INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE 2014 BLM VISITOR CONTACT AREA QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR FY 2013)

INTRODUCTION

The following instructions have been developed to assist individuals in preparing the BLM's 2014 Visitor Contact Area Questionnaire.

GENERAL:

In the spaces indicated, provide the visitor contact area name, and the name, title, field office, phone number, and email address of the individual completing the report.

Goal of Questionnaire

*The goal of this questionnaire is to gain a clear understanding of the BLM's visitor contact areas. This includes all **stand-alone** large and small visitor centers, interpretive centers, visitor contact areas, and interagency centers. It **DOES NOT** include visitor contact areas that are attached physically to a field, district, or state office. The results of this exercise will develop a comprehensive baseline of BLM visitor contact areas, establish networking opportunities, share best practices, develop efficiencies, and gain a better understanding of the needs of and resources available to BLM visitor contact areas.*

PART 1: MANAGEMENT AND STAFF: The information provided here reflects how each visitor contact area is managed and what kind of subject matter expertise the staff provides to that site.

1. **IN FY 2013 DID THIS VISITOR CONTACT AREA HAVE A DESIGNATED MANAGER?** Please reply yes or no.

    A. If yes to question 1, what was their name and title?

    B. If no to question 1, how was the visitor contact area managed?

2. **IN FY 2013 HOW WAS THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA STAFFED?** Please check all boxes that apply

3. **IN FY 2013 DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA HAVE STAFF WITH SPECIALIZED SKILLS?** Please reply yes or no.

    A. If yes to question 3, please check all boxes that apply.

4. **IN FY 2013 HOW DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA ATTRACT VISITATION?** Please check all boxes that apply.

5. **WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ISSUES CHALLENGING THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S STAFFING (LABOR) OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

6. **WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ISSUES CHALLENGING THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S OPERATIONS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

7. **WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ISSUES CHALLENGING THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S MAINTENANCE OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

8. **WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S STAFF (LABOR) OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

9. **WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S OPERATIONS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

10. **WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA'S MAINTENANCE OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?**

PART 2: FUNDING: The information provided here reflects the funding for each visitor contact area, and how funding is divided into labor, operations, and maintenance. Definitions are included for assistance.

1. **WHAT WAS YOUR FY 2013 BUDGET FOR YOUR VISITOR CONTACT AREA?**

    A. How much of the FY 2013 budget was spent on labor? (*cost for personnel – please breakdown in table as much as possible*)

    B. How much of the FY 2013 budget was spent on operations (*cost for the day to day operations of the area, does not include the cost for running facilities*)

    C. How much of the FY 2013 budget was spent on maintenance and upkeep of facilities (*cost for the upkeep and maintenance of the facilities located in the visitor contact area*)

    D. How was labor funded? Please include sub activities and other funding, and the amount provided by each subactivity. For example 1220, 1232, 1711, etc.

E. How was operations funded? Please include subactivities and other funding, and the amount provided by each sub activity. For example 1220, 1232, 1711, etc.

F. How was maintenance funded? Please include sub activities and other funding, and the amount provided by each sub activity. For example 1220, 1232, 1711, etc.

2. **IN THE LAST 5 YEARS HAS THE BASE BUDGET TO SUPPORT THE LABOR OF THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA CHANGED?**

   A. How much has the budget increased/decreased?

   B. How has the increase/decrease impacted the ability of the visitor contact area to serve the public? (Please be specific)

3. **IN THE LAST 5 YEARS HAS THE BASE BUDGET TO SUPPORT THE OPERATIONS OF THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA CHANGED?**

   A. How much has the budget increased/decreased?

   B. How has the increase/decrease impacted the ability of the visitor contact area to serve the public? (Please be specific)

4. **IN THE LAST 5 YEARS HAS THE BASE BUDGET TO SUPPORT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA CHANGED?**

   A. How much has the budget increased/decreased?

   B. How has the increase/decrease impacted the ability of the visitor contact area to serve the public? (Please be specific)

5. **DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA COLLECT FEES IN FY 2013?** Please reply yes or no.

   A. If yes, how much in fees were collected?

6. **DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA COLLECT DONATIONS IN FY 2013?** Please reply yes or no.

   A. How much in donations were collected?

7. **WITH THE TREND OF SHRINKING BUDGETS HAS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERED ANY ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA?** Please describe.

PART 3: WORKING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY: The information provided here reflects the involvement that the BLM has with other federal, regional and local partners and volunteers.

1. **IN FY 2013 DID THIS VISITOR CONTACT AREA SHARE SPACE WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES?** Please reply yes or no.

   A. If yes to question 1, please check all boxes that apply.

   B. If yes to question 1, please provide an explanation on how other agencies used the space, and how the space was funded.

2. **IN FY 2013 DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA SHARE SPACE WITH STATE OR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS?** Please reply yes or no.

   A. If yes to question 2, with which organizations was the space shared?

   B. If yes to question 2, please provide an explanation on how other organizations used the space, and how the space was funded.

3. **IN FY 2013 DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA WORK WITH A COOPERATING OR FRIENDS ASSOCIATION?** Please reply yes or no. Definitions are included for assistance.

   Cooperating Association: Revenue producing non-profit or not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting the educational, interpretative, and preservation goals of the partnering agency. Groups that have signed a cooperative agreement or assistance agreement fall into this category.

   Friends Group: An advocacy organization of interested citizens and volunteers who assist agencies or organizations in building constituency support; soliciting and accepting charitable contributions, grants, and funding from other sources to assist the agency partner.

   A. If yes to question 3, please identify the group(s) and whether they were a cooperating association or friends group.

   B. If yes to question 3, did the visitor contact area have a formal agreement with the group(s) or association(s)?

   C. If yes to question 3, what type of and quantity of financial assistance, in-kind donations, or volunteer services did they provide? Please be specific. Definitions are included for assistance.

   Financial Assistance: all direct payment for goods and services on behalf of the federal partner(s) and all operating expenses incurred in pursuing the organization's tax- exempt purpose on behalf of the federal partner(s).

   In-kind Donations: are non-cash donations provided by the partner. These can be in the

form of real property, equipment, supplies, services, and other expendable property.

Volunteers: A person or organization who performs a service to the federal partners without compensation.

D. If yes to question 3, how were those groups involved with the visitor contact area?

4. **IN FY 2013 WERE THERE OTHER PARTNERS THAT THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA WORKED WITH ON A REGULAR BASIS?** Please list by name and type of organization.

5. **HOW MANY HOURS DID VOLUNTEERS LOG AT THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA IN FY 2013?**

6. **DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA WORK WITH THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY (I.E. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ROTARY CLUB, KIWANIS CLUB, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, ETC.)?** Please reply yes or no

A. If yes to question 6, what kind of work was done? Please be specific.

PART 4: SERVICES: The information provided here reflects the different types of services that BLM visitor contact areas provide the public.

1. **IN FY 2013 WHAT WAS THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA?** Please rank each service from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Definitions are included for assistance.

    Interpretation: A communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource. Interpretation can be both personal (a person or persons providing interpretation to another person or persons), or non-personal (exhibits, waysides, brochures, signs, magazines, books, etc.) Jr. Explorer booklets and programs, Artist-in-Residence programs, and site specific programs apply. Programs can be held on- or off-site.

    Education: Education is the process of developing an individual's knowledge, values, and skills and encompasses both teaching and learning. Education can be site-based (such as Hands on the Land), or classroom based. Education programs usually follow local, state, or national curriculum or core standards, and are developed in conjunction with teachers, academics, or school systems. Programs can be held on- or off-site.

    Orientation: Providing in a personal or non-personal way the details to largely factual situations, such as geographical location of facilities, trails, tour routes, boat ramps, and other recreational information. This includes trip planning, visitor safety issues, and comments. Provide rules and regulations that cover routine use situations, collects fees, sells permits, and provide safety messages as appropriate.

    Other: Any other use that does not fit in the above categories. Please provide a detailed description.

2. **HOW MANY VISITORS DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA SERVE IN FY 2013? HOW WAS VISITATION COUNTED?** Please provide the number of visitors that used the visitor contact area.

    A. Please provide a detailed description of how visitors were counted.

    B. Please provide a detailed description of the visitor contact area's hours, days, and seasons of operations in FY 2013.

3. **IN FY 2013 DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA PROVIDE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND/OR PRODUCTS TO THE PUBLIC?** Please provide a yes or no answer.

    A. If yes to question 3, how many personal interpretive programs were provided? Definitions are included for assistance.

    Personal Interpretive programs are activities and/or presentations that convey key resource messages to visitors. They can include:

    Formal Interpretation: All on-site, pre-planned presentations that have a theme, goal, and objective with desired measurable outcomes. They are designed to provoke visitors to form their own intellectual or emotional connections with the significance of the site resource. These programs are advertised, scheduled, or announced prior to being presented. The presenter can be in uniform, historic period clothing, or in civilian clothes. Included in this category are tours, walks, talks, campfire programs, hikes, horseback tours, boat tours, cave tours, lectures, seminars, and orientation talks. It also includes illustrated programs that integrate tangible objects or props such as slides, rocks, reproductions, or artifacts with an interpretive narrative.

    Performing Arts: Programs that offer activities such as storytelling, poetry reading, dance,

drama, music, concerts, art shows, or artists in sites.

Historical Demonstrations: *Programs that demonstrate activities such as blacksmithing, glass making, wood working, wood stove or open hearth cooking, machine or hand sewing, machine operation, historic weapons firing, traditional skills, flint knapping, weaving, or basket making. First and third-person living history programs that demonstrate a skill are included here. This category does not include first or third-person period clothing tours or talks unless a demonstration is the primary theme of the program.*

Informal Interpretation: *Spontaneous (not scheduled) interpretive contacts with visitors within the site. These contacts may occur in a variety of settings, such as historic structures, natural features, overlooks, boats, or other vehicles. This category includes both stationary and roving interpretation. At an attended site the staff person is stationary and is expected to make contacts with visitors in the designated location for a period of time. On roving patrols the staff person has considerable latitude to move about the area and is expected to seek out and mingle with the visitors.*

Scientific Demonstrations *include but are not limited to programs dealing with activities such as water sampling, microscope investigations, bird banding, archeology, soil sampling, weather studies, geology demonstrations, or flora/fauna population densities.*

Recreation Safety/Skill Demonstrations *include but are not limited to programs dealing with activities such as safe boating, fishing, backpacking, rock climbing, snowshoeing, or bird watching.*

B.   If yes to question 3, how many non-personal interpretive products were provided? Definitions are included for assistance.

Non-personal Interpretive Products: *Production of materials that support the site's interpretive program that are generated by the site and are available to the public free or for a nominal charge*

Publications: *This category includes the production of all printed materials; i.e., newspapers, site bulletins, trail guides, site brochures, and Jr. Explorer booklets.*

Audio Visual: *This category includes the production of films, videos, slide programs, and other media shown in visitor centers and any interactive computer programs that are available for public use.*

Exhibits: *This category includes the production of exhibits, interpretive signs and kiosks, or waysides.*

Websites or Social Media: *This category includes the production of new website or social media (Facebook, twitter, Instagram, etc.) content.*

C.   If yes to question 3, please provide a detailed description of how programs/products were counted.

D.   If yes to question 3 who created/presented these programs and produces these products. Please check all that apply.

E.   If no to question 3, what was the main obstacle to providing these programs or producing these products. Please check all that apply.

4.   **IN FY 2013 DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA PROVIDE FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND/OR PRODUCTS TO THE PUBLIC?** Please provide a yes or no answer.

A.   If yes to question 4, how many formal education programs were provided? Definitions are included for assistance.

Formal Education Programs*: This category is for comprehensive curriculum-based programs conducted on- or off-site, for all ages, which are created cooperatively with educators. This category includes all curriculum-based programs that usually include pre-visit, on-site visit and post-visit activities. Only those programs that are curriculum-based and use a comprehensive methodology to conduct the program should be included in this category. This would include Hands on the Land, and Project Archeology programs. Do not include non-BLM institutes, field study seminars or school groups that attend a non-curriculum-based program at the site. These should be included in the "Informal Interpretation" or "Formal Interpretation" categories.*

B.   If yes to question 4, please provide a detailed description of how programs were counted.

C.   If yes to question 4, who created/presented these programs and produced these products. Please check all boxes that apply.

D. If no to question 4, what was the main obstacle that to providing these programs or producing these products.

5. **WHICH TYPE OF PLAN(S) DID THE VISITOR CONTACT AREA HAVE IN FY 2013?** Please check all boxes that apply. Definitions are included for assistance.

Interpretive Plan: An interpretive plan is a management document that outlines and guides decisions about a site's interpretive programming. It is created through a collaborative process involving management, interpretive specialists, subject matter experts, and stakeholders (community members who have a personal, economic or political stake in the project). The useful lifetime of an interpretive plan is about ten years, but it should be updated as necessary. There is no single template for an effective plan, but it typically includes two parts: a foundation and an action plan.

*Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP): The BLM's Recreation Planning process is an outcome-focused management approach that stresses the management of recreation settings to provide opportunities that allow visitors and local communities to achieve a desired set of individual, social, economic and environmental benefits. Planning for recreation resources focuses on fulfilling the BLM's mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Recreation Management Areas with complex implementation issues not resolved during the land use planning process may require a subsequent implementation plan that addresses implementation-level management, administration, information, and monitoring actions. The Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) provides specific direction for on-the-ground implementation of the land use plan. The RAMP must address the four implementation categories: management, administration, information and education, and monitoring. (**BLM Manual 8320**)*

*Business Plan: A written document that describes the objectives of a fee program and how those objectives will be achieved through identification of a fee structure and schedule. The plan is tailored to address the complexity of the venture described and the major features of the financial and environmental surroundings within which it will be implemented. These plans are a required component for establishing and adjusting recreational-use fees for public lands (**BLM Manual 2930**) and should be used in determining the appropriateness and level of*

fees to ensure that fair value for recreation opportunities is received.

Other: Another type of plan not previously mentioned. Please provide the type of plan and definition.

A. How old is each/all plan(s)?

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD? *Please use the supplied space to add questions, comments, concerns or ideas.*