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# Eastern Focus

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Bureau of Land Management

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**A**s the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for the people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
THE INTERIOR**

**Thomas S. Kleppe,  
Secretary**

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# Eastern Focus

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Bureau of Land Management

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Lowell J. Udy, Director  
Eastern States

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January 1976

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# The Bureau of Land Management

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Curt Berklund, Director

The Bureau of Land Management was created in 1946 when Congress combined functions of the General Land Office and the U.S. Grazing Service into a single Bureau. BLM has exclusive administrative responsibility for more than 450 million acres of National Resource Lands—most of them located in the Far West and Alaska. National Resource Lands are what is left of the Nation's public domain—lands acquired in national expansion and never privately-owned or acquired by other Federal agencies for special purposes. BLM is also responsible for subsurface resource management of an additional 310 million acres where mineral rights have been reserved to the Federal Government.

Timber, minerals (including oil and gas), geothermal energy, live-stock forage, wildlife habitat, recreation, soil, water, cultural values, and open space are other resources managed by the Bureau. BLM also surveys Federal lands and maintains public land records.

In all that it does, BLM strives for the protection, orderly development, and use of the National Resource Lands while maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment.

In its relatively short history, BLM has moved toward decentralization, delegating greater authority to field offices that are closer to specific problems and issues.



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## Eastern States

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The Eastern States Office (ESO) is unique among the 12 State Offices of BLM:

It is the only State Office east of the Mississippi River;

ESO's jurisdiction encompasses 31 states ranging from Minnesota to Louisiana and east to the Atlantic shore, and those states from Maine to Florida;

About two-thirds of the Nation's people live within this area;

The 1,219,000 square miles represent about one-third of the total surface area of the United States.

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## Lake States Office

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Comparable to a BLM District Office, the Lake States Office (LSO) in Duluth, Minnesota, is also unique in that it is responsible for BLM programs in three States: Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin. LSO's present emphasis is on resource and land use inventory, planning, and environmental work, and reports to the Director, Eastern States.

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## Staff

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The staff of the Eastern States organization has diverse professional and educational backgrounds in land and resource management, forestry, recreation, wildlife management, engineering, surveying, law, etc.



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## Eastern States Programs

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Program areas of concern in the Eastern United States parallel those of the Bureau and include: lands, minerals, coastal zone management, cadastral surveys, wildlife habitat, recreation, watershed, and environmental quality. ESO is not involved in range management to any appreciable extent, nor is it involved in Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) operations.



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## Mineral Resources

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One of BLM's primary concerns is the management of mineral resources on National Resource Lands, lands administered by other Federal agencies, and on private lands where the mineral rights are reserved to the United States.

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## **Federal Minerals Management Mapping Program**

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As an aid to achieve our national goal of energy self-sufficiency, the Bureau has instituted the Federal Minerals Management Mapping Program (FMMMP). By the careful mapping of all Federally-owned mineral deposits, and subsequent analysis of the information, more intelligent management of our resources is possible. This effort is at present Centered in the Great Lakes and Southeast regions. The maps will show the location and type of Federal minerals ownership.

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## **Mineral Leasing**

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In conjunction with prospecting, mining, and mineral leasing laws, the Eastern States Office issues permits and leases involving oil and gas, coal, phosphate, and so-called hard-rock minerals such as copper, nickel, lead, zinc, and iron. In all, the Eastern States Office has mineral leasing responsibilities for 37 million acres; four million acres are under lease.

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## **National Environmental Policy Act**

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To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Eastern States Office prepares or reviews environmental analyses which discuss the impacts of minerals activities on the environment in those states within its jurisdiction.

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## Land Resources

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With the majority of Americans living east of the Mississippi River, demands placed on the land and its resources face ever increasing pressure. BLM functions under principles of multiple use and sustained yield while striving to enhance a conservation ethic.

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## Land Use Planning

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BLM's Planning System is a process which culminates in a series of multiple resource use recommendations and alternatives which consider social, economic, and environmental values. Basic to this planning process is a complete and detailed environmental profile. One phase of the planning process is a comprehensive inventory of National Resource Lands and their associated resources including determination of Federal mineral ownership.

The Lake States Office is engaged in an islands inventory in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin. More than 2500 islands have been found to meet Federal ownership criteria. Until such inventories are complete, it is the policy to establish and maintain a protective and custodial management program.

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## Land Records

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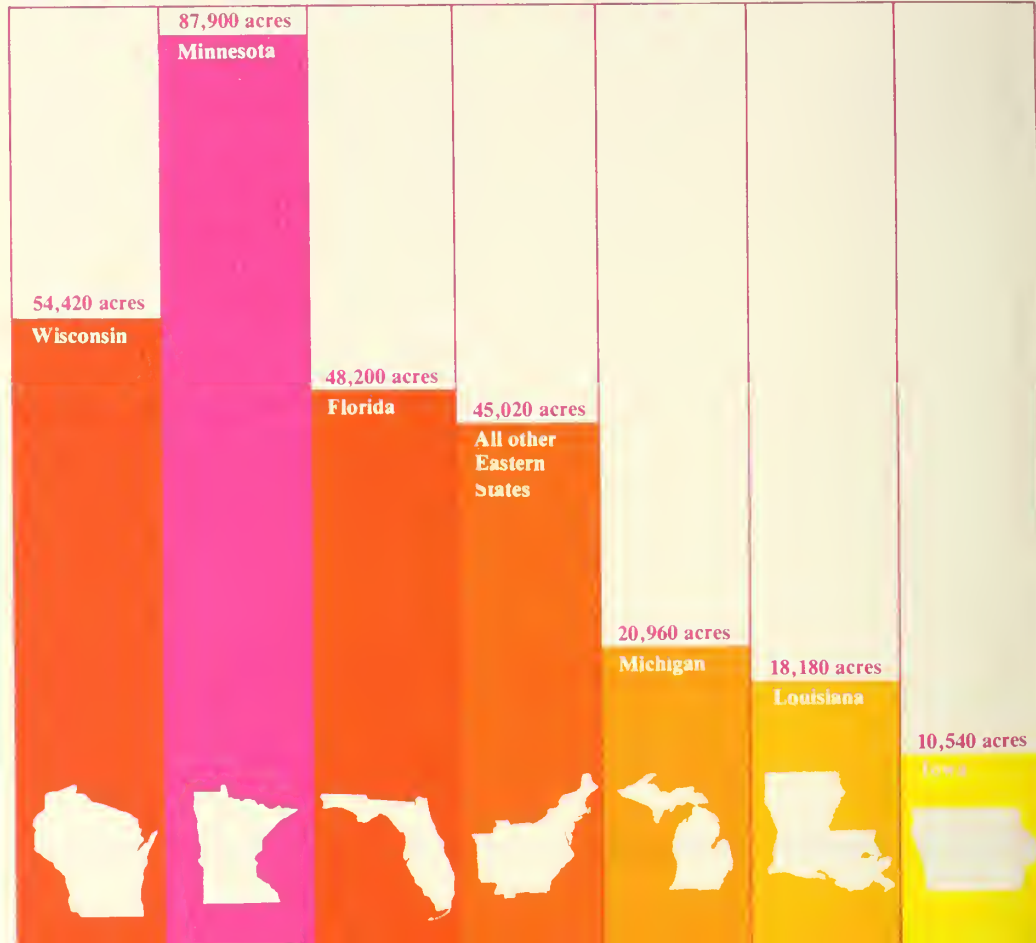
Questions of land ownership often present complex problems. Discovery of oil or other valuable minerals on property underscores the importance of clear title and accurate boundaries. BLM is the principal administrator of the public land laws, and the Eastern States Office handles over 7000 requests annually for help in determining land ownership and disposition. As the custodian of some 7.5 million patents (documents which convey legal title to public lands) and other documents covering over a billion acres, ESO has been referred to as the largest land title office in the United States. Also in its care are the original records or copies of all the public land surveys of the United States—many of which are of historical value.

## Cadastral Survey

In resolving questions of land ownership boundaries, it is often necessary to perform a cadastral survey. This type of survey creates or re-establishes boundaries of tracts of land. The cadastral survey program in the Eastern United States is extremely complex, due in part to the involvement of land ownership along waterways . . . miles of coastal boundaries . . . and the abundance of lakes and rivers in the Eastern United States. These factors and others have provided the setting for many erroneous surveys and numerous unsurveyed islands. To correct the problem of omitted lands, a retracement of the original survey must be made to isolate the apparent omitted areas and ultimately determine ownership.

Cadastral survey work is also performed for other Federal agencies such as the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

## Estimated Omitted Lands in the Eastern United States



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## **Cooperative Efforts**

The very nature of BLM's mission requires cooperative relationships with other Federal, State, and local agencies as well as the private sector.

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## **Recreation and Public Purposes Act**

As the name implies, R&PP authorizes the conveyance of National Resource Lands to State and local governments for recreation and public purposes, and to qualified nonprofit organizations for public and quasi-public purposes. BLM examines lands conveyed under R&PP at least every five years to assure that developments and uses are in compliance with those approved at the time of conveyance.

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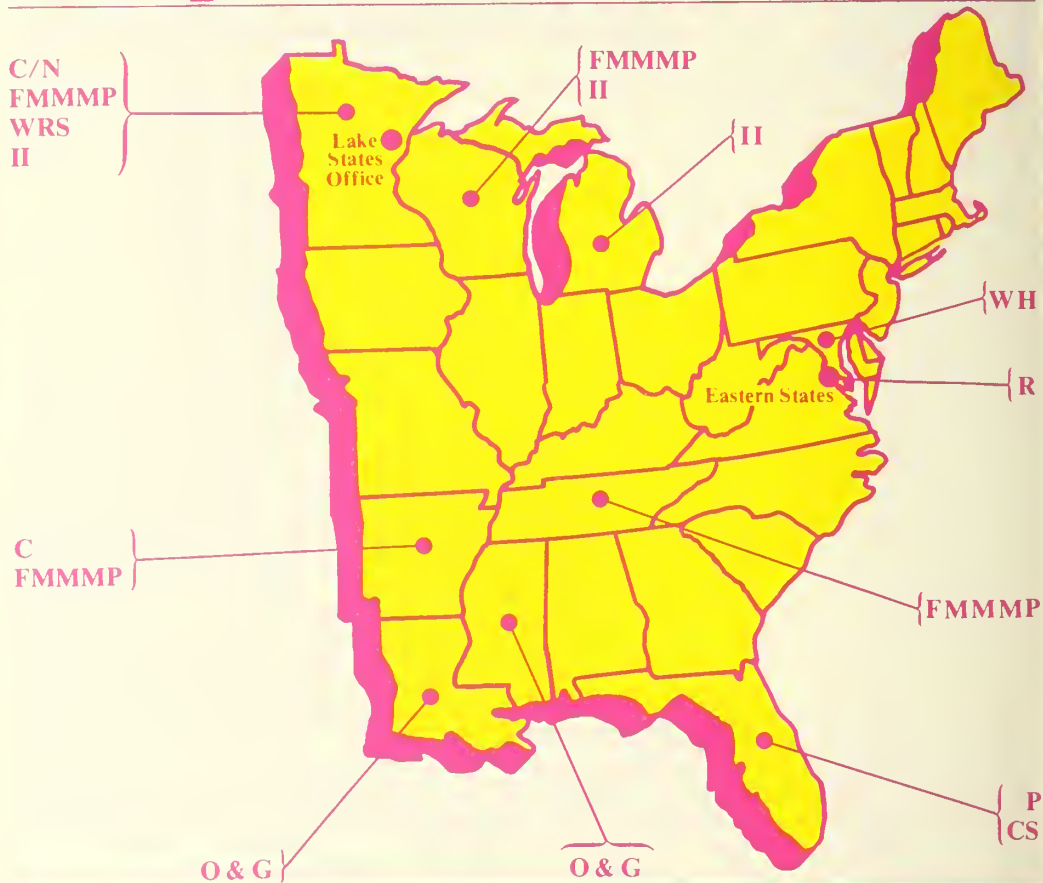
## **The Sikes Act**

Called BLM's Organic Act for wildlife, the Sikes Act (P.L. 93-542) empowers BLM to enter into cooperative agreements with States to further strengthen cooperative habitat programs for wildlife on public lands. Such agreements are being pursued.

## State Offices



## ES Program Areas and Responsibilities





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# Legend

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Left:

FMMMP	Federal Minerals Management Mapping Program
O & G	Oil and Gas
C	Coal
C/N	Copper/Nickel
WH	Wild Horses
II	Island Inventory
WRS	Wild River Studies
R	Records
P	Phosphates
CS	Cadastral Surveys

Right:

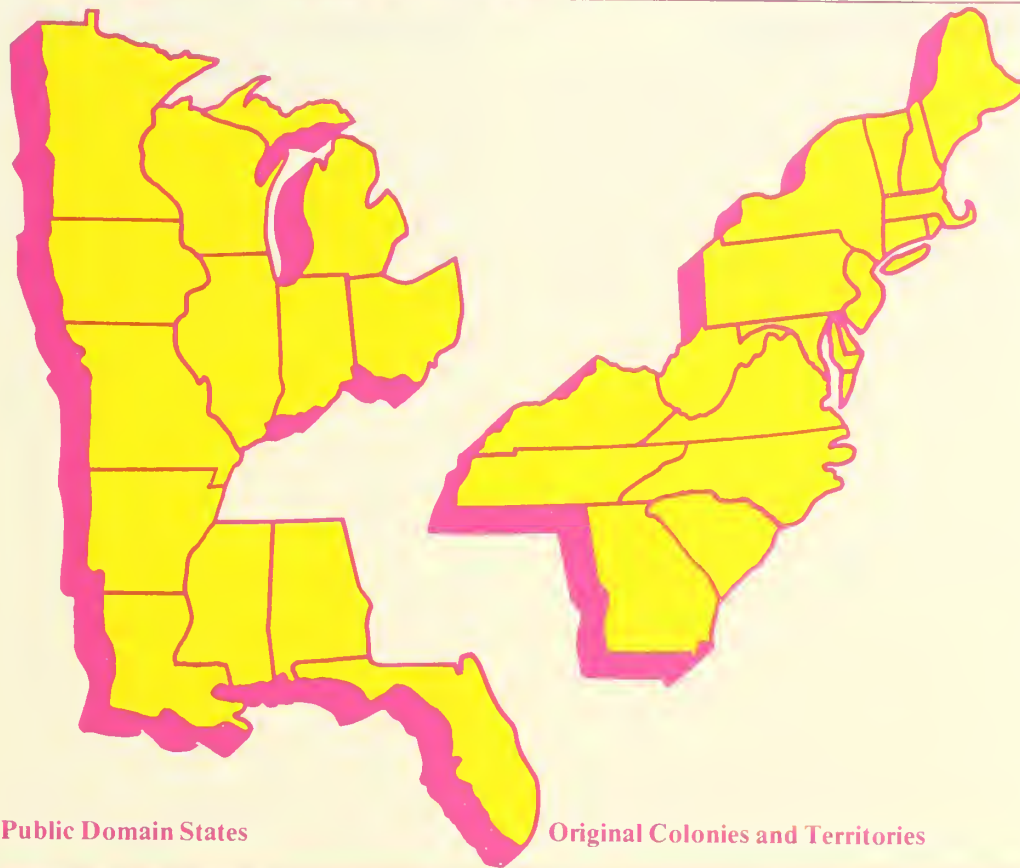
The public domain lands are those lands, except the original 13 colonies and their territories, which were acquired by the Federal Government in the course of national expansion, and have never left Federal ownership.

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# ES Public Domain Lands

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## Coastal Zone Management

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The Coastal Zone Management Act (P.L. 92-583) encourages Federal agencies to cooperate and participate with State and local governments in the development of a comprehensive coastal zone management plan. The Eastern States Office has given assistance to the State of Louisiana and will be working with other coastal states within its area of jurisdiction.

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## Wild and Scenic Rivers

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The St. Croix, Upper Mississippi, Kettle, Manistee, and Lower Wisconsin Rivers either have been or are being studied by an inter-agency task force to determine their suitability for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, which would protect their scenic, recreational and cultural value. Staff from the Lake States Office are members of the study teams.

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## Conservation Organizations

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Cooperative relations with conservation and environmental groups are an essential ingredient in the successful management of America's natural resources. In 1975, the Eastern States Office and the National Audubon Society signed an agreement granting the Society stewardship for 266 acres of Federal lands adjacent to the Society's Rookery Bay Sanctuary near Naples, Florida. The Sanctuary, one of the few remaining pristine estuaries along the East Coast, provides habitat for several endangered species including the American crocodile, the Bald Eagle, and the Manatee. Similar cooperative efforts with other groups are being considered.

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## Johnny Horizon

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Johnny Horizon is a symbolic character who represents the thoughtful user of America's publicly-owned lands. Originated by BLM in 1968, the program urges citizen participation to "Help Make America a Better Place to Be." The Eastern States organization works with local communities in organizing such efforts.

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## Laws Affecting the Bureau of Land Management

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Congress has enacted thousands of laws pertaining to the use and disposition of public lands and resources. When our country was in its infancy, "long on land and short on revenue", laws were passed to encourage development and generate revenue through disposal of the public domain. Many of these laws favored newly-forming states through special grants. There were also grants to utility companies for wagon roads, canals, railroads, and to colleges. Other laws were passed to encourage settlement for the benefit of homesteaders and veterans.

Today we are concerned not only with the responsibilities stemming from "old laws"—but with a myriad of public laws and executive orders re-directing our efforts toward contemporary problems. These issues are cultural, environmental, social, recreational and wildlife oriented. Our mission today is the successful management of many resources.

Some of the laws affecting BLM in the Eastern States include:

- The Mining Act of 1872
- The Antiquities Act of 1906
- The Mineral Lands Leasing Act of 1920
- The Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926
- The Historic Sites Act of 1935
- The Mineral Leasing Act of Acquired Lands of 1947
- The Historic Sites Preservation Act of 1966
- The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968
- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
- The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970
- The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972
- The Endangered Species Act of 1973
- The Sikes Act of 1974

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## Sources of Information

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Other BLM publications available on request include the following:

- Our Public Lands
- Eastern States Newsletter
- All Around You
- Surveying the Public Lands
- Making Multiple Use Decisions
- What Are "The Public Lands?"
- The Hard Facts of Homesteading
- Learning About the Environment

Requests for publications or additional information about BLM programs in the Eastern States should be addressed to:

Office of Public Affairs  
Eastern States Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
7981 Eastern Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910



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