

From: Nedd, Michael <mnedd@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 16, 2017 at 5:35 AM
Subject: Defining Our Priorities in a Time of Change
To: Michael Nedd <mnedd@blm.gov>

Hello Fellow BLMers,

Field season is in full swing across the BLM, and I know how hard you're working to carry out our important mission on behalf of the American people. Please remember that safety – for our employees, our visitors and other users of the public lands – is one of our highest priorities. Your Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has been hard at work, too, assessing shifts in priorities from the Administration, the impact of the President's proposed budget, and potential changes to our organizational structure.

The ELT and I recognize the value of certainty during these changing times, which is why we developed a core set of Leadership Priorities to provide a path forward. The result is a comprehensive list of priority assignments that will help us focus our limited resources strategically through the rest of this fiscal year, into FY 2018, and beyond.

Attached to this email are Qs&As that explain how the ELT and I see our mission relative to the Administration's priorities: supporting energy independence through environmentally responsible development; promoting conservation through shared stewardship; making America safe through effective border management; promoting jobs on working landscapes; and serving the American family—which includes being good neighbors and recognizing traditional uses of public lands (i.e., hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities).

These shifts in priorities are consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and our mission of multiple use. We're still the Federal government's premier land management agency, ready to meet the professional challenges and personal rewards that come when you manage 245 million acres of land and 700 million acres of mineral estate. These public lands and subsurface acres are integral to the lives and livelihoods of communities and families across the country.

By defining our priorities, we can better understand how we may be asked to change the way we do some of our work. To that end, we're looking at streamlining certain processes, working with our partners more closely on conservation and other issues, and looking for efficiencies that will allow us to better serve the American people, among other things.

We can't discuss workload, however, without addressing the challenging budget environment that we face. In an attempt to balance the Federal budget, the President has proposed about a 13 percent cut in our funding from current operating levels. While the President's budget makes its way through Congress, we're taking steps to prepare for potential eventualities on three fronts:

The first, as I mentioned above, is to establish our priorities for the work we can accomplish with the resources we have. The second concerns Department-wide reorganization efforts. I wrote to you last month about the BLM Reform Team – headed by Oregon/Washington State Director Jamie Connell – and the group's efforts to solicit ideas, seek efficiencies, and analyze what has worked for the BLM in the past. That effort continues.

Finally, we are addressing the BLM workforce. While the FY 2018 budget is not final, we must heed the staffing levels that it calls for. For our agency, this could mean 1,000 fewer full-time equivalent employees across the Nation. I understand this may create anxiety among some staff as we try to plan for the future of our agency, ourselves, and our families. Your leadership team is working to minimize the impact to our workforce while reviewing our priority work to determine what can be accomplished with the resources available.

We remain hopeful that the BLM can handle reducing the size of our workforce through normal attrition, retirements, and smart, selective hiring with an emphasis on trying to fill our critical vacancies from within our current workforce. To accelerate attrition, the Department may also seek authority from the Office of Personnel Management to offer early retirement and voluntary separation incentives later this year.

Constant communication is key as we move forward. From the ELT to your local leadership, we commit to keeping you updated on the above efforts as more information becomes available. In the meantime, I encourage you to discover a great new tool on the BLM Daily portal that announces job details, temporary promotions, and lateral reassignment opportunities that are open across the agency. Find it under the “Quick Links” tab on the BLM Daily or by clicking [here](https://blmspace.blm.doi.net/wo/700/WorkDetailsDatabase/SitePages/Home.aspx#/list) (<https://blmspace.blm.doi.net/wo/700/WorkDetailsDatabase/SitePages/Home.aspx#/list>). We have a talented team here at the BLM, and we must stay engaged with interesting and meaningful work in areas where it is needed.

This is a time of change, and it may not always be easy going forward. But BLM has a history of rising to the challenge and getting the job done, through innovation and creative solutions, and – most importantly – through the dedication and hard work of employees like you.

Today, I’m asking you to learn about our Leadership Priorities, remain flexible and adaptable, and keep being mindful of safety – in the office and in the field. During this transition, it’s important we take extra care of one another and ourselves. If we do so, I know we will succeed. We’re BLM Strong, and we’ll get through this transition. We are all in this together.

Take care and have a wonderful day! :)

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A thought to consider "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, for all the people you can, while you can!"