

# BLM's National Landscape Conservation System: Minimal Funding, Maximum Needs

The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) was established in June of 2000 to encompass the best of the lands and waters under the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) stewardship. The System consists of 26 million acres of spectacular National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Historic and Scenic Trails.

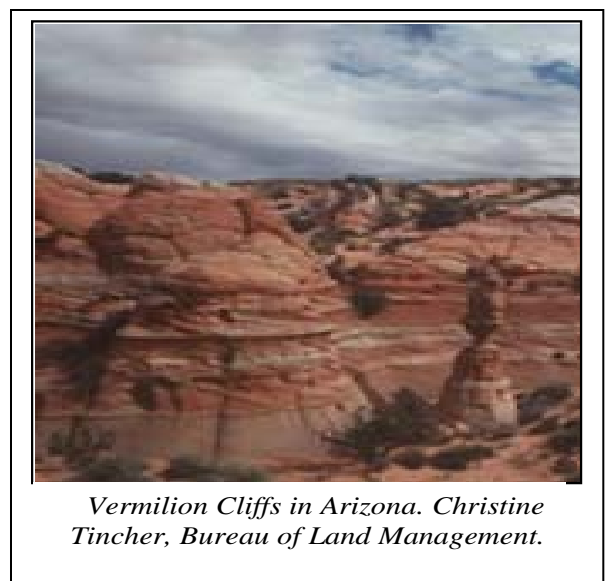
**Since its creation, the NLCS has been chronically under-funded at about \$41 million a year.**

Funding has **not** kept pace with:

- The System's expansion by about a million acres since 2001;
- Increasing visitor numbers, off-road vehicle use, and vandalism;
- Inflation;
- The completion of land use plans for the newest NLCS National Monuments and Conservation Areas. These plans provide the BLM with detailed guidance for managing these special places for the next decade. However, without additional funding, the BLM cannot *implement* the plans. More specifically, BLM cannot educate visitors, restore habitat, monitor cultural sites and wildlife, close roads, or take other essential actions specified in the plans which are necessary to protect resources.

**Under-funding leaves BLM unable to adequately complete its *conservation mandates!***

<b>Annual NLCS Funding: Resource Protection Shortchanged</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Funding for Planning, Operations, and Maintenance</b>	<b>New Land Use Plans Completed for the 30 National Monuments and Conservation Areas</b>
2001	\$42.4 million	
2002	\$38.8 million	
2003	\$41.4 million	-- 9 plans already in place as of 2003 --
2004	\$40.3 million	5 new plans completed
2005	\$41.6 million	8 new plans expected
2006	\$40-41 million (estimated)	7-8 new plans expected



*Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona. Christine Tincher, Bureau of Land Management.*

**The NLCS Coalition urges Congress to support a \$5 million increase for NLCS Operations, Planning and Maintenance Needs for FY 2006.**