

## Hazard Materials Management and Resource Restoration

---

The investigation and cleanup of public lands contaminated by hazardous materials continues to be an important role for the BLM in Idaho. Among the projects completed in FY 2002 were Drug lab cleanups, response to illegal disposals, herbicide sampling, continued treatment of mine discharges, continued assessment of the Southeast Idaho Selenium problem, and continued assessment of a large landslide. With hazardous materials staff in all Idaho BLM district offices, we are addressing hazardous materials through an aggressive cleanup program involving investigation and cleanup contracts, cooperative agreements, and educational outreach to those who may potentially be causing hazardous waste problems. Law enforcement is also playing an important role in reducing hazardous waste incidents. The hazardous materials program has been renamed "Hazard Management and Resource Restoration" and has expanded to include mine shafts, explosives, and other physical hazards.

*"We saved taxpayers more than \$200,000 by conducting special studies with the Idaho Hazmat Technical Response Team."*

- During FY 2002, the BLM in Idaho conducted 6 emergency responses and completed the investigation of 50 sites and the cleanup of 25 sites.
- We recovered over \$8,000 for an emergency removal conducted in FY 2001.
- Cost avoidance actions were completed that saved more than \$75,000 in cleanup expenses by having responsible parties conduct the cleanup.
- We also initiated a Hazard Recognition and Reduction program, which includes the restoration of abandoned wells and physical mine hazards, and the monitoring of the Blue Gill landslide area.
- We provided design assistance to The Nature Conservancy for the removal of a hazardous diversion dam resulting in a savings of more than \$100,000. The program is also providing assistance to the Abandoned Mine Lands program for the assessment, removal, and restoration of hazardous materials at mine sites.
- We continue to assist the Regional Solicitor's Office and the Department of Justice in the CERCLA-based Natural Resources Damages Assessment lawsuit seeking cost recovery from mining companies for past natural resources damages. This is one of the largest environmental lawsuits litigated in the U.S. and involves more than ten Department of Justice attorneys. We produced tens of thousands of documents in the discovery process and hundreds of maps in response to interrogatories and in preparation for depositions. The trial should conclude before the end of FY 2003.
- We are assisting the Department of Justice in the preparation of case materials in the defense against alleged damages caused by the BLM's fire rehabilitation program in southern Idaho that used the DuPont herbicide "Oust".

- The Hazard Management and Resource Restoration program is providing expertise on sampling, contaminant transport, toxicology, and meteorology.

## Law Enforcement and Resource Protection

---

The BLM Law Enforcement program in Idaho emphasizes voluntary compliance with federal natural resource related laws and regulations through positive, proactive Ranger contact with visitors and users. Idaho BLM Law Enforcement Officers are also responsible for ensuring the safety and security of visitors, users, employees, facilities, and critical infrastructures located on public land. Unauthorized uses and violations are vigorously investigated, and appropriate criminal, civil, or administrative actions are taken. Where monetary loss or resource damage is significant, restitution is sought. Substantial law enforcement resources continue to be devoted to the investigation of human-caused wildland fires.

*“Through partnerships, cooperative agreements, and other initiatives, several high impact investigations have been conducted that have resulted in convictions and restitution to the government for resource damage.”*

- In Idaho, Law Enforcement Rangers at the districts and field offices continued resource protection and public assistance efforts.
- Special Agents investigated controlled substance, hazardous materials, and other major resource-related violations.
- Together, Rangers and Agents also conducted search and rescue activities on public lands with county and State emergency services.
- Our Rangers and Agents participated in several law enforcement partnerships with local communities.
- Through these partnerships, cooperative agreements, and other initiatives, several high impact investigations have been conducted that have resulted in convictions and restitution to the government for resource damage.

## Public and Governmental Relations

---

The BLM's relationships to our local communities, partners, and other governmental entities are vitally important in obtaining and accomplishing mutually beneficial public land goals. This function includes activities such as public and internal dissemination of information, interagency coordination, public involvement in planning, environmental education, news media relations, Congressional relations, management of the Internet, and creation of audio-visual and other graphic arts products.

*“The BLM’s relationships to our local communities, partners, and other governmental entities are vitally important in obtaining and accomplishing mutually beneficial public land goals.”*

### *Public and Governmental Relations Highlights*

- Consulted with Idaho BLM's three District Resource Advisory Councils regarding several high priority issues. Key topics included Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines implementation, off-highway vehicle use, fire management, fee-use recreation sites, sage grouse habitat standards and guides, fire management, resource management planning, and other key issues.
- Planned and conducted numerous Congressional staff tours, including 135 Congressional briefings, to discuss the National Fire Plan, rangeland restoration efforts, and other key topics.
- Continued work on Idaho BLM's public Website including development of new websites for the Craters of the Moon, Birds of Prey, and Bruneau RMPs as well as the new Abandoned Mines website. Converted and posted 10 fire Mitigation Plans, 19 Technical Bulletins, 15 Environmental Assessments, and 6 Planning Documents.
- Responded to 30 congressional inquiries from Idaho and other states regarding Idaho resource and lands issues.
- Developed and distributed 130 public news releases and conducted 80 public meetings on numerous key multiple use management topics.
- Provided many State Director speeches, presentations, and briefing materials. Created numerous communication strategies and provided writing and editing services. Provided local contractors with numerous project opportunities and created and used numerous communication tools to keep our internal audience informed.
- Maintained Idaho BLM's section of the National Photodatabase at [www.photos.blm.gov](http://www.photos.blm.gov)

## *Outreach*

### *Pathways*

- Created new Idaho display and revised “Our Place” brochure giving new employees and the general public an overview of the BLM in Idaho.

### *Recreation*

- River Management Society 2002 National Symposium, a BLM national partnership - provided graphic design and illustration services.
- Developed kiosks for OHV use in Owyhee County, South Fork of the Snake River Boater Information, and Payette Recreation Fee Demonstration Project.
- Revised the Mineral Ridge Trail booklet.
- Developed 8 interpretive signs and initiated an educational website for Cress Creek Nature Trail on the South Fork of the Snake River.

### *Cultural*

- Developed interpretive signs for the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in Lemhi County, Bonneville Point in Ada County, and initiated work on the Sacajawea Center, Salmon.

### *Noxious Weeds*

- Developed noxious weeds display, 20 vinyl posters, digital and web presentations, and handouts for Idaho field offices and weeds partnerships.

## *Environmental Education*

The goal of BLM’s Environmental Education program is to help students know and understand their environment and the associated challenges. We offer classroom teachers a rich and diverse array of meaningful activities and opportunities for their students, including educational materials, hands-on exercises, and outdoor learning activities. In cooperation with our many partners throughout the State, our Environmental Education program strives to provide quality educational tools for a better informed citizenry.

- Produced and distributed two environmental education newsletters to over 8,000 teachers in the State.
- Partnered with Idaho Public Television and Idaho Department of Fish and Game to create two *Dialogue for Kids* programs, a call-in kids’ talk show on science and natural resources.
- BLM experts appeared on programs exploring *Wildfires* and *Desert Habitat* to response to kids’ questions.

- Teamed up with Project Learning Tree, a forest ecology education program, to bring information on weeds and fire ecology to 406 educators, both elementary and secondary. An estimated 15,225 students will be reached by these teachers.
- Participated in Salmon-Steelhead Days and Water Awareness Week helping approximately 20,000 Idaho students understand and appreciate the story of Idaho's salmon and the value of our precious water resource.

#### *National Public Lands Day 2002*

- *St. Anthony Sand Dunes.* Four hundred eighteen volunteers helped spruce up the area by sifting about 10 acres of sand and 3 miles of roadway to remove 4 tons of trash. Three hundred feet of fence were also built to protect the site.
- *Pirimid Interpretive site on the Lewis and Clark Trail.* Thirty-one volunteer reconstructed a fence to protect geological formations described in the Lewis and Clark journals, and built a 150-foot long retaining rock wall for the Sacajawea Interpretive Center's outdoor amphitheater.
- *Morgan Bar Recreation Site.* Forty-five volunteers built 70 sections of jack fence to enclose the recreation site, then moved on to seed grass at the Sacajawea Interpretive Center's outdoor amphitheater.
- *Gamlin Lake.* Fifteen volunteers constructed one mile of trail and planted 30 trees and shrubs for recreationists enjoying that area.



*Sage-grouse / BLM Photo*