

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

July 10, 1998

In Reply Refer To:
(8362) 910, 912, 930 P

EMS TRANSMISSION 7/14/98
Instruction Memorandum No. 98-139
Expires: 9/30/99

To: All Field Official's

From: Assistant Director, Renewable Resources and
Planning

Subject: Comments on Draft Interpretive Strategy Plan DD: 8/7/98

Please review and provide comments on this draft interpretive strategy plan. The final plan will be laid out with illustrations, so please focus your review on content. We especially would like comments on the mission and vision statements. Please refer to previous guidelines for interpretation. The Blueprint for the Future, Recreation 2000 Update and the BLM Strategic plan.

Interpretation is a communication process that helps visitors understand the resources and the agency's programs. Interpretation is revelation based on information. It aims to tell visitors the story of the resources and interconnections between the resources and the visitor. When done properly, interpretation can bring about an increased awareness and can influence people's behavior. Interpretation is done for visitors, who choose to attend the program or read the brochure or wayside exhibit. Therefore, interpretation must directly relate to the visitors' interest and needs and is done using varied creative approaches.

An important goal of the interpretive program is to have interdisciplinary efforts involved in developing interpretive programs. Representatives from the various resources programs should comment on this strategy plan, since Interpretation is a service to all public lands resources.

The BLM's Interpretive Program has been recognized by the interpretive profession for having high quality products and professionally active, devoted people.

The program has won many awards for its interpretive products. In addition BLM staff has been involved at many levels of the interpretive profession in a service capacity. This strategy plan should help strengthen the BLM programs and increase awareness within the agency of how interpretation can help accomplish the BLM mission. Your efforts in reviewing this strategy plan by **August 7**, will be greatly appreciated.

Please direct your review comments to Amy Galperin, the national lead for interpretation, Colorado State Office (CO 931), 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, phone number 303-239-3960 and E-mail address is AGALPERIN@co.blm.gov.

Signed by:
Tom Walker
Deputy Assistant Director
Renewable Resources and Planning

Authenticated by:
Robert M. Williams
Directives, Records
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3 Attachments

- 1 - FREEMAN Tilden's Principles (1 p)
- 2 - IB-97-85 (10 pp)
- 3 - Interpretive Strategy Plan Draft (13 pp)

Freeman Tilden's Principles

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

6. Interpretation addressed to children (up to twelve years) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240
February 26, 1997



8300 (250)
8362 (340) P

EMS TRANSMISSION 3/4/97
Information Bulletin No. 97-85

To: All Field Officials
Attn: Budget, Recreation, & Engineering Staff

From: Director

Subject: Visitor Center Evaluation Criteria

In recent years Congress has received numerous requests for funding of new visitor centers in the appropriations process. These requests coincided with public concern to balance the Federal budget. As a result, BLM established a Visitor Center Temporary Team to develop criteria for evaluating proposed new visitor centers. However, since the establishment of this team and the attached recommendations, several management decisions have been made.

The Corporate Team issued a policy in FY 1996 that places significant limitations on spending funds for new construction, particularly the construction of new visitor centers, without the establishment of a full funding partner.

Under the "No New Construction" policy, BLM field and/or state offices should not spend any funds on the design of a new visitor center without first coordinating the proposal with the Washington Budget Office and obtaining the approval to proceed from the Corporate Team. In order to help prepare a briefing to propose a new visitor center for the Corporate Team, we have attached the criteria developed by the Visitor Center Temporary Team. Appendix A, the Visitor Center Criteria, helps determine whether a Visitor Center is the best method for achieving your management goals and the mission of the Bureau. Appendix B helps rate the relative significance of your proposal.

Due to the anticipated appropriation limitations and as stated in the FY 1996 PAWP directives, all new visitor center proposals should strive to achieve at least 50 percent non-Federal funding for construction and 75 percent of the operations and maintenance costs from your partners.

If you have any questions relating to the interpretive information attached, please contact Amy Galperin, at (303) 239-3960 or questions relating to the funding requirements, please contact Rob Roudabush, at (202) 452-7716.

Members of the visitor center task group were:

Amy Galperin, WO Interpretation & Chair of Team

James May, Vale District Manager

David Hunsaker, Manager of Oregon Trail V.C.

Gene Ervine, Alaska Lead for Interpretation

Richard Ray, Oregon Lead for Interpretation

Don Charpio, Arizona Lead for Interpretation

Stephen Fosberg, New Mexico Archeologist

Katherine Eaton, Department of the Interior

Signed by:

Jack C. Peterson

Group Manager

Recreation

Authenticated by:

Robert M. Williams

Directives and Records

Group, WO540

2 Attachments

1 - Appendix A (5 pp)

2 - Appendix B (3 pp)

EXPLANATION OF CRITERIA FOR SUPPORTING VISITOR CENTER PROPOSALS

Introduction

Visitor centers are one method for providing interpretive technique for implementing an interpretive program. Developing interpretive techniques is limited only by a person's imagination. Some examples of common interpretive techniques are: wayside exhibits, kiosk, brochures, audio tapes, videos, displays, guided hikes, living history programs, and presentations. Choosing the right interpretive techniques depends on the goals of the interpretive program, the needs of the agency, the needs and type of visitors, and the resources to interpret.

Many times visitor centers are chosen as the interpretive technique before proper consideration is given to other interpretive methods. In the proper environment, a visitor center is a very effective interpretive technique. Good interpretive planning is needed to determine when a visitor center should be used.

Below are questions that must be answered before a decision can be made as to whether a visitor center is the best interpretive option.

1. Does the proposed visitor center relate to the BLM's mission and management objectives?

a. Does the purpose for the visitor center match the mission of the BLM? There should be a direct relationship between the interpretive program and the management objectives of the agency. Does it promote resource use or does it promote the use of a building?

b. Is the project identified in the Resource Management Plan, an amendment, or a Special Recreation Management Area activity plan? An effective visitor center is supported by the interpretive program and is not a separate part of the overall visitor services effort. The goals and objectives for building a visitor center should be clearly identified in planning documents related to the site and interpretive program. This includes addressing some of the challenges visitor centers bring to an area, such as potential to concentrate visitor use.

c. Are the interpretive objectives and messages consistent with BLM's philosophical positions? The BLM must be involved in developing the interpretive exhibit text and themes. This involvement will strengthen the understanding between the partners and the BLM and help the public understand the long-term effects of management decisions. The exhibit text focuses on serving visitor needs, while weaving-in resource management programs and natural and cultural resource information. We should show BLM management programs wherever there are opportunities within the exhibit text, but should not use this as an opportunity to "sell the public" on our management programs. That approach will lead to text that sounds like propaganda to the visitors, and often results in their lack of support or distrust of government approaches.

d. Does the Center help visitors discover and appreciate resources on the public lands ? An important objective in any BLM visitor center is to help the public appreciate and discover the resource diversity and recreation opportunities on public lands. We should also encourage visitors' feeling of ownership and involvement in trying to protect the resources. The visitor center should be supported by a good brochure supply. Brochures are still the most commonly preferred source of information for the public.

2. Are there signed documents showing clear commitment of partners and State and Federal Congressional support for the visitor center?

a. Are costs being shared with partners, including private, state, and/or federal entities? A cost analysis should be done showing how the predicted staff, operations, and maintenance costs including each partner's share. This should be realistic, reflecting the true ability of partners to live up to their promises. For instance, if the project expects to be staffed by a private group, such as a cooperative association, it should be shown that the association is truly prepared and able to take on this responsibility. These partnerships and economic commitments should be used to explain the project to the Department, OMB and Congress.

b. Are there agreements clearly identifying the responsibilities of each partner and an identified procedure for maintaining the agreement long term? The agreement must include expected in-kind services as well as percentage or amount of financial commitments. There also must be an agreement on the type of long-term commitment expected. Responsibilities and needs change, so a procedure for regularly scheduling reviews and updating of the agreement must be established. *Once the Corporate Team approves the project, the field staff will be expected to have these agreements signed.*

c. There should be good documentation showing State and Federal Congressional support for the project. Congressional member(s) should show support the project and be willing to lobby for it, including O&M funding. The proposed construction project should be divided into phases in order to maximize funding options.

d. Is there a clear commitment on the scope and magnitude of the project so it does not expand beyond fiscal reach? So often, as more partners get involved, more ideas get adopted. In order to incorporate these ideas, the facilities get bigger which is "project creep." There should be an up-front agreement to control project expansion.

3. Are we prepared to accept the long-term commitment that visitor centers require?

All new visitor center plans must have cost-analysis for operation and maintenance. Items to include in the cost analysis are as follows:

a. Proper staffing commitments:

(1) Effective hours of operation--visitor centers should be open when the public wants to use them. Usually, this means weekends and late hours on Friday and Saturday. It is poor customer service to have the doors closed when visitors expect them open.

(2) Developing and presenting interpretive programs--this is especially true when meeting the needs of students. Teachers and students are better served when the ratio of students to interpreter does not exceed 10.

(3) Giving programs to the general public--visitors enjoy personal presentations that go beyond the materials in the exhibits and enable them to ask questions. People also have different learning strategies and preferences. Some people learn best by reading the materials; others by listening. It is important for the success of the interpreter program to use several different interpretive techniques.

(4) There should be sufficient staff to help in the book store, schedule interpretive events, run the volunteer programs, and coordinate special exhibit showings. There should also be staff who are preparing temporary exhibits on the latest issues. One person cannot effectively do all these tasks.

b. Proper budget for operation and maintenance of the building, includes:

(1) Repairs and replacement of outdated exhibits. Exhibits should generally be replaced every 5-10 years. This means future funding commitments.

(2) Supplies for the interpretive program includes printing of posters and brochures and supplies for props. Interpretive programs with children should consider puppets, magnifying hand lens, etc. If there is a cultural theme to the interpretive program, there should be funds for purchasing sample artifacts replicates and period dress.

(3) Funds are needed for supplies necessary to backup equipment for the exhibits because they wear out, become damaged, get broke. This to will require a future funding commitment.

(4) Maintenance of the building and internal facilities, such as lights, heat, audio visual equipment, special light bulbs, etc.

c. The design should consider the need for fee collection facilities?

(1) Almost all visitor centers will become involved with the collection of fees. At present BLM only has authority to collect fees at visitor center in recreation demonstration pilots.

d. Are there steps for design and value engineering review of the project?

(1) Value engineering must be done on all Visitor Centers that cost more then \$1 million to construct, to ensure that the proposed design of the building best serves the established goals and objectives for the facility. It should address important issues such as the location of the restrooms and any potential sales area.

e. Has a cost/benefit analysis been done showing the long term cost per visitor?

(1) During the first five years there should only be minor repairs and maintenance cost for the visitor center. After five years many of the exhibits will need updating and major repairs maybe needed for some of the exhibits and for the building itself.

4. Is a visitor center the most effective interpretive medium to use for the specific location, audience, resources, and purpose of the interpretive program?

a. Have the potential visitor needs been analyzed through an interpretive prospectus ?

(1) A visitor center is an expensive interpretive tool and should be chosen only after it is determined to be the most cost effective means of accomplishing the objective. This decision should be obtained through the development of an interpretive prospectus, which will help identify the interpretive goals, objectives, and themes for the overall interpretive program. It also needs to identify the different areas, in addition to the visitor center, where interpretive media will be used to accomplish your objectives.

(2) As with any interpretive medium, visitor centers need to serve the visitors. This is especially true where there are repeat visits. Have you walked into a visitor center where there were all sorts of exhibits on the historic and natural resources of the site, yet the front desk is five people deep and no one is looking at the exhibits? People are trying to find out where they can go camping or hiking trails, or where the concessionaires are located, or where to sign up for permits. Often the exhibits do not provide answers to these questions

(3) In general, the effectiveness of a visitor center greatly depends on the type of visitors and their interest.

(a) First-Time Visitors - Visitor Centers are very effective at orienting first-time visitors that are unfamiliar with an area. They want information on facilities, recreational opportunities, and the cultural and natural resources of an area.

(b) Repeating and/or Recreational User - Visitor Centers are not as effective for repeat visitors or recreational users who are coming to an area for a specific recreational activity, such as river rafting, fishing, mountain biking, and boating. They have their equipment and are usually very ready to start their recreation activity. They are usually traveling with people familiar with the area and are not anxious to take time out from their activity to attend "educational programs." Their main interest is information on conditions related to their chosen recreational activity, such as where the fish are biting, or what the river flows and conditions are.

© Special Interest Visitor - Visitor Centers are effective in reaching the public with specific interests or at sites with significant resources. Many times, these facilities become designation points. However, one should be very careful in developing visitor centers for this purpose; it is very difficult to correctly predict if there is an interest market and the market is big enough to justify building a visitor center.

b. Has an interpretive prospectus analyzed the best site location ?

(1) The main criteria for deciding the best location of a visitor center is the purpose of the interpretive program and visitor center. Orientation/information visitor centers are best located at points before the visitor makes a decision as to where to go. If the region has a specific theme that the visitor center was built to serve, then the best location should be as close to the main access road. The visitor should be able to find the visitor center easily and shortly after they enter the area. In general, poor locations for visitor centers are at the end of long dirt roads, more than a few miles off the main road, within an area, or away from the main entrance to a resource.

c. Has an interpretive prospectus been done which identifies the interpretive program goals, objectives and theme?

(1) Developing the purpose of the visitor centers. Before any design work is done on a visitor center, there must be clear goals, objectives, and themes developed on the purpose of the building and interpretive program. This should be done with all the resource specialists and potential partners involved in a facilities planning session. Everyone should be clear about the purpose for the visitor center.

(2) Interpretive themes between agencies and other local facilities should be coordinated, so that the information is not repeated in each facility. Many regions of our country have specific interpretive themes, such as desert ecology, Lewis and Clark, Southwest Indian Cultural, Gold rush, or western settlement. Coordination will help each facility support the overall theme and message so the visitor has a more holistic understanding of the area.

(3) A visitor center can help develop an interpretive program. Visitor centers are very effective in providing a focus for the interpretive programs. Tours and special events are often easier to organize when there is a visitor center. Interpreters can use many of the visitor center exhibits to help illustrate concepts and ideas before head out on the trail or take the visitors on a tour. Visitor centers should not be viewed as the interpretive program. It is only one of many possible tools.

(4) Potential Economic Enhancement Project - Large visitor center projects often result from a proposal growing beyond its original intent, or as an economic development project for a local community. The success of a Visitor Center as an economic development effort depends on many factors, such as proximity to major travel routes, promotional efforts, quality of the exhibits and interpretive program, and potential market for the topics in the visitor center. A market evaluation and cost-benefit analysis in a business plan must be done before design work starts on a visitor center which has economic benefits one of its principle as a goal.

d. Are the visitors and managing agency goals and objectives already being served by another existing facilities ?

(1) Before a visitor center proposal is approved, there should be a thorough survey of other visitor centers and interpretive efforts in the region. This survey must identify if visitor needs are already being met by other facilities, and if the BLM could more easily accomplish its mission entering into a partnership with the existing facility managers. Whenever possible, visitor centers should be an interagency ventures. Visitors do not generally know nor care about different agencies and boundaries. They usually go to a visitor center for orientation information that interests them.

Corporate Team Criteria on Supporting a Visitor Center Proposal

1. Does the proposed visitor center relate to BLM's mission and management objectives?

- a. The Visitor center's purpose relates directly to the multi-use mission of BLM, its programs and/or legislative mandates:
High - Strongly relates to BLM multi-use Mission.
Medium - Indirectly relates to the BLM Mission.
Low - Does not directly relate to BLM mission.
- b. A publicly reviewed Resource Management Plan, plan amendment, or Special Recreation Management Area activity plan identifies the project as part of the preferred management strategy:
High - Recommend to be built.
Medium - Project listed as possible approach.
Low - Project not listed.
- c. BLM staff is involved in developing the exhibits messages. The messages support and are consistent with BLM policy and corporate agenda:
High - BLM is actively involved with developing the messages.
Medium - BLM has minor review the of developed messages.
Low - BLM is not involved with developing the messages.
- d. The objectives of a visitor center is to help visitors discover and appreciate public lands:
High - Objective clearly identified and contains information on low impact recreational use.
Medium - Helping visitors discover public lands is only a minor part of the message.
Low - No mention of public lands recreation opportunity.

2. Are there valid commitments showing clear economic and Congressional support for the visitor center?

- a. The proposed partnership agreement for operation and maintenance is:
High - For more than 10 years, and which clearly stated responsibilities for staffing, operation and maintenance cost. There are also clear provisions for regular review and updating of the agreement.
Medium - For more than 5 years, and which clearly stated responsibilities for staffing, operation and maintenance cost. There are also clear provisions for regular review and updating of the agreement.
Low - For more than 3 years, and which clearly stated responsibilities for staffing, operation and maintenance cost. There are also clear provisions for regular review and updating of the agreement.

- b. Construction cost sharing with partners, including private, state, and/or federal entities are:
High - Partners 75%/ 25% Government and identified procedures for regular reviews.
Medium (points) - Partners 50% /50% Government and identified procedures for regular reviews.
Low - Partners 25% /75% Government and identified procedures for regular reviews.
- c. Is there support from the Congressional representatives?
High - documentation showing support from the both State and Federal Congressional offices with a clear interest to lobby for funding support.
Medium - Support from both State and Federal Congressional representative that indicate support but no clear willingness to lobby for funding.
Low - No clear commitment.
- d. Is there a built-in control on the project cost so that it does not expand beyond original expectations?
High - Clear support from partners expressing their funding commitment and that set the scope and magnitude of the project.
Medium - Clear support from partners but not a clear funding commitment and the size of the projects seems to still be one likely to grow.
Low - Clear support from partners but no confirm funding commitments and still ample discussion about the scope and magnitude of the project.

3. Has BLM determined the long-term staffing, maintenance and funding commitment required to support the visitor centers ?

- a. Was an independent cost analysis done considering proper staffing, operational and maintenance costs related to an interpretive oriented facility.
High - Independent cost analysis.
Medium - An in-house BLM analysis.
Low - No cost analysis was conducted.
- b. The center is designed to collect entrance fees and conduct retail sales.
High - the Center has the authority and design for collecting fees and a sales outlet.
Medium - the Center is designed to collect entrance fees but is waiting for Congressional authority to do so.
Low - Has a cooperative association agreement for a retail sales area.
- c. Provisions include a process for conducting a value engineering review.
High -Funding for a value engineering review available.
Mediums - A valued engineering review is planned but funding is not yet available.
Low - there is no plans for a value engineering review.
- d. BLM has projections of a five-year cost per visitor analysis which concludes :
High - Cost per visitor is less than \$.50
Medium - Cost per visitor is between \$.50 - \$1.00
Low - Cost per visitor is over \$1.00 per visitor.

4. Is a visitor center the most effective interpretive medium for the specific location, audience, resources, and purpose of the interpretive program?

- a. An interpretive prospectus, or similar document, shows that a visitor center is the best interpretive technique for the type of visitor interest and type of use in the area.
High - Interpretive prospectus clearly identified a visitor center as the proper technique.

Medium - Interpretive prospectus showed that a visitor center was one of many techniques that could be used to reach the intended audience.

Low - No interpretive prospectus was done, or proper visitor analysis of intended audience.

- b. An interpretive prospectus, or similar document, shows that the proposed site location is the best for the intended visitor, the resources and the agency management.

High - An interpretive prospectus identified this area as the best site location.

Medium - An interpretive prospectus had many site selections and did not properly analysis which site was best for the visitors, resources or agency needs.

Low - No interpretive prospectus was done.

- c. An interpretive prospectus identifies the interpretive goals, objectives and themes.

High - Interpretive prospectus clearly identified goals, objectives and theme for the interpretive program.

Medium - Interpretive prospectus gave board goals for the interpretive program and did not clearly identify objectives or themes for the intended visitor or location of proposed visitor center.

Low - No goals, objectives or themes have been identified in the visitor center proposal or for an interpretive program.

- d. Are the visitor's and agency's needs already being served by other means?

High - Does not exist.

Medium - Exist more than day's drive away.

Low - Exist within a days drive.

Bureau of Land Management

Interpretive Strategy Plan

Interpretation is the Voice of the Resources

Draft

PREFACE

Interpretation is a voice for all of the resource management programs within the Bureau. This strategy clarifies and sets the direction for BLM's interpretive program. This strategy builds on the diversity of many excellent agency initiatives already in place. Although BLM has had some interpretive facilities, programs and products in place since the late 1970's, the program is relatively young.

In the last ten years, BLM's interpretive program has developed into an award winning effort that has served millions of people at locations throughout the country. BLM manages nineteen interpretive centers and provides interpretive services at many BLM offices and interagency facilities. Most of our programs and services are done in collaboration with other public agencies, cooperating associations and other private sector organizations in order to continue and improve upon this tradition of quality public service while implementing this strategy plan for 1999.

This strategic plan was developed by an interdisciplinary Bureau of Land Management team and evaluated by outside partners who are leaders in the field of interpretation. In addition there was extensive internal review at all levels of the BLM. This plan is based on the Bureau of Land Management's "Blueprint for the Future". This strategy also incorporates the guidelines set forth in IM 95-177, entitled "Guidelines for Interpretation".

Mission Statement

The Bureau of Land Management interpretive program supports the Bureau's mission and goals by serving customers, promoting the health of the land and enhancing the public's enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of public land natural and cultural resources and management.

Vision Statement

The BLM interpretive program fosters an appreciation of the resources and knowledge of the diverse recreational opportunities on public lands. Interpretation increases understanding about the relationships between people and the public lands. Interpretation communicates how the BLM manages resources and provides opportunities for public use. As a result of BLM's interpretive program, the public will be more environmentally responsible while enjoying their public lands.

OVER ALL GUIDING THEME FOR THE BLM'S INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM:

The resources on public lands are an integral part in people's lives and the BLM is working to protect the value of these resources for all generations.

THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Interpretation ...

1. Uses accepted interpretive principles.
2. Provides universally accessible services by using a diversity of media and combines techniques to reach different learning styles, abilities, generations, ethnic groups, cultures.
3. Serves visitor needs and enhances their experience.
4. Conveys accurate information through current interpretive techniques.
5. Incorporates appropriate safety and health considerations into planning, design and content of interpretive services.
6. Is evaluated to measure effectiveness of programs, services, facilities, and media to all audiences.
7. Supports agency initiatives for resource protection and environmental ethics.
8. Encourages visitor involvement in activities and "hands-on" experiences that increase understanding of ecosystem management goals.
9. Requires a "regional approach" to planning and providing interpretive services and facilities, in order to build upon interpretive efforts at other sites and identify our unique resources to focus on.
10. Employs effective planning processes and tiers interpretation to other BLM planning efforts.
11. Address interpretive media choices based on the goals and objectives identified in BLM policies such as Recreation 2000, and the Visitor Center memorandum (IB 97-85) (Appendices -)

12. Interpretation will serve current and future customers.
13. Interpretation will promote and support BLM's mission to restore and maintain the health of the land.
14. Interpretation will seek collaborative management.
15. Interpretation will improve accountability performance and evaluation (Business Practices).
16. Seek funding to ensure sustain ability of interpretation in BLM.
17. Interpretation will improve human resources management.
- 18.** Improve internal communications and public awareness.

draft

GOAL 1 INTERPRETATION WILL SERVE CURRENT AND FUTURE CUSTOMERS

OBJECTIVE: BLM will provide Interpretive opportunities to diverse audiences in a variety of settings using a variety of effective techniques.

Actions:

1. Evaluate existing interpretive programs, products, sites and facilities to identify those to be retained, improved, or replaced. (Field Offices, FY2000)
2. Identify gaps/needs/opportunities to reach under represented audiences. (Field Offices, FY2000)
3. Work with professional organizations such as National Association for Interpretation and North American Association for Environmental Education to develop effective programs. (National and State Leads, Ongoing)

OBJECTIVE: Working with user groups and other partners, BLM will canvas our customers to understand their needs and desires.

Actions:

1. Develop and begin to implement standardized procedures for measuring customer satisfaction with interpretive services and facilities. (National Lead, FY2000)
2. As part of the BLM interpretive planning process staff will evaluate visitor perceptions and information needs, through direct communications with the visitor. (All levels)
3. Evaluate interpretation and education activities using feedback from visitors to determine if desired messages are effectively communicated. (Field Offices, Ongoing)
4. Consider existing tourism and customer data when determining trends and identifying new audiences. (Field Offices, Ongoing)

OBJECTIVE: The BLM interpretive staff will collaborate with other groups such as public affairs, the land offices, and outfitters and guides to provide safety and basic information about public lands.

Actions:

1. Identify and compile basic information that should be provided to customers 24 hours/day. (Field Offices, Ongoing)
2. Provide information to visitors through appropriate media (Web pages, Public Land Information centers, administrative sites, visitor centers, cooperative site/programs). (State Offices, Field Offices & Visitor Centers, Ongoing)
3. Update basic public lands information (Field Offices & Visitor Centers, Ongoing).

GOAL 2 INTERPRETATION WILL PROMOTE AND SUPPORT BLM'S MISSION TO RESTORE AND MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF THE LAND.

OBJECTIVE: On an annual basis, BLM staff will identify site specific and agency-wide management goals that can be addressed by interpretation and environmental education (i.e., noxious weeds, wild horses, Leave No Trace, etc.)

Actions:

1. Identify and incorporate agency-wide management goals into interpretive directives. (National Lead, FY2000)
2. Target interpretive services to enhance appreciation, understanding and protection of significant natural, cultural and recreation resource values. (Field Offices, Ongoing)
3. Identify opportunities to interpret BLM's successful efforts to restore, improve and protect the land. (Field Offices, Ongoing)

OBJECTIVE: Develop interpretive services that promote and encourage public understanding of resource management goals and the importance of resources to individuals and communities.

Actions:

1. Review existing interpretive services to assess the extent to which resource issues are addressed. (National Lead and State Leads coordinate with Field Offices, FY2000)
2. Identify and provide specific tools and techniques to BLM staff that have been successfully used to increase public knowledge and appreciation of resources and resource management. (National Lead, Ongoing)
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of interpretive messages in promoting and encouraging public understanding of resources and resource issues. (Field Offices, Ongoing)
4. Interdisciplinary teams will identify local resource management issues to address by local interpretive efforts. (Field Office, Ongoing)

OBJECTIVE: Select interpretive media/techniques that minimize impacts to and, whenever possible, enhance the protection of resources.

Actions:

1. Use interpretive planning techniques to select effective and appropriate media choices. (Field Office, Ongoing)

GOAL 3 INTERPRETATION WILL SEEK COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT.

OBJECTIVE: Expand collaboration between BLM's Interpretation and Environmental Education (E.E.) programs.

Actions:

1. Identify opportunities and develop specific goals to cooperate on national level initiatives, priorities and programs such as the National Weeds initiatives, Leave No Trace and Wilderness Program. (National Leads in Interpretation and E.E., FY99)
2. Develop specific interpretive strategies to effectively use personnel and resources at the

state office and field office levels to achieve mutual goals.
(National Leads in Interpretation and E.E., FY99)

OBJECTIVE: Promote partnerships by establishing programs and projects that share staff, have interagency cooperation, work with cooperating associations, and friends groups to achieve mutual goals.

Actions:

1. Promote interagency cooperation and national level partnerships through the Federal Interagency Council for Interpretation, the National Association for Interpretation, the Association for Partners for Public Lands, the American Forest Coalition, and other organizations. (National Lead, Ongoing)
2. Outreach to cooperating associations and develop partnerships with them. (State Leads, Ongoing)
3. Evaluate existing partnerships annually for their effectiveness in accomplishing mutual goals. (All levels, ongoing)
4. Identify ways to increase BLM's interpretive services through cooperative efforts with other public lands, cooperating associations, outfitters and guides, concessionaires, and other government and non-government organizations. (All levels, on going)

OBJECTIVE: Leverage BLM funding and kind contributions to help achieve management and interpretive goals.

Actions:

1. Use existing database and grant coordinators to identify alternative funding sources for interpretation projects. (All levels, on going)
2. Increase partnership funding for interpretation. (All levels, on going)

GOAL 4 INTERPRETATION WILL IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY, PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION (BUSINESS PRACTICES).

OBJECTIVE: Improve the interpretive programs' accountability, performance and evaluation practices.

Actions:

1. Define directives and workload measures for interpretation to increase visibility and accountability. (National Lead & Budget Office, FY2000)
1. Develop a team to keep BLM employees informed of the latest technology and developments which will result in cost effective interpretation and enhanced customer service. (National Lead, FY99)
2. Identify interpretive projects and facilities in RMIS and FIMMS. (National Lead, FY2001)
3. Maintain accurate databases (RMIS, FIMMS) for interpretive projects and facilities. (Field Offices, annually beginning FY2001)
4. Demonstrate to BLM management and staff how interpretation can meet their program goals. Publicize our successes. (National Lead on going)

OBJECTIVE: Increase involvement of BLM staff at all levels of the agency and across disciplines in identifying interpretive priorities.

1. Prepare an annual implementation plan each July which will identify the national priorities to be accomplished for the year. (National Lead on going)
2. Prepare an annual report each September on the BLM's interpretive program accomplishment for the year (State Leads and National Lead)
3. Conduct annual interpretive meetings that involve people from varied BLM disciplines (National Lead 1999)
4. Encourage attendance at interpretive training (National and State leads on going)

GOAL 5 SEEK FUNDING TO ENSURE SUSTAIN ABILITY OF INTERPRETATION IN BLM.

OBJECTIVE: Incorporate interpretation into the budget process.

Actions:

1. Promote interpretation in the budget process
2. Identify key sources of funding (resource activities/subactivities, fee demonstration, challenge cost share) and incorporate into the annual directives. (National & State Leads, FY99)
3. Develop a mechanism for tracking interpretive accomplishments through the budget process. (National Lead, FY2000)
4. Include interpretive accomplishments in the annual performance report. (National Lead, FY98)
5. Develop an ongoing dialogue with budget staff, which inserts interpretation in the Bureau's budget cycles. (National Lead, 1999)
6. Work with the BLM budget office to get increase funding for interpretation from Congress

OBJECTIVE: Identify agency-wide budget needs for interpretive services.

Actions:

1. Evaluate funding needs for existing interpretive services and facilities. (National & State Leads)
2. Survey Field office needs for interpretive services (National & State Leads, on a three-year cycle beginning in FY99).

GOAL 6 INTERPRETATION WILL IMPROVE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.

OBJECTIVE: Provide professional training and development opportunities for staff and management especially those involved in implementing interpretive programs and developing partnerships.

Actions:

1. Create and distribute an interpretive tool kit (references, self study training materials, project examples) to field personnel. (National Lead, FY99)
2. Coordinate with NTC to assess training needs in interpretation (National Lead, on a biannual base beginning in 1999)
3. Continue to expand the use of interagency training. (National Lead & State Leads, Ongoing)
4. Work with NTC to incorporate interpretation into other resource training programs (e.g., cultural, wildlife, recreation). (National Lead, FY99)
5. Identify people to serve as mentors and help train other staff. (National Lead & State Leads, FY99)
6. Expand institutional memberships in professional organizations (i.e., National Association for Interpretation, North American Association for Environmental Education). (National & State Leads, Ongoing)
7. Encourage BLM participation in national awards programs such as the National Association for Interpretation award competition, BLM Excellence in Interpretation and E.A.. (National & State Leads, FY98)

OBJECTIVE: Provide an effective organizational framework that supports interpretation at all levels of the organization.

Actions:

1. Provide model job descriptions and performance criteria (to supervisors and managers) for positions with interpretive duties at the State Office and Field Office level. (National Lead, Ongoing)

2. Encourage BLM interpreters to obtain professional certification from National Association for Interpretation. (National Lead & State Leads, beginning)
3. Encourage each State Director to have a state lead for interpretation who is qualified and active in the profession and dedicates 50% of their time to interpretation. (National Interpretation Lead & National Group Leader for Recreation, FY99)
4. Evaluate vacant positions as potential interpretation positions when a need for interpretive expertise exists. (State Leads, Ongoing)
5. Establish an internal networking system among different disciplines within the BLM that is available to people involved in interpretation. (National Lead & State Leads, FY99)

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GOAL 7 IMPROVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AWARENESS.

OBJECTIVE: Increase the visibility of interpretation as a tool for accomplishing BLM's mission and goals (internal with program leads, staff, managers).

Actions:

1. Prepare articles highlighting effective interpretation for People, Land and Water and other agency newsletters. (National Lead & State Leads, on going)
2. Identify a champion for interpretation from the MT and Field Committee. (National Interpretation Lead & National Group Leader for Recreation, FY98)
3. Use BLM web sites (ie. National Internet Environmental Education, and Recreation Home Page) to show the diversity and accomplishments of interpretive programs. (National Lead, FY98)
4. Develop graphics for interpretation to be used to help identify interpretive tools. (Interpretive Team, FY99)
5. Develop a manager's award to recognize BLM managers for outstanding use and involvement of interpretation. (National Lead, FY99)

OBJECTIVE: Develop comprehensive information for the public about BLM's interpretive programs and services (materials).

Actions:

1. Encourage field offices to publicize interpretive opportunities within their areas. (National Lead & State Leads, Ongoing)
2. Develop a traveling exhibit highlighting BLM's interpretive programs and accomplishments for organizations such as the National Association for Interpretation, North American Association for Environmental Education, attending teacher workshops and conferences and the Watchable Wildlife Conference. (Team from all levels of the organization FY2000)