

**Attachment 4**  
**Prospective Conservation Designation:**  
**National Monument Designations under the Antiquities Act**

Many nationally significant landscapes are worthy of inclusion in the NLCS. The areas listed below may be good candidates for National Monument designation under the Antiquities Act; however, further evaluations should be completed prior to any final decision, including an assessment of public and Congressional support.

*San Rafael Swell, UT*

Located in South-Central Utah, the San Rafael Swell is a 75 by 40 mile giant dome made of sandstone, shale and limestone – one of the most spectacular displays of geology in the country. The Swell is surrounded by canyons, gorges, mesas and buttes, and is home to eight rare plant species, desert big horns, coyotes, bobcats, cottontail rabbits, badgers, gray and kit fox, and the golden eagle. Visitors to the area can find ancient Indian rock art and explore a landscape with geographic features resembling those found on Mars.

*Montana's Northern Prairie, MT*

The Northern Montana Prairie contains some of the largest unplowed areas of grasslands in the world and some of the best habitat regions in all the Great Plains. Unfortunately, we are losing our grasslands and northern prairies at alarming rates, and few opportunities exist to conserve grassland ecosystems and their native biota on large scales. If protected, Montana's Northern Prairie would connect more than 2.5 million acres of protected grasslands bordering Bitter Creek Wilderness Study Area and Grasslands National Park in Canada. This cross-boundary conservation unit would provide an opportunity to restore prairie wildlife and the possibility of establishing a new national bison range. This landscape conservation opportunity would require conservation easements, willing seller acquisitions, and withdrawal from the public domain.

*Lesser Prairie Chicken Preserve, NM*

This 58,000-acre Preserve is prime habitat for both the lesser prairie chicken and the sand dune lizard. This area of sand dunes and tall bluestem grasses is ideal habitat for both species. The Preserve contains more than 30 percent of the occupied lesser prairie chicken habitat in southeastern New Mexico. Recent monitoring of the area concluded that this habitat is in good to excellent condition. Protection of this area offers the best opportunity to avoid the necessity of listing either of these species as threatened or endangered.

*Berryessa Snow Mountains, CA*

The public lands of the Berryessa Snow Mountain region stretch from the lowlands of Putah Creek below Lake Berryessa, across remote stretches of Cache Creek, and up to the peaks of Goat Mountain and Snow Mountain. This vast expanse—nearly 500,000 acres in the wild heart of California's inner Coast Ranges — provides habitat and critical long-term movement corridors for many species of wildlife and an unusually rich part of the California Floristic Province, a biological hotspot of global importance.

*Heart of the Great Basin, NV*

The Heart of the Great Basin contains Nevada's wild heart – a globally unique assemblage of cultural, wildlife, and historical values. Here, Toiyabe, Toquima, and Monitor peaks tower to 12,000 feet. Thousands of petroglyphs and stone artifacts provide insight to the area's inhabitants from as long as 12,000 years ago. The region contains varied ecosystems including alpine tundra, rushing creeks, aspen groves, and high desert sage grouse habitat. The area is also a center of climate change scientific research, (e.g., Great Basin Pika is a keystone species for climate research), and one of North America's least appreciated wildland mosaics.

*Otero Mesa, NM*

Stretching over 1.2 million acres, Otero Mesa is home to more than 1,000 native wildlife species, including black-tailed prairie dogs, mountain lions, desert mule deer, and the only genetically pure herd of pronghorn antelope in New Mexico. These vast desert grasslands of Otero Mesa, once found throughout the region, have disappeared or been reduced to small patches unable to support native wildlife. Otero Mesa is one of the last remaining vestiges of grasslands – America's most endangered ecosystem.

*Northwest Sonoran Desert, AZ*

The Sonoran Desert is the most biologically diverse of all North American deserts. This area west of Phoenix is largely remote and undeveloped, with a high concentration of pristine desert wilderness landscapes. There is potential for up to 500,000 acres of new wilderness and National Conservation Area designations.

*Owyhee Desert, OR/NV*

Last year, Congress protected a significant portion of the Owyhee Canyonlands region in Idaho. However, a significant portion of the Owyhee region in Oregon and Nevada remains unprotected. The Owyhee Desert is one of the most remote areas in the continental United States, characterized by juniper covered deserts, natural arches, mountains and ancient lava flows. The many branching forks of the Owyhee River form deep, sheer-walled canyons between desert wilderness and entice river runners from around the Nation. The Owyhees are home to the world's largest herd of California bighorn sheep, elk, deer, cougar, Redband trout, sage-grouse and raptors.

*Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, CA (expansion)*

In 2000, Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument was established to protect the extraordinary biodiversity and vegetation found in southwestern Oregon. Unfortunately, because of political constraints, the Monument's southern boundary was artificially established at the California State line. Therefore, the Monument does not include the ecologically important Klamath River tributaries and cuts out sections of important eco-regions from protection. Connectivity of landscapes is essential to protect and maintain healthy wildlife populations especially in the face of global climate change. In addition, this expansion could connect Cascade-Siskiyou with the proposed Siskiyou Crest National Monument. Expansions on the Oregon side may also be worth consideration.

*Vermillion Basin, CO*

The Vermillion Basin, located in northwest Colorado, is a rugged and wild landscape containing sweeping sagebrush basins, ancient petroglyph-filled canyons and whitewater rivers. Besides its scenic qualities, the basin is a critical migration corridor and winter ground for big game species such as elk, mule deer and pronghorn, in addition to being vital sage grouse habitat. This unique high desert basin is currently under threat of oil and gas development, which will forever alter the region.

*Bodie Hills, CA*

The remote Bodie Hills, located in the eastern Sierra Nevada, provide habitat for the imperiled sage grouse and the iconic pronghorn antelope, rare in California. The ghost town of Bodie State Historic Park, managed by the State of California, lies at the center of the Bodie Hills. Bodie State Historic Park is known as the best preserved ghost town in the West and receives several hundred thousand visits annually. Numerous gold mining operations have been proposed in the Bodies, and a new proposal is pending. Bodie Hills provides an opportunity to link both ecotourism and cultural tourism providing benefits to the surrounding communities.

*The Modoc Plateau, CA*

Tucked away in California's northeast corner, the Modoc Plateau contains some of the State's most spectacular and remote lands. This wild and largely undiscovered region features an array of natural riches: unbroken vistas, abundant wildlife, and millions of acres of intact, undisturbed landscapes. Spanning close to three million acres of public land that is laden with biological and archeological treasures, the Modoc Plateau is one of the State's most important natural landscapes. The crown jewel of these areas -- the Skedaddle Mountains -- covers close to a half-million acres in California and Nevada. The California portion alone is the second largest unprotected wilderness area in the state.

*Cedar Mesa region, UT*

For more than 12,000 years, generations of families from Paleo-Indian big game hunters to Mormon settlers traveled to the area now within southeastern Utah's Cedar Mesa region. Their stories are now buried among the area's estimated hundreds of thousands of prehistoric and historic sites. Cedar Mesa also contains thousands of largely intact cliff dwellings and open-air sites built between A.D. 750 and 1300 by later prehistoric farmers known as the Ancestral Puebloans or Anasazi.

*San Juan Islands, WA*

This cluster of hundreds of islands along the Nation's northern border contains a wealth of resources. The deep channels between islands and placid, reef-studded bays are home to myriad marine species and support major migratory routes for Orcas. The islands contain healthy pine and fir forests which protect a wide variety of wildlife species. The outstanding scenery and a historic lighthouse support diverse recreation opportunities. This area also supports sailing and sea kayaking opportunities that are unique in the Northwest.

**Attachment 5**

**Conservation Designations:**

**Areas worthy of protection that are ineligible for Monument Designation and unlikely to receive legislative protection in the near term**

*Bristol Bay Region, AK*

Bristol Bay, located in southwest Alaska, is pristine wild country encompassing Alaska's largest lake, rugged snow-capped peaks and tundra laced with countless winding rivers. Bristol Bay has been called the world's greatest salmon fishery, home to the largest sockeye salmon fisheries and one of the largest king salmon runs in the world. The region is also home to caribou, brown and black bear, moose, sandhill cranes, and myriad migratory birds. Conservationists have expressed that Bristol Bay is threatened by proposed open pit gold mining, which would forever alter this pristine and delicate watershed, potentially exposing the salmon and trout habitat to acid mine drainage.

*Teshkepuk Lake, AK*

Teshkepuk Lake is a 22-mile wide lake located on the north slope of Alaska. Due to climate change and loss of habitat, Teshkepuk Lake has been called one of the most important areas for wildlife population survival in the entire Arctic. The Lake and surrounding land is both a migration and calving ground for 46,000 caribou and home to 90,000 summer geese. In addition, hundreds of species of birds migrate from six continents to spend part of the year at Teshkepuk Lake.

*Red Desert, WY*

The Red Desert's rich landscape offers spectacular desert structures and wildlife habitat. The Desert provides world class pronghorn and elk hunting; the area is home to the largest desert elk herd in North America and the migration path for 50,000 pronghorn antelope. Early explorers, pioneers, and Mormon settlers used the unique features in the Red Desert as landmarks to guide them Westward. The Pony Express Trail traverses the northern section of the Red Desert. One of the unique features in the Red Desert is Adobe Town, an astonishing and remote set of badlands and geologic formations. Visitors can see fossils of long-extinct mammals, reptiles and invertebrates.

**Attachment 6**  
**Cost Estimates: High Priority Land-Rationalization Efforts**

*(i) Checkerboard Consolidation*

The BLM proposes a program of land consolidation for its checkerboarded lands, particularly in Nevada, Oregon, California, Wyoming, and Utah.

**Cost estimate:** The BLM estimates this initiative could be accomplished, where consistent with BLM land-use plans and in areas where there is a willing seller, over the next 10 years at an annual expenditure of approximately \$5 million. Conversely, the BLM may use land exchanges or sales to dispose of lands within checkerboard areas consistent with land use plans as it attempts to meet our management goals for a specific area or region.

*(ii) Alpine Triangle, CO*

The Alpine Triangle contains a dramatic, high elevation, alpine tundra ecosystem unusual for BLM land. This wild area contains about 25,000 acres of patented mining claims that could be used to support backcountry cabins and second home development, which would threaten the landscape. Pursuing acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands here would help consolidate BLM land ownership in this nearly 200,000-acre block of high value conservation land.

**Cost estimate:** BLM estimates that there are approximately 2,400 patented mill sites and mining claims totaling roughly 25,000 acres. Recent Forest Service acquisitions of similarly situated groups of patented mining claims in the area were purchased for approximately \$1,400 per acre. A 2008 formal appraisal for a BLM land exchange involving a small number of patented mining claims within the Triangle estimated the claims to be worth \$1,700 per acre. Therefore using an average estimated value of \$1,500 per acre, the total dollar amount to acquire the 25,000 acres would be about \$37.5 million. This management area also includes some Forest Service Land; however, the BLM counted only patented mining claims that would fall under BLM jurisdiction if acquired. Careful analysis would be required because some claims are known to be contaminated, which would affect BLM's ability to acquire the properties.

*(iii) Upper Missouri River, MT*

This project is located from Fort Benton downstream to the Fort Peck Dam, a.k.a. "Fort to Fort," on the main stem of the Missouri river, along the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River and Missouri Breaks National Monument, and including the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The stretch features a small number of very large privately owned ranches with river frontage, such as the PN Ranch along the Judith River and nearby ABN Ranch. Conserving these private ranches would benefit the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, the exceptional scenery along the area, and important wildlife habitat.

**Cost estimate:** Based on recent market activity, prices in the \$300 per acre for raw land are common. For the 80,000 acres of inholdings, that would make the cost of acquiring the inholdings roughly \$24 million. This would not include improvements such as houses and outbuildings, and would not necessarily include mineral rights or existing leases. The State of

Montana has also indicated a desire to divest itself of 39,000 acres of inholdings in the same area.

*(iv) Pioneer Range, ID*

Roughly 140,000 acres of private lands provide a critical nexus between low-elevation BLM land in the Craters of the Moon National Monument and high-elevation Forest Service lands in this region. Only about 7 percent of these lands have been protected from development by conservation easements to date. Local landowners are working with conservation groups in the Pioneers Conservation Alliance to protect this important landscape.

**Cost Estimate:** Costs per acre in the Pioneer Range area vary widely, from \$1,000 to \$20,000 per acre. Total costs would depend on the location of willing sellers.

*(v) John Day River, OR*

This initiative would consolidate BLM land of the John Day Wild and Scenic River in Oregon benefitting salmon recovery and allowing for more effective management of recreation along this highly scenic and popular river.

**Cost estimate:** To consolidate BLM lands within a quarter mile of the currently designated sections of the John Day Wild and Scenic River, it would cost approximately \$67 million, working with willing sellers. This rough estimate does not factor in State and Forest Service ownership.

*(vi) Upper Green River Valley, WY – Wyoming Range to Wind River Range*

This initiative would focus on conserving large private ranches that are located at the base of the Wyoming and Wind River Ranges in the Upper Green River Valley to benefit sage grouse, big game species and the path of the pronghorn antelope.

**Cost estimate:** The BLM, the State of Wyoming, Conservation Fund, Jonah Interagency Office, Green River Valley Land Trust, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Wyoming Wildlife Foundation, the Bridger Teton National Forest, and a host of other private/public partnerships are all working cooperatively in the area between the Wyoming Range and the Wind River Range to provide big game migratory corridors and wildlife habitat improvement through easements and landscape level improvement projects. These cooperative efforts pay big dividends to the State, Federal and private partners involved by increasing individual ownership and responsibility for projects, and decreasing cost and burden to Federal and State governments.

To acquire land, property values are variable based on location, features, access/availability of water, elevation, and real improvements. In order to have an accurate portrayal of costs, serious appraisal work would be required. With that in mind, a preliminary estimate of a private land purchase in the area may be calculated as follows:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Field Office Total (all ownerships) | 1,618,140 acres   |
| State & Private land:               | 397,210 acres (nearly a quarter of the field office area, from the Wyoming Range to the Wind River Mountains) |

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Average asking price per acre: | \$6,000.00      |
| Total:                         | \$2,383,260,000 |

(vii) *National Historic and Scenic Trails (multiple states)*

This initiative would explore acquisition of key historic properties along National Historic Trails (NHTs). Willing land owners and local, State and Federal agencies work with the BLM on land acquisition, exchanges, sales, easements, and cooperative agreements, providing public access along missing segments of national scenic trails, and protection for critically important historic sites, segments, and settings along national historic trails.

**Cost Estimate:** Under the Secretary's Treasured Landscape initiative, the BLM would focus over the next 10 years on connecting critical scenic trail segments and the associated trail qualities, and properties that are key to the story of Western settlement and the associated diverse American cultures – including the Hispanic trails in the southwest, the journey of Lewis and Clark, the Nez Perce flight, emigrant travels West, Pony Express sites, and the Iditarod Trail between native Alaskan villages. An estimated \$7 million per year would provide a substantial base for an aggressive willing seller program along the BLM's National Scenic and Historic Trails.