

BLM contemplating moving headquarters west

By Dan Elliott, AP

From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Bureau of Land Management oversees some of the nation's most prized natural resources: vast expanses of public lands rich in oil, gas, coal, grazing for livestock, habitat for wildlife, hunting ranges, fishing streams and hiking trails.

But more than 99 percent of that land is in 12 Western states, hundreds of miles from the nation's capital. Some Western politicians – both Republicans and Democrats – are asking why the bureau's headquarters isn't in the West as well.

“You're dealing with an agency that basically has no business in Washington, D.C.,” said Colorado Republican Sen. Cory Gardner, who introduced a bill to move the headquarters to any of those dozen states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington or Wyoming. The Bureau of Land Management manages a combined 385,000 square miles in those states.

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