

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS

SERVICE FIRST



Under a unique, cooperative venture called Service First, the San Juan Field Office-BLM and San Juan National Forest manage public land together in southwestern Colorado. The agencies work as a joint entity under the Service First Initiative, which allows local USFS and BLM offices to combine resources to improve public-land management. The Service First Initiative was highlighted as a line item in the President's, and USFS's and BLM's, 2002 budget justifications. According to the National Service First Charter, the restructuring of the San Juan is designed to combine the best of each agency to manage 2.5-million acres of public

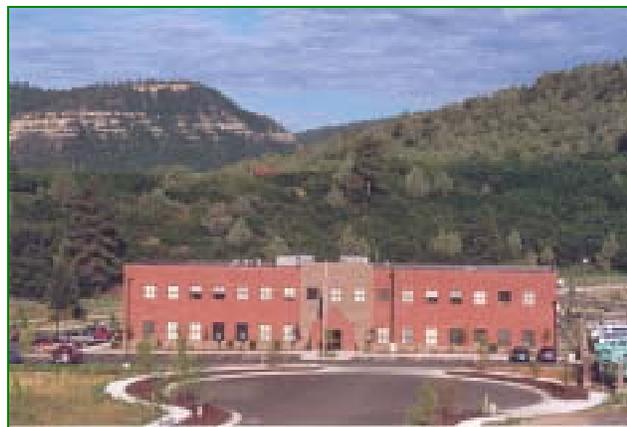
land.

OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Improve customer service through one-stop shopping for information, and maps and common permits for firewood, Christmas trees, etc.
- ❑ Provide leadership through collaborative stewardship by working with local communities and culturally affiliated tribes.
- ❑ Improve the health of the land through watershed-based field units and joint resource programs.

ORGANIZATION

The San Juan Public Lands Center combines the former San Juan National Forest Supervisor's Office and one-third of the former BLM Montrose District into one independent, integrated unit. The San Juan Public Lands Leadership Team, which consists of eight USFS and four BLM employees (each cross-delegated to the other agency), is responsible for integrated leadership of all aspects of the two agencies' work and is equally responsible



to the USFS Regional Forester and BLM State Director. Shared USFS/BLM offices in Pagosa Springs, Durango, and Dolores, Colorado, oversee three combined USFS Ranger Districts and BLM Field Offices. The Canyons of the Ancients National Monument is also an attached BLM unit. As such, the San Juan's is the only organization in the country with a single team providing leadership in all aspects of land management and public service for the two federal agencies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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National Service First Web Site:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/servicefirst>

SERVICE FIRST PROJECTS

National Energy Plan

The Northern San Juan Basin Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is studying impacts of additional Fruitland coalbed methane wells on USFS, BLM, state, and private land in the Northern San Juan Gas Field of southwestern Colorado. The field can potentially produce 2.5 trillion cubic feet of methane over the next 30 years, with an estimated \$7.5 billion in gross revenues.



The EIS is a joint effort of the USFS, BLM, and La Plata County, Colorado, with funding split 55% industry/45% federal and county. The proposal calls for development of about 300 new wells, an estimated additional 125 miles of access roads and pipelines, and approximately ten additional compressors. Issues to be studied include property values, noise, visual effects, tax revenues, water depletions, gas seepage into domestic water wells, impacts on vegetation, wildlife, roadless values, archaeological resources, and air quality.

National Fire Plan



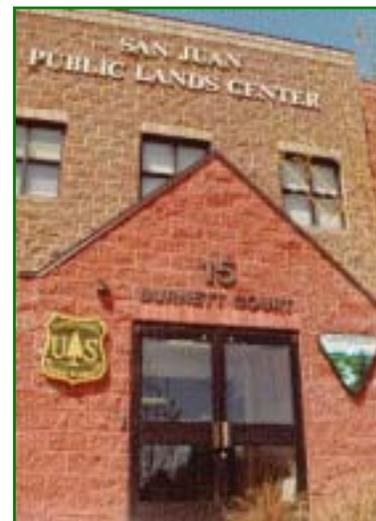
The San Juan Public Lands Center Interagency Fire Dispatch Center supports integrated fire response on land managed by the San Juan National Forest, San Juan Field Office-BLM, Mesa Verde National Park, Bureau of Indian Affairs (Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservations), Colorado State Forest Service, and six counties.

The center provides year-round wildfire response coverage 24-7, regardless of agency or type of incident. Fuel-treatment projects under the National Fire Plan also comprise a large amount of the workload and are accomplished through integrated prescribed fire and mechanical treatments across jurisdictions.

Joint Planning Revisions

Work has begun to revise the BLM San Juan Resource Management Plan and the FS San Juan NF Land and Resource Management Plan in one concurrent, coordinated effort, through an interdisciplinary team of planners and resource specialists with responsibilities for both agencies. Two plans with compatible direction will be packaged together and documented in one EIS, with two separate Records of Decision.

The San Juan Planning Team is in the second year of a project to extend the NRIS vegetation and soils GIS information that already exists for USFS-managed land to adjacent BLM-managed land. Consistent management across adjacent federal land will allow the public to speak to one agency contact for each issue, whether it affects land managed by the FS or the BLM.



Just as important, resources would be managed on a watershed and/or landscape scale in a

more holistic, comprehensive fashion. More efficient use would be made of planning resources because most of the same staff would be involved in both efforts. Completing the two plans together is expected to take less time and effort than would independent efforts because of an economy of scale. Because the agencies share many of the same interested publics, community participation in the planning process would also be more user-friendly and comprehensive.

Canyons of the Ancients



Under Service First, a land-health assessment was completed for 18 range allotments in the new BLM Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) with the help of a USFS range ecologist from the Dolores Public Lands Office. Recommendations for future grazing management on 164,000 acres will result from the effort.

The BLM Colorado program leader for hydrology is coordinating with local USFS hydrologists to identify water sources in CANM. This inventory will be completed in 2002. A local BLM weed coordinator was trained and supervised by a USFS range management specialist to inventory and document noxious-weed infestations in 20% of CANM. USFS staff in the Dolores Public Lands Office provides GIS services to CANM, which will be a critical component during preparation of the CANM Management Plan. USFS Public Affairs staff helps disseminate information about CANM to the general public.

Rangeland Management Program

One staff person in the San Juan Public Lands Center oversees the rangeland management program for both BLM and USFS. Rangeland management specialists are concentrated in Field Offices/Ranger Districts where the workload is greatest. This allows for more complete and effective grazing-permit administration.

Regardless of agency boundaries, rangeland management specialists administer those BLM and USFS grazing allotments, which are held by an individual permittee, together. Combining skills has also allowed consolidation of the noxious-weed, rangeland inventory, and monitoring programs.

