



# Implementing Service First

References & Recommendations

# What is Service First?

- Collaboration across agency boundaries
- A concept of organizing work with an external focus
- It's about the lands we manage and the customers we serve

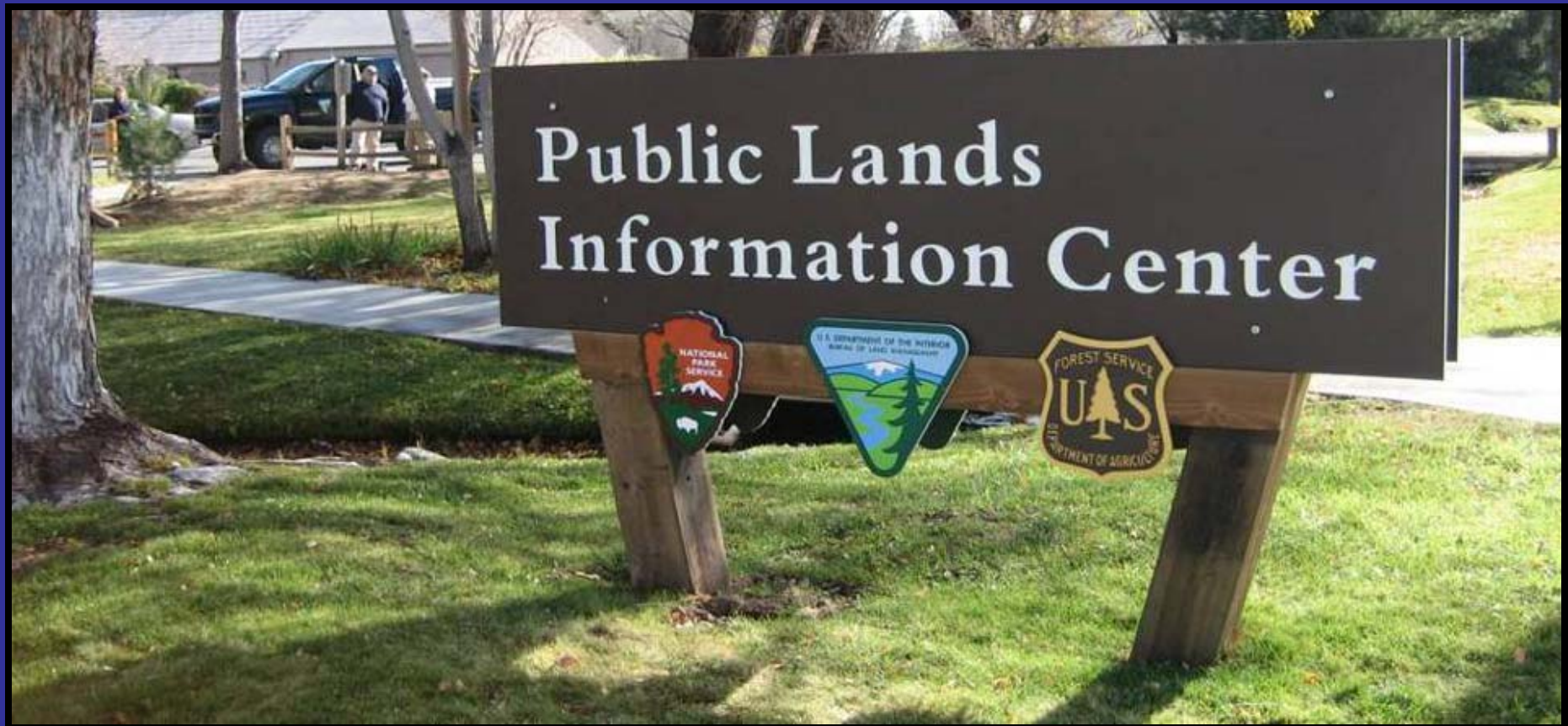
Presentation largely adapted from the Service First Resource Kit available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/servicefirst/>



# *Service First = Partnerships*



*Rather than focusing primarily on our agency procedures and boundaries, Service First challenges us to look at our work differently than we usually have, in order to better achieve the timeless goals of land stewardship and quality public service.*



# Service First Goals

- 1. Improve customer service** (such as one-stop shopping for information, permits, maps, etc.)
- 2. Increase operational efficiency** (such as reduced costs where field units collocate under one roof and share costs of rent, utilities and equipment)
- 3. Improve stewardship of the land** (which can come when the various land agencies' staff work in an integrated unit, learn together, and deal with the land on a landscape basis.)



# Service First Background

- Service First initiative was chartered by the BLM and FS in 1998
  - to promote interagency collaborative efforts which had occurred informally for years
- FY 1998 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act
  - authorized the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to make reciprocal delegations of their respective authorities, duties and responsibilities in support of joint pilot programs to promote customer service and efficiency in the management of public lands (BLM) and national forests (FS)



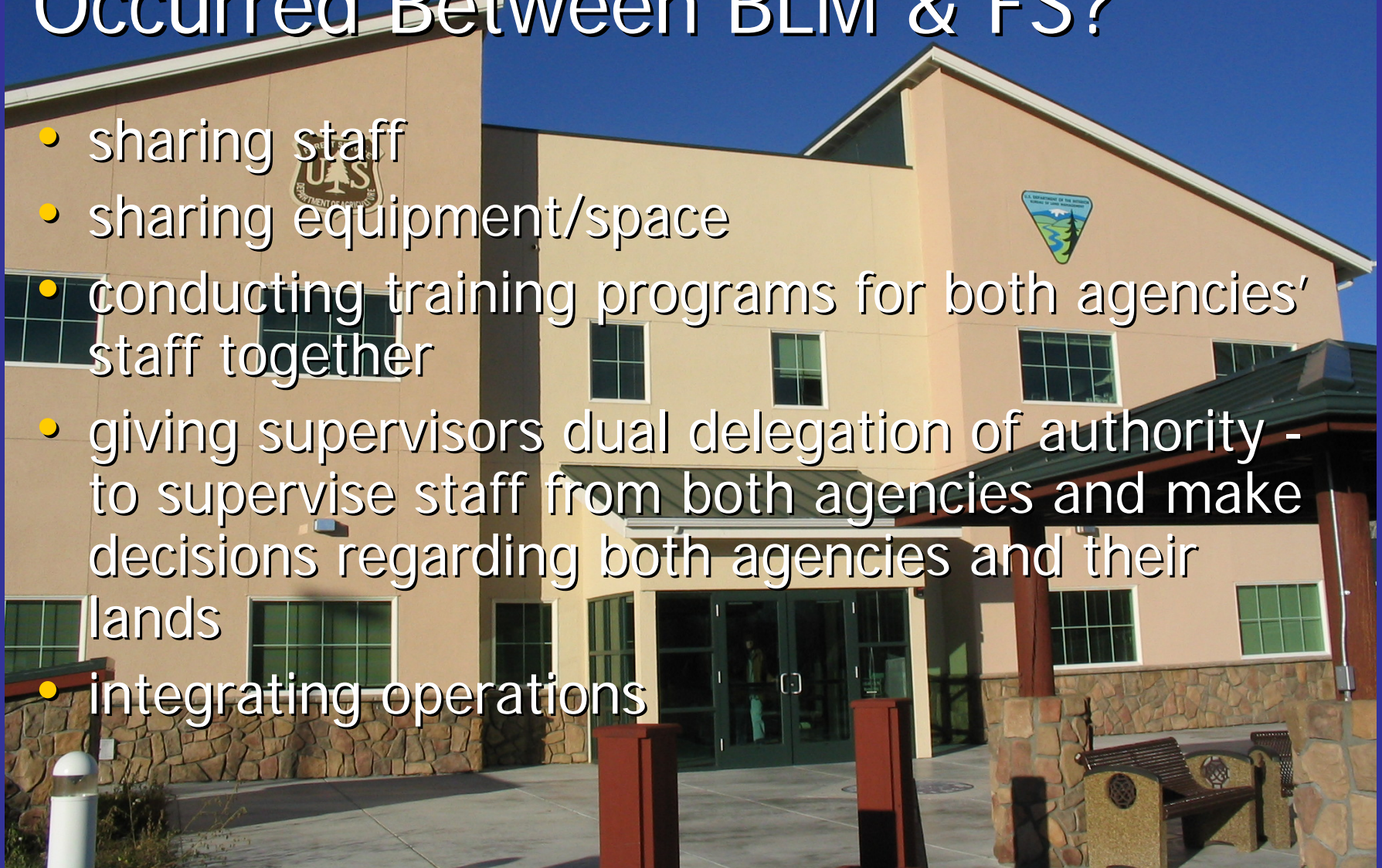
# Current Legislation

- **FY2006 Interior Appropriations Act**
  - expanded Service First to include NPS and USFWS; extended authority through 2008; and authorized all 4 land agencies to conduct projects, planning, permitting, leasing, contracting and other activities, either jointly or on behalf of one another
  - authorized transfers of funds and reimbursement of funds on an annual basis, including transfers and reimbursements for multi-year projects



# What Kind of Collaboration Has Occurred Between BLM & FS?

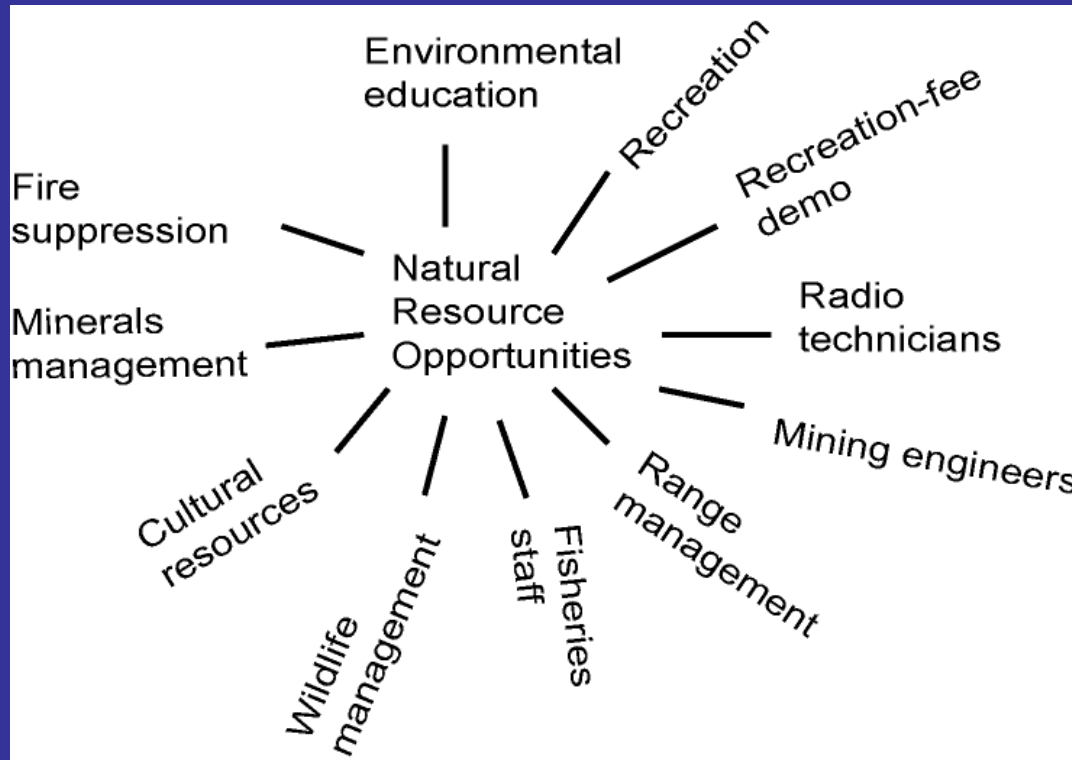
- sharing staff
- sharing equipment/space
- conducting training programs for both agencies' staff together
- giving supervisors dual delegation of authority - to supervise staff from both agencies and make decisions regarding both agencies and their lands
- integrating operations



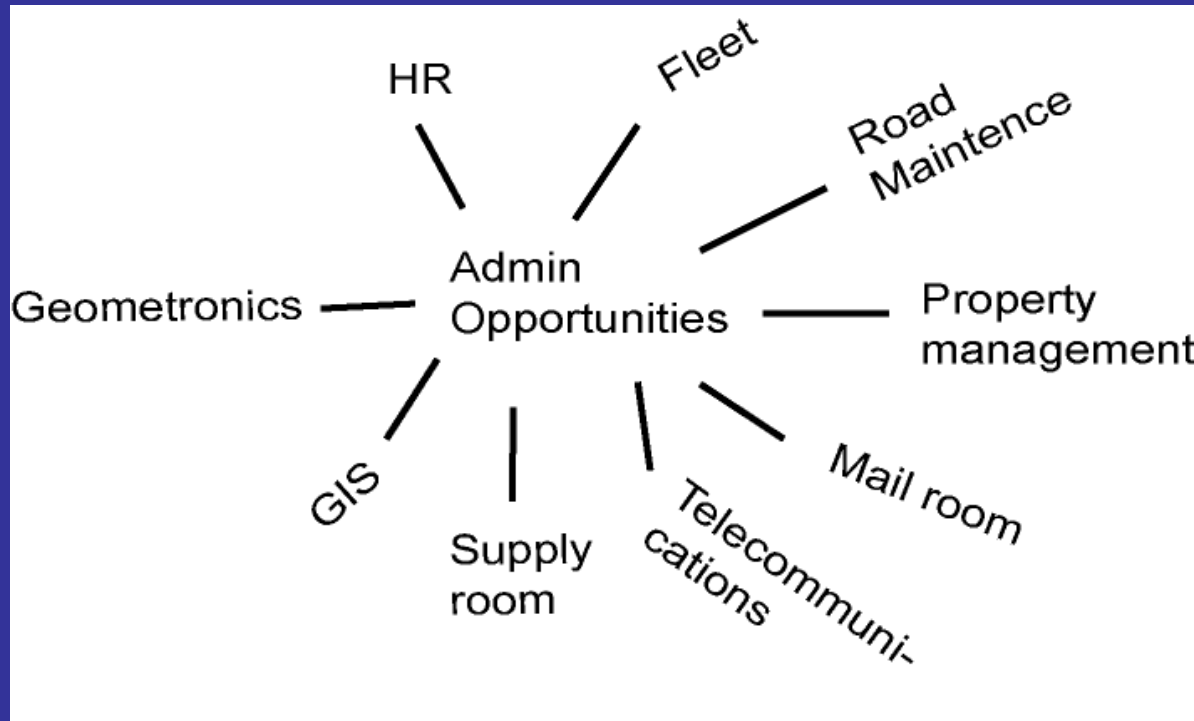




# Service First Can Include Integrating Resource Management



# Administrative Functions May Also Be Shared



# BLM / FS National MOU

- Signed February 2006
- Interprets expanded Service First authority for both agencies
- Authorizes use of Intragovernmental Orders (IGOs) to transfer funds
- Eliminates need for umbrella agreements
- Waives administrative charges

# National MOU

- FS/BLM Leadership issued joint transmittal memo to field units on application of MOU
- Some training on use of new authorities has been conducted
- Need for regional Service First subject matter experts (champions) has been identified

# What are the major lessons learned concerning Service First?

- ▶ Service First activities cannot be dictated by Washington; there's no one-size-fits-all model. Each location is different; each Service First effort must be tailored.
- ▶ Service First must be developed using adaptive management. Whatever you do initially needs to be modified as you get feedback on how it's working.
- ▶ Since there's no single model or template for all Service First work, field units can decide where to increase their partnerships by asking employees and the public one simple but powerful question:

***Where does it make sense to share resources?***

# More Lessons Learned

- ▶ Involve your employees at every step in planning and implementing the effort
- ▶ Senior management support is critical, to show overall commitment in the approach, to set goals that need to be met, and then to let staff teams figure out how to meet those goals
- ▶ The organizations must be treated as equals
- ▶ You need to inform the public about this change, why it's occurring, how it will benefit them. They'll be supportive once they understand what's happening

# Lessons Learned (cont.)

- ▶ Service First will likely help you provide better service to the public, and do a better job on the land. It often (but not always) saves money
- ▶ People like maintaining their own agency identity. It is important to encourage each staff to respect the other agency's culture and practices, and learn about them
- ▶ Involve your union early, so there's useful input and no surprises
- ▶ There are no barriers to implementation that cannot be overcome with innovation and commitment.
- ▶ As much as anything, Service First is about an attitude of sharing, not hoarding; an attitude of, "we're all in this together."



# Evaluating Service First Programs

## ► Criteria

- activity improves customer service at relative cost or activity provides same customer service at reduced cost
- legal per law, regulations, labor-management contract, etc.
- furthers mission accomplishment of agencies involved

# Other Criteria

- ▶ Does the activity make sense?
- ▶ What are the objectives and desired outcomes of the activity and how do we measure success or failure? Has a monitoring plan been developed?
- ▶ Have authorities been delegated to the appropriate level and documented? Are official organization charts established (to show reporting structure for all officially established positions whether vacant or filled, and affects on local workforce planning)?
- ▶ Are Service First organization charts established that reflect each "shared" position, including % of funding/duties between agencies and which agency is charged the FTE?
- ▶ Have adverse impacts to employees been identified and mitigated?
- ▶ Has collaboration between labor and management occurred, and issues resolved?
- ▶ Does implementation strategy address marketing needs to higher level management, customers and employees?

**Where it makes sense,  
Service First is a smart way to  
do business!**



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