



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

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BLM RELEASES RIPARIAN-WETLAND INITIATIVE FOR THE 1990's

The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released today a plan for managing riparian-wetlands on public land.

The plan, called the Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's, sets a series of goals and strategies to meet healthy conditions on the 23.7 million acres of riparian-wetlands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Initiative also summarizes the state of our efforts at managing these vital ribbons of green that are so valuable for fish, wildlife, livestock, water quality, recreation, and biodiversity.

Four national goals are set forth in the plan:

1. Restore and maintain riparian-wetlands so that 75 percent are in proper functioning condition by 1997.
2. Protect riparian-wetland areas and associated uplands through proper land management and avoid or mitigate negative impacts.
3. Ensure an aggressive riparian-wetland education program, including providing training and research.
4. Improve partnerships and cooperative restoration and management efforts in implementing the initiative.

(more)

BLM will implement an inventory of riparian-wetland conditions, prepare plans, implement projects to protect and enhance the resources, and monitor accomplishments.

The initiative also calls for acquiring riparian-wetlands, primarily through voluntary exchanges, where appropriate, to ensure systemwide habitat improvement.

The initiative provides a framework for field actions through BLM's state, district, and area offices. Each state is developing necessary strategies to implement the initiative consistent with existing regulations, policy, and funding.

The initiative provides an overall strategy in fulfilling BLM's multiple use mandate and will be used with other plans such as "Waterfowl Habitat Management on Public Lands," "The Range of Our Vision" which is a plan to manage public rangelands, "Fish and Wildlife 2000" and "Recreation 2000."

Achieving the riparian part of the initiative will require an estimated budget of almost \$61 million and an increase of 300 additional positions between 1991 and 1995. In addition, the wetland management part of the initiative will require about \$10 million over the next 10 years, and project maintenance will require \$2 million annually.

BLM