

Letters from Land Surveyor Trainees

Summer of 2008¹

Dear Bob,

This past summer has been a truly unique experience. I am currently entering my senior year at Alfred State College. George Winter, an employee of the BLM and recent graduate, had come to the college on several occasions to share his experiences with the BLM. I was immediately intrigued. When I heard about this amazing opportunity with the New Mexico State Office, I immediately sent in my resume.

The sectionalized land system had always been of interest to me and I knew that the BLM covered these states. The BLM surveys on a very large scale compared to the metes and bounds states. Fortunately, I was given the opportunity to become involved in the survey of an entire township. The crew that I worked with gave me the opportunity to learn a great deal about Cadastral Surveying with the BLM.

Surveying with the BLM has been one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had. I will definitely pursue any further opportunity that arises with the BLM in the future. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work with the BLM.

Sincerely,

Joe

Dear Bob,

I can sum up my experience working for the Bureau of Land Management this summer with one word — wow! I've seen and learned so much that it would take pages and pages to get it all down. Every surveyor that I have worked for has taken the time to share their own knowledge and experiences with me and I can only hope that one day I get the opportunity to do the same for the next generation of students.

It is hard to believe that I only have a week left on my tour of duty. These past few months have simply flown by and despite missing my family back home, I am a little saddened to be leaving so soon. On the bright side however, after working here and getting this experience this summer I have decided that the BLM is for me and I have a new focus to work towards in school. Next summer I am hoping to bring my family out so that I may show them around what they hopefully one day will be calling home. I really like New Mexico and am sure they will too.

After spending so much time in the private sector, I was a little overwhelmed by the support that the cadastral surveyors receive. There was never any need for equipment and everything that they were using was top of the line. There is nothing more frustrating than being out in the field and needing something that you don't have or can't afford. These guys never have that worry and I think that the quality of their work reflects that.

Most of all, I have been impressed with the lengths you and your support staff have gone to keep us students happy. From making sure that we always had accommodations to making it possible to travel home on long weekends or making sure that we got our per diems filed correctly, I've never worked for an organization where the people in charge cared so much about the people at the bottom of the ladder. Thank you and I hope you'll have me back next summer!

Sincerely,

Jeff

Dear Bob:

I would like to say thank you for the opportunity I have been presented with this summer. My experience has been everything I could have hoped for. Everyone I have worked with has been very informative and more than willing to answer any questions I had. I have been able to learn more about the public lands and its history than any textbook could tell me. I have been able to experience firsthand several duties that a cadastral surveyor has. This has included everything from taking field notes, locating original monuments, and cadastral corner monumentation to RTK and Static positioning using various GPS equipment. I have also had the opportunity to use cadastral software to post-process field measurements. I am also glad I have been able to spend time in another part of the country; the southwest has simply intrigued me. If given the opportunity I have every intention of returning next summer, upon graduation, to pursue a career as a surveyor with the BLM.

Sincerely,

Jeff

ⁱ Each of the letters is from students pursuing degrees in Land Surveying or related degrees. Each is addressed to the Cadastral Chief of the BLM New Mexico State Office and describes individual experiences of working in the field as a land surveyor. The students returned to their respective college in the fall to continue course studies.