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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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To: AD's and AFO's

From: Assistant Director, Renewable Resources and Planning

Subject: Information Technology in Support of Land Use Planning (IT-LUP) Project;
Bureau of Land Management Data Management 2001 Project - Their
Relationship to Land Use Planning in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Purpose: This Information Bulletin clarifies how the Information Technology in Support of Land Use Planning project (IT-LUP) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Data Management 2001 project relate to Land Use Planning in the BLM.

Policy/Action: The BLM is currently engaged in a major planning effort to develop Resource Management Plans in many areas across the Bureau. The IT-LUP and Data Management Project will both affect the planning process in the short and long term.

Information Technology in Support of Land Use Planning Project

IT-LUP received Information Technology Investment Board (ITIB) approval in August 2001 to prepare project and acquisition plans. This project will begin early in the 2002 calendar year and has four primary objectives:

1. To use the Internet to provide Land Planning data and analysis information through an Internet Map Server (IMS) with a "common look and feel".
2. To acquire and re-format data following established data and metadata standards as outlined in the Data Management Plan 2001.
3. To store, organize, and enable access to spatial data through a relational data base management system (RDBMS). This will require converting our spatial data used in LUP and other business processes to a virtual, seamless, consistent National standard.

4. To provide state-of-the-art GIS tools required for spatial data development, spatial analysis, and mapping technology in support of Land Use Planning.

These objectives will be accomplished by developing a national planning website and state/regional website templates, providing assistance to post planning documents to the web, assist in digital document creation for the Web and on CD-ROMs, provide on-line training for the use of these web and CD documents, and finally to implement data standards through the use of RDBMS technology. For more information about IT-LUP, see:

http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-500/sco/lup/sco_lup.htm

Data Management Plan 2001

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Data Management Plan project was initiated to reduce information management costs while improving the usability of BLM business data. This project will develop essential policies, procedures, and tools for better management of spatial and alphanumeric data. Products from this effort are expected to include:

1. Methods to create and maintain data standards
2. Ways to reduce data duplication
3. Tools to monitor adherence of data to standards
4. Definition of roles, responsibilities, and competencies required in data management

Implementation of project products will remain the responsibility of business programs, working under the leadership of the Bureau Data Administrator. More information about this project can be found at: http://web.blm.gov/data_mgt

What are the immediate effects to planning?

The Data Management project has defined policies that have an immediate effect on land use planning efforts. The use of metadata and data content standards for land use planning was addressed in Instruction Memorandum 2001-202 (August 3, 2001) and includes references and definitions necessary to comply, including the procedures to make metadata available through the BLM FGDC Clearinghouse node. In addition, some national BLM data content standards do exist and should be used for the current land use planning efforts. For example, Instruction Memorandum 2000-040 (December 1, 1999) documents data standards for Wilderness and Wilderness Study areas. The current BLM data standards are posted on the BLM IRM System Coordination Office Data Standards Reference Library website at:

http://web.blm.gov/data_mgt/data_stds_index.htm

IT-LUP will soon begin the process to define user requirements and develop standards to achieve a “common look and feel” for planning documents posted on the web. Until complete format and display standards are developed to post planning documents on the Internet, States are encouraged to continue the policies they have in place and coordinate within the state to develop consistency between planning efforts. Until IT-LUP produces comprehensive data display standards to create this consistent format and display, existing standards should be used where they exist. Instruction Memorandum 2001-154 (June 7, 2001) identifies standard color palettes to portray mapping displays of land ownership categories in a consistent format. States are also encouraged to become aware of planning efforts occurring in adjacent states and to be consistent with those efforts to the extent possible.

What are the short-term effects to planning in FY 2002?

IT-LUP will convene three subject matter expert (SME) teams early in calendar year 2002 to define the project requirements. These SME teams will develop requirements and standards for LUP websites, define requirements for comment tracking content analysis, and build the framework for a National Data transition plan. States are encouraged to identify staff to participate in this exercise when requested. A spatial architecture study is expected to be complete in the spring of 2002 that will define the Information Technology (IT) architecture infrastructure to host spatial data and deliver that data using the Internet. IT-LUP will begin to implement this architectural solution in support of land use planning during FY 2002. A national planning website and regional website templates will be developed for use by local planning efforts and assistance in posting LUP web documents will be provided. IT-LUP has a data architecture component and states will be expected to begin developing data transition plans to convert data from existing file servers to the RDBMS solution as defined by the spatial architectural study.

The Data Management Plan will continue to define processes to manage BLM data as corporate assets and will issue further guidance in this area. New planning starts will be encouraged to adopt these practices to insure corporate data is properly managed. Any new national data standards that are issued are expected to be incorporated into the planning efforts.

What are the long-term effects to planning during FY 2003 and beyond?

IT-LUP will have an operational planning Internet site on-line for use by LUP efforts and will provide on-line training for users. One goal of IT-LUP is to create true digital documents, not merely digital copies of a paper document. This will be accomplished by creating extensive formatting and data display standards for these web based documents. These standards will be available for use and LUP efforts will be expected to use them to truly create a “common look and feel” that presents a consistent image to the public. The architecture will have been deployed for use by the planning efforts to publish these web documents and to house planning data. States will be expected to have completed their data transition plans to be actively populating the RDBMS servers with newly converted data.

Data management guidance and policy is anticipated to be fully implemented during FY 2003 and LUP will be expected to adopt those policies and guidance. The development of data standards is expected to continue and LUP should continue to incorporate those standards into planning efforts. IT-LUP will also be supported in the data modeling and data standardization effort by the Bureau Enterprise Architecture (BEA) initiative. The BEA provides the road map for guiding BLM's IT investments to meet its business needs and will provide support to integrate these data modeling and data standardization efforts into BLM's Target Data Architecture. For more information about the BEA, please see the following Intranet site: <http://web.blm.gov/bea/>.

Although new planning starts will be expected to use all available products produced by both IT-LUP and the Data Management project, we recognize that these products will be available for use by on-going LUP efforts at different points in the planning process. When and how these new products, tools, guidelines, and standards will be incorporated into these on-going efforts will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Time frame: This Information Bulletin is effective upon receipt.

Background: This information is intended only to clarify projects related to land use plans published on the world wide web.

Manual / Handbook Sections Affected: Several BLM Technical References, Manuals and Handbooks, including 4180 Handbook, H-4180-1.

Coordination: This information was prepared with the cooperation of staff from the Data Management Plan 2001 Project, and the WO Renewable Resources and Planning (WO 200).

Contact: Questions should be referred to Pat Green (WO-210), 202-452-7763 or Jim Horan (WO-560), 202-452-5023.

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