

The Big Squeeze

107 million hectares (264 million acres) sounds like a lot . . . and it is. But the open spaces of BLM lands are no longer quite so empty. That's because more and more people are moving to the western states.

For example, just since 1990, the population of Nevada has grown by 45 percent. You won't find houses and shopping malls being built on BLM lands. But public lands are getting busier just the same.

More people in the West means that many more people are using BLM lands for recreation. You know how a soccer field looks after a long, hard season? Some well-used areas of BLM lands can begin to look a little worn out, too, especially if people don't treat the lands with respect. (See page 36 for a list of suggestions on how to treat the lands with respect.)

