



Stewardship Contracting Assessment Study

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A. Study Overview

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approached Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory (SRL) to conduct an evaluation measuring the effectiveness of Stewardship site visitation, proposal submission, and contracting process, as well as to explore areas of contracting strength and improvement. The BLM "manages 264 million acres of mostly Western land and 700 million acres of federal subsurface mineral estate nationwide. These lands encompass almost one-eighth of the Nation's overall acreage, and about one of every five acres from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific."¹ The BLM describes Stewardship contracting as:

"...a new authority for the BLM, contained in the 2003 Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-7). Stewardship involves caring for the public lands through broad-based public and community involvement. The contracts would be designed to achieve ecological restoration and maintenance objectives that may include the capture of some value of forest or rangeland material that is created as a part of the project. This material would offset the cost to taxpayers of the restoration project and should provide opportunities for local economic development in the fields of biomass for energy and alternative wood products. This is especially important in areas that have been historically dependent on commercial timber sales."²

The research team designed a telephone survey to explore these various aspects of Stewardship contracts and to measure the degree to which Stewardship participants and BLM Stewardship Contract Managers believe the Stewardship contracting process is effective in reaching mutually defined goals. Dr. Frederic Solop, director of the Social Research Laboratory, served as principal investigator for this research; Kristi K. Hagen served as co-principal investigator; and, Michael A. Aquino, served as project manager for the study. This report is the product of the assessment research conducted by the SRL research team.

The Social Research Laboratory is a full-service research and teaching facility located within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Northern Arizona University. The SRL offers quality research services to public and nonprofit clients while providing graduate and undergraduate students at NAU with applied research instruction and experience. The Social Research Laboratory specializes in program evaluations, public opinion studies, needs assessments, and demographic and social issue analyses.

¹ www.blm.gov

² www.blm.gov/nhp/spotlight/forest_initiative/stewardship_contracting/stcontrBLM_QAs0115.pdf

B. Methodology

INTRODUCTION

The following evaluation focuses on ways to mitigate problems and understand a range of perspectives regarding the contracting process. One survey, modified slightly for each group, was utilized to obtain qualitative and quantitative data from (1) Stewardship project and contract participants; and (2) BLM Stewardship Contract Managers. Survey results provide effectiveness ratings to be used in measuring how well the BLM Stewardship contracting process is managed and also identified areas and opportunities for improvement in the site visitation, proposal submission, and contracting process.

Processing and acquiring Stewardship contracts is a complex endeavor. Survey results provide both qualitative and quantitative data which identify opportunities for improvement in the Stewardship process. Surveys also provide a medium for both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers to feedback information about their experiences with current Stewardship contracts. The data gathered from this survey has been analyzed and shared with the BLM management and evaluation office, and recommendations have been made available to the appropriate offices.

There are three identifiable objectives of this study: (1) understanding Stewardship project area site visitation; (2) understanding perspectives of Stewardship project bidding and proposal process; and, (3) understanding ways to improve and better manage the Stewardship contracting process.

The Social Research Laboratory received a total of 31 contact names and phone numbers of BLM Contract Managers overseeing Stewardship sites, proposals, and contracts. Subsequently, BLM Stewardship Contract Managers provided 70 contact names and phone numbers of individuals who have been awarded a contract, bid for or proposed a project, or only attended a project site. Surveys were administered to “awardees,” “non-awardees (bidders)”, and “site attendees (only).” Surveys were also administered to the BLM Contract Managers who oversee Stewardship projects.

Fielding of surveys was conducted January 10 through February 11, 2005. Findings were summarized shortly thereafter.

SAMPLE

Stewardship Participants and BLM Stewardship Contract Managers

There are two types of respondents surveyed for this study: (1) Stewardship Participants and (2) BLM Contract Managers. *Stewardship Participants* are contractors not employed by the BLM (awardees, non-awardees, and site visit attendees). All

together, Stewardship Participants comprise 61 percent (N=48) of this study's total sample population.

Awardees are individuals who have been successful in obtaining a Stewardship contract with the BLM and comprise 28 percent (N=22) of this study's sample population.

Non-Awardees are individuals who bid for or proposed a Stewardship project, but have been unsuccessful in obtaining an award. Non-Awardees comprise 14 percent (N=11) of this study's sample population.

Site Visit Attendees are individuals who attend a project site, but chose not to place a bid or proposal. Site Visit Attendees comprise 19 percent (N=15) of this study's sample population.

The second group of respondents is BLM Contract Managers. *BLM Contract Managers* are individuals employed by the BLM who oversee and manage Stewardship project sites, proposals, and contracts. BLM Contract Managers comprise 39 percent (N=31) of this study's total sample population.

Table 1: Type of Stewardship Respondent

Type of Stewardship Respondent	Percent	(N)
Stewardship Participants	61%	48
Awardees	28%	22
Non-Awardees (Bidder)	14%	11
Site Visit Attendees (only)	19%	15
BLM Stewardship Contract Managers	39%	31
Total	100%	79

Sample 1: Stewardship Participants (N=48)

Initially, BLM staff supplied the names and contact information of 31 BLM Contract Managers who have been responsible for maintaining lists of Stewardship site attendees, bidders and contract awardees. The SRL contacted these BLM Field Officers during the months of November and December, 2004 and obtained names and contact information of Stewardship Participants. Stewardship Participants are individuals who have attended a Stewardship project site, placed a bid on a project site, or have been awarded a contract for a project. Seventy potential Stewardship Participants were identified for this investigation; upon further review, 22 were found to be duplicates (several potential participants have visited and/or placed bids for more than one Stewardship project site). In total, 48 Stewardship Participants were contacted and administered a survey regarding their perceptions of the Stewardship contracting process.

Sample 2: BLM Stewardship Contract Managers (N=31)

As stated, BLM staff provided the names and contact information for 31 BLM Contract Managers who are responsible for maintaining lists of Stewardship site attendees, bidders and contract awardees. BLM Contract Managers are BLM employees who oversee Stewardship project sites and contracts. The SRL contacted all 31 BLM Contract Managers during the fielding period and administered a survey regarding their perceptions of the Stewardship contracting process.

DESIGN

Questionnaire Design

The SRL collaborated with BLM officials in the development of the survey questionnaire. BLM officials who have considerable experience with the Stewardship process were retained as consultants to assure the relevance and accuracy of the survey questions. The final survey instrument was approved by Northern Arizona University's Institutional Review Board and the Office of Management and Budget.

The questionnaire addressed multiple areas of the Stewardship process including:

- Perceptions of the Site Visitation process
- Perceptions of the Bidding and Proposal process
- Perceptions of the Stewardship contracting process

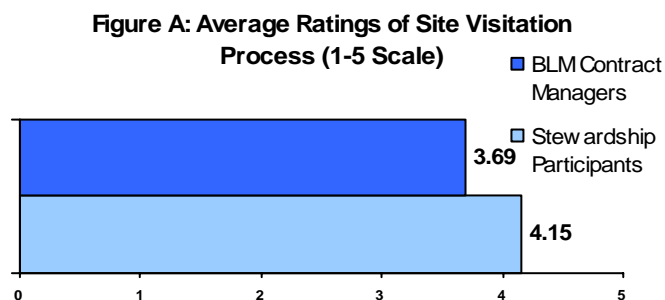
The survey includes both close-ended and open-ended questions. Respondents were asked to explain their ratings of various components of the BLM Stewardship process. The survey was also designed to elicit suggestions and comments from the respondents.

C. Executive Summary

I. STEWARDSHIP PROJECT SITE VISITATIONS

Site Visitation Ratings

- ❖ Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the site visitation process for Stewardship projects. Overall, Stewardship Participants rate the site visitation process **positively**, while BLM Contract Managers rate the site visitation process **moderately positive**.
- ❖ Stewardship Participants rate the site visitation process with a mean score of **4.15** and BLM Contract Managers rate the site visitation process with a mean score of **3.69** (see Figure A).



Aspects of Stewardship Site Visitations that Work Best

- ❖ Stewardship Participants report **explanation of the site** (31%), **interaction with the BLM** (26%), **touring the site** (14%), and **maps/mapping** (10%) as the top aspects of the site visitation process.
- ❖ BLM Contract Managers identify the ability of the bidder to **view the land/site** (39%), **communicate with the contractor** (35%), and **contract clarification** (15%) as the best aspects of the site visitation process.

Aspects of Stewardship Site Visitations that Need Improvement

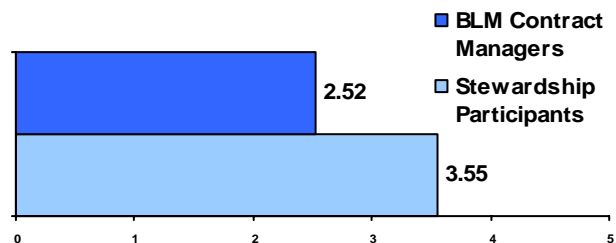
- ❖ Stewardship Participants note the need for **better explanation of the project** (24%), **more data** (18%), **more time for proposal/site visit** (12%), **better assessed byproduct** (12%), and **better informed guides** (12%) as the primary aspects of the site visitation process needing improvement.
- ❖ BLM Contract Managers identify **contractor interest/involvement** (40%), **workmanship/speed** (30%), **extended time frames** (10%), and required **site visits before contracting** (10%) as the aspects needing improvement in the visitation process.

II. BIDDING AND PROPOSALS

Effectiveness Ratings of Stewardship Bidding/Proposal Process

- ❖ When asked to provide an effectiveness rating, Stewardship Participants rate the bidding and proposal process **moderately**, while BLM Contract Managers rate the bidding and proposal process somewhat **less positively**

Figure B: Average Ratings of Stewardship Bidding and Proposal Process (1-5 Scale)



- ❖ On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest, Stewardship Participants rate the bidding and proposal process with a mean score of **3.55**. On the same scale, BLM Contract Managers rate the bidding and proposal process with a mean score of **2.52** (see Figure B).

Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Work Best

- ❖ Stewardship Participants report that the **site visits** (21%), **Internet advertising** (18%), **proposal evaluation** (18%), **BLM personnel** (18%), and **communication** (14%) are the best aspects of the bidding and proposal process.
- ❖ Among BLM Contract Managers, **equipment evaluation** (21%), **communication** (17%), **local involvement** (17%), **proposal evaluation** (17%), and the **pre-bid site visit** (13%) are identified as the best aspects of the Stewardship bidding and proposal process.

Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Need Improvement

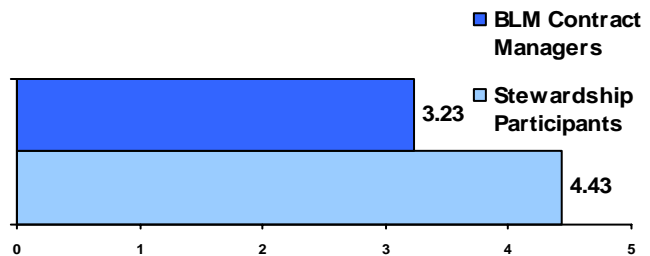
- ❖ Stewardship Participants report **project explanation** (35%), **more local control** (15%), **byproduct values** (15%), **speed-up process** (12%), and **more time** (12%) as the areas needing improvement in the Stewardship bidding and proposal process.
- ❖ Among BLM Contract Managers, **increase bidders' understanding of proposals** (26%), **advertising/notification** (19%), **accommodate local contractors** (19%), **funding assessment** (15%), **more local control** (7%), and **more time** (7%) are identified as the aspects of the Stewardship bidding and proposal process that need improvement.

III. STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS

Ratings of Stewardship Contracting Process

❖ Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the Stewardship contracting process on a scale of 1 to 5. Overall, Stewardship Participants rate the Stewardship contracting process **very positively**, while BLM Contract Managers rate the Stewardship contracting process **moderately**.

Figure C: Average Ratings of Stewardship Contracting Process (1-5 Scale)



❖ On a scale of 1 to 5, Stewardship Participants rate the Stewardship contracting process in general with a mean score of **4.43**. On the same scale, BLM Contract Managers rate the Stewardship contracting process with a more moderate mean score of **3.23** (see Figure C).

Aspects of Stewardship Contracting that Work Best

- ❖ Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “What aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting work the best?” Stewardship awardees are particularly impressed with the **BLM personnel, the ground technicians, and the inspectors** for example. Some awardees also mentioned that they appreciate working within a **performance based but flexible program where negotiations and cooperation are employed to achieve objectives**.
- ❖ Overall, BLM Contract Managers praise the **efficiency of land treatment**, and contracts that **trade goods for services, reduce cost, and create capital**. The Stewardships **encourage local involvement in projects** that simultaneously allow BLM officers to interact with local groups, the Forest Service, and the physical sites. (Refer to Appendix A for a complete list of detailed responses).

Aspects of Stewardship Contracting Needing Improvement

- ❖ All respondents were asked “What aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting need improvements?” Stewardship awardees report that improvements are needed in the area of **contract accessibility**, such as: notices from the BLM offices to alert them of new contracts when they become available; clarity and brevity in the paperwork; expedition in processes and payment time frames; and more realistic estimated product purchasing arrangements. Contractors believe that the program would also benefit from greater local control.

- ❖ BLM Contract Managers express the need for very similar, if not the same, improvements that contractors would like to see implemented. Their suggestions for improvement lie in the same areas: **contracting processes, local involvement/control, product price reductions, and better cost estimation.** BLM Contract Managers would like to shorten contracting processes, make conditions more conducive to local bidders, and reduce paperwork and contracting time in general. And similar to local contractors, they would like to improve cost estimation. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

Communication Ratings

- ❖ Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers rate the level of communication between each other **very positively.**
- ❖ Using the 1 to 5 scale, Stewardship Participants rate communication between the BLM and themselves with a mean score of **4.43.** On the same scale, BLM Contract Managers rate communication between the contractor and themselves with a mean score of **4.48** (see Figure D).

Stakeholder Involvement Ratings

- ❖ In regards to stakeholders and Stewardship projects, both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers rate the current involvement of stakeholders in Stewardship contracts **moderately.**
- ❖ Rating the stakeholder involvement on a 1 to 5 scale, Stewardship Participants give a mean rating of **3.29** while BLM Contract Managers rate stakeholder involvement with a mean score of **3.44** (see Figure D on page 12).

Ratings of Current Regulations for Stewardship Contracts

- ❖ Respondents were asked to rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Stewardship Participants rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts **positively;** however, BLM Contract Managers rate current regulations for Stewardship contracts **moderately.**
- ❖ On the 1 to 5 scale, Stewardship Participants rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts with a mean score of **4.00;** BLM Contract Managers rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts with a mean score of **3.03** (see Figure D on page 12).

Importance of Bonding Ratings

- ❖ In regards to the importance of bonding for Stewardship contracts, Stewardship Participants rate the importance of bonding **moderately**, while BLM Contract Managers rate the importance of bonding slightly more **positively**.
- ❖ On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, Stewardship Participants rate the importance of bonding for their Stewardship contract with a mean score of **3.18**. BLM Contract Managers, rate the importance of bonding for Stewardship contracts more positively with a mean score of **3.97** (see Figure D on page 12).

Ease of Obtaining Bonding Ratings

- ❖ Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the ease of obtaining bonding for Stewardship contracts. Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers rate the ease of obtaining bonding **moderately**.
- ❖ On a scale of 1 to 5, Stewardship Participants rate the ease of obtaining bonding for their Stewardship contracts with a mean score of **3.18**. On the same scale BLM Contract Managers rate the ease of obtaining bonding, slightly more negatively than Stewardship Participants, with a mean score of **2.88** (see Figure D on page 12).

Determination of Costs Ratings

- ❖ Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the way BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers rate the determination of costs for Stewardship contracts **moderately**.
- ❖ Stewardship Participants rate the determination of costs with a mean score of **3.13**; while BLM Contract Managers rate the determination of costs with a mean score of **3.52** (see Figure D).

Timber Harvesting and Wood Products Production Ratings

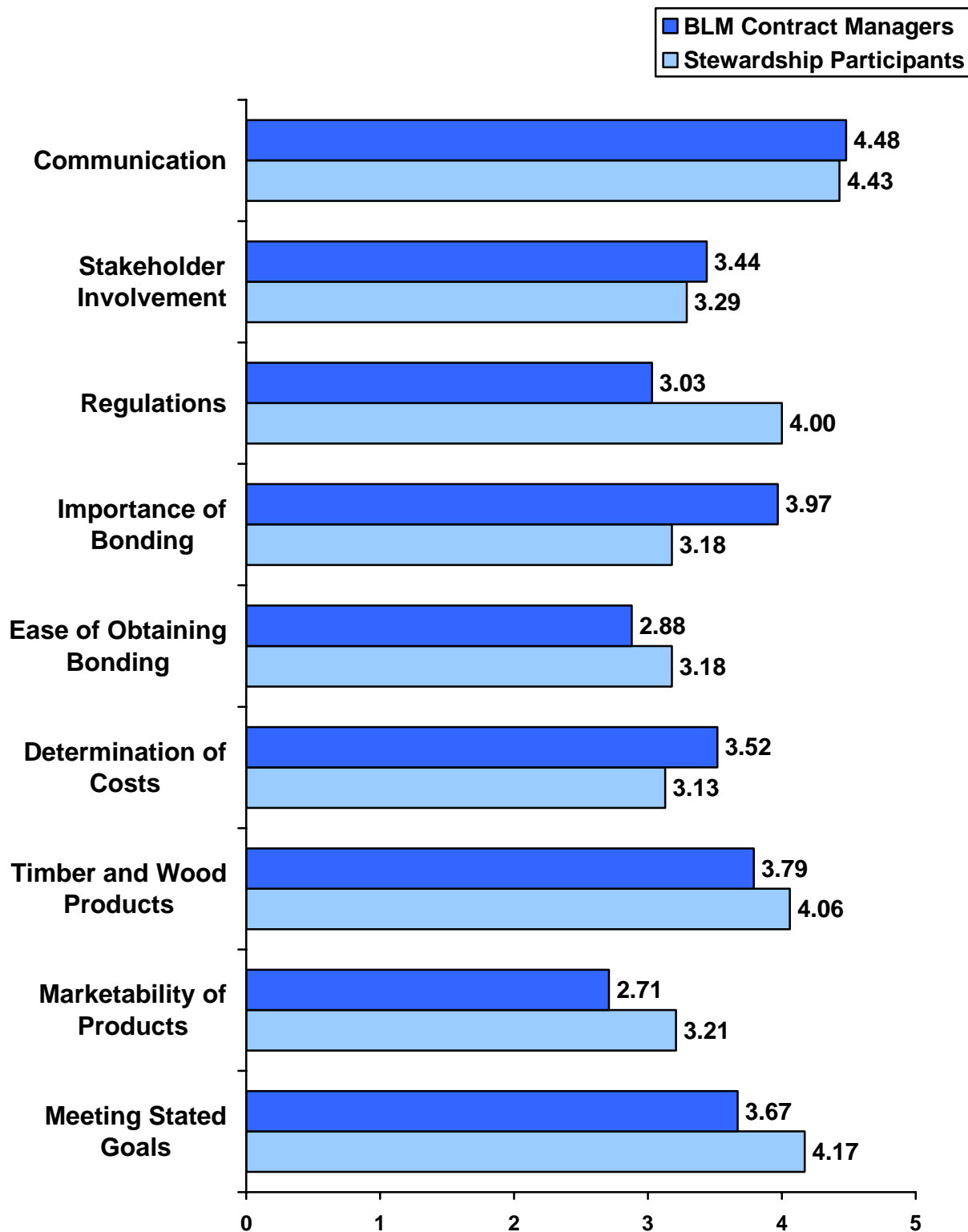
- ❖ Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the combination of timber harvesting and wood products production on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest rating and 5 as the highest. Stewardship Participants rate this combination **positively**, while BLM Contract Managers rate timber harvesting and wood products production **moderately to positively**.

- ❖ On a scale of 1 to 5, Stewardship Participants rate the combination of wood products production and timber harvesting with a mean score of **4.06**. On the same scale BLM Contract Managers rate the combination of wood products production and timber harvesting with a mean score of **3.79**.

Marketability of Products Ratings

- ❖ Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers rated the marketability of products generated from Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Stewardship Participants rate marketability of wood products **moderately**, while BLM Contract Managers rate the marketability of products generated from Stewardship contracts **negatively** to **moderately**.
- ❖ On a scale of 1 to 5, Stewardship Participants rate the marketability of products from Stewardship contracts with a mean score of **3.21**. On the same scale BLM Contract Managers rate the marketability of products from Stewardship contracts with a mean score of **2.71**.

Figure D: Average Ratings of Stewardship Contracting Process Items (1-5 Scale)



D. Study Findings

I. PROJECT SITE VISITATIONS

Number of Site Visits Made BLM Stewardship Project Areas

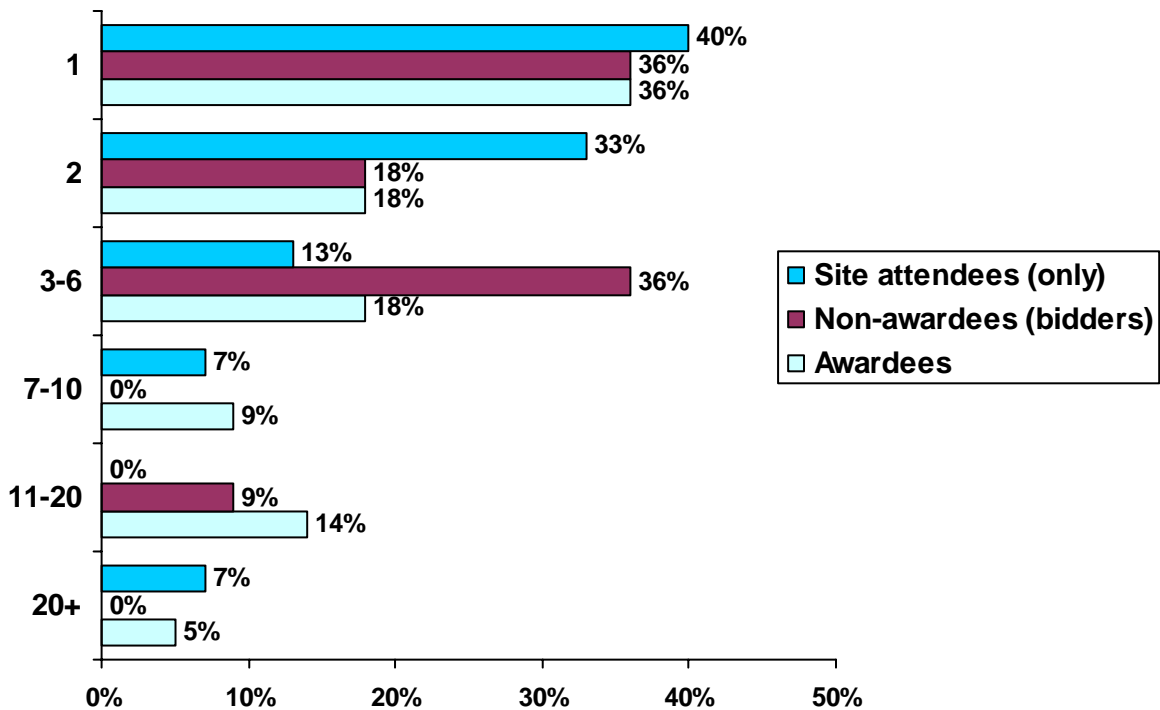
Initially, all Stewardship Participants were asked how many site visits they have made to BLM projects (see Table 2). Of the 48 Stewardship Participants, 38 percent (N=18) indicate that they have attended only one site, and another 23 percent (N=11) indicate that they have attended two sites. The average number of site visits reported by all Stewardship Participants is 5.31.

Table 2: Number of Reported Site Visits Made by Stewardship Participants

Number of Site Visits	Percent	(N)
1	23%	18
2	23%	11
3	8%	4
4	4%	2
5	2%	1
6	6%	3
10	6%	3
15	4%	2
17	2%	1
20	2%	1
25	2%	1
50	2%	1
Total	99%	48
Average	5.31	

Figure 1 below provides the distribution of site visits by the type of Stewardship Participant. Among awardees of Stewardship contracts, 36 percent (N=8) indicate they have attended only one site. Eighteen percent (N=4) indicate that they have attended two sites, and another 18 percent of awardees indicate that they have attended three to six sites. Among non-awardees (bidders), 36 percent (N=4) indicate that they have attended only one site, however, 36 percent (N=4) indicate that they have attended three to six sites. Forty percent (N=6) of site attendees (only) indicate that they have attended just one site, while an additional 33 percent (N=5) indicate that they have attended at least two sites (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Number of Site Visits by Stewardship Participants

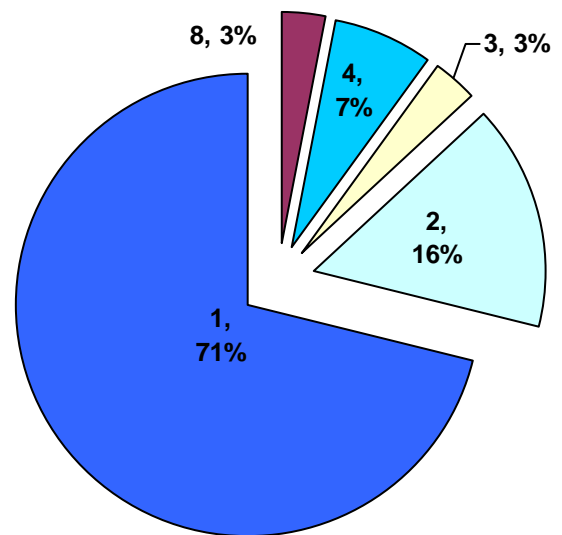


Number of Stewardship Projects Overseen by BLM Stewardship Contract Managers

BLM Contract Managers were asked, “How many Stewardship projects do you oversee?” The majority, 71 percent (N=22), indicate that they oversee only one project. Sixteen percent (N=5) claim to oversee two projects. And a small percentage report overseeing three, four, and eight Stewardship projects (see Figure 2).

The majority of BLM Contract Managers surveyed for this study are located in offices in the Northwest and West. Sixteen percent (N=5) are overseeing projects in Oregon followed by Idaho where 13 percent (N=4) are overseeing projects. The

Figure 2: Number of Projects Overseen by BLM Stewardship Contract Managers



California, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming BLM offices manage 10 percent per office; while Arizona, Montana, Nevada, and South Dakota offices oversee fewer Stewardships (see Table 3).

Table 3: Field Offices Managing Stewardship Projects by State

	Percent	(N)
Oregon	16%	5
Idaho	13%	4
California	10%	3
Colorado	10%	3
New Mexico	10%	3
Utah	10%	3
Wyoming	10%	3
Arizona	6%	2
Montana	6%	2
Nevada	6%	2
South Dakota	3%	1
Total	100%	31

Site Visitation Ratings

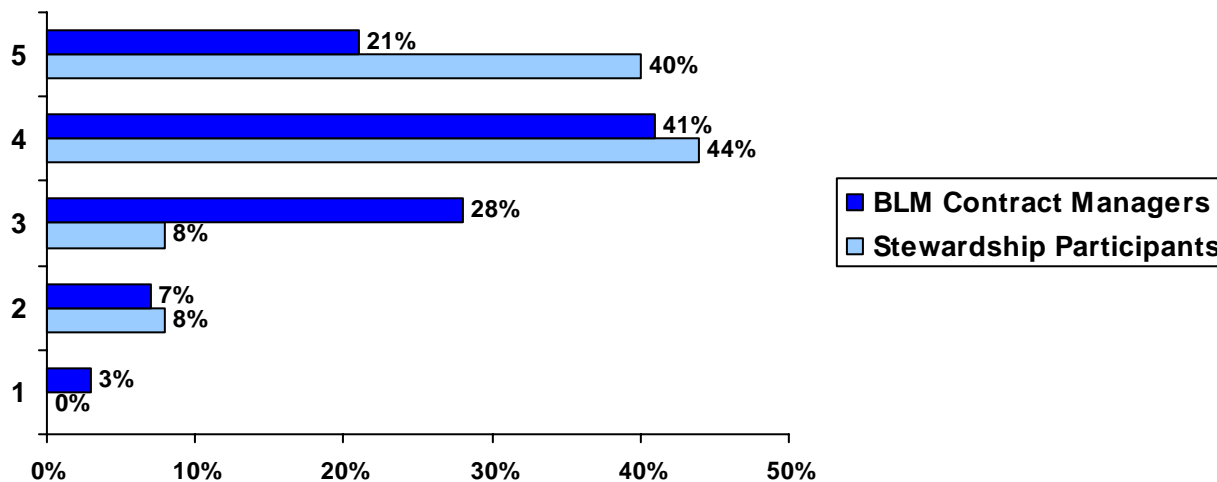
Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, overall, how would you rate the BLM Stewardship site visitation process?” Figure 3 displays the distribution of ratings for the site visitation process.

For Stewardship Participants, the average rating of the BLM’s site visitation process is **4.15**. This overall rating suggests a very positive perception of the way BLM conducts site visitations for potential Stewardship projects among Participants. Over three-quarters of Stewardship Participants who answered this question rate the BLM’s site visitation process very positively. Forty percent (N=19) of Stewardship Participants rate the BLM’s site visitation process with a score of 5, while another 44 percent (N=21) give the BLM a rating of 4 for its site visitation process. Eight percent (N=4) rate the site visitation process with scores of 3 and 2.

There appears to be a slightly less favorable perception of the site visitation process among BLM Contract Managers. Their average rating of site visitation is **3.69** that suggests a moderate to positive perception of visitation. Twenty-one percent (N=6) of Contract Managers rate the site visitation process very positively with a score of 5, while another 41 percent (N=12) rate the process with a score of 4. More moderately, 28

percent (N=8) rate it with a score of 3, while a few Contract Managers rate the site visitation process less favorably with scores of 2 and 1 (See Figure 3).

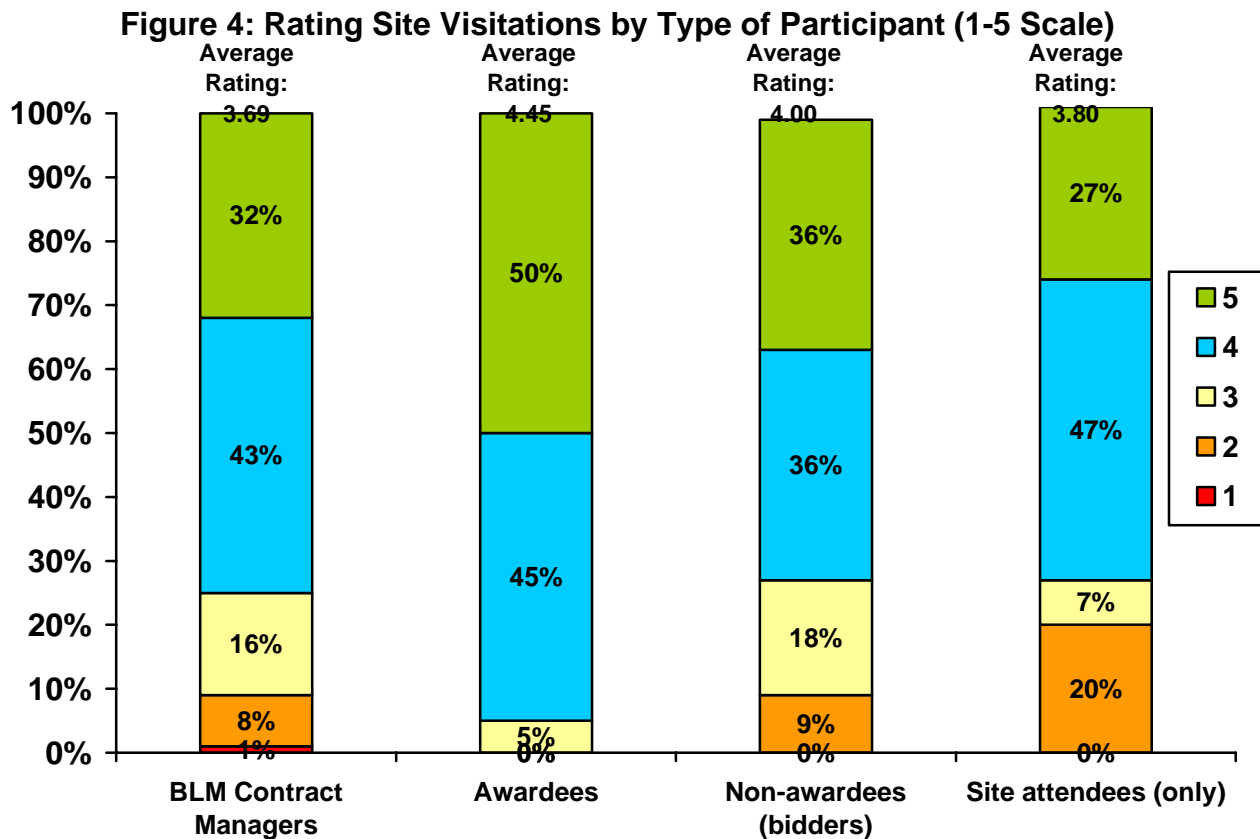
Figure 3: Rating of Site Visitation Process (1-5 Scale)



In Figure 4 below, a cross-tabulation of site visitation ratings and the different types of Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers is shown. On average, awardees rate the site visitation process with a mean score of **4.45**. This rating suggests a very positive experience. Half of awardees (50%; N=11) rate the site visitation process with a score 5, while just under half (45%; N=10) rate the site visitation process with a score of 4.

Overall, non-awardees (bidders) rate site visitation with a mean score of **4.0**. This rating suggests a positive perception of the process among individuals who have submitted a proposal but have been unsuccessful in obtaining an award. Over one-third (36%; N=4) of non-awardees rate site visitation with a score of 5, while another 36 percent (N=4) rate the process with a score of 4.

On average, site visit attendees (only) rate site visitation with a score of **3.8**. This average rating suggests a moderate to positive perception of the visitation process among individuals who have attended a Stewardship project site but chose not to place a bid. Twenty-seven percent (N=4) of site attendees rate site visitation with a score of 5, and just under half (47%; N=7) rate it with a score of 4. However, 20 percent (N=3) of attendees rate the visitation process negatively with a score of 2.

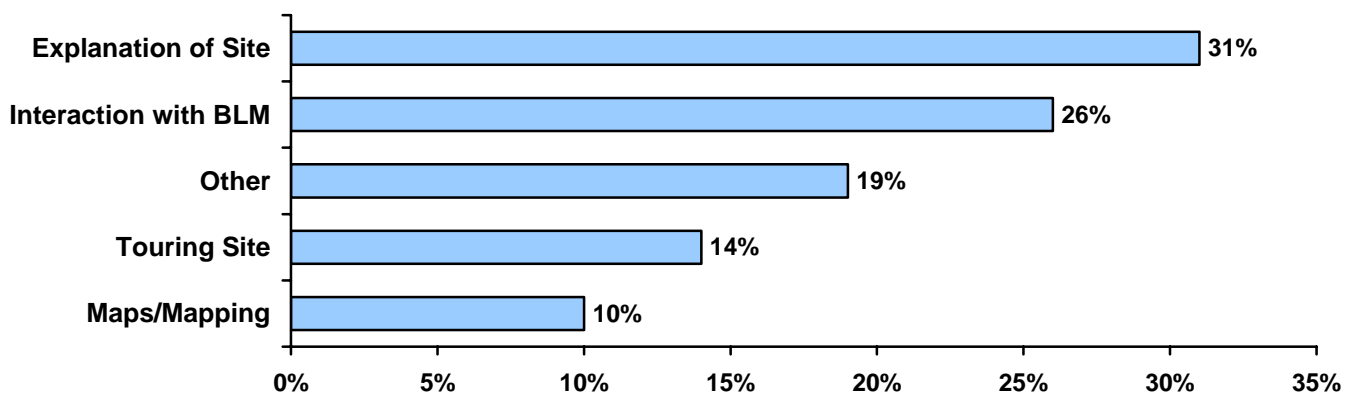


Aspects of Site Visitation Process that Work the Best

Both Stewardship Participants (Figure 5) and BLM Contract Managers (Figure 6) were asked, “In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship site visits work the best?” Open-ended responses were categorized and analyzed.

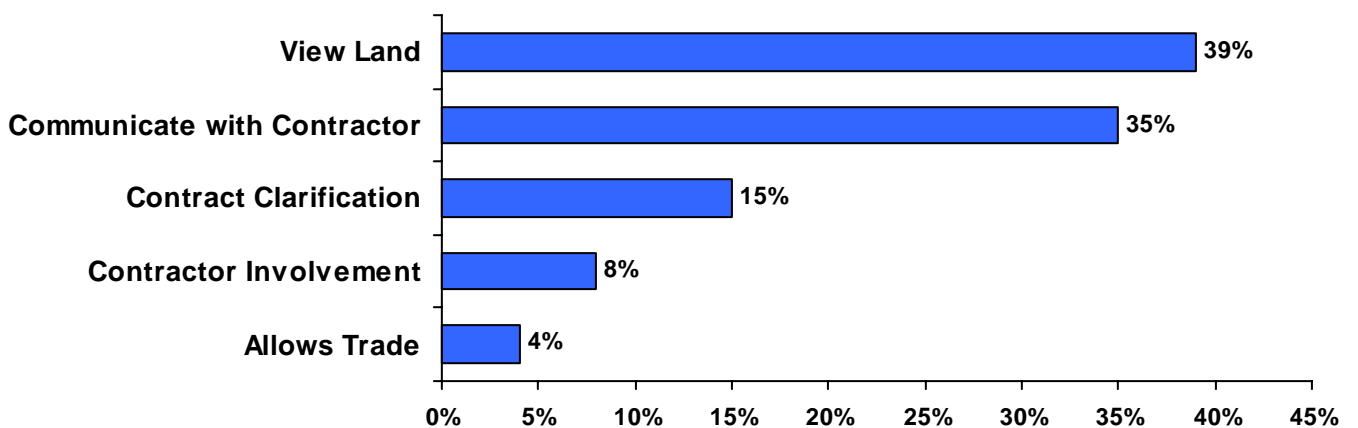
Among Stewardship Participants, responses vary from “The communication between the BLM and potential contractor” to “The maps and actual visual inspection” of the site. Nearly one-third (31%; N=13) of Stewardship Participants say that the “explanation of the site” by BLM personnel is the best aspect of site visitation. Just over one-quarter (26%; N=11) indicate that personal “interaction with local BLM” is the best aspect of the process. Additionally, 14 percent (N=6) report that they value the ability to tour the site with a guide, while another 10 percent (N=4) say that maps, and mapping of the sites, are best. Refer to Appendix A for a listing of responses from the Stewardship Participants.

Figure 5: Aspects of Site Visitation Process that Work Best for Stewardship Participants



For BLM Contract Managers, responses range from “The ability to communicate with the contractor” to “It allows potential contractors to more accurately bid their contracts.” Among the managers, 39 percent (N=10) say that that ability to “answer contractor questions” is the best aspect of the site visitation process, while over one-third (35%; N=9) note the ability to “communicate with, educate, and understand the contractor” as the best (see Figure 6). Additionally, 15 percent (N=4) of managers indicate that the best aspect of the site visitation process is the “contract/bid/proposal clarification.”

Figure 6: Aspects of Site Visitation Process that Work Best for BLM Stewardship Contract Managers

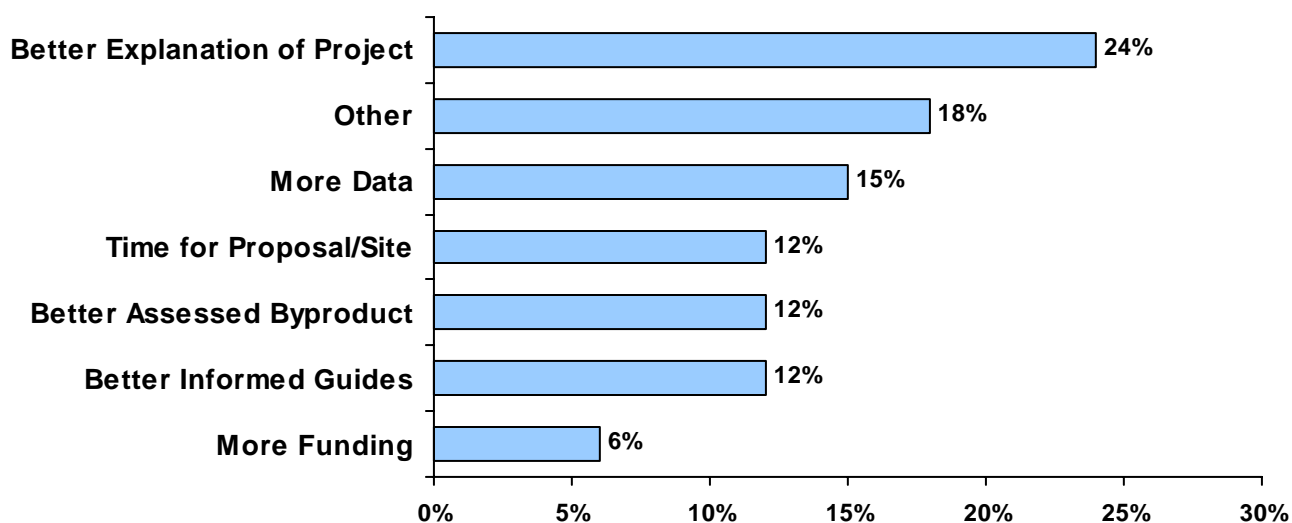


Aspects of Site Visitation Process that Need Improvement

Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship site visitations need improvements?” Open-ended responses were categorized and analyzed.

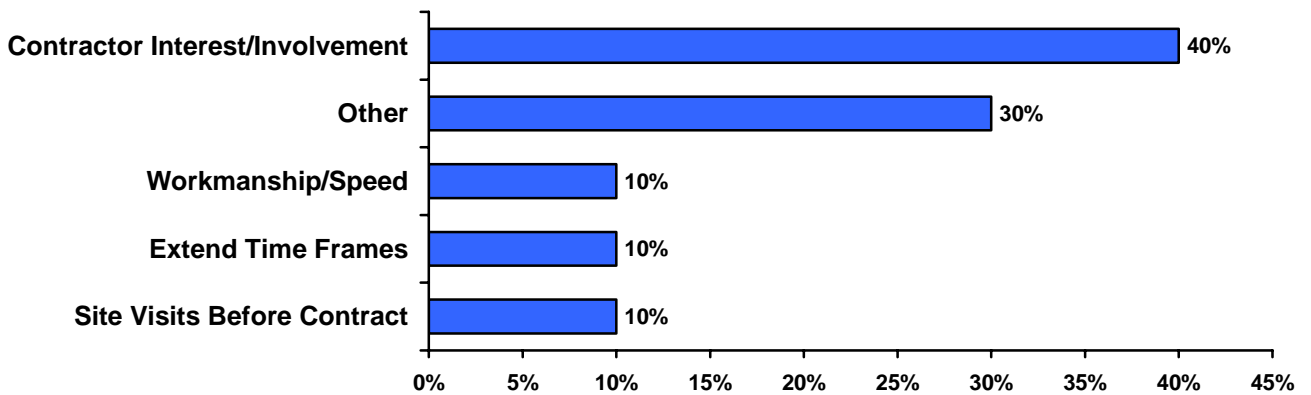
For Stewardship Participants, open-ended responses vary from “The BLM needs to answer questions with more lead time before projects start” to “The BLM’s guide should have been more familiar with contract” (See Figure 7). Nearly one-quarter (24%; N=8) express the need for “better explanation of the project,” while 15 percent (N=5) note the need for “more data” regarding the project. Twelve percent (N=4) would like there to be “more time to study the site,” an equal amount indicate that there needs to be a “better assessment of the byproducts’ values,” while another 12 percent (N=4) say that the “BLM guide needs to be better informed” about the project site. Refer to Appendix A for a list of responses.

Figure 7: Aspects of Stewardship Site Visitation Process Needing Improvement for Stewardship Participants



Among BLM Contract Managers, open-ended responses vary from “Make it a requirement to see the site before placing a bid” to “We need a longer time frame in-between site visits and bid submission” (See Figure 8). Forty percent (N=8) of BLM Contract Managers suggest increasing the “contractor interest/involvement” as an improvement. Ten percent (N=2) of managers suggest “required site visits,” “extend time frames,” and increase “contractor’s workmanship and speed” as ways to improve the site visitation process.

Figure 8: Aspects Stewardship Site Visitations Needing Improvement for BLM Stewardship Contract Managers



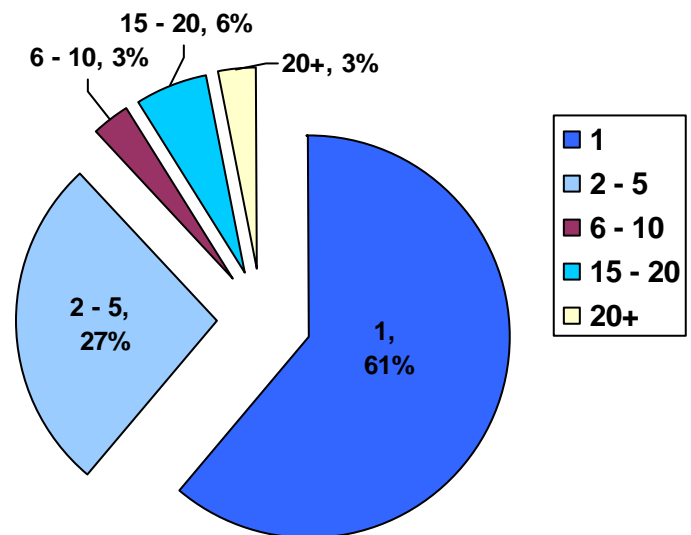
II. BIDDING AND PROPOSALS

Number of Bids/Proposals Submitted for Stewardship Projects

To begin this section of the survey, Stewardship Participants were asked “Have you ever bid or submitted a proposal for a Stewardship project with the BLM?” Only respondents answering “yes” to this question were administered the remaining questions of the survey.

Of the 48 initial Stewardship Participants, 69 percent (N=33) indicate that they have submitted a bid for a Stewardship project with the BLM. Of those respondents, 61 percent (N=20) indicate that they have submitted only one bid. Twenty-seven percent (N=9) indicate that they have submitted a bid two to five times, and six percent (N=2) indicate that they have submitted a bid 15 to 20 times (See Figure 9).

Figure 9: Number of Proposals Submitted by Stewardship Participants



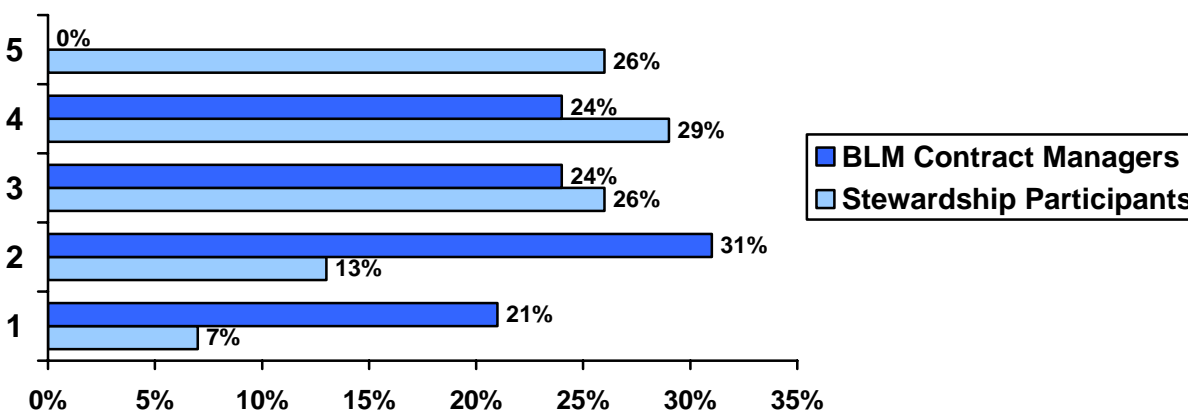
Effectiveness of Stewardship Bidding/Proposal Process

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, overall, how effective is the BLM Stewardship bidding and proposal process?”

Among the 33 Stewardship Contract Bidders, the average rating of the bidding and proposal process is **3.55**. This rating suggests a moderate perception of the process among Stewardship Participants who have actually submitted bids or proposals. Over half of the Stewardship Participants who answered this question rate the process positively, with over one-quarter (26%; N=8) rating it at 5, and another 29 percent (N=9) rate it at 4. Additionally, 26 percent (N=8) rate bidding and proposal at 3, and the remaining 20 percent rate it below a three.

On average, BLM Contract Managers rate the bidding and proposal process much lower than Stewardship Participants with a score of **2.52**. This rating suggests a negative to moderate perception of the overall process among managers. Just under one-quarter (24%; N=7) rate bidding and proposal positively with a score of 4, while another 24 percent (N=7) rate the bidding and proposal process moderately at 3. However, nearly one-third (31%; N=9) rate the process negatively with a score of 2. The remaining 21 percent (N=6) of managers rate it very negatively with a score of 1.

Figure 10: Effectiveness Rating of Stewardship Bidding and Proposal Process (1-5 Scale)

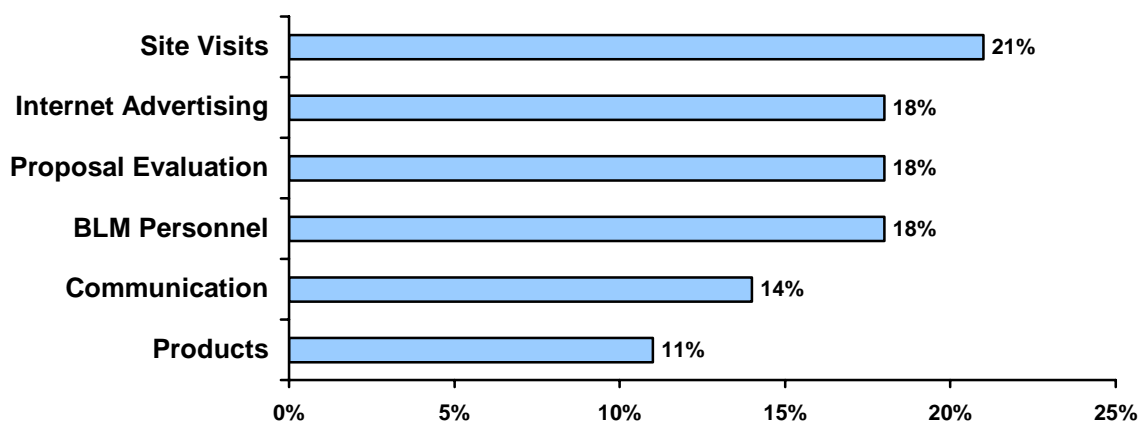


Aspects of Stewardship Contract Bidding/Proposal Process that Work Best

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship proposal and bidding process work the best?” Open-ended responses were categorized and analyzed.

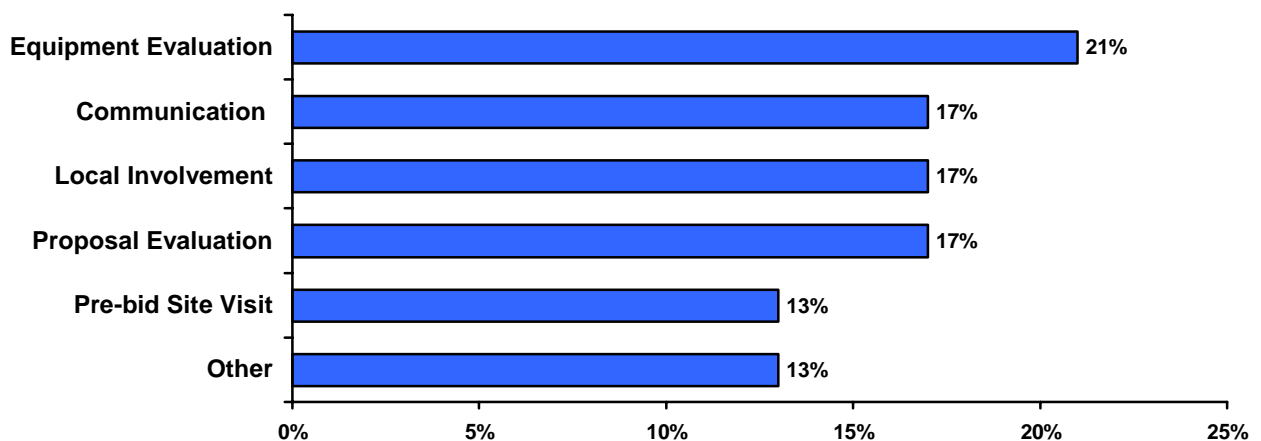
Stewardship Participant responses vary from enjoying “Good information on the internet” to appreciating “The quality of BLM personnel and integrity.” Twenty-one percent (N=6) say that “site visits” are the best part of the process. Eighteen percent (N=5) indicate that “BLM personnel,” “proposal evaluation,” and “internet advertising” are the best. Fourteen percent (N=4) say that “communication” with the BLM staff is the best, and the remaining 11 percent (N=3) indicate that the “products” themselves are the best part (See Figure 11).

Figure 11: Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Work Best for Stewardship Participants



BLM Contract Managers’ responses range from “Discussion with contractors after proposal evaluation” to the “required specialized equipment.” Among BLM Contract Managers, one in five (21%; N=5) note the “equipment requirements/technical evaluation” is the best aspect of the bidding and proposal process. Additionally, “local involvement,” “communication with bidders/potential bidders,” and the “proposal evaluation/format” are all identified to be good aspects of the bidding and proposal process among 17 percent (N=4) of BLM Contract Managers (See Figure 12).

Figure 12 : Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Work Best for BLM Stewardship Contract Managers

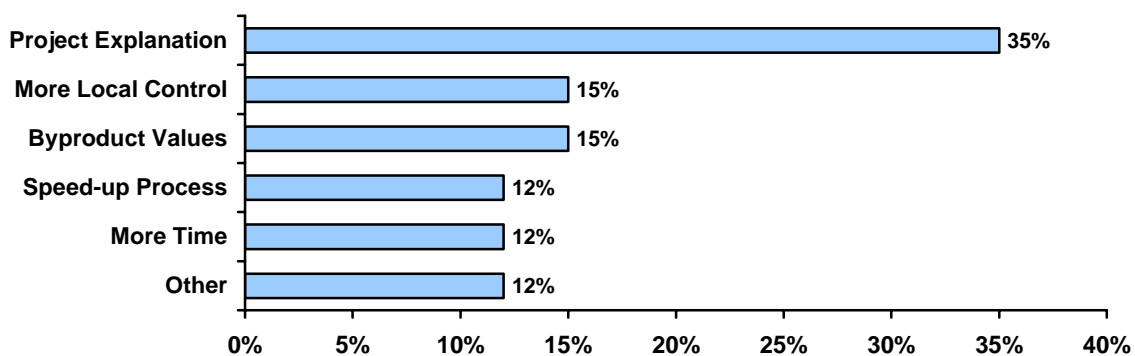


Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Need Improvement

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship proposal and bidding process need improvements?” Open-ended responses were categorized and analyzed.

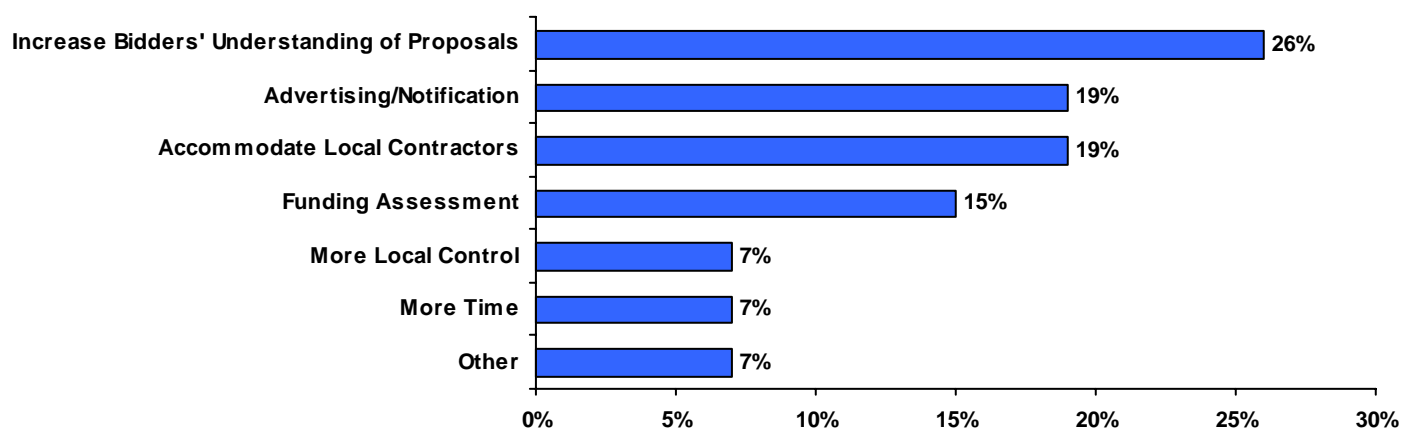
Among Stewardship Participants, responses vary from “The BLM needs to answer questions with more lead time before projects start” to “The BLM’s guide should have been more familiar with the contract.” Over one-third (35%; N=9) express the need for a “better explanation of the project.” Fifteen percent (N=4) indicate there needs to be a “better assessment of byproduct values,” and the same number say there is a need for “more local control.” Twelve percent (N=3) indicate that the BLM needs to “speed up the process,” yet another 12 percent indicate that they “need more time” for the proposal process (See Figure 13). Refer to Appendix A for a list of responses.

Figure 13: Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process that Need Improvement Among Stewardship Participants



Among BLM Contract Managers, responses to improve bidding and proposals vary from “Explain how the proposal process works to the bidders and have examples for them to use” to “Notify small scale bidders.” Twenty-six percent (N=7) of BLM Contract Managers report the need to “increase bidders’ understanding of proposals,” 19 percent (N=5) note the need for “improved advertising/notification” of projects, and another 19 percent (N=5) indicate the need to “accommodate small/local contractors.” Additionally, 15 percent (N=4) of BLM Contract Managers suggest “improving cost assessment/funding,” and seven percent (N=2) express the need for more “local control” and “extended time” for the proposal process (See Figure 14).

Figure 14: Aspects of Bidding and Proposal Process Needing Improvement for BLM Contract Managers



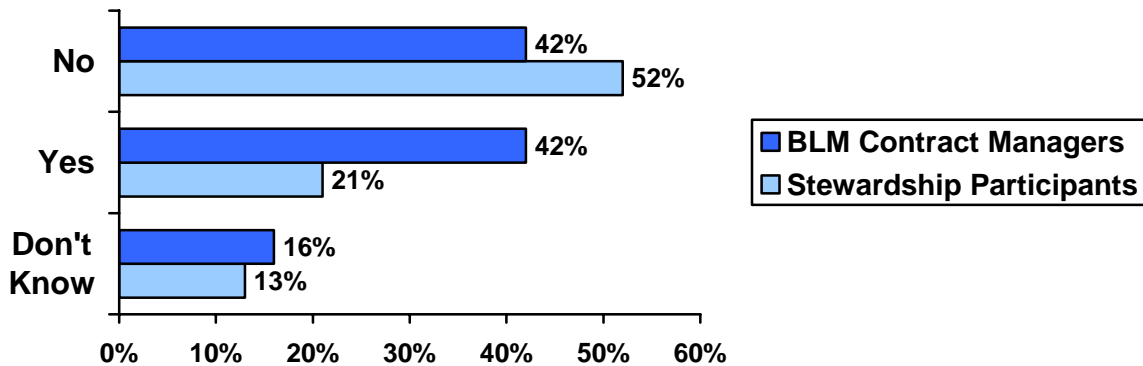
Limits in the Participation of Stewardship Bidding/Proposal Process

Next, both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked a series of questions regarding requirements and regulations of the bidding and proposal process for Stewardship projects. Specifically, respondents were asked, “Are there requirements or regulations that limit or exclude the participation of certain groups in the BLM Stewardship bidding and proposal process?”

Of the Stewardship Participants, 52 percent (N=17) say “No.” However, 30 percent (N=10) indicate there are regulations that limit or exclude participation; and eighteen percent (N=6) say they either don’t know or are not sure.

Among the BLM Contract Managers, “yes” and “no” responses are split evenly. Forty-two percent of BLM Contract Managers say there are regulations that limit or exclude groups, while 42 percent (N=13) say there are none. The remaining 16 percent (N=5) say they don’t know whether groups are limited or excluded by regulations or not. (See Figure 15).

Figure 15: Do Requirements/Regulations Limit Groups in the Bidding and Proposal Process?

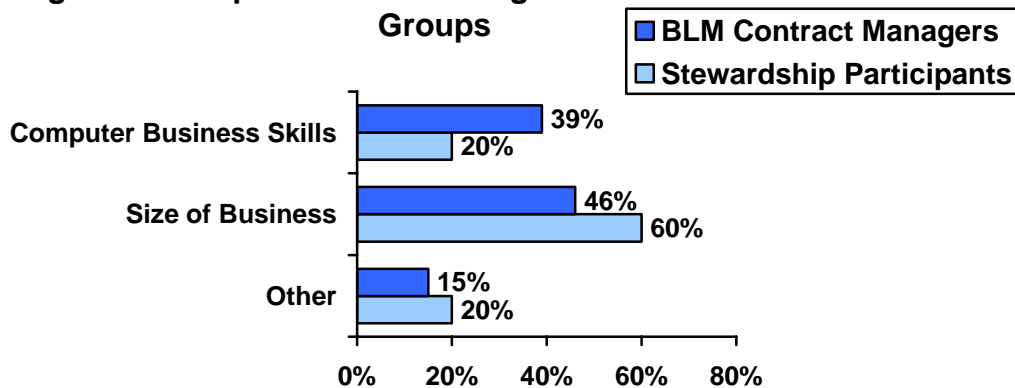


Stewardship Participants and BLM Project Managers who said there were requirements and regulations that limit groups in the bidding process were asked, “What are the requirements or regulations that limit or exclude the participation of certain groups?”

Sixty percent (N=6), of Stewardship Participants, say that the bidding and proposal process favors larger businesses. Twenty percent (N=2) indicate that required “computer and business skills” exclude groups from the bidding process. And 20 percent (N=2) in the “other” category mentioned bonding and personnel limitations.

Among BLM Contract Managers, 46 percent (N=6) express that the “size of business” limits or excludes smaller businesses in the process. Thirty-nine percent (N=5) say that necessary “computer/business skills” limit participation. A comparison of responses between participants and managers is illustrated in Figure 16.

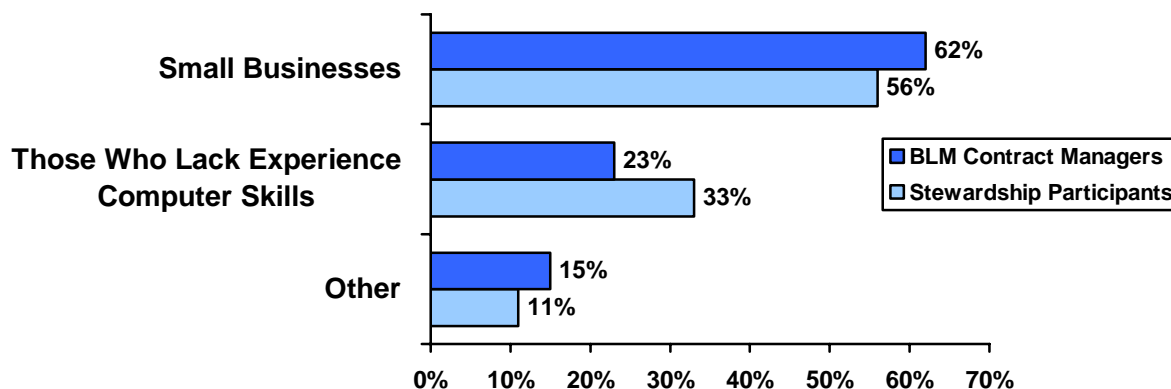
Figure 16: Requirements and Regulations that Exclude Groups



Respondents were asked, “Are there particular groups that you feel are excluded?” Of the Stewardship Participants who chose to answer this question (N=9), 56 percent (N=5) indicate that “small businesses” are often limited by proposal regulations. Additionally, 33 percent (N=3) of Stewardship Participants indicate that often “less experienced companies” have been limited by Stewardship bidding and proposal regulations.

Among BLM Contract Managers who were asked this question, 62 percent (N=8) also indicate that “small businesses” are often limited by proposal regulations, while 23 percent indicate that “those lacking computer skills” are excluded by regulations. Results from both groups are compared in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Excluded Groups in the Bidding and Proposal Process



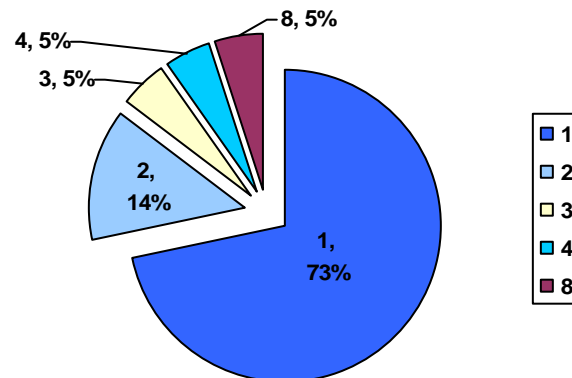
III. STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS

Number of Awards for Stewardship Projects

To begin this section of the survey, Stewardship Participants were asked “Have you ever been awarded a contract with the BLM for a Stewardship project?” Only contract awardees were administered the remaining questions of the survey that are specific to contracting.

Of the Stewardship respondents, 67 percent (N=22) indicate that they have received an awarded contract for a Stewardship project with the BLM. Nearly three-quarters (73%; N=16) of the awardees say that they have received only one award for a Stewardship project. Fourteen percent (N=3) indicate that they have received an award at least twice.

Figure 18: Awarded Contracts Among Stewardship Participants

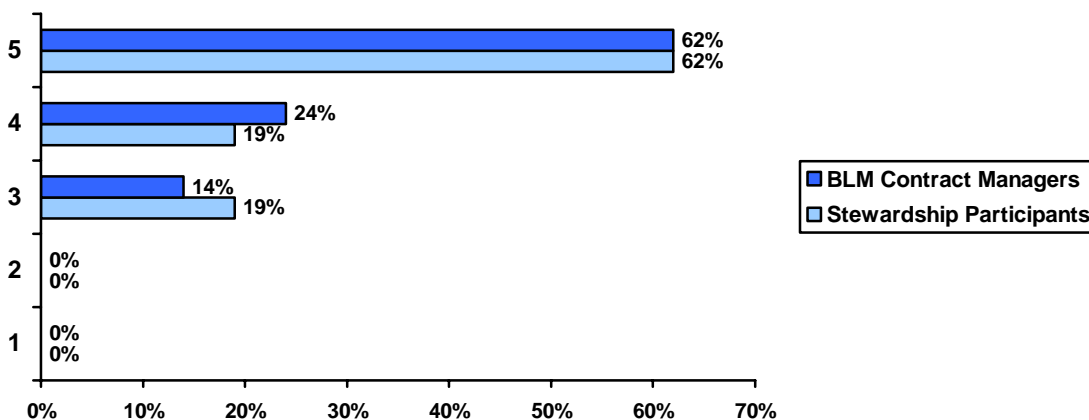


Communication Ratings

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the communication between awardees of Stewardship contracts and the BLM (See Figure 19). Among Stewardship Participants (N=22), the average rating of communication between the BLM and awardees was **4.43**. This rating indicates a very positive perception of the BLM's communication among the awardees.

Nearly two-thirds, 62 percent (N=13) of the Stewardship Participants rate the BLM's communication with awardees very positively with a score of 5. Nineteen percent (N=4) rate communication with a score of 4, while another 19 percent (N=4) rate it with a score of 3. Among the managers (N=31), the average rating was **4.48**. This rating also suggests a very positive perception of the communication between awardees and BLM Contract Managers.

Figure 19: Communication Ratings (1-5 Scale)



Improving Communication between Awardees and BLM Managers

Stewardship Participants who rate *communication* with a score of 4 or less were asked, "What could be done to improve communication between your organization and the BLM?" Seven awardees chose to answer the question and their primary concerns are with the lack of physical communication such as radio contact in remote areas and the availability of BLM representatives after office hours and holidays.

Nine BLM Contract Managers responded to the same question and they encourage a better understanding on the part of the awardees of contract processes, the program, and general duties. Like awardees, they also suggest better phone and cell phone coverage. (Refer to Appendix A for a complete list of responses).

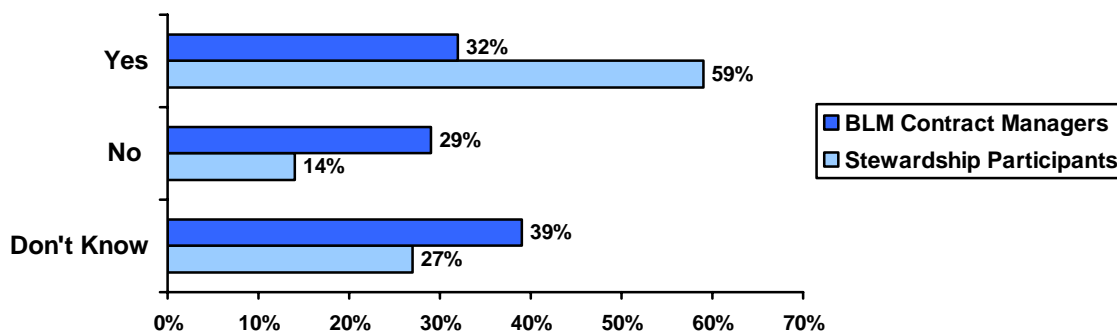
BLM WEBSITES

In an effort to better understand information dissemination, both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “Does the BLM provide adequate information for Stewardship contracts on its Field Office, State and National level websites?” Figure 20 compares their responses.

Of the awardees, 59% (N=13) say “Yes,” indicating that they do feel the BLM’s websites provide adequate information for Stewardship contracts. Fourteen percent (N=3) say “No,” BLM’s websites do not provide adequate information. The remainder, 27% (N=6) say they do not know or are not sure about the websites.

Among BLM Contract Managers, 32 percent (N=10) respond “Yes,” indicating they feel that the BLM’s websites are adequate. However, 29 percent (N=9) say “No,” they do not provide adequate information. Thirty-nine percent (N=12) say they do not know or are not sure about the websites.

Figure 20: BLM Provides Adequate Websites

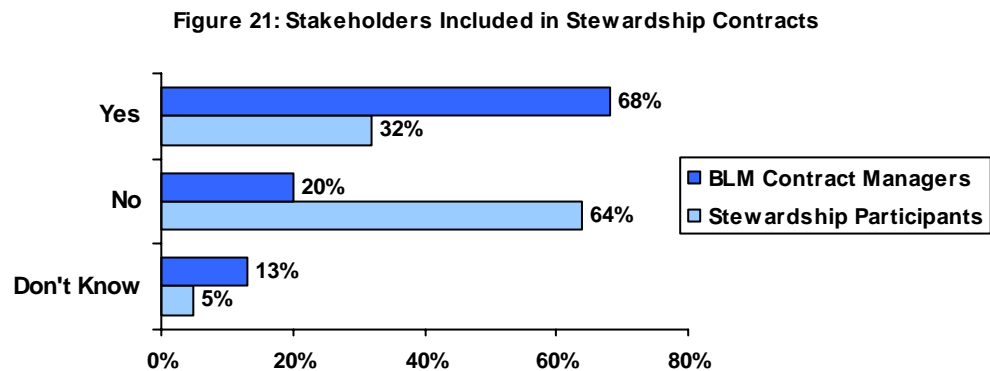


Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings regarding BLM website adequacy. A total of 11 Stewardship awardees chose to explain their responses regarding BLM website adequacy. Those who find the websites adequate praise the detail of information, website clarity, and the BLM’s efficiency with email and updates. Awardees who do not find the websites adequate mention the need for better maps, shortening and speeding up the application process, and providing better access to project files.

Seventeen Contract Managers chose to explain their responses. Those who find websites adequate praise the websites’ helpful information and guidelines. In contrast, managers who find the websites less than adequate note their need for clarity, the simplification of processes (such as those for bidding), and improved access to information. Some suggest website courses and links to national priorities and the Forest Service. (Refer to Appendix A for a full list of responses).

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked if stakeholders are being included in Stewardship contracts. Figure 21 below illustrates a comparison of their answers:



Among Stewardship Participants, 64 percent (N=14) answer “No,” indicating that their current contract does not include stakeholders, while 32 percent (N=7) answer “Yes.” The seven awardees who say their current contracts include stakeholders were asked to “Please name the primary stakeholders in your most recent contract with the BLM.” Their lists include local fire departments, local utility companies, and the local community.

BLM Contract manager responses concerning stakeholder involvement are opposite to those of the Stewardship Participants. Sixty-eight percent (N=21) say that stakeholders are involved in Stewardship contracts, while 19 percent (N=6) say “No.” Thirteen percent (N=4) indicate that they do not know if stakeholders are involved in the Stewardship contracts.

The Contract Managers were asked to explain their answers and 24 replied. In summary, they say that environmental review requirements mandate the involvement of the public in the way of notifications and meetings. And there is an intentional effort to reach rural communities, tribes, and other local populations. However, involvement is diminished by the complexities of applications. In addition, post-contract processes are less inclusive than pre-contract processes which leave good intentions for broadening stakeholder involvement unrealized. (Refer to Appendix A for detailed responses).

Stakeholder Involvement Rating

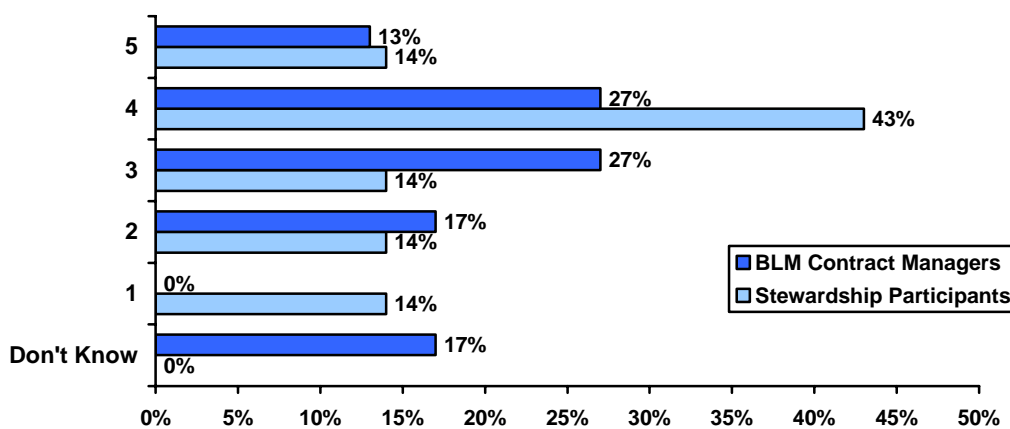
Both Stewardship Participants (N=7) and BLM Contract Managers (N=21) who answered “Yes” to the previous question were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, how involved are the stakeholders in your most recent BLM Stewardship contract?” (See Figure 22).

On average, Stewardship Participants rate the involvement of stakeholders in their contracts with a score of **3.29**. This average rating suggests a moderate perception of

stakeholder involvement among awardees of Stewardship contracts. Forty-three percent (N=3) of awardees rate stakeholder involvement in their contracts with a score of 4.

On average BLM Contract Managers rate the involvement of stakeholders in Stewardship contracts at **3.44**. This average rating also suggests a moderate perception of involvement of stakeholders among the managers. Twenty-seven percent (N=8) rate involvement at 4, while another 27 percent (N=8) rate it at 3. Additionally, 17 percent rate stakeholder involvement with a score of 2. The rest do not know or are not sure whether stakeholders are involved in the Stewardship contracts or not.

Figure 22: Stakeholder Involvement Ratings (1-5 Scale)



Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings of stakeholder involvement. Among Stewardship Participants, six awardees chose to respond to this question and said that the likely groups to be actively involved stakeholders are those who benefit economically from products generated by the projects, and/or the small percentage of people who oppose the nature of projects. Other stakeholders take on more observational roles.

Also in regards to stakeholder involvement ratings, 17 BLM Stewardship Contract Managers chose to respond. They indicate that fire planners, the Forest Service, and homeowners/landowners are very involved in land projects. However, a few suggest slowing down the initiative process and providing a forum with presentations to broaden stakeholder involvement. (See Appendix A for a complete list of responses).

Regulations for Stewardship Contracts Rating

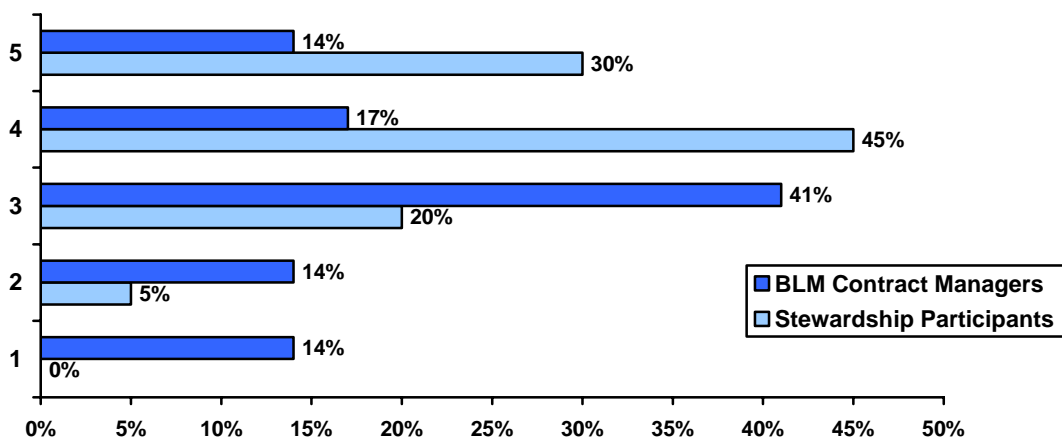
Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5

the highest. Figure 23 illustrates how respondents rate current regulations in the Stewardship contracting process.

On average, awardees of Stewardship contracts rate the current regulations with a score of **4.0**. This suggests a positive perception of the current regulations. Of the awardees who responded to this question (N=20), 30 percent (N=6) rate the current regulations with a score of 5, while nearly one-half (45%; N=9) rate them at 4. The remaining twenty percent (N=4) rate the current regulations at 3.

On average, BLM Contract Managers rate the current regulations with a score of **3.03**. This suggests a moderate perception of regulations. Seventeen percent (N=5) rate them at 4. And 41 percent (N=12) rate current regulations with a score of 3.

Figure 23: Regulation Ratings (1-5 Scale)



Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers who answered the previous question with a score or 4 or less were asked, “In your opinion, what changes to the current regulations could be made to make BLM Stewardship contracting more effective?” Ten awardees have chosen to answer the question. Their two primary concerns are year-round employment for contractors and the implementation or revision of environmental assessment. They also suggest relaxing the standards on acceptable types of wood products.

In regard to changes for current regulations, 26 Contract Managers chose to answer the question. They suggest adding wood products and selling byproducts by the ton; reduce paperwork, simplify the methods and language of the bidding process; and include different types of contracts to encourage small business without losing funds. Additionally, some Contract Managers report that the process is overregulated at the national level. They suggest the delegation of authority to the local field offices and Contract Managers provided they are given adequate information. (See Appendix A for a complete list of responses).

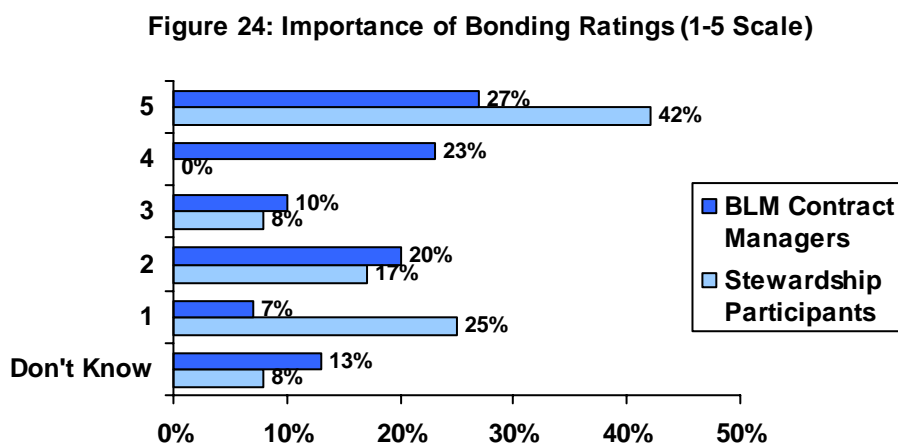
Stewardship Contracts with Bonding

Stewardship Participants were asked, “Are the primary participants in this current BLM Stewardship contract bonded?” Over half (55%) of Stewardship Participants say they are bonded, while 45% say they are not.

Importance of Bonding Rating

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the importance of bonding for Stewardship contracts, on a scale of 1 to 5, with one as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Figure 24 illustrates how respondents rate the importance.

Awardees who are bonded were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how important has bonding been to your BLM Stewardship contract?” On average, awardees rate the importance of bonding with a score of **3.18**. This rating suggests a moderate perception of bonding’s importance to their contracts. Forty-six percent (N=5) rate the importance with a score of 5. However, 27 percent (N=3) indicate that bonding was not very important to their current contract rating it with a 1.



BLM Contract Managers were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how important is bonding to Stewardship contracts?” On average, the managers (N=30) rate the importance of bonding with a score of **3.97**. This rating suggests a positive perception of bonding’s importance to contracts. Twenty-seven percent (N=8) rate it at 5; 23 percent (N=7) rate it at 4; and 20 percent (N=6) indicate that bonding is not very important to Stewardship contracts by a score of 2.

Stewardship Participants who indicate that they are bonded were asked to explain their ratings of the importance of bonding. Eleven awardees chose to answer. In sum, they said that bonding is not used widely enough throughout a project to warrant its requirement; work history is a good source of information. Yet some awardees say that bonding is indicative of stable companies and is not necessarily problematic, especially with short-term projects.

BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings of the importance of bonding. Twenty-five managers chose to answer the question. They say that bonding can be important relative to project size and product value; and bonding is a way to insure job completion. However, while it reduces risk, it also has the potential to deter and intimidate local contractors; a new contract type is needed. (Refer to Appendix A for a complete list of responses)

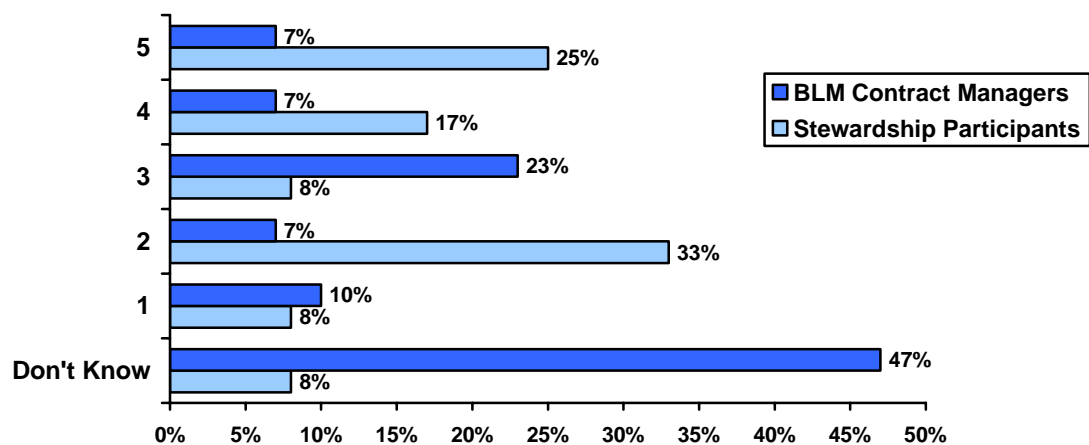
Ease of Obtaining Bonding Rating

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the ease of obtaining bonding for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Figure 25 illustrates how respondents rate the ease of obtaining bonding.

Stewardship Participants who indicate they are currently bonded were asked to rate how easily bonding was obtained on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. On average, awardees rate bonding ease with a score of **3.18**. This rating suggests a moderate perception of obtaining a bond. One-quarter (25%; N=3) rate obtaining a bond as very easy with a score of 5, and another 17 percent (N=2) suggest bonding was easy to obtain with a score of 4. In contrast, one-third (33%; N=4) of Stewardship Participants rate obtaining a bond as difficult with a score of 2 (See Figure 25).

BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate how easily bonding is obtained on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. On average, they rate the ease with a score of **2.88**. This rating suggests a negative perception of the ease for managers who oversee contracts. Interestingly, forty-seven percent (N=14) say they do not know or are not sure about it (See Figure 25).

Figure 25: Ease of Obtaining Bonding Ratings (1-5 Scale)



Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings regarding the ease of obtaining bonding. Among them, ten chose to explain their ratings. For those awardees who either have the money, experience, or a good performance history, bonding is relatively easy. Others say that bonding companies are hard to find, they may choose self-bonding or agent bonding as an alternative. And working with potentially hazardous projects can be an issue for the BLM.

BLM Contract Managers were also asked to explain their ratings regarding the ease of obtaining bonding. Seventeen managers responded to the question. Overall, BLM Contract Managers say that obtaining a bond is easier and more affordable for large contractors, while small contractors find bonding more difficult and expensive. (Refer to Appendix A for a complete list of responses)

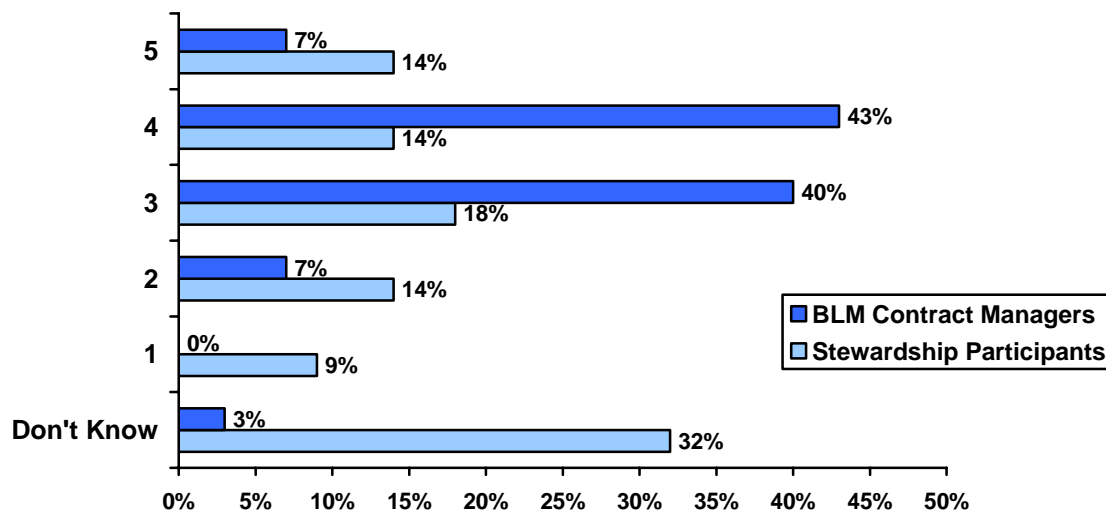
Determination of Costs

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to rate the way the BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest.

Stewardship Participants were asked to rate the way the BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. On average, awardees rate the determination of costs with a score of **3.13**. This rating suggests a moderate perception of cost determination among awardees. Twenty percent (N=3) rate it very positively with a score of 5, and another 20 percent (N=3) rate it with a score of 4. And, just over one-quarter of Stewardship Participants (27%; N=4) rate the determination of costs moderately with a score of 3.

Contract Managers were asked to rate the way BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. On average, they rate the determination of costs with a score of **3.52**. This rating suggests a moderate perception of the way costs are determined among Contract Managers. Forty-three percent (N=13) rate cost determination with a score of 4, while 40 percent (N=12) rate it with a score of 3 (See Figure 26).

Figure 26: Determination of Costs Ratings (1-5 Scale)



Those Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers who rate the way the BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts with a score of 4 or less, were asked, “What could be done to improve the determination of costs for BLM Stewardship contracts?” Twelve awardees chose to answer the question. They suggest engaging more experienced BLM officers in conjunction with the inclusion of project contractors in the determination process. The experience and cooperation can insure the feasibility of prices (such as freight costs) and marketability of products that ultimately keep costs down. Awardees also suggest raising the margin of error in new areas; lowering the cost of materials and products; and have a running price system for long term projects. A running price system allows a more accurate account of changing fuel and labor expenses.

In regards to the determination of costs, 23 BLM Contract Managers chose to answer the question. The BLM responses are in close agreement with the responses above from the awardees. Engaging more experienced BLM officers would be helpful in conjunction with involving contractors to improve site location awareness. In turn, experience and cooperation improves the determination of freight and other transportation costs. In similarity to awardees, BLM Contract Managers suggest a better understanding of the marketability of products to reduce unnecessary costs of transporting unprofitable material a long distance. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

Combination of Timber Harvesting Services and Wood Products Production Rating

Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the combination of timber harvesting services and wood products production?”

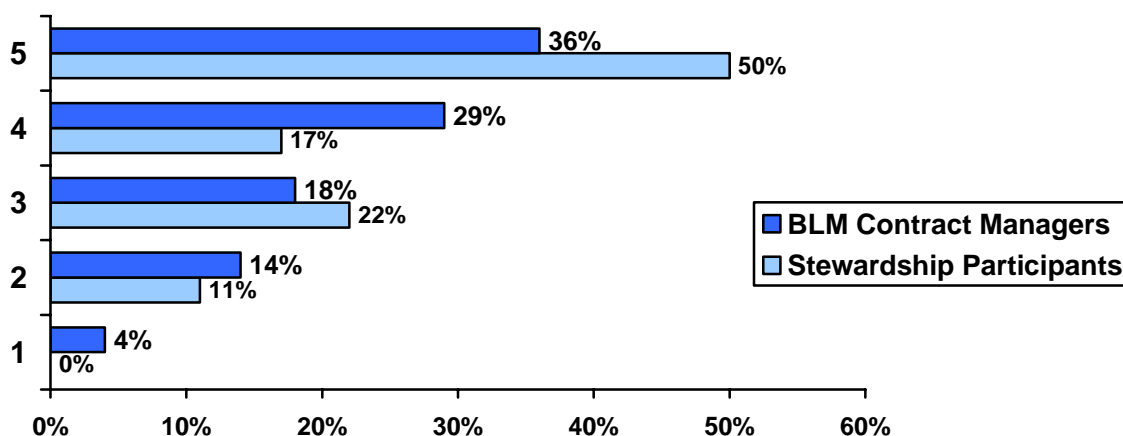
On average, Stewardship Participants rate the combination of timber harvesting services and wood products production with an average score of **4.06**. This rating suggests a positive perception of the combination for awardees.

Half of awardees, 50 percent (N=9) indicate a very positive with a score of 5, while another 17 percent (N=3) show a positive perception with a score of 4. Additionally, 22 percent (N=4) indicate a moderate perception of the combination of timber harvesting services and production of wood products with a score of 3 (See Figure 27).

On average, BLM Contract Managers rate the combination of timber harvesting services and production of wood products with an average score of **3.79**. This rating suggests a moderate to positive perception of the combination of timber harvesting services and production of wood products.

Thirty-six percent (N=10) of BLM Contract Managers give a very positive rating of the combination with a score of 5, while another 29 percent (N=8) give a positive rating of the combination with a score of 4. Also, 18 percent (N=5) of the managers give a moderate rating with a score of 3. See Figure 27.

Figure 27: Combination of Timber Harvesting Services and Wood Products Production Rating (1-5 Scale)



Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings for the combination of timber harvesting services with wood products production. Among Stewardship Participants, 19 awardees chose to respond to the question.

Awardees say combining timber harvesting and wood products production is a positive way to maximize removal and use of wood and wood byproducts. They also indicate that it creates jobs and boosts the economy while diminishing costs for contractors and returning capital to government agencies. Other respondents expressed having difficulty finding a market for their wood products (such as fine wood), or finding available processing facilities.

In regards to their ratings of the combination of timber harvesting services with wood products production, 19 BLM Contract Managers chose to answer the question. Their responses yield slightly less overall enthusiasm than the awardee responses. However, managers speak of the significance of combining the two to insure success and capital return. BLM Contract Managers suggest a more comprehensive awareness of the interrelationship between product markets, the size and remoteness of the project, and existing infrastructural limitations. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

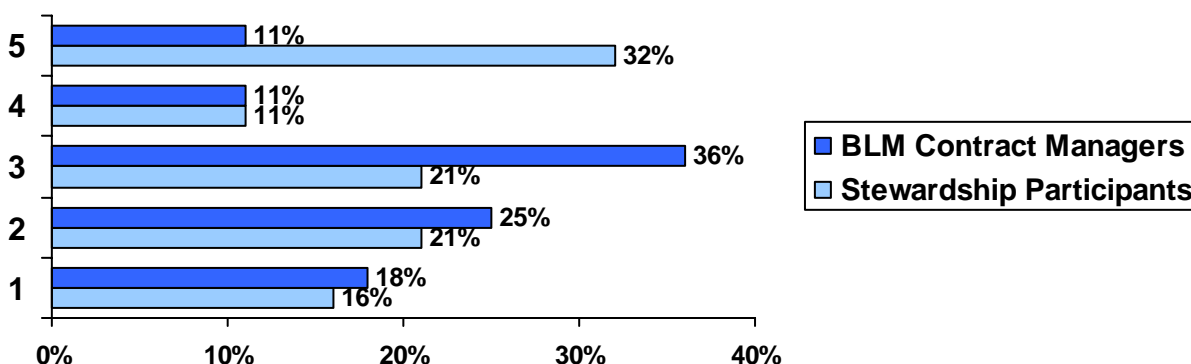
Marketability of Products from Stewardship Contract Rating

Next, Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, how marketable are the products from your BLM Stewardship contract?”

Overall, Stewardship Participants rate the marketability of wood products from their Stewardship contracts with an average score of **3.21**. Approximately one-third, 32 percent (N=6), indicate a very positive rating of wood product marketability with a score of 5. Additionally, 21 percent (N=4) indicate a moderate perception at 3, while another 21 percent (N=4) indicate a negative perception of marketability with a rating of 2 (See Figure 28).

Overall, BLM Contract Managers rate the marketability of wood products from their Stewardship contracts with an average score of **2.71**. Among the managers, 11 percent (N=3) rate the marketability of wood products very positively with a score of 5, while another 11 percent (N=3) rate it positively with a score of 4. However, just over one-

Figure 28: Marketability of Products (1-5 Scale)



third of BLM Contract Managers, 36 percent (N=10) indicate a moderate rating at 3. In contrast, one-quarter (25%; N=7) have a negative perception with a score of 2, and another 18 percent (N=5) have a very negative perception of the marketability of wood products with a rating of 1 (See Figure 28).

Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked to explain their ratings of the marketability of wood products. Among Stewardship Participants, 19 awardees responded to the question. The awardees are reiterating the general theme that flows throughout the responses that address product type, marketability, and site location. Success and subsequent satisfactory ratings are relative to high demand for their product in the area where the product is being extracted. Less than satisfactory ratings are consistent with high transport cost, low marketability due to distance from buyers, and limited biomass processing facilities.

Also in regards to marketability of wood products, 27 BLM Contract Managers answered the question, and their responses are in close agreement with the contractors above (as with the cost determination variable). Some managers say that an optimal market/product relationship can be generated by a well-written contract. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

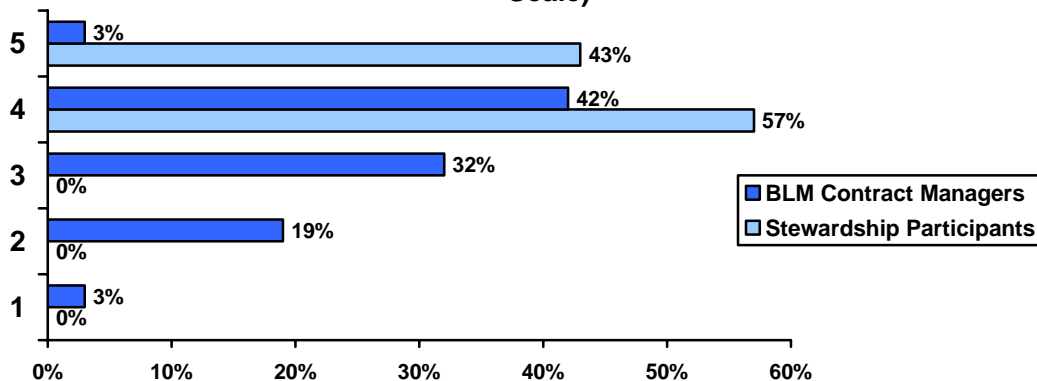
General Stewardship Contracting Process Rating

In this last section, Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked “Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest, how would you rate the Stewardship contracting process?” See Figure 29.

Overall, awardees rate the Stewardship contracting process in general with an average rating of **4.43**. This average rating suggests a very positive perception of the Stewardship contracting process among awardees. Forty-three percent (N=9) rate the Stewardship contracting very positively with a score of 5, while over half (57%; N=12), rate the contracting process positively with a score of 4.

Overall, BLM Contract Managers rate the Stewardship contracting process with an average rating of **3.23**. This rating yields a moderate perception of contracting among managers. Only three percent (N=1) rate it very positively with a score of 5. However, 42 percent (N=13) rate the contracting process positively with a score of 4. Just under one-third (32%; N=10) rate with a score of 3, and 19 percent (N=6) with a score of 2.

Figure 29: General Stewardship Contracting Process Rating (1-5 Scale)



Aspects of Stewardship Contracting that Work Best

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked, “Overall, in your opinion what aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting work the best?” Twenty-one awardees answered the question. Overall, they are particularly impressed with the BLM personnel, the ground technicians, and the inspectors for example. Some awardees also mentioned that they appreciate working within a performance based but flexible program where negotiations and cooperation are employed to achieve objectives.

Among BLM Contract Managers, 27 responded to the question. Overall, BLM Contract Managers praise the efficiency of land treatment, and contracts that trade goods for services, reduce cost, and create capital. The Stewardships encourage local involvement in projects that simultaneously allow BLM officers to interact with local groups, the Forest Service, and the physical sites. (Refer to Appendix A for a complete list of detailed responses).

Aspects of Stewardship Contracting that Need Improvement

Respondents were asked “And, overall, what aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting need improvements?” Among awardees of Stewardship contracts 16 answered the question. Stewardship participant awardees report that improvements are needed in the area of contract accessibility, such as: notices from the BLM offices to alert them of new contracts when they become available; clarity and brevity in the paperwork; expedition in processes and payment time frames; and more realistic estimated product purchasing arrangements. Contractors believe that the program would also benefit from greater local control.

Thirty BLM Contract Managers also responded to the question. They express the need for very similar, if not the same, improvements that contractors would like to see implemented. Their suggestions for improvement lie in the same areas: contracting

processes, local involvement/control, product price reductions, and better cost estimation. BLM Contract Managers would like to shorten contracting processes, make conditions more conducive to local bidders, and reduce paperwork and contracting time in general. And similar to local contractors, they would like to improve cost estimation. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

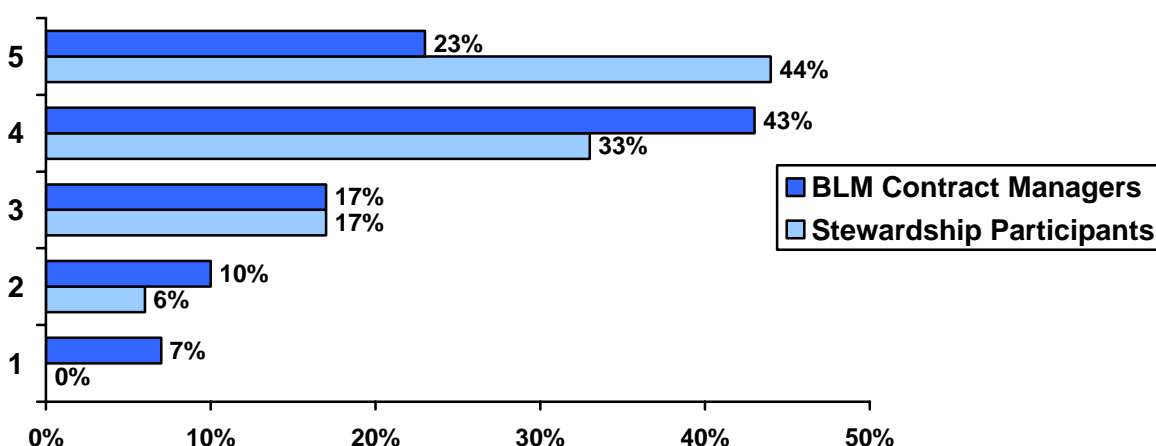
Effectiveness of Stewardship Contracts at Meeting Stated Goals Rating

This subgroup of respondents was asked, “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how effective are BLM Stewardship contracts at meeting stated goals?”

Overall, awardees rate the effectiveness meeting goals with an average rating of **4.17**. This rating yields a positive perception of the ability for contracts to meet goals. Among awardees, 44 percent (N=8) rate goal-meeting effectiveness very positively with a score of 5, while another 33 percent (N=6) rate effectiveness positively with a score of 4.

Overall, BLM Contract Managers rate the effectiveness of Stewardship contracts at meeting goals with an average rating of **3.67**. This rating suggests a moderate perception. Among BLM Contract Managers, 23 percent (N=7) rate goal-meeting very positively with a score of 5, while another 43 percent (N=13) rate it positively with a score of 4. Additionally, 17 percent (N=5) are moderate at 3, and 10 percent (N=3) are negative with a score of 2.

Figure 30: Rate Effectiveness of Stewardship Contracts At Meeting Stated Goals (1-5 Scale)



Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were prompted to explain their rating of meeting stated goals. Eighteen awardees answered the question and indicate

that overall system goals and objectives are being met. Many noted that no system is perfect, but goal-oriented design coupled with provisional flexibility, is working well for most. For awardees of Stewardship contracts, clearer goal descriptions in bid contracts and contract titles and cost efficiency initiatives have the potential to improve goal achievement.

In regards to their ratings of Stewardship contracts meeting stated goals, 23 BLM Contract Managers chose to respond to the question. BLM Contract Managers are satisfied with the achievement of goals, believe the Stewardship is a good tool, or are optimistic that improvements will occur over time. Unsatisfactory ratings come from the inability to find a contractor at BLM cost; they are experiencing too low a sales volume to meet district goals; or their program is not working because they need support from the state. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of detailed responses).

E. Appendix A: Open-Ended Comments

Both Stewardship Participants and BLM Contract Managers were asked several open-ended questions regarding various ratings and issues surrounding the site visitation process, the bidding and proposal process, and the contracting process. The following is a complete list of how respondents answer each particular open-ended question.

In your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship site visitations work the best?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “Able to tour site conditions which is imperative to project.”
- “BLM staff and local people are great. Their mapping is accurate and logical. Email and fax information is also very good.”
- “Communication and understanding of job. BLM is receptive to contractors’ needs and wants.”
- “Contact numbers for further information.”
- “I was happy with the site visit.”
- “It was a small area, we have been able to tour and cover entire site.”
- “Management of land and fire hazard reduction.”
- “Personal touch, them being there. For example the forest service does not attend site visitation with you.”
- “The BLM's demonstrative area for prescription layout.”
- “The BLM's trading of timber for services was a good idea.”
- “The BLM gave a thorough site visit and guided tour.”
- “The BLM gave proper notice.”
- “The BLM is doing a really good job.”
- “The BLM knew as much as they could know and covered questions well.”
- “The BLM officer's orientation, discussion and overall field visit was best.”

- “The BLM personnel contact was the best.”
- “The BLM provided good maps.”
- “The BLM seemed un-experienced, and they didn't know about the forest. BLM was more mismanagement then managed.”
- “The BLM was very good at soliciting both public and local input about how to make project successful. The BLM could increase community acceptance of project with more public/community involvement.”
- “The communication between the BLM and contractor.”
- “The contractors and BLM officers do on-site brainstorming.”
- “The discussion of the contract.”
- “The explanation and on-site visitation process. A class might be offered to help bidders on BLM project.”
- “The explanation from the BLM staff regarding contract and question and answer portion.”
- “The explanation of the project.”
- “The guide was helpful and the Q & A session was good.”
- “The maps and actual visual inspection.”
- “The maps and lay-out have been well-planned.”
- “The meeting with BLM was well coordinated.”
- “The on-site visit with BLM personnel.”
- “The on-site visitation.”
- “The one-on-one interaction with BLM personnel.”
- “The pre-site schedule helps make visitation work best.”
- “The question and answer portion of the site visit.”
- “The sawmill product that offsets clean-up costs and helps BLM.”

- “The showing of the timber on the lands.”
- “The site inspections and specifications of project.”
- “The small project was so straight forward and the BLM officer answered questions on site.”
- “Walking site and looking at project.”
- “Walking through the site and giving variances to questions and answer period.”
- “We developed a partnership with Idaho, but with Nevada not so good. Provides funding for surveillance, I do air monitoring.”
- “Working with staff at local level.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Ability to communicate with contractor.”
- “Ability to view land and answer questions.”
- “They allow contractors to trade goods for services and discussion was good.”
- “Being able to get on ground for feel of project and questions asked by contractors.”
- “Chance to show operators what BLM wants.”
- “Clarification of bid proposal and field visit resulted in modification of proposal.”
- “Contract specifications, item J in contract. Written document to follow.”
- “Didn't do site visits, contractors view it themselves.”
- “Explanation of area.”
- “Exposure of conditions to contractor.”
- “Get to actually see the site and personal interaction between BLM and contractor.”
- “Having people out there to visit and getting to share information with them. Both sides learn from each other.”

- “Helpful for those new to the program.”
- “Identifying impediments and opportunities to treat the ground. Communication with contractor.”
- “It allows potential contractors to more accurately bid their contracts.”
- “Knowing capabilities of various contractors.”
- “Letting people know about the project and the actual on-site visit.”
- “Local involvement by contractors.”
- “Meeting with the people who are involved in the project.”
- “No contractors showed up for site visit.”
- “One-on-one communication with contractor.”
- “Personal communication. Question and answer of portions.”
- “Question and answer portion.”
- “The opportunity for questions and site viewing.”
- “Visualizing and viewing of area; for access, tree density, etc.”
- “When contractors initiate the process.”
- “Working with contractors.”

In your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship site visitations need improvement?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “A notion of more realistic changes regarding site is needed.”
- “BLM field office should have more control, instead of Denver controlling Alaska's BLM field office. The Denver office doesn't know the project very well.”
- “BLM needs to make improvements on prescriptions that lead themselves to more empirical data.”

- “BLM needs to mark out areas by section because prescriptions change throughout an area.”
- “Contractors need to have all information on advertisement before being released.”
- “Contractors need to see more of site itself and further explanations.”
- “The 45 days to bid/solicitation wasn't posted by BLM. The BLM needs more than one week to bid/solicit.”
- “The accessibility to personnel needs improving, so they can show us what they want. The access is limited because private lands are often integrated with BLM lands. Overall, the contractors need more access to scheduling and project lands.”
- “The BLM's guide should've been more familiar with the contract.”
- “The BLM's lack of information - through the guide not being person who wrote contract - needs improving.”
- “The BLM didn't answer all questions and deadline for bids was too late due to the website not being updated.”
- “The BLM needs more accurate data pertaining to volume of units.”
- “The BLM needs more experienced help.”
- “The BLM needs to be more specific in the proposal of what they want.”
- “The BLM needs to give people longer time to have site visits.”
- “The BLM needs to offer more money for projects.”
- “The BLM needs to provide more funding. If that drops then there will be problems because the tribe is barely making it as is.”
- “The BLM wasn't providing a feasible rate for by-products of project.”
- “The communication and follow up was good.”
- “The contract needs to be more user-friendly and the location of the site was difficult to navigate.”

- “The contractors being able to expedite the process should be improved, but BLM is much better than other government agencies. The longer the process takes the lower the value of products.”
- “The contractors need more time to study and submit proposals.”
- “The coordination of questions and answers portion needs improvement.”
- “The guide was unclear about what the project needed to be done.”
- “The perceptions of BLM staff that materials are more marketable than they actually are, needs improvement.”
- “The project is still too new to decide.”
- “The project needs to be laid out better. The BLM needs to answers questions with more lead time before projects start.”
- “The selling techniques for bidder to estimate cost per average needs improvement. There needs to be more small business contracts awarded. And you shouldn't limit the amount of buyers for the project and who they can sell it to.”
- “The site needed road improvements.”
- “The tagging of units needs improvement.”
- “There were a lot of unknown factors due to the newness of the program.”
- “We do not have anything to compare it to.”
- “What needs improvement is the BLM's entire concept of giving money for no value products.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Working with contractors.”
- “Contractor's work needs improvement.”
- “Everything is working good.”
- “I can't really think of anything.”
- “Increase the number of people that are aware of the program.”

- “It takes too long to do the project. Improve the timetable, lower calendar days, and let the contractor work faster not as needed.”
- “Make it a requirement to see site before submitting the bid.”
- “Make the contracts available to all on the bidder list because contract was large enough to go through. Give authority at local level.”
- “More attendance is needed.”
- “More contractor involvement is needed.”
- “More diverse mix of contractors is needed.”
- “Short time frames need improvement.”
- “Take contractors as a group not on an individual basis.”
- “The site visitation was difficult for contractors to grasp regarding stewardship program.”
- “The whole paper process is exclusionary in nature.”
- “There's not enough contact between field office and contractors.”
- “There's not much of a market or interest.”
- “There weren't a lot of interested contractors.”
- “They work well if you do them.”
- “We didn't have a lot of contractors show-up due to web based information for project.”
- “We need a longer time in between site visits and bid submissions.”
- “We need better transportation arrangements.”
- “We need more contractors.”

In your opinion, what aspects of the Stewardship proposal and bidding process work the best?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- Attitude of BLM helps to make job work. BLM staff is willing to make it work with a great attitude. It's much better than the Forest service.
- Cooperation of BLM staff was the best.
- I'm impressed with advertising for projects on the internet. There's good information on internet.
- It's easy to submit.
- It's much better than the forest service.
- Requirements and regulations are a good aspect of the proposal process.
- Staying in contact with the BLM is good about the proposal and bid process.
- The bid is only as good as what is seen and heard. The submission data provided by BLM is what is used to bid initially.
- The bid went well.
- The BLM has a sharp staff and they are open to comments.
- The conference and question portion work best.
- The evaluation of the proposal was good.
- The individual bid items worked best.
- The land management stand-point is the way to go.
- The local BLM people and the contractors working together is what works best. It's a very logical process. They are moving in the right direction.
- The notification by BLM project manager works.
- The notification of the site visit schedule was good.
- The online registry works.

- The Pre-bid tour works best, because they don't have to give a written technical proposal just a price.
- The proposal and bid process is good at getting to people to areas to show projects.
- The quality of BLM personnel and integrity was best.
- The site visit and area familiarity works.
- The trade value for products that BLM needs work.
- The visual inspection works.
- There's good recognition of a contractor's needs and wants.
- There's knowledge of the website availability.
- There is online access.
- Web-based project advertisement works best.

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- "Bids and proposals involve local people."
- "Contacting individual potential bidders works well."
- "Forest service involvement works best."
- "It depends on the contractors' comprehension of Stewardship contract."
- "It keeps the ground and field personnel involved."
- "It legitimizes and off-sets contract costs and utilization of products."
- "Pre-bid meeting with contractors and townspeople works well."
- "Public awareness and notifications is good."
- "Requests for proposal works best."
- "Required specialized equipment works."

- “Technical group went through bids and analyzed them from a technical stand point only. Process was successful.”
- “The bidding and proposal process attracts local contractors.”
- “The concept of the performance based process; process considers bidders based on past work along with their proposal.”
- “The discussion with contractors after proposal evaluation was good.”
- “The evaluation of proposals turned out fine.”
- “The expectations of competition is good.”
- “The format was easy to work with and a template that was set up was clear.”
- “The process awarded one contract.”
- “The site tour and contract analysis from tour was good.”
- “The site visit itself is the best aspect of the bidding and proposal process.”
- “There is no best aspect success so far.”
- “There needs to be more wiggle room. Having a committee is a good idea.”
- “Web posting is accessible and good.”
- “You have to note in the contract how contractor will accomplish the work.”

In your opinion, what aspects of the Stewardship proposal and bidding process need improvement?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- A better system to speed up process to get jobs running is needed.
- Access to land is poor and difficult.
- Adequate time for bid preparations need forty days instead of thirty.
- Being able to get BLM data to all bidders for better group and range bidders is needed.

- Clean up old website information and duplicated information and find more work for contractors.
- Denver splits the bid and the categories and we're in CA. It should be more localized, and have the COR more informed about the actual needs of the project. They are not local and don't understand.
- Follow through is needed, with what they put up for bid and what it actually turned out to be.
- More experienced staff; they over estimated products compared to cost of clean up.
- Getting used to internet; regarding mailings, the BLM looks for prospective bidders instead of having the bidder look for the project.
- I suggest paperwork reduction and simplification.
- Make the process less complex; "simplify".
- More local office control and jurisdiction is needed. The bid packet had to be sent to
- Denver and nobody in Alaska could give any advice because local office had no control for the project.
- More revenue per acre for better economical lands is needed.
- Not everybody has a computer to use for the bid and proposal process. I suggest bid application by mail or in the field office.
- Our last bid took quite awhile.
- Results and feedback from BLM is needed.
- Separate the mechanical and the hand labor aspects into separate contracts, because mechanical and hand labor are two different types of work. They're not realistic about the values given the products (lumber). Cost analysis is too high.
- Sometimes the boundaries are not well-defined.
- The BLM estimates are too low. I'm curious as to how they come up with estimates on a new type of removal method.

- The BLM officer went on vacation right after the project was released for bid and proposal.
- The BLM thinks that by bidding they're going to get the lowest price. I suggest goods for services by use of contractor taking salvage. It's too long to review and too long a turnaround time.
- The clarity on the paper of job description needs improvement.
- The field officer has to go through an outside office so the contractor wasn't present.
- The site offer didn't have all the information and specific conservation credits questions he didn't know.
- They need information together and to allow more time before the project and site visit.
- We were notified at last minute for bid period - only one week.
- You need to put the BLM person who managed the site as the evaluator of the proposal.

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- "You have to note in the contract how contractor will accomplish the work."
- "Bidding and proposal is ineffective due to no-bid status."
- "Conservation Credits are difficult to understand - needs new wording."
- "Contracting authority doesn't work for small contractors."
- "Evaluation of costs of timber is good."
- "Get local authority to do contracts so they don't have to go through Denver."
- "I didn't find anyone to bid on the project at BLM's projected rate for contract."
- "I failed to tell contractors about deadline and needed an extension to get more involved."
- "It's difficult to score proposals."

- “It's very difficult for small business contractors to follow the process. The goal was to get these small businesses to work the land, but they lacked the skills and ability to complete application process.”
- “More funding would improve the projects.”
- “Online access isn't working because small businesses didn't always own computers and the application process is too difficult.”
- “Requirements for technical proposals need to improve.”
- “The bidding process needs further explanation.”
- “The BLM needs to condense the work load with a reduction in rules and wording of contracts.”
- “The newness of the process doesn't allow for all questions to be answered.”
- “The notifying of small scale bidders needs improvement.”
- “The process is best when you explain how the proposal process works to the bidders; have examples for them to use.”
- “The process is too cumbersome. Also, it requires too much for the type of contractors they want us to attract.”
- “The process only resulted in one bidder. And the time table needs to be improved and expanded.”
- “The selection of contractors needs improvement.”
- “The whole process is cumbersome and not reaching local contractors.”
- “There's not a very viable timber economy. Negotiations for contract prices need improvement.”
- “There was poor notification on the part of the BLM.”
- “We need education opportunities for bid/proposal. The process needs incentives.”
- “We need something better so contractors know what's coming up (ads, etc).”

- “We only solicited companies on IDIQ list. Outside of this list companies were unable to bid on the necessary information. It was difficult to obtain if the company was not on IDIQ list.”
- “Working with state office is cumbersome and not very expedient process.”

What are the requirements or regulations that limit or exclude participation of certain groups?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- Business experience is needed on register through Denver, CO office.
- Computer access and application access is required.
- Large amount of equipment for job is needed.
- One contractor wanted a certain portion of project land area for himself (a one-man crew).
- Requirements are based on equipment. Denver wanted a resume such as minimal impact. There are time constraints and equipment constraints.
- Size and time frame of job completion can be exclusive.
- There's too much favoritism to big businesses; there's a need to accommodate smaller businesses.
- There are requirements for companies to pay workers. Small companies would have to hire illegally to meet the requirement. The bonding and insurance requirements are too expensive.
- They require the bidder to become bonded, which excludes groups - but that's a good requirement to have.
- Those that aren't on the list are excluded. A group must be sent a package to qualify; otherwise you're not on the list. Only qualified bidders are sent a packet.

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Applications are designed for larger timber companies.”
- “Bidders have to have access to Internet and knowledge about technology.”
- “Contracting authority process excludes groups.”

- “Groups outside of IDIQ list are excluded. I have worked with Indian tribes and it seemed that there were more loops for them. Computer skills, internet, general computer skills exclude people. Process was far more difficult without them.”
- “If they are not registered as a small business they are not allowed to bid.”
- “Internet is required to apply.”
- “Lack of computer access, isolated communities. Contract process is too complex; smaller business. There is also a marketing aspect - small business couldn't produce wood product or biomass in a profitable way compared to large businesses.”
- “Open-up to larger businesses.”
- “Some contractors don't have equipment and size to complete the project, so they have to subcontract work out.”
- “The bonding requirements preclude smaller operators.”
- “There is contract required.”
- “Those without internet access get excluded.”
- “You have to have large enough businesses to complete a project.”

What could be done to improve communication between the contractor and the BLM?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “A little more feedback from the BLM to assess product values would improve communication.”
- “We need an after hours contact number and operator or officer.”
- “I would like a clear chain of command.”
- “At times, such as holidays, it would better serve the contractor to assign a person to help while BLM officer is gone.”
- “Keep in touch with the contractor.”
- “We need a radio system for communication and regular visits by BLM staff.”

- “The representatives are not easy to get a hold of. It needs to be easier to contact the BLM reps.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “A thorough understanding of the program.”
- “Administrators are in Denver and unfamiliar with the process on the contractor’s side.”
- “It comes down to personalities with open line of communication. Assign core duties to someone who has time to do it.”
- “It’s good at the local level.”
- “I haven’t had a complete project, but bidders’ contact is good.”
- “It will continue to improve over time with development and continued community with BLM and contractors.”
- “We need more phones, there’s no cell coverage in remote areas, so the contractors are hard to reach.”
- “Personalize relationship with contractor and BLM.”
- “A pre-bid award can obtain more communication.”

***Does the BLM provide adequate information for Stewardship Contracting on its Field Office, State and National level websites?
Please Explain:***

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “All information online is very good.”
- “Application access is poor and takes too long for notification. Notify local contractors first and weather co-ordinations for project status.”
- “I’ve been to the site and clarified questions through a telephone call.”
- “I couldn’t access file for Stewardship project.”
- “The website provides good access to information.”

- “I looked at it on the internet and disregarded it. Then BLM contacted me and I looked at the project site and accepted their offer. Personal contact, such as phone, works better.”
- “BLM is really good about keeping in contact through email and updates.”
- “The website is pretty detailed and took a lot of thought.”
- “Some BLM websites are clear and some are generic. Overall, they are pretty good though.”
- “The Forest Service has a complete bid packet which is a good example of a good website. BLM is getting better, but they could use a better map system on the website.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Both websites provide good information. Website was easy to access for guidelines.”
- “I can’t access information on website.”
- “It is a cumbersome process.”
- “It needs to be more detailed as far as instructing one on how to go about bidding.”
- “There is a lack of experience on BLM side, but it is a lack of implementation and answered personalized questions.”
- “There’s not enough information for contractors to get registered to bid. Website is cumbersome to those not internet savvy. It needs simplification.”
- “State sites need links to national priorities and Forest Service to view projects. It will help sell the program better.”
- “We sent the web addresses out to all on the bidding list for BLM projects. It wasn’t necessary, because we could find local contractors in the area. This is the first Stewardship project we worked with.”
- “We hold public meetings; provide handouts, maps, and site visits.”
- “The website is hard to understand, further courses for BLM officers are needed.”

BLM Stewardship contracts try to involve a wide variety of stakeholders. Do you feel that contracts are including the necessary stakeholders? Please explain:

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- Business experience is needed on register through Denver, CO office.
- Computer access and application access is required.
- Large amount of equipment for job is needed.
- One contractor wanted a certain portion of project land area for himself (a one-man crew).
- Requirements are based on equipment. Denver wanted a resume such as minimal impact. There are time constraints and equipment constraints.
- Size and time frame of job completion can be exclusive.
- There's too much favoritism to big businesses; there's a need to accommodate smaller businesses.
- There are requirements for companies to pay workers. Small companies would have to hire illegally to meet the requirement. The bonding and insurance requirements are too expensive.
- They require the bidder to become bonded, which excludes groups - but that's a good requirement to have.
- Those that aren't on the list are excluded. A group must be sent a package to qualify; otherwise you're not on the list. Only qualified bidders are sent a packet.

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- "We advertise to the public regarding projects."
- "The contracting process keeps work at the local level and community. The complexity of the application is scaring people away."
- "The environmental review process requires that these groups and individuals are included."
- "For our state of Montana, yes, it is an inclusive program,"

- “We have to have public meetings and involvement.”
- “Internet based information doesn’t include local community.”
- “Involved and public meetings went well.”
- “We let the townspeople know as they would be most affected by the project.”
- “Local stakeholders are well notified and involved in the process.”
- “Locally, they are involved.”
- “No consensus was built.”
- “Once the contract is implemented, there isn’t much room for stakeholder input. There is some contact made before contract is put in place.”
- “It’s open to those who get the job done.”
- “We have been reaching rural community contractors and assisting rural economy.”
- “Stakeholders have been contacted but the process needed more time.”
- “We talked with local tribes and wood cutters.”
- “The contracts are supposed to focus smaller operators, but because of contract requirements they preclude smaller operators.”
- “The intent is there but it doesn’t always played out.”
- “Try to involve the community/public, the small guy, and not just the lowest bidder.”
- “We are trying to, they are potential contractors.”
- “We have been working in a wildland/urban interface area. The fire department and residents have been involved.”
- “Yes, but we need to make a better effort to involve stakeholders.”

How involved are stakeholders in the Stewardship contracting process? Please explain:

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “They have been involved from the beginning of the project.”
- “Most stakeholders and businesses are being supported economically from products and work generated from projects.”
- “They are not directly involved, but indirectly observed in the project area. They helped out by shutting power lines off.”
- “Some stakeholders play more active roles than others.”
- “They tried to shut down the project and contacted the mayor. However, there was angst among only 5 percent of vocal public.”
- “They have been monitoring and observing the project. They have been also involved with the pre-planning of the project, which made it a positive experience.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Adjacent land owner approached BLM about the project.”
- “BLM has given too much time for project completion, supplementary work for contractors, too small of projects.”
- “Fire plan and Forest Service is involved with community for timber harvesting on private land.”
- “Fire-safe counsels and homeowners are very involved.”
- “Stakeholders have been given more than enough opportunity, but they didn’t take advantage of it.”
- “Stakeholders are highly involved locally.”
- “Stakeholders are involved at the local level.”
- “Involvement is not always required.”
- “There was a pre-project meeting and the stakeholders have been involved.”
- “There is private land adjacent to the project.”

- “The project was small, and not many stakeholders have been involved. But, if the process was slower, more cooperation could have taken place.”
- “A separate forum to talk with stakeholders is needed. Maybe presentations could improve.”
- “Stakeholders are more involved in projects on the ground.”
- “Stakeholders’ participate at the local level.”
- “We want to appeal to local interests.”
- “We notified them and the BLM had respondents.”

In your opinion, what changes could be made to the current regulations to make Stewardship contracting more effective?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “It’s OK, as long as they don’t get more involved in the summertime fire restrictions.”
- “I’m indifferent to the regulations.”
- “Let contractors burn more excess waste, and let contractors work year round.”
- “We need more accurate information up front to base the bid more accurately.”
- “There’s not a steady enough workload for contractors. There is too much off-time with no buyers for products.”
- “Post more Stewardships on BLM site, and more effective jobs for Northern California area.”
- “Require an environmental assessment and archaeological site.”
- “There are saw logs and products that do not meet standard. It would be simpler to allow more types of wood products.”
- “Improve the way the Environmental Assessment is done. There may be a lynx on the land.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- Add merchantability specifications for produce. When appraising saw timber, some percentage is removed for waste - there needs to be uniform standard. They should also lower the margin of error to 20% when dealing with SEE WORD DOC.
- Allow contracting officer at local level, state offices are too swamped. Improve procurement process it's "superfluous."
- Allow different types of contracts to be used, that are less cumbersome and more easily understood.
- Change bonding so the bond is not so high.
- Contract has been awarded but hasn't started yet.
- Developing documents that lend themselves to flexibility toward contract need to be changed.
- Eliminate the red tape.
- Experience and flexibility would be more effective.
- Get more information to BLM officers.
- I'm having a hard time finding a market for products and contracting authority regulations are prohibited. There needs to be restitution so the contractors are more pleased with projects.
- I don't know; I don't have enough experience yet. Small contractors didn't rely on internet to get projects. I'm unfamiliar with the website processes.
- Improve timber appraisal rate and reduce time table on completion date.
- It's easy to come up with more stewardship contracts if trade for acreage isn't in the exact same location.
- It could be delegated to field office and ease requirements for technical proposals.
- It has to be approved by national office
- It is overregulated.

- Make it easier for both BLM and contractor to reduce paperwork.
- Make it user friendly and include local interest. Reduce paperwork.
- Make money for services more strict, paying to take product and then selling it later is double pay.
- Marketable timber is good. Unmarketable Juniper has no mass market. Market prices need adjustment.
- Selling byproducts on a per ton basis would be an improvement.
- Simplify, allow or justify using small businesses to do the job instead of bigger out of state businesses. The process, if it is truly aimed at small or local companies, needs to find a way to make their participation easier.
- There is a need to iron out contracting language. The timber sale and construction and service contracts are three types of contracts rolled into one.
- There is low adequacy.
- We don't have market for products and BLM office is isolated.
- We need more leeway, the opportunity to say no to a high bid without losing the funding.

How important is bonding to Stewardship contracts? Why did you select this rating?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “A small percentage of the project is bonded. It’s an inconvenience and unnecessary.”
- “BLM wouldn’t let the bidder have the contract if they weren’t bonded.”
- “The bonding process didn’t amount to much time. There was a fast result, and I got the money back quickly. It would have made a bigger difference on a longer project.”
- “Bonding hasn’t made a difference due to the nature of the work.”
- “I haven’t had to use it too much.”

- “It should be more important. A company that is bonded is typically more stable and financially viable. There are less hassles with a bonded company.”
- “It was a requirement for the contract.”
- “Bonding is not important to the project.”
- “It was required, but not that important due to work history.”
- “Bonding was required for the BLM project.”
- “We wouldn’t have gotten contracted without being bonded.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Bonding is a deterrent for local partners and is intimidating. The government side values work to be done.”
- “Bonding is important but can be limiting to contractors.”
- “Bonding is not critical. The stewardship instead of timber sale have been more important.”
- “Bonding was removed from this project.”
- “Contracting authority says contractor has to be bonded which is causing cost - prohibitive problems since only one contractor is interested.”
- “It depends on contracting group.”
- “It depends on project title.”
- “It depends on size of project and value of timber on-site.”
- “From my timber background, dealing with product timber, the job couldn't be finished and that left the BLM holding the bag.”
- “There has to be some kind of process to make sure they complete the job.”
- “It depends on value of produce.”
- “In the local area, a lot of businesses aren't stable and could go bankrupt before completion of services. There’s not a large contracting pool.”
- “It’s necessary to have adequate bonding.”

- “We need a new type of contract. The government is at a risk so is the contractor. Bonding reduces risk.”
- “The potential damage is in the excess, blowing it will not allow for recovery.”

How easily is bonding obtained for Stewardship contracts? Why did you select this rating?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “The BLM doesn’t like to bond jobs with hazardous or natural disaster potential projects.”
- “The bonding company wouldn’t bond me, so I bonded myself.”
- “It’s easy, because I’ve been doing it for years.”
- “It’s easy and my past history is good.”
- “Contractors need financial standing power and low risk factor.”
- “Bonding companies are hard to find.”
- “My agent did it. The ease probably depends on performance history.”
- “Bonding was easy. I just put the money up.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Bonding is universal; the cost of the bond is the same as any other contract.”
- “I can’t answer the question on bonding, so our group did it the Forest Service way.”
- “I’m dealing with smaller contractors who don’t necessarily have the ability to bond.”
- “It depends on the contract.”
- “It’s different in every case, if the bond has to be posted up front.”
- “It’s difficult for small operators.”

- “It kept the bonding percentage down, and money down on performance bond.”
- “For large corporations it's no big deal, but for a smaller outfit it is more difficult.”
- “There is a need to understand program status for bonding.”
- “It's not easy for individual or small operators. It's easier for Big Camp Limiting pool of contractors available.”
- “Some contractors have difficulty obtaining bonds.”
- “The small operations don't have capital to secure that kind of bond.”

What could be done to improve the determination of costs for Stewardship contracts?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “There is a need to increase experience and flexibility.”
- “Contractors aren't provided with that information.”
- “I'm not sure how they do it.”
- “The BLM and contractors need more experience...experience helps.”
- “Increase involvement with contractors who might bid to check if prices, quotes, and costs are proper and feasible through the preparation process.”
- “Don't use material as an offset of the costs. They should be to no available status.”
- “Improve performance and price requirements.”
- “Realize the location of contract area in terms of economics and freight costs. That would help off-set costs with more marketable trees to keep cost lower.”
- “There's a need for on-the-ground experience of projects that haven't been done before and larger margins for estimates.”
- “They are underestimating the cost of the service and overestimating the value of the products. Better assessment of the product value.”
- “They seem to know what they are doing. BLM is much better than the Forest

Service.”

- “Lower the minimum price of the materials and products.”
- “Track the actual cost of the project as it goes. Labor prices and fuel prices need to be monitored throughout the project on a regular basis. Contracts can run multiple years.

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Advertise and improve resources for general contractors, get more contractors involved. There’s not enough research to attract contractors.”
- “We need better analysis programs and cost estimations.”
- “Improve understanding of market, cost discrepancies, and the size of the project.”
- “BLM costs have been much lower than contractors’ estimates; it varies from region to region.”
- “Goods for services are first and foremost, instead of money for products.”
- “Include volume materials in costs for market value.”
- “It sorts itself out in time.”
- “Make a standard way to figure the merchantability of material create a uniform system.”
- “They’re making progress and getting better ideas.”
- “The marketability for some products is low. Biomass is low, but timber has high prices.”
- “We need more consistency statewide, and look at site location due to distance to travel. They need to be determined on a price basis per acre.”
- “Improve the effort in field work for more accurate data.”
- “Improve experience base. The location of products in relation to the user is far/distant, and transportation is poor. Industry standards are tough to estimate costs of products.”
- “The process needs simplification.”

- “Produce more contracted projects to gauge costs better.”
- “Improve regional flexibility: For example, Oregon makes a profit because produce from the forest is better quality, but New Mexico doesn't have the same quality of products.”
- “There needs to be a standard timber appraisal system, which BLM doesn't currently have.”
- “State offices need a record of previous average costs to provide to field offices.”
- “There's a long history of timber appraisal, but a short history of contracting fuel projects. The first one is difficult, the second is easier.”

How would you rate the combination of timber harvesting and wood products production? Why did you select this rating?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “It affects costs to government. Some materials are valuable and better not to waste.”
- “It's a win-win situation. The purchaser acquires logs, it provides work, economy, and generates resources. Also, it returns money to the government.”
- “BLM is doing good, they just need help.”
- “I could have removed more product.”
- “There is difficulty in processing materials due to lack of facilities.”
- “To create extreme recreation sight enhancement, the BLM was concerned with the visual aspects of site.”
- “It generates wood products.”
- “I will make money. It's very profitable and helps defer costs.”
- “In order to achieve BLM goals the best products is kept. The rest is junk and hard to get rid of.”
- “I'm in the wood products business and it's profitable for me. It should be done.”
- “It's been a good balance.”

- “I need to get into it better.”
- “It needs to be done. There are fire containment issues that offset cost.”
- “There is no market for my products. It’s all biomass product, and there is no value for fine wood.”
- “We should utilize everything.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “There needs to be a better understanding of the market, the cost discrepancies, and the size of project.”
- “Biomass talk is a pipe dream. It doesn't have proper infrastructure to work.”
- “I didn't get the best contractor; I got the lowest bidder.”
- “Due to a remote location and distance, the wood products from the site would not be cost effective.”
- “There is a good sale value for products.”
- “It has to be there in order to be successful.”
- “You have to have enough sources to get rid of materials.”
- “It's a good idea.”
- “It was an excellent project to combine biomass versus the saw-timber. It made the effort a viable project.”
- “Most of the contracting focused on the timber, and not the wood products. There's no market for those things.”
- “There’s no value, and no plant to process biomass products. Firewood is good but there’s not a whole lot of firewood on the project site.”
- “There wasn’t high value timber in most cases.”
- “I’m only getting fuel wood from the product, not high quality timber.”
- “I’ve only experienced one project to determine combo.”

- “Government is getting money in return for a product.”
- “There is a poor timber economy.”
- “It depends on the resale value.”
- “Woods are traded for services in this case.”
- “The combination works well in some areas of the country and not so well in others.”

How marketable are the products from Stewardship contracts? Why did you rate it this way?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “I experienced a low resale value.”
- “I was able to sell log materials, but not pulp wood. Smaller diameter wood is harder to sell, so I just burn it.”
- “All products generated from project have value. There is a high demand for the wood products.”
- “The BLM doesn’t want to leave out high value timber, which is most appealing to contractors.”
- “I can sell all of the products.”
- “The contractor pays for material and the contractor pays for the equipment and uses.”
- “It costs to dispose and sell to schools for biomass fuels.”
- “Getting the product out is too difficult. It’s not cost effective to get it out. There needs to be better ways to get the resources out so they don’t go to waste.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “A lot of wood is juniper with no market for its sale.”
- “Many products are marketable, but given the distance in this case they have been not.”

- “Fuel costs are too high.”
- “Commercial timber is high, but timber byproducts are low.”
- “It can be high if contract is written right.”
- “It depends on the area and wood product base in certain parts.”
- “It depends on the kind of product you're dealing with. Timber has a market. Small biomass does not have a market, in particular Juniper or Pinon pine.”
- “Marketability is due to location.”
- “There’s a good market for timber.”
- “There’s a high market value, best in nation probably.”
- “There’s a limited number of sawmills and contractors with proper equipment in area.”
- “Locally, there’s less of a market for products.”
- “Markets are so far away and price is poor with freight distance "prohibitive" and low utilization.”
- “Mine have been barely marketable, generally they are okay.”
- “Most of the product is Juniper and wood. The technology is not there to market products.”
- “There’s not enough buyers for timber, because timber is too small.”
- “Saw-timber is very valuable and easy to sell. Biomass is new so it’s difficult to process, but industry is gearing up for it.”
- “Some products have low value and others high value.”
- “Subsidize costs through trading goods for services. The market doesn't exist.”
- “The distance to market is great.”
- “The logs are readily marketable but biomass products are not.”
- “There's no market for produce; product is low value mostly firewood, not many pulp mills to use material.”

Overall, in your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship contracting work the best?

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “There’s an ability to choose not only the low bid, but to choose a performance based model.”
- “Civic cultural goals, or harvest prescription work the best.”
- “Communication between the BLM and the contractor work best.”
- “I appreciate dealing with on-ground technicians.”
- “The flexibility of people (BLM) we worked with worked best.”
- “There’s a good understanding of the project by the BLM.”
- “I like having a local forester being there on site.”
- “I like the IDIQ contract process.”
- “The requirements for past work history and contractor qualifications work well.”
- “Negotiations with BLM improve the stewardship.”
- “I like not having to be bonded, and the trade offs of the products.”
- “The outlay of the contract is nice, and buying permits through BLM with reduction in contract stipulations weekly subsidies operational costs.”
- “The BLM’s people on the ground/field level are excellent (inspectors, COR’s). They want to get the job done right.”
- “What works best is providing biomass fuels/services to schools.”
- “The concept and cooperation in contract completion works well.
- “The local hands-on decision making is very good. The local staff are great.”
- “The on site visit and pre-bid meeting improve stewardship.”
- “The requirements and paper work are best, because they weed out the competition.”

- “I appreciate the willingness of the BLM to solicit public input and to put it into practice. The public meetings generate suggestions from the community and increase the project’s success and attractiveness.”
- “I like working with the local offices.”
- “It is a young program, but I am benefiting from the program.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Flexibility to allow for a greater performance time works.”
- “Getting land treated and utilizing materials is best.”
- “Good ideas warrant further development and need to be tailored to the area in question.”
- “It’s a good tool, but it’s now mandated, and often used in the wrong places.”
- “It’s effective in not wasting valued resources.”
- “It’s the ability to treat area with one contract that works best.”
- “It’s the ability to use timber receipts to get the work done that works, otherwise there’s a lack of funding.”
- “It has good potential.”
- “It legitimizes directives on ground; hazardous fuels, wildlife habitat, and timber products with value that should be utilized.”
- “It provides opportunities for small/independent contractors.”
- “Local individual involvement with contractors works best.”
- “Local involvement in planning and contracting works.”
- “Reduced administration and impact on grounds works well.”
- “Saving money through conservation credits instead of through money, and saving in administrator costs works well.”
- “Site visits, and getting to work with the people works best. Teams and peers review bids and look at technical aspects and rate from them, felt the technical review that I took part in was successful.”

- “The actual on the ground work was best.”
- “The concept is good, but needs a design improvement.”
- “The contractors are not opposed to track services for products.”
- “The coordination between field office and Denver offices direction of guidance works well.”
- “The cost per acre of treating forested land came down.”
- “The exchange of products for services works best.”
- “The IDIQ portion of contracts work best.”
- “The people on the ground (the actual workers with a successful bidder) were the best aspect.”
- “Trading goods for services is the best aspect.”
- “Utilizing local community and getting money back for a product works well.”
- “We need guidance from the State Forester in the Stewardship process as it is very new to BLM staff.”
- “Work is done using one contract.”

And, overall, what aspects of Stewardship contracting need improvements

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “The BLM could send more letters by mail to bidders, instead of having bidders search for potential projects on the internet.”
- “The BLM’s pay scale is poor.”
- “There needs to be better clarification in the paperwork.”
- “Coordinate commercial buyers and consistent buyers for materials. Also, weather related issues impede the contract’s continuance.”
- “Improve the healthy forest initiative evaluation for Stewardship projects.”

- “Increase the size of the project program. And, improve assessment of land products, environmental causes, and expand acreage coverage.”
- “Increase the process speed from start to finish.”
- “Increase the clarity and understanding with local field technicians. Further empowerment for technicians is needed.”
- “There needs to be more leeway in contract outlines.”
- “There needs to be more local control.”
- “They need to keep the regular bidder more informed.”
- “Expedite the payment process.”
- “Pricing structures are sometimes off or unrealistic. Goods for services are unrealistic. There needs to be more viable ways to sell wood products to make it profitable.”
- “The local factions need more control. They don’t have any control in the local Alaska office. Small companies don’t bid because they can’t use certain types of equipment and don’t have enough time. BLM is only available Monday through Friday.”
- “The turnaround notification takes too long.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “All process paper needs improvement and increase the availability for local contractors which was initial goal of program.”
- “Change the level of contracting, and the level of approval at project level.”
- “Contracts are unwieldy and complicated.”
- “Dealing with the Denver office, should be at the state level.”
- “Grange land Range land products need to be included.”
- “Having a contracting officer too far away from the project who doesn't know project well enough could improve.”

- “Improve cost estimation and have more communication pre-bid with contractors.”
- “Improve education of the public regarding the program.”
- “Improve the marketing of each program.”
- “Increase accessibility for small businesses.”
- “Increase flexibility with contracting authority with additional funding.”
- “Internal written process of getting to a contract could use improvement.”
- “It's a big program and has made more work for the BLM than other contracting alternatives. It's time consuming.”
- “It forces land managers to work closer with contractors.”
- “Make it a service-first project and it's incompatible with the BLM and Forest service.”
- “Make things more familiar to the general public, who might have interests in projects.”
- “Quit worrying about the number of projects and apply projects where they will be more effective and feasible.”
- “Reduce the requirements of technical proposals.”
- “The ability to bring in smaller or more remote groups would be an improvement.”
- “The bidding process needs improvement. Make contractors aware of the process through website and negotiations.”
- “The BLM isn't doing a poor job with projects, but the tools aren't set up right due to processing of products during project. Some projects should be a fuel reduction program. Contracts should be generated out of state office not Denver office.”
- “The contract process from the time that information is put into contract until the time the contract is awarded is complicated, slow, and confusing. Need to speed it up and clarify it.”
- “The contracting process is too cumbersome, there are too many steps.”

- “The contracting process itself needs improvement.”
- “The contractors need to understand the process better. There needs to be more education for contractors.”
- “There needs to be more information getting to the BLM field officers and contractors. Share information with other offices.”
- “They should contract the person with the best technical points not just the lowest bidder.”
- “We need a correlation of goals and funding of contracts.”
- “We need contract template improvements and more outreach education and price product increases.”
- “We need more experience with the program.”

***How effective are Stewardship contracts at meeting stated goals?
Why did you select this rating?***

Stewardship Participant Responses:

- “I don't know. It's great the way it is.”
- “I have an unclear understanding of the project title.”
- “I rated this because of a good past project experience with healthy forest initiative.”
- “It's pretty adequate.”
- “It worked well for us.”
- “Nothing is perfect, but the project is the way to go to achieve goals.”
- “Objectives were met for company and the BLM.”
- “Stated goals included provision and flexibility.”
- “That's the design and purpose.”
- “The cost analysis needs to be improved.”

- “The goal is to maximize buyers but it's not happening.”
- “The project has yet to start.”
- “The project is in progress.”
- “There's a big enough portion to make a difference and conjunction in the area.”
- “There are good goals.”
- “There needs to be a better description of contract needs in bid packet. The name of the project doesn't really fit the actual job.”
- “They described the end result well with what they need (goals).”
- “Things are moving along well.”

BLM Contract Manager Responses:

- “Because of their cumbersome nature contracts are not awarded in a timely manner. The public doesn't understand contracting.”
- “Contracting has been successful.”
- “Contracts are a good tool to use.”
- “Contracts are good.”
- “From the results it seems that contracts are accomplishing objectives.”
- “I'm still following up on the project.”
- “I'm working with long periods of time, so it's hard to see immediate results.”
- “I haven't implemented it yet.”
- “If you can get a bidder contracts work.”
- “Individual project wise, it's ok.”
- “It's an appropriate tool for our circumstances.”
- “It's done a great job so far.”

- “It's trying to satisfy two groups: management and contractors, so they don't always correspond to one another.”
- “It directly affects the area around town that is addressing the fire danger.”
- “It is still difficult.”
- “It will get better with time.”
- “Objectives are simple and straight forward.”
- “Our project will do a good job.”
- “The program is not workable because it does not have state support.”
- “The project isn't complete yet.”
- “The Stewardship program is still in development, and it is on the right path to achieve the goals they have set out for it.”
- “There's not enough volume in sales to meet district goals.”
- “There was an unsuccessful award and I can't find a contractor to do the job at BLM cost.”

F. Appendix B: Frequency Tables

Table 1: Number of Site Visits for Stewardship Projects with the Bureau of Land Management by Type of Participant

Number of Site Visits	Type of Stewardship Participant							
	Awardees		Non-Awardees (Bidder)		Site Visit Attendees (only)		Total	
	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)
1	36%	8	36%	4	40%	6	38%	18
2	18%	4	18%	2	33%	5	23%	11
3 – 6	18%	4	36%	4	13%	2	21%	10
7 – 10	9%	2	0%	0	7%	1	6%	3
11 – 20	14%	3	9%	1	0%	0	8%	4
20+	5%	1	0%	0	7%	1	4%	2
Total	100%	22	99%	11	100%	15	100%	48

Table 2: Field Offices Managing Stewardship Projects by State

	Percent	(N)
Oregon	16%	5
Idaho	13%	4
California	10%	3
Colorado	10%	3
New Mexico	10%	3
Utah	10%	3
Wyoming	10%	3
Arizona	6%	2
Montana	6%	2
Nevada	6%	2
South Dakota	3%	1
Total	100%	31

Table 3: Number of Stewardship Projects Overseen by BLM Contract Managers

Number of Stewardship Projects Overseen by BLM Contract Managers		
	Percent	(N)
Average		1.65
1	71%	22
2	16%	5
3	3%	1
4	7%	2
8	3%	1
Total	100%	31

Table 4: Are there requirements or regulations that limit or exclude the participation of certain groups in the Stewardship bidding and proposal process?

	Stewardship Participants		BLM Contract Managers	
	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)
Yes	30%	10	42%	13
No	52%	17	42%	13
Don't Know	18%	6	16%	5
Total	100%	33	100%	31

Table 5: Contracts Held by Stewardship Participants

Number of Contracts	Percent	(N)
1	73%	16
2	14%	3
3	5%	1
4	5%	1
8	5%	1
Total	102%	22

Table 6: Does the BLM provide adequate information for Stewardship contracting on its Field Office, State and National level websites?

	Stewardship Participants		BLM Contract Managers	
	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)
Yes	59%	13	32%	10
No	14%	3	29%	9
Don't Know	27%	6	39%	12
Total	100%	22	100%	31

Table 7: Do you feel that contracts are including the necessary stakeholders?

	Stewardship Participants		BLM Contract Managers	
	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)
Yes	32%	7	68%	21
No	64%	14	19%	6
Don't Know	5%	1	13%	4
Total	101%	22	100%	31

Table 8: Average Ratings of Stewardship Assessment Items*

	Stewardship Participant Average Rating	BLM Contract Manager Average Rating
How would you rate the BLM Stewardship site visitation process?	4.15	3.69
How effective is the BLM Stewardship bidding and proposal process?	3.55	2.52
How would you rate the level of communication between the BLM and yourself (reversed for BLM Contract Managers)?	4.43	4.48
How involved are the stakeholders?	3.29	3.44
How would you rate the current regulations for BLM Stewardship contracts?	4.00	3.03
How important has bonding been to the BLM Stewardship contract?	3.18	3.97
How easily was bonding obtained for the BLM Stewardship contract?	3.18	2.88
How would you rate the way BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts?	3.13	3.52
How would you rate the combination of timber harvesting and wood products production?	4.06	3.79
How marketable are the products from Stewardship contracts?	3.21	2.71
How would you rate the Stewardship contracting process?	4.43	3.23
How effective are Stewardship contracts at meeting stated goals?	4.17	3.67

*Ratings are based on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest.

G. Appendix C: Survey

Stewardship Participants

BLM Stewardship Survey

Date _____

Record # _____

Participant Name _____

Company _____

INTRODUCTION

Hello, may I speak with _____ (**state the first and last name of the person on the list**)?

**If the person on the list is NOT correct, they no longer work there, or there is no Stewardship participant name ask for "the person there that handles potential Stewardship projects with the Bureau of Land Management" (the main contact person involved in the Stewardship with BLM).*

**** If this is the case, be sure to record their name, correctly spelled at the top of the form.**

I'm calling on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management. My name is (**state your first and last name**) calling from Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory. We are conducting a survey to assess the Bureau of Land Management's Stewardship Contracting Program. Your views are very important in helping the BLM improve the bidding and contracting process. The questions I would like to ask will only take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Is now a good time to ask you some questions?

If yes → continue

If no → set up a callback time and record in data base

Thank you. This survey was developed in order to better understand the experiences of groups and organizations bidding on or participating in stewardship contracts on BLM lands. Survey responses will be used to make improvements in the program's performance. All of your answers are voluntary and confidential and will be reported as a group response. If I should come to any question you would prefer not to answer, just let me know and I'll skip over it.

First, I need to inform you that the Paperwork Reduction Act requires approval of all federal government surveys by the Office of Management and Budget. If you would like to know more about the approval of this survey, I can provide that information. Would you like this information?

If yes → continue below

If no → skip to Q1

***Additional information provided upon request:**

This survey has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget. The designated approval number is 1040-0001, expiring January 31, 2005. You may direct comments that you have about any aspect of the survey to Sheri Harris at the Office of Planning and Performance Management. Would you like her phone number? If yes → 202-208-7342. As another option, you may call the principal investigator of this survey. Her name is Kristi Hagen. She is the Associate Director of the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. Would you like her phone number? If yes → You can call Ms. Hagen toll-free at (866) 213-5716.

EXPERIENCE WITH STEWARDSHIPS

PART I: SITE VISITS

First, I am going to ask you some questions about site visits.

Q1. Can you please tell me the number of site visits you have made for Stewardship projects with the Bureau of Land Management? *(If respondent asks: a "site visit" is attending or visiting a BLM Stewardship project so that a potential contractor can assess the project.)*

1. Total # with BLM _____
2. None: ***If none → skip to Part II Bidding and Proposal section (p. 3)***

Q1a. What is the name of the *(If more than 1: most recent)* Stewardship site project that you have visited?

Q2. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, overall, how would you rate the BLM Stewardship site visitation process?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Q3. In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship site visitations work the best?

Q4. In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship site visitations needs improvement?

PART II: BIDDING AND PROPOSALS

Now I am going to ask you some questions about bidding and proposals.

Q5. Have you ever bid or submitted a proposal for a Stewardship project with the BLM?

1. Yes → Q5a. How many times have you submitted a bid? _____
2. No → Has anyone in your organization ever bid or submitted a proposal to the BLM for a Stewardship project? *(Int: If yes, ask for name and phone # of person who bid/proposed)*

- ***If none for Q1 & Q5 → terminate interview: Those are all of the questions that I have for you. Thank you for your time. Have a great day!***
- ***If R answered Site Visit questions (1-4) & no on Q5 → Those are all of the questions I have for you at this time. Thank you for participating in our survey. Have a great day!***

Q5b. What is the name of the most recent bid or proposal you submitted with the BLM for a Stewardship project?

Q6. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, overall, how effective is the BLM Stewardship bidding and proposal process?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Q7. In your opinion, what aspects of the BLM Stewardship proposal and bidding process work the **best**?

Q8. In your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship proposal and bidding process need improvement?

Q9. Are there requirements or regulations that limit or exclude the participation of certain groups in the BLM Stewardship bidding and proposal process?

1. Yes → **go to Q9a**
2. No → **skip to Q10**
3. Don't know → **skip to Q10**
4. Refused → **skip to Q10**

Q9a. What are the requirements or regulations that limit or exclude participation of certain groups?

Q9b. *If yes for Q 9* → what are the particular groups you feel are excluded? → Can you explain?

PART III: AWARDEES/CONTRACTS

Now I am going to ask you some questions about contracts.

Q10. Have you ever been awarded a contract with the BLM for a Stewardship project?

1. Yes → Q10a. **How many times have you received an award for a Stewardship project with the BLM?** _____
2. No → **end survey. Those are all of the questions that I have. Thank you for your time, we appreciate your participation in this survey. Have a great day!**

Q10b. Approximately how long have you worked on this [*If more than 1: most recent*] BLM Stewardship contract? _____ [*Interviewer: record in years and/or months*]

COMMUNICATION

Q11. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate the level of communication between the BLM and yourself, the stewardship contractor? (*Interviewer note: this may include personnel from field offices & central Washington*)

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

If 4 or less → go to 11a.

If 5 → skip to Q12.

11a. What could be done to improve communication between your organization and the BLM?

Q12. Does the BLM provide adequate information for Stewardship Contracting on its Field Office, State and National level websites?

1. Yes → go to Q12a
2. No → go to Q12a
3. Don't know → skip to Q13
4. Refused → skip to Q13

Q12a. Please explain:

STAKEHOLDERS

Q13. BLM Stewardship contracts try to involve a wide variety of stakeholders. Does your contract include any stakeholders? (*If R asks, "Stakeholders" are defined as groups or individuals with a vested interest in the project outcome, and/or who are affected by the project outcome. Interviewer note: this does **not** include the respondent or the R's company/organization of the contract.*)

1. Yes → go to Q13a
2. No → skip to Q15
3. Don't Know → skip to Q15
4. Refused → skip to Q15

Q13a. Please name the primary stakeholders in your most recent contract with BLM?

Q14. On a scale of 1 to 5, with one as the lowest and five as the highest, how involved are the stakeholders in your most recent BLM Stewardship contract?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q14a. Why did you rate it this way?

REGULATIONS

Q15. And on the same scale, how would you rate the current regulations for BLM Stewardship contracts?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

***If 4 or less → go to Q15a.
If 5 → skip to Q16.***

Q15a. In your opinion, what changes could be made to the current regulations to make BLM Stewardship contracting more effective?

BONDING

Q16. Are the primary participants in this current BLM stewardship contract bonded?

1. Yes → continue to Q16a
2. No → skip to Q17
3. Don't know → skip to Q17
4. Refused → skip to Q17

Q16a. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how important has bonding been to your BLM Stewardship contract?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q16b. Why did you select this rating?

Q16c. On the same scale, how easily was the bonding obtained for your BLM Stewardship contract?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q16d. Why did you select this rating?

COSTS

Q17. And on the same scale, how would you rate the way the BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts? (*Interviewer note: "determination of costs" is the cap that BLM imposes on contracts or a maximum bid*)

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

If 4 or less → go to Q17a.

If 5 → skip to Q18.

Q17a. What could be done to improve the determination of costs for BLM Stewardship contracts?

MARKETING

Q18. As you may know, BLM Stewardship contracts try to combine timber harvesting services with wood products production. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the combination of timber harvesting and wood products production? [*Int. note: an example of "timber services" is 'pre-commercial thinning,' and examples of "wood products" are chips, mulch, cedar, furniture, etc. made from 'small diameter wood.'*]

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q18a. Why did you select this rating?

Q19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how marketable are the products from your BLM Stewardship contract? [Int. note: "marketable" denotes the ability for Stewardship contractors to sell the bi-products of a project site]

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
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Q19a. Why did you rate it this way?

GENERAL

Q20. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the Stewardship contracting process? (Repeat scale if necessary)

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
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Q21. Overall, in your opinion, what aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting work the **best**?

Q22. And, overall, what aspects of BLM Stewardship contracting need improvements?

Q23. On a scale of 1 to 5, how effective are BLM Stewardship contracts at meeting stated goals?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q23a. Why did you select this rating?

Q24. Do you have any other comments you would like to share with the BLM regarding the Stewardship contracting process?

Q25. Would you be willing to have a BLM staff person contact you in the future to further discuss your experiences with the stewardship contracting program?

Yes **No**

***If yes → Q26. “What would be the best way for BLM staff to contact you?”
If no → skip to closing statement***

Verify Information

[Fill in contact information from respondent]

Name _____

Phone(s) _____ Best day(s) and time to call: _____

Email(s) _____

Address(es) _____

Other _____

Closing Statement: Those are all the questions that I have for you. Thank you very much for your participation in this survey. Have a great day, goodbye! (END CALL)

BLM Staff Participants
BLM Stewardship Survey

Date _____

Record # _____

Participant Name _____

INTRODUCTION

Hello, may I speak with _____ (*state the first and last name of the person on the list*)?

I'm calling on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management. My name is (*state your first and last name*) calling from Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory. We are conducting a survey to assess the Bureau of Land Management's Stewardship Contracting Program. Your views are very important in helping the BLM improve the bidding and contracting process. The questions I would like to ask will only take about 15-20 minutes to complete. Is now a good time to ask you some questions?

If yes → continue

If no → set up a callback time and record in data base

Thank you. This survey was developed in order to better understand the experiences and perceptions of BLM field officers managing stewardship projects. Survey responses will be used to make improvements in the program's performance. All of your answers are voluntary and confidential and will be reported as a group response. If I should come to any question you would prefer not to answer, just let me know and I'll skip over it.

First, I need to inform you that the Paperwork Reduction Act requires approval of all federal government surveys by the Office of Management and Budget. If you would like to know more about the approval of this survey, I can provide that information. Would you like this information?

If yes → continue below

If no → skip to Q1

***Additional information provided upon request:**

This survey has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget. The designated approval number is 1040-0001, expiring January 31, 2005. You may direct comments that you have about any aspect of the survey to Sheri Harris at the Office of Planning and Performance Management. Would you like her phone number? If yes → 202-208-7342. As another option, you may call the principal investigator of this survey. Her name is Kristi Hagen. She is the Associate Director of the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. Would you like her phone number? If yes → You can call Ms. Hagen toll-free at (866) 213-5716.

EXPERIENCE WITH STEWARDSHIPS

PART I: SITE VISITS

First, I am going to ask you some questions about site visits.

Q1. What is the field office where you are located?

Q2. How many Stewardship projects do you oversee? (*Int. note: This includes projects whether they have been awarded a contract or not.*)

Q2a. How long have you worked with Stewardship projects? _____ (*Int: enter in years and months, i.e. 1 year two & months.*)

Q3. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, overall, how would you rate the Stewardship site visitation process?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q4. In your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship site visitations work the best?

Q5. In your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship site visitations need improvement?

PART II: BIDDING AND PROPOSALS

Now I am going to ask you some questions about bidding and proposals.

Q6. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, overall, how effective is the Stewardship bidding and proposal process?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q7. In your opinion, what aspects of the Stewardship proposal and bidding process work the **best**?

Q8. In your opinion, what aspects of the Stewardship proposal and bidding process need improvement?

Q9. Are there requirements or regulations that limit or exclude the participation of certain groups in the Stewardship bidding and proposal process?

1. Yes → **go to Q9a**
2. No → **skip to Q10**
3. Don't know → **skip to Q10**
4. Refused → **skip to Q10**

Q9a. *If yes for Q9* → What are the requirements or regulations that limit or exclude participation of certain groups?

Q9b. *If yes for Q9* → What are the particular groups you feel are excluded? → Can you explain?

PART III: CONTRACTS

Now I am going to ask you some questions about contracts.

COMMUNICATION

Q10. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate the level of communication between the stewardship contractor and yourself, the Stewardship project manager?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

If 4 or less → go to 10a.

If 5 → skip to Q11.

Q10a. What could be done to improve communication between the contractor and the BLM?

Q11. Does the BLM provide adequate information for Stewardship Contracting on its Field Office, State and National level websites?

1. Yes → go to Q11a
2. No → go to Q11a
3. Don't know → skip to Q12
4. Refused → skip to Q12

Q11a. Please explain:

STAKEHOLDERS

Q12. BLM Stewardship contracts try to involve a wide variety of stakeholders. Do you feel that contracts are including the necessary stakeholders? *(If R asks, "Stakeholders" are defined as groups or individuals with a vested interest in the project outcome, and/or who are affected by the project outcome. Interviewer note: this does **not** include the Awardee/Contractor)*

1. Yes → go to Q12a
2. No → go to Q12a
3. Don't Know → skip to Q13
4. Refused → skip to Q13

Q12a. Please explain:

Q13. On a scale of 1 to 5, with one as the lowest and five as the highest, in general, how involved are stakeholders in the Stewardship contracting process?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q13a. Please explain:

REGULATIONS

Q14. And on the same scale, how would you rate the current regulations for Stewardship contracts?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

If 4 or less → go to Q14a.

If 5 → skip to Q15.

Q14a. In your opinion, what changes could be made to the current regulations to make Stewardship contracting more effective?

BONDING

Q15. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how important is bonding to Stewardship contracts?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q15a. Why did you select this rating?

Q15b. On the same scale, how easily is bonding obtained for Stewardship contracts?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q15c. Why did you select this rating?

COSTS

Q16. And on the same scale, how would you rate the way the BLM determines costs for Stewardship contracts? (*Interviewer note: "determination of costs" is the cap that BLM imposes on contracts or a maximum bid*)

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

If 4 or less → go to Q14a.

If 5 → skip to Q15.

Q16a. What could be done to improve the determination of costs for Stewardship contracts?

MARKETING

Q17. As you may know, Stewardship contracts try to combine timber harvesting services with wood products production. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the combination of timber harvesting and wood products production? [*Int. note: an example of "timber services" is 'pre-commercial thinning,' and examples of "wood products" are chips, mulch, cedar, furniture, etc. made from 'small diameter wood.'*]

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q17a. Why did you select this rating?

Q18. On a scale of 1 to 5, how marketable are the products from Stewardship contracts? [Int. note: "marketable" denotes the ability for Stewardship contractors to sell the bi-products of a project site]

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q18a. Why did you rate it this way?

GENERAL

Q19. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the Stewardship contracting process? (Repeat scale if necessary)

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q20. Overall, in your opinion, what aspects of Stewardship contracting work the **best**?

Q21. And, overall, what aspects of Stewardship contracting need improvements?

Q22. On a scale of 1 to 5, how effective are Stewardship contracts at meeting stated goals?

Lowest 1	2	Medium 3	4	Highest 5	Don't Know Refused	Not Applicable
-------------	---	-------------	---	--------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Q22a. Why did you select this rating?

Q23. Do you have any other comments you would like to share regarding the Stewardship contracting process?

Q24. Would you be willing to have a BLM staff person contact you in the future to further discuss your experiences with the stewardship contracting program?

Yes **No**

***If yes → Q25. “What would be the best way for BLM staff to contact you?”
If no → skip to closing statement***

Verify Information

[Fill in contact information from respondent]

Name _____

Phone(s) _____ Best day(s) and time to call: _____

Email(s) _____

Address(es) _____

Other _____

Closing Statement: Those are all the questions that I have for you. Thank you very much for your participation in this survey. Have a great day, goodbye! (END CALL)