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REALITY,  
CHALLENGE,  
AND  
SELF-CONFIDENCE

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*Remarks by*  
Mike Dombeck  
Acting Director  
Bureau of Land Management

*Presented to*  
the BLM Executive  
Leadership Team  
Denver, Colorado,  
February 7, 1996





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**T**he year 1996 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the 20th Anniversary of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) signed by President Ford in 1976. FLPMA is a commitment that our public lands will, in general, be retained by the American people and managed in perpetuity for future generations. This agency has a long history of accomplishment, innovation, and dedicated employees. The designation of BLM's first National Conservation Area, the Kings Range back in 1971, is just one example.

Today, we find ourselves in a climate of uncertainty and uneasiness. The challenges seem enormous. As we proceed this year, I want you to do three things—the three primary things I want to talk about today.



- Give yourself and your coworkers credit for the many accomplishments.
- Be a realist about our challenges and deal with the future in a positive way.
- Focus on priorities—the days of doing more with less are past.

## *Accomplishments*

**L**ooking back over the two years since Secretary Babbitt asked me to take this job, I am honestly amazed at our many accomplishments. We have had failures and always will. But sit back and think about what you, the innovative and hard working employees of this agency, have accomplished.

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*First*, we held the BLM Summit, a historic meeting of all of our line managers and over 100 outside participants, including folks from State, tribal, and local governments, user groups, academia, and the media. Based on the discussions at that meeting, we developed the *Blueprint for the Future*, an integrated, interdisciplinary vision for the future of the public lands and the BLM.

That *Blueprint* has survived, even in a period when everything else around us seems to be undergoing colossal change. We have witnessed a sea change in the political landscape. The changes wrought by the 1994 elections are driving an aggressive re-examination of all our national priorities. But the *Blueprint* is as valid, visionary, and relevant today as it was before the 1994 election. I want to thank everyone who contributed to it and ask that each of you go back and read it again. The *Blueprint for the Future* is our guiding document.

*Second*, we streamlined the organization and reduced administrative overhead. Mandated personnel reductions are occurring at the BLM Washington Office and the State Offices. At the Washington Office, for example, the number of employees has declined over the last few years from 515 to about 320. The same trends are occurring at our State Offices.

These changes are indicative of an important long-term transformation in our organization. In Fiscal Year 1993, less than two-thirds of the BLM was engaged in operational-field work and more than one-third was doing what Vice President Gore's National Performance Review

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defines as headquarters and administrative type work. Today, we have improved that ratio to 70 and 30 percent, respectively. Our goal is to have 80 percent of our funding allocated to operational-field work by 1999 or sooner.

Knowing that our goals are the health of the land and service to customers, my message has been to move the money and the resources to the ground. We want more people doing on-the-ground work with less administrative oversight. If you are reviewing things for individuals at other levels of the organization, **STOP** doing that. Go out there and help them do it right the first time. Our commitment is to the land and to the people. We can't afford to do everything at every organizational level.

**Third**, we did the heavy lifting on many Administration and Secretarial initiatives. Think about what we've done:



- Just three years ago, there was absolute gridlock in the Federal old growth forests of the Pacific Northwest. Working with the Forest Service and other partners, we successfully completed and are now implementing an interagency management plan covering all of the Federal forests west of the Cascades. This is a genuine landmark in natural resource management. It is the kind of thing your children are going to be reading about in their natural resource management textbooks in the coming decades.
- We teamed up again with the Forest Service in Idaho, Oregon, and California to develop and

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implement PACFISH — a scientifically based watershed approach to management that is improving and maintaining habitat for rare salmon and steelhead species, and hopefully heading off costly litigation.

- Under extremely challenging circumstances, we also developed new rangeland management regulations. Working with the Western Governors, we are now implementing these regulations through recently chartered Resource Advisory Councils (RACs), a truly historic experiment in public land management built on BLM's culture of working with people. The pioneering work of BLM Colorado with RAC concepts has been especially helpful in the process.

Last week the leadership of the Public Lands Council of the National Cattlemen's Association told Assistant Secretary Bob Armstrong and me that they support the RACs. They recognize the importance of all interests working together.

These RACs are citizen-owners and are taking a responsible, active role in helping BLM set long-term goals for the public lands, lands owned by all Americans. I strongly encourage the citizens who are serving on these RACs all across the West to take this responsibility very seriously. The BLM is listening.



- We embraced Vice President Gore's National Performance Review to make government cost less and work better. In recognition of our accomplish-

ments BLM received five Hammer Awards from the Vice President for work in Montana, Montana's Belle Fourche Office in South Dakota, Idaho, New Mexico's Tulsa District Office, and the Joint Pipeline Office in Alaska. In addition, we received two Interior innovation awards for helping design the government purchase card program and for work in Alaska's Glennallen District Office.

- Working with a variety of other Federal agencies, we recently completed the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review. It recognizes, among other things, that wildland fire is a natural event important to the long-term health of many ecosystems. Wildland fire is not all bad nor all good, but is a landscape phenomenon that ignores ownership or management boundaries.
- The policy reaffirms our commitment to the protection of human life and safety. Safety is and always will be our top priority. Every time. Every fire. And I ask everyone to hammer the safety message home so we'll never have a replay of the tragedy that we experienced in 1994.

***Fourth***, we continue to excel at implementing innovative approaches to resource management. For example:

In California, BLM worked with a wide consortium of agencies to develop a regional habitat conservation plan for multiple species in the Western Mojave Desert. This plan will save taxpayers' money, protect threatened species, and provide for responsible development.

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In Arizona, BLM reduced its backlog from 50 proposed exchanges two years ago to a current roster of nine. This was done through the use of "feasibility reports" that allow for prioritization of exchanges in the State. Processing time has been reduced from 20 to 13 months per transfer.

BLM and the State Trust Administration in Utah exchanged State lands that possess critical habitat for the Desert Tortoise with public lands that would enhance Utah's future urban development needs.

In southeastern Oregon, local ranchers are working with BLM managers, conservation groups, and other Federal and State agencies to improve watershed health. In 1991, grazing on 523,000 acres of public lands faced a shutdown when the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout was discovered. But implementation of a deferred rest/rotation grazing program helped return woody vegetation and green riparian areas, and improved water quality.

Today, trout populations are increasing and grazing plans developed by the working group have received four "no jeopardy" opinions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In New Mexico, BLM developed a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, New Mexico Department of Fish and Game, State Parks and others to operate a public information center for maps and other information.

With respect to energy and minerals, last year oil and gas leasing on the public lands generated over \$40 million in

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bonus bids for State and Federal treasuries. We adopted and are now implementing an acid mine drainage policy.

BLM Nevada helped us respond to the County Supremacy Movement, developing useful background information for our employees and reaching out to local officials in Nevada.

BLM Eastern States continued to successfully adopt out a significant number of our excess wild horses and burros.

In Wyoming, BLM developed a precedent-setting partnership with the State Historic Preservation Officer to share data and streamline cultural clearances and reviews. We want to emulate that success in other States.

Last month I had the good fortune to be in Laramie, Wyoming, for a celebration honoring "Big Al." No, I'm not talking about our Wyoming State Director; I'm talking about the fossil of a dinosaur called the Allosaurus. This is the first large carnivorous dinosaur fossil to be found intact. It was discovered on BLM-managed property by a group of Swiss collectors who thought they were on private land.

Big Al roamed the earth 150 million years ago — to put that in perspective, that was many years before Ed Hastey began his career as BLM California State Director.

But if the dinosaur had not been found on BLM-managed land, and if our Law Enforcement people hadn't been so alert, the fossil would probably now be found in either

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Japan or Europe in a private collection. Instead, "Big Al" will remain in the care of the University of Wyoming where it will be viewed and enjoyed by all Americans and studied by scholars worldwide.

The record of accomplishments goes on and on and on. And the keys to the success that we've enjoyed are that we have been creative and innovative—remarkably innovative—and hard working during a period of tremendous organizational change and uncertainty. These are the same traits that will get us through future challenges: innovation, creativity, and dedicated employees.

## **~ Change is All Around Us ~**

**T**hink back. When I accepted this position two years ago, the Clinton Administration was a year old and the Democrats were the majority party in Congress. The BLM had been growing for almost 50 years in budget, in personnel, and in statutory authority.

We now have a Republican majority in both Houses of Congress for the first time in over 40 years. We have a Democratic President saying that "the era of big government is over." We've suffered two furloughs in the last two months and may be on a Continuing Resolution for the remainder of the year.

We face declining budgets—in real dollars—for the foreseeable future. And we face a significant number of proposals to transfer all or part of the public lands to others.

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Nearly 30 separate legislative measures were introduced in the first session of the 104th Congress. For example:

- Transfer ownership or management responsibilities for the public lands;
- Utah wilderness designation;
- Grazing;
- Mining law reform; and
- Timber salvage.

It would be comforting to think that the current situation is an aberration, that things will revert to "normal" in the next Congress or administration. Comforting, but unrealistic. These changes transcend secretaries, administrations, and Congresses. The simple truth is that many of the same forces that led to corporate mergers, restructuring, and downsizing in the eighties are now being felt in the public sector—in the Federal Government, in State government, and in academia.

For us, the reality of the future is that personnel levels are going down. Budgets are going down. This will be true under any election scenario we can imagine. We've got to deal with it. The only prediction I can make is that the rate of change is going to increase.

This increasingly rapid pace of change is all around us, but no where more evident than in the world of technology. I read last month that scientists have more evidence than

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ever to believe that there may be some forms of life on far away planets.

Planets are located in distant corners of the universe that we did not even know existed just a few years ago. A collection of 1,500 galaxies was found last month in the direction of the Big Dipper's handle. Wow! Talk about remote sensing—it's hard to top the Hubble space telescope.

A few weeks ago, I upgraded my home computer for the third time. I knew when I bought it before Christmas that before long it would be out of date. Now, just two months later, the same model is selling at a cheaper price, and even better, faster models are already available. That is the pace of change we are dealing with.

What is the key to survival? I think it's the same for organizations as it is for individual species and that's flexibility and adaptability. We've got to be nimble, to be able to adjust to change. Do you know how species avoid getting on one of those endangered or threatened lists? They remain flexible and adaptable, genetically plastic.

We've heard the prediction that the 1990's are going to be to the government what the eighties were to the private sector. And I think we can learn something about the future of government by looking at what is happening in the corporate world today. Each January *Forbes Magazine* profiles the best corporate organizations and looks at the key to their success. In the 1996 edition, Hewlett Packard is listed as number one, selected by peers. And here are some of the comments:

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- "What they are really striving for is respect of their colleagues;"
- "They push each other to the limits of their talents;"
- "They spend a lot of time talking about values;"
- "They believe they create the future;" and
- "They believe in running a boundary-less company."

Jack Welch of General Electric has been recognized year after year for his skills in management. He reorganized from assembly lines to work teams. His most recent innovation was the design of a new line of washing machines with 40 percent fewer movable parts. Think of the savings in manufacturing.

Chrysler amazes its competition with its ability to design and bring new models on line faster than anyone else without sacrificing quality.

The last corporation I want to mention is Kodak. They believed they were trying to do too many things all at once and couldn't afford to do any of them very well, so they went back to basics, back to their core business of photography. They also reorganized because they felt that the company's old functional lines enabled managers to blame other functions for failures. Today, they are organized in 10 operating units, each one accountable for its own profit and loss.

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Any of that sound familiar? I think the lessons to be learned there are: to focus on the core business, then do it better and cheaper than anyone else.

Some people believe that market forces do not work in government agencies. I remember disputing that with someone during a course I took at Penn State some years ago. He said, "You government employees don't have to compete for anything." But there is one basic marketing principle that applies across the board — in government, in the private sector, anywhere. And that is, money comes from people wanting things, goods, and services. People pay for what they value. Money flows to the organizations that can satisfy their customers. We need to understand and utilize marketing. Marketing is simply identifying needs and filling them.

## ~ Looking Toward the Future ~

**W**e must move forward with the Presidential/ Departmental initiatives and priorities. Several weeks ago Assistant Secretary Bob Armstrong organized a retreat to review accomplishments for 1995 and to set priorities for 1996. For the BLM, the following 12 priorities were identified and reaffirmed in the *Blueprint for the Future*.



- Continue to implement the President's Forest Plan;
- Grazing regulations:
  - Advance the Resource Advisory Councils; and
  - Restore riparian areas functioning at risk;

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- Implement Departmental strategy to reduce the spread of noxious weeds;
- Implement the new Joint Wildland Fire Policy;
- Implement the Secretary's land exchange initiative;
- Promulgate use authorization and bonding regulations for hard rock mining;
- Implement oil and gas performance review initiatives;
- Continue to provide recreational visitor services;
- Administer recreation fee collection pilots;
- Implement the Interagency Desert Protection Agreement; and
- Evaluate diversity program effectiveness.

This is our priority work for this year and beyond. I expect you, the members of our Executive Leadership Team (ELT), to communicate these priorities to your employees and ensure that we as an organization accomplish them. By the end of the year, I want to be able to report to the Assistant Secretary and the Secretary that we were successful. These priorities are the most important efforts of our *Blueprint for the Future*.

I also want to be able to report to them that we continued to implement the *Blueprint for the Future*. We developed the *Blueprint* in 1994 following the Summit. Last year, we

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sort of tried it on for size, using it to establish priorities and discuss accomplishments. Judging from the comments that I've heard from people both inside and outside of the organization, we generally like the fit. This year, we have to translate the *Blueprint* into terms that are truly meaningful to on-the-ground operations.

The discussions the ELT is having this week about the long-term budget picture and about Bureauwide priorities, the workload analyses that each of you is going to complete over the next month, and the resulting decisions in March are crucial to making the *Blueprint* an operational reality. I also want each of you to be relentless on cost cutting in every activity. Dollars saved are coworkers' salaries. I look forward to hearing the results of this next month. Just remember, everything we do in the BLM should further the *Blueprint*. If it doesn't, we shouldn't do it.

And I want the ELT to continue to improve the division of labor and communications between the Washington Office and the State Offices and among the State Offices. The Washington Office should be our ambassador.



- Communicating field successes to the Department, the Hill, our constituencies, and the public;
- Building national coalitions;
- Communicating new legal mandates and administration priorities to the field;
- Being responsive to the Assistant Secretary, the Secretary, the White House, and the Congress.;

- Running interference for the field when members of Congress demand actions for which they have not given us the resources.;
- Supporting decisions based on good science and common sense.;
- Facilitating regulatory and legislative changes needed to help us do our job better; and
- Most important of all, delivering the budget.

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

- Rely on each other for operational advice and technical information;
- Share scarce skills and organizational resources;
- Serve our customers on the land; and
- Maintain the health of the land.

We must improve our ability to work together. There's a fire on the range. And, as any westerner knows, you can't fight a range fire ranch by ranch. We need to continue to move away from linear processes and approaches and move toward the truly interdisciplinary - quantum approach, working with people in everything we do. And working with people is one of this agency's strengths.

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These are trying times. Trying times to be committed to sound resource management. Trying times to be a civil servant. Innovation got this agency through the last 50 years and it will get us through the next 50.

Remember to celebrate our many accomplishments; be a realist about the future; and focus on priorities. We must also remember our core beliefs as professional resource managers.



- A belief in managing resources for the long term;
- A belief in the need for open discourse grounded in good science and common sense for the common good;
- A belief in working across the fence lines;
- A belief in the need for effective government programs; and, above all,
- A belief in the importance of public service.

We also must remember that ours is a sacred trust. The resources depend on us. Local communities depend on us. Future generations depend on us.

The public lands, and the resources they contain, are a legacy we inherited from our forefathers. Our collective challenge is to pass them on, unimpaired, to our children.

***Thank you for your help.***



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*The Bureau  
of Land Management  
sustains the health,  
diversity, and  
productivity of  
the public lands  
for the use  
and enjoyment  
of present  
and future generations.*  
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26-28 FEBRUARY 1996

# Setting the Symposium Stage: Past, Present, and Future Sharing of Common Ground

## Mike Dombeck

I can see from the attendance at this symposium that the interest in resolving conflicts between livestock and big game on our Western rangelands is stronger than ever. This is all about people working together. Identifying and implementing solutions to these conflicts is a process that is appropriately called *seeking and sharing common ground*. And the public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management are, quite literally, common ground to all Americans, because they are owned by the people in this room and all the American people. Under Federal law, the BLM's mission is to manage the public lands—on behalf of all Americans—for multiple uses. Since those uses often conflict with one another, that's no easy task.

Federal law also requires the BLM to ensure the health and productivity of the public lands. That means managing to meet the needs of current and future generations of Americans—and that's a tall order. To fulfill its land-management mission, the BLM recognizes that it must work more effectively with everyone who uses or cares about the public lands—the people we call stakeholders—the citizen-owners of the public lands. And that's why understanding each others' concerns and finding and building consensus among the various stakeholders is so important. That's why meetings like this are so critical.

My assignment is to help set the stage for this symposium. I'd like to do this by discussing how and why we got here, take note of what's going on now, and then look at what the future appears to hold.

This symposium is a follow-up to the Livestock/Big Game symposium that was held here in Sparks in September 1991. That symposium was co-sponsored by 13 public and private organizations. It was the first time that such a diverse group of interests came together in the spirit of cooperation to focus on solutions. A result of that symposium was a "leadership committee" made up of the heads of the original sponsoring organizations and agencies. In the spring of 1992 the leadership group met and agreed to provide direction to actively address livestock/big game issues through partnership efforts. They agreed to:

1. Develop and follow a set of common principles to guide future national cooperative efforts.
2. Identify and provide some additional funding for demonstration projects that would actively focus on solutions to livestock/big game conflicts.
3. Evaluate the opportunities for holding a follow-up national level symposium, and

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In: Evans, Keith E., comp. 1996. *Sharing common ground on western rangelands: proceedings of a livestock/big game symposium; 1996 February 26-28; Sparks, NV. Gen. Tech. Rep. INT-GTR-343. Ogden, UT: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Intermountain Research Station.*

Mike Dombeck is Director of the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior.

4. To communicate progress in implementing many of the actions recommended in the first national symposium and share what we have learned.

This symposium is a follow-up of the agreements made in the spring of 1992. After careful review of the situation, we took a hard look at what we could do to improve conditions on the land for both people and animals. Since then, numerous private organizations, communities, and individuals have worked with local, State, and Federal agencies to *improve and maintain the health of the land*, which is BLM's top priority.

During the past 5 years we have learned a lot. We have applied the best techniques and knowledge at our disposal, finding out what works and what doesn't. And now the people who care are back in Sparks so we can take stock of and build on our accomplishments. The accomplishments of the past 5 years tell me that the dollars going into Sharing Common Ground are among the most efficiently used of any spent by the Bureau of Land Management. The funds earmarked for this program go directly to the ground, bypassing the usual red tape and layers of bureaucracy. The positive results from this direct approach are evident in the improvements we can see on the land, in wildlife habitat, livestock productivity, water quality, and riparian areas.

Now if those were the only benefits of this program, that would be reason enough to rejoice. But even more important are the positive relationships that have been formed as diverse groups work together to achieve common land-management goals.

What are those common goals? One of them is to ensure that public lands are managed in a way that recognizes the needs of local communities—communities that depend on the public lands for recreational, spiritual, or economic purposes. In concrete terms, that means—among other things—that the BLM finds ways to accommodate both wildlife and livestock on the public lands. In broader terms, it means the BLM must work with its stakeholders to manage the public lands in a manner that goes beyond Old West-New West conflict—you know, the one that pits commodity-based users against hunters and other recreationists. Sharing Common Ground addresses this conflict by taking into account the condition of the land and the people who use this land.

We should be very proud of what has happened in places like Owl Mountain, Muddy Creek, Monroe Mountain, Jarbidge Mountains, and elsewhere. Not only have we improved conditions on the land, but we have done it in a way that has encouraged people to work better together. Allow me to give you a few examples of how we have Shared Common Ground to Improve the Health of the Land:

Owl Mountain, located in north-central Colorado includes over 30 partners, among them, numerous ranchers, and agencies such as the BLM, Forest Service, NRCS, Fish and

Wildlife Service, Park Service, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado Land Board, and Colorado State University. This project focuses on the application of ecosystem management in a 245,000 acre block of mixed ownership land including developing better management plans, implementing on-the-ground improvements, facilitating cooperation between interest groups and using the area as a prototype for extension to other conflict areas in the region.

The Jarbidge Bruneau River area contains some of Nevada's premier mule deer and bighorn sheep habitat. This project area was the site of riparian habitat work, water developments, and habitat inventories involving twelve partners including the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Nevada Division of Wildlife and Division of Environmental Protection, and the Newmont Gold Company.

The Upper Muddy Creek Watershed Project in Wyoming is a project where the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Game and Fish, and Department of Environmental Quality, Wyoming Water Development Commission, University of Wyoming, NRCS and EPA, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and others are working cooperatively on restoration and stream improvement on this 390,000 acre watershed.

The Monroe Mountain project in Utah is working with groups as diverse as the Boy Scouts and the Utah State

Prison, wildlife groups, to resolve major conflicts between big game and livestock and enhance the ecological integrity of the demonstration area, while providing for human values, products, and services. They have done this by using prescribed fire to rejuvenate sagebrush/aspen habitat, while improving the composition of forbs and grasses. This area has also been involved in modern techniques of radio telemetry for elk monitoring, for wildlife research, and for aspen research.

These examples are just four of numerous big and small approaches to seeking, finding, and sharing common ground while living on and improving the land.

And let me say: feel free to undertake any and all cooperative initiatives that will improve the land. Call it Coordinated Resource Management, Seeking Common Ground, or just good coordination and cooperation. As long as it works—and isn't illegal—just do it!

I've talked about the past and the present. Now I'll peer into the crystal ball and try to tell you about the future. Actually, it's crystal clear that budgets are going to be tight. And that will affect much of what we do at the BLM. Both funding and the number of employees will decrease. To deal with these constraints, we need programs that stretch our dollars further, like Seeking Common Ground.

So let's keep a good thing going—by keeping up all your good work!

**MIKE DOMBECK  
ACTING DIRECTOR  
REMARKS**  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROUNDTABLE**  
**12TH ANNUAL ELK CAMP AND EXPOSITION**  
**RENO, NEVADA**  
**FEBRUARY 28, 1996**

**INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to visit with you again this year at your always exciting Elk Camp and Exposition.

It's a pleasure to meet RMEF's Board of Directors to discuss issues of mutual importance — "working for wildlife in pure western style," current budget situations, collaborative decision-making, and maintaining the health of the public lands through our partnership.

As you may know, the Bureau of Land Management manages 270 million acres of public lands. These public lands are a virtual sportsman's paradise with every kind of wildlife you can image.

### **MOVING RESOURCES TO THE GROUND**

To maintain these magnificent resources for today's and future generations of Americans, BLM has been charting a new course in how it does its job as the 21st century approaches.

Our new course includes three priorities:

- To restore and maintain the health and productivity of the land;
- To improve service to our customers;
- To promote collaborative decision making so that local, interested parties have a greater say in how the public lands are managed.

In setting these goals, we knew we could accomplish them by moving more people and more funds to the field level. Our budgets are diminishing. We need and seek your advice and counsel.

By doing this, BLM is moving away from Washington's "one-size-fits all" approach to hands-on management that addresses local needs and conditions.

## BUDGET

As you may know, BLM is currently funded on a continuing resolution or "CR" at the '95 level. This translates into a real decrease in funding of \$30 million for BLM.

This CR funds BLM until March 15th. After the 15th, Congress and the President will likely either pass our Interior Appropriations or another CR.

We are hearing from the House Resources Committee counsel that there will be no Interior Appropriations until after the election.

We think we will be funded by another CR at the '95 level.

Regardless, of BLM's budget, our partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is critically important to us on every level.

## **ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT**

Ecosystem management has become the new mantra of all the Federal land management agencies in the Clinton Administration and has been nearly chiseled into the walls of all of our offices.

Most people agree that the word "ecosystem" is difficult to define without using often equally confusing scientific terms.

Yet, the term has real meaning for most Americans.

That meaning is rooted in the strong sense of place and regional consciousness and identification with the particular natural surroundings and characteristics of one's home, be it Texas Hill Country, the Rocky Mountains, or Reno, Nevada.

As a concept, ecosystem management is still being defined. Through practice, its premise is very simple: partnerships.

Partnerships between all the people who live in and make decisions about the community and the landscape.

With so many demands on the public lands and its resources, we simply must coordinate all the efforts and activities that affect the public lands, or we will lose everything.

We are now coming to a much fuller realization, if not full understanding, of the often very subtle connections between the parts of the landscape, between the soil, the birds, the water, the animals, and the forests - all the pieces of the puzzle.

Those connections are all strands in the web of life on which we also depend for our food, our air, our water, our home, our livelihoods, our peace of mind, and our quality of life.

Our new understanding of our environment and the reality of the American landscape reveal that, like many artists working with the same canvas, we must all work together to safeguard the beauty of the health of our country's heritage.

What we must do is not difficult to understand: to maintain and restore the health of the land.

Achieving that goal is often times difficult. But achieving it is our greatest reward.

### **Healthy Rangeland Strategy**

Probably one of the best examples of this move is the formation of the Resource Advisory Councils which are a key component of the BLM's Healthy Rangeland Strategy.

Our Healthy Rangeland Strategy involves:

- Encouraging broad public participation.
- Looking at the big picture rather than its isolated parts.
- Using the best science to learn the land's condition.

The Resource Advisory Councils strive to ensure local input and strikes a balance between local needs and the national interest.

There are 24 Resource Advisory Councils, or RACs. The RACs will give ranchers, recreationists, environmentalists, hunters, and local officials an opportunity to find common ground on public land issues of local concern.

The formation of the RACs and their initial meetings is the first phase of implementing the Healthy Rangelands Strategy.

The overriding purposes of the Healthy Rangeland Strategy are:

- To improve rangeland health for the benefit of current and future users of the public lands;
- To promote sustainable use of public land resources for the economic benefit of Western rural communities;
- And to ensure that public land users have a meaningful say in the management of those lands.

The RACs are working. In Colorado, for example, a forest ecologist and Fort Lewis College biology professor who has been doing research on public lands for over 15 years, commended BLM on its RACs experiment. He was so impressed with the RAC concept that he applied for and was accepted to a term on one of Colorado's first RACs.

RACs have been carefully crafted to include a broad spectrum of people and backgrounds. Each RAC has 15 all-volunteer members, divided into three groups of five representatives each. The three groups are designed to represent environmental interests, resource users, and "mid spectrum representatives - academics, government employees, independent scientists.

RACs are good attempts to get the public involved early, hammering out compromises in a non-threatening manner. The RACs will provide more meaningful, useful, and timely information on managing the public lands

#### **INTEGRATED WILDLAND FIRE POLICY**

Just a few weeks ago, the Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman endorsed a joint federal wildland fire policy that will provide greater uniformity, help to streamline and improve interagency coordination and communication, and reduce risks to both people and resources.

This is a landmark document, turning what managers have learned in the field over the years into a cohesive, uniform Federal policy.

The policy directs managers to:

- Integrate wildland fire into land and resource management plans to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources.
- Base fire management activities, including suppression actions, on the values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives.
- Articulate the roles and responsibilities of Federal agencies in the wildland/urban interface - where inhabited areas mix with undeveloped wildland.
- Ensure that Federal policies are uniform and programs are implemented cooperatively and cohesively.

The report also addresses one of the more complex fire management issues facing Federal agencies: fire in the interface between wildlands and inhabited areas.

The report spells out a clear operational role for Federal agencies as a partner in the wildland/urban interface to fight wildland fires, to reduce accumulations of inflammable vegetation, to provide technical assistance to State and local governments, and to participate in cooperative education.

We are moving away from using prescribed fire solely to achieve specific objectives - like improving elk winter range in Wyoming, New Mexico, and Oregon - to using fire on a larger scale to emulate natural processes and maintain all components of an ecosystem that evolved with, and depend on fire.

As Jack de Golia says in his book, *Fire, A Force Of Nature*: "Fire seems to bring down the curtain but is really just the opening act. Unlike our plays, nature's drama has no curtain - each rain, each fire, each falling needle is another event in the long series of events that compose the unending drama of the natural world."

#### **PARTNERSHIP WITH ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION**

Since your inception in 1984, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has contributed nearly \$1 million to State and Federal agencies and private property owners to help fund prescribed burns on more than 200,000 acres - from Kansas to Oregon, and California to the Canadian Rockies - to enhance and maintain healthy habitat for elk and other wildlife.

We welcome your monitoring program you are in the process of developing to evaluate past projects and outline guidelines to ensure future projects - like prescribed fires - are done as efficiently as possible to benefit not only elk, but all the plants and animals that survive in healthy ecosystems.

BLM continues to enjoy a strong partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Through the years, we have carried out many important projects that protect and conserve wildlife habitat and maintain healthy and productive ecosystems.

BLM greatly appreciates your contributions of time, money, and untiring, dedicated volunteer efforts - which is the key to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's remarkable success in habitat conservation.

Our partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has focused our efforts in maintaining the health of the land by thinking long-term and working toward common goals -- whether they are ecological, economic, or social.

Collaborating with you, BLM land managers are now practicing adaptive management -- changing any aspect of on-site management that does not appear to be working.

BLM is totally committed to your Conservation Challenge:

- Operation Winter Range - securing critical habitats;
- Bringing Them Back - restoring elk to their native habitats;
- Looking Ahead - monitoring the status of elk and elk habitat;
- Seeking Common Ground - resolving conflicts between cattle and elk;
- Telling the Conservation Story - providing wildlife exhibits at interpretive centers.
- Preparing For Tomorrow - developing conservation education materials;
- Working Together - building corporate-conservation partnerships.

Restoring the health of the land through ecosystem management means achieving such results as greener riparian areas, higher water tables, better hunting, a diverse mix of native grasses, cleaner water, and less soil erosion -- just to name a few.

These are the kind of results that should please all sides in the debate over how to manage the public lands into the 21st century.

#### **REDISCOVER YOUR PUBLIC LANDS**

We hope that the you will join us in celebrating BLM's 50th Golden Anniversary during 1996. Perhaps you could consider designating some of our projects - Book Cliffs for example - this year as Golden Partnership Opportunities.

In closing, I would like to say that BLM's Corporate Agenda dove tails with your Conservation Challenge, and challenging us to:

- Maintain healthy ecosystems;
- Serve current and future publics;
- Promote collaborative leadership;
- Improve business practices;
- Improve human resource management practices.

*Tom Udall*

Today, more than ever before, our ability to meet many of these goals will be dependent on how successful we are in working with you and dozens of other groups.

You and your peers, who are all concerned about how your public lands are managed, will always have seats at our decision making table.

I look forward to working with you to achieve our mutual goals.

28 FEBRUARY 1996

Remarks of BLM Acting Director

## MIKE DOMBECK

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Opening Ceremony

- Good morning.
- It's a pleasure to be here this morning and to see many familiar faces.
- As most of you know, just prior to this meeting, many of us participated in the Sharing Common Ground Symposium.
- This was the second time in 5 years that a

meeting such as this was held. The Sharing Common Ground Symposium was the outgrowth of an effort by several organizations, including the RMEF, to bring diverse groups together in an attempt to resolve conflicts between livestock and big game on many Western Rangelands.

- The first symposium, held in 1991 led to the establishment of several pilot projects on BLM and Forest Service lands and this recent meeting was held to share what we have

learned over the past 5 years.

Three things are clear - First, we **can** solve  
resolve big game livestock conflicts when we  
get our heads together focus on solutions  
rather than blame.

- Second, reaching solutions is not only hard work but we can't do it alone - it requires input and support from a lot of different people and organizations.

- And finally, it requires leadership from the agencies and ~~outside~~ <sup>stakeholders</sup> groups that want to **improve the health of the land.** *for our children and their children.*

RMEF members should be proud of the leadership role that the Foundation has played in supporting the Sharing Common Ground initiative and many other conservation efforts on BLM and Forest Service lands.

- Individuals such as Bob Munson, Ron Marcoux, Kevin Lackey, Bill Geer and many

others deserve a lot of credit for their leadership and support.

- The BLM is proud of what has happened in places like Owl Mountain, Muddy Creek, Monroe Mountain, Jarbidge Mountains, and elsewhere. Not only have we improved **the health of the land**, but we have done it in a way that has encouraged people to work better together.

- We are also proud that the Foundation has

been there every step of the way.

- RMEF as an organization and its members  
*you get things done on the land - where it counts.*  
do walk the talk, and I just want to say *I tell you how much*  
publicly that we appreciate your support.

## Future Challenges

- The year 1996 marks the 50th Anniversary  
of the BLM and the 20th Anniversary of the  
Federal Land Policy and Management Act  
signed by President Ford in 1976.

*This legislation ~~should~~ mandated that the 270 million  
acres of remaining Public Domain lands would  
be ~~managed~~<sup>6</sup> held in trust for the American People.*

- Today, we find ourselves in a climate of *Resource management* uncertainty and uneasiness. The challenges

seem enormous.

- We face declining budgets and personnel.

- And we face a significant number of proposals to transfer all or part of the public lands to others.

- These are trying times but innovation and *and strong partners* cooperation and a dedicated workforce got this

agency through the last 50 years and it will get us through the next 50.

- Our challenges are many, but we plan on moving forward on many fronts despite some of the gloom or doom scenarios that we are facing. For example, we plan on continuing to:

- Implement our new Grazing regulations and advance the Resource Advisory Councils;

- Restore riparian areas functioning at risk;
- Reduce the spread of noxious weeds;
- Effectively manage wildland and prescribed fire to restore the long-term health of many ecosystems;
- Improve the way we use land exchanges to ensure long-term public benefits;
- ~~Develop new regulations for hard rock~~

~~mining;~~

- ~~Improve the management of oil and gas resources on BLM lands;~~
- Provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities;
- And most importantly, we will continue to promote ~~and use~~ partnerships to improve the health of the land.

- The public lands, and the resources they contain, are a legacy we inherited from our forefathers. Our collective challenge is to pass them on, unimpaired, to our children. And with the continued support of organizations like the Foundation and many others, I am confident that we ~~can~~ <sup>will</sup> succeed.
- Again, thank you for all your support.

Talking Points  
Idaho Managers' conference call  
5/21/96

I asked Martha for some time on your agenda today so that I could let you know how much I appreciate the work you do. I am proud of this agency. And proud of the professionals, such as you, to whom the American people entrust the land's care.

I see that later in the day, there's a discussion of reorganization on the agenda. And I know that many of you are worried about "contingency planning."

But I want you to spend less time worrying about change and more telling the story of our successes. You know, better than anyone, how ~~we are improving customer service. You understand how we are working~~ with local communities to improve the health of the land.

To

So talk about it.

### Lemhi MOU

Talk about the good work of the Salmon Field Office for its continuing involvement in land use planning with Lemhi County. Next week, we'll sign a Riparian Habitat Conservation Agreement with the county.

What's happening in the County is a tremendous success story, a place where people of widely differing interests are working cooperatively to manage resources and help take control of their future. My belief is that through such efforts, the health of the land will improve, and at the same time, local economies will prosper and a sense of community and common purpose will become stronger.

### Conservation Agreements

Tell constituent groups what you know. Call the Statesman. ~~He~~, call the New York Times. Let them know about the Idaho State Conservation effort. How we have worked with federal and state agencies to develop conservation strategies that will conserve more than 25 special-status species. Whatever you do to work with local communities to avoid listings and keep species' populations healthy has my **unequivocal** backing.

### Essay on Conservation by BLM employee

Don't be afraid to talk with people, to communicate the importance of our conservation work. Don't let the politics of Idaho discourage "risk-takers." I'm thinking right now of Allan Thomas and the essay on biodiversity he wrote in January for the Idaho Statesman.

Allan lent reason and logic to an often unreasonable, emotional debate. In defending the Endangered Species Act, he said, "Doesn't it make good logic that we should stop fighting

and making lawyers rich and try harder to remove the threats to species so that they don't need to be listed?"

Well said, Allan.

No-one knows better than the folks at the end of this phone line how hard BLM works to bring people together to

- conserve the nation's cultural and natural resource heritage,
- restore the health of rangelands,
- improve hunting and fishing,
- lease oil and gas operations that provide strategic natural resources, and
- manage properly functioning riparian areas.

We spend less to manage an acre of land than any other federal land management agency.

We are among the country's only resource management agencies, federal or state, who take in more revenues than we incur in costs.

This agency has been downsized, right-sized, reorganized, and re-engineered. I don't make light of these efforts. In a period of fiscal austerity, it cannot hurt to learn to "do more with less."

### Reorganization/Contingency Planning

**But remember this — no-one — no-one, will remember us for our reorganizations.** As Leopold said "The only progress that counts is that on the actual landscape of the back forty."

You know how to ensure that we'll have to "do more with less?" Silence. Because in the absence of our positive message of collaboration — without the benefit of our experience in bringing diverse interests together — we automatically default to the extremists who have no interest in cooperation or conservation.

It's time we told how we are working with local communities to restore the health of public lands to the American people.

### Healthy Rangelands Initiative

For example, about a ~~year~~ <sup>2 yrs.</sup> ago, reports were that implementation of our healthy rangeland initiative would

- bankrupt rural communities
- impose national standards on permittees and lessees and
- give people from "far away places" control of the public lands.

Nine months later:

*Hope*

- ~~No~~ ranchers have gone out of business because of our new regulations *P*
- Standards for healthy rangelands and guidelines for grazing management are being developed with the help of a diverse group of local citizens
- Ranchers, environmentalists, local officials, and others are working together to develop and help implement sustainable public rangeland policies.

~~I am happy to declare that the War-that-never-was, is over.~~ *We yet caught up in*

### Resource Advisory Councils

Once people saw how much of the criticism was purely political, a funny thing happened. Conservation groups, commodity interests, and local citizens sat down — often for the first time — to shape and define a shared vision for managing healthy and productive public lands.

The Idaho Resource Advisory Councils are functioning exceptionally well. From what I understand, your citizen councils are nearing agreement on standards and guidelines. What Secretary Babbitt has been saying all along is true in Idaho -- that if we can get people to sit down and honestly approach issues and differences, then we can come to resolutions that will benefit all interested parties.

You still have some work to do as far as integrating your standards and guidelines into the Upper Columbia EIS effort, but I'm confident that can be achieved.

### Value of Public Lands/Healthy Environment

Explain to people that the lands we manage are

- the open spaces of the future;
- places of economic prosperity and solitude;
- refuges for rare species; and

- the destination of recreationists and family vacations.

All across the West, we are learning what most communities and economists already knew: *a healthy environment translates to healthy economy.*

I was astonished to recently learn that from 1988-1994,

- employment in Idaho increased 3.6 times faster than the national average.
- personal income grew 2.8 larger than the national average
- wages and earnings increased 3.9 times faster than the national average.

I'm not making these numbers up. They are documented in *Economic Well Being and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Northwest* — a report of 34 independent economists.

More industries are bringing more jobs to Idaho because they want their employees and families to enjoy the magnificent natural resources that the State has to offer.

### **Our Obligation to Speak**

We cannot allow the fact that we are BLM managers to silence us. Our silence gives credibility to the radicals and extremists. You are community leaders who also happen to be highly trained professional land managers. You are the folks on the firing line every day; the ones whose job it is to protect the goose that lays the golden egg. **To ensure that we don't allow production to ruin Idaho's productive potential.**

We have an obligation to the citizen owners of the public lands to tell our story. So, the next time someone questions the value or worth of BLM's management of the public lands in Idaho:

- Explain to them that your management generated more than \$10.3 million in revenue in 1994.
- Tell them we returned over \$10 million to the state and counties of origin.
- Let them know our maintenance of roads, fire prevention activities, and other management saved the state over \$55 million.

This is only part of your story. Let them know how conservation statutes such as the *Clean Water Act* and the *Endangered Species Act* allow us to ensure clean drinking water to communities and to protect our natural resource heritage. Most importantly, show how the collaborative approach of the Resource Advisory Councils make it possible for us to execute these laws while making clear that people are part of the equation.

*You all on the front lines  
know this better than  
anyone*

Ours is a story steeped in tradition and tested by experience. Do not allow the debate to be informed by ignorance.

For my part, **I will tell your story.** I will tell Congress, the media, and the tens of millions of Americans who use and enjoy public lands that you are working for them. I will tell them that BLM employees are community leaders. I will show them how you are working with local citizens, state and local government, and commodity users and conservation groups to maintain and restore healthy public lands.

*Oppose  
rule 101*

Remarks of Mike Dombeck to the  
National Association of Counties  
May 23, 1996

Introduction

Thank you [Larry] for that welcome. It's a privilege to be here because it's an opportunity for me to pay tribute to the men and women of the National Association of Counties. When I became Acting Director of the BLM, one of my goals was to strengthen our relationship with NACo in developing our public land partnership.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the BLM, a perfect time to reflect upon the value of public lands to our country and to our communities. It is also the ideal occasion to talk about something in which we all believe, good government. Good government at the federal level and good government at the county level. Just recently, an article about the federal government in the *Casper Star Tribune* caught my attention. It was headlined, "Wyoming's big, stable, least-liked employer." That's something we hear a lot about these days.

Today, I invite you to join me in considering what we expect from our government--why we have it and why it's important in our lives. How should government work, and how it affects the West. Perhaps that *Casper Star Tribune* article says it best:

Critics sometimes want government to act more like business. But the business of business, and the business of government are not the same.

Government is more an expression of constitutional ideals than market forces. It is about community: "We, the people ... in order to form a more perfect Union ..." do join together -- to start a fire department, to build roads, to educate children, to ensure stable communities, to defend the country.

That's a sentiment with which we can all identify--the sense of community, the sense of joining together to achieve the common

good.

The partnership between citizens and their elected

government has been a guiding principle of our nation. In recent years, we saw it at work as Congress and the Administration responded to growing public appreciation of the public lands. In 1964, Congress established the Public Land Law Review Commission to make recommendations on how the public lands should be managed. In response to the Commission's findings, President Ford signed into law the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. This Act is a commitment to the American people that our public lands will be retained by the American people and managed in perpetuity for future generations.

The same bipartisanship that produced FLPMA also

brought about some of our landmark environmental statutes: the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act. These initiatives were the product of a Democratic Congress working with a Republican Administration. Together, they responded to the growing voice of Americans as they sought protections for their surroundings.

'ay, the era of bipartisanship may be over. Not

since President Theodore Roosevelt created the first National Forest Reserves, has the nation seen more legislative controversy regarding the use and management of public lands. There are proposals in Congress to transfer public land to state control, legislate new grazing policies, and dramatically alter the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act and other environmental measures.

In these changing times, BLM must contend with other

challenges. We face declining budgets and BLM employees and other public servants at all levels of government are threatened with violence. We must look for new solutions. Instead of following a course charted by armchair ideologues who condemn public service and malign public servants, BLM has chosen the path that was advocated so clearly by our founding fathers. "We the People" working together to reach consensus-based decisions about managing the land. BLM is working in partnership with all users of the public land. Collaboration, not confrontation.

## Partnerships

Let me just mention a few examples of our partnerships.

Just three years ago, there was absolute gridlock in the federal old growth forests of the pacific Northwest. We were able to work with the Forest Service and other federal agencies, as well as state and local governments and private interests to put together a management plan covering all of the federal forests west of the Cascades. This is a genuine landmark in natural resource management.

Further south, on the San Juan Ridge in California's

Nevada County, there is the 'Inimim Forest, which is the Maidu Indian word for ponderosa pine. Today, the coniferous forest extends across 1,800 acres of BLM-managed land. As you know, BLM must complete land use plans. As you also know, these can often provoke disagreements between users. In the 'Inimim Forest, we adopted a new approach. We invited the local community to work together to produce a draft management plan that was within the constraints set by federal law. The community responded enthusiastically. Two groups of residents--the Yuba Watershed Institute and the Timber Framer's Guild of Northern America--joined forces to develop the plan. Neighbor worked with neighbor--a conservationist worked with loggers. Together they developed an approach based on federal law but forged in a local community.

Let me give you one another example of how local cooperation is working, BLM's Resource Advisory Councils. We proposed these Councils last year to help develop policies on how grazing land should be used. We brought together environmentalists, loggers and ranchers, recreationalists and miners. Formerly, these were people who were more accustomed to meeting in the court room. This sounds like a common-sense approach, but not everyone thought so. There were widespread predictions of doom and gloom. Some newspapers anticipated the end of livestock grazing on public lands. Despite all this, August 21, 1995--the day on which the new regulations were implemented--has come and gone. I think a comment in the August 21, Grand Junction, Colorado Daily Sentinel sums up best what actually happened on that date:

The earth did not yawn today and swallow the rural communities of the West. Reports of raining frogs remained nonexistent west of the 100th meridian. And the rivers are still here.

Today is May 23, 1996 and still no frogs and rivers are still here! Instead, the RACs are working. Men and women who care deeply about the public lands are putting aside their single interests, and working at the state and local toward a common vision for healthy and productive public lands. This kind of collaborative partnership is the only way to manage the public lands. And I'd like to pay tribute to those of you here today who are serving on the RACs, and to thank you for helping making this possible.

### County Supremacy and NACo

For a contrast to consensus-based management, we need look only to the recent court decision in the Nye County case against the U.S. government. As you know, the court reaffirmed the government's responsibility to manage the public lands for the benefit of all Americans. In many ways it reaffirmed that contract between government and its citizens that I referred to at the beginning of my talk.

I am glad the case is over because this legal decision has come after much animosity and much confrontation. Now we can look ahead to rebuilding positive relationships with counties and other constituents throughout the West. BLM has an important role to play in providing local communities with a louder voice in how our nations lands are managed. My goal is to stay committed to that concept, I believe that we will see fewer and fewer cases challenging public ownership of the land and natural resource management decisions.

I have asked every BLM State Director to meet with County Commissioners to identify ways where we can work cooperatively rather than at cross purposes. Where there are possibilities for agreements I'd like those agreements formalized. Where agreements already exist, I'd like them reviewed to see if we can improve them. And let me be very clear that Nye County plays an important part in this rebuilding efforts.

We need Nye County--we need all public land users--working together for the common good. Now is the time to find ways to heal relationships that have been strained, and I invite all those with an interest in the future our country's public lands to join in this collaborative effort.

One of the reasons, I am delighted to be here is that BLM and the Forest Service just signed such an agreement with NACo. We have developed a Memorandum of Understanding that will enable us to work together more cooperatively. I am confident that we will see many other Agreements of this type being reached by BLM and NACo members throughout the country. We recognize that some counties have disagreements with BLM. But I prefer talking to our constituents across the table, rather than across the court-room--especially those who have disagreements with us.

### Health Lands: Healthy Economies

In an era of declining budgets and reduced federal spending, partnerships offer a clear, common sense solution for managing the land. Through partnerships we are able to work toward the health of the land. And healthy land means healthy local economies and stable Western communities.

This partnership between the federal government and the state helps fulfill some of our fundamental beliefs about what our government should do. "We the people do join together to educate our children, to build roads, to ensure stable communities." We see this in practice today through BLM's mineral leasing program. Each year, BLM raises about \$1.1 billion annually, of which over \$500 million is shared with the states. Many states use these revenues to fund education, hospitals and highway programs.

"We the People" are working to preserve the wide open spaces of the West, which are made possible by public ownership. In many ways, our public land legacy is a reminder of the values upon which our country was founded. Our forebears had a vision of freedom and equality, which we see in practice today in our public lands. They are the province not of

the privileged few, but of each and every American. They are open for hunting, for fishing, for hiking, for family picnics. They are open to everyone.

"We, the people ... do band together -- to start a fire department." The Bureau of Land Management plays a vital role in funding fire control, spending over \$234 million nationwide each year. I'd also like to mention our new fire policy here. Each year, when catastrophic fires burn out of control threatening people and property, we ask ourselves, is there a way we can reduce the risk? The answer is yes, and it's in our new fire policy released earlier this year, which recognizes the natural role of fire in creating healthy landscapes. This, in turn, will reduce the risk of devastating forest fires.

### The Changing West

Our perceptions of the West are changing. We used to think that the best use of the West was extraction of its resources. Now we are seeing that all its resources are valuable. Open spaces, clean air and clean water all translate into economic opportunity, whether for recreation or for new businesses.

I want to mention a few examples of communities that have discovered the changing values of the West for themselves. In 1987, the town of Dubois in Wyoming--population 2,000--lost its major employer, the Louisiana Pacific lumber mill. According to some estimates, nearly 30% of Dubois' total employment and 35% of its payroll were associated with the mill. But the town didn't stagnate, stores didn't close and people didn't leave. To everyone's surprise, the town started to grow. For the first three years after the mill closed, real income in Dubois grew by 8.5% a year--much faster than the national average. The town had recognized that timber wasn't its only resource--so was a clean environment.

Not far from here, on the Colorado Plateau, there's another example of how the local economy is changing. Historically, the plateau region looked for employment to its abundant energy and mineral resources, as well as water, timber and grazing lands. In the past few decades,

commodity uses of the land have declined in importance, and the land, open space and other natural resources are playing significant roles in the economy.

In the Pacific Northwest, many predicted that protection of salmon and the northern spotted owl would render a "new Appalachia" of Oregon and Washington. Today they lead the region in economic growth. A recent report by 34 independent economists indicates that personal income in the Northwest grew 2.2 times the national average between 1988 and 1994.

These changes are happening all over the West. SO I was not surprised to read recently in *Money Magazine* that when Americans were asked what they thought was important about where they lived, they replied that clean water and clean air were numbers one and two. Not far behind was proximity to lakes, oceans, national forests and parks.

### Our Public Land Legacy

Just as our perception about the values of the public lands has changed, so have our ideas about retaining the land in public ownership. In the early days of this country, the government pursued a policy of disposal. But with FLPMA, we recognized that public land should be kept in public ownership. We committed to retaining public lands as a gift to future generations.

It is our responsibility no only to pass on this legacy, but also to improve it. We know that in many areas the land ownership pattern makes little sense, and we need to work harder to improve it through land exchanges. During the past few years, the agency has been working to reconfigure the land pattern by cooperating with other jurisdictions, including counties, as well as private interests to implement land exchanges. The goal is to trade public land of high commercial value, and acquire non-federal lands with significant resources that serve public needs, including prime recreation areas; riparian and wetland habitat; critical habitat for sensitive and endangered species; and significant historical, archaeological, and cultural sites.

## Conclusion

As we make decisions about the future of the public lands, it is worth recalling the words of Teddy Roosevelt, "To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed."

Our decisions must also be guided by consensus--people working together rather than following edicts from Washington or the State Capital or the courts. We must take every opportunity to reach out to all those with an interest in the land and bring them into the decision-making process. This is one of the best ways in which can put into practice the Constitution's opening phrase, "We the People." We the People will work together. And to work together means bringing everyone to the table. We've done it in the 'Inimim Forest, we're doing it with RACs for grazing, and we're doing it with the Western Governors' Association as they conduct a comprehensive review of the public lands.

Before I close, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for inviting me and for the hospitality you have shown me. I also want to mention that I've brought along some copies of a recent BLM publication "Public Rewards from Public Lands."

I hope that you'll leave here today with some new thoughts about how we expect government to work, be it at the federal or at the county level. We are both struggling to achieve the same goals, to provide jobs, foster economic opportunity and bring stability. By working in partnership with each other, we are expanding these opportunities. Government is our collective responsibility. We the people have created it. And we the people are its beneficiaries. Thank you.

# Wildland Fire Fighters Monument Dedication June 15, 1996

Thank you for letting me be part of this very special dedication.

*Yesterday evening*

~~Earlier,~~ <sup>stone boulders</sup> I read the panels on the memorial and chuckled at the words of H.A. Calkins, a forest ranger back in 1925. He said, "I have met a few fellows that claimed they enjoyed fighting fire, but I have always thought there was something wrong with their heads."

Seeing all of the fire fighters in the audience today, I won't comment on Calkins' observation. But much has changed in the intervening <sup>past 75 yrs.</sup> years. Today, we recognize fire as an integral part of healthy and productive ecosystems. In fact, I'll bet at least a few fire ecologists are in the audience.

But through the welter of change, the mission of the wildland fire fighter has remained constant: to protect our nation's public lands, homes, and communities.

The commitment of the wildland fire fighter is unparalleled; their courage unmatched. Every time they wield a chainsaw or swing a pulaski through the smoke, they renew that commitment; demonstrate that courage.

I see that the monument references "The Armies of Summer." This reminded me of General Douglas MacArthur's assurance to his troops that, "the long gray line has never failed us." As I thought about how to best observe this dedication, I recalled MacArthur's praise for his soldier's commitment to "Duty, honor, country."

WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER'S MONUMENT DEDICATION  
PRINCEVILLE, OR  
15 JUNE 1996

As he put it,

Duty - Honor - Country. Those three hallowed words, reverently dictate, what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying points: to build courage when courage seems to fail; to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith; to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.

Those three words — duty, honor, country — best express my personal admiration for your work. They best express the respect of the thousands of people whose property you protect, whose resources you guard, whose lives you save.

- The wildland fire fighter's *duty* is to protect and serve. And they do so unflinchingly.

- The wildland fire fighter's *honor* is the marrow that links the Hotshots of Prineville with Helitack crews from John Day.
- And *country*? What greater sacrifice can we ask, than to stand in defense of life and property?

Wildland fire fighters are a special group of people. And I don't mean "special in the head", as Mr. Calkins suggested.

Teamwork and hard work are the rule on fire crews. Wildland fire fighting works only because of cooperation and support among such partners as structural fire fighters, state and local governments, tribal governments, and the national guard. So, thank you our many state, federal, and local partners.

I also wish to thank the organizers of this monument, particularly the families of those who died at South Canyon in 1994.

*on Storm King Mountain*  
4

This monument is a tribute to the living; a way of permanently thanking all of the wildland firefighters for their work this summer, and for all of the summers to follow. But we also stand together to honor the lives of those who have died fighting to protect the nation's special places.

Nearly two years ago, in the wake of the worst fire season in history, I made a commitment to do everything in my power to prevent the tragedy of the South Canyon fire from ever happening again. In July of 1994, my friend Jack Ward Thomas and I laid a bronze plaque at the foot of <sup>Storm King Mtn.</sup> Storm King Mountain. It rests there today in silent remembrance of those who fell in service to our country.

So, as we commemorate the hundreds of wildland firefighters here today and remember those who have gone before, use this dedication to recommit to the basic principle that "firefighter safety comes first, on every fire, every time."

For my part, I pledge our commitment to improving the safety and effectiveness of wildland fire fighting. We learned many hard lessons during the 1994 fire season. Lessons that will serve us well in the future.

Agencies and states are working together more than ever before to find improved and safer ways to fight wildland fires. Since 1994, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service identified 30 corrective actions that need to take place in wildland fire fighting; the majority of which have already been

implemented.

For example:

- the new Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch Center is an example of how federal agencies can work more efficiently and effectively. Such interagency centers are now found across the country.
- interagency crews — ~~something relatively unheard of two years ago~~ — have broken the administrative barriers that kept them from working together in the past.
- On the national level, we have created an interagency Federal Fire and Aviation Safety team to examine and promote effective safety methods.

Our intensified commitment to wildland fire

suppression — and fire fighter safety — involves more than writing reports or creating combined dispatch centers. It is rooted in a collective commitment to prevent tragedies such as those of 1994 from happening again.

This monument stands to remind us that wildland fire fighters are not simply crew members or hot shots. They are our sons and daughters; friends and loved ones; neighbors and colleagues. They are just like us in all ways but one — at the ring of a telephone, they will risk their lives to protect what we value most.

We must never forget or take their sacrifices for granted. This monument honors those who risk their lives, and those who gave their lives, protecting our lands, our communities, and our homes.

They have our thanks.

Fire      }  
Water    }  
Wind    }  
          } clean / cleanse  
          } the Earth

Remarks prepared for Acting Director  
Mike Dombeck  
DC Urban Tree House Dedication  
June 21, 1996

- ♦ I was lucky enough to grow up in northern Wisconsin and to spend much of my youth enjoying the great outdoors. Having that opportunity provided me with a foundation -- the love of the land --and it ultimately led me to my life's work.

in natural  
Resource  
Mgmt.

- # If I had not been given that gift of living with the land as a youth, I might have missed the lessons that set me on this path in natural resources

- ♦ With the DC Urban Tree House project, the

sponsoring partners are providing students with a

*Bureau of Land Mgmt*  
similar path. The BLM is proud to be a partner.

~~In this natural setting~~, I hope that together we can

instill in today's young people a stewardship ethic *and love*

for the land.

- ♦ The challenges in the natural resource field are great

today, but will be even greater tomorrow. I believe

it is part of our responsibility as a federal agency to

provide youth *now* with the tools necessary for the

future.

- ◆ This year, the Bureau of Land Management celebrates its 50th anniversary. Fifty years ago, we managed the public land and resources that were called the lands nobody wanted--lands that were passed on by homesteaders, lands that weren't set aside as National Parks or Forests or Wildlife Refuges.

- ◆ Today, more and more Americans recognize the ecological, aesthetic and economic value of BLM-managed lands.

- ♦ As a result, we are working harder than ever to improve the way we manage the land. It is our mission to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of our children and our children's children.
- ♦ What will happen to these lands and resources that belong to all Americans? Well, if the enthusiastic students I see here today represent today's youth, then our future looks bright.

- ◆ It is my hope that students who visit the DC Urban Tree House gain a passion for the environment that they may not get elsewhere. It is also my hope that some of the students here are called to make their love of the land their life's work, too.

- ◆ Being here at Anacostia Park and seeing all the students reminds me of a favorite proverb of mine:

"We have not inherited the land from our forefathers

-- we have borrowed it from our children."

- ◆ Thank you.

ATT: KNIFFY PPS. 11

Remarks of BLM Acting Director  
**MIKE DOMBECK**Before the Invasive Weed Action Coalition  
June 24, 1996  
Patuxent Wildlife Refuge

- ~~Good morning~~. I'm Mike Dombeck, Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management.
- I'm stepping in today for John Garamendi, Deputy Secretary of the Interior, who was unable to be here and sends his regrets.
- You heard earlier from Mark Schaefer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. Mark is working on the science side of the weed problem while I'm working on the land-management side.
- To win the War on Weeds, we need both good science and effective land management. And just as important, we need public support for our anti-weed efforts.

*and with  
BLM 270  
within de*

*fight it on  
3 fronts*

*to build*

43,600  
4,600  
4,600 00  
861,600 00  
1744,00  
2005,6000 0

Page 2

- But to gain that support, we must raise public awareness about the threat of noxious weeds to America's public and private lands.
- Let me briefly explain why we at the Federal level take this problem so seriously.
- In 1985, we estimated that 2.5 million acres of Bureau of Land Management lands were infested. That figure has ~~increased to~~ <sup>8 million</sup> ~~risen by millions more over the past~~ <sup>17 million</sup> ~~decade~~ <sup>1993 - 2000</sup>
- And without dramatic action, we estimate that some 4,600 acres of Federally-managed land will become infested with weeds every day. <sup>14% increase</sup> ~~200,560,000 sq feet / day~~
- ~~That means millions of BLM-managed acres will be harmed. Moreover, since weeds respect no administrative boundaries, they threaten the State and private lands that surround them.~~

Page 3

- And sure enough, infestations are underway on huge tracts of State and private lands across the country.
- These infestations reduce or destroy wildlife habitat, including important winter ranges and ~~birthing~~ areas.  
*Calving*
- Weeds also reduce forage for livestock. In fact, sometimes the infestations are so severe that they make certain lands virtually useless for grazing or other uses.
- Weeds also limit recreational opportunities, including hunting, boating, camping, hiking and family cutings.
- Weeds increase soil erosion and degrade rivers and lakes.
- ~~And weeds can poison children, pets, and livestock.~~ *OK*

Page 4

*give a few examples*

- Let me a few specifics of the damage that weeds are inflicting on the land.
- Salt Cedar, found in the Southwest, is the scourge of more than 1.5 million acres of riparian and wetland ecosystems.
- Leafy spurge infests about five million acres in 23 states, causing economic losses of some \$100 million annually.
- Knapweed has spread to eight states, *7 provinces* with Montana suffering the largest infestation -- about 600,000 acres. *4.7 million acres nationally*
- Yellow star thistle, found in eight states, has infested some 12 million acres in California alone. So many acres are infested that California has had to remove star thistle from its list of noxious weeds because, by law, all plants listed must be treatable. In the case of star thistle, that is not possible in California.

*introduced  
in CA in 1869.  
now found in  
8 states &  
2 provinces*

Page 5

- The bottom line of all this: weeds, ~~by reducing the productivity of the land~~, are hurting local economies and limiting recreational opportunities. *by reducing the productivity of the land*
- That's why we've got to get out our War on Weeds message to the public -- especially to hunters, anglers, hikers and picnickers.
- Our message is simple: First, people need to realize that when they pick weeds that look like pretty flowers, they are spreading destruction of the land. And that hurts those who earn their livelihood from the land, as well as those who enjoy recreational activities on the land.
- Second, everyone who works or plays on the land -- whether it is Federal, State or private -- can help stop the damage caused by weeds.

Page 6

Burns  
starts with

Ben Abeker

- And third, if everyone does his or her part, we can enjoy and pass on healthy lands to our children.
- Because of the harmful effects of weeds, they have been described as a "biological wildfire." And the comparison to wildfire is a good one, because we are considering fighting weeds in the way we fight fires -- through prevention, early detection, and quick control.
- But weeds are different from wildfire. For one thing, fire produces an ecological rebirth, whereas weeds have no beneficial effect on the land. Weeds are also far more subtle in their destructive power than fire, and this makes it harder to convince the public of the dangers of weeds.

*a cleansing*

Page 7

- Unlike fire, weeds generate no plumes of smoke, and no spectacular flames to attract media attention and public scrutiny.
- And thus far there has been no high-profile Smokey Bear-type campaign that warns the public about weeds.
- So where do we go from here?
- For the immediate future, we must do a better job of documenting the trends of invasive weeds.
- We must upgrade data bases to provide a complete picture of the problem.
- We must develop a better understanding of the physiology, genetics, transportation and migration methods of weeds *across the landscape*.

Page 8

- And we must do a better job of integrating the various methods used to control invasive plants. No single method works every place.
- My job, in part, is to convince top policymakers and ~~budget writers~~ *Those in control of the purse strings* that spending money on weed control is minor compared to the cost of trying to restore the land.
- I've been encouraged by the fact that the Deputy Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture strongly support the weed-control efforts of ~~their~~ Department's ~~land-management~~ agencies.
- As a result, we are seeing unprecedented cooperation between the two Departments on the weeds issue.

Page 9

- We have also received strong support from States, local governments, academia, weed groups and other organizations as we try to gain the upper hand in this battle.
- We have taken several actions at the national level that we hope will translate into on-the-ground successes.  
*Babbett*
- First, the Secretary ~~of~~ Interior has issued an order that clarifies the responsibility of the Department's agencies to identify, prevent the spread of, and treat invasive plants wherever they occur on lands within the Department's jurisdiction.

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- Second, we are forming partnerships to carry out weed-control efforts.
- And third, Federal agencies are working with State and local agencies, academia, and other parties to develop a national anti-weed strategy.
- Let me conclude by saying that we are at a critical juncture in the War on Weeds. This war is winnable. Despite the serious nature of the problem, we need to keep in mind that 95 percent of the lands under Federal management have not been overtaken by weeds.

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- While victory is not at hand, it is within our reach, so long as we join forces. By "we" I mean Federal, State and local agencies, academic institutions, weed groups and other interested parties. *and people on the land.*
- Together, we can check the spread of noxious weeds.
- And by doing so, we can ensure the health and productivity of the land -- be it Federal, State or private -- for generations to come.
- Thank you.

###

outdoor writers, 1996  
DULUTH, MN

JUNE

JUNE 1996

It's an honor to be with you today to talk about the importance of outdoor recreation to the American people.

Last week the American Sportfishing Association gave a Lifetime Achievement Award to Homer Circle. As you may know, Homer has written for *Sports Afield* magazine for over 30 years.

Upon receiving this award for a lifetime of achievements, Homer told of the time he taught a mentally retarded child to fish. "Bait the hook," he told her, "and watch for that bobber to move." For 15 minutes, all around him other children whooped it up as they pulled in fish. Homer looked up to the skies and said a little prayer, "Lord, I've never asked for your help with this sort of thing before, but please just this once..."

Sure enough a few minutes later, the bobber danced and as she reeled in her first fish, the little girl looked to Homer and said with glee, "Now I'm a fisherman!"

That Homer would recount this simple story upon receiving such an honor is telling. I recount Homer's story not because I am an avid fisherman. I am not. But Homer reminds us of what's important. Of how in this world of deadlines and social posturing, sometimes all that matters is the wonder and hope of a child.

Somehow our elected officials, readers, listeners, and viewers and perhaps even some of us, have also forgotten what is truly important. It's as if over the past few years our collective frames of reference have shifted.

- Instead of talking about conservation of our natural resource legacy, we argue about takings legislation.
- Rather than focus on our collective obligation to pass on clean rivers to our children, we rail about property rights.
- Instead of working together to develop a common vision of healthy watersheds, we fight public land bills that grant privileges to special interests.

Too often we seem to focus only our differences. When we do that in an election year, it's called politics. When we do it in natural resource management, it's usually disaster.

In the end, there are really only three kinds of natural resource issues. Those where people agree. Those where some agree and some disagree. And, those where no one agrees.

Too often today, we find ourselves arguing over issues where no one agrees. That's because we allow people who have no interest in reaching consensus to control the debate. Those who talk the loudest control the agenda.

You can help to change that. Over 60 million Americans — about 25% of the nation — fish and hunt. How many countless millions more enjoy camping or hiking? Birding or simply walking in the woods?

Collectively, the people gathered in this room probably reach a larger audience than any other organization in the country.

Whether we hunt, ranch, fish, mine, or hike, what matters most is that our natural resources are healthy, productive and sustainable. Once we agree to that, we can move constructively into the second set of issues. And not surprisingly, once we begin to work toward achieving common goals, the third kind of issues — the really intractable ones — begin to seem less important.

My challenge to you is to redirect the debate back to those things that draw us together as a nation of communities. My hope is that you will counter rhetoric with reason. Meet ideology with common sense.

I am asking you to join with me to communicate three basic messages to the American people.

**First, environmental protection spurs healthy economies**

**Second, conservation laws work**

**Third, recreation on public lands promotes economic prosperity**

Because so much of the recent debate has revolved around western issues, I'll discuss these messages in the context of the public lands, which are primarily in the western United States. But their significance is clearly national in scope.

Although these three messages are inextricably linked, let's look at them one at a time.

**Environmental Protection Spurs Healthy Economies**

Remember a few years ago when people were saying that protection of the Northern Spotted Owl under the Endangered Species Act would render a "new Appalachia" of the Pacific Northwest?

Well, the opposite occurred. From 1988-1992, the economy of the Pacific Northwest has been remarkably strong and productive. Why? According to 34 independent economists in the Pacific Northwest, because businesses and jobs are moving to those parts of the country with the healthiest environments.

For example, from 1988-1992:

- employment in the Pacific Northwest grew 2.4 times faster than the rest of the country
- personal income grew 2.2 times faster than the rest of the country
- average income grew 2.1 times that of the rest of the country
- earnings increased 2.7 times faster than the rest of the US and
- population increased at twice the rate of the rest of the US.

Why the dramatic growth in personal income, job creation, and wages? Because the quality of the Pacific Northwest's environment draws employers and families to the region, proving that a healthy environment is a major stimulus for a healthy economy.

Over the next 10 years, the economies of the western public land states are expected to prosper and grow faster than any other part of the country. For example, the Rocky Mountain Region is projected to be the fastest growing with a **\$65 billion** increase in gross state product (i.e., the market value of all goods and services produced within a state).

The economy of Nevada, with the *highest* proportion of public land in the nation, is projected to have the *highest* rate of growth of all states, followed by Utah and Arizona.

### **Conservation Laws Work**

Twenty-five years ago, laws such as the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Clean Air Act passed Congress with broad support. As a result, our air is cleaner. More rivers are swimmable and fishable. Hunting is better.

Our successes are measurable and important.

- Not so long ago, urban rivers such as the Potomac in Washington, D.C., were little more than sewers. Today, some of the finest bass fishing in the East is found in the shadow of the Washington Monument. In the 1970's the only thing "great" about the Great Lakes was the stench. Today, anglers ply Lake Erie for trophy walleye while the city of Cleveland reaps the benefits of waterfront development. Countless other communities benefit from improved water quality since passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972.
- Critics claim the Endangered Species Act puts a few rare species ahead of thousands of potential jobs. The facts tell a different story. Of the nearly 97,000 federal projects reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service between 1987-1992, only 54 were terminated because of potential harm to endangered species. Meanwhile, the nation's symbol, the bald eagle has recovered from the brink of extinction. Dozens of

native plant and animal species are stabilized or recovering due to the Act's protection.

Equally important, landowners are protecting species before federal intervention is required. For example, the Georgia-Pacific Company voluntarily manages thousands of acres of private timber land to protect rare red-cockaded woodpeckers.

- Those who would give away public lands conjure up a mythical economic "War on the West." They forget the \$5 billion in federal funds supplied to the same states from 1989-93 courtesy of the taxpayers. And the \$900 million annually spent on fire management by federal agencies.

In fact, annual family income in rural counties adjacent to public land is approximately **\$2,000 higher** than those rural counties without a public land base.

### **Recreation on Public Lands Promotes Economic Prosperity**

One of the things I think we would all agree on is that public lands should forever remain in public hands.

While wealthy folks may be willing to pay \$200 rod fees or spend \$5,500 to hunt for elk on a private ranch, most of us cannot.

And be certain that there are a lot of condo-developers and real estate moguls licking-their-chops, relishing the chance to competitively bid for public lands. Good-bye to the open spaces. Good-bye to the public access. Today's winter forage for elk is tomorrow's putting green. Today's rare archaeological site is tomorrow's theme park.

What was once *public* land becomes *posted* land.

I promise you that will never happen on my watch. The accessible, wide-open spaces of the public lands are the backyard of the little guy; a legacy to be passed on unimpaired to our children. To consider transferring ownership of public lands is not only socially objectionable, it is fiscally irresponsible.

For example, according to a recently completed survey, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing on Forest Service managed lands generates **\$12 billion** dollars in revenue. That's right, I said \$12 billion.

According to preliminary, and probably conservative, estimates, recreation on land managed by the Department of the Interior generates an additional \$12 billion dollars per year.

That's **\$24 billion dollars** of recreation-related income from public lands that flows directly into small communities across the country.

- Public lands managed by the Department of Interior generated over **560,000** recreation-related jobs in 1994.
- Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing on Forest Service-managed lands generates over **140,000** full time jobs. State sales and income taxes generated from these activities on Forest Service managed lands approaches \$200 million per year.

All of this is happening while a profound shift occurs in traditional western industries. According to Thomas Power, an economist at the University of Montana, metal mining on public lands accounts for less than 1 in 2,500 jobs in the 12 western states. Public land livestock grazing accounts for only 1 in 1,700 jobs. Federal timber lands of the Pacific Northwest only provide about 1.5 percent of the region's jobs.

The growth of the West's economy is fueled by new jobs in retail trade; finance; insurance and real estate; small business; business, health, legal, and consumer services; and local government.

The extractive industries remain critically important threads in the fabric of growing and diverse western economies. The lesson for all of us is, however, is to never allow production to impair the land's productive capacity and potential.

Nearly 60 years ago, Dr. W.C. Lowdermilk, a Department of Agriculture employee wrote a report entitled the "Conquest of the Land Through Seven Thousand Years." He described how thousands of years ago poor land use toppled empires and wiped out entire cultures in the "cradle of civilization".

Lowdermilk prescribed an *Eleventh Commandment* to avoid such disasters in the future. His charge mirrors mine to you as the guardians of our grandchildren's natural resource endowment.

"Thou shalt inherit the Holy Earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forest from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, their fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and their descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or perish from the face of the earth."

**TALKING POINTS FOR MIKE DOMBECK  
ABANDONED MINE LAND MEDIA EVENT  
JULY 12, 1996**

-If funded by Congress, the federal government will contribute over 4 million dollars to clean up abandoned mines next year in Montana alone. Because the money is earmarked specifically for the government to contract the on-the-ground work, this money will provide a direct economic benefit to surrounding communities.

- The cooperative efforts of several state and federal agencies have paved the way for the clean up of abandoned mine lands (AMLS) in Montana.

-The BLM worked with Montana's Water Quality Division and Abandoned Mine Reclamation Bureau, the U.S. Geological Service and U.S. Forest Service to characterize and prioritize AMLs on a watershed basis and then choose the appropriate clean-up and legal mechanisms. Because of this cooperation, Montana was chosen as the pilot state by the Department of the Interior to implement clean up efforts in priority watersheds like the one we see here today.

-The Boulder River watershed above the town of Basin has been selected as a top priority watershed partly because the old mine is impacting significant public values.

-Since 1870, at least 51 ore producing mine and 11 mills were located in this area. Heavy metals such as zinc, copper and lead from the resulting abandoned mines are depressing trout populations and degrading water quality in the Boulder River and its tributary streams between Basin and Boulder.

-High Ore Creek is a major source of metals feeding into the upper Boulder River. Reclamation of this creek will

significantly reduce the levels of heavy metals in the River and substantially improve trout populations.

-The state of Montana has the lead to clean up the Comet Mine. BLM plans to build upon that effort by removing streamside mine tailings deposited on BLM lands from the Goyonda and Reliance Mines and then work on cleaning up the material you see deposited along the creek.

-Reclamation efforts on a watershed basis will continue to require a great deal of coordination among federal agencies and between federal agencies and the state, but it is the most efficient and cost effective method to remedy water quality impacts from abandoned mines.

-At a time when funding is scarce, we can maximize our resources by getting Federal and State agencies and private partners to work together.

*Teamwork at Montana*  
-To take this one step further, this Abandoned Mine Land Watershed Remediation is part of a new Western Mine Restoration Partnership with the Western Governor's Association. This national partnership will expand the collaborative work that is already underway in Montana.

-When we work together to clean up abandoned mine sites, we are protecting fish and wildlife habitat, which provide hunting, fishing and other recreation opportunities that benefit small businesses throughout the West. In addition to providing a short term economic boost to communities as the restoration work is being completed, our Western Mine Restoration Partnership means clean water, and clean water translates into economic opportunity.

This isn't rocket science. We've done this before in MT — 1) London Ferry Mine near Phillipsburg  
2) Park Mine near Townsend  
Both times we worked closely with the state & other agencies

TALKING POINTS FOR MIKE DOMBECK  
BEAVERHEAD WEED DAY BARBEQUE  
JULY 13, 1996

NOTE: Setting will be very informal, outdoors at a park. About 100 people will attend. Will not be a lot of speeches.

-Thank you for inviting me to this worthwhile event. It is pleasure to be here.

-The collaboration and cooperation I have observed today is right in line with the national priorities for the Departments of Interior and Agriculture.

-My job, in part, is to convince top policymakers and budget writers that spending money on weed control is minor compared to the cost of trying to restore the land after weeds have taken over.

-You are helping make my job easier by demonstrating a commitment to work together to keep the spread of noxious weeds in check.

-In talking with the BLM employees here in Dillon, I have heard some about some folks that, I would like to commend for their involvement:

-Conservation Districts - in particular, I'd like to acknowledge the work of Art Christiansen;

-East Pioneer Experimental Stewardship Group. Maynard Smith, Charlie Hahnkamp, and other ranchers in the east Pioneers group have dedicated themselves to this cause for many, many years;

-Beaverhead County and the Beaverhead County Task Force who sponsored today's event.

-By working together, we can ensure the health and productivity of the land -- be it Federal, State or private -- for generations to come.

-This is exactly the kind of grass-root effort that will make a difference. I commend your efforts and I will support this cause in any way I can.

-Thanks for the invite and keep up the good work.

or

(Lead into Health of the Land Award presentation)

1996

### Opening Remarks on the Future of BLM Baker City

Major economic, social and demographic shifts are occurring across the Western United States. Western economies are booming even as traditional extractive and agricultural industries decline.

Consider what happened here in the Columbia River Basin from 1969 to 1993: 779,000 new jobs were added (an 83% increase) and \$29 billion in personal income was earned (a 100% increase).<sup>1</sup>

Most of the growth is occurring in the services, non-commodity manufacturing, recreation, and tourism industries.

Meanwhile, in Idaho from 1969 to 1993, farm and agricultural services and resource extraction industries fell from 19% of the state's total personal income to 13%.<sup>2</sup>

Now, it wasn't long ago that doomsayers were predicting that protection of the Northern Spotted Owl would render a "new Appalachia" of the Pacific Northwest.

Instead, between 1988-1994, the economy of the Pacific Northwest was remarkably strong and productive.<sup>3</sup>

For example, in Oregon from 1988-1994:

- employment grew 2.2 times faster than the rest of the country
- personal income grew 2 times faster than the rest of the country
- average income grew 2 times than the rest of the country and
- earnings increased 2.3 times faster than the rest of the US

Why are people, jobs, and new economic opportunities moving to public land states? Because the open space, clean water, clean air, good hunting and fishing, and scenic beauty make them nice places to live and raise a family.

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis. Regional Economic Information System, US Dept. Of Commerce, 1995.

<sup>2</sup>Ray Rasker, "A New Home on the Range, Economic Realities in the Columbia River Basin, The Wilderness Society, September, 1995.

"Economic Well-Being and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Northwest", A consensus report by Pacific Northwest Economists, December, 1995.

The traditional extractive industries remain critically important parts of diverse state economies. In many rural communities they are the sole economic life-line. But we cannot afford to stick our heads in the sand and ignore the dramatic changes that are occurring across the public land states. We have an obligation to work with local communities, states -- all who use and care for the public lands -- to understand, prepare for, and take advantage of these changes.

We are a nation of communities. Communities that work together and adapt to changing conditions retain a strong sense of identity and thrive economically. We see that all across the West today. That's what BLM's Resource Advisory Councils are all about. These citizen councils bring together traditional users of the public lands, local citizens, and conservationists to define and implement common goals for healthy public lands.

These citizen councils -- the citizen owners -- are the future of BLM. These councils help move resource decision-making closer to local communities. Surely, decisions reached across a table in our hometowns are more lasting, more effective, and more accepted than those handed down in a court room.

BLM's challenge is the same as our collective challenge as a nation of communities -- to help the old and the new form relationships based on mutual understanding and shared respect.

In the final analysis, only by protecting the land can we safeguard strong and stable rural economies. Only by protecting the land can we move beyond the rhetoric and into the common ground that unites us as a nation of communities.

## HEALTHY LANDS AND HEALTHY ECONOMIES

### Economic Prosperity and Public Land Management

#### Recreation opportunities

Recreation is the second largest industry in the country. Six million Americans are employed by the recreation and tourism industry which generates a \$22 billion trade surplus (highest of all economic sectors in the United States).

Each year Americans take more than 1.8 billion trips to go fishing, swimming, boating, or relaxing around water.<sup>1</sup>

The multiple use public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities. These accessible, wide-open spaces are the backyard of the little guy; a legacy to be passed on unimpaired to our children.

Many of these public lands are located in the western United States; the fastest growing, most highly urbanized region of the country. Demand for recreation and access to open space will continue to increase.

Publicly-owned natural resources include:

- 2.6 million acres of lakes and reservoirs
- 24 million acres of riparian wetlands
- 174,000 miles of fishable streams
- 6,664 miles of floatable river
- 300 watchable wildlife areas
- 19,000 miles of off road vehicle trails
- 3,179 miles of designated Back Country Byways
- Over 3,000 species of fish and wildlife

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<sup>1</sup> "Liquid Assets: A Summertime Perspective on the Importance of Clean Water to the Economy," Environmental Protection Agency, May 1996.

## Recreation-related revenue

- In fiscal year 1997, BLM estimates that 66 million recreation related visits will be made to BLM managed lands.<sup>2</sup>
- According to preliminary estimates, recreational activity on lands managed by agencies within the Department of the Interior (i.e., BLM, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Park Service) accounted for over \$12 billion worth of economic activity in the western public land states in FY 1994.<sup>3</sup>
- Western federal lands managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, and the Park Service generated over 560,000 recreation-related jobs in 1994.<sup>4</sup>
- Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing on Forest Service-managed lands generates over 140,000 full time jobs.<sup>5</sup>
- Fishing on Forest Service-managed lands pumps \$5.1 billion into local communities; wildlife related recreation generates an additional \$5.1 billion; and hunting \$1.8 billion.<sup>6</sup>
- Recreation on Forest Service-managed lands generated 369 million in federal taxes and 196 million in state and local tax revenues.<sup>7</sup>

These figures **do not** include the significant economic effects of federal salaries, contracts, equipment, etc., on local communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Budget Summary 1997. Bureau of Land Management. 1996.

<sup>3</sup> *Draft Economic Impacts of Recreational Activity on Federal Lands*. Department of the Interior. 1996. These estimates are presently being refined and updated.

<sup>4</sup> See fn. 3

<sup>5</sup> *The 1994 Economic Impacts of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Related Recreation on National Forest Lands*, American Sportfishing Association. April, 1996

<sup>6</sup> See fn. 5

<sup>7</sup> See fn. 5

## Economic status of public land states

Over the next 10 years, the economies of the public land states are expected to prosper and grow faster than other regions of the country — increasing the demand for recreation and access to public land.

- The Rocky Mountain Region is projected to be the fastest growing with a \$65 billion increase in gross state product (i.e., the market value of all goods and services produced within a state) projected over the next decade.<sup>8</sup>
- The economy of Nevada, with the highest proportion of public land in the nation, is projected to have the *highest* rate of growth of all states, followed by Utah and Arizona.<sup>9</sup>
- Projected Increases in Job Growth (1993-2005)

Region	Increase in jobs
Far West	5.62 million
Southwest	3.36 million
Rocky Mountain	1.25 million <sup>10</sup>

- Annual family income in rural counties with public land is approximately \$ 2,000 higher than those rural counties without a public land base.<sup>11</sup>

## Changing Western Economies

Recreation and other non-traditional industries play an increasingly important role in the economies of the western states.

- For example in Wyoming from 1969 to 1991, employment in mining and agriculture-related industries declined from 17.6% of the state's employment to 12%. Similarly, mining and agriculture-related industries fell from 17% of the state's total personal

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<sup>8</sup> "Regional and State Projections of Economic Activity and Population to the Year 2005," *Survey of Current Business* 75:44-71, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 1995.

<sup>9</sup> See fn 8

<sup>10</sup> See fn 8.

<sup>11</sup> "Understanding Rural America," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Agricultural Information Bulletin, 710, 1994.

income to less than 10%.<sup>12</sup>

The trend in Wyoming is replicated across the West. Between 1969-91, the Rocky Mountain States gained 2 million new jobs. Although the traditional extractive industries remain critically important, prosperous western economies are fueled by jobs in the service, recreation and tourism, and technology fields. For example, from 1969-91, Montana's economy added 141,000 new jobs. During the same period, farming ranching, mining, lumber and wood products lost 7,500 jobs.

### **Environmental protection spurs economic prosperity**

Protection of the Northern Spotted Owl on Forest Service and BLM managed lands was supposed to render a "new Appalachia" of the Pacific Northwest in the late 1980's. Instead, between 1988-1992, the economy of the Pacific Northwest was remarkably strong and productive.

According to 34 independent economists in the Pacific Northwest,<sup>13</sup> people, businesses, jobs are moving to the area because of the quality of the environment.

For example, from 1988-1992:

- employment in the Pacific Northwest grew 2.4 times faster than the rest of the country;
- personal income grew 2.2 times faster than the rest of the country;
- average income grew 2.1 times that of the rest of the country;
- earnings increased 2.7 times faster than the rest of the US; and
- population increased at twice the rate of the rest of the US.

According to new arrivals to the area, the dramatic growth in personal income, job creation, and wages is directly related to the quality of the Pacific Northwest's environment which draws employers and families to the region. Healthy, diverse, and productive public lands provide countless recreational opportunities. In turn, these activities promote income generation, job growth, and the diversification of thriving rural economies.

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<sup>12</sup> Ray Rasker, "A New Look at Old Vistas: the Economic Role of Environmental Quality in Western Public Lands," University of Colorado Law Review, 1994.

<sup>13</sup> "Economic Well-Being and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Northwest", A consensus report by Pacific Northwest Economists, December, 1995.