

Summary: BLM Employee's Actions Created the Appearance of a Conflict of Interest

Report Date: September 3, 2020

Report Number: 19-0569

The OIG investigated allegations that a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) employee shared nonpublic information with a family member for use in an Off-Range Pasturing (ORP) contract proposal and had a direct financial interest in the award of the contract.

We did not find that the employee violated conflict-of-interest laws or provided nonpublic information to a family member. The employee did, however, assist a family member with some aspects of the ORP contract bid and stood to gain financially if the family member had received the contract. (We note, however, that when the family member learned that the proposal had raised concerns, the family member rescinded the submission.) The Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch state, in part, that employees may not use their public office for the private gain of themselves or their relatives and that employees should avoid even the appearance of violating these standards. We concluded the employee did not comply with the standards because their actions created the appearance of using public office for the private gain of themselves and their family member.

This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the BLM Deputy Director.

