



# Guardians of the Range

*Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life*

Newsletter No. 99

July 2012



P.O. Box 472  
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[www.GuardiansOfTheRange.org](http://www.GuardiansOfTheRange.org)

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Serlkay Printing, Worland

## Guardians at Work

Public Lands Issue meeting – Cody  
Sage-grouse Local Working Group -  
Worland

Shoshone NF Revision meetings -  
Thermopolis

BLM – Field Reviews/Worland:  
Zimmerman Springs and Kirby Creek  
allotments on Wednesday June 20th,  
and Denver Jake Draw Allotment on  
Thursday

## TIME SENSITIVE

## USFS Comment Deadline August 13

### National Environmental Policy Act: Categorical Exclusions for Soil & Water Restoration Activities

Complete details at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nepa/restorationCE>. Click on **Federal Proposed Rule & Request for Public Comment**.

The USDA Forest Service (FS) is proposing to supplement its National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (36 CFR Part 220) with three new categorical exclusions for activities that restore lands negatively impacted by water control structures, natural and human caused events, and roads and trails.

The FS says these categorical exclusions will allow them to more efficiently analyze and document the potential environmental effects of soil and water restoration projects intended to restore the flow of waters into natural channels and floodplains.

*- Please see **Comment** on page 4*

## New Worland BLM Field Manager: Rebecca Spurgin

~ by Echo Renner



When Rebecca “Becky” Spurgin accepted the position as BLM Field Manager in the Worland office in May, for her it was like coming home. Spurgin grew up in Greybull, and her mother and extended family still live in the area.

“I grew up in Greybull and went to Northwest College in Powell. This area is very near and dear to me. The geology and landscape of this area is why I studied geology. This is the opportunity of a lifetime. Not many people have the opportunity to come back to where they grew up.”

Spurgin earned degrees in geological engineering and geology from the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

She started working with the BLM as a college student on a cooperative education (co-op) program. After college, she worked for the BLM at Lewistown, Montana for a short time before accepting a permanent position at Malta, Montana as a mining engineer. There she oversaw work in hard rock mining, sand and gravel, and worked in oil and gas and other resource programs.

“In 1998, I moved to Billings as the Coal and Leasable minerals program lead for the Montana - Dakotas, working on coal geology and modeling, coal leases and lease sales, and tribal solid minerals. Later, I was also the state program lead for Locatable Minerals, including bentonite, hard rock and gold mining,” says Spurgin. She was in the Montana State Office for 10 years.

*Please see **BLM** on page 3*

**“In the general course of human nature, a power over a man's subsistence amounts to a power over his will.”**  
~Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) First Secretary of the Treasury

## ESA Congressional Hearing

On June 19, the House Committee on Natural Resources held a congressional hearing on "Taxpayer-Funded Litigation: Benefitting Lawyers and Harming Species, Jobs and Schools".

U. S. Representative Cynthia Lummis – Wyoming (At-Large) served on Panel 1.

The Guardians Executive Director watched the hearing via streaming video, and said the caliber of the witnesses was strong. You might take a quick look at their testimony.....it will provide a handy reference for your files and conversations.

You can find the testimony at: <http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=298882>. The witness list is below.

An appropriate quote on the need for the hearing: "More lawsuits will inevitably follow unless Congress recognizes the problem it has created, and acts to solve the problem...Until Congress does, tax dollars will be spent not on protecting species, but on fighting losing battle after losing battle in court. The solution to this problem lies not in the courts, but with Congress."

Federal District Court Judge Paul Kelly, Center for Biological Diversity v. Norton 163 F.Supp.2d 1297 (2001)

Hearing Focus/Summary: This hearing is the second full committee oversight hearing on the ESA, a sweeping federal environmental law that has not been changed in over two decades. The focus of this hearing will be on how litigation has driven the ESA to the detriment of species and people.

Saving endangered species is an important and worthy goal, yet the ESA statute's deadlines and other provisions foster lawsuits that undermine its effectiveness and help environmental organizations use taxpayer dollars to sue the federal government. Regrettably, millions of taxpayer dollars are being spent by federal agency attorneys, either defending litigation over the ESA or on actions to avoid anticipated litigation.

This is precious money that could be used to recover species or to ensure policies that will balance species with economic activity and jobs. The hearing will specifically focus on the lack of accountability and lack of transparency of federal agencies and the Justice Department in their negotiation and settlement of these lawsuits behind closed doors. It also focuses on payment of literally millions of taxpayer dollars over the past four years to lawyers, and the direct and indirect impact of lawsuits on species recovery, jobs, and public needs like affordable electricity rates and even public schools and safety. ★

## CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or [guardians@hughes.net](mailto:guardians@hughes.net).



## National Day of the American Cowboy

Saturday, July 28, 2012

## Homeland Security Warns of Terrorist Fire Attacks

Reprinted from [www.TheWesterner.blogspot.com](http://www.TheWesterner.blogspot.com)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security and fusion centers around the country are warning that terrorists are interested in using fire as a weapon, particularly in the form of large-scale wildfires near densely populated areas. A newly released DHS report, available at: <http://publicintelligence.net/dhs-terrorist-interest-in-using-fire-as-a-weapon/> states for more than a decade, "international terrorist groups and associated individuals have expressed interest in using fire as a tactic against the Homeland to cause economic loss, fear, resource depletion, and humanitarian hardship."

The report notes that the tactical use of fire as a weapon is "inexpensive and requires limited technical expertise" and "materials needed to use fire as a weapon are common and easily obtainable, making preoperational activities difficult to detect and plot disruption and apprehension challenging for law enforcement."

Though law enforcement has been warning of the use of fire as a weapon for years, the recent fervor over wildfires as a potential terrorist tactic is largely due to Inspire magazine, a slick online publication that is reportedly produced by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

The most recent issue of Inspire featured multiple articles on the use of wildfire as a weapon in jihad, including a complete guide on creating an "ember bomb" that would likely have a "high failure rate when manufactured and utilized by untrained or inexperienced personnel" according to the DHS report.

The FBI also separately warned about the latest issue of Inspire, which "instructs the audience to look for two necessary factors for a successful wildfire, which are dryness and high winds to help spread the fire. Specific fire conditions that are likely to spread fire quickly are Pinewood, crown-fires (where the trees and branches are close together), and steep slope fires (fire spreads faster going up a slope)."

California and Montana are specifically listed in Inspire as potential targets. ★



**Direct from the Director:  
Thank You to our  
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**WyoBen** – Greybull  
**Dennis Lee** - Hyattville  
**Big Buck Outfitters** – Brian Biesher  
**Probst Western Wear** – Tyson Probst  
**Wyoming Water Rights** – Todd Rhodes  
**Orchard Ranch** – Rob & Phyllis Orchard  
**Wyoming Hot Fence Sales** – Mary & Stan Flitner  
**Vergie Rhodes** - Worland  
**Security State Bank** – Sheridan, Basin & Worland  
**B & J Fence** – Julie & Bill Greer  
**Wilson Land & Cattle** – Wes Wilson  
**Murdoch Oil** – Paul Murdoch  
**Bank of Greybull** – John Koller  
**Tire Rama** – Greg Hansen  
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**Sheridan County Implement** – Nate Balstad  
**Chris and Clair Ellsworth** – Gillette  
**Les Jayne** - Sheridan  
**Y-TEX** - Cody

*Kathleen*

Kathleen Jachowski, Executive Director  
 307.587.3723 [guardians@hughes.net](mailto:guardians@hughes.net)

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"In 2008, I was selected to be Assistant Field Manager in Rawlins. There, I managed the Range, Wildlife and Fisheries, Cultural, Hydrology, Forestry, Soils, Weeds, and Wild Horse & Burro staffs."

"One of my strengths is I'm very good at seeing the big picture. Another strength is I'm well-rounded in the programs I've worked in, particularly minerals, budget, several collateral duties in safety and equal employment opportunity, support service functions, and more recently resources."

She adds, "I have a thorough understanding of what the Bureau is about and how the programs interrelate. I've worked at the field district, state, and Washington office levels. I've worked at various levels with cooperators and other agencies, and I look forward to establishing relationships with the various users groups, cooperators, and publics within the Worland Field Office."

Spurgin says she sees herself as not only a field manager, but also a spokesman for the field office, and what that office means to landowners and the public. She is working on a marketing strategy for the Worland BLM Field Office to better communicate with the public. "There are opportunities to promote the BLM, and the great job the Worland staff has been doing. I would like the public to know about their public lands and their opportunities, how BLM is managing these lands through stewardship, and finally ways they can become engaged with the BLM, either through partnerships or volunteer opportunities."

*Please see BLM on page 4*

## Join Guardians of the Range

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**40 cents / head for sheep**

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Applicable to any new livestock operator membership that needs help within 90 days of joining the Guardians of the Range.

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**[www.GuardiansoftheRange.org](http://www.GuardiansoftheRange.org)**

**To pay by check, please make checks payable to:  
Guardians of the Range**

**mail to:**

**Guardians of the Range, P.O. Box 472, Worland, WY 82401**

**[www.GuardiansoftheRange.org](http://www.GuardiansoftheRange.org)**

## Guardians of the Range

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*Comment continued from page 1*

The FS plans to accomplish this **by removing water control structures, such as dikes, ditches, culverts and pipes; restore lands and habitat to pre-disturbance conditions, to the extent practicable, by removing debris, sediments, and hazardous conditions following natural or human-caused events; and restore lands occupied by roads and trails to natural conditions.**

The proposed road and trail restoration category would be used for restoring lands impacted by non-system roads and trails that are no longer needed and no longer maintained. This category would not be used to make access decisions about which roads and trails are to be designated for public use.

**Comments must be received in writing on or before August 13, 2012.** Addresses: Submit comments online at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Electronic comments are preferred.

Submit written comments to: Restoration CE Comments, P.O. Box 4208, Logan, UT 84323, or by fax to (801) 397-1605. Identify written comments with "Categorical Exclusions" on the cover sheet or the first page. For comments sent via U.S. Postal Service, please do not submit duplicate electronic or facsimile comments.

Please confine comments to the proposed rule on Categorical Exclusion for Restoration Activities.

For more information, contact Peter Gaulke, Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff, (202) 205-1521. ★

*BLM continued from page 3*

Spurgin sees the greatest challenges to the BLM in Wyoming as sage-grouse issues; on-going litigation and challenges to coal leasing, grazing and wild horse gathering decisions; and budget constraints.

"We need to continue to look at monitoring as one of the tools to help answer some of these questions. We also have a mature workforce. Statistically, I believe that 50 percent or more of the Bureau's workforce will be eligible to retire within the next five years. As they walk out the door, we are losing 20 - 25 years of their knowledge, experience, and knowing the resources like the back of their hand."

In a perfect world, Spurgin says, "people would know how rights of way, recreation, grazing, hydrology, cultural resources, oil and gas, and mining interconnect on public land. People would understand how, as a public agency, we make it work and make it sustainable, while allowing for economic benefits as part of the Bureau's multiple use mission."

Within the Bighorn Basin, multiple generations have been operating the lands, but today's generation isn't operating like they were two generations ago. They want to do it better. In a perfect world, they would come to us in partnership, wanting to develop better ways to do things, hand-in-hand for the betterment of public lands, rather than view BLM as big government regulating them. I hope I can help build on the relationships my staff have already established with the communities, cooperators and publics to help make this a reality."

For more information, contact the Worland BLM Field Office at 307.347.5100. ★