



Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation

Whether by foot, horseback, or on wheels, recreational activities are how most people connect with their public lands. As one of its first program initiatives, the Foundation for America's Public Lands is working with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to refine the agency's Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation and ensure it aligns with the needs and desires of the communities it serves.



ABOUT THE RECREATION BLUEPRINT

The BLM's "Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation" establishes a new vision to provide exceptional and unique recreational experiences that invite all to share in the enjoyment and stewardship of their public lands. Through the Blueprint, the Bureau invites partners to embrace a shared commitment to improve the accessibility and sustain the quality of the diverse recreation opportunities found on America's public lands.

This first-of-its-kind Blueprint establishes a roadmap for the next several years focusing on four strategic pillars:



Grow and Diversify Funding for BLM Recreation



Prioritize and Embrace Partnerships



Expand Outreach and Establish a Culture of Inclusion



Meet the Demand, Protect Resources, and Improve Access



BLM lands contribute to **more than \$11B** in economic output and **~498,000 jobs** from outdoor recreation on public lands.



Recreation staffing levels declined by **more than 10%** in the past 5 years.

WHY NOW?

The growing demands on public lands and waters, along with the limitations of current resources and existing management approaches, signal a critical need for investments in BLM-managed lands.

The Blueprint offers a timely and essential pathway to promote sustainable recreation and ensure the continued enjoyment, conservation, and resilience of public lands and waters for future generations.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

As use of BLM recreation resources continues to grow, the BLM faces a critical window to advance a transformational shift in recreation management.



Increasing Demand, Stagnant Resources: Over the last decade, BLM has experienced a substantial increase in visitors, with a 35% surge in visitation since 2015. However, the agency's budget and staffing levels have not kept pace with this growing demand. The agency's recreation budget has remained relatively stagnant at about \$0.79 per visit on average, even declining in real terms, while recreation staffing levels have declined by more than 10% in the past 5 years. The disparity between growing visitor numbers and shrinking resources puts immense strain on both the land and the BLM's ability to manage these spaces effectively.



Inadequate Access and Inclusion: Despite the proximity of BLM lands to over 120 urban centers and thousands of towns, the lack of awareness, access, and inclusion limit diverse communities' engagement with these public lands. BLM outdoor recreation opportunities need to be more known and accessible to all people, including youth and underserved communities.



Need for Diverse and Sustainable Funding: Public lands and waters contribute more than \$111 billion in economic output and approximately 498,000 jobs nationwide. Despite this, the current funding for BLM recreation is neither sufficient nor diversified, hindering the agency's ability to ensure the sustainable use and conservation of these lands.



Preservation of Natural and Cultural Resources: As visitor numbers grow, so does the potential impact on the natural and cultural resources on these lands and waters. Without proactive management and clear guidance for visitors, the risk of harm to these precious resources increases.

VISION

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will require strong and effective partnerships; increased outreach with a culture of inclusivity and accessibility; diversified and sufficient funding for BLM recreation; and a balanced approach to meeting recreational demand while protecting resources.

The following key success metrics offer a means to measure the progress of the Blueprint's implementation:

- 1 Recognition and Leadership:** A marked increase in public awareness and recognition of BLM lands and waters and their unique recreational benefits. Leadership will be demonstrated through the BLM's progressive strategies and commitment to implementing the Blueprint's goals.
- 2 Inclusivity and Equitable Recreation:** Enhanced diversity, equity, and inclusion in BLM programs and access.
- 3 Partnerships & Collaboration:** Strengthened relationships with local, state, Tribal Nation governments, nonprofits, and private sector partners to share stewardship and improve management.
- 4 Durability & Longevity of Public Lands:** Effective protection and conservation of natural and cultural resources on BLM lands despite increasing visitor numbers.
- 5 Financial Sustainability:** Increased and diversified funding for BLM recreation to ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.