

Chapter One



Chapter One - Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Agua Fria National Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP), the Bradshaw-Harquahala RMP, and their joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) have been prepared to provide guidance on current and future management decisions for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Phoenix District (PD). These plans represent the culmination of many months of planning on the part of BLM's PD staff, BLM Arizona State Office staff, representatives of communities within the planning areas, cooperating and collaborating Government agencies, special interest and user groups, and several hundreds of concerned citizens. The decisions outlined in the pages that follow, as a distillation of the combined thought, effort, and research from all those involved, will enable BLM to manage the Agua Fria National Monument as well as other BLM-managed lands north and west of the Phoenix metropolitan area. These plans will also consolidate management decisions, now contained in several existing plans, in one comprehensive plan to guide BLM's management actions for years to come.

Combined, the planning areas encompass more than 3 million acres in a complex mosaic of land ownerships and jurisdictions. BLM manages the resources on 967,000 surface acres within these planning boundaries, including the entire 70,900 acres of Agua Fria National Monument. In addition, BLM retains subsurface (mineral) rights to 346,300 more acres within the planning area boundaries. Another 181,200 acres of subsurface mineral rights north and east of the planning areas are also addressed in this plan. The Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala RMPs/EIS are vital to creating a framework for future planning

and decision-making within the context of such complex ownership.

The planning areas are rich in resources. Their unique public lands contain archaeological sites and artifacts unlike those anywhere else on earth; providing researchers with critical insights into the lifestyles of the peoples who first settled this region of the Southwest. The lands are home to pronghorn antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer, bighorn sheep, mountain lion, black bear, javelina, countless native songbirds, migratory waterfowl; and endangered and special-status species, such as the bald eagle, southwestern willow flycatcher, and Sonoran desert tortoise, and native fish species including the Gila chub and desert pupfish. Vegetation throughout the area ranges from creosotebush in the desert flats to ponderosa pine at higher elevations. The varied panorama of mountains, mesas, canyons, grasslands, and high and low desert vistas provide thousands of residents and visitors each year with unparalleled recreation opportunities. Thousands of local residents rely on these lands for their livelihood through mining, grazing, and tourism. The Agua Fria National Monument is also a part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, comprised of designated areas that preserve natural landscapes for public use and enjoyment.

As the population of the Phoenix metropolitan area continues to grow, BLM-administered lands within the planning areas will receive increasing pressure, especially for recreation uses. The management decisions set forth in these plans, after much deliberation on the part of BLM and its partners, provide the broadest possible consensus to wisely guide management of these valuable resources.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala RMPs is to guide future land management actions within the planning areas. These documents must not only give adequate guidance for management actions but also ensure that actions comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

and Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).

The need to prepare the RMPs has been established by three main factors:

- The Presidential Proclamation creating the national monument as a discrete management unit.
- The degree of urban expansion and population growth in and around the planning areas.
- The time that has elapsed since the last major planning that encompassed the planning areas.

The planning areas are now being managed under three land use plans (LUPs). While these plans include both planning areas, they also cover a much larger section of western and southwest Arizona. These plans are the *Phoenix RMP and EIS* (BLM 1988a); the *Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan* (BLM 1983); and the *Kingman Resource Area RMP and Final EIS* (BLM 1993a).

On January 11, 2000, President William J. Clinton signed Proclamation 7263 establishing Agua Fria National Monument (Appendix A). The signing of the proclamation represented "new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan" (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1610.5-6). The proclamation restates the need to develop plans for managing the monument. Later that year, the requirement to develop a stand-alone plan for managing all national monuments was affirmed and issued to all BLM's State offices in Instruction Memorandum 2001-022, Planning Guidance for National Monuments and National Conservation Areas (BLM 2000).

Additionally, Sections 201 (43 United States Code [USC] 1712) and 202 (43 USC 1713) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and Section 1610.5-6, Revised (43 CFR 1610.5-6) of BLM's regulations establish the requirement for plans to reflect existing conditions through maintenance or revision.

A need for consolidating and revising the existing plans is revealed in the following:

- changes in BLM's planning process,
- growth and development in the planning areas, and
- changes in the environment of the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area since completion of the last planning efforts.

An internal study completed in September 2000, which evaluated the Phoenix District's land use plans, concluded that the plans had not adequately kept pace with changing conditions and needed to be revised to reflect the current land use and expected future conditions.

1.3 Planning Area and Map Setting

Agua Fria National Monument, 40 miles north of metropolitan Phoenix, encompasses 70,900 acres of BLM managed land and 1,444 acres of scattered private parcels. It is entirely within Yavapai County, Arizona, to the east of Interstate Highway 17 (I-17), northeast of Black Canyon City, and southeast of Cordes Junction (Map 1-1). The monument is being managed in accordance with the following:

- Proclamation 7263 (Appendix A), establishing Agua Fria National Monument.
- The *Phoenix RMP and Final EIS* (BLM 1988a).
- Department of the Interior Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-008, Interim Management Policy for Bureau of Land Management National Monuments and National Conservation Areas (BLM 2001a).
- Agua Fria National Monument Current Management Guidance (BLM 2002).

The Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area, encompassing 896,100 acres, is located within Maricopa, Yavapai, and La Paz Counties (Map1-1). Adjoining the Phoenix metropolitan area, this planning area has recently experienced significant population growth. The population of Maricopa County increased by 35 percent in the last decade; during this same period the City of Peoria has annexed more than 59,000 acres, including more than 16,000 acres of BLM-managed land. The size of the City of Phoenix has increased by more than 19,000 acres, including nearly 700 acres of BLM-managed land. These are only two of the growing cities and towns expanding their borders toward and into the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. The increased pressure on public lands for recreation, rights-of-way, mineral rights, and other uses; resulting from urban expansion, requires BLM to readdress its land use plan decisions.

Scattered, isolated BLM-administered parcels are located outside the planning areas but within the BLM Phoenix District's administrative district (Map 1-2). Combined, these parcels consist of 5,200 surface acres. In addition, BLM retains subsurface (mineral) rights on 181,200 acres of lands to the north and east of the planning areas (Map 1-2). Surface rights on these lands are held by the following entities:

- The Bureau of Reclamation.
- The State of Arizona.
- Counties (through Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) agreements).
- Private parties.

A summary of surface management acres within the planning areas is described in Table 3-2. Besides surface management acres, within the entire planning area there are 594,600 acres of BLM managed mineral estate with non-Federal surface ownership. Both the scattered parcels and subsurface lands are included in this plan because BLM remains responsible for managing them.

1.4 Process

1.4.1 Collaboration and Cooperation

Collaboration and cooperation are areas of emphasis in BLM's approach to the planning process. The main parties involved in these processes are the general public and interest groups, cooperating agencies, tribal governments, and collaborating agencies and groups. These participants, their roles, and impacts on the planning process are described below.

1.4.2 Community Collaboration and Community Vision

To establish valuable communication relationships before beginning specific planning, James Kent Associates (JKA), under contract to BLM, met with residents and community groups in or next to the planning areas. In addition to building communication networks for the formal planning process, JKA received citizens' inputs on issues and concerns related to BLM's land management practices and helped citizens gain a better understanding of the land use planning process. JKA's staff informally visited with residents in the following settings:

- in community settings,
- in civic and social group meetings, and
- in the communities of Wickenburg, Yarnell, Buckeye, Tonopah, Castle Hot Springs, New River, Black Canyon City, Cordes Junction, Mayer, Dewey, Humboldt, Prescott Valley, and Phoenix.

Contacts were also made in Flagstaff and Prescott, Arizona.

Once established, communication networks served as an integral link between BLM, citizens, and communities by fostering interest

and participation in the planning process. When BLM's managers and staff communicate and collaborate with communities on RMPs and planning issues, the plans are considerably more successful than those prescribing a process or those that do not consider the issues, needs, insights, assets, or resources of local communities.

To begin preparing the Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala RMPs and EIS, a series of workshops for both scoping and development of the Alternatives described in Chapter 2 and in the Introduction, were held in central community locations. The series of informal meetings provided the citizens and the BLM's managers with time to reflect on the local issues between discussions. At the same time, citizens' interests were viewed side by side with BLM's management concerns, allowing planners to integrate management concerns with community interests in ways that fostered collaboration and; more importantly, shared land stewardship.

These workshops encouraged citizens to do the following:

- refine issues,
- discuss visions for the future of public lands, and
- begin exploring alternative ways to manage public lands and resources.

BLM considered citizen's input, from both groups and individuals, as they developed the Alternatives. Additionally, citizens could submit formulated Alternatives as well as vision statements for specific community areas or resources. These ideas were also considered in the range of Alternatives, and analyzed in the EIS.

The BLM's planning process has fostered the climate for effective community visioning of their future in relationship to public lands. In many cases those visions have been integrated into local, regional, and other planning efforts. Those visions have thus expanded the value of the collaborative environment supported by the BLM's planning process.

Overall, the collaborative environment has resulted in open communication. Additionally, this environment has created an increased sense of public ownership of the following:

- the planning process,
- the decisions that result from it, and
- the importance of collaborative stewardship as a strategy for implementation.

1.4.3 Community Vision Statements

As part of an extensive community collaboration throughout the planning process, several communities prepared community vision statements. These statements played an integral role in developing the overall vision for these plans. Following are the vision statements developed by each community.

These statements are presented not as an endorsement by BLM, but rather to show the interrelationship between BLM-managed lands and the people who live, work, and recreate around these lands. These statements do not reflect the visions of all members of the community. They are the collective thoughts of citizens who chose to participate in the planning process. Furthermore, certain vision statements propose actions that are beyond the scope of BLM's legal authority to influence or implement.

1.4.3.1 Black Canyon City

The ultimate desire of the citizens of Black Canyon City is the preservation of the rural nature of our community and the natural beauty of our surroundings. Coincidental to that desire is the retention of open space to be used for designated public recreational activities. The community would like a sufficient amount of BLM-managed lands surrounding the town dedicated to future development of public trails, nature preserves, and riparian areas. A sufficient amount of land would be a minimum depth of five miles from the private property

lines around the community. The State Trust Lands within that area would be purchased by BLM for inclusion in the designated open space.

The community would like the viewshed protected from the town to the mountaintops in all directions. Limiting further commercial or residential development will also help protect the limited water supply in our area. In support of these considerations, many residents have expressed an interest in working with BLM and other communities to assure continued protection, cleanliness, access, and enjoyment of the public lands in our area.

1.4.3.2 Castle Hot Springs

Our community has a vision to maintain our remote yet reachable lifestyle, yet we also recognize that recreational use will increase and needs to be accommodated. This is not only an enforcement issue for the BLM, Yavapai and Maricopa counties, and the City of Peoria, but also an increasing social issue for our community. With this in mind, our community embraces the following as a means to maintain our way of life, as well as deal with increased outside pressure:

- Existing, historically described roads on BLM land must be mapped, legally described, and dedicated so as to ensure that residents and property owners can continue to access and use their lands into perpetuity.
- We need to seriously consider a recreational-user fee, earmarked for the local community, imposed on non-residents to help fund the substantially increasing costs associated with recreational uses.
- Existing roads (whether public, private, or easement) located in areas subject to occasional inundation will be exempt from permitting requirements for continued maintenance in this area.
- In considering changes in the use of private property in this area, the county or city will not be permitted to consider

federal goals and objectives for the surrounding property.

- All federal lands in the Lake Pleasant area are to be treated the same as private property with regard to obtaining new or perfecting existing legal and physical access.
- Mineral rights retained by BLM in this area under private property will be transferred gratis to the surface owners.
- We want a community-based stewardship group to proactively plan and later provide expertise, labor, and cultural wisdom with BLM on all recreational uses, including but not limited to non-motorized and motorized trails.
- Many of the existing water wells are in the "younger alluvium" as currently defined by recent case law.
- Encourage the re-establishment of a northern loop road around Lake Pleasant linking to Table Mesa Road at I-17 for health/safety/welfare purposes.
- Target shooting needs to be encouraged in appropriate and safe areas. Our community is willing, as a stewardship group, to counsel BLM on appropriate areas for target shooting.
- Encourage appropriate discreet cell-site development to provide for better law enforcement telecommunications.

1.4.3.3 Dewey Humboldt - Friends of the Agua Fria River Basin

Our vision is based on the overwhelming grassroots support for retaining public lands for open space made during BLM's scoping comment process. Imagine living here a half a century from now. What would we like our public lands and our communities to look like? The following vision is written as if today is in the year 2050. It describes what can be seen and what took place back in 2003 to make that a reality. Please share in this dream for the future. In the year 2050, we envision the following:

The BLM Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area (including the local communities of Dewey, Humboldt, Mayer, Spring Valley, and Cordes Lakes) represents preserved and protected tracks of open space that have sustained their natural health, diversity, and productivity throughout the first half of the 21st century. These tracts of land are crowded by an uncontrolled urban sprawl. This development explosion stretches from Phoenix to Black Canyon City and continues toward the west and north along the highway corridors to Prescott and Flagstaff. The Agua Fria National Monument and the expanded BLM-managed lands in the Cordes Junction, Mayer, Dewey, and Humboldt areas (referred to as the Upper Agua Fria Basin) are the only open space areas along major roadways. Not surprisingly, these open spaces have been a significant factor in maintaining the rural character within a large section of central Arizona.

BLM continues to work with the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors to support a staunch conservation of the natural and human ecological relationships within the county. The Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area has become a showcase of ecological and rural community sustainability. It provides numerous recreational opportunities for the large and growing urban areas within the state of Arizona, as well as examples of sound traditional agricultural enterprises. These multiple uses of the land include protection of human antiquities, continued environmentally sustainable ranching, hunting, fishing, hiking, equestrian use, bird watching, planned off-road vehicle access, wild river designations, and ecologically responsible mining.

BLM has continued to successfully manage these lands to preserve water flow and water recharge. They have done this by ensuring that all riparian tributaries and supporting uplands feeding the Agua Fria River and monument have remained in their natural state. Wildlife habitat (and corridors) has been identified and protected predominately through the expansion of lands under BLM supervision. This expansion of BLM-managed lands took place almost half a century ago (around 2003-04). At

that time, all lands originally identified for disposal under the old management plan were reclassified and retained as open space under federal ownership.

BLM then furthered their commitment to protecting open space for multiple uses by either forming partnerships with state and other federal agencies, or directly acquiring wide strips of land on either side of the existing BLM-managed lands within Yavapai County. This allowed BLM to successfully buffer their original parcels from development and encroachment. It is interesting to note that in the early part of the 21st century BLM honored the wishes of the people they served (to keep public land public and to protect open space). This visionary and courageous action resulted in preserving a large section of central Arizona for the native flora and fauna, as well as the use and enjoyment of many generations of Arizonans.

1.4.3.4 New River

The Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area maintains the wild and scenic character of today, while continuing to provide an array of public opportunities in the future for visual resources, water, education, recreation, and exploration within the framework of a healthy, properly functioning landscape. This does include grazing and/or other commercial endeavors, if they are consistent with and support the overall vision. Emphasis is on maintaining the scenic views and recreational opportunities while protecting the watershed function.

1.4.3.5 Wickenburg

The Wickenburg Outdoor Recreation Committee seeks to establish a system of world-class equestrian trails surrounding Wickenburg that will buffer the area from Phoenix valley urban sprawl, and preserve the open space value of the local landscape. The area of this trail system will afford a multitude of opportunities for all recreational enthusiasts, and serve to enhance the lifestyles of all community members.

1.4.4 Collaborating Agencies and Other Stakeholder Groups

A variety of entities played a vital role in the planning process. These collaborating groups did the following:

- attended meetings,
- made databases and information available,
- provided peer reviews, and
- helped develop Alternatives.

These included people from the following organizations:

- Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD),
- Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT),
- Maricopa County,
- Yavapai County,
- City of Phoenix,
- City of Peoria,
- Tonto National Forest,
- Prescott National Forest, and
- Luke Air Force Base.

Representatives from the following organizations also met to discuss issues directly related to future communication right-of-way needs:

- American Tower Corporation,
- Campbell A&Z, LLC,
- Phoenix Planning Department;
- Crown Castle,
- Delta Group International,
- Ironwood Real Estate for Verizon Wireless,
- QWEST Wireless LLC,
- Tierra Right-of-Way,
- T-Mobile, and
- West & Company.

Representatives from the following organizations met to discuss future utility rights-of-way (ROW) needs:

- Arizona Public Service (APS),
- Bureau of Reclamation, Arizona Projects Office,
- Phoenix Planning Department,
- El Paso Natural Gas Company,
- Kinder Morgan,
- Salt River Project (SRP); and
- Southwest Gas.

Representatives from the following organizations met to discuss future transportation right-of-way needs:

- ADOT,
- City of Peoria, Phoenix Planning Department,
- Phoenix Street Transportation Department,
- Copland Associates,
- Federal Highway Administration,
- Maricopa Association of Governments,
- Town of Buckeye, and
- Yavapai County.

1.4.5 Tribal Coordination and Consultation

During the scoping period, BLM began consulting with Indian tribes who have oral traditions or cultural concerns relating to the planning areas, or who are documented as having occupied or used portions of these areas during historic times. These tribes include the following:

- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation,
- Yavapai-Prescott Tribe,
- Yavapai-Apache Indian Community at Camp Verde,
- Hopi Tribe,
- Gila River Indian Community,
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community,
- Ak-Chin Indian Community,

- Tohono O'odham Nation,
- Colorado River Indian Tribes, and
- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe.

The planning areas include tribal lands near Prescott, administered by the Yavapai-Prescott Tribe.

Tribal leaders were first contacted by certified mail. Copies of that contact letter were also sent to tribal cultural heritage program leaders and specialists. Follow-up contacts included meetings, field tours, and presentations to representatives of tribal heritage programs. BLM staff gave planning updates at meetings with tribes through the various stages of the planning process, including scoping, development of Alternatives, and release of the Draft RMPs/EIS.

1.4.6 Cooperating Agencies

U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, which are contained in 40 CFR 1501.6 and 1508.5, implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analysis and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments," and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 USC 4331(a), 4332(2)). In support of this mandate, BLM invited a broad range of local, State, tribal, and Federal agencies to attend a series of meetings with the aim of developing Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that would establish cooperating agency status with BLM. Cooperating agency status allows interested agencies to assume responsibilities beyond attending public meetings, and to both review and comment on plan documents.

MOUs describe the responsibilities of BLM and the cooperating agency during the planning process. For example, city and county planners are particularly well acquainted with methods for predicting growth patterns within their communities. A city or a county government may be willing to share that expertise and would do so through the support of a cooperating agency MOU. To date, the ADOT,

AGFD, Yavapai County, Tonto National Forest, Prescott National Forest, City of Peoria, and Luke Air Force Base each have MOUs in some stage of completion from draft to signed, agreeing to become cooperators for the Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala RMP and EIS.

1.5 Mission and Goals

BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

In keeping with its mandate for developing multi-use management plans, BLM developed overall goals for both the Agua Fria National Monument and the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Areas. These goals support a rich variety of public experiences, while simultaneously providing for long-term protection of the natural resources within each planning area. The goals for each planning area have been carefully developed in consideration of BLM's overall mission and with careful regard to the communities and groups that will be affected by future BLM management's decisions for the planning area.

1.5.1 Agua Fria National Monument

The Agua Fria National Monument was created to protect an array of cultural, historical, biological, geological, and hydrological objects. These objects, both individually and collectively, in the context of the natural environment that supports and protects them; are referred to as "monument objects," "monument resources," or "monument values" throughout this document.

Purpose, significance, mission, and goal statements clarify the intent of the monument's proclamation and are used to shape the development of a management plan. The purpose statement clarifies why the monument was set aside as a unit for special management. The significance statement addresses what

makes the area unique. Lastly, the mission and the goal statements reflect ideal conditions which managers should strive to attain. The BLM developed goal statements for the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area based on management principals identified by FLPMA of 1976, as amended.

1.5.1.1 Purpose

Agua Fria National Monument was established to preserve and protect, for present and future generations, its exceptional scientific and historic resources. These resources are defined in the monument's proclamation (Appendix A) as the objects to be protected:

- Archaeological remnants of prehistoric villages, rock art, agricultural systems, and other sites that composed one of the few remaining systems of prehistoric pueblo communities in central Arizona during the period A.D. 1250 to 1450.
- A cultural landscape that encompasses several hundred archaeological sites of diverse types within an undeveloped setting. These resources provide outstanding opportunities for scientists to study the interrelationships among prehistoric communities in their social and environmental contexts.
- Historic sites that reveal the progression of ranching and mining in a rugged area that posed environmental challenges to early settlers.
- A diverse set of topographic features that support an expansive mosaic of semi-desert grassland, transected by ribbons of rare and valuable riparian forest.
- A diversity of vegetation communities and water sources that provide habitat for a wide array of wildlife species.

1.5.1.2 Significance

Agua Fria National Monument includes a large portion of the Perry Mesa Archaeological District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district was established to recognize and protect a particularly well-

preserved system of prehistoric communities that were inhabited between A.D. 1250 and 1450.

The spatial interrelationships among hundreds of irreplaceable archaeological sites are preserved on the monument's landscape. These resources offer unprecedented opportunities for scientific research, public education, and the preservation of ancestral sites and heritage values that are important to Indian tribes.

The monument contains a large component of the Agua Fria watershed, with free-flowing reaches of perennial streams and associated riparian zones that have become rare environmental features in Arizona.

The Agua Fria River, which crosses the monument through rolling hills and the Agua Fria River Canyon, has been determined to be suitable for designation to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (WSR) by virtue of its outstandingly remarkable scenic, cultural, and wildlife values.

The mesas support one of the largest undeveloped expanses of desert grassland in Arizona. Herds of pronghorn, which are at risk in much of Arizona, inhabit these grasslands. The monument offers valuable opportunities for sustaining these important resources and for the scientific study of grassland ecosystems, environmental changes related to the effects of wildfires, and the use of prescribed fires to achieve resource management objectives.

The mesas, canyons, and streams support an uncommon diversity of vegetation communities. This variety provides habitat for many wildlife species including desert tortoise, lowland leopard frog, Mexican garter snake, common black hawk, Gila chub, longfin dace, speckled dace, and desert sucker.

Despite its closeness to urban areas, the monument contains remote, primitive areas that offer excellent opportunities for solitude and the appreciation of outstanding scenic values. Several remote canyons are oases that feature

springs and unusually lush growth of riparian plants and rare species.

1.5.1.3 Mission

BLM will protect and sustain the extraordinary combination of cultural, natural, and scientific resources within Agua Fria National Monument and, to the extent consistent with resource protection, will provide opportunities for scientific research, public education, recreation, and other activities compatible with resource protection.

1.5.1.4 Goals

Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within the broader context of ecosystems and cultural landscapes. The protection of cultural, biological, and physical resources, which the monument was created for, receives the highest priority in project planning and the management of resources and land uses.

Cultural resources are protected and managed for scientific, heritage, and educational values. Selected archaeological sites are developed for public visitation and interpreted to explain how humans have used and modified the desert grasslands over the past 2,000 years.

Diverse habitats, vegetation communities, and corridors of connectivity are conserved, and restored to sustain a wide range of native species. Habitats for special status and sensitive species are protected and recovered to support viable populations.

The Agua Fria River and its tributaries are managed to sustain and enhance their free-flowing character, water quality, and associated riparian values.

As a focus of scientific studies, the monument supports the following:

- relevant research priorities in the natural and social sciences,

- interdisciplinary studies, and
- the development of effective resource management strategies.

Decisions about resource and visitor management are based on scientific information.

Visitors have opportunities to view scenic vistas, wildlife, and archaeological sites through a variety of appropriate and sustainable activities. The preservation of natural quiet and primitive settings is emphasized in zones possessing these values. The public receives the information needed to ensure safe and enjoyable experiences.

Facilities, such as parking areas and trails, are developed so they ensure visual enjoyment and public safety, while protecting monument values.

The public understands and appreciates the purpose and significance of Agua Fria National Monument and the benefits of protecting its resources for present and future generations.

BLM respects valid existing rights and manages authorized uses and facilities to protect monument resources.

BLM enters into active partnerships with local and regional communities, Government agencies, Indian tribes, academic institutions, and organizations. These partnerships foster management practices that protect resources, support communities, and promote public education. Volunteers significantly contribute to resource protection, scientific studies, and public outreach.

1.5.2 Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area

Within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area is an opportunity to support the development of sustainable ecosystems with long-term productivity. This opportunity allows local communities to identify with and have a relationship with the surrounding landscape. This sense of community also extends to the

public wishing to escape the urban environment and enjoy the rural qualities and sense of solitude within this planning area. In addition to this sense of solitude, this planning area offers abundant multi-use opportunities. These opportunities include an array of increasingly popular recreation activities, along with more traditional or historical uses, which need to be managed to avoid degrading the land and its resources. Establishing and encouraging a sense of stewardship among each of its many users will ensure availability of all resources for future generations.

1.5.2.1 Goals

In cooperation with community partners and collaborating agencies, BLM has developed the following list of overall management goals for the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area:

- Engage communities and encourage partnerships with those who have a stake in the management and protection of resources in the planning area. Provide opportunities for public education, volunteerism, visitation, and enjoyment of resources in a manner consistent with resource protection.
- Form partnerships in cooperative management adjacent and intermingled lands.
- Provide for cooperative management of contiguous public lands for recreation and maintaining/restoring wildlife habitats.
- Support public understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of public lands and resources, and promote visitor safety.
- Work with communities and other interests to meet the need for resources, and infrastructure for growing communities in the planning area.
- Manage lands to contribute to the social, economic, and environment health and sustainability of communities.
- Develop outreach programs that encourage thoughtful use and social responsibility, for stewardship of BLM-administered lands.
- Restore and maintain the natural environments that characterize a healthy, unfragmented landscape.

- Support a diverse, flourishing community of plants and wildlife.
- Restore and maintain the area's capacity to capture, store, and safely release water.
- Retain the scenic quality of the area as a legacy for current and future generations of residents and visitors.
- Sustain a diversity of recreation benefits and opportunities, while minimizing harm to natural and cultural resources.

1.6 Planning Issues

1.6.1 Introduction to the Scoping Process

For this planning effort BLM emphasized compliance with the public involvement requirements in the following:

- CEQ regulations in 40 CFR 1501.7
- FLPMA Section (a) of 43 USC 1713
- BLM regulations in 43 CFR 1610.2

The process also followed the provisions of Executive Order 12898 ("Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations") and later BLM's guidelines in Instruction Memorandum 2002-164 on environmental justice.

Several procedures encouraged public participation in the scoping process. Public outreach began before the planning actions were initiated, by publishing the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on April 24, 2002 (67 FR 20148). This outreach established lines of communications with a spectrum of community and user groups in and around the planning areas. These lines of communication facilitated public participation when the RMP planning requirements were defined. This activity is explained in detail in the Community Collaboration and Community Vision section of this chapter. Planning bulletins, including sections specific to soliciting public input, were

periodically distributed throughout the planning process.

The formal scoping process began with the publication of the NOI, and ended on November 15, 2002. The NOI briefly described the project and announced BLM's intent to develop RMPs for both Agua Fria National Monument and the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. Although there is a formal end date to the public comment period in this initial scoping phase, BLM's policy is to accept public comments and other input throughout the planning process. Results of the formal scoping phase are included as Appendix B.

1.6.2 Issues and Management Concerns

Issues were identified for both planning areas through a combination of the following:

- public input,
- BLM's knowledge of the land and management requirements, and
- coordination with local Native American tribes and with Federal, State, and local agencies.

These issues were summarized in the *Scoping Report for the Agua Fria National Monument/Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Areas* (Jones & Stokes 2003), which was released to the public through a variety of means. Also included in the scoping report were the outcomes of coordination with local Native American tribes and Federal, State, and local agencies. Table 1-1 (located in the Additional Tables section) lists issues that reflect the scope of planning decisions addressed in the formulation of the Alternatives in Chapter 2. Table 1-2 also lists management issues that reflect the scope of planning decisions addressed in Chapter 2.

1.7 Laws, Regulations, Policies, Planning Criteria, and Existing Land Use Plans

The BLM's planning process is governed by Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) (43 USC 1711) and 43 CFR 1600, which governs the administrative review process for most BLM's decisions. Land use plans ensure that BLM-administered public lands are managed in accordance with the intent of Congress as stated in FLPMA and under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. As required by FLPMA, public lands must be managed in a manner that protects the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, preserves and protects certain public lands in their natural condition and provides food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and provides for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use by encouraging collaboration and public participation throughout the planning process. In addition, public lands must be managed to help meet our Nation's needs for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from public lands.

Land use plans are the main mechanism for guiding BLM's activities to achieve the mission and goals outlined in the BLM's Strategic Plan (BLM 1997). The Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area RMPs were produced in accordance with Federal statutes and regulations (Appendix C). The selected planning approach is consistent with the requirements in FLPMA and BLM regulations, as most currently defined in the revised BLM's *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1). The process also complies with the set of instruction memoranda, information bulletins, and other BLM's manuals, handbooks,

and strategic plans that embody the most current BLM's business practices on conduct of the process and the content of any resulting documents.

As part of the BLM's planning process, resource specific Strategic Plans are developed at the national level that establish the overall direction for programs within the BLM. These plans are guided by the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, cover a 5 year period, and are updated every 3 years. They are consistent with FLPMA and other laws affecting the public lands.

Several management plans, programmatic documents, and standards and guidelines were considered in the preparing the RMPs. These documents include the following:

- *Phoenix Resource Management Plan* (BLM 1988a);
- *Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan* (BLM 1983);
- *Kingman Resource Management Plan* (BLM 1993);
- *Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration* (BLM 1997);
- *Arizona Statewide Wild and Scenic Rivers Legislative Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1994b); and
- *Arizona Statewide Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire, Fuels, and Air quality Management* (BLM 2004).
- *Approved Amendment to the Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan and the Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan and Decision Record* (BLM 2005).
- *Executive orders 11644 and 11989 Off-Road Vehicles on the Public Lands (1972 and 1977)*

BLM has examined these documents not only to ensure proper integration and compliance, but also to determine which information is still suitable for including in the RMPs and which decisions are still valid and can be carried forward into the RMPs being prepared. BLM has also considered activity plans that have been

tiered off the existing land use plans. These activity plans may need to be revised to conform to the new RMPs.

1.8 Relationship to Other Plans

Title II, Section 202 of FLPMA guides BLM's land use planning coordination with Native American tribes, other Federal departments, State agencies, and local governments. BLM is instructed to do the following:

- stay informed of State, local, and tribal plans;
- ensure that it considers these plans in its own planning; and
- help resolve inconsistencies between such plans and BLM's planning.

The provisions of this section of FLPMA are repeated in Section 1610.3 of BLM Resource Management Planning regulations.

In keeping with the provision of this section, BLM informed State, local, and tribal officials of the planning process through the previously described mailings and meetings. The following is a list of plans reviewed during the Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala planning efforts.

- *Prescott National Forest Proposed Action: Forest Plan Amendment*, November 2001.
- *Wildlife 2006: The Arizona Game and Fish Department's (AGFD) Wildlife Management Program Strategic Plan for the Years 2001-2006*, Finalized January 22, 2001.
- *Maricopa Association of Governments: Desert Spaces Environmentally Sensitive Development Areas (ESDA) Policies and Design Guidelines*, June 2000.
- *Maricopa County 2020, Eye to the Future Comprehensive Plan*, Adopted October 20, 1997, Revised August 7, 2002.
- *Maricopa County Mobile Planning Area Land Use Plan*, Adopted August 12, 1991.

- *Yavapai County General Plan*, Adopted April 7, 2003.
- *City of Peoria General Plan*, December 2002.
- *City of Phoenix General Plan*, Adopted December 5, 2001.
- *Town of Wickenburg General Plan*, Adopted 1988.
- *Town of Buckeye General Development Plan*, Adopted September 18, 2001.
- *Town of Prescott Valley General Plan*, Adopted January 17, 2002.
- *Management Plan for the Sonoran Desert Population of the Desert Tortoise in Arizona*, Arizona Interagency Desert Tortoise Team, December 1996.
- *Desert Pupfish Recovery Plan*, 1993.
- *Final Recovery Plan, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher*, August 2002.
- *Southwestern Bald Eagle Recovery Plan*, 1982.
- *Draft Gila Topminnow Revised Recovery Plan*, 1998 (original approval: March 15, 1984).
- *Spikedace Recovery Plan*, 1991.