

## Lands and Realty Program

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Through the lands and realty program, the BLM in Idaho authorizes the use of the public lands through the issuance of rights-of-way, leases, and permits. Rights-of-way can be issued for such things as roads, transmission lines, communication sites, water facilities, and pipelines. In addition, we have an active land exchange program and a small sale program used to resolve resource issues. The Recreation and Public Purposes program makes lands available to State and local governments and non-profit associations. Another significant program is the acquisition of access to public lands and the acquisition of lands or interests in lands with Land and Water Conservation Funds.

*"The BLM in Idaho processed 31 energy-related rights-of-ways. This includes authorizing 1 oil and gas pipeline, 1 power facility, and 14 transmission lines; amending 8 transmission lines; and renewing 7 transmissions lines."*

### *Energy Related Rights-of-Way*

- The BLM in Idaho processed 31 energy-related rights-of-way.
- This includes authorizing 1 oil and gas pipeline, 1 power facility, and 14 transmission lines; amending 8 transmission lines; and renewing 7 transmission lines.
- In addition, there has been a renewed interest in wind energy development, primarily in southeastern Idaho.
- Two short-term rights-of-way have been issued for wind monitoring sites in the Cottler Mountains south of Burley and on the Brown's Bench area south of Hagerman.
- There has been a renewed interest in wind energy development, primarily in southeastern Idaho. BLM currently has 5 rights-of-way applications for wind energy development in Idaho.

### *Non-Energy Related Rights-of-Way*

- We issued 101 new rights-of-way for roads, telephone lines, communication sites, fiber optic lines, water facilities, and other uses, which is 15 more non-energy related rights-of-way than we issued the previous year.
- In addition, we amended 20 rights-of-way and renewed 17 rights-of-way for roads, telephone lines, communication sites, fiber optic lines, water facilities, and other uses.

## *Land Acquisitions*

- The BLM in Idaho completed 33 land and easement acquisitions.
- Three of these acquisitions were significant conservation easements which protected 4,550 acres and provided for recreation opportunities on segments of the South Fork of the Snake River, the Lower Snake River, and the Lower Salmon River.

## *Other Land Actions*

- The BLM in Idaho completed 3 exchanges.
- In addition, we processed 46 leases, permits, and licenses; renewed or amended 3 Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases; and completed 1 lands sale.

## *Hydroelectric Power Relicensing*

A team of specialists chartered by the Idaho and Oregon/Washington BLM is actively coordinating with Idaho Power Company on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing for the Hells Canyon Complex of Dams.

- We are at the review and comment stage of the preliminary draft application package.
- Idaho BLM is also actively involved with the relicensing process for six Idaho Power dams on the Middle Snake River in south-central Idaho and five Avista Corp dams on the Spokane River in northern Idaho and eastern Washington.
- A negotiated settlement agreement was signed by BLM and sixteen interested parties on August 28, 2002 for the three PacifiCorp dams on the Bear River in southeastern Idaho. Over \$15 million will be spent on environmental protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures over the 30-year term of the license.

## *Snake River Basin Adjudication (Water Rights)*

The Snake River Basin Adjudication is the most complex water rights project in BLM and the second largest adjudication among the Western states. Because of this, the decisions, policies, and direction of this State-led water allocation process are establishing precedents for the other Western states and for BLM nationally.

*“We have completed litigation on 4,642 Public Water Reserve claims with the State of Idaho in the Snake River Basin Adjudication and are pursuing procedures for issuance of partial decrees. We have also reached settlements in over 5,700 BLM water rights contested by private interests.”*

### *Snake River Basin Adjudication Highlights*

Objections Filed	◆ Staff researched and filed approximately 148 objections to claims and Idaho Department of Water Resources reported claims.
Historical Beneficial Use Claims	◆ Working with the State of Idaho, settled objections to 1,165 stockwater claims based on grazing history dates.
Public Water Resource Claims	◆ Successfully defended 4,642 challenged Public Water Reserve claims with the State of Idaho.
Other Settlements	◆ Produced settlement on about 5,755 other individual objections from ranchers.
Court Hearings and Trials	◆ Staff and our DOJ attorney completed about 150 hearings, prepared for 5 trials, and went to 1 trial.
Continuing Negotiations	◆ Negotiated with Shoshone-Paiute Tribe of Duck Valley Indian Reservation.
Claims Reviewed	◆ Reviewed 3,856 claims in Preliminary and Final Director’s Reports issued by the Idaho Department of Water Resources order to identify problems with BLM claims and potential objections to private claims encroaching on Public Lands.
Water Right Claims Awarded to Date (Cumulative)	◆ The cumulative total of Water Right Claims awarded to the BLM by the State SRBA Court is about 7,537.

### *Minerals Program*

The BLM is responsible for mineral programs on all federal lands in Idaho, including National Forest lands, and on about 1.8 million acres of private lands with reserved minerals. Also, upon invitation by either the Bureau of Indian Affairs or by the individual Tribes, BLM acts as technical adviser to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for mineral development on Indian reservation lands. The objective of BLM’s minerals program is to make mineral commodities available to meet national

and local needs by ensuring orderly and timely development of resources, protection of the environment, receipt of fair market value for minerals leased or sold, and supervision of exploration and production operations on leased lands.

Minerals on public lands are available under three distinct systems – locatable, leasable, and salable. Locatable minerals cover typical metal deposits and most valuable mineral deposits not included in the other two systems. These mineral rights are acquired through mining claims. When a valuable deposit is discovered, the mining claims involved may be patented and title to both land and minerals granted. Mineral leases are issued on specific acreages for a specified period of time, and the lessee pays annual rentals and royalties on any minerals or energy produced. In Idaho, leasable minerals include oil and gas, phosphate, acquired hardrock minerals, and geothermal resources. Salable minerals include common sand, gravel, decorative rock, building stone, fill material, and other construction materials. These minerals are available through material sale or to governmental agencies and non-profit organizations through the issuance of free-use permits.

*“During the fiscal year, 86 federal phosphate leases on nearly 43,000 acres of National Forest and public lands in Idaho produced about 7 million tons of phosphate ore and generated nearly \$6 million in royalty, rents, and bonuses.”*

### *Locatable Minerals*

- For FY 2002, there are 185,538 active and closed unpatented mining claims on record in Idaho. This is about one percent more than in FY 2001.
- For FY 2002, 1,018 new claims were recorded. This is an increase of about 46 percent from FY 2001.
- There are currently 174,370 closed claims on record for FY 2002. This is about a 3 percent increase from FY 2001.
- There are 11,370 active mining claims on record in Idaho for all mineral commodities for FY 2002. This is about a 21 percent decrease from FY 2002.
- There are 126 active mining operations (43 CFR 3809 plans of operations) on public lands in Idaho for FY 2002.



## *Leasable Minerals*

- There are 86 federal phosphate leases on about 42,896 acres of National Forest and public lands produced about 7 million tons of phosphate ore. This is about a 29 percent increase in production from FY 2001.
- There are 8 authorized oil and gas leases on 11,500 acres of federal land in Idaho for FY 2002. This is a 38 percent increase in number of leases and 50 percent increase in the acres under lease.
- There are 2 acquired lands hardrock leases for garnet in Idaho for FY 2002. There is no change from FY 2001.
- There are no federal geothermal leases in Idaho for FY 2002.

## *Salable Minerals*

- There were 1,003 community pit, common use area, and negotiated sales conducted in Idaho for FY 2002. This resulted in 52,414 cubic yards and 53,996 tons of material sold for the year. The mineral materials sold were valued at \$65,500. Although fewer sales, there were larger quantities per sale than in FY 2001.
- There were 275 Free Use authorizations made to governmental and non-profit agencies in Idaho in FY 2002. These authorizations provided 505,000 cubic yards valued at \$295,000. Again, there were fewer Free Use authorizations but larger quantities per authorization than in FY 2001.

## Abandoned Mine Lands

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- The Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) program in Idaho BLM continues to evolve with progress in the cleanup of water-quality impacted sites and in identification and mitigation of physical safety hazards at mine sites.
- In FY 2002, Idaho completed five water-quality related AML projects.
- AML investigations continue in areas of suspected water-quality degradation or where AML safety hazards occur in areas of active public recreation or urban growth.
- Ongoing work emphasizes building partnerships and includes investigations of sites, removal of tailings and waste rock, protection of fisheries, restoration of riparian zones, and mitigation of safety hazards for public safety.
- For additional details on Idaho's AML program, please refer to the Idaho BLM Web site: <http://www.id.blm.gov/aml/index.htm>