

Leadership Priorities: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What are the Leadership Priorities?

BLM leadership has developed a set of high-level priorities consistent with the themes and related goals of the Administration and our guiding legislation, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The priorities are organized along five themes:

- 1) **Making America Safe Through Energy Independence** (encouraging environmentally responsible development of energy and minerals on public lands);
- 2) **Making America Great Through Shared Conservation Stewardship** (by working with our partners to promote multiple-use on public lands);
- 3) **Making America Safe – Restoring Our Sovereignty** (through effective management of the borderlands and cooperation with the Department of Defense on public land issues);
- 4) **Getting America Back to Work** (by promoting job creation and supporting working landscapes); and
- 5) **Serving the American Family** (by being good neighbors, supporting traditional land uses such as grazing, and providing access to hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities).

What does this focus on priority work mean to me?

For some of us, it will mean analyzing our work processes to be more efficient. For others it will be following new guidance on how to do a particular task. For all us, it will mean continuing to work together to look for efficiencies, creative solutions, and better ways in everything we do.

Across the Bureau this effort will help us invest our available resources on our priority work. If a manager has a choice between doing Project A or Project B, our leadership priorities will help him or her know which project to take on first. We can all look to our leadership priorities to guide us in the process of aligning and focusing our work.

Change is an opportunity for BLM to focus on its mission and to do what we do best. It's also a time to look forward, find new and creative solutions, and improve how we serve the American people.

How will the new priorities change my day-to-day work?

Everyone will notice an increased emphasis on promoting multiple-use on public lands, consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. There could be shifts in projects you are working on, depending on your local line officer's priority focus. You may be asked to work on new or different projects based on your office's needs and staffing.

This is a time of change, and it may not be easy for some. But the BLM has a history of rising to the challenge of getting the job done with the available resources, through innovation and creative solutions, and by partnering with local communities.

Are the Leadership Priorities meant to capture all the work we do?

The Leadership Priorities represent a way to focus our work on the Administration's themes and goals. We realize that we do other important work that isn't identified here.

We've taken the approach of dividing the BLM workload into three categories or buckets. The first bucket is the priority workload that we are discussing here and that would be most responsive to the Leadership Priorities. The second bucket includes the work we must do by law or regulation that is not already in the first bucket. Leadership will review and prioritize the work in this second bucket and allocate resources accordingly. The third bucket includes any remaining low-priority work that leadership will review and assess, using any remaining funds available.

The Leadership Priorities provide the framework for how we will approach the work in all three buckets. The priorities will help us invest our resources efficiently so we can maximize the quality and quantity of our work, focusing on the first bucket and then the others in step. We can't do everything, but we can do more if we work efficiently and if we support each other along the way.

How does this mesh with BLM's work force planning and reorganization efforts?

Depending on the budget that is passed, we could have fewer dollars and fewer people to do the work we do. That is why it is critical to define top priorities to focus the work of our agency, and that is what BLM leadership has done.

The Leadership Priorities will help direct efforts to review the BLM's current alignment of functions, organizational structure, and workforce. The goal is to develop a more efficient structure that allows us to focus on the BLM's core mission, to better serve the American people, and to identify gaps where resources should be redirected to align with the FY 2018 budget.

The Leadership Priorities will also help guide efforts to identify the skills, training, and resources that our work force needs in order to accomplish our work.

Will there be workforce opportunities at BLM during this time of transition?

At BLM, we've long supported continued employee growth and development. One effective way for employees to develop is through detail assignments. The *BLM Daily* maintains a home page where announcements for [detail and temporary promotion opportunities](#) are posted. You can even sign up for email alerts when new opportunities are posted.

Because of the various hiring controls that are currently in place that limit our ability to recruit new employees from outside BLM, there is a growing number of detail and temporary promotion

opportunities being posted to temporarily fill important vacancies. Additionally, as we strive to orient and re-shape the BLM's workforce to align to the Leadership Priorities, there will be an increasing number of lateral reassignment opportunities posted to this same site.

We encourage employees who would like to explore new career opportunities within BLM to monitor the site and to consider lateral reassignments to vacant positions.

How should I approach all this change and uncertainty?

We can approach this time of change by being flexible and adaptable. We can speak up when we see something that we can do better or more efficiently. We can share our creative and innovative ideas via the BLM's Reform Team mail box at blm_wo_workingsmarter@blm.gov. We can support each other and help maintain a healthy work-life balance.

During this time of transition, we especially need to be mindful of safety—in the office and in the field. This can be a stressful and uncertain time, so it is important to take care of ourselves and one another. As Acting Director Mike Nedd says, “We’re BLM Strong and we can get through this transition if we work together.”

What can I do to help with this effort?

Leaders throughout the Bureau are looking for your open and honest feedback, and we’re counting on you to help move this agency forward during this transition by focusing on the Leadership Priorities. We ask each employee to learn about the priorities and understand how they help us accomplish BLM’s multiple-use and sustained-yield mission. We ask that you speak up to share ideas to streamline the work you’re involved with, to offer creative solutions to challenges you face, and to identify ways to enhance partnerships to work with communities and stakeholders you serve.

We can work through this transition if we stay engaged and support each other. We are stronger when we’re all in this together.

What do I say to partners or the public who have questions about the new priorities?

It is common with any change of Administration for government entities, including the BLM, to re-examine how we do our work for the American people. To provide new direction, the Administration has defined its five priority themes for the BLM, and they can be simplified for the public as follows: 1) Energy Independence, 2) Shared Conservation Stewardship, 3) Safe Borders, 4) Job Creation, and 5) Serving America. These shifts in priorities are consistent with BLM’s mission, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and the dual mandate of multiple use and sustained yield.

Public lands belong to the American people so it is important we address any questions or concerns that partners or the public may have. Employees are on the front line with serving the American people. By having a solid understanding of our new priorities, our mission, and FLPMA, we can provide a consistent message to interested citizens and stakeholders.

Who should I contact if I have questions or want to learn more about these priorities?

In the upcoming weeks, there will be an internal communication campaign to help inform all employees about the priorities, workforce planning efforts, budget, and organizational review. The Washington Office and State and Center Directors will be sharing information on the *BLM Daily*, at employee meetings, and state leadership teams. A special intranet site will be developed to provide access to current information and updates. Throughout the process, feel free to contact your local line managers and your public affairs specialists to ask questions and keep the dialog going.