Scenario Planning: A Tool for Long-term Strategic Thinking

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School of Community Resource and Development
Socio-economic trends
Scenario Planning

A systematic tool for thinking creatively about possible futures.

- What are the drivers of uncertainty?
- How will these drivers impact us?
- What are the scenarios?
- What policies and strategies do we need to deal with these scenarios?

Stimulates strategic thinking

Challenges status quo
Northstar 2025
The future is trying to tell us something.
## Public Lands in Western States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Land Area</th>
<th>NFS Land in Million Acres (1,000 sq km)</th>
<th>BLM Land in Million Acres (1,000 sq km)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>5.9 (24)</td>
<td>48.0 (194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>8.2 (33)</td>
<td>29.9 (121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>20.5 (83)</td>
<td>11.9 (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>15.7 (64)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>20.8 (84)</td>
<td>15.2 (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>14.5 (59)</td>
<td>8.4 (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>11.3 (46)</td>
<td>12.2 (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>9.2 (37)</td>
<td>18.4 (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>9.4 (38)</td>
<td>13.5 (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>17.0 (69)</td>
<td>8.0 (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>22.0 (89)</td>
<td>87.0 (352)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>9.3 (37)</td>
<td>0.4 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public lands held by the National Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management

Trends

Employee Survey
What factors will affect the future (2025) of BLM's goal to protect and manage natural resources?
High Importance

- Scarcity of natural resources
- Trend of technological advances
- Invasive species
- Urbanization

- Climate change
- Funding
- Political landscape
- Public perception (social values, social license)
- Impacts of technological advances
- Big data
- Information management
- Citizen science
- Land use policies
- Markets

Low Uncertainty

High Uncertainty

- Meat consumption
- Biosecurity
Utopian Scenario

High Support for Public Lands

A

More lands added to public “spaces”
More transparent decision-making
Co-management increase
Highly informed public
Functioning sustainability framework
Planning based on longer vision of future
Inclusive decision making
Less litigation
More reuse and restoration
High morale
More resources available
Better recruitment (e.g. younger employees)

B

More competition for resources
More conflict
Intensive scrutiny and review
High accountability
Dilution of mission/chasing the money
Infighting
More different uses
Greater opportunities for stakeholders
Increased sensitivity to inclusivity
More political protests
Social media polarization
More creative solutions
Fewer solutions to risks
More complex decision making

C

Divestiture of public lands
Washington-centric decision making
Apathy/disengaged public
Increase in unfunded mandates
Rethinking of BLM mission
Permitted-use of BLM lands
Lack of users frustrated
Lack of employees
Lack of morale
Substitution of agency stewardship – nonprofit
Decisive policy changes (CCC)
Increased cost to the user to provide public goods

D

Lack/decrease of funding/resources
Poor or no decision making (gridlock)
Wedge issues predominate and pull up resources
Public lands at risk (water security, etc)
Loss of public trust
Increased litigation
Reactive management/process
Opportunity for collaboration
Washington-centric management

Doomsday Scenario

Low Support for Public Lands

Low Political Polarization

High Political Polarization
High Environmental Variability

Low

Support of Public Lands

Attracting challenge-driven workforce
Need for flexibility
Need for more collaboration (inter/intra agency)
Less normative biodiversity
Greater need for adaptive management
Wedge issues
More work, fewer resources
More vandalism/trespassing
Degradation of resources
Divestiture of public lands
Need for increased public outreach/education

High Support of Public Lands

Effective long term planning
Less litigation
High capacity to deal with envir. variability
More scientific data/understandability
Adequate budget and funding
Successful resource management results
High Environmental Variability

Low Support of Public Lands

Attracting challenge-driven workforce
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Attracting stable workforce
Consistent workload
More predictable engagement/collaboration

High Support of Public Lands

More litigation on wedge issues
Push towards prescriptive management
Need to have more collaborative decision making
Increased demand for scientific research
More resources for scientific research
Opportunity to provide extension work to private lands
More public scrutiny
More attractive management required
Increased demand in open land
Reduction in anthropogenic uses of the land
Increased pressure of adaptive management
Need for quick management response
More resources/funding available
Attracting younger workforce

Low Environmental Variability

Reduced social license
Complacency of workforce
Less engagement
More commercialization of commodities
Divestiture of public lands
Increased user fees
Less planning
More centralization and contraction of agency
Leading to status quo
Loss of relevance of conservation
Need for public outreach/communication

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## Developing Strategies, Actions and Policies

- Short-term, medium-term (6-10 yrs), long-term (beyond 2025).

### Policies/Strategies/Actions with the Following Focal Attributes:
- How will BLM attract, develop, retain, and manage new cohorts of workers in the future? (including office spaces)
- Will there be any new or updated infrastructure?
- How will BLM communicate externally with stakeholders and public, and how will data management evolve and how can BLM adapt? How can traditional processes transform?

### Strategies and Actions

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<th>Long-term</th>
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<td><strong>Short-term</strong></td>
<td><strong>Medium-term</strong></td>
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<td>1. Sharpening focus on the mission (including job description)</td>
<td>Recruit and Retention – Marketers have been working to change the perception of the BLM, school outreach</td>
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<td>2. Collaboration efforts: developing and sharing strategies to better understand BLM</td>
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<td>3. Hiring a team to further build BLM brand/mission</td>
<td>Education/Outreach to reach out to new workforce and further mission (Campus recruiting)</td>
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- **Recruit and Retention – Marketers have been working to change the perception of the BLM, school outreach**

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## Implementation Plan

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<th>Individual Adaptive Traits</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
<th>FY19</th>
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<td>Recruitment - recruit for adaptability</td>
<td>Conduct exit interviews to understand retention issues.</td>
<td>Integrate Individual Adaptive traits into IDP</td>
<td>Re-assess ind &amp; org traits for changes</td>
</tr>
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<td>Retention - conduct stay interviews for key positions</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Knowledge Management - complete a knowledge management strategy</td>
<td>Targeted EAP trainings on organizational adaptive traits.</td>
<td>Begin exploring technology for automation and collaboration opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Foundation - continue digitizing; develop a strategy for other paper-only records</td>
<td>Digital Foundation - Continue digitizing; Corporate data strategy</td>
<td>Digital Foundation - Corporate data standards implemented</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NS 2025 - Findings rollout; staff engagement</td>
<td>Begin celebrating experimental projects; “Northstar Awards”</td>
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<th>Topic Specific Initiatives</th>
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<td>Management review of hydrology and sociology capacity.</td>
<td>Continued emphasis on adaptive management.</td>
<td>Environmental scanning process with programs for trend changes.</td>
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<td>Expand social media capability/use and narratives.</td>
<td>Accelerate priority changes ID’d by units or programs. Experiments, rapid prototyping &amp; evaluation.</td>
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<td>Aide program responses</td>
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How we’ll build a learning organization

**Inputs**
- Northstar project support
- Participation in 10x Lab
- Ideas from partners & employees
- Funding of innovations

**Activities/ Outputs**
- Activities
  - Recruit & Retain
  - Information Management
  - Knowledge Management
  - Communication strategies
  - Program-specific sessions
  - 10X Lab
  - Evaluate Efforts
- Outputs:
  - A workforce of adaptive people
  - Changes in IDPs & TTOs;
  - Innovations and prototypes
  - Emphasis on adaptive behaviors

**Outcomes - Impact**

**Short-term:**
- Shift behaviors across population

**Long-term:**
- Learning Organization

**Impact:**
- Improved public land management in a dynamic, complex decade.

**Performance Measures**
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