

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240
<http://www.blm.gov>
February 21, 2014

In Reply Refer To:
1114, 1115, 8300 (420) P

EMS TRANSMISSION 02/25/2014
Information Bulletin No. 2014-039

To: All Washington Office and Field Office Officials
From: Assistant Director, National Landscape Conservation System & Community Partnerships
Subject: Bureau of Land Management's 2014 "Public Lands Partnership Excellence"
Award: Announcement of Winner

We are pleased to announce the selection of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) 2014 "Public Lands Partnership Excellence" Award winner, the Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument of Black Canyon City, Arizona. The biannual Excellence award recognizes an interpretive association or friends group that has a formal assistance agreement with the BLM and has demonstrated exceptional support for the BLM's interpretive, educational, and/or public outreach programs. We thank all of the BLM offices that submitted nominations; as in the past, there were many excellent partner nominations, all deserving of recognition.

About the Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument (Friends):

The winning partner organization was established to help support the BLM in its efforts to manage and protect Agua Fria National Monument's (monument's) cultural and natural resources and to conduct related public education and outreach.

For nearly a decade, Friends' volunteers have devoted thousands of hours to the monument to advance and accomplish numerous stewardship projects and community outreach and conservation programs.

Friends' volunteers have assisted the monument in completing archaeological surveys and site documentation projects, oral history projects, public outreach efforts, and on-site interpretive development at two historical sites, the Teskey Home Site and the 1891 School House, conducting educational programs and site tours for the public.

Since 2007, the Friends have assisted the BLM in conducting the annual Wet Dry Mapping Project of the Agua Fria River. The event involves documenting wet and dry portions of the Agua Fria River and its tributaries on or near the summer solstice: the hottest, driest day of the year in the area. The purpose of the project is to engender stewardship, educate stakeholders, and contribute to the preservation of instream water flows. The Agua Fria River Wet Dry Mapping Project provides a low-cost, comprehensive snapshot for monitoring water flow conditions in the river, providing a better understanding of hydrological systems on a landscape or watershed scale. In 2013, volunteers mapped nearly 47 miles of the Agua Fria River and its tributaries.

The Monument also features one of the most significant systems of prehistoric sites in the American Southwest. The partnership with the Friends has enhanced the BLM's ability to raise public awareness of these outstanding objects and values. For example, in 2012, the Friends, along with the BLM monument archaeologist, initiated monthly "field days" to conduct cultural resource surveys to document identified archaeological sites and train new volunteers. Since the establishment of these field days, over 1,200 volunteer hours have been logged for field-based archaeological investigations alone.

The BLM's partnership with the Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument has been invaluable in

increasing local community involvement and promoting land stewardship within the monument.

A representative of the winning organization has been invited to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to participate in a February 26, 2014, award ceremony in conjunction with the 2014 national convention of the Association of Partners for Public Lands (APPL), an umbrella organization for the many interpretive associations and friends groups that work to foster stewardship and appreciation of Federal and State public lands and historic sites nationwide.

For additional information on the BLM's "Public Lands Partnership Excellence" Award, please contact BLM National Interpretive Lead Brianna Candelaria of the Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships at bcandela@blm.gov or (202) 912-7583.

Signed by:
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