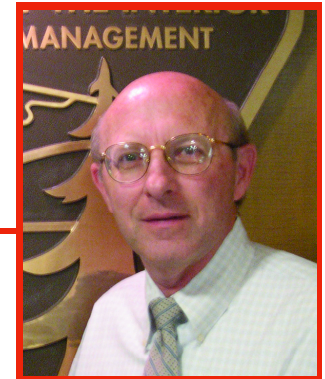




## RAY BRADY

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Bureau of Land Management



### What is the Bureau of Land Management?

As part of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is a small agency with a big responsibility. It manages more land than any other Federal agency – some 262 million surface acres, an area about the size of California and Texas combined, along with some 700 million acres of subsurface Federal mineral estate. The vast majority of these public lands managed by BLM are located in the western U.S. and Alaska.

### What is the BLM's primary mission?

The BLM's mission – to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations – is both complex and challenging.

The BLM's mandate from Congress is to manage the public lands for multiple uses, however, the variety of these uses may conflict with or impact each other. The BLM-managed public lands contribute to the quality of life of the American people and to our national interests in many different ways. The public lands offer boundless opportunities for recreation and adventure in some of the most spectacular landscapes in America, but these same public lands also support economic activities, including energy development and right of way infrastructure, that are vital to the

health of local economies and to our national economy. In many cases, managing these competing interests requires a balancing of priorities and making difficult decisions on the appropriate uses of the land.

### What are the challenges facing the BLM ?

The BLM faces significant challenges in managing and responding to these competing interests. These challenges include promoting responsible development of our Nation's energy resources to reduce our reliance on foreign sources; providing for the exploration and development of new or renewable sources of energy and the development of rights of way for the delivery of energy; reducing fuel buildups in our forests and rangelands that increase the risk of wildfires; providing recreation opportunities and places of solitude for an exploding western population; improving wildlife habitat and working toward the recovery of threatened and endangered species; managing wild horse and burro populations on the public lands; and providing lands for local community infrastructure and economic development needs.

### What is the perception of public land usage?

The needs of a growing and changing West are increasing and BLM must address them. The American West, home to most of our BLM-managed public lands, is now the fastest growing region of the



Nation. Eight of the 12 fastest-growing states are in the West, and the rate of growth in these western states averaged 30 percent from 1990 to 2000 – more than twice the national average of 13 percent during the same period. Millions of people in rapidly growing western communities are now within an hour's drive of formerly remote public lands. As a result of these and other changes, public lands are increasingly viewed from the perspective of their diverse recreational opportunities and in an increasingly urban world, their vast open spaces. However, the more traditional land uses of grazing, timber production, and energy and mineral development are also very important, especially to the economic and social well-being of many western communities and States.

### What programs are you currently focused on?

The BLM has focused our efforts on four overarching mission or program areas to respond to demands on the public lands:

- 1) **Resource Protection** - to improve, restore and maintain the health of our public lands; sustain important biological communities; and protect cultural and natural heritage resources
- 2) **Resource Use** - to provide for the sustainable use and management of energy and renewable energy resources, non-energy mineral resources, forest and woodland resources, rangeland forage resources, and lands for right of way infrastructure uses
- 3) **Recreation** - to enhance the quality of recreational opportunities and improve access to public lands
- 4) **Serving Communities** - to improve fire management and safety, improve protection of public resources, and improve public information.

### What are some of your immediate goals?

The way of life we Americans take for granted every day depends on a stable and abundant supply of affordable energy, much of that from the public lands. The ranching culture of the American West has historically been the backbone of our country, but as the Nation's population has expanded, energy has become increasingly important.

The public lands of the West contain significant reserves of oil, natural gas, coal and minerals that maintain our quality of life. Energy keeps our homes warm in the winter and cool in the summer and is critical in producing, processing, transporting, preparing and preserving our food. Energy powers our communication and

computing networks and allows us to move people and goods safely and quickly across the U.S. However, to supply this energy also requires the necessary infrastructure and rights of way on the public lands to move the energy to the market.

### What role does BLM play relative to the nation's energy sources?

As manager of more Federal land than any other Federal agency, the BLM plays a key role in implementing many provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. In recent years, BLM-administered lands have produced some 40 percent of the Nation's coal, 18 percent of its natural gas, and 5 percent of its oil. Coal and natural gas production on the public lands continues to increase. Coal mined from the public lands is used primarily for the generation of electricity and is the source for 16 to 18 percent of the electricity used in the US.

The development of renewable energy resources, especially geothermal and wind energy resources on the public lands, is increasingly important. The development of right of way infrastructure on the public lands, especially electric transmission lines and oil and gas pipelines is also critical. BLM has therefore placed the highest priority on streamlining the permitting process for energy resource development, updating regulations to be consistent with the provisions of the Energy Policy Act, and providing the necessary resources to enhance the business practices of the agency.

### How is funding allocated among the various BLM programs?

The allocation of funding for the various BLM programs is ultimately the responsibility of Congress through the annual appropriations process. However, agency funding requests are based upon the priorities and goals established through the BLM Strategic Plan or operating plan. This operating plan tiers directly off of the Department of the Interior's strategic plan. Additional funds are also available to BLM through the cost-recovery program that requires applicants for rights of way on the public lands to cover some of our costs.

### What is the Operating Plan?

The BLM's operating plan is focused on the four main themes that were previously addressed under our program focus areas: Resource Protection, Resource Use, Recreation and Serving Communities.

The BLM expends approximately 31 percent of its total funding on its Resource Protection mission, approximately 24 percent on its Resource Use mission, approximately 13 percent on its Recreation



mission, and approximately 32 percent on its Serving Communities mission (with a significant portion of this funding supporting the wild land fire program).

It is interesting to note that the BLM generates over \$1 billion annually in Federal revenue from commercial activities on the public lands. The market value of the products produced from the public lands runs between \$10 billion and \$20 billion annually. Typically, 98 to 99 percent of this revenue and production is derived from energy and minerals activities, livestock grazing, timber sales, and right of way fees. These revenues are deposited into the General Treasury of the US.

### **Which programs directly affect the right of way professional?**

It is estimated that approximately 90 percent of the major oil and gas pipelines and major electric transmission lines in the West are dependent to some degree on right of way authorizations across the public lands. The BLM currently administers some 27,000 right of way authorizations for oil and gas pipelines and some 13,900 right of way authorizations for electric transmission lines. We process some 1,400 pipeline right of way authorizations and some 500 electric transmission right of way authorizations each year. The number of oil and gas pipeline authorizations has increased by more than 10 percent each year during the last few years. We expect that number to grow by 15-20 percent annually over the next 5 years.

### **How will you prepare for this anticipated growth?**

This is a significant workload and we depend upon the industry right of way professionals to work closely with our BLM field staffs to ensure enough lead time is built into a project to complete the pre-planning, prepare complete right of way application packages, and assist in the review process.

The BLM has established several National Project Manager positions to assist our BLM field offices in the processing of major right of way projects. These positions were established to: 1) improve the coordination of right of way projects that may involve several field offices or cross State boundaries and to 2) streamline the processing of major projects. In addition, BLM has established a National Lands Academy and other right of way training programs to maintain a level of proficiency for our lands and realty staff.

The BLM is also currently involved in a west-wide corridor planning effort with the Forest Service, Department of Defense and the Department of Energy as required by Section 368 of the Energy Policy

## **“BLM generates over \$1 billion annually in Federal revenue from commercial activities on the public lands.”**

Act of 2005. A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is currently being prepared that will evaluate issues associated with the designation of energy corridors on federal lands in the eleven western States. The Corridor EIS was initiated in September 2005 and a website established at [www.corridoreis.anl.gov](http://www.corridoreis.anl.gov) to provide public information on the project. A Preliminary Draft Corridor Map has been posted on the EIS webpage and the Draft EIS is expected to be released for public review by January 2007.

We encourage those professionals actively involved in right of way issues to be engaged and participate in this public review process for the designation of energy corridors on federal lands in the west.

### **How can the IRWA help you achieve your goals ?**

The BLM works with numerous partners – States, counties, local communities, other agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals – to meet its stewardship responsibilities for our Nation’s vast public land holdings. These diverse partners have eagerly joined the BLM in providing assistance with on-the-ground projects, as well as providing additional resources and cooperative efforts for training, outreach and education, and assistance in the facilitation of conflicts.

We deeply appreciate the support of our partners and are grateful for their many contributions and valuable help. I would like to especially acknowledge the cooperative partnership relationship that we have had for many years with the IRWA. The IRWA support of the BLM right of way pipeline course is an example of that partnership. Our joint training and outreach efforts have been of great benefit to both BLM staff and to IRWA members. These efforts need to continue and we need to look at opportunities to expand these efforts as well. In addition, I would like the IRWA to assist in the outreach and review process for the Corridor EIS and planning process that was described previously. ●