

Public Lands Directors Panel

Kurt Rausch, NPS

Amanda Walker, NFS

Sadie Wehunt, NFS

Monica Zimmerman, BLM





NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

- **COMMERCIAL SERVICE PROGRAM**
- **AMERICA OUTDOORS CONFERENCE**
- **PHOENIX, AZ**



- **KURT M RAUSCH**
- **CHIEF OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES**
- **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

• **DECEMBER 6, 2023**

Topics

- Legislation and Policy
- CUA Online System
- Other Policy and Initiatives

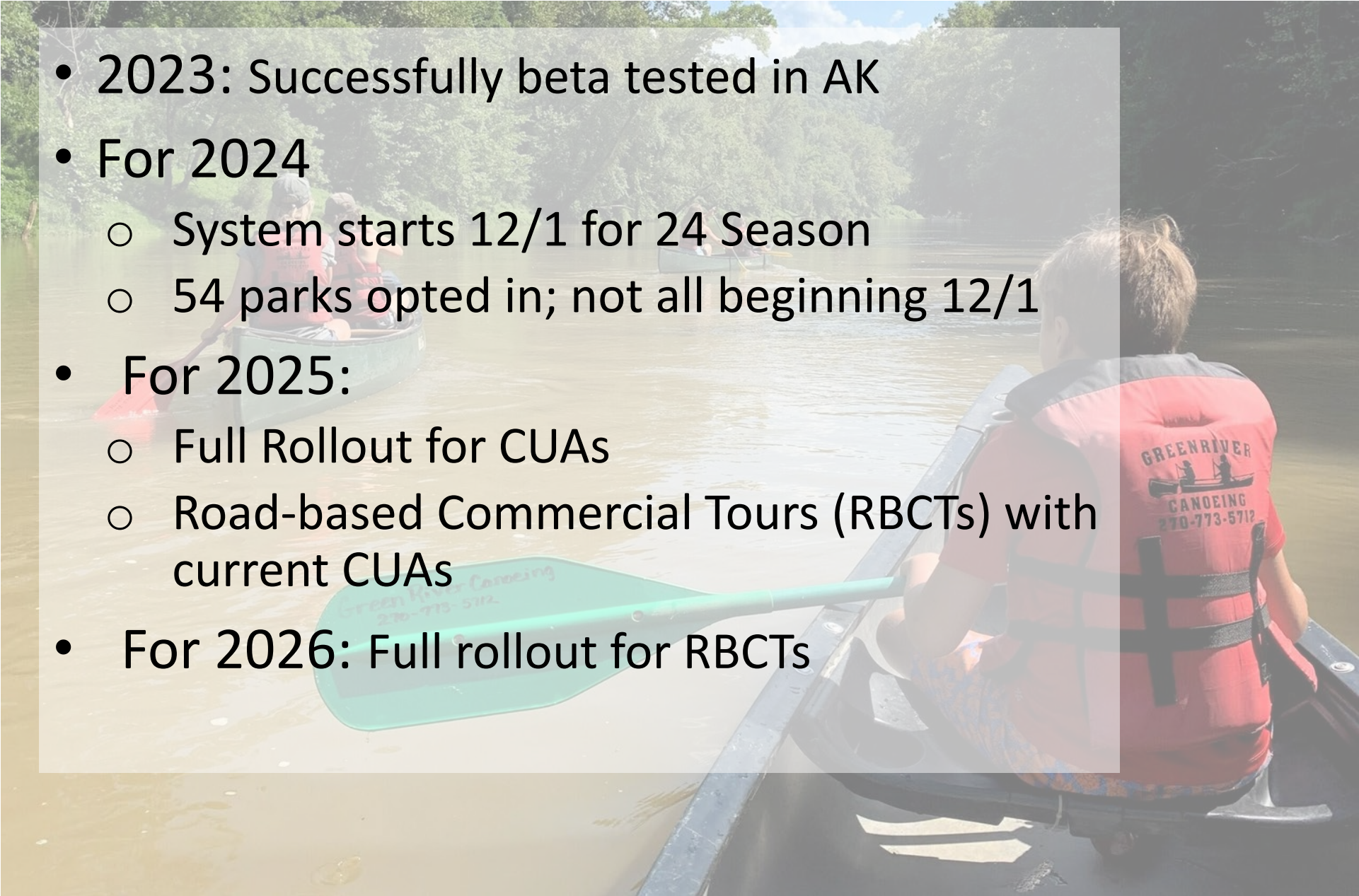


Legislation

- **Laws**
 - America's Outdoor Recreation Act of 2023
 - Great American Outdoors Act
- **Regulations**
 - Concession Rule, 36 CFR 51
 - Visitor Experience Improvement Authority, 36 CFR 52
 - Commercial Use Authorization Rule, 36 CFR 53

Online CUA Permitting and Reporting

- 2023: Successfully beta tested in AK
- For 2024
 - System starts 12/1 for 24 Season
 - 54 parks opted in; not all beginning 12/1
- For 2025:
 - Full Rollout for CUAs
 - Road-based Commercial Tours (RBCTs) with current CUAs
- For 2026: Full rollout for RBCTs



Policy and Initiatives

- EO 14026 – Federal Minimum Wage
 - Per court order, continuing to not include/enforced for seasonal recreation services or recreation equipment providers.
- Continued Emphasis on Sustainability
 - EV light-vehicle fleets
 - Waste Reduction/Plastics Elimination
 - Commercial Filming and Still Photography

Policy and Initiatives

- America the Beautiful - Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FOCOR)
 - More equitable access, opportunities and collaboration
- EO 13583 – DEIA and SO 3403 – Tribal Co-Stewardship
 - Our commercial service providers are an extension of our workforce
 - Emphasis on engaging with Tribes, Native American businesses and employment



Contacts

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Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

USDA Forest Service

An update on our Recreation Special Uses program

America Outdoors Conference December
5-8, 2023

Agenda

- Reimagine Recreation
- Modernization
- New Staff in Recreation
- Policy Updates
- Questions



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

REIMAGINE RECREATION

Creating an Inspired New Vision for Outdoor Recreation on America's
National Forests and Grasslands

America Outdoors Conference
December 2023

REIMAGINE RECREATION

General Timeline & Process Overview



REIMAGINE RECREATION

Drafting an Informed Path Forward

Ideas and input gathered through:

- Employee sensing & discussions
- Tribal perspectives
- Partner group conversations

Collectively informing strategic elements & actions:

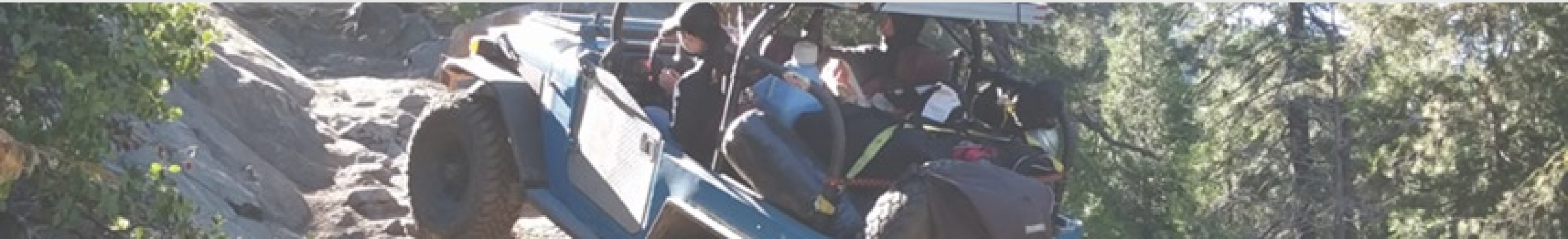
- Strategic Key Shifts & focused Goals to guide the Forest Service Recreation Program.
- National-level Actions to organize around and execute clear priorities.

Collaborative actions built around shared interests & mutual benefits.

Anticipated publication – Spring 2024

Modernization

- Established a National Billing Team who is taking over special use permit billings to provide efficiencies and consistency
- Working with developer to create a new Special Uses Database System (SUDS)
- Exploring e-permitting systems



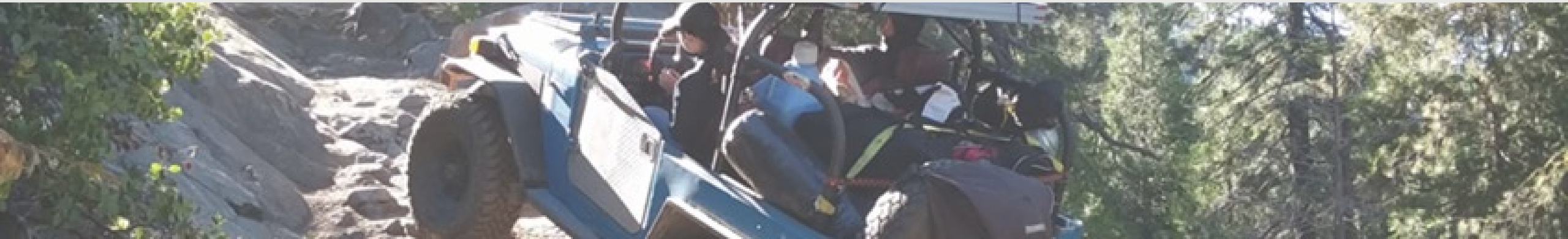
New Staff in Recreation

Focused on all levels of recreation managers – from District to Washington Office

New recreation employees hired and on boarded during the last year.
Focus now has shifted to training the new employees.

Strong step in getting the recreation staffing back to levels we have not seen in decades

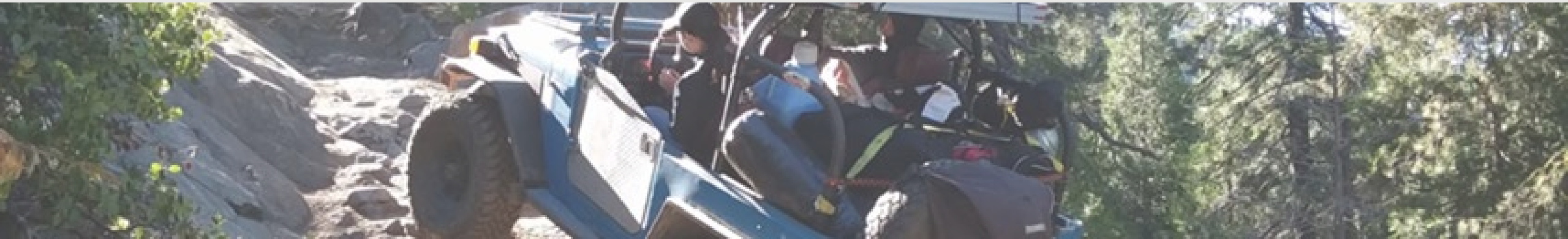
Exploring staffing structure to better support special uses



Policy Updates

For the past 2-3 years we have been working internally on directives concerning concession campgrounds, outfitters/guides and recreation events.

These updates are going through their final Agency/Department clearance processes so they can be published for notice and comment.



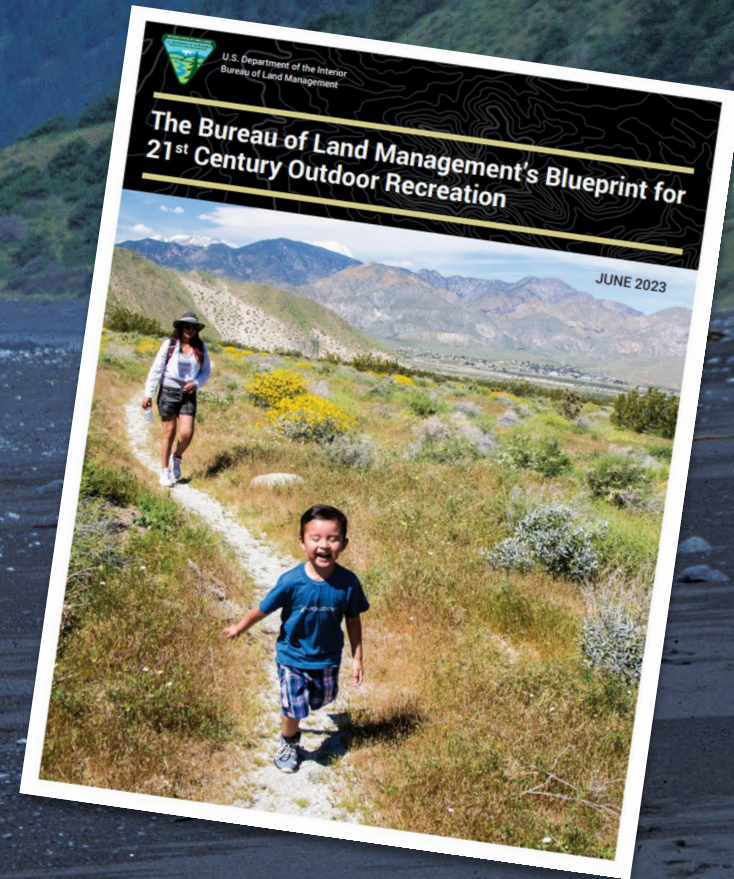


Questions?



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management's Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation





Blueprint vision

To provide exceptional and one-of-a-kind recreational experiences that invite all to share in the enjoyment and stewardship of their public lands.

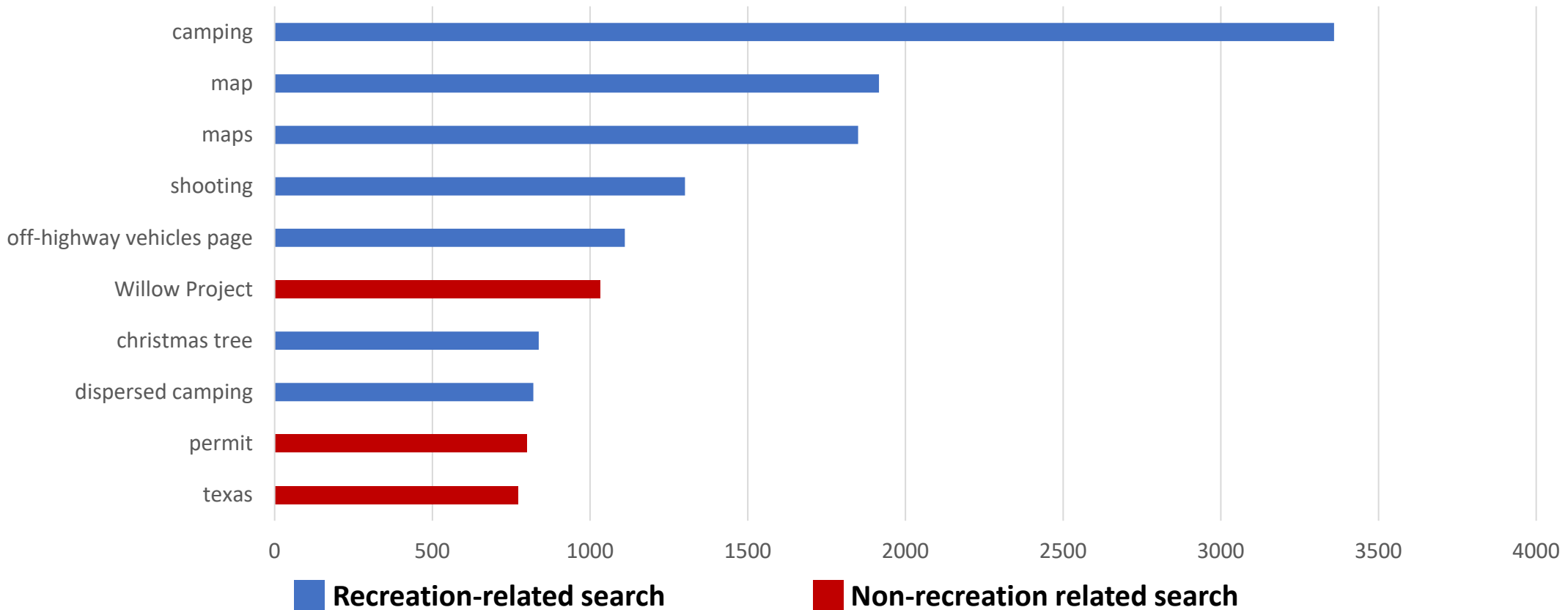
Blueprint – the Case for a New Approach

- Visitation has increased 40% over the past 10 years.
- Funding per visit is down.



Public Interest in BLM = Recreation

Oct 2022-May 2023 Top Search.gov queries



13,798 Total Searches

11,193 Recreation-Related Searches

81% of Total Searches were Recreation-Related

Blueprint Highpoints

- Grow and Diversify resources supporting recreation
- Advances equity in outdoor recreation
- Addresses challenges of increased visitation



Why ask for more recreation resources?

Key Needs:

- Prioritizing the recreation program within BLM
- Expand Community engagement
- Access to public lands – approved travel routes, landlocked public lands, transportation grants to underserved communities
- Meeting demand, protecting resources, youth programming

Blueprint Structure

Strategic Pillars

- Desired Outcomes
- Core Strategies
- Partnership
Success Stories



Blueprint Vision and Key Concepts

“Our Blueprint vision is to provide exceptional and one-of-a-kind recreational experiences that invite all to share in the enjoyment and stewardship of their public lands.”

Four Strategic Pillars:

01

Grow and diversify resources for BLM recreation

02

Prioritize and embrace partnerships

03

Expand outreach and establish a culture of inclusion

04

Meet the demand, protect resources and improve access



How it Ties Together

Blueprint Aligns with:

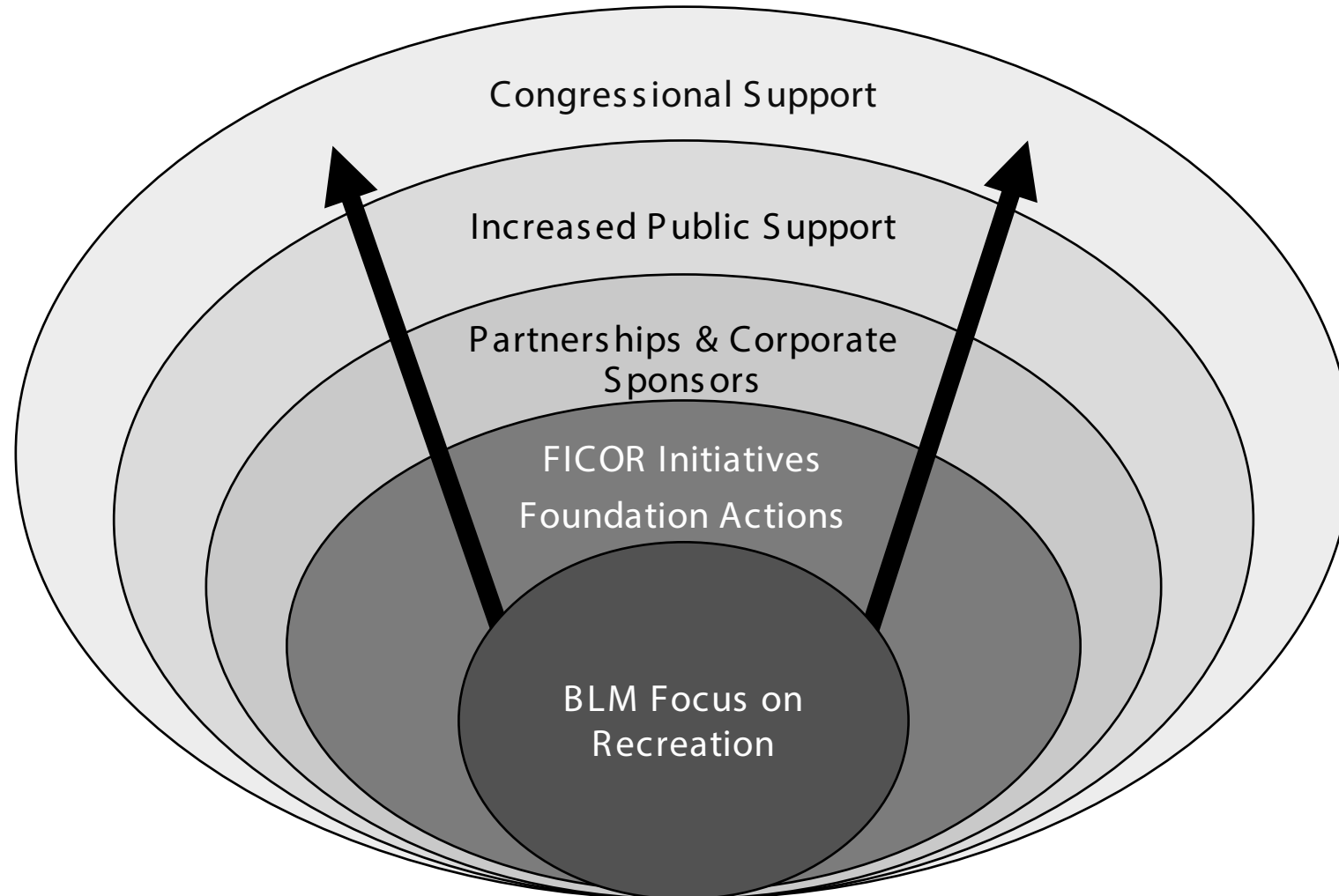
- ✓ Federal Interagency Council for Outdoor Recreation (FICOR)
- ✓ Equity in Outdoor Recreation
- ✓ Public interest in BLM

Blueprint Impact: Meet the Needs of Today and the Future



BLM Focus on
Recreation

Blueprint Impact: Meet the Needs of Today and the Future





Building on Success

- ✓ High-impact investing in and partnering with BLM
- ✓ Nimble approach/agency culture
- ✓ State-level assessments
- ✓ Ground level Summits in each state



BLM's Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation

How do SRPs play a big part in our recreation strategy?





Leveraging Technology for Recreation

RAPTOR – Recreation and Permit Tracking Online Reporting

Recreation.gov

E-Commerce



Proposed Rule – Temporary Closure and Restriction Orders

A photograph of a slot canyon with smooth, undulating sandstone walls. The walls are illuminated from above, creating a play of light and shadow that highlights the intricate textures and curves of the rock. The colors range from warm oranges and reds to cooler blues and greys.

Questions?

Thank you!

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