Cultural Resources Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) stewards the largest, most diverse, and most scientifically important body of cultural, historical, and paleontological resources on federal lands. Yet only about 10% of BLM lands have been surveyed for heritage resources, meaning we have limited data about the types and density of cultural resources that exist on nearly 90% of our public lands.

Background

BLM’s Cultural Resources Management (CRM) program inventories, evaluates, and manages cultural and paleontological resources on public lands, as well as associated data and museum collections, for the benefit of the public. The cultural resources program also supports National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review of land-use proposals, Section 110 inventory and protection of cultural resources, compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and consultation with Tribes and Alaska Native Governments. This work includes surveys of sensitive areas, site protection, and stabilization projects for sites vulnerable to unauthorized activities and damage.

FY 2020 Appropriations Request

Please support $20 million for the Cultural Resources Management at the Bureau of Land Management in the FY 2020 Interior Appropriations bill.

APPROPRIATIONS BILL: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management
ACCOUNT: Management of Lands and Resources
ACTIVITY: Land Resources
SUBACTIVITY: Cultural Resources Management

Recent Funding History:
FY 2017 Enacted Funding: $16.131 million
FY 2018 Enacted Funding: $17.131 million
FY 2019 Enacted Funding: $17.131 million
FY 2020 President’s Budget Request: $15.585 million
FY 2020 NTHP Recommendation: $20 million

JUSTIFICATION: Increased funding is necessary to fulfill BLM’s statutory requirements for inventory and protection of cultural resources. Funding would also support updated predictive modeling and data analysis to enhance the implementation and maintenance of BLM’s National Cultural Resources Management (CRM) Data Standard—a successful collaboration with western State Historic Preservation Officers to manage cultural resource information. The CRM Data Standard creates an interstate-level GIS database of historic and cultural resources that can be utilized during high-level planning, including Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements, Resource Management Plans, and other large-scale analyses and permitting reviews to help avoid conflict and costly permitting delays.
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado contains some of the highest densities of archaeological sites in North America, with pueblos from around 1200 AD.

PHOTO BY BOB WICK, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Cultural Resources Management*

BLM has inventoried cultural resources on 25.5 million acres (10% of its land base) and recorded approximately 391,000 properties. Resources include:

• 141 National Register of Historic Places (National Register) listed properties
• 2,187 National Register contributing properties
• 57,291 National Register eligible properties
• 425 maintained historic structures
• 30,413 recorded paleontological localities
• 10 million artifacts and specimens in 165 museums and universities

*Information from the 2017 Public Lands Statistics report and FY 2018 BLM Budget Justification

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