

Statewide Summary

The BLM in Idaho

“In addition to its many partners, Idaho BLM managers seek advice and recommendations from Resource Advisory Councils, which provide representative citizen input on major programs and issues. There are three Resource Advisory Councils in Idaho, one for each of Idaho’s three districts.” State Director K Lynn Bennett

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages nearly 12 million acres of public lands in Idaho, nearly one-fourth of Idaho’s total land area. Three BLM district offices, twelve field offices, and the Idaho State Office administer the public lands in Idaho. Key to carrying out our resource management mission, the BLM in Idaho seeks public and intergovernmental involvement in its planning and land-use decisions. In addition to its many partners, Idaho BLM managers also seek advice and recommendations from Resource Advisory Councils, which provide representative citizen input on major programs and issues. There are three Resource Advisory Councils in Idaho, one for each of Idaho’s three districts.

Federally Administered Lands in Idaho Agency	Acres
Bureau of Land Management	11,847,328
U.S.D.A. Forest Service	20,460,774
National Park Service	97,296
Department of Energy	571,082
Bureau of Indian Affairs	32,632
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	40,925
Bureau of Reclamation	482,912
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	61,211
Air Force	111,110
Agricultural Resource Service	33,110
Total Idaho Land Area	52,960,576
Total Federal Land (63.7%)	33,738,380

Land Use Planning and Environmental Coordination

Public lands in Idaho contain a diversity of resources that provide benefits to the people of the United States. These lands also serve local communities' needs for growth and development and provide rights-of-way for public utilities and other purposes that serve the national interest. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 directed BLM to prepare comprehensive Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to keep up with growing public demands on the public lands. Prior to passage of the Act, the BLM prepared land use plans called Management Framework Plans. As the older plans become outdated, they are being replaced by the more integrated RMPs. Currently, Idaho BLM has twelve Management Framework Plans in place that encompass 4,950,000 acres and nine RMPs covering 7,319,000 acres.

“In FY 2002, Idaho BLM continued work on three new or revised Resource Management Plans.”

- We published the Notice of Intent to prepare a plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Craters of the Moon National Monument, jointly with the National Park Service.
- We completed public scoping and prepared the scoping report and planning criteria for the Craters of the Moon, Birds of Prey, and Bruneau RMPs.
- We continued intensive collaborative activities for these plans with Tribes, State, and local governments, and other federal agencies.
- By comparison, we completed two RMPs during the decade of the 90's.
- As a cooperating agency to the Forest Service, who is the lead agency, we completed public scoping and prepared a preliminary draft plan amendment and EIS to establish management direction to maintain habitat for the Canada lynx.
- We completed public scoping to amend twelve land use plans in the Upper Snake River District to bring those land use plans into compliance with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

As part of the land-use planning process, the BLM designates and manages areas where special attention is required to prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values; to protect fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems; or to provide public safety where natural hazards exist.

- In Idaho, we have designated, through land-use plans and amendments, 96 areas totaling 556,918 acres as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Recreation Program

Outdoor recreation opportunities abound on public lands in Idaho. Opportunities range from more relaxed activities such as lake fishing to more vigorous activities such as backpacking through remote and primitive canyons and mountains. A primary management goal is to provide high quality recreation opportunities while imposing as few restrictions as possible. The recreation program includes the following major functions: river management; recreation planning; special recreation permits; partnerships; trails management, including off-highway vehicle (OHV) management, and back country byways; operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites; and recreation construction and reconstruction.

Visitor use of public lands in Idaho increased by over 10 percent from FY 2001, with the largest percentage increases occurring in camping, hunting, off-highway vehicle riding, snowmobiling, motorized boating, rafting, and other types of non-motorized boating.

“In FY 2002, public lands in Idaho accommodated 11.8 million recreation visitors who spent a total of 4.7 million visitor days and who enjoyed everything from stream fishing and snowmobiling to backpacking through remote and primitive canyons and mountains.”

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial

Partnerships, outreach, and improved recreation facilities are the major themes for Idaho BLM’s Lewis and Clark Bicentennial program. We are working with local government, federal agencies, and community groups to help visitors experience a vital chapter of our heritage.

Partnerships

- The BLM recently entered into an assistance agreement with the city of Salmon for the development of the Sacajawea Interpretive Center. We will provide funding for trail construction and interpretation. In addition to our regular funding channels, we have secured several grants for the center.
- The BLM has also agreed with the city of Salmon to develop a historical interpretive area, or “history park,” on a vacant lot in downtown Salmon.
- Recently, the BLM signed an agreement with Viola and Kelly Anglin, the owners of the Tendoy Store at Tendoy, Idaho. The store is the gateway to the Lewis and Clark National Backcountry Byway, which is managed by the BLM and Forest Service. The BLM will provide portable toilets at the store and construct an interpretive and informational kiosk.

- Through the initiative of an education intern, the BLM offered a Lewis and Clark course for local teachers through the Sawtooth Science Institute. The Institute has approached the BLM to discuss a Memorandum of Understanding that would permit the Institute to offer more courses in this area.

Outreach

- For the third summer, the BLM assigned park rangers to provide interpretive services, maps, and brochures to visitors at Lemhi Pass, one of the most important sites along the Lewis and Clark Trail.
- The BLM Salmon Field Office taught a Lewis and Clark workshop for local teachers through the Sawtooth Science Institute and Idaho State University. The students learned more about the Expedition and had time to work on curriculum.
- BLM employees also hosted Salmon students on several field trips this spring and made numerous classroom presentations. This will continue through the Bicentennial.
- BLM has worked on designing a trail system that would link the Sacajawea Interpretive Center, a greenbelt along the Lemhi and Salmon rivers, and public land east of Salmon. We also produced maps and guides to local Lewis and Clark sites.
- The Salmon Field Office will be installing 30 interpretive signs during the next year. They will interpret Lewis and Clark and related themes.
- The BLM Cottonwood Field Office designed and will be installing Lewis and Clark interpretive signs at the Pink House Recreation Site.
- The BLM Cottonwood Field Office assisted Lewis and Clark historian Steve Russell and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in inventorying and assessing the route taken by Lt. Ordway to the Snake and Salmon Rivers. The Cottonwood Field Office will also assist Fish and Game in designing, installing, and maintaining a kiosk and interpretive maps detailing Ordway's trip.

Recreation Sites

The BLM Salmon Field Office's recreation sites have been upgraded for visitor enjoyment during the Bicentennial. Among the major improvements are:

- *Sharkey Hot Springs.* We have revived a natural hot springs adjacent to the Lewis and Clark Trail with the installation of two large soaking pools, changing rooms, restrooms, a fire pit, picnic tables, and barbecue stands.
- *Tower Rock Recreation Site.* The Tower Rock Recreation Site is located on the site where Clark's reconnaissance party camped on August 21 and 25, 1805. It will be completely

remodeled with new roads, interpretive signs, boat ramp, restrooms, landscaping, and paved RV campsites, thanks to a grant from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

- *The Pirimids [sic]*. The Pirimids, a rock formation on the Lewis and Clark Trail noted in Clark's field notes, were acquired this year through a 40-acre land donation to BLM from a private citizen. In addition to the formation, the site is being developed as a picnic area.

Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative

In support of the Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative, BLM staff worked on a number of recreation and tourism-related projects. In part, these projects included participating in the Statewide free fishing day, reprinting an ethics brochure on hunting with all-terrain vehicles, updating and printing the annual Statewide RV Campground, final editing and printing of a Statewide interagency recreation map, and reprinting of the State Scenic Byways brochure, "Taking the Scenic Route."

Visit Idaho Playgrounds (VIP) Pass

In FY 2001, multiple partners in Idaho initiated the Visit Idaho Playgrounds (VIP) Pass under the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program. The VIP Pass is an optional service for recreationists who use a variety of recreation sites and areas throughout Idaho.

- The VIP program is managed by the following partners: BLM, Forest Service (Intermountain and Northern Regions), Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, Idaho Department of Commerce, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.
- It is honored at approximately 100 sites where vehicle-based, day-use parking fees, or entry fees are currently charged.
- VIP Pass users continue to be very supportive of the program.
- In response to the 2001 user survey, the cost of the VIP Pass was reduced from \$69 to \$49 in 2002 as a way to increase the value to the user.
- As a result of this bargain price, VIP pass sales more than doubled in 2002.



Travel and Access Management

- With increasing interest and participation in off-highway vehicle (OHV) riding, Idaho BLM hired an individual to focus on travel and access management issues on public lands throughout the State.
- This individual has been actively working on numerous projects, including participating on an interagency travel and access subgroup of the Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative, completing a Statewide OHV Management Strategy (in draft), participating in resource management planning efforts, and providing technical assistance to field personnel.

<i>Idaho Recreation Highlights</i>		
Activities	Participants	Visitor Days
Picnicking	911,000	147,000
Camping	897,000	1,075,000
Driving for pleasure	1,068,000	240,000
Fishing	1,251,000	438,000
Hunting	1,126,000	664,000
Miscellaneous land activities	915,000	254,000
Miscellaneous water sports	370,000	51,000
Motorized boating	661,000	166,000
Snowmobiling	122,000	58,000
Rafting and other types of non-motorized boating	686,000	534,000
Hiking, mountain biking, and other types of non-motorized travel	964,000	258,000
Downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and other types of non-motorized winter sports	519,000	299,000
Off-highway vehicle riding	846,000	271,000
Viewing or learning about the environment	1,423,000	277,000
Total	11,759,000	4,732,000