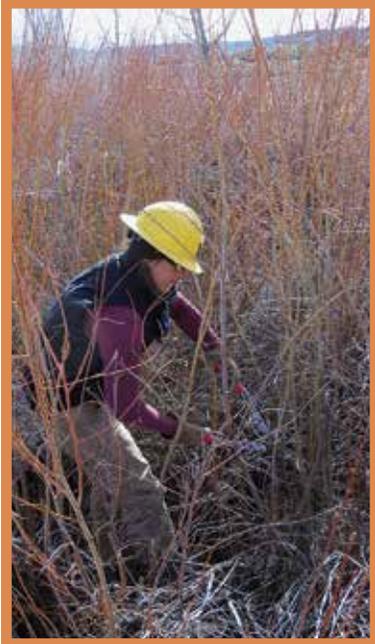
##### Best Practices

*Evaluate existing teen and young adult programming and identify best practices.*

The BLM already pursues a wide range of programs for teens and young adults. By conducting a bureauwide inventory and evaluating these programs, best practices can be identified and successful models can be replicated more effectively.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY



### Objective 2: Expansion of Opportunities

*Increase the number of teens and young adults involved in recreation, education, and stewardship activities on BLM public lands by at least 10 percent over the next 5 years.*

Programs for teens and young adults

help ensure that the BLM provides the continuum of experiences from early childhood through young adulthood, nurturing interest in public lands stewardship and, for those who are interested, careers in natural and cultural resource management.

### Objective 3: Career Awareness

*Provide information on BLM careers to teens and young adults of all backgrounds.*

To create a 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation, as envisioned in the Department of the Interior's Strategic Plan for 2011–2016, the BLM needs to ensure that youth from all backgrounds are aware of career pathways in the bureau.

### ◆ GOAL 11: Entry-Level Positions

*Recruit and retain youth from diverse backgrounds for entry-level careers.*

As a critical component of workforce planning efforts, the BLM needs to be engaged now in recruiting young people to

replace employees who are expected to retire over the next decade. Current employees can play important roles as official and unofficial recruiters and mentors. And managers at all levels should consider ways in which young people can be engaged in mission-critical work.

### Objective 1: Workforce Planning

*Identify workforce planning needs and science and resource priorities that can be addressed by teens and young adults as volunteers or interns, or as members of youth corps crews.*

Hiring young people should not be viewed as just a nice thing to do, but rather as an essential element in workforce planning. The BLM's 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce will be made up of youth who are training for and entering careers today.

### Objective 2: Staff Resources and Guidance

*Provide guidance and resources to assist BLM staff with creating career pathways for teens and young adults.*

The BLM has a long history of working with youth and creating pathways to entry-level careers. To ensure that young people have safe, quality experiences, the BLM needs to provide explicit and consistent guidance on working with youth.



## II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY



### Objective 3: Federal Jobs and Partner Positions

*Hire youth through federal employment programs and through partner organizations.*

In addition to helping the BLM address workforce planning needs, youth employment is a high-priority goal for the Department of the Interior and is included in the Strategic Plan for 2011–2016.

### Objective 4: Program Evaluation

*Evaluate the effectiveness of youth programs throughout the BLM.*

Educating, engaging, and employing youth should be more than a “numbers” exercise. Youth programs need to be evaluated to ensure that the BLM is enhancing environmental and heritage literacy, promoting conservation stewardship, inspiring service, and creating career pathways for young people.



# Acknowledgments

Development of this Strategy has involved close collaboration with staff, partners, and other stakeholders. State Youth Leads and interagency partners on the Department of the Interior Youth Task Force have contributed their ideas. Members of the Hands on the Land Working Group and Take It Outside! team have been consulted. Input was also solicited at several national meetings, including the National Association for Interpretation and the Society of American Archaeology. At the summit that led to the development of the strategy for the National Landscape Conservation System, staff and partners provided input on education and interpretation as well as youth programs. The Strategy is integral to other bureau strategies as well, so program leads in Washington as well as the states provided valuable input. Close collaboration across all BLM programs and levels will continue to be required as implementation gets under way. Staff from the Division of Education, Interpretation and Partnerships appreciate all the contributions to the Strategy that have been made thus far and look forward to working together as we pursue goals and objectives outlined here.







**For more information on the BLM's education,  
interpretation, and youth programs, see:  
*[www.blm.gov/education](http://www.blm.gov/education)*.**

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