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Rediscovering America
A New Direction For BLM

Remarks by Mike Dombeck
19th Natural Areas Conference
October 27, 1992
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

The theme of this conference is Rediscovering America and I'm here to talk about the Public Domain, the 1.8 billion acres of land acquired by the U.S.

Of this 1.8 billion acres about 2/3 was acquired by individuals, corporations, or states. Of what remained, some was set aside as National Forests, Wildlife Refuges, National Parks and Monuments, Military Bases, and other public purposes.

Today, the land that nobody else wanted is managed by the BLM, more than 270 million acres of the remaining Public Domain, mostly in Alaska and 11 western states, that's about 8% of the U.S.

My topic here this evening is the new BLM. Its interesting how many people in the U.S. have never heard of the BLM, especially in the East. And no, its not the Bureau of Livestock and mining. The history and culture BLM is very different from any other Federal land managing agency. I want to briefly cover three areas:

First, It's important to understand how we got where we are today so I want to give you a little history of the Public Domain.

Second, I want to tell you about the most recent changes in direction.

And lastly, where I believe BLM is headed.

Lets start with the history. This year we are celebrating the quincentenary of Columbus' discovery of America.

Early explorers were all interested in the wealth that ~~could be used~~ came from the land.

After the Revolutionary War, the land secured from the British Crown by "blood" was considered common stock. Most states had colonial charters granting them land west of the Appalachians.

When the Union was formed
As the original colonies relinquished their claims to western lands in the 1780's Congress agreed that the lands should be used as a source of revenue and to provide land to soldiers. Instead of a pension a private may have gotten 100 acres of land while a General was granted 1,000 acres.

Our land base continued to grow after the revolutionary war.

The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the nation in 1803.

In the 1840's the Gadsden Purchase of 19 million acres described by one senator as "utterly desolate, desert, and God-forsaken."

And finally in 1867, our last addition, "Seward's folly", the northern icebox, Alaska, 365 million acres for \$7.2 million. And what a deal it was at 51 cents an acre.

And like today there was controversy. Thomas Jefferson (1st Secretary of State) wanted public lands sold in small tracts, at a cut rate, to promote the agrarian lifestyle he so strongly favored.

Alexander Hamilton (Secretary of Treasury) wanted public land auctioned off in large blocks to the rich, the able, the well-born so they would help develop the national economy.

Hamilton's philosophy prevailed. The vast tracts of land were to be used to raise revenues for the U.S.

By the early 1800's the race to reap the wealth of the land was on.

1

The legendary mountain men and trappers were the first group to head west.

2

Next were the miners. Waves of immigrants flocked to the new free, land rich nation.

3

An administrative clearing house was needed for all the land transactions so in 1812 the General Land Office was established to administer the disposal of over one billion acres of land. Thus the origin of the idiom "doing a land office business".

After years ^{of} heated debate there was another change in philosophy.

^{1841 change in policy}
The Preemption Law of 1841, Congress decided that allowing settlement of the public lands was as important as raising revenues. A person could get up to 160 acres of land for \$1 an acre or less.

4

But this didn't get enough people to the west so in 1862

3

the Homestead Act which offered free land was enacted. Easterners and immigrants flocked to the golden lands of the west. Did you every try to make a living farming or grazing 160 acres of desert?

5

The railraods started west and Congress gave the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific railroad companies every alternate section of land, the odd sections, for a 10 mile swath on flat land and 20 miles in the mountains each side of every mile of track that was laid.

In all, more than 91 million acres of land was given to the railroads. And the checkerboard ownership pattern created a ~~twentieth century~~ management nightmare.

Today,

Another interesting venture was the Timber Culture Act of 1873 which granted individuals 160 acres of arid land naturally devoid of trees if they would plant 40 acres of it into trees.

6

The belief was that this would bring rain to the west.

We are still waiting

7

The settlers continued to move West and did with the land what they wanted.

8

They continued to harvest what the land had to offer, totally unregulated.

9

They needed wood for fuel and building, no need to worry about forest practices.

10

Another tragic chapter in the story is called "grazing the commons." Livestock grazing in the west was largely "first come, first serve." Totally unregulated.

11

By the 1870's the range was over-stocked. There were range wars over grazing rights and battles between cattle and sheep herders. Water was at a premium and miles of illegal fences went up.

The bottom line was that a rancher couldn't survive on the 160 or even 320 acres of arid lands granted by homesteads. And grazing the Public Domain was

/ considered a "right" in this vast new land.

12

Towns were built.

13

And disappeared almost over night.

| By 1900 over 1.3 million homestead entries were filed.

14

| By 1900 the vast western rangelands were trashed.

Public Domain
In the midst of this public lands free for all, the need to protect the land and its treasures became obvious. The way to protect the land was to take it out of the Public Domain. Yellowstone National Park was set aside in 1872. The Forest Reserve Act in 1891. By 1920 little more than 1/5 of the original 1.8 billion acres remain either vacant or unreserved.

15

Public Domain
In 1934 we saw another shift in philosophy, to regulate use and protect the Public Domain. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 sought to stop injury to public

grazing lands and to provide for their orderly use and improvement. The Division of Grazing later renamed the Grazing Service was established. This was a highly decentralized organization made up of grazing districts. The focus was local control.

16

In 1946 President Truman with the approval of Congress merged the ~~Federal~~^{General} Land Office, a highly centralized agency, and the Grazing Service, a highly decentralized agency, to form the Bureau of Land Management. The fledgling agency had a real challenge.

17

Clover Creek, Idaho

18

Another southern Idaho shot

19

Results of mining

20

Improper placement of roads. We can see why nobody wanted these lands.

With Rachal Carson's Silent Spring came an era of environmental awareness followed by laws such as NEPA. The BLM began to change.

*Agency began hiring
"biologists"*

21

Resource inventory intensified.

22

Habitat improvement work began. But BLM still had little more than a custodial mission. Finally in 1976 The Federal Land Policy and Management Act established policy to retain public lands under federal ownership, to inventory and identify their resources, and to provide for multiple use and sustained yield management through land use planning.

23

The agency started to make more headway and the land began to heal. But advances were often followed by set backs and the early 1980's there were declines in renewable resource programs.

24

And controversy over the Public Domain continued.

25

But Americans' desires for better land management and more and better outdoor recreation continued to increase.

The lands nobody wanted held many hidden treasures.
Abundant

26

fish and wildlife,

27

and botanical resources.

Starting in the mid 1980's the professionals at BLM developed the first National level strategic plan called

28

Fish & Wildlife 2000, this was another major change for the Public Domain.

29

*et long
um
spala*

Fish & Wildlife 2000 for the first time articulated what the BLM's role in Wildlife & Fish Habitat management Should be. It defined a role for BLM's own managers and brought on the support of interest groups. Other programs followed the lead and we now have Recreation 2000, The Riparian Wetlands Initiative, and others. And these programs are succeeding. *Not funded at the lead needed*

30

Here is a photo of Calf Creek near Shoshone, ID about 1950.

31

This is what it looked like last year.

32

Clover Creek in 1976

33

Sci Advisor
att. H. H. S.

Clover Creek in 1990. In the last four years there has been more emphasis than ever before and more progress than ever before on renewable resources of the Public Domain.

All this progress is great but we have new and even

more difficult challenges. Most resource agency programs are largely functional. The forester has been trained to maximize timber production, the fisheries biologist maximizes fish production, the wildlife biologist trained to maximize wildlife. Who brings its all together? What about biodiversity? What about ecosystem management? Thats our challenge today.

I've tried to give you a historical perspective of how we got where we are today. A new breeze is blowing in BLM in the midst of controversy.

34 Start Oregon slide talk

Rather than philosophize about where we should be going, I'm going to tell you about BLM's newest venture western Oregon.

BLM also manages the mineral estate underlying about 570 million acres of land.

Management of these lands is guided by principles of multiple use and sustained yield and a recognized need to protect and enhance the natural and human environment. This is no easy job.

There is intense competition for the public lands among users and interest groups with conflicting needs and philosophies on natural resource management: miners want to open mines, ranchers want grazing land, and environmentalists seek to preserve wilderness.

The challenge to BLM today is allocating public land resources in a manner that allows for each interest to enjoy the opportunities the public lands offer.

Conflicting laws and user group demands influence the decisionmaking process, thrusting BLM into the midst of controversy and making politics an everyday fact of life.

Many of us detest the influence of politics. But politics has always been a part of the public land equation. Political controversy gave birth to the public lands; politics has shaped the laws that govern their disposition and administration. To help things into perspective I want to touch on a few of the historical high points of the public lands issues.

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After the Revolutionary War the land secured from the British Crown by "blood" was considered common stock.

When the Union was formed the colonies relinquished their claims to western lands and Congress agreed that the lands should be used as a source of revenue and to provide land to soldiers. Instead of a pension a private may have been granted 100 acres of land for their military service, a General was granted 1,000 acres.

This was the first National land policy decision.

In those days our land base was still growing.

The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the nation in 1803.

In the 1840's the Gadsden Purchase added 19 million acres.

And finally in 1867, our last addition, "Seward's folly", Alaska, 365 million acres for 51 cents an acre or \$7.2 million.

And like today there was controversy with National policy decisions.

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1 BLM Logo.

Re-discovered Metrics
A New Direction for BLM

Remarks by Mike Dombeck
Last Natural Resources Conference
October 24, 1993

University, Bloomington, Indiana

2 BLM was created in 1946

Truman Merged the Grazing Service &
General Land Office

This new Agency had to work out for it

3 Clover Creek, Idaho

4 Another Southern ID photo

5 Damaged Rangelands

6 Mining Operations. No wonder this is
often called the Land nobody wanted.

7. This is what left of the Public Domain lands.

Major loss

revenues for the U.S.

1

A clearing house was needed for all the land transactions so in 1812 the General Land Office was established to administer the disposal of over one billion acres of land. This was our first land managing agency.

2

The legendary mountain men and trappers were the first group to head west.

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After about 40 years heated debate there was another change in philosophy. The concept of Homesteading.

The Preemption Law of 1841, Congress decided that allowing settlement of the public lands was as important as raising revenues. A person could get up to 160 acres of land for \$1 an acre or less.

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But this didn't get enough people to the west so in 1862 the Homestead Act which offered free land was enacted. Easterners flocked to the golden lands of the west. Did you every try to make a living farming or grazing 160 acres of desert?

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Next Congress decided to give railroads land to help develop the west. Railroads were given every alternate section of land, the odd sections, for a 10 mile swath on flat land and 20 miles in the mountains each side of every mile of track that was laid.

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The bottom line was that a rancher couldn't survive on the 160 or even 320 acres of arid lands granted by homesteads. And grazing the Public Domain was considered a "right" in this vast new land. By 1900 the vast western rangelands were trashed.

11

During this era. Towns were built.

12

And disappeared almost over night.

By 1900 over 1.3 million homestead entries were filed.

In the midst of this public lands free for all, the winds of change in public land policy were blowing. The need to protect the unique lands became obvious. The way to protect the land was to withdraw it from the Public Domain. Yellowstone National Park was set aside in 1872. The Forest Reserve Act in 1891.

By 1920 little more than 1/5 of the original 1.8 billion acres remain either vacant or unreserved.

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In 1934 we saw another shift in philosophy. The first policy to regulate use of the Public Domain. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934.

It created the Division of Grazing later renamed the Grazing Service was established. This was a highly decentralized organization with the focus was local control.

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In 1946 President Truman merged the General Land Office, a highly centralized agency, and the Grazing Service, a highly decentralized agency, to form the Bureau of Land Management. The fledgling agency had a real challenge.

15

Hers is what some of the BLM lands looked like, Clover Creek, Idaho

16

Another southern Idaho shot

17

Results of mining. We can see why nobody wanted these lands.

18

Today 270 million acres this is what remains of the original 1.8 billion acres of the Public Lands million acres. But lets continue the story.

The 1950's and 60's brought more change. With Rachal Carson's Silent Spring came an era of environmental awareness followed by laws such as NEPA, ESA, etc. The BLM began to change.

19

The inventory of resources began.

20

Habitat improvement work began. But BLM still had little more than a custodial mission.

Finally in 1976 The Federal Land Policy and Management Act established policy to retain public lands under federal ownership to inventory and management of resources and use planning for multiple use and sustained-yield management

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But advances were often followed by set backs and the early 1980's there were declines in renewable resource programs.

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→ But Americans' desires for better land management and more and better outdoor recreation continued to increase.

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fish and wildlife,

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25

a rich cultural history.

Starting in the mid 1980's the professionals at BLM developed the first National level strategic plans, ~~another~~ major shift for the Public Domain.

26

The

~~This~~ first came to be called Fish & Wildlife 2000.

27

Partnership
Fish & Wildlife 2000 defined a role and a program for BLM's own professionals and rallies the support of interest groups. Other programs followed the lead and we now have Recreation 2000, The Riparian Wetlands Initiative, and others. And these programs although not fully funded, are succeeding.

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Here is a photo of Calf Creek near Shoshone, ID about 1950.

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This is what it looked like last year.

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Clover Creek in 1976

31

recent

Clover Creek in 1990. In ~~the last four~~ years there has been more emphasis than ever before and more progress than ever before on renewable resources of the Public Domain *lands*.

All this progress is great, but all is not well and we have new challenges. Most resource agency programs are largely functional. The forester has been trained to maximize timber production, the fisheries biologist maximizes fish production, the wildlife biologist trained to maximize wildlife. Who brings its all together? What about biodiversity? What about ecosystem or landscape management? Thats our challenge today.

Start Oregon Sidles

A new breeze is blowing in BLM, I now like to tell you about BLM's fisrt attempt at incorporating concepts of biodiversity and landscape management. And its happening in the midst of controversy.

3

10 FEBRUARY 1994

Video Script for
MIKE DOMBECK
Acting Director, BLM

Hello. I'm Mike Dombeck, your new Acting Director.

I'm honored that Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Armstrong have asked me to take on the challenging task of heading up the BLM.

As some of you know, I most recently served as Bob Armstrong's Chief of Staff. Prior to that, I was Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Assistant Secretary,

When I told my daughter Mary that I had been named BLM Acting Director, she asked me: Can't you keep a job, Dad?

Well, as important as my job with Bob Armstrong may sound, I definitely consider this one to be a bigger challenge.

I view this assignment as an opportunity to help Secretary Babbitt achieve his goals while you and I help shape the BLM of the future.

We need to make this agency a more satisfying place -- and, yes, even an enjoyable place -- to work.

Before talking to you about my objectives as Acting Director, I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself.

REMARKS
ACTING BLM DIRECTOR MIKE DOMBECK
TO BLM, EASTERN STATES EMPLOYEES
FEBRUARY 1994

It's my pleasure to make my first field visit to Eastern States in my new role as Acting Director of BLM. It seems not long ago I was out here for the swearing-in ceremony of your new State Director Pete Culp, and it is a pleasure to see many of you again.

How quickly things change! Just last week I was Acting Assistant Secretary. And now Acting Director of BLM! My daughter Mary asked me if this was a promotion or what?

I did talk with Jim Baca late last week to wish him well. He told me how good he felt about all of you, the dedicated BLM employees.

I'm extremely honored that Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Armstrong have asked me to take on this awesome task.

As a career employee with a natural resources management background, I know the quality and character of the employees in BLM, both here in the Washington area and in our field offices in Milwaukee, Jackson, and out West.

I've worked at several different offices and locations at every level of either the Forest Service or the BLM.

The Secretary has already said that we are right on track and we are going to stay on track.

Many of the things we are working on today are not new. They came from you, the hard working, creative employees, and from our friends and stakeholders.

The General Land Office or GLO Records Automation Project is a good example. This Project demonstrates the epitome of good government--giving the taxpayers what they want easily, quickly, and inexpensively.

The wild horse and burro adoption program in the East places more than 4,000 animals into private care per year--that's about 70 percent of the Bureau's total adoptions. And, I'm sure you all are aware that the temporary site adoptions concept started here in Eastern States!

Most of the public lands BLM manages may be in the West, but the vast majority of people who have a stake in the future of those lands reside in the East. Your work here in the East can have a significantly greater impact on the public's perception of BLM than you might imagine.

For example, the professional way you operate your oil and gas lease sales, or how you deal with your cooperators and your counterparts in other agencies. Your day-to-day routine makes and shapes BLM.

Another good example is your annual Kids' Fishing Day that I have had the pleasure of attending. You are educating kids--teaching them responsibility and appreciation of the environment--you are making a difference.

These kids are tomorrow's land managers and you are shaping the future--BLM's future--and **you're doing a great job.**

We are extremely fortunate to have a Secretary who is receptive to many of your initiatives. They make sense and are simply the right thing to do.

And what we are really doing, together, is reshaping the Agency and defining the BLM of the future.

It's like a hockey game. Where I grew up, in the frozen north (coincidentally, in the same state where one of your district offices is located) hockey is big. Some players skate to where the puck was. The successful players skate to where the puck will be.

In a meeting with the Assistant Directors and other last week, I said I thought it was very important that we make this pause in leadership as brief as possible.

Lee Otteni said to me later that he hoped it would be just a blink. I'm asking your support to make it a very brief blink.

There are lots of big things on the platter for us all. From budget and appropriations hearings, State Director vacancies to be filled, to implementing the Secretary's reforms. Lots of big decisions. I promise to listen very carefully. I expect accurate information and your very best advice.

And with your help, hopefully, they will be the right decisions.

I'm a believer in the "don't tell me, but show me" philosophy.

The people who care about and depend on the 270 million acres of BLM managed lands are counting on us. My first directive to you all is LET'S GET BACK TO WORK!

Let's take a few questions now.

Best
Be good.

Draft Remarks of
MIKE DOMBECK

before Schedule C Appointees
On the subject of "Managing Change"
Wednesday May 18, 1994

- Anne Lindbergh, the wife of pilot Charles "Lucky Lindy" Lindbergh, wrote: "*The wave of the future is coming and there is no fighting it.*"
- Secretary Babbitt, Assistant Secretary Bob Armstrong and I believe that the BLM must either catch the wave of the future or be swept over by it.
- To catch that wave, the BLM must change the way it does its job.
- Why? Because the West today is a very different place from what it was 50 years ago or even 20 years ago.

We are creatures of habit. The only one that wants a change is a baby in a wet diaper. 2 basic rules of life: 1) change is inevitable, 2) everybody resists change

uncertainty
The misery of uncertainty is worse than the certainty of misery.

- Secretary Babbitt ^{tells about} has observed that when he grew up in Flagstaff, Arizona, the town's economy was based almost exclusively on commodity production.
- But today Flagstaff is a community where ranchers, loggers and miners mingle with ^{entrepreneurs,} river guides and scientists who work for high-tech firms.
- With the emergence of the New West, the old ^{way} consensus of how to manage the public lands has gone. ^{policy by decree are gone.}
- ^{and Tom Collier} Secretary Babbitt is working hard to build a new consensus.

Where I grew up in the lake country of N. Wisconsin then
w.h. loggers

2. Fishing lodges

lots of other activities today both winter & summer

Change in values. about 1965 the picture windows changed.

The Secretary talks about consensus.

talks a lot about consensus.

- The Secretary feels strongly, as do I, that a new consensus must be found because the public lands belong to all Americans and therefore all Americans have a stake and deserve a say in the management of those lands. *and they know it.*
- By forging a new consensus, we can preserve the ^{our} culture of the Old West while making sure that future generations will be able to use and enjoy the public lands. *We need to be leaders in consensus building*
- The recent BLM Summit, attended by our agency's managers, was intended to help the Bureau ^{define the} carry out changes that will make the BLM a more effective and efficient land-management agency. *our goal was to*

- One of the ways the BLM intends to become a more effective is by implementing ecosystem management, which is a key component in the Secretary's reform agenda.
- The term "ecosystem management" has generated a lot of confusion, but there is nothing mysterious or supernatural about it. It simply means a style of management that focuses on maintaining the health and productivity of the land.

Ecosystem management means:

greener riparian zones

better water quality

less soil erosion

a rich mix of native plants

better fishing

increased weight gain in livestock

preserving our cultural heritage

more wildlife

- Under ecosystem management, ~~Federal land managers~~ ^{we}

-- will look at the Big Picture of the landscape,

-- will know the land's condition,

-- will use the best scientific information available

-- and will bring all affected and interested parties to the discussion table.

Ecosystem management

ecological
social
economic } stability

- What Theodore Roosevelt said in 1909 about the need for conservation also describes the rationale for ecosystem management:

"If we of this generation destroy the resources from which our children would otherwise derive their livelihood, we reduce the capacity of our land to support a population, and so either degrade the standard of living or deprive the coming generations of their right to life on this continent...."

- A proverb from India makes the same point:

"We have not inherited the world from our forefathers -- we have borrowed it from our children."

- In short, ecosystem management is the means by which the BLM will maintain the health and productivity of the land.
- And doing that is the BLM's Number One job. Whatever else the BLM may achieve, we will fail as a land-management agency if we do not maintain the health and productivity of the land.

The bottom line

- Making changes, such as implementing ecosystem management, is never easy for a bureaucracy. But the failure to make necessary changes creates problems of its own. I like to put it this way: *We must either make dust or eat dust.*

- One of the ways to make dust, in my view, is to raise our level of thinking in dealing with the challenges we face. Albert Einstein, who by reputation was a pretty smart guy, said: *"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."*

- But raising our level of thinking doesn't mean the BLM must come up with complex answers that only rocket scientists would appreciate. On the contrary, the KISS approach to problem-solving -- "Keep it Simple, Stupid" -- is the one I favor.

Waiting so you & the grader understands

IRS

- To me, keeping it simple means empowering employees to come up with new ways of doing things that will cut red tape, reduce paper shuffling, cut costs and reduce command-and-control from

Washington. *Things will work better when decisions and responsibility are placed at the lowest possible place in the organization.*

- Besides implementing ecosystem management, the BLM is working to effect other changes, such as promoting collaborative leadership, improving service to our agency's customers and diversifying our workforce.

BLM's 5 point corporate agenda

X to next page

- Let me conclude by saying that today the Western frontier, in the sense of an unsettled land area, no longer exists.
- But in another sense, there still is a New Frontier -- the New Frontier being, as John F. Kennedy put it in 1960, "a set of challenges" for Americans to meet.
- And today some very tough land-management challenges face the BLM and other Federal land-management agencies.

- Those challenges are:

-- First, to protect the public lands from misuse and other forms of damage.

-- Second, to preserve the natural resources on these lands for recreational, economic, aesthetic and other uses.

-- And third, to ensure that taxpayers get a fair return for the use of public land resources, such as livestock forage, minerals and timber.

as Vice Pres. Doe said

*"If you always do what you always did,
you will always get what you always got."*

- Secretary Babbitt has responded to these challenges by working to reform the way our nation's public lands are managed.
- I assure you today that the BLM will do its part to make these reforms a reality.

--end--

MIKE DOMBECK
REMARKS
OUTDOOR WRITERS OF AMERICA ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE, ORONO, MAINE
NEWSMAKER: PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERWAYS
ISSUES
JUNE 12, 1994

Thank you for that kind introduction.

It's a pleasure to be with you today. The names I have seen among your ranks are names I know from years of reading and enjoying articles on America's great outdoors.

For those of you who do not yet know me well, let me briefly describe my background - which I believe is relevant to our panel discussion today on "Public Lands and Water Issues."

I grew up with five sisters and brothers in the lake country of rural northern Wisconsin--25 miles from a town of 2,500. I spent 11 great summers in the big woods as a fishing guide.

That experience was the foundation for my initial career as a fisheries biologist. More importantly, it was the foundation for a love of all that nature and the outdoors offers.

Graduating with a doctorate, I taught biology and chemistry at the high school level and zoology and fisheries management at the university level.

Of course, to really understand something -- and fisheries is a great example -- one has to truly experience it first hand. ...So I've taken it upon myself to do a lot of fishing -- for professional growth purposes, of course.

I've fished the lakes of Wisconsin where I grew up, and many lakes and streams in Canada and the West. Now that I'm in Washington I've even been known to cast a worm or two into the tidal basin of the Potomac River.

I'm a writer myself. One of my articles was "Artificial turf incubator for muskellunge eggs." I don't think you need to worry about me as competition.

As for my professional background, I spent 12 years with the Forest Service, including a stint as National Fisheries Program Manager before coming to the BLM.

I'm honored that Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Armstrong have asked me to take the challenging task of heading up the BLM.

I think you known how committed Secretary Babbitt is to seeing through a new American Land Ethic. One that calls for us to live more lightly on the land. Central to that is ecosystem management.

The BLM has been given a major role in implementing this new land ethic.

We are moving rapidly to implement ecosystem management.

I have often been asked "Mike, what the heck *is* ecosystem management?"

Don't look for the answers in a manual or textbook. They're not there. Look for them across the landscape, in the water, on the soil. Look at the watersheds and the plants. And look to the people.

Ecosystem management is about the health of the land. It is about better hunting and cleaner water. It is about greener riparian areas, higher water tables, better fishing, a diverse mix of native grasses, increased weight gain in livestock, more song birds, cleaner water, protection of cultural resources, and less soil erosion.

It is about healthy, productive watersheds.

The bottom line is predictable, long term ecological, social, and economic stability. I haven't found anyone opposed to this.

That is one of the first places where I see you having an important role. Beyond informing your readers, you educate them. It is through your discussions that they can begin to understand the broader concepts of landscape management. Education is a theme I want to develop further in a moment.

Unfortunately, government bureaucracies have a knack for making things more complicated than they are.

I'm here to ask you for help. Help me communicate to the people the benefits of maintaining healthy ecosystems.

I'm on a crusade at BLM--a keep it simple crusade. Keep it simple; Back to Basics; Common Sense.

I've asked every employee--and we have 11,000 of them--to look at their job and see if we can't cut process.

A few weeks ago, we held the first ever BLM Summit. We brought together all the field and Washington managers.

We also brought in over a hundred outside groups who came to help us chart our course.

My goal in holding the Summit was to find better ways to work internally and externally to handle the changes that are facing us.

There were five themes for the Summit -- 1. ecosystem management, 2. serving our publics, 3. collaborative leadership, 4. improving the way we do business, and 5. diversifying our workforce. These are all singularly important issues linked by our absolute need to maintain the long term health and productivity of the land.

At this meeting I told BLM managers that we can collaborate till the cows come home, recruit the most culturally diverse work-force in the Federal government, provide outstanding service to our customers, and efficiently manage information.

But, if in the end, the land is not healthy, we have failed as managers.

Theodore Roosevelt put it nicely nearly a century ago when he said:

"If we of this generation destroy the resources from which our children would otherwise derive their livelihood, we reduce the capacity of our land to support a population, and so either degrade the standard of living or deprive the coming generations of their right to life on this continent."

That's what it's all about--right?

Applying common sense to common problems for the common good. Maintaining healthy, diverse, and productive ecological systems for the good of present and future generations.

My agency is at a crossroads. The BLM is two years shy of its 50th anniversary, rapidly approaching the year 2000.

The West has changed dramatically since our early days as the General Land Office. In the nineteenth century, we thought we had limitless supplies of fish and wildlife, wood fiber, forage, and minerals.

Our policies helped to settle and develop a growing country in the last century.

There are no remaining frontiers in the American West. We realize now that rivers, grasslands, minerals, and forests are finite resources.

BLM and all the land management agencies face critical issues relating to the numbers of threatened and endangered species -- the explosive spread of noxious weeds -- stream courses, riparian zones, and rangelands in need of repair--and impaired water quality and forest health problems.

The opportunities now before us are limitless. You can help us...I'm tempted to say that you have an obligation to help us.... The public needs to have a grasp of these issues, and enter into the decision making process. It is their land--your land--and everyone has a stake in its future.

We must work together, with other agencies and the public, to develop common goals for the health of the land.

One of the opportunities we have embarked upon is the Pacfish initiative with the Forest Service.

Pacfish is the nickname for an ecosystem-based aquatic habitat strategy to restore and conserve riparian areas and freshwater habitat for Pacific anadromous fish on Forest Service and BLM administered lands in California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

We developed Pacfish in response to broad declines of anadromous fish populations. These declines are in part an indication of widespread degradation of freshwater habitat.

Would a person on the street understand that discussion? Simply stated, of course, Pacfish will mean more salmon and steelhead. More fishing opportunities. Better commercial harvest. Better fishing means stronger, more diverse local economies and a healthier landscape. We need you to help the average reader understand that.

We will involve more people in efforts that are biologically sound, socially acceptable, and cost effective.

I'd like to tell you about another effort called "Bring Back The Natives."

This is a national effort to restore native fish populations. It is supported and sponsored by the BLM, Forest Service, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Bring Back The Natives is restoring the health of entire riverine systems through watershed rehabilitation and responsible resource stewardship.

It protects the water as a habitat. But you can't save half a river. We must work with the broader package...the landscape...the ecosystem.

Some of these projects benefit a wide variety of aquatic species and wildlife, and contribute toward the recovery of targeted threatened or endangered species.

Other projects are reversing the decline of candidate and/or special status species.

This project work and collaboration is important for the future of our land.

We must help future generations understand the new land management ethic. You can help us help them understand this approach.

Begin by using your communications skills to bring more people to our decision-making table today. Help us reach the public policy makers. Begin involvement today.

Educating children on the environment is critical. Recently, I was on the West Lawn of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial to help kick-off National Fishing Week.

Over 400 children from Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. schools experienced the Pathway to Fishing to learn the land and water ethics involved in fishing. Then we fished for bass and catfish in the Tidal Basin, in the shadow of the Jefferson Memorial.

Earlier I mentioned casting worms into the Tidal Basin. I was with a severely handicapped child. What a joy to see the broad smile on that youngster's face as we fished together that morning!

As I looked out at the eager and excited young faces, I felt pride that the BLM is working hard to conserve and protect our natural resources for these youngsters and millions of others across this Nation.

A local television camera crew also talked with some of the students. I got a real kick that evening hearing one of the boys telling the TV reporter that fishing was more fun than being home watching television!

Returning again to the education theme I mentioned a few moments ago, let's consider our obligation. There is a saying that we have not inherited the land from our forefathers, but borrowed it from future generations.

As that is true, we have an obligation to learn how to best live with that land, and to share that knowledge with our children. You are in a unique position. You can take the scientific language that many experts use to communicate among themselves...work it into words the layman understands...and create a better informed generation.

I ask you to use those great talents of yours toward that end.

And let us help you.

My agency has offices in or near virtually any major settlement in the West. We have people in each one with knowledge not only of the broad scene, but of the secret places as yet undiscovered as the West fills in. They know the recreation use--and untapped potential--of the area.

We're talking about two thousand miles of designated wild and scenic rivers. Of 25 hundred miles of historic trails, from the Iditarod to the Pony Express...and another 500 miles of continental divide and Pacific crest trails.

BLM manages 24 million acres of wilderness or wilderness study lands. Places where in Robert Service's words, you can "stretch your soul to silence."

If you have a favorite subject, we have a place to explore it. Ghost towns...prehistoric sites...fossils from an earlier time. Camping, from total wilderness to formal camps. Miles of Sunday afternoon scenic byway driving in the family car.

Every kind of wildlife you can imagine. Stand on a Western cliff and look *down* on a soaring eagle. Photograph mountain lions and fawns. Fly-fish in a stream where the only signs of mankind are those you make.

This is only a hint at the wonders of the lands managed by the BLM offer. There are a number of our employees here throughout this event. Meet with them and let them help you with some story ideas.

And as you write, remember that as a writer you have a stewardship role. You must be a collaborator also...not so much with BLM as with the land and our mutual obligations to future generations.

Public lands and water issues are a topic which must be on the American agenda. We see broad shifts from consumptive use to recreational use...from exploitation to enhancement. We have seen that the land is neither endless nor unforgiving.

Help us by bringing your talents to the workplace and become an integral part of a collaborative, progressive future.

Thank you.

Talking Points for BLM Acting Director
MIKE DOMBECK

for his appearance before
Washington, D.C., Office BLM Employees
July 6, 1994

Opening Remarks

- It's good to be with you today.
- Today I'd like to talk to you briefly about change -- more specifically, the BLM's need to change the way it does business.
- Why? Because the West today is a very different place from what it was 50 years ago or even 20 years ago.
- It used to be that many Western towns' economies were based almost exclusively on commodity production.
- But today these same towns are communities where ranchers, loggers and miners mingle with river guides and scientists who work for high-tech firms.

- With the emergence of the New West, the old consensus of how to manage the public lands has gone.
- Whether that's a good or bad development depends on your point of view. But the fact is that a consensus no longer exists.
- So it's just common sense that a new consensus must be found to replace the old one.
- What's clear is that this new consensus must reflect the fact that the public lands belong to all Americans.
- And since they belong to all Americans, all interested parties have a stake and deserve a say in the management of those lands.

- By forging a new consensus, we can preserve the cultural heritage of the Old West while making sure that future generations will be able to use and enjoy the public lands.

Ecosystem Management

- The recent BLM Summit, attended by our agency's managers, was intended to help the Bureau carry out changes that will make the BLM a more effective and efficient land-management agency.
- We are now working to implement the five objectives discussed at the recent Summit in Nevada.

- Those objectives are: to promote collaborative leadership; to serve current and future publics or customers; to diversify the BLM's workforce; to improve the way the BLM does business; and to maintain healthy ecosystems.
- As for the objective of maintaining healthy ecosystems, we intend to do that through ecosystem management. Unfortunately, that term has generated a lot of confusion.
- But there is nothing mysterious or supernatural about ecosystem management. It simply means a style of management that focuses on improving or maintaining the health and productivity of the land.

- When I talk about the health of the land, I mean greener riparian areas, higher water tables, better fishing, a diverse mix of native grasses, increased weight gain in livestock, more song birds, cleaner water, less soil erosion and so on.
- Under ecosystem management, Federal land managers
 - Will know the land's condition.
 - Will keep the land healthy or, as necessary, will restore the land's health.
 - Will bring all parties interested in public land management to the discussion table.
 - Will achieve ecological, social, economic and other goals.

- Will fix what's wrong.
- Will use the best science and the best information available.
- Will think long term.
- Will look at the Big Picture.
- Will be flexible, adapting management practices as new information becomes available.

- What Theodore Roosevelt said in 1909 about the need for conservation also describes the rationale for ecosystem management:

"If we of this generation destroy the resources from which our children would otherwise derive their livelihood, we reduce the capacity of our land to support a population, and so either degrade the standard of living or deprive the coming generations of their right to life on this continent...."

- A proverb from India makes the same point:

"We have not inherited the world from our forefathers -- we have borrowed it from our children."

- In short, ecosystem management is the means by which the BLM will maintain the health and productivity of the land.
- And doing that is the BLM's Number One priority.
- **I've said it before and I'll say it again: whatever else the BLM may achieve, we will fail as a land-management agency if we do not maintain the health and productivity of the land.**

- Ecosystem management is a sound tool for achieving healthy land conditions, which is consistent with the American public's desire for a healthier, cleaner environment.
- That desire was recently documented by a new public opinion poll conducted by the Roper organization for Times Mirror Magazines.
- The nationwide poll found that Americans are willing to make financial sacrifices in support of the environment -- specifically, 48 percent said they were willing to pay an extra 25 cents per gallon of gasoline to protect the environment.

- And 88 percent of those who are potential contributors to environmental causes said they would be likely to contribute to environmental groups that address water pollution issues.
- The results of the Times Mirror-Roper poll tell me that we're on the right track with ecosystem management, which will, among other things, accelerate the BLM's progress in restoring and maintaining riparian-wetland areas.
- And that's important, because healthy riparian-wetland areas purify water, support wildlife and plant species, maintain habitat for fish, provide water and shade for livestock and create opportunities for recreation.

- Ecosystem management is one of the ways that the BLM is trying to meet the very tough land-management challenges facing our agency.
- Those challenges are:
 - First, to protect the public lands from misuse and other forms of damage.
 - Second, to preserve the natural resources on these lands for recreational, economic, aesthetic and other uses.
 - And third, to ensure that taxpayers get a fair return for the use of public land resources, such as livestock forage, minerals and timber.

- The BLM and other agencies of the Interior Department have responded to those challenges with proposals like Rangeland Reform, Mining Law Reform and other initiatives.
- And I feel strongly that the BLM will help make those proposals a reality.
- But to do so, we need to raise our level of thinking.
- Albert Einstein, who by reputation was a pretty smart guy, put it this way: *"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."*

- But raising our level of thinking doesn't mean the BLM must come up with complex answers that only rocket scientists can appreciate. On the contrary, we need to take the KISS approach to problem-solving -- "Keep it Simple, Stupid."
- Taking the KISS approach means encouraging BLM employees -- that is, YOU -- to come up with new ways of doing things that will cut red tape, reduce paper shuffling, cut costs and reduce command-and-control from Washington.

Conclusion

- The BLM and all other Federal agencies face this choice: they must either catch the wave of the future or be swept over by it. But change is never easy. It tends to make employees nervous and uncertain, and I understand that.
- But as strange as it may seem, during this time of transition BLM employees must **stop** doing what comes naturally and **start** doing what works.
- Some of you may be familiar with a short book that was distributed at and after the BLM Summit called *Culture Shift* by Price Pritchett.

- Drawing from that book, let me encourage you to do the following:
- First, **stop** slowing down and **start** speeding up. Slowing down may make you feel safer, but the BLM needs more, not less momentum. Despite the uncertainties of reorganization and other changes, let's pick up the pace.
- Second, **stop** panicking and **start** staying cool. Change can be scary, but hold steady with cool-headed thinking.
- Third, **stop** waiting for instructions and **start** taking the initiative. Notice, I'm not telling you to ignore directives or instructions. What I'm saying is, in the absence of explicit guidance, don't be afraid to solve a problem on your own initiative.

- Fourth, **stop** getting ready and **start** moving. Yes, you'd like to gather as much information as possible before taking action. But you also need to get things done, and sometimes that means you will have to improvise your way through a situation.
- As a military leader once put it, no battle plan can survive intact against the enemy. Make your plan, go to work and then adjust your plan as necessary.
- Fifth, **stop** trying harder and **start** trying easier. This is a variation on working smarter rather than harder. Look for ways to save time, money and effort without sacrificing quality. Simplify, simplify, simplify!!!

- Finally, **stop** playing it safe and **start** taking more chances. Use your imagination. Give yourself permission to try a new approach. Stick your neck out. And remember, in case of failure, you can always redeem your risk coupon with your boss.
- It's been a pleasure to be with you.
- **Now let's get out there and make dust, not eat dust.**
- I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

--end--

Remarks of
MIKE DOMBECK

BLM Acting Director
Before BLM Employees in Oregon
July XX, 1994

Oregon-Specific Opening Remarks

Forest Plan

- It's great to be with you today.
- I'd like to begin by commending you all for the tremendous job you've done and are continuing to do on the President's Forest Plan.
- I know that many of you have worked long hours, nights, and weekends to help put this plan together. You've given it your best effort, and the quality of your work shines through in the Record of Decision.
- In creating the Forest Plan, you and other Federal agencies have shown both the practicality and the benefits of collaborative leadership and interagency cooperation.

- The overall benefit is that by working together, the BLM, the Forest Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are serving American taxpayers in a more effective and less costly manner.
- One of the best examples of the new spirit of cooperation is the way the land management and regulatory agencies are working to make consultation an ongoing part of proposed timber sales.
- In fact, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service are assigning field personnel to help the Forest Service and BLM lay out timber sales.
- This will result in timber sales that take into account the concerns of both the timber industry and environmentalists.

- That's why I'm convinced your work on the Forest Plan will serve as a model for future Federal land management planning.
- More specifically, as a model for ecosystem management of the public lands.
- Although the task of drafting the Forest Plan has been completed, an even greater challenge lies ahead.
- That challenge, of course, is to turn this plan on paper into an on-the-ground reality.
- I have no doubt that with the energy you've already demonstrated, you can successfully implement this plan -- if you are given the chance.
- Whether you get that chance, of course, depends on the outcome of the various legal challenges to the Forest Plan.

- But I'm optimistic about the outcome, because I believe the courts will find that the Forest Plan allows timber harvesting on a scientifically credible, ecologically sound and legally defensible basis.

Eastside Project

- You've got a lot to be proud of here in Oregon, not only because of your work on the Forest Plan, but on other projects as well.
- Those of you working on the Eastside Ecosystem Management Project are taking on a range of tough issues: improving forest health, implementing the Pacfish strategy for anadromous fish and initiating ecosystem management on the Eastside.
- As you do this, you are finding innovative ways to involve the public in every step along the way.

- I commend you for your professionalism in putting together the scientific framework, the scientific assessment, and the Environmental Impact Statement under such tight time constraints.

Rangeland Reform

- Also, I want to thank you for your work on Rangeland Reform. Oregon and Washington held the most range reform hearings on June 8, and that was no small task.
- And keep up the good work you are doing with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Coalition and the Trout Creek Mountains Working Group. Your efforts show that that there really is common ground between commodity interests and environmental groups, which is the key to implementing Rangeland Reform.

Yaquina Head

- I would like to recognize the Salem District and the Oregon State Office for their work on the Yaquina Head project, a showcase site for innovative recreation management.
- As you move ahead with plans for lighthouse tours and a new visitor center, you have taken on the traditional role of lighthouse keepers, guiding explorers to Oregon's shore.
- And the barrier-free tide pools you are creating are breaking new ground — literally — by providing easy access to wildlife watching and exploration for the elderly, the disabled and families with young children.

Reorganization

- Finally, I want to say thanks to those of you who have been helping us reorganize and reinvent BLM. The bottom line is that our agency must do its job more effectively and efficiently, and I greatly appreciate your efforts to cut red tape and improve customer service.

General Remarks

- Today I'd like to talk to you briefly about change -- more specifically, the BLM's need to change the way it does business.
- Why? Because the West today is a very different place from what it was 50 years ago or even 20 years ago.
- It used to be that many Western towns' economies were based almost exclusively on commodity production.

- But today these same towns are communities where ranchers, loggers and miners mingle with river guides and scientists who work for high-tech firms.
- With the emergence of the New West, the old consensus of how to manage the public lands has gone.
- Whether that's a good or bad development depends on your point of view. But the fact is that a consensus no longer exists.
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- And doing that is the BLM's Number One priority.
- **I've said it before and I'll say it again: whatever else the BLM may achieve, we will fail as a land-management agency if we do not maintain the health and productivity of the land.**
- I want to note that ecosystem management is not only a sound tool for achieving healthy land conditions, it is also consistent with the American public's desire for a healthier, cleaner environment.
- That desire was recently documented by a new public opinion poll conducted by the Roper organization for Times Mirror Magazines.

- The nationwide poll found that Americans are willing to make financial sacrifices in support of the environment -- specifically, 48 percent said they were willing to pay an extra 25 cents per gallon of gasoline to protect the environment.
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- I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

--end--

Remarks of
MIKE DOMBECK

BLM Director
Memorial Service Commemorating Fallen Firefighters
August 8, 1994

- The 17 Federal firefighters, including the BLM's Rich Tyler, who lost their lives on Storm King Mountain and in Gila National Forest, ~~were true heroes~~, epitomizing ~~the~~ the best in public service and human nature.
- So it is fitting that we remember their ~~heroic~~ ^{personal sacrifice} deeds today. And as we do, it is also fitting that those of us who work for the Federal Government rededicate ourselves to the noble calling of public service.
- Although few of us will ever face the kind of dangers that these firefighters did throughout each year's fire season, we can all imitate their example of ~~professionalism~~ and teamwork. ^{commitment}

- When a tragedy like this strikes, it's often difficult to see what, if any, good can come from it.
- For my part, as Director of the BLM, I hope that the deaths of these brave men and women will give each of us pause for reflection and a bigger-picture perspective about our lives and our work.
- As for how we carry out our daily lives, I hope that this tragedy will, as the Scripture says, "teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom" [Psalm 90:12].
- As for work, I believe that doing our jobs well is the best way to show our appreciation for what these brave firefighters stood for and what they died for.

- You may recall another Scripture, from the Book of Ecclesiastes, that says there is "a time to weep" and "a time to mourn." *This is such a time.*
- And therefore I hope no one will try to rush through this period of mourning by hiding or denying your feelings of loss. Find someone to be your Wailing Wall, someone who will listen, comfort and support you as you take the time you need to grieve.
- To all who gave their lives on Storm King Mountain and in Gila National Forest, all of us gathered here today thank you.
- Your country thanks you as well.

Additional Thoughts/Quotes for
BLM Director Mike Dombeck
for 8/8 Memorial Service for Fallen Firefighters

- "As I get considerably beyond the biblical allotment of three score years and ten, I feel with increasing intensity that I can express my gratitude for still being around on the oxygen-side of the earth's crust only by not standing pat on what I have hitherto known and loved. While the oxygen lasts, there are still new things to love, especially if compassion is a form of love."

-- From the book *Young Men and Fire* (about the Forest Service Smokejumpers who were killed in 1949 in Mann Gulch, Montana) by Norman Maclean, who also wrote *A River Runs Through It*.

- "One thing...that the Smokejumpers have been taught well from the beginning is pride, and you can't be much of a firefighter without it...." -- From *Young Men and Fire*, p. 41.

- "To project ourselves into their final thoughts will require feelings about a special kind of death -- the sudden death in fire of the young, elite, unfulfilled, and seemingly unconquerable. ...

"The evidence...is that at the very end beyond thought and beyond fear and beyond even self-compassion and divine bewilderment there remains some firm intention to continue doing forever and ever what we last hoped to do on earth. By this final act they had come about as close as body and spirit can to establishing a unity of themselves with earth, fire, and perhaps the sky." -- From *Young Men and Fire*, pp.

Remarks of BLM Director
MIKE DOMBECK

On the 1994 Fire Situation
Wednesday, Sept. 21, 1994

- Good morning.
- First I'd like to update you on the 1994 fire season.
- Contrary to what some may think, this year has not been the most destructive fire season in U.S. history. That happened in 1924.
- Nor has this year been the longest (that was 1985). Nor has it been the costliest (that was 1988).
- What the 1994 fire season has been is the most intense, that is, the *busiest*, that anyone can remember, according to the National Interagency Fire Center, or, as we call it, NIFC.

the Fire Center

- As of September 19, NIFC has received reports of more than 60,000 wildfires that have burned over 3.5 million acres. [The Federal Government's fire suppression costs have easily exceeded \$400 million -- and not all the bills are in yet.]

- More than 28,000 men and women (both civilian and military) have been involved in Federal firefighting efforts this season.

They have come from almost every state and U.S. territory, including Puerto Rico.

- Federal firefighters have suppressed over 21,211 fires with their initial attack, and only 464 fires have escaped the initial attack. That means firefighters have suppressed nearly 98 percent of the fires that have occurred this year.

- The Coordination Center at NIFC has fielded more than 42,000 requests for just about everything you can think of that relates to fire: crews, fire managers, aircraft, supplies and more -- by far the most requests in the 30-year history of the fire center.
- All told, fire crews have been sent enough fire hose to stretch from Canada to Mexico. Every day the fire crews use more than 300,000 AA batteries, enough in one week to power more than a million Sony Walkman radios.
- Nationwide, 40 tractor-trailers have been on the road each day, moving supplies and equipment to fires or to the 11 fire support centers located throughout the United States.

1994

This year will go down as one of the most tragic fire seasons.

- Tragically, this year -- as of Friday, Sept. 16 -- 26 brave men and women have lost their lives in fighting fires or in supporting fire-suppression efforts. *I expected all sorts of things but not going to funerals and spending time with grieving spouses parents & friends.*
- As you know, much of our attention this year has been focused on the South Canyon fire tragedy of July 6, which took the lives of 14 Federal firefighters, including one from the BLM.
- An investigation into the causes of the South Canyon fire accident was carried out by a team headed by Les Rosenkrance, the BLM's Arizona State Director, and by Mark Reimers, Deputy Chief of Programs and Legislation at the U.S. Forest Service.
- The team's overall finding was that the South Canyon fire tragedy was caused by a combination of natural factors and human error.

2 Jacob Thomas & I flew to Glenwood Springs the Sec. was already there. We went to hospital & visited with survivors & some families of those who didn't survive.

We immediately chartered and investigation team - & get every shred of info

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
to the

*EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
TEAM AND FIELD COMMITTEE*

Phoenix Training Center
October 24, 1994



I'd like to welcome our guests, Tom Collier, the Secretary's Chief of Staff, Bob Armstrong, Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, the newest members of the Bureau's Executive Leadership Team and Associate State Directors. Greetings and thanks to the veteran Field Committee and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) colleagues for their continued hard work.

I want to spend a few minutes talking about where we've been over the past year, where we're headed, and to revisit what it means to be a leader in the Bureau of Land Management.

But first, I want to address perhaps the worst tragedy in the Bureau's history. Fourteen firefighters lost their lives fighting a wildfire on Storm King Mountain. This was the most painful experience of my career. I hope and pray it is never repeated.

The most fitting memorial to these brave men and women is that we learn as much as possible from this painful experience to prevent such a tragedy from ever occurring again. I ask that every one of us, and all Bureau employees, preach and practice a passion for safety in everything we do.

On the bright side, we also had some big wins over the past year:

- The first BLM Summit was an unparalleled success. I'd like to thank all of you for carrying the message to the field through the mini-Summits.
- We show-cased successful local ecosystem management projects in every BLM state.
- Range Reform is nearly complete.
- PACFISH, the President's Forest Plan, Rangeland Reform, and many local efforts have positioned the Bureau as a leader in implementing ecosystem approaches to land management.
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- We filled 17 top leadership posts in the last eight months

3 Assistant Directors

8 State Directors

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I have every confidence that these men and women will be leaders in our future efforts to maintain and restore the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands.

- More than 450 buy-outs were processed.
- We developed a National Training Center Strategic Plan.
- We began to simplify the budget process ... saving time and money. Most importantly, increasing our ability to target funds where needed most; and lifting most limits on fiscal year spending restrictions.
- Vice-President Gore acknowledged the Bureau as a leader in implementing the National Performance Review, and
- Area Managers serving as Field Deputy Directors have helped keep Headquarters in touch with the issues facing field managers.

The American people owe each of you a debt of gratitude for your efforts to make the BLM a more effective and efficient organization. I appreciate your hard work.

As you know, the Bureau is at the forefront of many efforts to maintain and restore the health of the land. I'm convinced, and pleased, that we're headed in the right direction.

Rangeland reform, PACFISH, the President's Forest Plan, the Trout Creek Mountain working group, and the Oil and Gas Review all exemplify a new way of doing business. A modus operandi that a majority of the American public appreciates and supports.

In reality, we are all on a life long professional journey. We're on the road, but we're not finished yet. Our success as stewards of the land, the legacy that we pass on to our children, hinges on your willingness and ability to demonstrate bold and decisive leadership for the Bureau.

That's what we are paid to do:

Because we tackle the important issues and are not afraid to delegate decisions as close to the ground as possible.

Because we accept the responsibility to maintain the health of the land and to serve the best interests of present and future generations of Americans.

Because we are not afraid to make tough decisions to keep the land healthy.

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We are responsible for the management of over 270 million acres of land, 10,000 plus employees, and a budget of about \$1 billion.

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The government simply cannot make up their minds, or they cannot get the Prime Minister to make up his mind. So they go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all-powerful to be impotent... The era of procrastination, of half measures, of soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences.

Winston Churchill said that in a speech to the English House of Commons in 1936.

I read this to you because I believe that the Bureau has entered its own "period of consequences." This is a time we can make unprecedented changes in the way we value and care for the land, the people who love it and our employees. An opportunity to make a difference for the future of our sons' and daughters' children.

During the past several years, the courts have been making big natural resource management decisions. The Pacific Northwest forest management issues are a prime example. With a collaborative, ecosystem approach to management, we have the opportunity to move away from this "duke it out in court" approach, and to make decisions closer to the ground.

Our ability to adapt and improve during this period of change will determine the future of this agency. Each person in this room will need to exert stronger leadership, of a more collaborative nature, than ever before. We must meet the challenge or face the consequences.

One of my favorite definitions of leadership is from the Harvard Business Review, 1937. It says that leadership is:

- "Managing time,
- Setting the agenda, and
- Networking" or communicating.

I want each of you to take a very close look at how you and your staffs manage your time. Simply putting in another couple of hours a day or working every Saturday, won't get us there. How we manage our time and resources must be measured against the Corporate Agenda. The Corporate Agenda and the *Blueprint for the Future* clearly identify the Bureau's highest priority items.

Taking responsibility for implementing those actions is our job. We have never had a set of goals more worthy of our commitment and effort.

Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Armstrong will evaluate my performance against our success in executing the *Blueprint* and the Corporate Agenda. This is your performance contract with me.

Back when I first became Acting Director, I told the Secretary that I wanted to be known as the “Simpleton” Director with a “keep it simple and get back to basics” theme. He said I already had the simpleton part down cold.

Seriously, what we have to do is not difficult to understand: “maintain and restore the health of the land.” It’s the getting there that’s difficult.

I need all of you folks to know and spread the five strategic goals for the Bureau as described in the *Blueprint For the Future*. Speak them with conviction. Communicate them passionately. Make certain they are implemented in the field.

We in this room must preach the Bureau’s mission statement as defined in the *Blueprint*. If we do not take the lead on promoting and executing the Bureau’s highest priority tasks, what should we expect of our employees? We have a tremendous opportunity to shape the character and future of the public lands.

We must meet the challenge.

Allow me to read the strategic goals of the *Blueprint For the Future*:

- **Restore and maintain the health of the land.**
- **Improve service to the public and encourage sound land use practices.**
- **Foster more inclusive decisions and better accountability.**
- **Improve the way we do business.**
- **Recruit, develop, and retain a quality and diversified work force.**

“It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.” That’s the Bureau’s mission statement and our job description as members of the ELT.

Pay particular attention to the first two strategic goals. "Restore and maintain the health of the land" and "improve service to the public and encourage sound land use practices." This is what we are paid to do, what makes the Bureau unique among all government agencies.

The strategic goals that deal with accountability, business practices, and diversity are the tools we'll use to maintain healthy, diverse ecosystems and to improve customer service.

No longer can we afford to try and "do more with less." Good leaders set clear priorities for their employees. Our job is to allocate resource and personnel priorities based on the Corporate Agenda and the *Blueprint for the Future*.

We have to take a careful look at the personnel skill's mix and resources of our grazing states, for example, so we can successfully implement Range Reform. The same is true for PACFISH, the President's Forest Plan, etc.

Lower priority items may have to be set aside for a while.

It is imperative that we do the important things very well, rather than do everything just "OK. " As Tom Peters has said, "good managers do things right, leaders do the right things." Tell Headquarters what resources you need to implement PACFISH, Rangeland Reform, or the President's Forest Plan.

By the end of the year, I expect each of you to tell me how you plan to implement the Corporate Agenda and the *Blueprint*. I want to know what will be done and what ongoing activities will be dropped.

We must stress the importance of real, on-the-ground improvements.

Each of you will be expected to know the condition of lands within your states. Your performance needs to be judged on improvements in the health of the land.

We need to work more closely with the regional leadership of other agencies and states.

The Pacific Northwest Regional Executive Steering Committee provides a model each region of the West should replicate.

We must involve local interests, state governments, Native American tribes, and public interest groups in developing a common vision for the health of the land.

Coordinated approaches to resource management, percolated from the ground-up, are the essence of ecosystem management.

We must make better informed decisions by using the best available technical information.

I have assigned my Science Advisor, Jack Williams, and Jack Peterson to develop a prototype Ecosystem Management Technical Assistance Team for the Columbia River Basin. I want you to lend assistant and support to their effort. Each region of the West should organize these interagency technical teams to pass on the latest scientific and technical information to field managers.

Decisions must be based on the best scientific and technical information available. We must err on the side of maintaining the health, and productivity of the land. We simply cannot hope to meet the long-term needs of society without first *securing* the health of the land.

The land is the “goose that lays the eggs.” The healthy goose lays more and better eggs and everybody benefits.

All of the federal natural resource management agencies are committed to implementing actions similar to our Corporate Agenda. Your challenge is to coordinate implementation of efforts such as Rangeland Reform with other agencies and the states and local interests.

The public must know that PACFISH, whether on the Eastside or the Upper Columbia Basin; Rangeland Reform; mining law reform; and the President's Forest Plan are all different ways of saying the same thing, we must maintain the health of the land. The public will not support redundant efforts among the agencies.

The *Blueprint* provides the sort of flexibility resource managers need to manage site-specific situations. That flexibility is tempered by the assumption that we will dramatically improve our business practices.

Improving business practices means:

- Standardizing data collection, information exchange, and mapping among agencies
- Integrating monitoring and evaluation across administrative boundaries
- Examining cumulative effects across landscapes, and
- Exchanging personnel with other agencies

We have begun to walk the talk. BLM is a leader in the field in its ALMRS modernization effort.

I've worked for federal land management agencies for 17 years. Let me tell you, there were few people that were more functional or "tunnel-visioned" than I, Dr. Mike Dombeck, "head fish squeezer" for the Forest Service. I know that change is not easy. The goal is not to dismiss programs such as oil and gas, fish and wildlife, or recreation but to implement them in an interdisciplinary manner across every watershed that BLM manages.

If we do not redefine what it means to be a "leader" in the Bureau of Land Management, we may find ourselves increasingly on the fringe of change — something less than relevant. Someone else will take the lead.

The ELT and the Headquarters must improve communications among ourselves and with other agencies. Consider yourselves the Board of Directors. The American people are our shareholders.

How will we communicate the results of this meeting to your shareholders?

How will we track our decision-making process?

How will we demonstrate our accountability to the taxpayer and to future generations?

How will you involve our shareholders in implementing the Corporate Agenda?

We need to clarify the division of labor between Headquarters and the Field.

Headquarters must focus on Headquarters functions, most importantly:

- Communicating field successes to the Department, the Hill, our constituencies, and the public,
- Building national coalitions,
- Competing with other agencies for dollars,
- Communicating new legal mandates and administration priorities to the field,
- Being responsive to the Assistant Secretary, the Secretary, the White House, the Congress, and
- Facilitating regulatory and legislative changes needed to help us do our job.

If Headquarters fails at these functions, the field will not have the resources and other support it needs to get the job done. Field offices are going to have to:

- Rely on each other for operational advice
- Share rapid response capabilities and technical information, and
- Shoulder more policy and program development work.

We also need to develop a more coherent division of labor among our Field offices. We can't afford to have everyone involved in everything. Nor can we afford to be as *ad hoc* as we've been. As I said at the Summit, employees who review already reviewed work should stop. Instead of spilling red ink on the work of others, they need to help get the job done right the first time. Remember, we don't inspect or review quality into anything. Resources are simply too thin.

Different field offices will have to take the lead in:

- Providing operational advice. For example, Wyoming can take the lead for coal, New Mexico for oil and gas.
- Developing and sharing scarce skills such as hydrologists, geomorphologists, and conservation biologists, and
- Coordinating policy and program development work.

And we need to keep our priorities in focus.

We need to refine them.

We need to commit the resources required to achieve them.

And, most importantly, we must agree on what we can stop doing. I told Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Armstrong to expect me in a couple of months with a list of things BLM will stop doing.

As the Bureau's decisionmakers, we must do a better job of coordinating, tracking, and remaining accountable for decisions made. We can accomplish this in several ways. For example, each of the Rangeland Reform teams has an ELT adviser. I expect these ELT advisors to regularly communicate with their teams and with one another.

We must meet the challenge.

Second, to ensure that the ELT is fully involved in, and accountable for, implementing and communicating the Corporate Agenda.

We have to develop processes such as these to ensure that top management is helping to define the Bureau's national strategic objectives involving every organizational level. Equally important is our need to improve the way we communicate the themes of the *Blueprint for the Future* and the Corporate Agenda. This message must resonate with our own people as well as with the American public.

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- Challenge your employees to work in a truly collaborative manner with Tribal Governments, other agencies, state and local governments, and interested parties.
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In short, demand that they become less bureaucratic and more involved in implementing the Corporate Agenda. Rest assured, the performance of each of us in this room will be judged by the same standards.

My final direction to you is to get back to basics. Keep it simple. Use common sense. Always err on the side of maintaining the lands' health. The American people are counting on us to do it.

We must meet the challenge.

SIMPLIFY OR DIE!!!



Remarks of Mike Dombeck
to the Executive Leadership Team and Field Committee
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November 8, 1994

Talking Points - All Employees Meeting
HQ Reorganization

Why is HQ going to a new structure:

Need to get on with it.

We have a roadmap detailing where we are going in the "Blueprint for the Future", which lays out our Corporate Agenda.

Our new reorganization is the vehicle to achieve the Corporate Agenda. The existing structure has worked well for BLM, but it will not move us into the future in achieving our mission. The new structure is necessary to:

- facilitate ecosystem management by moving out of current program divisions and offices to maximize an interdisciplinary approach to our work;
- obtain flexibility to meet customer and program requirements more efficiently than in our current structure;
- necessary to respond to external requirements like the National Performance Review.

The new structure will necessitate that we all develop new skills. In the past, I have said that there will not be much difference, because BLM has used teams. In fact, there will be big differences. Your new teams will:

- look closely at what our customers want to determine what work will have priority;
- be accountable for their products; and
- have more flexibility to share skills across what were traditional program areas.

It is important to remember that we are not doing teams to have teams--we expect teams to be more effective in doing our work.

What do I expect Headquarters to do:

*We can't do everything at every level
We can't do more by less*

As I told the ELT two weeks ago, the role of Headquarters is changing:

- HQ must focus on HQ functions - communicating; building coalitions; obtaining resources; responding to Sec, Asst Sec, White House, Congress; facilitating regulatory and legislative changes.
- Field offices have to shoulder more policy and program development work.
- Different field offices will take lead in coordinating policy and program development work; providing operational advice, developing/sharing scarce skills.

WY - Coal

NV - Wildhorses & Burros.

NM - Oil & Gas.

What is the current status of reorganization:

- Secretary's Order has been signed and puts in place the new Assistant Director organization. Copies of the Secretary's Order are available in the back of the Auditorium.
- New ADs have been established:¹ Resource Assessment & Planning, Resource Use & Protection, ² Human Resource Management, ³ External Affairs, and ⁴ Business and Fiscal Services.
- Implementation of the new structure will be phased in. We anticipate operating in the new structure starting January 1, 1995.
- The Centers in Denver will be established during this fiscal year.

Next Steps:

- Workload and skills analysis for teams is underway and should be completed in early December. AS A PART OF THIS EFFORT, WORK THAT WILL NO LONGER BE DONE WILL BE IDENTIFIED. WE MUST FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTING THE CORPORATE AGENDA AND ELIMINATING WORK THAT WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO DO.
- As a part of this workload analysis, we are reviewing rightsized positions. Our process will identify individual positions that are needed to do Headquarters work. Most of the rightsized positions will become a part of the State's organization as a part of our streamlining plan. In the future State Office employees will be a part of our teams where we need their help on national issues.
- New organizational codes for the Directorate and Home Groups will be reflected in Table 10 and FFS effective January 1.
- Reassignment of individuals to the new organization would be effective January 1.
- Group Administrators and employees will update position descriptions and initiate individual performance appraisals so they will be in place by January 1.
- Training for every employee in team skills and process management will begin before January.

Employee Involvement:

- Employees continue to be involved in implementation teams/subteams and in working with ADs on workload/skills analysis.
- Focus Group will continue to meet with the Implementation Team. Once we're in the new structure, ADs will start meeting with focus groups ~~within their~~

~~directorate~~

There are several things happening at once.

How does streamlining relate to our reorganization:

We have created the new organization with those currently assigned to Headquarters. In so doing we have saved your existing grade and pay. In addition to the work efficiencies we are trying to achieve with the new structure, we must also address the streamlining mandates.

Streamlining requires:

- a reduction of overall personnel;
- a reduction of 14's, 15's, and SES;
- a 1:15 supervisory ratio;
- a move of some Headquarters functions to the frontline; and
- a Bureau-wide reduction of staffs like personnel, public affairs, Congressional affairs, audit, budget, and acquisition.

BLM intends to meet these mandates by actions like:

- moving 70 Washington Office positions to the field by FY 1999 and we will be working on the specific time tables;
- moving to home groups, which will significantly improve our supervisory ratio in HQ.

For Public Affairs, Congressional Affairs, and personnel, the Department has imposed rigid requirements. As a result, we have had to modify our original thoughts regarding ~~the Human Resources Assistant Directorate.~~

3/92

1. Maintain professional identity
2. Encourage participation in professional societies & scientific org.
3. Enhance training and career opportunities
4. Maintain customer point of contact.

Issues:

Paradigm Shift

- Contacts - internal/external. Intend to prepare and distribute a directory of employee group/team assignments and a crosswalk of programs/major functions in new organization.
- Professionalism - want to work with employees to assure that strong professionalism in BLM is enhanced. Will pay close attention as implementation proceeds.
 - Career paths - career ladders.
 - Be at the cutting edge professionally

(over)

• About the past 9 months.

• Tragedy - Storm King Mt.

investigation team.

Mynt review team.

• Changes in Leadership.

3 asst A.D.

8 State Directors

6. Assoc. State Directors

450+ buyouts processed

Retirements due to change in comp sum rules.

Big wins - brighter side

Most of Sec initiatives - has not been a quiet year.

R2'94

Pacfish Calif. Desert

Pres Forest Plan

Blueprint for the future

Corporate Agenda

simplify budget process - save \$4 million.

Nice Pres & Pres. acknowledged BLM as a leader in implementing National Performance Review
Summit

American people owe you a debt of gratitude

Priorities for next 2 years / Sec. 2.

Mining Law reform

ESA

Self-governance

Salmon -

Parks

fire

science agenda.

BLM Corp. Agenda. - My contact w/ Sec. & Asst Sec.

Attached list.

~~HQ Reorganization~~

Based on Blueprint for the future, Corporate Agenda

Not where we are now, but where we want to be.

How do we get there.

National Performance Review

Streamlining

Don't that works better & cost less

1990's is to Don't what the 80's was to the private sector.

Change is all around us but as I said at the summit.

The only one that likes change is a baby in a wet diaper.

Change will occur with or without us.

This is a real opportunity to be part of shaping the future.

How do we maintain our competitive edge?

This is tremendous opportunity ~~to~~ to shape what we do at HQ.

Nov. 1994

TALKING POINTS FOR ALL BLM Employees:

I am honored to be back at the BLM.

It's a great organization with a lot of good employees.

Since I arrived, I've talked with all of the State Directors and other members of the Management Team.

And last week, I appointed an Ad Hoc Committee -- composed of a diverse mix of BLM employees representing State Directors, Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors and Special Assistants -- to provide me with a critical and timely review of initiatives underway in the Director's office, including:

Plans for the BLM Summit;

Field and Washington Office reorganization;

Development of strategic plans; and,

Operations of the Director's Office.

On Friday, February 11, 1994, the Ad Hoc Committee presented me with a report on their findings.

I have thanked them for their efforts and concurred with their recommendations.

The purpose of this message is to announce my decisions and to explain their rationale straightforwardly to all employees without the need for any "grapevine" communications.

The concept and basic agenda for the BLM Summit are excellent.

The Summit should provide the Director with quality employee input from various levels of the BLM in establishing our shared vision of where the Bureau is going and how we get there.

In all, the Summit provides a unique opportunity that must not be foregone.

Therefore, after reviewing plans for the BLM Summit and the results of on-going efforts to cut costs and trim outlays by cancelling several annual, single-issue meetings and conferences to prepare the way for the Summit, I have concluded that the Summit should be held.

However, I have directed that it be delayed for about 35 days so that we can sharpen the focus of the event and increase our opportunities for a successful meeting.

The BLM Summit will be held in Incline Village, Nevada beginning Monday, April 25th, and running through Thursday, April 28th.

An all employees bulletin will be issued next week describing the specifics of the BLM Summit

As now constructed and planned, I am excited about the BLM Summit and the other reorganization efforts that are currently underway.

I think we are on the verge on real breakthroughs in managing change at the BLM and I want to take this opportunity to briefly describe how we intend to build on this momentum.

I see a broad consensus emerging about where we should go and what we should do.

Here is how I see that consensus:

The BLM is legally responsible for managing the use of the public lands in a manner that is ecologically sustainable, environmentally sensitive, responsive to the changing needs of local communities, and in the long-term interests of the American taxpayers.

We are responsible for accomplishing this mission in a rapidly changing world.

Resource conditions are changing, as is our scientific understanding of how ecosystems function.

Demands for the public lands are changing both in scope and intensity.

The laws that we are required to execute continue to evolve.

I want all of us - the employees of the BLM - to become known and recognized for our ability as public land managers to creatively anticipate, understand, and manage such changes.

To do so, we must improve our existing management policies, procedures and practices.

I know that a lot of good work has and is being done in each of these areas.

But, we must do more.

In fact, another important aspect of the Ad Hoc Committee report was their findings on the need to continue the efforts already underway to reorganize the Washington Office and the Field Organizations.

The concept for a reorganized BLM headquarters was presented at the December 1993 BMT.

Since that time, the Washington Office Reorganization Team has worked to develop a process to involve employees with the Director in moving those ideas from the concept stage to an actual structure for BLM headquarters.

This process for reorganizing has been considered and approved by the Director and the Deputy Director.

Now as we approach another critical stage in the reorganization effort, I wanted to talk to you about how you will be involved.

Throughout the next steps you *will* be involved and your input is vital to the success of this effort.

Here is what we will do for the rest of the day.

We will describe the next steps in the reorganization process.

Next, we will introduce the new Team that is assigned the task of working with you to develop the appropriate work flow and operating procedures for the new structure.

Then, we will provide a brief overview of the next phase of the effort and our plans for employee involvement beginning the first week of March 1994.

Finally, we will answer your questions.

Now, I want to yield to Denise and then the Team, but first let me repeat the Secretary's pledge:

There are no planned RIFs at the BLM Headquarters.

BLM is already getting along with less and has been doing so, for some time.

We are going to re-organize so that we can fulfill our mission.

I know that there is an unbridled enthusiasm for our mission among the BLM employees.

I know that there is an urgency to change the way in which we manage public lands.

BLM must change to effectively meet these new challenges.

My duty as Director is to facilitate change and to guide the BLM into this new era.

An important part of that leadership is giving us a organization that functions well and supports its people.

I think we have found out how to do just that, and today we will tell you about it.

Remember, I have one simple policy toward my fellow employees: My door is always open!

12/27/94

Note

To: Donna Janisch
From: Cathy Applegate, Eastern States
Subject: Introductory Remarks for "Order On The Land"

Attached are draft introductory remarks for Mike or Denise to open the "Order On The Land" presentation on Thursday, January 5 in the Departmental auditorium at 10 a.m.

Pete Culp has reviewed the remarks and will most likely use some of the same remarks to introduce Rob's program at Eastern States on January 4 to ES employees and representatives from the Society for Historical Archaeology.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at 703/440-1721. Thanks for sending out the flyers and for your help.

Attachment.

Acting Director Mike Dombeck's
DRAFT Introductory Remarks
ORDER ON THE LAND
Thursday, January 5 at 10 a.m.
Departmental Auditorium

Good Morning and Happy New Year. I'm Mike Dombeck, Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management. I sincerely hope each and every one of you enjoyed a safe and happy holiday. I know you are all happy to be back at the office and anxious to tackle the challenges of 1995!

Welcome to "Order On The Land," an educational and entertaining interpretation about the Department's Cadastral Survey program sponsored by BLM's Eastern States office. Before we get into the program, I'd like to acknowledge a few folks in the audience.

Secretary Babbitt; Assistant Secretary Armstrong; any other VIPs

"Order On The Land" is presented by Rob Nurre, teacher, geographer and historical interpreter. Assistant Secretary Armstrong and I saw Rob's program last June at the annual meeting of the Outdoor Writers Association of America. We were delighted and impressed with the breadth of the presentation and determined then that we wanted you to have the opportunity to see it.

Rob has been working with the BLM for a number of years on public heritage education programs that focus on the history of the General Land

Office and Cadastral Survey Records. Based upon his research in these records, Rob has developed programs designed to explain the depth of natural and cultural resource data recorded in Federal surveyors' notes from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

From about 1781 to 1867, at its maximum, the original Public Domain amounted to about 79 per cent of the total land area of the continental United States. Since then, more than half of that area has been conveyed out of Federal ownership through homestead grants or sales, railroad grants, and other means. BLM's predecessor agency, the General Land Office, or the GLO, played an important role in shaping our young Nation. Hardy GLO surveyors established and marked the boundaries of the public domain territory slated for settlement by our early pioneers. Today, the Department of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, administers about 180 million acres of public domain on the continental United States and another 90 million acres in the state of Alaska.

Rob's program vividly describes the processes of the Federal rectangular survey and the content of the records produced by the program. You will learn how and why the GLO and Cadastral Survey Records were developed and how their data will help with some of our important and specialized ecosystem missions. Much of this historical data is only a short drive away in Springfield, Virginia. More than 9 million historic land information documents are archived at the BLM's Eastern States Office in Springfield, Virginia. We hope that you'll take the opportunity to access this treasure trove of resource information whenever you can to gain insight into the land as we began to develop it.

At this point Rob (in character) will enter the auditorium and

interrupt the speaker --he'll ask speaker what year it is and why he's wearing such strange clothing styles etc. Follow Rob's lead with ad libs -- then finish with suggesting the "old timer" take over the program.

At conclusion of program, encourage wide use of these records by all agencies for various ecosystem management planning efforts. Staff at Eastern States Public Room can assist with research.

The Homestead and Cash Sale Entries issued before 1903 for 9 of the 13 eastern public domain states have been automated and can be quickly accessed from computer terminals. Remote modem access is available for these 9 states as well. Also, the data for 4 of the automated states are now available on Compact Disk from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. Charge for each disk is \$15.

BLM's Eastern States staff offers tours of the General Land Office Records Automation facility. Arrangements can be made through the Eastern States GLO staff.

We're here this morning to talk about performance measures. To discuss questions like, how successful have we managed the land? **How well can we account for the money allocated us by Congress?**

HBCL

In the past, we have measured our "success" and "accountability" by such things as dollars spent on fisheries enhancement, range improvement, and forest projects. By using this sort of accounting system, we effectively measure the number of instream structures placed, acres revegetated, culverts improved, guzzlers installed, widgets built, etc..

While useful to agency budget analysts OMB bean-counters, this sort of accountability neglects a far more important question. What, if anything, do these activities have to do with the health of the land?

As you probably know, BLM has been working on a new budget structure. We hope the new procedure will help us to more efficiently deliver needed resources to local managers. We think it will streamline administrative processes and help us to improve on-the-ground conditions. A good number of our constituents have rightfully, asked, "sure, but how will you remain accountable?"

That's why I'm here today. To talk about how we will remain fiscally and environmentally accountable for money allocated to us by Congress.

But I can't discuss performance measures without first talking about the standard by which I want you to measure us. That standard is our success at implementing ecosystem management.

You are all aware that ecosystem management is a high priority of Secretary Babbitt's. Yet we still argue over its definition. If you put ten biologists, ranchers, and environmentalists in a room, they'd come up with ten different definitions of ecosystem management. But it's not the definitions or lines on a map that are important. What matters is how we treat the land.

I always like to start discussions from common points of agreement. And I guarantee you when the smoke clears from that room of biologists, ranchers, and conservationists, they'd all agree on at least one point...

We have to maintain the health and productivity of the land. That's what ecosystem management is really about — maintaining healthy, diverse, and productive lands. If we can all agree on that, and I think we do, the ecosystem approach provides common ground from which to develop consensus-based decisionmaking.

"Protecting ecological sustainability", "conserving biological diversity", and "preserving ecologic integrity" are all fancy ways of talking about lands with clean water, an abundance of perennial native grasses, sustainable populations of extraordinary fish like salmon, and healthy watersheds. All Americans recognize the value of these things.

And that's what it's all about, isn't it? Maintaining healthy, diverse, and productive watersheds so that present and future generations continue to derive benefits from the land. Simply said, ecosystem management is the application of common sense to common problems for the common good.

Healthy, productive, and diverse public lands contribute to strong economies and stable communities. They help ensure that future generations enjoy social, economic, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits from the land. That's the gist of ecosystem management.

Today the West faces the explosive spread of noxious weeds... Threatened, endangered, and extinct species... Stream courses and rangelands in need of repair... Degraded water quality. And forest health problems. All these indicate the need for fundamental changes in the way we view and administer the land. *and on
endless integration*

The catalyst of change is ecosystem management. We've defined nine operating principles to guide implementation of the ecosystem approach. Simply put, they are:

- 1● Sustain the productivity and diversity of ecological systems. Or in English, keep the land healthy.
- 2● Know the condition of the land.
- 3● Communicate with and involve all interested publics
- 4● Have common goals.

- 5● Restore the land's health.
- 6● Use and have available the best science.
- 7● Base planning and management on long-term horizons and goals. Or, think ahead.
- 8● Reconnect isolated parts of the landscape. Again, in English, look at the big picture. And,
- 9● Practice adaptive management. That is, be flexible.

Albert Einstein once noted that "the significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." I think that's the right attitude from which to approach our task.

So you ask, what does this have to do with performance measures? Well, I envision a BLM that effectively serves our customers while efficiently accounting for taxpayer money spent. We will measure our effectiveness — evaluate our performance — by the condition and health of the land. Not by counting widgets — but by the health of the land.

To implement this new approach we'll need to: understand historic and present conditions of the land; identify and relieve stresses to the land's health; and work with other agencies and publics to develop common ecosystem health goals and objectives.

We'll work with the other agencies and the public to identify indicators that characterize ecosystem health and function. These indicators may include water temperature, streambank stability, percent native vegetation, and so on.

If threshold levels of these indicators are exceeded, resource use and management direction will be modified and refined. We will share with the public the best available scientific and technical information to support our land use decisions and develop on-the-ground management direction. This will help local communities anticipate and adjust to changing social and economic conditions.

These indicators and thresholds will serve as our performance measures. Indicators, thresholds, performance measures. Sounds sort of confusing, doesn't it? It's really not.

You may know that I'm a Ph.D. fisheries biologist. My colleagues and I love to sit around at conferences discussing complexes of indicator species to evaluate native biodiversity. Or, indices of biotic integrity to monitor ecosystem health. Or, procedures for assessing properly functioning riparian areas.

The problem is that us scientists spend too much time talking to each other and not enough speaking to the public in clear English. Like Senator Hiakowa said "I got my Ph.D. and it took me 3 years to get over it."

There's nothing complicated about what we have to do. Don't get me wrong. Some of these issues require folks with real specific and technical expertise. But our job is to communicate with you in a simple, direct, and clear manner the benefits — the performance measures — of the ecosystem approach.

When we discuss properly functioning riparian areas, what we're really talking about are:

- Higher water tables
- Greener riparian areas.
- Fatter calves
- More song birds

- Stable streambanks
- Flood buffers
- Replenished ground-water reserves
- Better hunting, and so on.

When you hear me mention healthy watersheds, what I mean is:

- Clean, clear water
- More consistent water flows
- Healthy fish populations
- Better fishing
- Increased flow in ephemeral streams
- Diverse and healthy wildlife populations

- Less erosion

When we talk about diverse and productive uplands, what we mean is

- A resilient mix of native grasses
- Better grazing
- Healthier forests
- Increased productivity, and so on.

I think you get the drift. The bottom-line is that our new approach will result in productive, diverse, and healthy lands that maintain sustainable levels of forest products, minerals' development, and forage use. Lands that provide a wide variety of educational and recreational opportunities. Education is key.

Simply put, ecosystem management is a new way of doing business. A compact and a promise to our unborn customers. It involves coordinated planning at the local level, forming partnerships, and using good information to manage the land.

We must sit down with other federal, state, and interested private land owners to develop a consensus vision for the land. A vision based on maintaining healthy watersheds and diverse and productive ecosystems. Our performance measures won't be described in some dusty old manual. They will be present across the landscape. In strong economies stable communities.

If we do our job right, local communities will be in the lead. People will recognize and appreciate the social and economic benefits of maintaining healthy and diverse ecological systems.

1st thing I did
was to sign Pacific /

DECEMBER 1995

Remarks of Mike Dombeck at the 1994 Western Division Meeting
of the American Fisheries Society

Advantages of the Ecosystem Approach to
Management of the Federal Lands

Meeting theme
Ecosystem mgmt
New approaches to
Complex issues

There's a new buzz-word in town. It's called ecosystem management. I'm here to tell you it's more than a passing fancy — more than a fad. And to invite you to join our efforts to make it an on-the-ground reality.

Our challenge is to
~~This new approach is~~ often greeted with skepticism, outright distrust, or confusion. ~~We~~ People don't trust things ~~we~~ they don't understand. Ecosystem management is a good case in point. ~~But~~ what we have to do is not complicated. It's not mystical. It's plain common sense. It's simply doing what's good for the land. *and the water*

We know how to do it

I'd like to ~~take this opportunity~~ to talk about three issues related to our new approach. And to invite you to join us, on the path we're headed. First, I'll talk about what ecosystem management is. Second, how it will translate to tangible on-the-ground benefits. Third, how you can help us make it work.

Ecosystem Management: What is it?

We tend to be our own worst enemy by making definitions of ecosystem management more complicated than they need to be. But there is nothing mysterious or unclear about it.

Put ten fisheries biologists, ranchers, and environmentalists in a room and they'll come up with ten different definitions of ecosystem management.

If we focus on the individual words, we get lost in the ~~ensuing~~ debate. You've all seen it happen. Public meetings end in arguments. Plans get bogged down by lawsuits. We end up spending millions of doallars in litigation. Ultimately, the land and water and the people who depend on them, suffer.

But it's not the definitions or lines on a map that are important. What matters is ~~how we treat~~ the land.

I always like to start discussions from common points of agreement. And I guarantee you when the smoke clears from that room of fisheries biologists, ranchers, and conservationists, they'd all agree on at least one point...

We have to maintain the health and productivity of the land. That's what ecosystem management is really about — maintaining healthy, diverse, and productive lands. If we can all agree on that, and I think we already do, the ecosystem approach provides common ground from which to develop consensus-based decisions.

"Protecting ecological sustainability", "conserving biological diversity", and "preserving ecologic integrity" are all fancy ways of talking about lands with clean water, an abundance of perennial native grasses, sustainable populations of extraordinary fish like salmon, and healthy watersheds. All Americans recognize the value of these things.

as Jack Ward Thomas says it's the case . . .

And that's what it's all about, isn't it? Healthy, productive, and diverse public lands contribute to strong ^{predictable} economies, and stable communities. They ensure that present and future generations continue to enjoy benefits from the land. Simply stated, ecosystem management is the application of common sense to common problems for the common good.

Healthy ecosystems

President Theodore Roosevelt put it nicely nearly a century ago, when he said:

If we of this generation destroy the resources from which our children would otherwise derive their livelihood, we reduce the capacity of our land to support a population, and so either degrade the standard of living or deprive the coming generations of their right to life on this continent.

For too long, management of the public lands has been contentious and controversial. Arguments among multiple competing interests — environmentalists vs. developers vs. recreation users vs. fishermen — have paralyzed "multiple use" agencies making us foils for interest group disagreements and lightning rods for litigation.

The West is ~~growing~~^{changing} faster than any other part of the country. People are moving to previously undeveloped areas. At the same time, we face the explosive spread of noxious weeds... Threatened, endangered, and extinct species... Stream courses and rangelands in need of repair... Degraded water quality. And forest health problems.

To break the gridlock and restore the land's health we must fundamentally change the way we look at and care for the land.

I believe the catalyst of change is ecosystem management. We in BLM have nine operating principles that define our new approach. Simply put, they are:

- 1● Sustain the productivity and diversity of ecological systems. Or in plain English, keep the land healthy.
- 2● Know the condition of the land.
- 3● Communicate with and involve all interested publics
- 4● Have common goals.
- 5● Restore the land's health.
- 6● Use and have available the best science.
- 7● Base planning and management on long-term horizons and goals. Or, think ahead.

- 8● Reconnect isolated parts of the landscape. Again, in English, look at the big picture. And,
- 9● Practice adaptive management. That is, be flexible and willing to change if your approach if something doesn't work.

Albert Einstein once noted that "the significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." I think that's the right attitude from which to approach our task.

A New Vision

So here we stand. Two years shy of BLM's 50th anniversary — rapidly approaching the year 2000. The West has changed dramatically since the early days of the General Land Office.

In the nineteenth century, we thought we had limitless supplies of fish and wildlife, wood fiber, forage, and minerals. Our policies helped to settle and develop a growing country.

We now know that rivers, grasslands, minerals, and forests are finite resources. No frontiers remain in the American West. And development has come with a cost to the health and sustainability of the land. The age old question remains the same. How do we provide for the present and preserve for the future?

As good stewards, we need to recognize the limits of the land and manage in ways that maintain ecosystem health. If we do this, *Over the long haul* everyone wins — people, wildlife, ^{Fish} commercial users who depend on renewable resources, and most important, future generations.

This message was recently "sent home" to over 400 BLM managers at a week long meeting in Nevada. The five themes of the "BLM Summit" were ^①maintaining healthy ecosystems, ^②serving our publics, ^③collaborative leadership, ^④improving the way we do business, and ^⑤diversifying our workforce. These are all singularly important issues linked by our absolute need to maintain the health of the land.

both people and culture

We can collaborate till the cows come home, recruit the most culturally diverse work-force in the federal government, provide outstanding service to our customers, and efficiently manage information, however, if the land is not healthy, we have failed as managers.

Let me say that again. If the land is not healthy, we have failed as managers of the public trust. That is the standard you should judge us by.

Charles Wilkinson says "it should not be so hard to mesh the needs of the lands and waters and the people. They ought to be the same."

Our first priority must be to the health of the land. After all, how much forage is available to wildlife or livestock from rangelands infested by leafy spurge or cheatgrass? What good to a community is a watershed contaminated by runoff from an abandoned mine? Or, a fishery ruined by excessive sedimentation?

An ecosystem approach will not eliminate the need to make difficult decisions to accomplish social and economic goals. But we must have the information to make these decisions — and know they are not likely to impair the long-term health of the land.

Communicate the

Benefits of the Ecosystem Approach

Most of You may know that I'm an AFS life member and certified fisheries scientist. My colleagues and I love to sit around at conferences like this ruminating over native ichthyofauna. Discussing complexes of indicator species to evaluate native biodiversity. Or, procedures for assessing properly functioning riparian areas. Another favorite is, indices of biotic integrity to monitor ecosystem health.

The problem is that us scientists spend too much time talking to each other and not enough speaking to the public in clear English. As Senator Hiakowa said, "I got my Ph.D. and it took me 3 years to get over it."

*I'm on a keep it simple, back to Basics crusade at BLM
Cut process
How we write,*

Now, don't get me wrong. Many of our problems require professionals with real specific technical expertise such as yourselves. But we must clearly communicate to the public the benefits of our new approach. And yes, that includes ranchers, miners, timber companies, and even BLM managers. *we need more technical breadth & depth than ever* *most importantly those that or not with us*

When we discuss properly functioning riparian areas, make it clear that we mean:

- Higher water tables
- Greener riparian areas *functioning*
- More song birds
- Stable streambanks
- Flood buffers
- Replenished ground-water reserves
- Better hunting, and so on

When healthy watersheds are the issue, help the public understand that we're talking about:

- Clean, clear water
- More consistent water flows
- Healthy fish populations and habitats
- Better fishing
- Increased flow in ephemeral streams
- Diverse and healthy wildlife populations
- High quality domestic water supplies
- Less erosion

When we talk about diverse and productive uplands, stress benefits such as:

- A resilient mix of native grasses

● Better grazing

- Healthy, disease free forests
- Increased productivity
- Fatter calves, and so on

I think you get the drift. The bottom-line is that our new approach will result in productive, diverse, and healthy lands that maintain ecologically sustainable levels of forest products, minerals' development, and forage use. Lands that provide a wide variety of educational and recreational opportunities. Education is key.

Too often our traditional approach to management has been based on a society whose values and needs have changed. We now know that overemphasizing commodity production, commercial use, and intensive development can compromise, and ultimately jeopardize the land's health.

Its the fish stupid

Aquatic species such as fish, are excellent indicators of the overall health of the land. For example, within the United States, 33% of native fish species are considered endangered, threatened, or of special concern. This number has increased 45% since 1979.

Another AFS study, co-authored by my Science Adviser, Dr. Jack E. Williams, found that of the 400 known stocks of salmon and steelhead populations in the West, 106 are extinct and 214 are identified as threatened, endangered, or of special concern.

Habitat loss and degradation are cited as primary factors in the demise of approximately 75% of the 40 North American fish species that have become extinct since 1900.

By now, we are all too aware of these gloomy statistics. But did you know that over 215 federally listed threatened and endangered plant and animal species, over 1,000 candidate species, and hundreds of sensitive species

occur on BLM lands?

Are you aware that BLM and National Forest system lands provide habitat for almost 69% of the threatened and endangered fish species in the United States and another 61% of the species that are candidates for listing?

1st phys. fish
Through interagency efforts such as FEMAT and PACFISH, we can stem these declines.

However, we simply don't have the resources to restore declining fish populations on a species-by-species basis. Nor can we hope to meet the long-term needs of society without first securing the health of the land. Too often we have concentrated on the *effects* of our management without fixing the root *causes* of the problems. Managing ecological systems in their entirety, rather than focussing on their parts, is essential to good stewardship.

~~What~~ We need to do better than restoring 1/2 a watershed. If we spend \$ on the stream bottom without addressing upland issues we haven't accomplished ¹⁶ much

It is high time that the Bureau began to uncomplicate our bureaucratic processes. We will use the ecosystem approach to eliminate excessive and conflicting policies, rules, and regulations. To streamline administrative processes and improve fiscal and environmental accountability.

And we cannot succeed without your help. Work with us to conserve the land's health for future generations. Help us to provide stability to local communities. Help BLM managers to develop common goals to maintain healthy ecosystems.

Always remember the old adage: "we have not inherited the land from our forefathers, we have borrowed it from our children."

- Challenge us to respect the limits of the land.
- Remind us to remain humble and admit that we do not know all the answers.

- Challenge us to be flexible to changing conditions and responsive to new information.
- Demand that we become less bureaucratic and more involved in helping local communities anticipate and adjust to change.

In short, help us to form a new land compact with the American public.

If we do our job right, local communities will be in the lead. People will recognize and appreciate the social and economic benefits of maintaining healthy and diverse ecological systems.

I envision a BLM that can effectively serve our customers while efficiently accounting for taxpayer money spent. We will measure our effectiveness by the condition and health of the land.

We must sit down with other federal, state, and private land owners to develop a common vision for the land. A vision based on maintaining healthy watersheds and diverse and productive ecosystems. With your assistance, I will evaluate my line-managers' performance by the health of the land. Less red tape equals more productivity.

Performance measures won't be described in some dusty old manual. They will be visible across the landscape — in strong economies and stable communities. *productive ecosystems*

Simply put, ecosystem management is a new way of doing business. A compact and a promise to our unborn citizens. It involves coordinated planning at the local level, working and communicating clearly to the public, forming partnerships, and using good information to manage the land.

I'm asking for your help. We need your active participation. We must know the condition of our lands... And work together to achieve their health.

Challenge us to lead by example. Don't look to Washington, DC for a prophet to guide you. You, in this room, are the catalysts of change. To paraphrase Margaret Mead, never doubt that a few dedicated individuals can change the world, indeed, often only they can.

Help us to think in new ways. Take risks and be innovative. Challenge us to err on the side of maintaining the land's health. This is our charge from the American public and your challenge as fisheries professionals. Never forget that we are shaping the management of the land for the future.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world,
indeed it is the only thing that ever has.

Conclusion

The principles of ecosystem management form the philosophic underpinning of a new land ethic. An ethic with roots in the words and actions of Roosevelt, Pinchot, Aldo Leopold, and many in this room. An ethic designed to maintain ecosystem health so that future generations may continue to enjoy benefits from the land.

Leopold once said:

The practice of conservation must spring from a conviction of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right only when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the community, and the community includes the soil, waters, fauna, and flora, as well as people.

Help us to make these old words our shared compact.

Thanks for being here today. I'd be happy to answer any questions.