



Connecting People to Their Public Lands 2017

An Update on BLM Education, Interpretation, Volunteer, and Youth Employment Activities



The Bureau of Land Management’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

CONTENTS

From the Assistant Director	1
National Summary	2
Alaska	14
Arizona	16
California	18
Colorado	20
Eastern States	22
Idaho	24
Montana/Dakotas	26
Nevada	28
New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas	30
Oregon/Washington	32
Utah	34
Wyoming	36

“Connecting People to Their Public Lands 2017” is a publication of the Bureau of Land Management’s Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships. Design, layout, editing, and printing services were provided by the BLM National Operations Center in Denver, CO.

The mention of company names, trade names, or commercial products does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use by the federal government.


Additional copies of this publication may be obtained by calling (202) 912-7457 or by writing to:

BLM Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships
1849 C Street, NW, Room 2134LM
Washington, DC 20240

To view this publication online and to obtain more information on BLM’s public engagement programs, visit www.blm.gov/learn.

BLM/WO/GI-17/008+1115

FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR




On behalf of the staff at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), I am pleased to present this overview of our 2016 accomplishments in the areas of education, interpretation, volunteers, and youth involvement.

In keeping with the BLM’s commitment to the concept of shared stewardship, we view these programs as integral to effective resource management. The efforts highlighted in this report are helping to nurture a population of scientifically literate citizen stewards who are eager to assist the BLM with complex multiple-use issues on public lands. By educating, engaging, and employing young people in the BLM’s resource programs, we are helping to shape the next generation of land management leaders. And each of the programs featured here provides opportunities for Americans to connect with their public lands and waters and to pursue healthy, active lifestyles.

BLM public lands provide exceptional education and engagement opportunities for students, lifetime learners, and the general public. While a report of this length can highlight only a small number of the BLM’s programs for youth and adults, I hope it will give readers a sense of the scope of the BLM’s efforts. These include the superb programs offered at BLM Hands on the Land outdoor classrooms around the nation. Hands-on field experiences are also helping college-age interns expand their skills and “try out” possible future careers. In addition, thousands of children and families are benefiting from outdoor opportunities provided through BLM interpretive programs and self-guided activities. And we are fortunate to have a cadre of more than 27,000 volunteers who contribute their time and energy to the public lands they value so much.

Many of the initiatives described in this update attest to the important role that partners play. A prime example is the BLM’s success in employing young people and veterans. Working as youth corps crew members or as individuals through universities and other organizations, youth and veterans are participating in virtually every BLM resource program. In 2016 alone, more than 2,100 young people and veterans participated in work and training opportunities provided through partner organizations.

I am grateful to the agency staff, volunteers, and partners who have helped to make the BLM a nationally respected leader in the fields of education, interpretation, and youth engagement. We know that the health and productivity of the public lands depend on citizens who are informed and willing to assist us in conserving America’s natural and cultural legacy. We will continue to work together to cultivate that commitment to shared stewardship and to bring our programs to ever-expanding and increasingly diverse audiences.



Christopher J. McAlear,
Assistant Director
National Conservation Lands
and Community Partnerships



The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM’s) Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships helps Americans of all ages understand, appreciate, and care for their public lands. Through local partnerships and the BLM’s programs, families **PLAY** and build memories through recreation, volunteers **SERVE** and bring stewardship to life, students **LEARN** about America’s cultural and natural resources, and youth and veterans **WORK** and discover career opportunities. These programs result in a growing appreciation for public lands and a better understanding of land management challenges.

LEARN



Education

Through books and site-based activities, the **Junior Ranger Program** continued to create clear pathways in 2016 for the next generation to connect with the BLM’s mission.

Young people pursue healthy recreational activities, spend time with friends and family, nurture their curiosity about the natural world, discover clues to our country’s past, and participate in service projects on millions of acres of BLM-managed public lands. The Junior Ranger program helps the BLM and local community partners expand on these activities to engage the next generation of conservation stewards and leaders.

Thousands of youths and their families participated in hundreds of organized recreational and service programs during fiscal year (FY) 2016. Programs included custom-designed summer camps, family hikes and bike rides, children’s fishing events, and stewardship projects tied to

larger events such as National Trails Day and National Public Lands Day. BLM offices also offered special events and programs for fourth grade students and their families through the **Every Kid in a Park** program, which aims to connect every child in America with their public lands and parks.

In 2016, more than 160,000 students participated in a formal BLM education program, many of them at one of the BLM’s **Hands on the Land** (HOL) sites. Hands on the Land is a national interagency network of field classrooms that connects students, teachers, and community volunteers to America’s public lands. HOL coordinators work with schools and community partners to create hands-on experiences using local, natural, historical, and archaeological settings. Students form strong connections to the natural environment, learn about issues confronting 21st-century land managers, and become familiar with resource careers.



BLM Hands on the Land Program, FY 2016		
State Office	Number of Sites Reported	Number of Participants
Alaska	2	10,637
Arizona	NR	NR
California	10	16,871
Colorado	7	2,513
Eastern States	3	3,161
Idaho	NR	NR
Montana/Dakotas	3	475
Nevada	5	21,924
New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas	1	60
Oregon/Washington	7	24,547
Utah	4	1,325
Wyoming	4	1,919
Total	46	83,432

NR = not reported; totals reflect only those states that reported.

The BLM continued its partnership with the University of Colorado Denver to host 18 teacher “interns” through the **Teachers on the Public Lands** (TPL) program. Teachers spent their summer breaks at Hands on the Land sites in their local communities, where they engaged in education projects, observed BLM resource management, and developed educational projects for use in their classrooms and for use by BLM employees and volunteers. After participating in a 160-hour BLM field experience, teachers were eligible for college credit from the partnering university. TPL teacher–staff partnerships strengthened connections between the BLM and local schools and communities.

As part of a bureauwide effort to reach out to diverse youth audiences and connect them and their families to public lands, the BLM published **“Mis Tierras Públicas, Jóvenes Guardaparques.”** This Spanish edition of “My Public Lands Junior Ranger,” which was published in the fall of 2016, uses child-friendly language and activities to explain the BLM’s multiple use and sustained yield mission.





New resources for educators include www.blm.gov/teachers, a searchable database of the BLM's teaching units and curriculum guides. The database includes the Classroom Investigation Series and other materials that the BLM has produced for educators over the years.

The **BLM Presenters Toolkit** helps presenters plan and evaluate the sessions they deliver to students. Recent updates include “Four Strategies for Infusing Evaluation into Activities” and a training guide on how to use these strategies.

Project Archaeology

For more than 26 years, Project Archaeology has been providing educators and learners with high-quality archaeology stewardship education. The program uses archaeological inquiry to foster understanding of past and present cultures, which helps preserve our archaeological legacy.

Founded in 1990 by the BLM, the program has grown from its origins in Utah to include 37 state or regional programs across the country. Through a partnership with Montana State University and a network of state programs, the BLM continues to expand the program, creating new products, such as “Investigating the First Peoples,” to reach secondary educators, their students, and learners at visitor centers, museums, youth group events, and other informal venues.



Project Archaeology, FY 2016			
State	Number of Educators Certified	Number of K-12 Informal Learners	Number of Family Learners*
Alabama	99	1,845	0
Alaska	6	0	0
Arizona	10	0	0
Arkansas	2	0	5
California	8	577	0
Colorado	145	60	60
Florida	28	387	0
Idaho	17	0	0
Illinois	222	1,411	152
Iowa	8	572	0
Kansas	147	1,149	38
Kentucky	114	2,057	1,469
Missouri	9	50	1,200
Montana	39	1,092	0
Nevada	21	125	0
New Mexico	39	493	0
Oklahoma	17	0	450
Oregon	0	28	0
Tennessee	85	200	15
Texas	38	0	0
Utah	5	1,068	328
Wyoming	40	0	130
National Office	794	175	0
Total	1,893	11,289	3,847

* Family learners attend programming that serves children and their parents together.

Interpretation

The BLM's interpretation program connects audiences with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and needs to public lands by engaging emotions, enhancing experiences, and deepening understanding of natural and cultural wonders. Exhibits, signs, and other interpretive products add to the quality of visitor experiences, enhance the understanding of resource management issues, and build public interest in conserving and protecting America's public lands. In 2016, more than 4.9 million people attended 33,000 interpretive programs at 176 different sites.

The BLM's **Artist-in-Residence** program invites artists who find inspiration in the beauty of public lands to interpret that beauty through painting, photography, sculpture, pottery, weaving, or other media. After spending at least 1 week immersing themselves in a particular environment, the artists use their creativity to inspire others by bringing enjoyment and a deeper understanding of the treasured landscapes and features at the heart of the BLM's mission. Many of the artists exhibit their work at various venues, reaching a wider audience. Since the program's inception in 2012, about 14 sites have engaged 20 artists in this unique type of interpretation.



BLM Interpretive Programs, FY 2016		
State Office	Number of Programs	Number of Participants
Alaska	1,864	228,718
Arizona	941	318,400
California	3,117	538,465
Colorado	1,028	289,888
Eastern States	2,934	144,987
Idaho	624	55,081
Montana/Dakotas	8,770	146,091
Nevada	2,073	902,318
New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas	707	210,070
Oregon/Washington	4,157	1,361,374
Utah	5,725	445,069
Wyoming	1,485	270,905
Total	33,425	4,911,366



AWARDS

Excellence in Interpretation or Education Awards

Acknowledging outstanding work in the fields of interpretation and education is one of the goals of BLM's interpretation program. Program leaders announced the 2016 winners of the BLM's Excellence in Interpretation or Education Awards at the National Association for Interpretation's National Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The BLM recognized Josh Hammari of the California State Office in Sacramento for his public engagement work on California's Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), a multiagency, collaborative landscape planning effort. Hammari's multimedia outreach and communications strategy informed the public about the need to conserve unique and valuable desert ecosystems while allowing for responsible development of renewable energy projects on 10.8 million acres of public land in California.

The BLM recognized Molly Allen of Oregon's Medford District for her outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in providing environmental education for the local community. The programs that she oversees integrate all facets of youth engagement, from environmental education to outdoor play.

"Making a Difference" National Volunteer Awards

In June 2016, the BLM recognized several remarkable volunteers representing seven states. The 2016 awardees and their BLM nominating offices were:

- Bill Mackie, Outstanding Achievement, Lake Havasu Field Office (AZ)
- Sharron Evans, Outstanding Achievement, Utah State Office
- Danny and Barbara Frye, Outstanding Achievement, Butte Field Office (MT)
- Asha Lela, Lifetime Achievement, San Juan Islands National Monument (WA)
- Jack and Sandy Gasser, Lifetime Achievement, Yuma Field Office (AZ)
- Horsetown Clear Creek Preserve, Group Excellence, Redding Field Office (CA)
- Lesly Smith, Employee Winner, Wyoming State Office
- Shanita McLean, Outstanding Youth, Eastern States Office (VA)

The outstanding youth winner began volunteering with the BLM in her teens, and the lifetime achievement winners collectively served nearly 75,000 hours over the past several decades.

Public Lands Partnership Excellence Award

The BLM selected the Colorado Canyons Association (CCA) for the 2016 Public Lands Partnership Excellence Award. The award, which the BLM presents every 2 years, recognizes an interpretive association or friends group that has a formal assistance agreement with the BLM and demonstrates exceptional support for the agency's interpretive, educational, and public outreach programs.

CCA offers several high-quality education programs that encourage youth to learn about public lands and natural resources in an outdoor classroom environment. In the past year, the CCA has formalized the curriculum for these programs to meet the Colorado Academic Standards and to allow for teachers, volunteers, and partners to help advance the BLM's mission.



Josh Hammari (left)



Molly Allen (left)



Sharron Evans



Jack and Sandy Gasser



Joe Neuhoef, Colorado Canyons Association (second from left)

SERVE

Volunteer Program

The BLM engaged more than 27,000 volunteers in vital land management activities during 2016. Volunteers contributed almost a million hours, worth an estimated \$23 million to the BLM. A wide variety of BLM programs benefited from volunteers' time, services, and skills, including recreation, wild horses and burros, wilderness and wilderness study areas, cultural and historical resources, and environmental education and interpretation. Volunteers served almost half of these total hours at national monuments, national conservation areas, national wild and scenic rivers, and other units of the BLM's National Conservation Lands. Nearly one-third of BLM volunteers were age 25 or younger.

Summary of BLM State Office Volunteer Contributions, FY 2015

State Office	Hours	Value*	Work Years**	Number of Individuals
Alaska	18,034	\$435,341	10.0	3,715
Arizona	130,723	\$3,155,653	72.6	1,637
California	103,526	\$2,499,118	57.5	6,839
Colorado	182,901	\$4,415,230	101.6	2,204
Eastern States	29,414	\$710,054	16.3	594
Idaho	43,077	\$1,039,879	23.9	1,579
Montana/Dakotas	50,294	\$1,214,097	27.9	815
Nevada	56,153	\$1,355,533	31.2	1,275
New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas	100,613	\$2,428,798	55.9	895
Oregon/Washington	117,667	\$2,840,481	65.4	3,316
Utah	112,681	\$2,720,119	62.6	3,320
Wyoming	26,482	\$639,275	14.7	880
National Operations Center	461	\$11,129	0.3	3
National Training Center	121	\$2,921	0.1	5
Washington Office	3,106	\$74,979	1.7	9
Total	975,253	\$23,542,607	541.7	27,086

* Value based on 2016 Independent Sector value of volunteer time (\$24.14 per hour).

** One work year is based on 1,800 work hours.



National Volunteer Totals by Program, FY 2016*			
Program	Volunteer Hours	Donated/ Hosted Worker Hours	Total Hours
Recreation	426,090	73,154	499,244
Biological Resources	35,733	35,923	71,656
Wild Horse and Burro	18,241	99,413	117,654
Cadastral Survey	1,326	3,575	4,901
Wilderness/Wilderness Study Area	9,314	2,844	12,158
Riparian/Watershed	16,390	28,384	44,774
Cultural/Historical	42,244	16,521	58,765
Minerals	1,055	2,726	3,781
Support Services	34,559	13,987	48,546
Environmental Education/Interpretation	59,868	8,802	68,670
Other	17,605	27,499	45,104
Total	662,425	312,828	975,253
Funds Expended	\$416,366	\$282,937	\$699,303
Value of Work**	\$15,990,939	\$7,551,668	\$23,542,607

* The term “volunteer” as used in this report includes donated workers. Volunteers do not receive pay for their service to the BLM. They donate their time, and in some instances, equipment and money to assist the BLM with a variety of tasks. Donated or hosted workers, by contrast, receive compensation from another organization but work for the BLM at no charge.

** Value based on 2016 Independent Sector value of volunteer time (\$24.14 per hour).

National Public Lands Day (NPLD)

For NPLD, the BLM coordinated 292 projects at 193 BLM sites hosted by 91 field offices in 16 states. Approximately 11,000 BLM volunteers participated in a variety of enhancement and restoration activities. This year marked the 23rd celebration of this annual service day for the public lands. The National Environmental Education Foundation, in cooperation with numerous federal agencies, organized NPLD, which is the single largest 1-day volunteer event on public lands.



WORK

Youth Hiring Programs

Working in partnership with more than 100 different organizations, the BLM accomplished hundreds of priority projects in 2016 while providing work and training opportunities for more than 2,100 young people and veterans. The BLM has long recognized the benefits of partnerships with youth corps, schools, and other organizations. BLM offices accomplish important work in a cost-effective way, and the young people involved form connections to public lands, develop an understanding of the Bureau’s complex mission, and gain job skills in the process.

Over the years, youth crews have built and maintained miles of trails, improved campgrounds, and installed signs. They’ve also removed acres of invasive weeds and restored habitat for fish and wildlife. State resource program funding, as well as grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Developing the Next Generation of Conservationists program and from the Department of the Interior, supported these projects in 2016.

In 2016, young interns monitored bird populations in riparian areas of California, sage-grouse in Colorado, ferruginous hawks in Idaho, and shorebirds along the Pacific coast. Crews and interns assisted with stream surveys and river restoration projects. They assessed land for wilderness characteristics and inventoried segments of historic trails. They were involved in education and outreach programs from Jupiter Inlet Outstanding Natural Area in Florida to the Campbell Creek Science Center in Alaska and many locations in between. They also helped to expand outreach to new audiences—from tribal youth to Spanish-speaking communities.

Crews and interns played an important role in several national initiatives, including data collection as part of the BLM’s assessment, inventory, and monitoring strategy and seed collections undertaken as part of the national seed strategy. A poster presentation at the 2016 World Conservation Congress in Hawaii brought international attention to the role of interns in supporting the national seed strategy. The electronic poster, featuring the Chicago Botanic Garden’s Conservation and Land Management Intern Program, included profiles of several interns working with the BLM.

The BLM’s many partners in FY 2016 included youth-serving programs sponsored by government agencies, members of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, schools, research institutions, environmental organizations, and friends groups. Along with the young people hired by the BLM into federal positions, the young people engaged through partners will be well trained and ready to serve as the BLM’s 21st-century workforce.



Veterans Hiring Programs

The BLM worked with numerous partners to engage veterans in a wide range of projects. The Southwest Conservation Corps has had a veterans crew working for several years on tamarisk removal and other habitat improvement projects with the Tres Rios Field Office in Colorado. In Nevada, a Veterans Conservation Corps crew engaged through the Great Basin Institute pursued several projects to enhance the visitor experience as well as the habitat at Sloan Canyon. This crew also trained a cadre of volunteers to continue trail maintenance projects into the future.

The BLM and its partners have long recognized that they can tap into the skills veterans learned in the military to assist with wildland firefighting efforts. Skills such as teamwork, risk mitigation and management, logistics, emergency medicine, and decisive leadership continue to be valuable assets for partner-supported wildland firefighting veteran crews in many locations throughout the West.

Payroll and Partner Youth Hires, FY 2016*			
State Office	BLM	Partner	Total
Alaska	104	166	270
Arizona	62	113	175
California	256	236	492
Colorado	142	253	395
Eastern States	19	36	55
Idaho	20	0	20
Fire and Aviation	328	120	448
Montana/Dakotas	192	96	288
Nevada	222	306	528
New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas	98	131	229
Oregon/Washington	374	566	940
Utah	161	118	279
Wyoming	137	35	172
Washington Office	15	16	31
National Operations Center	22	3	25
Total	2,152	2,195	4,347



PLAY

Every Kid in a Park

The BLM staff enthusiastically supported the Every Kid in a Park program in FY 2016. The program provides fourth grade students and their families with a pass for free entry to more than 2,000 federally managed lands and waters nationwide for the entire school year—from September 1 through August 31. After taking part in an orientation webinar, BLM staff members visited classrooms and worked with partners to organize recreational activities and other events to distribute more than 8,000 passes to eager fourth graders.

Nearly a dozen BLM offices applied for and received transportation grants from the National Park Foundation for Every Kid in a Park field trips. Throughout the year, several other organizations came forward with grant programs to support outdoor experiences for fourth graders. A number of BLM partners took advantage of these opportunities. Such partnership efforts introduced thousands of fourth graders to BLM public lands—from national monuments near Las Cruces, New Mexico, to Craters of the Moon in Idaho. In Utah, the BLM staff worked with the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service to ensure that fourth graders learned about and visited public lands surrounding Kanab.

Reports from the staff, partners, teachers, and fourth graders were uniformly positive. A student named Diego captured the essence of the program following his class’s visit to California’s Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument:

“It was Thursday May 19, 2016. We were at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. There were about thirty students in my class that went. We played a game describing animals before the tram ride. When we were on the tram, I was excited. When we were moving, I was taking pictures with my camera. It was fun. On Mount San Jacinto we observed rocks. Most of them were igneous and metamorphic. I found rough, smooth, and colorful rocks. We also saw animals on the mountain, squirrels, Steller’s jays, chickadees, bees, black ants, and a dragonfly. The field trip to the forest was so fun. I want to go there every day. It was so awesome!”

In late 2016, all the participating agencies involved in Every Kid in a Park signed a memorandum of understanding establishing a framework for continuing the program with fourth graders for at least the next 5 years.



Stewardship

While the BLM wants to encourage Americans to get out and play on their public lands, it's important to teach them to do so responsibly. The goal of the BLM's **stewardship program** is to promote environmental stewardship and help develop informed, knowledgeable, and responsible BLM staff members and visitors. To realize this goal, the BLM partners with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics to provide Traveling Trainer teams to teach outdoor ethics and responsible recreation practices to the BLM staff and the public in every state with BLM-managed lands. At 112 Traveling Trainer events in 2016, teams provided tailored Leave No Trace education programs for 38,270 participants. The stewardship program also provides funding for BLM staff members to enroll in Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses through the National Outdoor Leadership School. These efforts will ensure that outdoor enthusiasts practice minimal impact principles that support the long-term integrity of public lands.



HOW THIS REPORT WAS COMPILED

The BLM collected data for this report from more than 300 staff members from state and field offices who contributed more than 1,100 reports on education, interpretation, volunteer, and youth employment programs during fiscal year 2016. Articles published in the *BLM Daily*, the online publication for BLM employees, provided additional data and photographs. The total number of participants reported in the state summaries includes participants for Hands on the Land, Project Archaeology, interpretive programs, and additional BLM education programs, including Take it Outside!, a program that was discontinued at the end of fiscal year 2016.



By the Numbers

Education and Interpretation Program Participants	241,338
Volunteer Hours	18,034
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$435,341
Youth Hires	270

Alaska's public lands attract visitors, volunteers, and learners from across the state and around the globe, and BLM's partnerships in Alaska helped these guests make the most of their time in the state. Mountain biking associations pitched in for "fat bike" events, a Student Conservation Association intern helped with a crucial river cleanup, and a refugee-serving organization worked with the Campbell Creek Science Center to acclimate young immigrants to their new home. Thanks to these and other partnership efforts, visitors and new residents alike found reasons to appreciate and enjoy all that Alaska's public lands have to offer.



SERVE

Volunteer Brightens Dalton Highway Travels

The BLM's Yukon Crossing Contact Station sits by mile marker 56 of the Dalton Highway, next to Alaska's only bridge over the Yukon River. During the summer, this cozy log cabin receives about 80 visitors a day. Audrey Bohl, a volunteer at the station, greeted visitors who were tackling the infamous "Haul Road," originally built to support construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

These visitors included a number of motorcyclists on a road trip from Key West, Florida, and a couple that was slowly venturing north in a luxury RV after leaving Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America 10 years ago. People from places such as Finland, China, Russia, Fairbanks, and New York City signed the guest book at the station.



PLAY

"Fat Bike" Trend Heats Up on Snowy Roads

In Alaska, the BLM manages public lands and trails that are prime destinations for fat biking, which is one of the fastest growing winter sports in the United States. The 730-acre Campbell Tract draws fat bike aficionados to Anchorage, while the million-acre White Mountains National Recreation Area attracts bikers from Fairbanks, and the Iditarod National Historic Trail lures riders who want to test their winter biking skills over ultralong distances.

The BLM showcased its outstanding winter riding opportunities at the first Fat Bike Expo held in Anchorage. The BLM's booth at the expo featured its partnership with the International Mountain Bicycling Association and the MTB Project, which involved creating a mountain biking section on the BLM's website that highlights the top 20 backyard to backcountry rides on BLM-managed public lands. The booth also featured the BLM's new National Conservation Lands recreation mapping project.

As part of the expo, more than 450 fat bike riders took to the streets for the first-ever Big Fat Ride, which looped 5 miles through downtown Anchorage.



WORK

Cleanup Enhances the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River

During multiple summer trips, James Riley, a realty technician from the Fairbanks District Office, and Joe Bozzo, an intern from the Student Conservation Association, floated a raft down the different forks of the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River system in eastern Alaska. In 2016, they joined up with Michael Sybert, a natural resources specialist, and brought along an extra raft.

As they floated the river, Riley, Bozzo, and Sybert cleaned up trash and tidied up a historic mining camp and log cabin. They filled the extra raft up with trash and scrap metal, including some pieces of mining equipment weighing more than 100 pounds. "It kind of feels like you're floating a dump truck," said Riley. These efforts helped to improve the river and maintain the historic character of the area.



LEARN

Eco-Explorer Camp Acclimates Young Refugees

The BLM's Campbell Creek Science Center hosted a 3-day eco explorer camp to help 20 newly arrived refugees and immigrants adjust to their new environment. The students, primarily from Sudan and Rwanda, spent their time on the Campbell Tract discussing animals they may encounter in Alaska. They were able to touch bones, teeth, and furs of lynxes, foxes, wolves, and more. The camp focused on safety around moose and bears, since the students may see these unfamiliar animals in their neighborhoods throughout the year.

Students also dove into the aquatic biology of Campbell Creek. They examined macroinvertebrates, trout, and salmon. The older students set fish traps and caught salmon fry to study with the younger children. In addition, students examined plants to determine which local plants were edible and which were poisonous. They tasted wild raspberries, smelled Labrador leaves, pressed flowers, and talked about similarities between Alaska's plants and the plants of their home countries. After a lesson about seed propagation, students were able to take home a flower from the science center greenhouse to share with their families.

The BLM Campbell Creek Science Center sponsored this program in partnership with the Alaska Catholic Social Services Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services program, which provides aid to the 130 refugees that Anchorage receives every year. Students on this trip received transportation funding from the Every Kid in a Park program.





ARIZONA

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	324,145
Volunteer Hours	130,723
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$3,155,653
Youth Hires	175

In Arizona, the BLM relied on partnerships, volunteers, education, and interpretive programs to address crucial land management goals. A collaboration among state, federal, and private groups helped educate the public to improve recreational shooting behaviors. Volunteers made Arizona’s trails attractive to hikers. The BLM staff worked with workforce investment boards and a college to give youth a look at BLM careers by holding a field school. These efforts advanced BLM’s stewardship, recreation, and human capital goals.

SERVE

Committee Focuses on High-Priority Trails

The Arizona State Committee on Trails (ASCOT) received the 2016 Citation of Merit Award from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association for the many volunteer hours its members spent in service to the Arizona trail-using community. ASCOT serves in an advisory capacity to the Arizona State Parks Board, and its members represent various groups, including mountain bikers, equestrians, hikers, bird watchers, trail runners, and government agencies, all of which are passionate about Arizona trails.

The group assists Arizona State Parks in distributing Recreational Trails Program funds for nonmotorized trails across the state.

According to Bill Gibson, the BLM’s representative on the committee, ASCOT retooled the State Trails System to focus on 100 premier trails—the “best of the best”—that visitors are encouraged to experience. “ASCOT helps us to understand the needs of other trail managers and the public,” said Gibson, who is also the BLM’s travel management lead in Arizona. “It focuses funding, maintenance, and marketing on the highest priority trails.”



LEARN

Outreach Encourages Responsible Recreational Shooting

The Sonoran Landscape Pilot Project, an education, outreach, and engagement strategy, promotes responsible recreational shooting on public lands surrounding metro Phoenix. The BLM in Arizona created the pilot project to join the expertise and talents of public and private sector partners (U.S. Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and nonprofit Tread Lightly!) to educate public land visitors about the need for safe and responsible recreational shooting behaviors.

The campaign uses a three-prong approach of accountability, education, and communication to encourage a stewardship ethic among recreational shooting enthusiasts. The BLM and its partners developed and delivered appropriate and consistent outreach material for internal and external audiences through outdoor billboards, a responsible shooting video, and social media messages.



PLAY

Special Recreation Permits Support Diverse Enjoyment

Special recreation permits are one way the BLM allows the public to conduct certain recreational activities on public lands. The BLM may issue these permits for commercial, competitive uses and organized events to satisfy recreational demand while protecting resources, reducing user conflicts, and providing for visitor health and safety.

On lands managed by the BLM’s Hassayampa Field Office, equestrian competitions, off-highway vehicle (OHV) rides, mountain biking events, 4x4 rock crawling events, and orienteering meets are popular. These events are great ways to get users out exploring areas they might not normally visit, but they do require planning.

“We work side by side with event organizers, often helping them design their routes,” said Rem Hawes, manager of the Hassayampa Field Office. “We work together to understand what type of terrain they are looking for and figure out how we can make that happen without damaging the resources.”

The BLM issues special recreation permits at its discretion, so obtaining one represents a privileged use of public lands. However, their use definitely helps ensure that diverse activities can occur safely on America’s public lands.



WORK

Popular Field School Prepares Students for Careers

The BLM in Arizona holds a 16-week Conservation and Resource Management Field Certification Program, known as field school, that provides students with field training and certifications for wild land firefighting, chainsawing, OHV/4x4 driving, Leave No Trace ethics, and wilderness first aid.

Lawrence Harper, youth program coordinator in the Phoenix District Office, has seen many positive results from the field school. “The first year we had a hard time finding projects for the students to do. Now with more people hearing about the program, we have project requests we don’t have time to complete,” said Harper.

Partnerships with the Phoenix and Maricopa County Workforce Development Boards, Phoenix College, and other agencies help make the program a nationally recognized youth initiative. The Workforce Development Board contracts with Arizona Call-A-Teen-Youth Resources to recruit and pay students, and Phoenix College gives field school students college credits for their work with the BLM. Getting paid while earning college credits is a big selling point for prospective students, as are the leadership skills and sense of purpose they gain from the program.

“We used to get five to six applicants, now we get 10 to 15,” noted Harper. “By picking students who are more passionate about conservation, we see our graduates applying the skills they’ve learned more quickly.”





CALIFORNIA


By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	559,456
Volunteer Hours	103,526
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$2,499,118
Youth Hires	492

A multigroup partnership gave 104 Los Angeles youths a fun and educational experience on public lands through the 10th annual Camp Wesson. The event, hosted by Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson on behalf of the Project SAVE gang intervention program and the City of Los Angeles, brought youths from 6 to 13 years old to the Hansen Dam Recreation Area for 3 days and 2 nights.




The partnership connected the BLM with youth in one of the largest urban communities in the United States. Campers “Discovered the Desert” with live reptiles from the BLM’s California Desert District. They met six snakes, a chuckwalla lizard, and desert tortoises. They also participated in horseback riding, rock wall climbing, swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, and archery. Camp Wesson demonstrates the power of partnerships in letting youth broaden their horizons through playing and learning on public lands.

PLAY




Dirt Riders Take On Shasta Dam Grand Prix

In April, the Redding Dirt Riders hosted the 2016 Shasta Dam Grand Prix at the Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle Area, located in Shasta County and managed by the BLM’s Redding Field Office. The motorcycle club has hosted the event for more than 20 years at this location. The number of participants reached a record high, with 525 riders racing in the Grand Prix, which is part of the AMA National Hare and Hound Championship series. In Hare Scramble events, riders race on a marked course through wooded or other rugged natural terrain for a set time, ranging anywhere from 1.5 to 3 hours, usually completing multiple loops. The overall winner is the contestant who maintains the highest speed throughout the event.



LEARN




Youth Summit Inspires Hundreds of High School Students

BLM’s California Desert District hosted the Southern California Youth Summit, Lead the Way Outdoors, at Mount San Antonio College in Walnut. The summit featured more than 20 state and federal agencies and organizations that promote natural resources and outdoor activities, opportunities, and careers. Hundreds of high school students participated in the day’s hands-on workshops, discussion circles, and a higher education and career expo.

Students explored topics such as trail maintenance and construction, capturing environmental data with drones, plant identification, Leave No Trace ethics, and land surveying. Jose Gonzalez, founder of Latino Outdoors and the event’s keynote speaker, shared some inspirational words with the students about his connection to the natural world and the importance of linking communities to the outdoors.



SERVE




Volunteers and Partners Help Tire Amnesty Event Succeed

In an effort to reduce illegal dumping on public lands in California, the BLM partnered with Waste Management and Nevada County government to host a local tire amnesty event. The event allowed county residents to dispose of a maximum of nine tires free of charge.

The BLM and its partners collected nearly 7,000 tires from local residents. The Waste Management staff and BLM employees were instrumental in planning and executing the event. The U.S. Forest Service staff volunteered to assist in tire collection, as did Rotary Club members, who provided a vital service by transporting local residents’ tires to dropoff locations.



WORK



High School Interns Map Pine Hill Preserve Ecosystem Health

Each year, high school students from Sacramento spend their summers interning with the BLM. The students are part of Generation Green, a program that provides environmental education and leadership opportunities to underrepresented youth.

Students spent 1 day mapping the Pine Hill Preserve, east of the city of Folsom. Their job was to identify and record the location of landscape features, such as recently cut shrub piles, burn sites, rare plants, and power lines. They were equipped with mobile devices programmed with mapping software and sent out in teams to explore. Each group mapped different features and spent much of the morning hiking and learning from their BLM mentors. The experience gave students a real-world example of tools naturalists and environmental scientists use to assess ecosystem health.





COLORADO

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	293,580
Volunteer Hours	182,901
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$4,415,230
Youth Hires	395

An innovative partnership in Colorado demonstrated how youth can help carry out crucial land management tasks. When the Colorado River Valley Field Office needed inventory updates on thousands of acres within its jurisdiction to address new public information requests, they looked to their partners at the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps.

Typically, the youth corps undertakes trail building and other physical work for the BLM. Corps members also conduct wilderness inventory updates in remote, rugged areas of western Colorado. The partnership is a force multiplier that addresses a BLM need while deepening members’ understanding of management issues and conservation.

Over a 4-week period, corps members in groups of four or five inventoried 20,000 acres of land at the base of the Roan Plateau and at King Mountain, noting any human influences in the areas. They also learned about oil and gas resources and multiple-use management. Alex Provstgaard, a BLM petroleum engineering technician, and specialists from WPX Energy gave the crews site tours and explained how they work to minimize environmental impacts.



PLAY

Alpine Loop Visitors Awed by Breathtaking Scenery

Southwest Colorado’s popular Alpine Loop National Back Country Byway provides access to some of the most spectacular scenery anywhere in the Rockies. Its jagged peaks rise up to 14,000 feet above rushing streams and wildflower-filled meadows.

Visitors who stop at Cataract Gulch enjoy great scenery and photo opportunities after hiking a somewhat arduous but rewarding trail along a stream that plunges over rocks and falls. Visitors need four-wheel drive as they climb above tree line to reach the loop’s higher passes, including Engineer Pass at over 12,800 feet. Just to the west of this pass is the ghost town of Animas Forks, at 11,200 feet, which features several restored buildings.



LEARN

Students Experience the Real World of Archaeology

In partnership with Colorado State University (CSU), the BLM’s White River Field Office hosted a 12-day archeological field school in the rugged Miller Creek Archaeological District. The goal of the Miller Creek field school was to research the Fremont people, who lived in northwest Colorado between 1,000 and 800 years ago. The project provided teaching, training, and research opportunities for CSU students and faculty.

Situated within the 13,740-acre Skull Creek Wilderness Study Area, the Miller Creek Archaeological District contains a rich archaeological record spanning more than 10,000 years. It possesses one of the densest concentrations of standing architectural features, pithouse villages, shelters, and open-air sites in northwest Colorado. More than 20 students from CSU carried out minor systematic testing of a Fremont-era pit structure and a previously looted rock shelter to locate intact buried cultural deposits. Many of the students will go on to archaeology jobs with private companies and state and federal agencies.



SERVE

Colorado Canyons Association Awarded for Excellence

The Colorado Canyons Association (CCA) is the friends group for the BLM’s McInnis Canyons, Dominguez-Escalante, and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Areas in western Colorado. The CCA is also the winner of the BLM’s 2016 Public Lands Partnership Excellence award for its high-quality outdoor education curriculum.

Through hands-on activities, nearly 2,000 K-12 students learned about the public lands in an outdoor classroom setting. Topics included geology, riparian science, wildlife monitoring, archaeology, ranching history, rare plants, and amphibians. Many of the students were from underserved communities. The CCA covered the transportation and facility costs for the schools, which is a common barrier to participation for many schools.

The CCA also coordinated two citizen science programs that engaged local residents in collecting valuable riparian inventory and trail condition data to help inform BLM management decisions.



WORK

Partnership Prepares Crews for Firefighting Careers

An innovative partnership between the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and the Kremmling Field Office is allowing the BLM to complete important fuels projects while giving veterans and youths extensive training that helps them land firefighting jobs throughout the West. The Kremmling Field Office relies on the veteran and youth crews to complete a wide variety of fuels and resource work. The crews thin pinyon-juniper forests, reduce ladder fuels, thin tree stands for forest health, remove trees that are roadside hazards and beetle-killed trees, and build slash piles.

Participants from years past have found employment fighting fires. “The program altered the course of my life by providing me a foot-in-the-door to a career that I love,” said Benji Spencer, who worked on a veteran crew in 2013. “I was easily able to acquire a job with the BLM the next year on a fire engine in Colorado, and I now have a career seasonal position on a veteran handcrew based out of Las Vegas.”





EASTERN STATES

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	185,494
Volunteer Hours	29,414
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$710,054
Youth Hires	55

A strong partnership plus fun activities for kids and families equals increased appreciation for public lands. The BLM's Southeastern States District Office partnered with the Loxahatchee River Historical Society and other local entities to bring Sea Fest for Kids to life at Florida's Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA). Families enjoyed an afternoon on the waterfront with sea-inspired education and adventures for kids to celebrate the ONA's coastal heritage and history.

More than 3,700 individuals attended the event, most of them elementary-aged youths. The event also provided an opportunity to connect youths who are interested in the great outdoors with Every Kid in a Park passes.



WORK

Veterans Train for Wildland Firefighting

The BLM and Team Rubicon, which engages military veterans as first responders, hosted wildland firefighting training courses in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and Pearl, Mississippi, for more than 60 military veterans. The veterans paid for their own travel, room, and board. The certifications they received can help them gain employment during the wildland fire season.

"Even though we've taken off our Marine or Air Force or Army uniforms, we continue to serve," said Pat Gustafson, an Army veteran from Arkansas. "This [the firefighter uniform] is the uniform we get to put on now, and we want to thank Team Rubicon and BLM for that."

The Stone Mountain training consisted of mostly classroom instruction followed by a "field day" exercise. In Pearl, 20 veterans focused on helicopter crew training, which is for Team Rubicon veterans who already have wildland firefighting experience. BLM instructors from the National Interagency Fire Center in Idaho, as well as from Nevada and Wyoming, taught all of the courses.



SERVE

Partners and Volunteers Protect the Potomac

The BLM's Lower Potomac Field Station participated in the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 28th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, partnering with the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Charles County's Public Works Department, and Nanjemoy Volunteer Fire Department. The field station staff focused on cleaning the shoreline along the Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) in Maryland. More than 300 volunteers, including county litter crews, civic groups, scout troops, and students, removed more than 13 tons of trash from Charles County's Potomac River watershed.

Managed by BLM Eastern States, the 548-acre Douglas Point SRMA is one of the most ecologically and culturally significant landscapes in Maryland. It is part of the Nanjemoy Natural Resource Management Area, managed jointly by the BLM, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Charles County.



PLAY

The BLM Promotes Water Sports at Canoeecopia

Madison, Wisconsin, hosted the 27th annual Canoeecopia—the world's largest paddlesports consumer event. BLM natural resource specialists Katie Kassander, Kyle Schumacher, and Derek Strohl participated in the event, representing the BLM's Northeastern States District.

Presented by Rutabaga Paddlesports, Canoeecopia included more than 110 seminars and clinics about paddling gear, skills, and locations. The BLM team staffed an exhibit and shared information with the public about recreational opportunities on public lands—particularly in the Wisconsin Islands—and increased awareness of the BLM's Wisconsin Islands story map. This interactive map enables users to zoom in on 21 different waterways within 400 BLM-managed islands.



LEARN

Milwaukee Museum Hosts Earth Day Fair

In observance of Earth Day 2016, the BLM's Northeastern States District staff participated in the Outdoor Recreation Resource Fair at the Betty Brinn Children's Museum in Milwaukee. Families talked to exhibitors from local organizations about the best places for outdoor recreation and ways to actively explore and enjoy nature.

Along with archaeologist Jarrod Kellogg, natural resource specialists Katie Kassander and Kyle Schumacher staffed an exhibit and shared information with children and families about the Wisconsin Islands. The exhibit also featured a hands-on display of urban animal furs and skulls.





IDAHO

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	77,042
Volunteer Hours	43,077
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$1,039,879
Youth Hires	93


At the BLM’s Salmon Field Office (SFO), the Hands on the Land program was the catalyst for a partnership that brought 55 seventh graders to the usually tranquil Chief Joseph Ski Area for a day. The SFO; Salmon Valley Stewardship, a nonprofit organization; the Lemhi County School District; the Youth Employment Program; and the Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club teamed up to host the outing, which is always a winter highlight for both students and adult instructors.

Students took part in discussions about how plants and animals adapt to survive the harsh winter climate of Lost Trail Pass. Yet another partner, Idaho Fish and Game, provided animal pelts for the students to examine.

As part of establishing its Hands on the Land site in 2012, the SFO entered into an assistance agreement with Salmon Valley Stewardship. Salmon Middle and High Schools joined the effort, along with local outfitter shops, to bolster the program and facilitate multiple field trips featuring skiing, mountain biking, and peering into volcanoes. Thanks to the contributions of all the partners, students left with a sense of connection to and reverence for their public lands.




LEARN




Fourth Graders Experience Idaho History

BLM employees joined College of Southern Idaho staff members in an event to teach 300 fourth graders about archaeology, botany, geology, wildlife biology, wildland firefighting, the historic Oregon Trail, atlatl throwing, and flint knapping. Students were excited to sit behind the wheel of a wildland fire engine; grind flour; identify native plants; and pet muskrat, mink, and wolf pelts. Thanks to an efficient station rotation, the students cycled through nine different stations in just a few hours.



PLAY




Endurance Runners Traverse a National Scenic Trail

More than 150 gutsy runners gathered in Lemhi County, Idaho, to compete in the 2016 Beaverhead Endurance Runs, which showcased gorgeous BLM-managed lands.

The racecourses traversed about 20 miles of BLM-managed lands, following the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail along the Idaho/Montana border before dropping down into the Bohannon Creek drainage near Salmon. The longer Beaverhead run spanned 100 km (just over 62 miles). The shorter run covered a still-challenging 55-km (34.2-mile) course, which started at Lemhi Pass along the Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway.



SERVE




4-H Members Support Wild Horse and Burro Adoptions

Members representing five southern Idaho 4-H clubs that focus on equestrian skills gathered outside of Boise to pick up a wild horse weanling. This annual event is part of a weanling training program developed through a unique partnership between the BLM and the University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development Program.

Each year since 2009, 4-H members have selected and taken home weanlings (wild horses that are 6-11 months old) so they can begin the process of gentling and training the horses—a key step in the horses’ eventual adoption. This year there were 14 weanlings, which the BLM had gathered from Idaho’s Owyhee Desert following the massive Soda Fire.

The 4-H members worked with the young horses every day for 2 months, and the transformation that the weanlings underwent was remarkable. After the gentling and training period ended, the clubs brought the weanlings back to Boise for an event called the Trail Challenge, where all of their hard work paid off. The members not only gained horsemanship experience but also added value to these young horses by gentling them and getting them used to being handled, which benefits future adopters.

WORK



Students Get Hands-On Experience in Land Surveying

BLM’s Idaho State Office cadastral surveyors Dan Young and John Zink explained the land surveyor profession to about 40 students from Idaho City High School. The hands-on session was part of the Idaho Center for Outdoor Education’s career day held in Idaho City.

Young gave the students an overview of the Public Land Survey System. Other volunteers with the Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors talked about the history of land surveying from ancient times to the present. Instructors also discussed the various types of surveys, the equipment surveyors use, and the day-to-day tasks of surveyors.

After that, the students went outside to do some actual surveying. Students used modern day survey instruments to measure the outdoor site and evaluated a historic mineral survey corner using conventional surveying tools.



MONTANA/DAKOTAS

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	155,933
Volunteer Hours	50,294
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$1,214,097
Youth Hires	288

In Montana and the Dakotas, the BLM brokered numerous partnerships that advanced the agency’s goals and recruited members of the public to become allies in land management. Field offices collaborated with jobs programs to inform the upcoming generation about BLM careers. Diverse recreational groups pitched in to teach young people about courtesy and safety on multiuse trails. The BLM staff leveraged scores of volunteers to teach students about sustainable forestry and enticed visitors to take full advantage of scenic rivers and other BLM-managed sites. As people learned about their public lands, they gained a deeper understanding of land management challenges.



WORK

Cadets Shadow BLM Employees

For 1 snowy week in December, three cadets from the Montana Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA) gained job skills and got a taste of what it’s like to work for the BLM as they shadowed employees from the Dillon Field Office.

The MYCA assists at-risk youth in developing skills and abilities to become productive citizens. The MYCA cadets spend 22 weeks of their 18-month program living on the University of Montana-Western campus in Dillon. The BLM has been a partner in helping the youth learn about the outdoors and BLM careers for several years. During their time with the BLM, the cadets took core samplings from trees, harvested a Christmas tree, helped with monitoring on a late fall allotment, and spread seed for a vegetative project, among other activities.



LEARN

Sharing Trails Event Teaches Outdoor Safety and Ethics

The next generation of trail users gathered on Earth Day at the Fergus County Fairgrounds in Lewistown, Montana, to learn how to enjoy the outdoors safely and courteously. The annual Sharing Trails educational event emphasizes that with some preparation, everyone can have a safe and enjoyable experience, whether traveling by horse, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, or on foot.

Opening ceremonies featured live demonstrations on four principles of sharing trails: respect, communicate, yield, and be safe. Students watched as a motorcycle approached a horse on a trail and noted that both riders courteously communicated trail conditions to each other. Similar scenarios involved hikers, snowmobilers, snowshoers, bicyclists, and horseback riders while the master of ceremonies detailed the appropriate course of action for each instance. Afterward, the students moved from station to station, learning how to prepare for a safe outing on the trail.



SERVE

Students Learn About Trees for Arbor Day

Teaching kids about trees and public lands is a natural sweet spot for Ken Reed, a BLM forester for Montana and the Dakotas. Reed took part in an Arbor Day celebration hosted by the city of Billings, which introduced about 500 fourth graders to the great outdoors.

About 150 volunteers and businesses participated in the event, which included 22 stations where students learned about trees, weather, wildlife, insects, pollution, invasive pests and weeds, and other environmental subjects. Students also got hands-on experience planting and pruning trees throughout the park.

Reed opened his presentation with a discussion about public lands. He told students that they share ownership with all citizens and therefore need to be good stewards of their public lands.

Students also learned how to use basic forestry tools such as a logger tape and increment borer. They saw that the wood from different tree species has different colors, densities, and grain patterns, and that some even have a unique smell. Reed wrapped up the discussion by talking about forest disturbances including wildfire, insect outbreaks, and forestry treatments.



PLAY

The Fort Benton Staff Entices Visitors to Stay and Play

First-time visitors are often surprised by what they find when they venture off Highway 87 and drop into Fort Benton, Montana. A stop for a quick leg stretch or a bite to eat can easily turn into hours—or days—of exploring the history-rich town that holds claim as Montana’s birthplace.

Though they planned to spend just a day visiting Fort Benton, two Arizona women decided to extend their stay after talking with the staff at the BLM Missouri Breaks Interpretive Center. The staff shared opportunities to explore the Wild and Scenic Missouri River by kayak or canoe, and the women decided to call up a local outfitter and book a trip. After spending several days on the river, the women returned to Fort Benton to visit the museums and sights around town. Their day trip turned into a weeklong visit, and they left with high compliments for the BLM and local museum staff, as well as for the community.

“Their word of mouth will go far in bringing more people our way in the future,” said Connie Jacobs, director of the BLM Missouri Breaks Interpretive Center.





NEVADA

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	932,755
Volunteer Hours	56,153
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$1,355,533
Youth Hires	528

In Nevada, the BLM made use of partnerships and public engagement to address a number of challenges. Conservation corps members stepped in to restore a campsite, a friends group planted sagebrush to help restore a fire-damaged area, and a rock climbing event provided a forum to explore how best to manage a high-use recreation area. These initiatives showcase that strong partnerships can be part of the solution to help solve resource management issues.



SERVE

Friends Group Works on Fire Recovery

The Friends of Nevada Wilderness planted more than 2,400 Wyoming big sagebrush seedlings to rehabilitate the area affected by the Coleman Fire, which burned 15,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat near Mosquito Lake in northwest Nevada.

The friends group received a grant from the Nevada Dream Tags charitable fund to acquire the seedlings. The group, along with three BLM employees and five additional volunteers, devoted a weekend in late March to planting the sagebrush seedlings.



WORK

Conservation Corps Members Restore Campsite

The Nevada Conservation Corps (NCC) and the BLM's Battle Mountain District staff completed a 4-day campsite restoration project at the Hickison Petroglyph Recreation Area east of Austin. NCC projects help students and young professionals conserve and protect lands in the West while they gain experience in natural resource management.

The site features 16 campsites, a day-use area, multiple restrooms, grills, and picnic tables. Visitors can set up camp, go on a self-guided tour to view historic petroglyphs, enjoy trails for walking and horse riding, and see views of the Toiyabe and Toiyabe Ranges. The group's key tasks included installing new fire pits, realigning concrete parking barriers, repainting all picnic tables, and maintaining trails.



LEARN

Traveling Cave and Karst Center Teaches Caving

When it's hot outside, caves are cool, especially in the BLM cave and karst program's traveling environmental education exhibit. James Goodbar, the BLM's national program manager, describes it as a combination "bounce house" and interpretive display.

The exhibit came to Ely for the National Speleological Society's annual convention. This is the largest nonprofit organization in the world dedicated to the study and exploration of caves.

The inflatable exhibit contains three parallel passages. "The first passage educates 'cavers' on geology, hydrology, and how cave formations are formed. The second passage focuses on bats and bugs and biology. The third passage teaches cave conservation and safety and how to be a good caver," said Goodbar.



PLAY

Red Rock Rendezvous Encourages Safe Climbing

The Red Rock Rendezvous, a 3-day event at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, is the country's largest outdoor climbing festival. This year's event offered hundreds of rock-climbing clinics and other classes. Each clinic provided personalized instruction from licensed climbing guides to small groups. One popular class focused on introducing beginners to the tools, techniques, and safety requirements of slab climbing, a technically demanding style of climbing that requires intense concentration and precise foot placement.

At the event, the local BLM staff, climbers from around the country, and local and national partners discussed subjects such as the BLM's ability to meet changing user demands, protecting conservation values in high-use areas like Red Rock Canyon, and working with partners to help implement the BLM's national recreation strategy.



NEW MEXICO/ OKLAHOMA/TEXAS/ KANSAS

By the Numbers

Education and Interpretation Program Participants	212,466
Volunteer Hours	100,613
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$2,428,798
Youth Hires	229

Partnerships allowed the BLM to reach diverse populations, including students of all ages, teachers, interns, job seekers, and tribal groups. Volunteers and partner organizations helped the BLM carry out mission-critical activities such as cleaning up sites, connecting Native youth to public lands, training teachers about archaeology education, and reaching potential future employees.



WORK

Career Expo Features Carlsbad Field Office Staff

The Carlsbad Field Office staff participated in the New Mexico State University (NMSU) Carlsbad Career Expo 2016. Organized by NMSU-Carlsbad Counseling and Student Development Center and the Carlsbad Rotary Club, the event was open to high school students, all NMSU students, and the public.

The Carlsbad Field Office staffed an exhibit booth and shared information about internship and direct hire opportunities; resource management, fire management, clerical, and other job opportunities; and federal careers.



SERVE

Interns and Volunteers Clear 900,000 Pounds of Trash

Five summer interns working for the BLM Las Cruces District tackled some of the most challenging cleanup efforts in the district. Together Rena Kolikant, Kade Calloway, Nicah Montoya, William Haywood, and Elliot Fuentes cleaned up about 300 acres of public lands throughout the district's six-county radius.

"This year's interns have performed admirably, making an outstanding contribution to the district's 'No Illegal Dumping' campaign," said Rusty Stovall, BLM's chief of operations in Las Cruces. "They have been a well-oiled team, cleaning up some of the district's public lands in the urban interface."

The district's safety specialist, Dominick Chavez, has developed a partnership strategy to deploy the interns and community volunteers to clean up public lands. He teamed up with Annette Joyner, an Alamogordo teacher, and her team of volunteers from the Alamogordo High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps and from Bethel Baptist Church. In total,

Joyner enlisted 18 volunteers to help the BLM's interns clean up a strip of public land near the city of Alamogordo.



PLAY

Collaboration Connects Pueblo Youth to Public Lands

The BLM's Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument hosted a Let's Move! Outside event for 150 Pueblo youths in 2016.

The BLM, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Let's Move! Outside collaborated to host the 1-day event, which connected youth from the Cochiti Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, and Zia Pueblo to their public lands. The day was full of hiking, learning, and other fun activities.



LEARN

Project Archaeology Fires Oklahoma Teachers Up

The BLM's Oklahoma Field Office conducts a successful Project Archaeology program that has attracted increasing numbers of teachers each year since its 2014 launch. "As soon as we hold a workshop, those teachers tell their coworkers about it and then we get a flood of requests to hold more," says Ryan Howell, the BLM's lead for Project Archaeology in Oklahoma.

The growth is driven by the high quality of Project Archaeology's "Investigating Shelter" curriculum and the enthusiasm that the BLM and its Oklahoma state partners have for helping teachers learn how to explore archaeology in their classrooms. The teachers then engage students through their excitement about archaeological site preservation on public lands and stories of Native Americans that connect the past to the present.





OREGON/WASHINGTON

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	1,395,874
Volunteer Hours	117,667
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$2,840,481
Youth Hires	566

Partnerships can bring citizens from all walks of life onto their public lands for activities that spur personal growth and support land management. The BLM in Oregon and Washington teamed up with a school district to introduce hundreds of fourth graders to ecosystem studies. At-risk youth and young adults experienced a sense of purpose through improving trails, as did participants in a volunteer vacation. And wounded warriors found fishing to be the ideal avenue to reintegrate into the civilian world.

Volunteer Vacationers Maintain Pacific Crest Trail

The Medford District's Ashland Resource Area hosted an American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacation, giving volunteers interested in trail work and recreation site maintenance a chance to give back to the places they love to visit.

The 10-person volunteer crew camped for the week at the BLM's Hyatt Lake Recreation Area. Most of the work focused on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, but the crew also visited the Grizzly Peak and Pilot Rock Trails in the Soda Mountain Wilderness. Volunteers helped perform annual maintenance, such as removing trees that blew down over the winter and installing and maintaining grade dips and waterbars. In total, the crew maintained more than 11 miles of trail.



LEARN

Prineville Students Discover Ecosystems

Every fourth grader from the Crook County School District in Prineville spent a sunny day outside at Chimney Rock Campground discovering the wonders of central Oregon's natural resources.

The Prineville BLM staff helped nearly 250 kids get their hands and minds engaged in the local ecosystem. As they moved among stations, students learned about weed management, anadromous fish, and aquatic ecosystems. They also learned how to dig a fire line and extinguish a fire, how to properly throw a rope to a person in trouble in the water, and how to follow Leave No Trace principles.

One of the stations focused on the value of open space, and each child walked away with an Every Kid in a Park pass.



WORK

Youth Corps Works on Trail Improvements

Using a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Prineville District BLM staff and Cascadia Outfitters took 10 youths from the Heart of Oregon Corps on a 31-mile, 3-day float trip down the Lower Deschutes River in Central Oregon. The three goals of the trip were to educate the youths about the river environment, Leave No Trace ethics, and recreation on public lands; complete some needed trail work along the river; and have some fun.

The nonprofit Heart of Oregon Corps aims to reduce poverty, stimulate economic growth, and maintain the natural environment of Central Oregon by training and educating at-risk youth and young adults, ages 16-27. It offers an AmeriCorps and a Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps program. AmeriCorps crewmembers serve for 6 months, working toward their GEDs or diplomas, preparing for college, and gaining work experience. Youth Conservation Corps students can receive high school credit and apply for a scholarship.

On the Deschutes float trip, everyone worked hard to refurbish 3 miles of old railroad grade trail by removing boulders, clearing brush, and realigning sections of the trail. For fun, the youths paddled inflatable kayaks, slid down a makeshift waterslide, and rafted through class 3 whitewater. For many, this was their first river trip.



PLAY

Project Healing Waters Helps Veterans Thrive

BLM fish biologist Jeff McEnroe and volunteers from Project Healing Waters are helping retired Air Force Airman 1st Class Sonny Binder and other veterans through therapeutic outdoor recreation.

McEnroe's wife Abby, a nurse at Roseburg Veterans Affairs Medical Center, asked him to look into Project Healing Waters as therapy for veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder. The program recruits fly fishing enthusiasts to teach disabled veterans the art of tying flies, casting, and catching fish.

McEnroe was convinced and enlisted fly fishing legend Frank Moore, a WWII veteran and a member of the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame, to work with Project Healing Waters to develop a fly fishing course for veterans. With Moore on board, McEnroe had no trouble attracting a dozen participants to fish the waters of the North Umpqua River.



UTAH

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	493,633
Volunteer Hours	112,681
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$2,720,119
Youth Hires	118

In Utah, the BLM emphasized collaboration with local communities and organizations to reach diverse populations and enlist engaged citizens as public land stewards.

PLAY



Intern Assesses Recreation Accessibility


Graydon Bascom, a Direct Hire Authority intern for BLM's recreation and visitor services program in Utah, assessed more than two dozen outdoor recreation facilities across the state to determine how accessible they are for individuals with disabilities. The assessments gave field offices specific recommendations on needed accessibility upgrades and allowed the BLM to begin publicizing the recreation sites in Utah that already meet all accessibility standards.

The nonprofit National Ability Center (NAC), based in Park City, helped focus Bascom's assessments on high-demand activities and facilities. The NAC also invited the BLM to share its efforts



to improve accessibility on the public lands with a delegation from the Russian Federation, which was visiting the United States to learn how to incorporate accessibility into their local schools, public lands, and communities. After Bascom successfully completed his internship, the BLM's Richfield Field Office hired him permanently.


LEARN




Project Archaeology Reaches Statewide

The BLM in Utah established a statewide partnership with Southern Utah University to expand the reach of its Project Archaeology program, which focuses on teaching scientific and historical inquiry and cultural understanding to young Americans. The partnership has reached well over 2,500 students, teachers, and interested citizens across Utah to convey the importance of protecting our nation's rich cultural resources.

One of the BLM's most collaborative efforts was to host a multiday Project Archaeology workshop for 18 Girl Scouts from San Juan County, Utah, in the Bears Ears National Monument, a place known for its world-class red rock landscapes and archaeological resources. The Girl Scouts learned archaeological theories and research techniques from professionals with the BLM's Monticello Field Office, U.S. Forest Service, and the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum. Members of the Navajo Nation and Ute Tribe also shared their cultural perspectives and history with the Girl Scouts.




SERVE




BLM and Partners Roll Out the Respect and Protect Campaign

In partnership with Tread Lightly!, a nonprofit organization focused on promoting responsible outdoor recreation, the BLM launched the Respect and Protect public awareness campaign in Utah. The campaign's goal is to eliminate the looting and vandalism of archaeological, paleontological, and other natural resources from public lands in Utah. The campaign kicked off at the Natural History Museum in Salt Lake City, with additional public events held around the state. This groundbreaking campaign has brought together stakeholders representing state, local, nonprofit, and tribal interests to share consistent messages about the importance of these resources across Utah.



WORK




Youth Corps Members Support Recreation and Gain Job Skills

BLM's youth programs in Utah connect a diverse pool of young people to their public lands through environmental education, work experience, and outdoor recreation opportunities. In 2016, the BLM's Color Country District's offices and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument staff provided numerous career awareness activities.

Specialists from the Cedar City Field Office connected with their community to build new mountain bike trails and expand a popular disc golf course. Youth conservation crews carried out trail work.

The St. George Field Office staff worked with 21st Century Conservation Service Corps crews to conduct a number of resource and conservation projects. The crews installed fencing along mountain biking trails in the Red Bluffs Area of Critical Environmental Concern to protect populations of the endangered dwarf bear poppy from recreation-related impacts.





WYOMING

By the Numbers	
Education and Interpretation Program Participants	280,462
Volunteer Hours	26,482
Volunteer Contributed Labor	\$639,275
Youth Hires	172

In Wyoming, the BLM joined forces with numerous partners to engage the public in enjoying and supporting their public lands. Collaborative efforts established new recreational trails and drafted students to monitor water and soil. An interagency Every Kid in a Park event connected students to parks and paleontological sites. And an Eagle Scout project resulted in new fencing that contains cattle without harming wildlife.



PLAY

Partnerships Bring Mountain Bike Trails to Cody


The city of Cody, the mountain biking club Park County Pedalers (PCP), and the BLM's Cody Field Office developed a formal mountain bike riding area on public land and city property on the edge of town. The new trails at Beck Lake began as an idea from local residents who rode cow trails in the 1980s.

In 2011, the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) conducted a feasibility study and designed a conceptual trail plan. In 2013, the BLM approved the right-of-way lease, and in 2014, Wyoming's Recreational Trails Program awarded the PCP and the city a \$50,000 grant, opening the final path to build the trails.



Over the summer of 2015, the PCP organized volunteer workdays and an IMBA Trail Care Crew workshop to involve community members in constructing sustainable trails in the Beck Lake area. After obtaining final permissions, a contractor in 2016 completed phase I of the project: 8 miles of climbing, downhill, and connector trails that provide a fun riding experience for all skill levels.

Despite the many challenges, partners set a trail vision and followed through with dedication, commitment, and resilience to create an area for bikers, hikers, and runners.



WORK


Eagle Scout Project Protects Wildlife

The Crookston Ranch Historic Site, managed by the BLM's Rock Springs Field Office, is looking better thanks to a recent Eagle Scout project. On National Public Lands Day, local scouts replaced the old barbed wire fence with a new fence that allows wildlife to go through it or over it without injuring themselves, while also containing the cattle in the area.

Hunter Davidson of Troop 85 worked with the Rock Springs Field Office staff on his project. They decided to continue installation of a new buck and pole fence around the site, a project that the BLM staff and volunteers had started on National Public Lands Day in 2014 and 2015.

Davidson's Eagle Scout project focused on removing remnants of old fence with wire panels and barbed wire. Four leaders, five scouts, and one BLM staff member from Rock Springs helped him with his project. Davidson's team removed the old fencing and hauled the materials back to Rock Springs to be recycled. The new fence will protect the site and retain its visual integrity.





LEARN

Fourth Graders Teach about Public Lands


"Hi! My name is Breauna and today my talk is about the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center." Dozens of fourth grade students from Sunrise Elementary in Cheyenne gave similar presentations as part of an Every Kid in a Park project designed to connect public lands and local students.

The BLM's communications staff in Wyoming used the Every Kid in a Park program as a way to generate interest in public lands from the kids as well as from their families. "Every year, we teach Wyoming history as part of our normal curriculum, and I know that BLM public lands are an important part of that history. But kids know almost nothing about BLM," said teacher Anna Bechtel. The closest BLM-managed lands are more than 100 miles from the school, so field trips to BLM sites are not feasible for Bechtel and teacher Julie Norman.



After giving a presentation about various BLM sites as well as economic benefits, the staff helped students explore various BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service sites via the Internet and put together multimedia presentations about what they learned. Topics ranged from the Red Gulch Dinosaur Tracksite to Martin's Cove and from the Killpecker Sand Dunes to Yellowstone.

The students presented their final projects to family and friends at an evening program. At the end, each student received their Every Kid in a Park pass, which allows them to visit some of these sites for free.



SERVE

Hands-On Science Involves Soil, Water Testing

Since 2011, the BLM's Rock Springs Field Office has helped Wyoming's Sweetwater County School District No. 1 with its water and soil lab. The lab introduces children from Rock Springs Eastside Elementary to basic scientific principles, including comparative analysis, reproducible results, and good lab working practices.

Phase 1 of this year's lab was a field trip to the Arrowhead Springs Park area to test water and soil samples in the field. During Phase 2, the BLM provided water and soil samples from across BLM-administered lands that are tested using the same testing sets. Phase 3 involved computer-assisted analysis of the data and an opportunity for the students to compare their water quality results with those submitted by other students around the world.

"The project provides students with an outdoor research experience and opportunities to expand that experience," said Georgia Foster, a BLM outdoor recreation planner in Rock Springs. Wrapped within this block of instruction are life lessons, including the importance of considering careers in science and technology.



