



Field/District Office: Butte Field Office (BFO)

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: L24AS00097

Project Submission Dates and Times: Refer to Funding Opportunity Announcement on GRANTS.gov

Project Title: Butte Field Office Youth and Saw Crews

Maximum Available Funding in FY24: \$600,000

Project Background Information: The 'Butte Field Office (BFO) Youth Resource and Saw Crews project exists to engage, empower, and educate youth with the ability to learn new skills while providing valuable mentoring, all in service of public lands. The mission is to enhance the natural resource landscape through restoration, innovative management techniques, and sustainability, fostering a public service-minded approach by our Youth Crews. This project will play a vital role by actively participating in resource monitoring, recreation management, wildlife project implementation, fuels reduction projects, trail stewardship, and range improvement projects. The main purpose is to create opportunities for youth to develop natural resource skills on BLM managed lands, contributing and supporting the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of future generations. Ultimately, this project aims to improve the long-term management of BLM lands, ensuring a sustainable and thriving future for our natural resources.

Project Objective:

- Skill Development:** Provide participating youth with hands-on training and mentorship in natural resource management, including forestry, recreation, wildlife, trail maintenance, and range improvement.
- Resource Monitoring:** Contribute to the BFO's resource monitoring efforts by engaging the youth crews in data collection, assessment, and reporting on the condition of natural resources on BLM lands.
- Wildlife Project Implementation:** Collaborate with the Field Office to execute and support wildlife conservation and habitat improvement projects.
- Fuels Reduction:** Actively participate in fuels reduction projects to mitigate wildfire risk on BLM-managed lands, meeting predetermined reduction targets to enhance safety and protect natural resources.
- Trail Stewardship:** Maintain and enhance recreational trails on BLM lands by engaging the youth and saw crews in trail construction, maintenance, and improvement projects, with defined improvements for trail accessibility and safety.
- Range Improvement:** Assist in range improvement projects, such as invasive species management or range infrastructure enhancements.
- Recreation Management:** Collaborate with the BFO to enhance the recreational experience for visitors on BLM lands. This objective may involve improving signage, creating new amenities, and ensuring that the natural beauty of the area is preserved while providing high-quality recreational opportunities.

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Work Schedule: The work schedule is flexible, however the youth and saw crews must ensure that coordination with the BFO point of contact to initiate, monitor, and close out projects occurs during normal work hours for the BLM. Generally this occurs Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Qualification Requirements:

Applicants must pass a DOI security background check in order to access BLM computer systems and reporting programs.

Youth Crew Recruitment and Training:

- Recruit and select diverse groups of youth participants, including those with an interest in natural resource management.
- Provide comprehensive training for the youth crews, covering essential skills and safety protocols for various project activities, including natural resource monitoring, wildlife conservation, fuels reduction, recreation management, and range improvement.

Youth Crew Deployment:

- Youth crews may be committed to the BFO for durations ranging from 6 to 16 weeks, allowing for flexibility in matching their availability with project timelines. Generally youth crews would be deployed starting in late May to early June.

Multi-disciplinary Project Support:

- Youth crews will actively engage in natural resource monitoring efforts, including data collection, assessments, and reporting, to assist the Field Office in tracking the condition of BLM lands.
- Encourage cross-training within the youth crews, enabling them to participate in a range of projects, including fuels reduction, wildlife project implementation, trail stewardship, and range improvement.

Saw Crew Development:

- Provide specialized training and certifications for youth crew members interested in becoming part of the saw crews.
- Ensure that saw crew members are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to safely conduct fuels reduction, tree thinning, and other related tasks. Saw crew members must be trained to safely use a chain saw and must meet the training requirements of the BLM.

Resource Management and Conservation:

- Collaborate with BFO experts and staff to plan and execute projects that align with the goals of resource management and conservation, ensuring the achievement of project objectives.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system to assess progress toward project objectives and the development of participating youth.
- Regularly review the performance of youth crews, saw crews, and project outcomes, and make necessary adjustments to achieve desired outcomes.
- Coordinate with BFO youth crew and saw crew points of contact to communicate monitoring and evaluations between the grant recipient and the BLM. If corrective action is necessary this will be the responsibility of the grant recipient, however the BLM project lead will participate in the process.

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Safety

Youth and Saw Crew Leaders will be responsible for:

- Pre-Departure Training:
 - Before the crews begin their work, provide comprehensive safety training that covers:
 - Proper tool use and safety precautions.
 - Basic first aid, including how to respond to common injuries in the field.
 - Fire safety protocols.
 - Wildlife safety and awareness.
 - Proper GPS and Garmin InReach device use.
 - Emergency procedures, including how to initiate SOS calls on the InReach device.
- Communication:
 - Ensure that every crew always carries a Garmin InReach device with them.
 - Establish a check-in system where crews regularly communicate their status and location to the BFO work lead.
 - Set up regular communication schedules to confirm that crews are safe and accounted for.
- Protective Gear:
 - Ensure that crew members are equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as helmets, gloves, eye protection, and hearing protection (for saw crews).
- Environmental Awareness:
 - Train crew members to be aware of their surroundings, including potential environmental hazards like steep terrain, wildlife encounters, and adverse weather conditions.
- Hydration and Nutrition:
 - Emphasize the importance of staying hydrated and properly nourished, particularly during strenuous activities.
- First Aid Kits:
 - Equip crews with well-stocked first aid kits and provide training on how to use the supplies effectively.
- Weather Monitoring:
 - Stay informed about weather conditions and ensure that crews are aware of approaching storms or adverse weather, which may necessitate a retreat to safety.
- Review and Feedback:
 - After each project or fieldwork, conduct debriefings to review safety practices, identify areas for improvement, and gather feedback from crew members.

Housing: The agency cannot provide housing, however the BLM can help to identify areas for camping during extended field work. Additionally, a reasonable living stipend can be identified to support the housing needs of the saw and youth crews. Any identified living stipends must be clearly identified as going to individuals to find their own housing or towards the entire crew to find group accommodations.

Vehicle Needs: Each crew should be equipped with adequate transportation for getting to and completing field work in a variety of rugged terrain. The BLM will not provide vehicles for the crews. If there is a need for the use of a UTV, the BLM will provide training to individual crew members and provide a UTV to complete the necessary work if one is available to use.

Other Project Considerations:

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Food:

Crews are responsible for providing their own meals.

Supplies:

- The BLM will provide computer access once crew members have passed a background investigation. If a crew is not within the BFO long enough to justify completing a background investigation then the grant recipient will provide the crews with a computer and a hot spot to complete necessary computer work.
- The successful recipient will provide a Garmin InReach, or similar device, to each crew for safety.
- Each crew will come equipped with chainsaws and general hand tools. If specialized equipment is required the BLM will provide this equipment.
- Each crew should come equipped with the necessary supplies to safely camp out overnight in remote locations if the projects require this.

Training Requirements:

The recipient will provide the following training to youth and saw crews

- Proper tool use and safety precautions, including the safe use of a chainsaw.
- Basic first aid, including how to respond to common injuries in the field.
- Fire safety protocols.
- Wildlife safety and awareness.
- Proper GPS and Garmin InReach device use.
- Emergency procedures, including how to initiate SOS calls on the InReach device.

The BLM will provide UTV training if this is required for the completion of a specific task.

Travel:

Travel will be expected for both youth and saw crews.

Duties:

Land Health Assessment (LHA) Monitoring:

- Conduct annual LHA monitoring, following BLM protocols, to assess the condition of BLM-managed lands in the BFO.
- Collect data on vegetation, wildlife presence, soil erosion, and other relevant indicators.
- Report findings to the Field Office for use in land management decisions.

Range Improvement Projects:

- Participate in a minimum of 5 range improvement projects over the life of the agreement, including activities like fence construction, water development, and invasive species management.
- Assist with the design and implementation of range improvement initiatives.

Wildlife Improvement Projects:

- Support at least 5 wildlife improvement projects over the life of the agreement, which may involve habitat enhancement, monitoring, or wildlife surveys.
- Collaborate with biologists and other experts to carry out these projects effectively.

Fuels Reduction Projects:

- Participate in at least 1 fuels reduction project each year to mitigate wildfire risks on BLM lands.
- Safely thin forests, clear brush, and create defensible spaces in wildfire-prone areas.

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Recreation Program Support:

- Contribute to the developed recreation program by clearing and maintaining at least one trail, campground, or trailhead, including brushing, signage installation, and erosion control.
- Assist with campsite maintenance, restroom facilities, and other amenities to enhance the visitor experience.

BLM's Involvement:

The BFO will provide a primary point of contact (POC) for the youth and/or saw crews. This POC will be responsible for the initial introduction of the youth and/or saw crews to the field office and to BLM personnel as well as closing out the season with each crew. The POC will also be the primary point of contact for the monitoring and evaluation of the work performed by the crews.

The BFO will identify project leads for each of the project areas (LHAs, Range, Wildlife, Fuels, and Recreation) that will be responsible for providing direction for each individual project. These project leads will help to provide supplemental training (e.g. UTV) if necessary or provide specialized equipment if it is need to complete a project. Project leads will coordinate project timelines and objectives with crew leads to ensure successful completion of each project.

BLM Program Contact:

Field PO Name:	Brandy Janzen
Field PO Number:	406-533-7632
Field PO Email:	bjanzen@blm.gov

Applicants are encouraged to refer to the full program announcement number L22AS00269 posted on Grants.gov for all program requirements and applicable terms and conditions. Recipients selected for awards will be required to adhere to those requirements should an award be made.