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Secretary Norton Announces Appointments to BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced today the appointment of five members to the Dakotas' citizen-based Resource Advisory Council (RAC) that advises the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on public land issues.

"We value the concerns and input that the Dakotas Resource Advisory Council provides in helping us to manage our public lands," Norton said. "I welcome our new members and look forward to their commitment, expertise, and counsel as we work to improve the health of our public lands."

Composed of citizens chosen for their expertise in natural resource issues, the BLM's 24 RACs help improve the health and productivity of public lands across the West. Each RAC provides counsel and advice on public lands planning and management within the RAC's jurisdictional boundary.

"RAC members bring diverse backgrounds and a wide range of perspectives to each of our councils," said BLM Director Kathleen Clarke. "This diversity results in a balanced outlook that helps the BLM carry out its multiple-use mission in North and South Dakota."

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Montana/Dakotas State Director Marty Ott added, “The Dakotas RAC joins the three RACs in Montana in providing advice on public lands issues in the three states. Having a separate RAC for the Dakotas helps us keep more in tune with local issues in just these two states.”

New and reappointed members and the groups they represent are:

Ron Ness, energy/minerals (reappointment)

Andrea Stomberg, energy/minerals (new)

Robert Paulson, environmental (reappointment)

Richard Brauhn, academia (reappointment)

John Hoganson, state natural resources (new)

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land—262 million surface acres—than any other federal agency. Most of the country's BLM-managed public land is located in 12 western states, including Alaska. The bureau, which has a budget of \$1.8 billion and a workforce of 10,000 employees, also administers 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's "multiple use" mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM accomplishes this by managing for such resources as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, and energy and mineral development that helps meet the nation's energy needs, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on the public lands.

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