

# Cost Recovery Handbook

H-1270-2

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**CHAPTER I - BLM COST RECOVERY****A. BLM Cost Recovery Overview****1. Introduction**

This handbook provides the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) cost recovery specifications and rates for various information products and services for the public. The purpose is to ensure that requesters are charged consistent and equitable fees, and the BLM recoups expenses, when appropriate.

**2. Legal Authority for Cost Recovery**

43 U.S.C. § 1460 authorizes the BLM to charge and collect fees to recover the costs of production, and associated administrative services, involved in providing information products and services. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-25 establishes Federal policy regarding fees assessed for Government services, provides information on the scope and types of activities subject to user charges, and provides guidance for agency implementation of charges. OMB Circular A-130 establishes certain restrictions on fee amounts whereas they may not exceed the cost of dissemination except where otherwise specifically authorized by statute.

**3. Relationship to 43 CFR Part 2, Freedom of Information (FOIA) Fee Schedule**

The BLM has chosen as policy to follow the Department of the Interior's (DOI) FOIA regulations, 43 CFR Subtitle A Part 2, *Appendix A, Fee Schedule*, when charging for products reproduced on a standard copy machine or scanned into an electronic format. Other types of products are identified as "Direct cost to DOI."

**4. BLM Cost Recovery Fee Schedule**

The BLM has compiled the comprehensive "BLM Cost Recovery Fee Schedule for Public Requests" (see Appendix 2). The schedule incorporates the FOIA Fee Schedule along with common information products and services. Additional information products and services not listed may be available by contacting the appropriate program office for more information. Fees for common and additional information products and services will be determined by using the Cost Recovery Rate Specifications (§IV).

**CHAPTER II - BLM COST RECOVERY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES****A. Products subject to the BLM Cost Recovery Fee Schedule**

Fees are based on the medium and/or equipment used to produce the information product. Fees are not based on the record type requested.

- 1. Paper Copies.** All paper copies (black and white, color) reproduced on a copy machine, including standard size copies (8 1/2" x 11" to 11" x 17") and non-standard size copies (any size larger than standard copies). Note: To protect the record integrity, the Public may not disassemble case files.
- 2. Scanned Copies.** All copies reproduced through a scanner and provided in either paper or electronic format.
- 3. Microform Copies.** Paper copies created from microforms.
- 4. Printouts from Electronic Records.** Includes printouts from word processing documents, spreadsheets, standard reports from computer programs, and specialty reports such as Legacy Rehost (LR) 2000 Serial Register Pages.
- 5. Plotter Products.** All outputs from plotter devices including raster, vector, geographic information, spatial images, and scanned images.
- 6. Maps.** All maps, whether color or black and white, independent of scale (1:100,000; 1:500,000; 1:1,000,000; etc.) and method of production or duplication (photographic, xerographic, etc.).
- 7. Publications.** BLM printed publications.
- 8. Special Products.** The BLM may designate specific products that are available at discounted or special costs in order to promote a product. Examples include: Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale List, Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale Results List, Geothermal Sales List, Geothermal Results List, and Noncompetitive Lands Available List. Costs not covered by discounted rate will be absorbed by the program area based on an analysis of promoting the product or the demand for the product. The BLM Washington Office (WO) Program Lead must obtain Assistant Director level approval for special product rates.
- 9. Unique Products.** Certain BLM offices may have unique products and may establish a specific cost recovery rate.
- 10. Other Agency Products.** The BLM may sell products from another agency based on that agency's established cost recovery rate (e.g., U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] maps must be sold at USGS prices).

**B. Services subject to the BLM Cost Recovery Fee Schedule**

- 1. Research.** Research time includes examination or analysis of records necessary to locate specific information or a record, which has been requested by a member of the Public.

*It does not include: (1) general guidance provided to assist and/or enable a member of the Public to conduct the research themselves; or (2) time spent with the Public in interpreting regulations, looking at maps, or other public relations type work, as all of these actions are considered as general assistance.*

Research time for a public request is free up to 15 minutes per request. Time expended for research in excess of 15 minutes will be charged in 15 minute increments. Research fees are charged even if records are not located or copies are not provided.

- 2. Mailing Costs.** Postage fees collected will be based on the rates charged by the provider (e.g. USPS, UPS, FedEx, etc.), plus the costs of containers. There is no charge for a standard letter-size envelope for one-ounce first-class postal mailings.
- 3. Certification of Records** (43 U.S.C. § 1460 & 1462). Certification of records provides the Public with copies of official agency documents. Copies of records are certified only upon request. A fee is charged for each certificate of verification and seal. Fees for certification do not include reproduction costs.

The certification process involves certifying and embossing the official BLM seal to attest that the document is an exact copy of an official BLM record. This certification does not attest to the accuracy of information. There will be no charge for the certification of copies required for official use by the officers of any branch of the Government. The BLM is not required to notarize documents.

- 4. Delivery Method or Media.** Electronic copies may be delivered via electronic mail (email) or on portable media such as CD, DVD, USB drive, or external drive. Charges are based on the cost of reproduction plus the cost of the portable media.
- 5. Retrieval of BLM Records from Federal Records Centers (FRC).** The FRCs charge the BLM for retrieval and refiling of requested records. The requester will be charged for both the retrieval and return of the record as well as any reproduction costs incurred.
- 6. Special Media and/or Formatting Requests.** Offices may receive public requests for records to be provided in electronic format or on special media. It is the discretion of the office receiving the request to fulfill such a request, and cost recovery guidelines will apply.
- 7. Manipulation of Data.** Offices are not required to manipulate data to create a new record, such as specialized reports generated by an ad hoc query, or overlay analysis of GIS data to produce statistics in paper or electronic formats.

- 8. Access to Spatially-Derived Public Information.** Spatially-derived information includes Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, maps, and geospatial products, satellite imagery, AutoCAD drawings, aerial photography, video imagery, and scanned graphics. Requests for spatially-derived information subject to fees should be processed through the BLM Public Rooms.
- 9. Fax Transmissions.** Offices may establish local rules limiting the number of pages per transmission (e.g., 5 pages based on equipment location, performance, and personnel time).

## CHAPTER III - COST RECOVERY FEES

**A. Collection of Cost Recovery Fees**

Payment is required prior to receiving information products or services described in this handbook. The BLM accepts cash, check, or credit card. Exceptions to the collection of cost recovery fees are:

1. Fee Waivers.
  - a. Where specific BLM regulations allow for the dissemination of copies without a charge, the provisions of the regulation will be followed. Additional copies requested outside the BLM regulations will be subject to the BLM's cost recovery rates. *For example, an additional copy of a Resource Management Plan per 43 CFR 1610.2-3.*
  - b. Discretion will be used in determining whether to charge fees to other Government entities for copies of BLM records. This will be based on an analysis of mutual benefit.
  - c. Fees will be waived for charges of \$3.00 or less.
2. State Agencies Performing Oil and Gas Royalty Audits.

Pursuant to §§202, 205 of the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act (FOGRMA), state government agencies will not be billed for document production when the request is necessary to perform a royalty audit on oil and gas leases. State government agencies requesting copies of materials for other purposes are billed at the appropriate rate unless explicitly waived by another law or authority.

**CHAPTER IV - COST RECOVERY RATE SPECIFICATIONS**

The following is a specification of included and excluded factors to be used when determining rates.

**A. Factors Included When Determining Rates**

1. Personnel time - Track total time spent (in minutes) based on hourly rate. Costs include time spent retrieving files, making duplicates, preparing the product for dissemination and processing payment.
2. Duplication method - Based on equipment used (e.g. standard copier, large format printer, plotter, etc.)
  - a. Equipment costs include yearly costs for purchase (depreciated annual cost), lease, maintenance, and repair. The total number of copies produced each year from each machine counter will provide a unit cost.
  - b. Supplies include toner, ink, lenses, bulbs, etc.
3. Type of product - Includes paper, CDs, DVDs, and USB drives. If a product is produced on different media (e.g., paper and DVD), separate costs are collected for each type of media.
4. Flat Fee Cost Recovery for Maps. Costs incurred to produce, store, and provide a map are the only costs considered under flat fee cost recovery.

**B. Factors Excluded When Determining Rates**

1. Time spent assisting the public in interpreting maps and regulations.
2. Certifications of copies (set by statute).



**APPENDIX 1 – COST RECOVERY AUTHORITIES**

1. Title 43 U.S.C. § 1460, establishes the authority to collect copy fees for providing copies of books, records, copies, documents, maps, plats, or diagrams.
2. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, as amended, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, requires reducing the burden and costs associated with collecting, using, and disseminating information and promoting better management of information resources.
3. Independent Offices Appropriation Act of 1952, 31 U.S.C. §9701, as amended, authorizes Federal agencies to charge a fee for government services and things of value.
4. Distribution and Sale of Public Documents, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 17, provides procedures for the distribution and sale of public documents.
5. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, as amended, establishes the right of any person to request information, and provides procedures for the disclosure of certain information and charging of appropriate fees.
6. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-25, Revised, User Charges, establishes Federal policy regarding fees assessed for Government services and for sale or use of Government goods or resources.
7. OMB Circular No. A-76, Revised, Performance of Commercial Activities, provides requirements for identifying and controlling information resource costs.
8. OMB Circular No. A-130, Revised, Management of Federal Information Resources, establishes policy for the management of Federal information resources.
9. Title 43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 2, Appendix A, Department of the Interior Fee Schedule.

**APPENDIX 2 - BLM COST RECOVERY FEE SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC REQUESTS**

<b>PRODUCT/SERVICE</b>	<b>CURRENT RATE *</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHORITIES/COMMENTS</b>
<b>STANDARD COPIES (Black and White)</b> 8 ½ x 11” up to 11 x 17”	\$0.15 per page per side (\$0.30 for double-sided)	Black and white paper copies reproduced on a copier or printer.	43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 2, Appendix A, Fee Schedule
<b>COLOR COPIES</b> 8 ½ x 11”  8 ½ x 14” up to 11 x 17”	\$0.90 per page per side  \$1.50 per page per side	Paper copies reproduced on a color copier or printer.	43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 2, Appendix A, Fee Schedule
<b>SCANNED COPIES</b> 8 ½ x 11” up to 11 x 17”	\$0.15 per page per side (\$0.30 for double-sided) + Scan time + Cost of media	Paper documents scanned to electronic format (e.g., PDF).	43 CFR Subtitle A, Subpart G §2.42(d) and Part 2, Appendix A
<b>COMPACT DISCS (CD or DVD)</b>	\$1.00 per CD/DVD + Scanning costs + Cost of mailing container		
<b>HARD DRIVES, USB DRIVES</b>	Actual Cost + Scanning costs + Cost of mailing container		

\* Current rate does not include mailing costs for charges exceeding first class postage.

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<b>PRODUCT/SERVICE</b>	<b>CURRENT RATE *</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHORITIES/ COMMENTS</b>
<b>LR2000 REPORTS AND OUTPUT</b> Serial Register Pages (SRP)  Standard reports/ printouts other than SRP  Non-standard (specially formatted) reports/printouts  Electronic copy	\$0.75/page  \$0.15 per page per side  \$0.15 per page per side + Research time  Research time + Cost of media		
<b>MICROFILM, APERTURE CARD, AND MICROFICHE COPIES</b> 8 ½ x 11" up to 11 x 17" Paper Copies  Scanned Copies	\$1.10 per page per side  \$1.10 per page per side + Scan time + Cost of media	Paper or electronic copies produced from micrographics reader/scanner/printer.	43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 2, Subpart G, 2.42(c)
<b>ALL PLOTTER PRODUCTS</b>	\$2.50/9" length  \$5.33/9" length	Paper copies	Fee scaled for every 9" of length plotted (based on the fees for an "average" plot size of 27 x 32).
<b>LARGE FORMAT COPIER</b>	\$4.20/page	Paper copies produced on 24" or 36" roll feed paper (nonstandard size up to 24 X 36", use plotter rate for larger sizes)	e.g. Xerox 6204

\* Current rate does not include mailing costs for charges exceeding first class postage.

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<b>PRODUCT/SERVICE</b>	<b>CURRENT RATE *</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHORITIES/ COMMENTS</b>
<b>CERTIFICATION OF RECORD</b>	\$0.25 per certification +Reproduction costs	Certification is by document, not by individual page.	43 U.S.C. 1460
<b>RESEARCH/SEARCH</b>  Clerical (GS-7 and below)  Professional (GS-8 through GS-12)  Managerial (GS- 13 and above)	\$6 per 15 minutes, \$24 per hour  \$10.75 per 15 minutes, \$43 per hour  \$15.50 per 15 minutes, \$62 per hour	Total time taken to locate a record when such time exceeds 15 minutes.  Charge by 15-minute increments.	Rates subject to change based on current pay scale; set by DOI Regulations 43 CFR 2.41
<b>MAPS (1:100,000 Surface and Mineral Management Status; 1:500,000 and 1:1,000,000)</b>	\$4.00 (1-49 maps) \$2.40 (50 or more) Flat fee	Volume discount applies to same or mixed map titles totaling 50 or more.	Volume discount applies to maps sold at BLM offices or BLM internet sites.
<b>MAPS (Other Maps Published by BLM)</b>	\$4.00/map		
<b>MAPS (Published by other entities)</b>	Price set by other agency	Maps produced by other agencies or the private sector.	Includes USGS maps at their established prices.
<b>O&amp;G SALES LIST/ GEOTHERMAL SALES LIST/ NONCOMPETITIVE LANDS AVAILABLE LIST</b>	\$10 over 250 pages \$5 up to 250 pages	Paper copies of Sales List or Lands Available list.	Lists are available electronically on State websites for free.
<b>O&amp;G RESULTS LIST GEOTHERMAL RESULTS LIST (COMPETITIVE &amp; NONCOMPETITIVE)</b>	Free for one page. \$5 for more than one page	Paper copies of Results list.	Lists are available electronically on State websites for free.
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>	Actual Cost	Publications by BLM.	

\* Current rate does not include mailing costs for charges exceeding first class postage.

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<b>PRODUCT/SERVICE</b>	<b>CURRENT RATE *</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHORITIES/ COMMENTS</b>
<b>REQUESTS FOR RECORDS FROM FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER (FRC)</b>	\$10 per case file or \$10 per box (includes return to FRC) +Reproduction costs	Cost of retrieval and return of records from/to FRC.	Established by Bureau Records Officer to reimburse BLM for FRC processing costs.
<b>REQUESTS FOR RECORDS FROM NATIONAL ARCHIVES</b>	Refer customer to National Archives		Public may access records from National Archives directly.
<b>REQUESTS FOR ELECTRONIC DATA/ INFORMATION</b>	Research time + Cost of media + Reproduction costs		
<b>WEBSITE INFORMATION AND DATA BASES PROVIDED ONLINE FOR THE PUBLIC</b>	No charge for viewing. Cost recovery rates will apply for copies requested by the public.	Information and data bases provided on websites for the convenience of the public.	Offices may elect to place publicly available data bases on websites for free public viewing.
<b>AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY DUPLICATES</b>	Actual cost plus \$10 service fee	Paper or digital copies from film roll negatives.	Cost varies depending on product requested; email description of product needed to <a href="mailto:orderaerialphotos@blm.gov">orderaerialphotos@blm.gov</a>
<b>PATENTS – Eastern States Office (ESO) ONLY</b>	\$15.00 per patent + Cost of Certification	Paper copy of Patent from bound volume at ESO only.	
<b>MAILING COSTS</b>	Actual cost of postage + Cost of materials	Overnight, USPS, UPS, FedEx, etc.	Charges that exceed the cost of standard letter size one ounce first class postage.

\* Current rate does not include mailing costs for charges exceeding first class postage.

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<b>PRODUCT/SERVICE</b>	<b>CURRENT RATE *</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHORITIES/ COMMENTS</b>
<b>FAX TRANSMISSIONS</b>	\$1.10/page +Reproduction costs +Research time	Copies sent via fax machine.	No charge for transmission page or cover page.
<b>EMAIL TRANSMISSIONS</b>	No charge for email transmission Charge for products and services provided	Products sent via email.	
<b>\$3 WAIVER</b>	Offices may waive Cost Recovery Fees totaling \$3 or less		

\* Current rate does not include mailing costs for charges exceeding first class postage.