

**HEALTHY FORESTS INITIATIVE AND THE
HEALTHY
FORESTS RESTORATION ACT**
Position Paper No. 26-2005
(Continued from Page 10.)

The PLF recommends that:

1. Since the management activities and environmental consequences of actions on BLM lands are the same or similar to National Forest lands, the BLM should incorporate into their procedures the same categorical exclusions that have been adopted by the Forest Service for implementing NEPA and Council on Environmental Quality regulations.
2. The BLM should incorporate into their planning system an element entitled "Catastrophic Planning" to enable the agency to be better prepared to deal with catastrophic events like wildfires that impact our public forest and rangelands. Emergency stabilization and rehabilitation efforts following a fire must begin as soon as possible to prevent serious losses of soil and ecological site deterioration. It should be the goal that the needed rehabilitation be started before the beginning of the next growing season. While it may not be possible to predict all of the rehabilitation a public land site may require following a fire, the anticipated rehabilitation requirements based on the ecological site(s) in the planning area can be examined in the planning document. With this analysis in the planning document, the rehabilitation of a burned area can begin quickly with a minimum environmental analysis and documentation.
3. The Congress should give serious consideration to expanding the principles of the HFRA to areas outside of Wildland Urban Interfaces (WUI) that are also suffering from deteriorating ecological health.
4. Local planning and zoning authorities consider restricting building in the Wildland Urban Interfaces (WUI).

The Public Lands Foundation will continue to work with Congress and BLM to advance additional common-sense efforts to protect communities and to restore forest and rangeland health. We seek efforts to improve the processes to ensure more timely decisions, efficiency and ways to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, and implement tools that will assist land managers in restoring forest and rangeland health.

For further information on the topic of restoration following wildfires, we recommend our Policy Statement No. 23, "Restoration and Recovery of Federal Forests After Catastrophic Wildfires".

PLF BOARD OF DIRECTOR CHANGES

Our Board member representing Alaska, **Sandy Dunn**, soon to retire, is moving to Utah and will be leaving the Board as a result. We surely thank Sandy for her help the past years and wish her the best. Any one interested in filling Sandy's place on the Board, please contact us.

Ron Fellows has moved to Santa Fe and has stepped forward and volunteered to be our main representative for New Mexico on the Board. Thanks, Ron!



SMALL TRACTS

The following are some of the small but important items left on the "cutting room floor" that would have remained there if not for this *Monitor*.

CBM blocked in Montana. The Ninth U.S. Court of Appeals, on May 21, halted all new work on coal bed methane development in the Powder River Basin in Montana, agreeing with a lower court decision that the BLM 2004 programmatic EIS on CBM development was flawed. The lower court, while finding the EIS insufficient, did allow for some development work to continue. The May 21 decision stopped all work.

Enviros add Otero Mesa suit. Eight conservation and environmental groups have filed a lawsuit against a BLM decision to lease oil and gas in the Otero Mesa of New Mexico. The suit is separate from the one filed by the State of New Mexico in April. The state charged that BLM ignored an alternative policy recommended by the state. The environmental suit charges that BLM hid the true impacts of leasing.

New BLM Deputy Director. **Fran Cherry** suddenly resigned as BLM's Deputy Director and retired in March 2005 after more than 30 years of dedicated federal service. It is our understanding that Fran and his wife have moved to Utah. The true reason for this sudden departure has not been given. **Larry Benna**, former Assistant Director for Business and Fiscal Resources, has been selected to replace Fran. We wish Fran the best in retirement and Larry the best in his new position.

Programmatic EIS on Vegetation Treatments. After more than two years of planning, BLM is scheduled to release its Programmatic EIS to update and replace four existing EISs completed by BLM since 1986. This is a massive effort to cover the BLM lands in 14 western states. Two documents assessing vegetation treatment activities on public lands will be released. One will be a programmatic EIS addressing BLM's use of herbicides, and the second is a report describing the environmental impacts of using non-herbicide treatment methods, including fire and mechanical, manual or biological controls.

Wind Energy EIS released. With current emphasis to find and develop alternative energy sources, BLM has

timely released its final Wind Energy Development Programmatic EIS covering the public lands in the western states but excluding Alaska. The document is available for down loading at <http://windeis.anl.gov>.

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA). The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act was passed in the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill signed into law on December 8, 2004. The law was passed with little fanfare following several years of controversy over whether to charge recreationists for their use of public lands. The Act authorizes the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture for the next 10 years to establish, modify, charge and collect recreation fees at Federal recreation lands and water.

The Act basically does three things. First, it requires all federal agencies to issue a uniform pass for use of public lands. Something called the America the Beautiful is being considered.

Second, the Act established a system of Recreation Resources Advisory Councils (RRAC). However, the name is a bit misleading in that the only issue the Council is to be concerned with is to make recommendations to the Secretaries regarding the implementation or elimination of a standard or expanded recreation fee, to establish a specific recreation fee site, and to expand or limit the fee program. The Act provides the authority for the Secretaries to establish 1 to 50+ RRACs with 11 members each. Joint BLM and FS RRACs will be established. The main question at present is how many RRACs should be established: one national committee, one for each state, or several regional committees? Each RRAC could employ the use of non-chartered sub-groups to provide local perspective, input and collaboration.

Third, the Act outlines the criteria under which agencies may charge a recreation fee. A majority of fee money collected would be reinvested back to the site of collection to enhance visitor services and reduce the backlog of maintenance needs.

The act also provides more opportunities for cooperation with gateway communities through fee management agreements for visitor and recreation service, emergency medical services and law enforcement services.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE PLF LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD ARE NOW OPEN.

Nominations Due August 1, 2005

The PLF Lifetime Service Award is given for career accomplishments to the Bureau of Land Management's programs that benefit the management of public lands. Up to three awards may be granted annually, at the annual PLF convention in September, including one posthumously, to former BLM employees who have demonstrated a lifetime of significant public service and dedication to public lands. An honor board on display at BLM National Headquarters recognizes each recipient. Award criteria can be found on the PLF website at www.publicland.org, along with a history of the awards program.

Nominations are invited from any and all sources, and each nominee's performance must be documented against evaluation criteria. Any career BLM employee meeting the following criteria is eligible:

(1) professional career that lasted at least 30 years, of which 20 years or more were with BLM. (The Board may waive this requirement where the nominee has substantially completed the specified time and his/her career was terminated by death or permanent disablement.)

(2) Must have endorsement of three individuals who are knowledgeable of the nominee's accomplishments.

Evaluation factors include:

(1) notable performance with respect to major issues,

(2) evidence of public and professional esteem, and variety of professional, governmental, or civic awards or recognition,

(3) Department as a BLM role model, through community service, influence on peers and the public and subordinate career development, examples of dedication as a public servant for courage and initiative to enhance public stewardship, and

(4) recognizable legacy attributes.

Nominations should be held to one or two pages (can be by email), preferably submitted first to the appropriate PLF State Representatives for their preliminary evaluation against criteria, and then by them to the Awards Committee (Spang, Steele, Leavell) who will recommend selections to the PLF Board. Nominations may also be sent to PLF at PO Box 7226, Arlington, VA 22207 or emailed to leaplf@erols.com. The 2004 awardees were Burt Silcock, Bill Mathews and posthumously, Mark E. Lawrence and Russ Penny.

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONAL AWARDS FOR 2005

Nominations are also now open for our Outstanding Public Lands Professional Manager and Technician awards. Criteria and instructions can be found at our web site (www.publicland.org). Our 2004 award winners were Dave Hunsaker, Manager of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument at Kanab, Utah, and Dave Yokel, Wildlife Biologist at the northern Field Office at Fairbanks, Alaska.

BLM LEGACY PROGRAM FOR 2005

The objective of the Legacy Program this year is to reunite senior and retired resource professionals and will emphasize resource monitoring, focusing on the permanent plots, transects, and photo points implemented 25 or more years ago. Many BLM retirees were involved during their careers with installing these monitoring systems for the range, forestry, wildlife, watershed, and cultural resource programs.

There may also be continuing opportunities for BLM retirees to work as volunteers with BLM field offices on their monitoring activities. Depending on funding availability in 2005, there might be opportunities to develop Legacy projects on topics related to recreation, minerals, and prescribed fire. For further information, contact Lee Barkow (303.236.6454) (Lee_Barkow@blm.gov) at the BLM National Science and Technology Center.

2005 SPECIAL DUES PAYMENTS

We want to give special thanks and recognition to the following members who have used one of our special dues categories to pay their 2005 annual dues as of June 15th. Those many members who paid their dues early in the year and used our special dues categories were recognized in the Spring issue of the *Monitor*. Many are paid-up Life Time Members but continue to contribute annually. Through the years, this extra financial support by our members is one of the rewarding aspects of operating the Foundation.

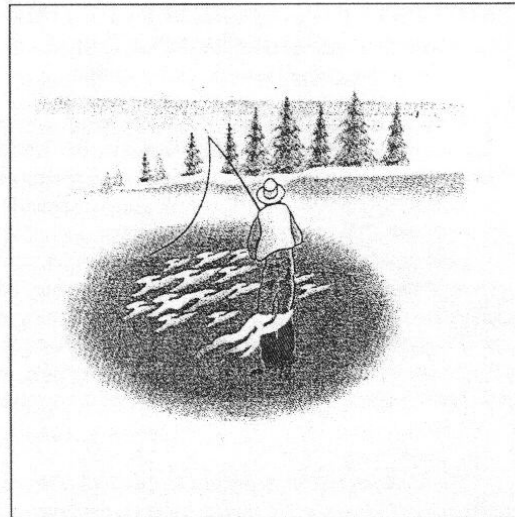
If you have not paid your 2005 dues, please consider using one of our Special Dues categories.

Patron Member (\$500+)

Rebecca Johnson

Contributing Member (\$50)

Bob Rivers Karl Kipping Claire Letson



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

By volunteering on National Public Lands Day (NPLD) on **September 24, 2005**, PLF members will be helping improve and preserve this country's habitats. Nationally, more than 90,000 volunteers are expected to take part this year. This is an opportunity for our members to lend a hand and pay back a little for their lives with BLM.

BLM has 97 public land sites lined up where activities are available for all who are able to spend a day. Just call the nearest BLM office for the details, directions and transportation if needed.

PLF has received a small but welcomed grant from the sponsor of the national program, the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation, which we will use in helping BLM offices organize the day's events and to acquire supplies, services and materials which are difficult for BLM to obtain on short notice. So, if you can, put your hands to work at the 12th annual NPLD.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN CFC #2346

Attention BLM employees and PLF members. The Public Lands Foundation is again a part of the 2005 Combined Federal Campaign. This year we have adopted an assumed name, called a "doing business as (d.b.a)" name of "*Conservation and Protection of Public Land*". **So look for us under this name at our old CFC number of 2346.**

We are still affiliated with the Conservation and Preservation Charities of America, a group of 30 national organizations, all dedicated to conserving and preserving the natural resource of our country. We ask current BLM employees to look for PLF in the CFC Catalogue, **CFC # 2346**, when the 2005 campaign begins this fall. The working children and grand children of PLF members can also find us listed in both the **United Way** and CFC. Hint, Hint!

We also want to send a special thank you to those who have supported PLF by directing their CFC contribution to the Foundation each year.

IN MEMORIUM

The Public Lands Foundation regrets to inform you that the following long-time BLM employees have passed on:

John Fournier—BLM Chief Appraiser in the Oregon/Washington State Office on May 11, 2005 in Aloha, Oregon.

Russell S. Barry—in Oregon on April 7, 2005 in Portland, Oregon.

Ross Youngblood—O&C Forester in Portland, BLM District Forester at Coos Bay, District Manager at Medford and Fairbanks, Chief, Branch of Access and Rights of way in BLM Washington Office, Forestry Consultant for the Peace Corps in Nepal and Tunisia and the 2003 PLF's Outstanding Lifetime Service Award recipient, on April 13, 2005 in Medford, Oregon.

Edwin "Moe" Price—BLM range management, budget, public affairs and environmental specialist in the Boise, Salmon and Elko districts, the Arizona and Wyoming State Offices, and in the BLM Washington Office, on April 22, 2005 in Boise, Idaho.

Miriam (Mim) Kane—BLM administrative specialist in the Bakersfield district office and the Divisions of Finance and Management Research in the Washington Office on April 5, 2005 in Falls Church, Virginia.

Gerald Wright—BLM Forester at Spokane, Juneau, Fairbanks and Washington Office on February 28, 2005 in Milwaukee, Oregon

Kenneth Shurtliff—BLM Electronics Engineer at the National Interagency Fire Center in March 2005 at Salt Lake City, Utah.

Pat Pex—BLM Computer Specialist at the Alaska State Office on May 23, 2005 in Anchorage, Alaska.

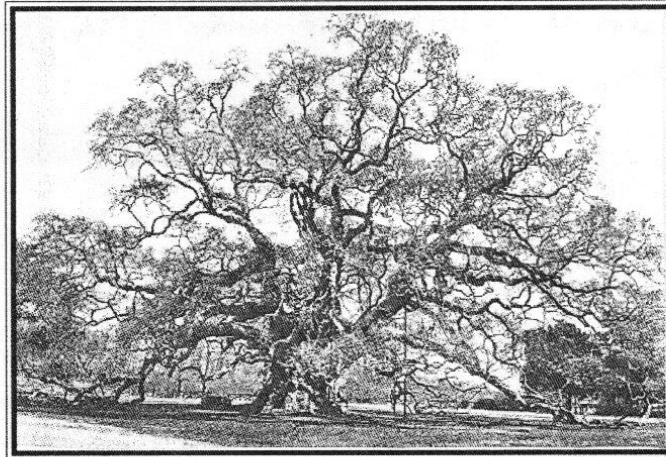
Mario Lopez—BLM Land Law Examiner in Los Angeles, Riverside, Albuquerque and Phoenix on April 9, 2005 in Phoenix, Arizona.

Larry Oldroyd—BLM Range Manager at Arizona Strip, Vernal and Richfield, Utah on April 8, 2005 in Richfield, Utah.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

A contribution honoring **Ross Youngblood and Paul Sanger** has been received from Howard Delano.

A contribution honoring **John Fournier** has been received from Champ Vaughan.



Public Lands Foundation

P.O. Box 7226 Arlington, VA 22207

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Date _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

- \$ 25 Regular
- \$ 50 Contributing
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$200 Sponsoring
- \$500 or more Patron

Public Lands Foundation Goals

- Keep lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in public ownership and open to use by the public.
- Support multiple use management under the Federal Land Policy & Management Act.
- Encourage professionalism by BLM employees.
- Increase the public's understanding of and support for the proper management of the public lands.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP FEE - \$250

THE PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION IS A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

Public Lands Foundation
P.O. Box 7226
Arlington, VA 22207



For America's Heritage

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