

Any future land tenure action will recognize the trail and facilities and will retain a ¼-mile corridor (1/8 mile on each side) along the trail and any ancillary facility, as well as public access to them by easement, right-of-way, deed restriction, or other suitable means.

Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543).

#### ***Administrative Actions***

Establish a citizen focus group to help with trail and facility sites, designs, and management.

With citizens' inputs, write a long-term SRMA management plan.

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

The remaining lands within the Management Unit would be allocated as an Extensive Recreation Management Area.

### **2.5.2.2.7.6 Visual Resources**

#### ***Land Use Allocations***

VRM classes for *Alternative D* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-59. The entire Upper Agua Fria River Basin Management Unit would be allocated as VRM Class III.

### **2.5.2.2.7.7 Mineral Resource Management**

*Alternative D* proposes no mineral withdrawals or closures within this MU.

### **2.5.2.2.7.8 Travel Management**

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

The Upper Agua Fria River Basin Management Unit would be allocated as a limited use area, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16).

#### ***Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions***

WHAs are discussed in the Biological Resources Section 2.5.2.2.7.3.

SRMAs and other recreation allocations are discussed in Section 2.5.2.2.7.5.

#### ***Management Actions***

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in chapter 3.

Establish the North Black Canyon Trail SRMA. Determine exact locations of the trail or any ancillary facilities in conjunction with the Yavapai County Trails Committee and other interested citizens. Travel Management related decisions within the SRMA include:

- Issue a right-of-way agreement for the trail and facilities to preserve their access and long-term character.
- Acquire easements, rights-of-way, or both on non-Federal lands where the trail or facilities must cross or be built.
- Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543).

Prohibit building of new vehicle routes on public lands, and close, limit, or suitably mitigate

vehicle routes that conflict with maintenance of riparian and wildlife values within the Upper Agua Fria River Basin Habitat Corridor WHA, in order to achieve DFC.

## 2.6 Alternative E (Proposed Action)

*Alternative E* is the BLM's proposed management plan. It is designed to respond to each of the issues and management concerns recognized during the planning process in the most comprehensive manner possible. BLM has determined that the management actions presented under *Alternative E* would protect the resource values in the national monument and provide an optimal balance between authorized resource use and the protection and sustainability of sensitive resources in the Bradshaw-Harquahala area. The following discussion, along with the Desired Future Conditions (DFCs), land use allocations, and management actions described in the Management Common to All Action Alternatives section of this chapter, comprise the total proposed *Alternative E*.

### 2.6.1 Agua Fria National Monument

#### Introduction

*Alternative E* for the Agua Fria National Monument RMP is the BLM's proposed management plan. This plan would protect the resources described in the proclamation (Appendix A), while providing opportunities for public access, education, and appreciation of these values. The following section describes the elements of the proposed management plan for each resource, including DFC and relevant management actions.

#### 2.6.1.1 Special Designations

##### Wild and Scenic River Eligibility

Analysis of eligibility of tributary streams to the Agua Fria River within the Agua Fria National Monument determined that the streams shown on Map 2-27 are eligible for consideration as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. From north to south, these eight streams include Ash Creek/Little Ash Creek, Sycamore Creek, Indian Creek, Silver Creek, Bishop Creek, Tank Creek, Lousy Canyon/Creek and Larry Creek.

Following the guidance in BLM Manual 8351, *Wild and Scenic Rivers—Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management*, staff evaluated the identified stream segments for free-flowing character and the presence of at least one “outstandingly remarkable” value.

“Free-flowing” is defined by Section 16(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as “existing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway.” Streams with intermittent flows may be eligible. According to BLM Manual 8351.31B, the existence of minor dams or diversion structures shall not by themselves render a river ineligible. The eligible streams in the monument are free-flowing. A small, low concrete dam exists in Silver Creek. It creates a pool from which a pipeline diverts water to Horseshoe Ranch, which claims a water right dating to 1875. Nevertheless, water can flow around this structure, and Silver Creek is determined to be free-flowing.

The eligible streams possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values. Outstandingly remarkable scenic values are characterized by notable or exemplary visual features of landforms, water, color, and related factors. Outstandingly remarkable values for fish and wildlife are characterized by the presence of exceptionally high quality habitat, especially for native fish and populations of state sensitive,

federally listed, or candidate threatened and endangered species. Outstandingly remarkable cultural values are characterized by rare or unusual prehistoric sites, or sites that may have national or regional importance for interpreting prehistory.

The Audubon Society has designated the Agua Fria River and these eight tributaries as an Important Bird Area (IBA). IBA's are sites that provide essential habitat for species of conservation concern, which may include breeding, wintering, or migrating birds. The yellow-billed cuckoo, a candidate species, is among the bird species in the Agua Fria IBA.

Ash Creek is the only perennial stream, even during drought conditions. Ash Creek and Little Ash Creek have outstandingly remarkable wildlife values, represented by riparian vegetation and the Agua Fria IBA. Sycamore Creek has similar values.

Indian Creek has outstanding wildlife values, represented by the Agua Fria IBA. The segment between Red Rock Gulch and the national forest boundary is designated critical habitat for endangered Gila chub, a native fish species.

Silver Creek has outstanding wildlife values, including the Agua Fria IBA and critical habitat for endangered Gila chub. It is also characterized by outstanding scenic values of Silver Creek Canyon, as well as outstanding cultural values of Pueblo la Plata and associated prehistoric sites within the Perry Mesa National Register District.

Bishop Creek is characterized by outstanding wildlife values associated with the Agua Fria IBA. It also has outstanding scenic values of Baby Canyon, as well as outstanding cultural values of Baby Canyon Pueblo, widespread petroglyph sites, and other sites within the Perry Mesa District.

Tank Creek has outstanding wildlife values within the Agua Fria IBA and outstanding scenic values of Perry Tank Canyon. Its outstanding cultural values include Pueblo Pato, widespread

rock art, and other prehistoric sites within the Perry Mesa District.

Lousy Creek is part of the Agua Fria IBA and its outstanding wildlife values include critical habitat for endangered Gila chub. It is also an introduction site for other species of native fish. Lousy Creek has outstanding scenic and cultural values associated with Lousy Canyon.

Larry Creek has outstanding wildlife values, as part of the Agua Fria IBA, and it is an introduction site for native fish species. A tributary is critical habitat for endangered Gila chub. Larry Canyon also has outstanding scenic values.

In addition to evaluations of free-flowing condition and outstandingly remarkable values, eligibility determinations involve tentative classifications of stream segments as wild, scenic, or recreational areas. Classification reflects the type and degree of human developments associated with the river and adjacent lands as they exist at the time of evaluation. Wild river areas are defined as free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with shorelines essentially primitive and undeveloped. Scenic river areas have similar qualities but may be accessible in places by roads. Recreational river areas typically are more developed than are the areas within the monument.

As shown on Map 2-72, the following tentative classifications are assigned to the Agua Fria tributaries. The numbers of miles indicate the length of stream segments, which are limited to areas on BLM-administered lands within the monument.

- Ash Creek: scenic, 1.1 miles along Ash Creek and 2.7 miles along Little Ash Creek.
- Sycamore Creek: scenic, 3.3 miles.
- Indian Creek: scenic, 5.6 miles.
- Silver Creek: scenic, 4.9 miles.
- Bishop Creek: wild, 5.2 miles, south of Bloody Basin Road; scenic, 1.7 miles

from Bloody Basin Road to the national forest boundary.

- Tank Creek: wild, 3.4 miles.
- Lousy Creek: wild, 5.0 miles.
- Larry Creek and tributaries: wild, 3.4 miles.

The next step before making recommendations to Congress concerning designation of particular water courses is a suitability analysis.

Suitability determinations involve a more detailed, comprehensive analysis of a wider range of factors, based on the BLM Wild and Scenic Rivers Manual 8351. Suitability determinations will be conducted in the future as funding becomes available. Congress makes the final decisions regarding river designations and classification of streams as wild, scenic, or recreational. Regardless of whether these streams are ultimately determined as suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation, the BLM will continue to preserve their free-flowing condition and protect their outstandingly remarkable scenic, cultural, and fish and wildlife values in accordance with the Monument Proclamation and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Tributary streams of the Agua Fria River, which are determined eligible for study as potential additions to the national Wild and Scenic Rivers System, are maintained in free-flowing condition and managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable scenic, wildlife, and cultural resource values.

### ***Management Actions***

In accordance with BLM Manual 8351, when a river segment is determined eligible and given a tentative classification, its identified outstandingly remarkable values shall be afforded adequate protection, subject to valid existing rights, until the eligibility determination is superseded (i.e., the segment is determined not suitable for designation, or Congress makes a decision regarding designation). Authorized uses shall not be allowed to adversely affect

either eligibility or the tentative classification, i.e., actions that would change a classification from wild to scenic).

If one or more stream segments were eventually found non-suitable for designation, those streams would be managed according to the Monument Proclamation and the allocated recreation settings and other resource allocations. The monument values that would be protected include the outstanding biological and cultural resource values that define the eligibility of these streams for consideration under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Management actions shall apply to areas within ¼ mile on either side of each eligible stream.

Maintain the free-flowing characteristics of eligible streams by prohibiting new stream impoundments, diversions, channelizations, or rip-rapping to the extent the BLM is authorized under law.

Implement actions to monitor and protect outstanding wildlife habitat, native fish species, other sensitive species, and cultural resources. Relevant management actions are described in Sections 2.6.1.3, 2.6.1.8, 2.7.1.1, 2.7.1.4, 2.7.1.5, 2.7.2.4, and 2.7.2.5.

Implement actions to protect outstanding scenic qualities in accordance with visual resource management objectives. Management actions are described in Sections 2.6.1.7, 2.7.1.8, and 2.7.2.8.

Implement proposed route closures, shown on Map 2-76, to help protect outstandingly remarkable values along Ash, Sycamore, Silver, Bishop, and Lousy Creeks. Prohibit new vehicle routes in areas managed as wild segments.

Continue to work with partners, such as the Audubon Society and the Arizona Site Stewards, to monitor, inventory, and protect outstandingly remarkable river values.

### *Administrative Actions*

The BLM will evaluate the suitability of each eligible river segment for inclusion in the national Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The public will have opportunities to comment on the proposed suitability determinations. Suitability evaluations will be completed within four years after the Record of Decision for the RMP is signed.

### **2.6.1.2 Lands and Realty**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Utility and Transportation Corridors

#### *Desired Future Condition*

To continue to maintain utility and transportation connectivity along an important north-south route from the greater Phoenix area to suppliers to the north, while protecting the resources described in the National Monument Proclamation (Appendix A).

#### *Management Actions*

Narrow the existing utility corridor (designated by the Phoenix RMP [BLM 1988a] in the Black Canyon RCA), so that the utility corridor's eastern boundary follows the easternmost boundaries of any existing rights-of-way that are within the corridor identified in the Phoenix RMP. This corridor is also modified on the west side, and is further described in the Lands and Realty discussion under the Black Canyon Management Unit section of *Alternative E*.

### **2.6.1.3 Biological Resources**

Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area

### *Land Use Allocations*

Pronghorn Fawning Habitat Wildlife Habitat Area (16,810 acres) Map 2-73.

Pronghorn Movement Corridor Wildlife Habitat Area (22,520 acres) Map 2-73.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Manage habitat to avoid fragmentation and provide conditions that promote natural movement and fawning behavior of pronghorn.

Restore and maintain habitat of suitable quality and quantity to promote long-term sustainability of a viable pronghorn population in the national monument.

#### *Management Actions*

To ensure achievement of DFC, limit or suitably mitigate vehicle routes that:

- cross known pronghorn movement corridors and
- have a type and volume of use that modifies pronghorn behavior in ways that fragment their habitat or adversely affect fawning.

Implement seasonal restrictions or closures when vehicle use degrades habitat values.

Apply prescribed fire and fuels management projects to improve habitat for pronghorn fawning and movement

Fence construction and maintenance will follow guidance provided in BLM's Handbook for Fencing H-1741.

Limit or suitably mitigate new recreation site developments in pronghorn movement corridors to avoid disturbing pronghorn movement.

Close pronghorn fawning areas to Special Recreation Permit activities between April 1 and June 1 annually.

Maintenance of wildlife habitat will be given management priority in resolving resource conflicts.

Additional management guidance is described in the Biological Resources discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas and the Biological Resources discussion of Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument sections of Chapter 2.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Conduct site-specific studies to determine pronghorn fawning habitat quality and potential. Base implementation actions on the data acquired.

Following guidance in BLM's Handbook H-1741, construction and modification of fences to meet fence standards will include coordination with livestock operators, interested conservation organizations, and other Federal, State, or local governments as appropriate.

### **2.6.1.4 Cultural Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocations*

SCRMA's are shown on Map 2-73.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Cultural resources are being used to enhance scientific and public knowledge and understanding of the monument region during prehistoric and historic periods, while at the same time they are being preserved for future generations as well. Partnerships and volunteers are utilized to support these objectives and management actions. Selected sites are allocated to public use and interpreted to further public knowledge, enjoyment, and stewardship of cultural heritage values.

#### *Management Actions*

Sites described below, allocated to High and Moderate public use would be developed consistent with discussion in Section 2.7.1.5, Cultural Resources, of the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument. Interpretive development would be focused on the sites listed below, leaving the majority of the areas within each SCRMA's undeveloped.

#### High Use SCRMA (2,056 acres)

Sites allocated to public use within this SCRMA are:

- Pueblo la Plata and Fort Silver (Pueblo la Plata complex) north of Bloody Basin Road on Perry Mesa.
- Historic Teskey homestead near the Agua Fria River.

#### Moderate Use SCRMA (8,100 acres)

Sites allocated to public use within this SCRMA are:

- Baby Canyon Pueblo and Pueblo Pato on Perry Mesa.
- Badger Springs rock art and the Arrastre Creek site on Black Mesa.
- Prehistoric sites on the south rim of Black Mesa.
- Rollie Site (AZ N:16:231(ASM)) near Sunset Point on Black Mesa.

#### Low Use area (60,750 acres BLM)

All remaining areas outside the two SCRMA's would be excluded from on-the-ground interpretive development or commercial tours. No sites would be allocated to public use in these areas.

### **2.6.1.5 Recreation Resources**

*Alternative E* would allocate the entire national monument to a Special Recreation Management Area with three Recreation Management Zones

within it. These zones include a Back Country RMZ of 57,650 acres to manage and maintain the natural landscape character (Map 2-74). A Passage RMZ of 1,350 acres would be allocated 100 feet from the centerline of designated routes that pass through or enter into the Back Country RMZ, to manage vehicle-based visitation. The remainder of the monument would be allocated as a Front Country RMZ of 11,900 acres, where management would focus more on recreation and interpretive opportunities. General descriptions of the Front Country, Back Country, and Passage RMZs, including DFCs common to all Alternatives, appear in the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument section of Chapter 2 under the discussion of Recreation and Public Access.

Appendix S, Benefits-Based Recreation, contains detailed descriptions of recreation settings in each RMZ. In accordance with BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C, this information addresses management objectives for the specific recreation opportunities to be produced and the outcomes to be attained (activities, experiences, and benefits). Also included are prescriptions for facilitating the attainment of beneficial outcomes and an activity planning framework that addresses management, marketing, and monitoring actions needed to achieve management objectives and setting prescriptions.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Front Country Recreation Management Zone (11,900 acres).

### ***Desired Future Condition***

The DFC for the Front Country RMZ is described in Section 2.7.2.7 of the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument section of this chapter. In addition, the Front Country RMZ would also:

- recognize that people are part of the ecosystem,
- allow visitors to responsibly interact with the resources,

- offer people with physical limitations a way to enjoy the monument while still maintaining the integrity of the resources and landscape characteristics, and
- give the public sustainable recreation/tourism opportunities while protecting the integrity of the monument's cultural sites and other resources.

### ***Management Actions***

VRM Allocations to achieve the Desired Future Conditions of this Recreation Management Zone are described in Section 2.6.1.7.

Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) and Concessions:

- Require groups of 25 or more to obtain an SRP.
- Rather than defining a maximum allowable number of SRPs, the BLM will review permit applications on a case-by-case basis taking into account the following considerations. Permit numbers will be determined and may be increased or decreased through adaptive management, which is described in Section 2.7.2.7.
- Prohibit competitive motorized or mechanized races, and consider other competitive events on a case-by-case basis as long as they do not conflict with achievement of all resource DFCs for the location.
- Issue SRPs for vending operations for a permitted SRP activity or event in the monument or recreation site. Vending for permitted activities or events might be included with the SRP for the permitted activity or event if the permittee is responsible for the vending operations. If not, a separate SRP for vending would be required. Consider vending if the service or goods for sale directly enhance the recreation experience and cannot be adequately provided by the closest local

community. BLM would not authorize permanent structures.

- Issue recreation concession leases to enhance visitor use, visitor services, and visitor safety and enjoyment if leases are consistent with resource DFCs and monument objectives. Consider concessions on a case-by-case basis and base determinations on consistency with management objectives and a clearly, demonstrated need.
- Close pronghorn fawning areas to SRP activities between April 1 and June 1 annually.

#### Dispersed Camping:

- Require a free permit for camping. Camping permits could be limited in number if resource damage occurs that conflicts with achieving resource DFCs or threatens resources protected by the proclamation, or if health and safety issues emerge. If damage continues, more limitations might be required, including temporary or permanent area closures, limiting camping to designated sites, or seasonal limitations or closures.
- Allow dispersed camping only in existing disturbed areas or at existing campsites, accessed by designated routes.
- Prohibit camping within a 200-foot radius (70 adult paces) of developed facilities, such as trails, kiosks, entrance signs, signed archeological sites, parking areas, and riparian and water source areas.
- Make management adjustments that respond to recent ecological research and data results (for example, using data from outdoor recreation research on human effects to natural and biological resources).
- Camping would be prohibited within ¼ mile from water sources "...containing water in such a place that wildlife or domestic stock will be denied access to the only reasonably available water

(Arizona Revised Statute 17-308, Unlawful Camping).

- The authorized officer may designate or close camping areas as needed to maintain, protect, or enhance resources.

#### Developed Campgrounds:

- None.

#### Campfires:

- Prohibit campfires within 1/4 mile of intensive and moderate public use archaeological sites.
- Prohibit campfires within a 200-foot radius of developed facilities, such as trails, kiosks, entrance signs, parking areas, archaeological sites including petroglyphs (rock art) sites, and riparian and water source areas.
- Limit firewood collection to campfire use only. Allow collection of dead, down, and detached material for campfire firewood. Monitor vegetation use and disturbance and temporarily or permanently suspend such use to prevent resource damage.

#### Recreational Target Shooting:

- Prohibit recreational target shooting throughout the monument.

#### Trail Construction for Non-motorized Recreation Use

Discussion of trail development can be found in Travel Management Section 2.6.1.9.

#### Badger Springs Area Management Actions:

- Enhance the entrance to Badger Springs, which may include rerouting, reclaiming, and recontouring routes.
- Enhance the Badger Springs Wash Trail complex, which might include redesigning, rerouting, reclaiming, and

recontouring the parking area, trailhead, and trails.

- At or near the trailhead provide visitor amenities, which may include rest and shade areas, restrooms, equestrian parking and supports, and interpretive and directional signs.
- Close to livestock grazing the area encompassing recreation facilities at the Badger Springs Wash trailhead.
- Consider pronghorn movement and habitat needs in any development in the Badger Springs area.
- Provide for route maintenance to reduce erosion and maintain routes to provide for public safety.

#### Cordes Lakes Area Management Actions:

- Fence the Cordes Lakes Area (T. 11 N, R. 3 E., Section 20) near the Agua Fria River to prevent motorized access and provide for safe vehicle parking.
- Provide access points for walk-in and universal access.
- Provide visitor amenities, which may include picnic tables, rest areas, shade facilities, directional signs, and interpretive and visitor information opportunities.

Bloody Basin Road Entrance (just beyond the existing kiosk)

- Reclaim and landscape west entrance on the southeast side for desert vegetation.

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Back Country Recreation Management Zone (57,650 acres).

#### *Desired Future Condition*

The DFC for the Back Country RMZ is described in Section 2.7.2.7 of the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument section of Chapter 2.

#### *Management Actions*

VRM Allocations to achieve the Desired Future Conditions of this Recreation Management Zone are described in Section 2.6.1.7.

Maintain river crossings at Kelton Ranch, EZ Ranch, Horseshoe Ranch, and Cross Y Ranch.

#### SRPs and Concessions:

- Require an SRP for groups of 25 or more.
- Rather than defining a maximum allowable number of SRPs, the BLM will review permit applications on a case-by-case basis taking into account the following considerations. Permit numbers will be determined and may be increased or decreased through adaptive management, which is described in Section 2.7.2.7.
- Authorize no competitive motorized or mechanized races. Consider other competitive events on a case-by-case basis on how they conform to the proclamation of the monument.
- Issue SRPs for vending operations if for permitted events on the monument or recreation site. Include with the SRP vending for permitted events if the permittee is responsible for the vending operations. If not, require a separate SRP for vending. Consider vending at recreation sites if the service or goods for sale directly enhances the recreation experience and cannot be adequately provided by the closest local community. Prohibit permanent structures.
- Issue recreation concession leases to enhance visitor use, visitor services, and visitor safety and enjoyment, if these leases conform to monument values and objectives. Consider concessions on a case-by-case basis and base determinations on consistency with management objectives and a clearly, demonstrated need.

- Close pronghorn fawning areas to SRP activities between April 1 and June 1 annually.

#### Dispersed Camping:

- Allow dispersed tent camping with free permits. Camping permits could be limited in number if resource damage occurs that conflicts with achieving resource DFCs or threatens resources protected by proclamation, or if health and safety issues emerge. If damage continues, more limitations might be required, including temporary or permanent area closures, limiting camping to designated sites, or seasonal limitations or closures.
- Prohibit motorized campers/units in the back country since vehicles are not allowed off-road.
- Make management adjustments that respond to recent research and data results.
- Camping would be prohibited within ¼ mile from water sources "...containing water in such a place that wildlife or domestic stock will be denied access to the only reasonably available water (Arizona Revised Statute 17-308, Unlawful Camping).
- The authorized officer may designate or close camping areas as needed to maintain, protect, or enhance resources.

#### Developed Campgrounds:

- None.

#### Campfires:

- Limit firewood collection to campfire use only. Allow collection of dead, down, and detached material for campfire firewood. Monitor vegetation use and disturbance and temporarily or permanently suspend use to prevent resource damage.
- Prohibit campfires within a 200-foot radius of petroglyphs (rock art),

archaeological sites such as pueblos, and riparian and water sources.

#### Recreational Target Shooting:

- Prohibit recreational target shooting throughout the monument.

#### Trail Construction for Non-motorized Recreation Use

Discussion of recreation trail development can be found in the Travel Management Section 2.6.1.9.

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Passage Recreation Management Zone (1,350 acres)

#### *Desired Future Condition*

This Passage RMZ consists of a 200-foot-wide corridor (100 feet on each side of centerline) along all designated vehicle routes passing through the Back Country RMZ. The DFC for the Passage RMZ is described in Section 2.7.2.7 of the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument section of Chapter 2.

#### *Management Actions*

VRM Allocations to achieve the Desired Future Conditions of this Recreation Management Zone are described in Section 2.6.1.7.

#### SRP and Concessions:

- Require a SRP for groups of 25 or more.
- Rather than defining a maximum allowable number of SRPs, the BLM will review permit applications on a case-by-case basis taking into account the following considerations. Permit numbers will be determined and may be increased or decreased through adaptive

management, which is described in Section 2.7.2.7.

- Authorize no competitive motorized or mechanized races. Consider other competitive events on a case-by-case basis depending on how they conform to monument values.
- Issue SRPs for vending operations if for a permitted event on the monument or recreation site. Include vending for permitted events with the SRP for the permitted event if the permittee is responsible for the vending operations. If not, require a separate SRP for the vending. Consider vending at recreation sites if the service or goods for sale directly enhance the recreation experience and cannot be adequately provided by the closest local community. Prohibit permanent structures.
- Enter into recreation concession leases to enhance visitor use, visitor services, and visitor safety and enjoyment, if these leases conform to monument values and objectives. Consider concessions on a case-by-case basis and base determinations on consistency with management objectives and a clearly demonstrated need.
- Close pronghorn fawning areas to SRP activities between April 1 and June 1 annually.

#### Dispersed Camping:

- Allow dispersed camping with a free permit. Camping permits could be limited in number if resource damage occurs that conflicts with achieving resource DFCs or threatens resources protected by proclamation, or if health and safety issues emerge. If damage continues, more limitations might be required, including temporary or permanent area closures, limiting camping to designated sites, or seasonal limitations or closures.
- Allow dispersed camping only in existing disturbed areas or in existing

campsites, accessed by designated routes.

- Prohibit camping within a 200-foot radius (70 adult paces) of developed facilities, such as trails, kiosks, entrance signs, signed archeological sites, parking areas, and riparian and water sources.
- Camping would be prohibited within ¼ mile from water sources "...containing water in such a place that wildlife or domestic stock will be denied access to the only reasonably available water (Arizona Revised Statute 17-308, Unlawful Camping).
- Issue with each free permit, monument-specific Leave No Trace/Tread Lightly information to minimize impacts to resources and prevent pollution to desert water resources.
- Make management adjustments that respond to recent research and data results.
- The authorized officer may designate and close camping areas, as needed, to maintain, protect, or enhance resources.

#### Developed Campgrounds:

- None.

#### Campfires:

- Allow campfires in existing disturbed areas.
- Prohibit campfires within 1/4 mile of archaeological sites managed for High or Moderate public use.
- Prohibit campfires within a 200-foot radius of developed facilities, such as trails, kiosks, entrance signs, parking areas, archaeological--including rock art--sites, and riparian and water sources.
- Limit firewood collection to campfire use only. Allow collection of dead, down, and detached material for campfire firewood. Monitor vegetation use and disturbance and temporarily or

permanently suspend this use to prevent resource damage.

#### Recreational Target Shooting:

- Prohibit recreational target shooting throughout the Monument.

#### Trail Construction for Non-motorized and Non-mechanized Recreation Use

Discussion of recreation trail development can be found in the Travel Management Section 2.6.1.9.

#### *Administrative Actions*

With free permits for camping within the monument issue specific Leave No Trace/Tread Lightly information to minimize impacts to the resources and prevent pollution to desert water resources.

Monitor dispersed campsites and establishes limits of acceptable change. Base site carrying capacities on the limits of acceptable change.

Adopt measures to increase visitor responsibility for campfire etiquette and to reduce proliferation of campfire rings.

### **2.6.1.6 Wilderness Characteristics**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Within the national monument, 20,900 acres would be allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics as shown on Map 2-74.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

In addition to the DFC and management actions in the Wilderness Characteristics discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter, the following DFC also applies:

Lands within the monument allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics contain outstanding opportunities for solitude and naturalness. Maintain these characteristics and provide opportunities for unconfined primitive recreation, adventure, and discovery. Important wildlife populations and habitat are also within these lands and they are recognized as an important component of the naturalness and will be actively managed.

#### *Management Actions*

Evaluate non-motorized trails between Bull Tank and Baby Canyon, between Badger Springs/Agua Fria confluence and Pueblo Pato, and in other areas if needed, to enhance resource protection by providing planned and accessible paths between major access points and interpretive sites.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.1.7.

Authorize no new rights-of-way.

### **2.6.1.7 Visual Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocations*

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75.

Within the Agua Fria National Monument, allocate:

- lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics (20,900 acres) to Class II objectives,
- remaining Back Country Recreation Management Zone and the Passage RMZ to Class II objectives (20,900 acres),
- the Front Country RMZ to VRM Class III (11,900 acres), and

- the utility corridor (which is within the Front Country RMZ) would be allocated to VRM Class III.

### *Desired Future Condition*

Throughout the national monument, regardless of VRM class, the objective is to minimize the visual impacts of authorized activities. To the extent possible, keep night skies free of light pollution.

### *Administrative Actions*

Cooperate with surrounding communities and national, State, regional, and local entities to minimize the impacts of lighting.

Include clear nights from light standards in new permits/authorizations and in renewing permits/authorizations within all the viewsheds affecting the monument.

## **2.6.1.8 Rangeland Management**

### *Land Use Allocations*

BLM would continue to administer the current 11 grazing authorizations on 10 allotments as shown on Map 2-5.

### *Desired Future Condition*

Watersheds are in properly functioning condition, including their upland, riparian, and aquatic components. Soil and plant conditions support infiltration, storage, and release of water that are in balance with climate and landform.

Ecological processes are maintained to support healthy biotic populations and communities.

### *Management Actions*

Limit livestock grazing in riparian areas to the winter season (November 1 to March 1).

Inventory and/or monitoring studies will be used to determine if adjustments to permitted use

levels, terms and conditions and management practices are necessary in order to meet and/or make significant progress towards meeting the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and other Land Use Plan Objectives.

Fence construction and maintenance will follow guidance provided in BLM's handbook on Fencing No. 1741-1.

When lands are devoted to a public purpose that precludes livestock grazing, adjust allotment boundaries to allow for that use.

Remove the immediate area surrounding Badger Springs Wash from the Cordes allotment to provide for developing a visitor parking area, information kiosk, campground, and infrastructure.

## **2.6.1.9 Travel Management**

### *Land Use Allocation*

The entire monument is allocated as Limited to Designated routes (Map 2-16).

### *Management Actions*

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. Cross-country motorized travel is prohibited except in the case of an emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Although OHVs are manufactured to travel off regularly maintained roads or travel cross-country where no roads exist, OHVs throughout his planning area are restricted to designated roads. A back country zone is defined as: Areas with undeveloped, primitive, and self-directed visitor experiences without provisions for motorized or mechanized access, except for designated routes.

On the Bloody Basin Road provide a vehicle route accessible by high-clearance vehicles where views of the monument and interpretation of monument resources create a better understanding of the resources being protected. Along the central-monument travel route create a comprehensive visitor experience that is both

sensitive to monument resources and provides a high-quality visitor experience which would:

- Maintain at BLM Maintenance Intensity standard of Level 3 ‘Medium’ (BLM Roads and Trails Terminology Report), passable by high-clearance vehicles.
- Maintain the existing roaded-natural and rural settings ½ mile to either side of the road's centerline.
- Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.1.7.
- Secure easements and rights-of-way where needed to ensure long-term public access.

Interpret monument features along the route, including the following:

- prehistoric cultural features and
- historic homesteads, settlements, and ranching history, and other natural and cultural features.

Install directional, safety, and interpretive signs to enhance public use, enjoyment, and stewardship of the route.

Mitigate impacts to wildlife movement to ensure achievement of the DFC.

### **Within Front Country**

Trail Construction for Non-motorized and Non-mechanized Recreation Use:

- Develop trails as needed to protect monument's resources and improve interpretive opportunities.
- Ensure that all construction is compatible for social and managerial settings, see Section 2.6.1.5.
- Design trails to blend into the environment.
- Build loop, connector, and linear trails, depending on recreation, access, interpretation, education, and resource objectives.

- Build trails to maintain connectivity to recreation opportunities such as equestrian use, hiking, and viewing cultural sites.
- Build trails to link with other connector trails outside the monument.
- Explore opportunities to link networks of trails within the monument to those outside the monument on other BLM's lands, or with the adjacent jurisdictions, where linkages would conform to monument's values and would not impair protecting monument resources.
- Place priority for trail development on archaeological sites developed for interpretive use and visitation.
- Build other trails for visitor access and enjoyment of the monument's resources, including the following: self-guided nature and cultural resource trails; trails to interpretive sites not accessible by vehicle; or longer trails linking multiple sites for day or multiple-day trips.
- Where deemed necessary to achieve Desired Future Conditions, roads or trails may be closed and reclaimed to a natural state.

Route Construction for Motorized Use:

- Relocate segments of routes when needed to reduce resource damage and help protect the monument's resources.
- Allow relocation of routes for access to public lands around privately owned parcels (inholdings), if needed to meet administrative or public needs.
- All construction would be compatible with Desired Future Conditions for the construction area.
- Design construction to blend into the environment.
- Where deemed necessary to achieve Desired Future Conditions, roads or trails may be closed and reclaimed to a natural state.

Public Access

- All vehicles would be limited to designated routes consistent with the discussion in the Travel Management Section 2.7.2.10. All public vehicle travel is restricted to designated routes.
- Require emergency vehicles, including air support, to use designated routes whenever possible and practical.
- Set speed limits for OHV use to provide for visitor safety and to minimize visitor conflicts.
- Maintain safe public access, which may include the following: designing and installing needed improvements at low-water crossings, installing vehicle control guards, and enforcing traffic laws and other applicable regulations for visitor safety.

### **Within Back Country**

Trail Construction for non-motorized and non-mechanized recreation use:

- Build nonintrusive trails to allow visitors to access areas of interest, to enhance recreation experiences, and to protect monument's values. Trail design could vary from built, engineered routes to trails marked only with fiberglass posts without any construction.
- Do not allow trails or trail construction to degrade monument resources.
- Design trails to blend into the environment.
- Keep trails compatible with social and managerial settings and manage them to meet VRM II objectives.
- Where deemed necessary to achieve Desired Future Conditions, roads or trails may be closed and reclaimed to a natural state.

Route Construction for Motorized Use:

- Routes open for administrative use will be maintained as needed to provide for the use.

- Allow emergency route construction to maintain access for permitted operations and administrative purposes within the Back Country RMZ. No other construction would be allowed unless necessary to meet DFCs.

### **Off-Highway Vehicles**

- Prohibit OHV travel in the Back Country RMZ.
- Permit emergency response vehicles, including aircraft landing, in the Back Country RMZ. If practical, these vehicles should use existing routes or areas void of vegetation and cultural resources.
- Non-emergency administrative use of vehicles may be allowed in the Back Country on missions pre-approved by the BLM's field manager. If practical, these vehicles should use existing routes or areas void of vegetation and cultural resources.

### **Within Passage**

Trail Construction for Non-motorized and Non-mechanized Recreation Use:

- Same as for Front Country RMZ.

Route Construction for Motorized Use:

- Relocate segments of existing routes to reduce resource damage and to help protect monument's resources.
- All construction would be compatible with Desired Future Conditions for the construction area.
- Design construction to blend into the environment.
- Where deemed necessary to achieve Desired Future Conditions, roads or trails may be closed and reclaimed to a natural state.

### **Off-Highway Vehicles**

- All vehicles would be limited to designated routes consistent with the discussion in the Travel Management Section 2.7.2.10.
- Allow continued vehicular access (both motorized and non-motorized mechanized) along designated vehicle routes. Do not upgrade routes but maintain them for access at current levels, speeds, and types. In some cases, conduct route maintenance to purposely limit vehicular type or speed. For example, a route may be purposely maintained in a primitive condition to discourage ATVs or four-wheel drive vehicles from traveling at speeds exceeding 25 to 30 miles per hour.
- Ensure that emergency vehicles, including air support, use designated routes whenever possible and practical. When not possible or practical, emergency vehicles should, as much as possible, minimize disturbance of vegetation and the risk to monument resources by using existing openings and disturbed areas.
- Establish speed limits for OHV use to provide for visitor safety and to minimize visitor conflicts.
- Maintain access and provide for visitor safety.
- 25 miles of tertiary roads are closed to public use, yet administrative use will be permitted as necessary; and
- 52 miles of roads would be closed to all uses and be restored or allowed to naturally reclaim.

Please see Map 2-76 for route decisions. Routes designated in the monument are shown below.

**Open Designated Routes** 94 miles

**Closed Routes** 52 miles

**Administrative Routes** 25 miles

**New Routes** 0 miles

Appendix W provides detailed information on the basis for decisions on proposed route designations. It includes a Route Designation Summary Table that gives a brief summary of the rationale for each route decision, along with the corresponding number assigned by the BLM to each road and trail.

## 2.6.2 Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area

BLM has developed *Alternative E* as the proposed management plan for the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. The land use allocations and management actions under this *Alternative* would best facilitate responsible use of resources within the planning area, while continuing to protect fragile resources. *Alternative E* proposes six MUs (Map 2-77).

### 2.6.2.1 Management Applicable to the Entire Bradshaw-Harquahala under this Alternative

The following section presents management actions for *Alternative E* that apply throughout the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area (i.e. they are not specific to any MU).

### Implementation Actions

#### Public Access

The designated route network within the national monument would include the following:

- 25 miles of secondary roads, accessible in good weather by two-wheel-drive vehicles;
- 69 miles of tertiary roads, accessible mainly by four-wheel drive, ATVs and motorcycles or, in some areas, high-clearance, two-wheel drive vehicles;

### 2.6.2.1.1 Lands and Realty

#### Land Tenure Adjustments

*Alternative E* proposes 39,395 acres of the lands within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area as potentially suitable for disposal. Of these, 29,870 acres are potentially available for sale or disposal under any authority, and 9,525 acres would be available only through exchange. The lands include scattered parcels outside the planning area and others as shown in Map 2-78. Criteria limiting which lands might be selected as suitable for disposal are described in Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter in the discussion under Lands and Realty.

Lands considered for potential acquisition would include State and private lands (willing seller) within the planning area and would be in accordance with resource management prescriptions in this land use plan. These lands would meet the criteria described under Lands and Realty in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter, as well as program objectives reflected in *Alternative E*.

#### Utility and Transportation Corridors

New utility corridors within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area (Map 2-79) would be designated for future expected demands. These designations respond to the demand for the intensifying the power grid and conform to the utility regulations of the Arizona Corporation Commission.

To accommodate recent and future development needs, the Bradshaw-Harquahala Land Use Plan will designate two transportation corridors: the Wickenburg Bypass and the Canamex Corridor. No existing state highway system routes (Interstate, U.S. routes, and Arizona State routes) would be designated as transportation corridors. The existing highway system routes, as they pertain to public lands, have been issued right-of-ways, and will remain issued under a right-of-way.

In the newly designated transportation corridors, other uses would be allowed when the uses are compatible.

#### *Management Actions*

- The Wickenburg Bypass and the Canamex Corridor will be identified and designated as transportation corridors within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Land Use Planning Process.
- Co-locate other compatible uses within the designated transportation corridors, unless doing so would negatively impact the transportation corridors.

### 2.6.2.1.2 Rangeland Management

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Authorize 93 grazing authorizations within the grazing allotment boundaries shown on Map 2-21.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Watersheds are in properly functioning condition, including their upland, riparian, and aquatic components. Soil and plant conditions support infiltration, storage, and release of water that are in balance with climate and landform.

Ecological processes are maintained to support healthy biotic populations and communities.

#### *Management Actions*

Implement grazing management changes as needed to produce riparian areas that are in or are making progress toward proper functioning condition. Base grazing management changes on allotment evaluations, which analyze compliance with the Land Health Standards and the Guidelines for Grazing Administration described in the Rangeland Management discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this

chapter. Changes could include, but may not be limited to; seasonal grazing, grazing rotation, or no grazing.

Build livestock control fences and alternative water sources where needed to meet natural resource objectives. Fence construction and maintenance will follow guidance provided in BLM's handbook on Fencing No. 1741-1.

### **2.6.2.1.3 Mineral Resources Management**

#### **Leasable Minerals**

Open all lands for mineral and geothermal leasing and exploration except lands with existing segregations or withdrawals. Map 2-80 shows the leasable mineral allocations.

Open lands reconveyed to the Federal Government to mineral and geothermal leasing, and exploration.

Issue lease applications, with needed restrictions, to protect important resources. Include stipulations based on interdisciplinary review of individual proposals and environmental analysis.

#### **Saleable Minerals (Mineral Materials)**

The following management actions for saleable minerals are shown on Map 2-81.

Except for legislatively withdrawn areas and other withdrawn and segregated areas, open all public lands within the planning area to mineral material disposal, on a case-by-case basis.

Open lands that have been reconveyed to the Federal Government and managed by BLM to mineral material disposal under applicable laws, except on the floodplain of riparian areas.

#### **Locatable Minerals**

The following management actions for locatable minerals are shown on Map 2-82.

Withdraw Tule Creek ACEC from mineral entry. All other public lands within the planning area would be open to locatable mineral activities except for legislatively withdrawn areas and other withdrawn and segregated areas.

Lands that have been reconveyed to the Federal Government and managed by BLM would be open to location under the mining laws, except within riparian areas.

### **2.6.2.1.4 Travel Management**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

All public lands within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area would be allocated as limited use areas, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes. The Hassayampa River Canyon, Hells Canyon, Harquahala Mountains, Big Horn Mountains and Hummingbird Spring Wildernesses would remain closed to motorized and mechanized uses (Map 2-16).

#### *Desired Future Conditions*

Define, designate, implement, and monitor a comprehensive travel management network affording a range of high-quality and diverse motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. The network would consist of a system of roads, primitive roads, and trails. The travel management network and associated recreation opportunities would be consistent with other resource management objectives and recreation settings for the area.

#### *Management Actions*

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until such time that final route designations are made, motorized and mechanized vehicles are restricted to currently inventoried routes. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

### *Administrative Actions*

BLM requires a standard evaluation process, supported by software and database and that is compatible with GIS functionality. An evaluation process, similar to one described in Appendix D, will be used to establish a designated public access and route system within the Black Canyon Management Unit to support resource objectives consistent with *Alternative E.*

Develop comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plans for the management units and other public lands within the planning area within five years of plan completion. These plans would implement route designations on the public lands.

#### **2.6.2.1.5 Recreation Resources**

Appendix S, Benefits-Based Recreation, contains detailed descriptions of special recreation management areas and recreation settings in each Management Unit of the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. In accordance with BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C, this information addresses management objectives for the specific recreation opportunities to be produced and the outcomes to be attained (activities, experiences, and benefits). Also included are prescriptions for facilitating the attainment of beneficial outcomes and an activity planning framework that addresses management, marketing, and monitoring actions needed to achieve management objectives and setting prescriptions.

Rather than defining a maximum allowable number of Special Recreation Permits within a given Management Unit, the BLM will review permit applications on a case-by-case basis. Permit numbers will be determined and may be increased or decreased through adaptive management, which is described in section 2.7.2.7.

### **2.6.2.2 Management Units**

The following is the list of list of MUs selected for *Alternative E* and the document sections they are discussed in (Map 2-77):

- Black Canyon MU, Section 2.6.2.2.1, Map 2-83.
- Castle Hot Springs MU, Section 2.6.2.2.2, Map 2-84.
- Hassayampa MU, Section 2.6.2.2.3, Map 2-85.
- Harquahala MU, Section 2.6.2.2.4, Map 2-86.
- Harcuvar MU, Section 2.6.2.2.5, Map 2-87.
- Upper Agua Fria River Basin MU, Section 2.6.2.2.6, Map 2-88.

Each MU represents a geographic region and contains a variety of land use allocations, Desired Future Conditions (DFC), and management actions for the allocations. General DFC and management actions can be found in the Management Units discussion of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this chapter.

#### **2.6.2.2.1 Black Canyon Management Unit**

The Black Canyon MU stretches from the southern end of Table Mesa on the south to Cordes Junction on the north. It is bounded by Agua Fria National Monument and Tonto National Forest on the east and the Prescott National Forest on the west (Map 2-83).

The Black Canyon MU contains the following land:

- 68,730 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 12,600 acres of Arizona State land,
- 6,780 acres of private land, and
- 1,100 acres of county parklands in both Maricopa and Yavapai Counties.

### 2.6.2.2.1.1 Special Designations

#### Nomination to National Recreation Trail System

##### Black Canyon Trail

##### *Desired Future Condition*

Provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding urban population to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Black Canyon corridor. A non-motorized National Recreation Trail should be established primarily near urban areas, secondarily within scenic areas, and along historic travel routes of the area. A motorized route will generally parallel the trail to improve administrative access needs and public long distance travel using vehicles.

##### *Management Actions*

Issue a right-of-way for the non-motorized, mechanized use trail of approximately 69 miles, and ancillary trails, and facilities to preserve public access and long-term character of this corridor.

Acquire easements or rights-of-way on non-Federal lands if trail segments or facilities are proposed to be located on any of these lands.

Recognize and accommodate long-term continuation of the trail and facilities in land tenure actions. Retain a 1/4-mile wide corridor (1/8 mile each side of the trail) along the trail and any ancillary facility for a permanent trail location. Ensure public access to the trail and related facilities through easements, rights-of-way, deed restrictions, or other suitable means.

Continue to work with the Black Canyon Trail Coalition and other public groups to build and maintain the trail. Engage motorized vehicle

groups and other interested groups to build and maintain the parallel motorized route.

Develop at least eight trailheads and staging or camping areas near communities and vehicle access points to serve the Black Canyon Trail and adjoining public lands for the following purposes:

- parking,
- unloading of OHVs and horses, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- information signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- water,
- toilets,
- loading ramps, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 5 acres the area of exposed barren soil for each site. Mark or delineate the perimeters with barriers to prevent expansion of the exposed areas. One proposed site is the heavily used site near the intersection of County Road 59 (Crown King Road) and Forest Service Road 684 (Castle Creek Road).

Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 1968 (P.L.90-543).

### 2.6.2.2.1.2 Lands and Realty

#### Land Tenure Adjustments

*Alternative E* proposes no land tenure adjustments for the Black Canyon MU because it proposes no lands for disposal or acquisition.

#### Communication Sites

The MU has one designated communication site, the Black Canyon City communication site,

which would be retained and subject to valid existing rights.

### **Utility and Transportation Corridors**

*Alternative E* adjusts the boundary of the Black Canyon corridor, shown on Map 2-79. The northern portion of the corridor is roughly three miles wide and narrows to approximately 1 mile wide at the Bumblebee Ranch. The eastern boundary of the middle portion of the revised corridor has been shifted to the west to put the majority of the corridor below the rim of Black Mesa, away from the edge of I-17. The southern portion of the revised corridor, from about the Bumblebee Ranch south to Black Canyon City, would remain about one mile wide, with the east boundary following the south-bound lanes of I-17 from near the Sunset Point Rest Area, south to Black Canyon City.

A new corridor southwest of Agua Fria National Monument would be added to extend the Black Canyon utility corridor completely across land south and west of Black Canyon City.

#### **2.6.2.2.1.3 Biological Resources**

No biological allocations would be made within the Black Canyon MU. Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area.

#### **2.6.2.2.1.4 Cultural Resources**

##### *Land Use Allocation*

Black Canyon Corridor SCRMA (49,540 acres BLM). Allocate to public use sites that are easily accessible from the Black Canyon Trail.

##### *Desired Future Condition*

Selected prehistoric and historic sites are interpreted for public education and visitation. Interpretive projects are completed in a manner that monitors and protects sites while allowing for public use. For more information on public use of cultural resources, see Appendix E.

##### *Management Actions*

Build trails to link the following suitable selected sites to the Black Canyon Trail. Local site types potentially suitable for public use include prehistoric hilltop structures, rock art, mining camps, and features of the historic Black Canyon Sheep Driveway.

Develop historic properties for heritage tourism to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

Implement some or all of the following and other actions at selected sites:

- platforms,
- restrooms,
- picnic tables,
- benches,
- trash receptacles,
- signs along routes and trails to direct visitors to interpreted sites,
- hard-surfaced walking trails,
- interpretive signs and register boxes, and
- brochures and related educational materials or programs.

Stabilize, repair, and maintain sites in good condition, as needed. Regularly monitor the condition of sites.

Authorize commercial and noncommercial group tours if they are conducted with protective stipulations in accordance with BLM's regulations and, where required, SRPs.

***Administrative Actions***

Select sites for public use by considering the following:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development,
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails,
- site condition and the feasibility of stabilizing areas or features to withstand visitation,
- visitor safety,
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans,
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

The BLM's recreation program would participate in developing sites for public use.

BLM would cooperate with agencies, tribes, and local communities in supporting heritage tourism programs that benefit local economies. Historic properties for heritage tourism would be developed to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

BLM would continue to work with the Site Steward Program to regularly monitor the condition of sites.

### **2.6.2.2.1.5 Recreation Resources**

***Land Use Allocation***

The entire Management Unit would be allocated to the Black Canyon SRMA (68,730 acres BLM) with the following Recreation Management Zones within it:

- Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ.
- Table Mesa RMZ.

***Desired Future Condition***

Preserve scenic and open space values and provide an array of public opportunities for trail-based recreation within diverse and healthy landscapes.

Provide an assortment of intensively managed, intensively used trail-based motorized and non-motorized recreation uses within the SRMA. Emphasize motorized and non-motorized trail links east and west of I-17, links with Prescott and Tonto National Forests, Lake Pleasant Regional Park, the Castle Hot Springs area, the Great Western Trail, and connections to all communities.

Manage the recreation area to function as an open space gateway into Maricopa County from the north, managed for viewsheds and long-range vistas of valleys, hills, and the Bradshaw Mountains. Connect the Maricopa County Park System with a regional non-motorized trail system between Lake Pleasant Regional Park, the Cave Creek Recreation Area, and the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

Facilitate preserving a scenic open space corridor along I-17 between Yavapai and Maricopa Counties, welcoming visitors to Maricopa County and promoting area tourism.

Maintain recreation settings identified through inventory as shown on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum on Map 3-11, except where otherwise stipulated in prescriptions of other allocations.

Secure more law enforcement and public user group involvement as a high priority to promote environmentally responsible recreation, discourage vandalism, protect the public, and protect the public investment in public lands.

***Management Actions***

Acquire legal public access to public lands through suitable easements, rights-of-way, or other methods.

Develop a comprehensive trail system centered on the Black Canyon Trail. Identify, analyze, build, and designate new single-use and multi-use, hiking, equestrian, and OHV/vehicle routes for hikers, equestrians, mountain bicycles, ATVs, and four-wheel-drive enthusiasts, and linked to other trail systems and communities. Routes would include motorized and non-motorized Wickenburg-Lake Pleasant-Black Canyon City trail corridors and direct links with the Great Western Trail.

Specific activities envisioned in this area include trail development for the following:

- differentiated use (separate motorized and non-motorized travel routes),
- single use (e.g. hiking or ATVs only),
- multi use (vehicles, bicycles, hiking, and equestrian use on a single trail), and
- single-track use (e.g. motorcycles or mountain bicycles only).

Locate, analyze, build and designate single or multiple-use, motorized (OHV) special recreation vehicle areas, loops, routes, and management strategies through interdisciplinary plans, with community and user input.

Locate and develop parking, staging areas and trailheads, as suitable, for the following purposes:

- facilitate responsible use,
- ensure resource protection,
- parking, and
- unloading OHVs and horses.

Limit five acres per site of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeters with barriers to prevent expansion.

Prohibit motorized competitive races in the SRMA.

Minimize visual disturbances to the area's open spaces, vistas, and viewsheds. Co-locate communication towers/facilities on existing powerlines or communication towers, using identified utility corridors whenever possible.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.3.2.2.1.6. Apply visual resource prescriptions for the SRMA or RMZs to all governmental, commercial, and private rights-of-way, easements, and other conveyances.

Pursue legal public access through the Lake Pleasant Regional Park using existing routes to provide access to archaeological and historic sites allocated for public use, or to achieve other resource objectives.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ (8,325 acres)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Complete the Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails alignment from State Highway 74 to State Highway 69, with community and citizen participation. The trails will provide high-quality non-motorized recreation experiences for hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers through the Black Canyon corridor.

Incorporate loops, links, and trailheads for both destination and point-to-point travel into the Black Canyon Trail design. Link the communities of Black Canyon, New River, Anthem, and Phoenix, and eventually develop a connecting trail system to include Lake Pleasant Regional Park and Tonto and Prescott National Forests.

Locate, analyze, build, and designate new trail segments as needed to replace those now used by motorized vehicles. Align these new segments as closely as possible along the historic sheep driveway corridor. Determine exact locations of the trail or any ancillary trails and facilities, in conjunction with; Maricopa and Yavapai County trails committees, communities, equestrian and other user groups, and interested citizens. Citizen working groups will help with

trail and facility alignments, site designation, design, and management.

Evaluate the trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System in order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding urban population and in order to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Black Canyon corridor. A National Recreation Trail should be established primarily, near urban areas, secondarily, within scenic areas and along historic travel routes of the area.

### ***Management Actions***

Issue a right-of-way for the trail and ancillary trails and facilities to preserve public access and long-term character.

Acquire easements or rights-of-way on non-Federal lands if the trail or facilities are proposed for any of these lands.

Recognize and accommodate long-term continuation of the trail and facilities in land tenure actions. Retain a 1/4-mile wide corridor (1/8 mile each side of the trail) along the trail and any ancillary facility for a permanent trail location. Ensure public access to the trail and related facilities through easements, rights-of-way, deed restrictions, or other suitable means.

Develop at least eight trailheads and staging or camping areas near communities; vehicle access points to serve the Black Canyon Trail and adjoining public lands for the following purposes:

- parking,
- unloading of OHVs and horses, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- information signs,
- kiosks,

- picnic tables,
- loading ramps, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 5 acres the area of exposed barren soil for each site. Mark or delineate the perimeters with barriers to prevent expansion. One proposed site identified during planning is the heavily used site near the intersection of County Road 59 (Crown King Road) and Forest Service Road 684 (Castle Creek Road).

Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543).

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Table Mesa RMZ (11,050 acres BLM)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Manage for intensive motorized single and two-track routes and general motorized recreation.

Acceptable dust control and compatibility with neighboring communities and landowners.

Semi-primitive motorized and roaded-natural settings. Users will occasionally be concentrated in developed sites, but recreation use will generally be dispersed.

Facilities to meet the basic needs of visitors and to enhance resource protection. Clear yet non-intrusive signing in most of the RMZ.

### ***Management Actions***

Develop facilities, staging areas, trails, signage, trailheads, and other sites when needed to protect resources, to promote visitor health and safety, or to maintain recreation opportunities.

Develop large (five to ten acres) and small (one-acre) staging areas in the RMZ as needed for the following purposes:

- meet high motorized and non-motorized recreation demand,
- provide for parking,
- unloading of OHVs and horses,
- overnight camping, and
- large special events.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit the total acres of exposed barren soil for the staging area sites to a maximum of 20. Mark or delineate the perimeter of staging areas with barriers to prevent expansion.

Develop at least two small day use areas for up to ten vehicles with trailers for the following purposes:

- parking,
- unloading of OHVs and horses, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramps, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 2 acres the area of exposed barren soil for each site. Mark or delineate the perimeters with barriers to prevent expansion.

Manage recreational target shooting consistent with the "Recreational Target Shooting" guidelines in the Recreation discussion of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this Chapter.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.1.7 (Map 2-75).

### *Administrative Actions*

Engage a diverse group of stakeholders in a collective effort to conserve the scenery, open space, and recreation values of the Black Canyon SRMA. Promote citizen involvement and partnerships as an integral component to the SRMA management. Empower community workgroups to carry out stewardship and resource management activities.

Collaborate with the AGFD, Prescott and Tonto National Forests, Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, Lake Pleasant Regional Park, and land managers of other trails to link to trails on BLM's land.

Complete an OHV designation for all existing and proposed motorized (OHV) routes and non-motorized trails on public land within the Black Canyon SRMA within 2 years of plan approval.

Develop and implement collaborative management partnerships with the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department and the communities to share recreation management of the SRMA areas within Maricopa County.

Collaborative efforts would do the following:

- ensure consistent management between partners,
- enhance the recreation experience of visitors and recreation permit holders,
- maintain open space and provide a natural gateway into Maricopa County, and
- facilitate development of the Maricopa County Regional Trails System Plan.

Develop a long-term Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails master plan within 2 years of plan approval. Define proposed trail alignments, trailheads, linking trails, and other alignments within 1 year of plan approval.

Determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,
- define desired conditions and standards,
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses.

### **2.6.2.2.1.6 Wilderness Characteristics**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Within the Black Canyon Management Unit, 13,490 acres would be allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics as shown on Map 2-89.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Maintain and enhance non-motorized and primitive recreation experiences, tied to open space and natural landscapes. The desired recreation setting is semi-primitive non-motorized. Management retains the area's undeveloped natural desert landscapes and scenic remote character and preserves outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation experiences. Conserve rock cabins, artifacts, petroglyph sites, prehistoric structures, and riparian areas. Manage the motorized segment of the Black Canyon Trail, which crosses this allocation, as a semi-primitive motorized corridor. This trail segment is multi-use, open to both motorized and non-motorized users. Recognize that wildlife populations and habitat are important aspects of the naturalness and actively manage them.

#### *Management Actions*

Manage for a semi-primitive motorized recreation setting along designated routes and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation setting beyond ½ mile from designated routes.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.1.7.

Develop non-motorized trails when such trails are determined to be needed to protect resources, enhance recreation opportunities, or provide links with other trail systems.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Conduct a detailed site-specific inventory to determine the current level of disturbance. From this baseline data, establish standards to maintain proper levels of recreation and landscape disturbance to conserve the DFCs.

### **2.6.2.2.1.7 Visual Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocations*

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75.

Within the Black Canyon Management Unit, allocate:

- Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics to VRM Class II objectives.
- Black Canyon SRMA to VRM Class II objectives, except
  - Table Mesa RMZ to VRM Class III objectives, and a corridor along Interstate 17 near New River to VRM Class IV
  - Utility corridors would be allocated to VRM Class III or IV.

### **2.6.2.2.1.8 Mineral Resource Management**

#### *Management Actions*

Close riparian areas in reconveyed lands to mineral entry, and close riparian areas throughout the MU to mineral material disposal, to preserve riparian values (Map 2-82 and Map 2-81).

### **2.6.2.2.1.9 Travel Management**

The Black Canyon Management Unit would be allocated as a limited use area, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16). Until such time that final route designations are made, motorized and mechanized vehicles are restricted to currently inventoried routes. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

#### ***Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions***

SCRMA's and cultural resource sites allocated to Public Use are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.1.4.

SRMA's and other recreation allocations are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.1.5.

Allocations to maintain wilderness characteristics are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.1.6.

#### ***Management Actions***

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in Chapter 3.

Develop non-motorized and non-mechanized trails when such trails are determined to be necessary to protect resources, enhance recreation opportunities, or provide links with other trail systems within the 13,490 acres allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics as shown on Map 2-83.

Build trails to link the area's cultural sites to the Black Canyon Trail.

Establish the Black Canyon SRMA (68,730 acres BLM), as allocated in the Recreation section of this plan with two Recreation Management Zones: Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ and the Table Mesa RMZ. Complete an OHV designation for all existing and proposed motorized (OHV) routes and non-motorized trails on public land, within the Black Canyon SRMA, within 2 years of plan approval.

Establish the Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ (8,325 acres). Issue a right-of-way for the trails, ancillary trails, and facilities to preserve public access and long-term character. Acquire easements or rights-of-way on non-Federal lands if the trail or facilities are proposed for any of these lands.

Establish the Table Mesa RMZ (11,050 acres BLM). Manage for intensive motorized single and two-track routes and general motorized recreation.

### **2.6.2.2.2 Castle Hot Springs Management Unit**

Castle Hot Springs MU is bounded by State Route 74 (Carefree Highway) on the south, Prescott National Forest on the north, Black Canyon MU on the east, and Hassayampa MU on the west (Map 2-84). The MU contains the following lands:

- 112,430 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 53,730 acres of Arizona State land,
- 32,560 acres of private land,
- 22,870 acres of county park lands in both Maricopa and Yavapai Counties (Lake Pleasant Regional Park), and
- 1,100 acres of Bureau of Reclamation lands outside Lake Pleasant Regional Park.

#### **2.6.2.2.2.1 Special Designations**

Current Special Designations within the Management Unit would be managed consistent

with Management Actions described in Section 2.7.3.2 in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section.

### **Area of Critical Environmental Concern**

#### **Tule Creek ACEC (640 acres)**

##### ***Relevance***

The Tule Creek area contains significant historic and cultural values, including the Fort Tule site, a prehistoric hilltop ruin occupied from A.D. 1100 to 1300, and a home site occupied by miners in the 1920s and 1930s. Tule Creek is an example of rare Sonoran Desert riparian system dominated by emergent vegetation and occupied by the endangered Gila topminnow.

##### ***Importance***

The Fort Tule cultural site was probably used as a significant connection in a regional communication system based on signaling among hilltop sites. Fort Tule's role in the communication system can offer important information on prehistoric social systems during the era it was used.

Tule Creek and its sensitive biological resources are extremely vulnerable to disturbance and degradation from vehicle, mining, and livestock use. Continued protection of Tule Creek is important to the recovery of the endangered Gila topminnow.

##### ***Desired Future Condition***

The integrity of the riparian area, endangered species habitat quality, and cultural resources are maintained and protected from degradation.

##### ***Management Actions***

Close the fenced area to livestock grazing and motor vehicles.

Withdraw the ACEC from mineral entry, and close it to mineral materials disposal and mineral leasing.

Develop an interpretive site for biological and cultural resources.

Continue patrols of archaeological sites with help from Site Steward Volunteers. Where needed, take measures to protect sites such as the following:

- stabilizing structures,
- fencing or closing sensitive sites to public visitation,
- excavating to collect scientific information from threatened sites, and
- taking other actions to be determined by site-specific needs.

Ensure that activities that change the visual landscape conform to the historical setting.

### **2.6.2.2.2 Lands and Realty**

#### **Land Tenure Adjustments**

*Alternative E* proposes no land tenure adjustments for the Castle Hot Springs MU because no lands there have been proposed for disposal or acquisition.

#### **Communication Sites**

The Castle Hot Springs MU has no designated communication sites.

#### **Utility and Transportation Corridors**

No new utility corridors would be designated within this MU.

All State highway system routes would be designated as transportation corridors, including a new 1-mile-wide corridor along SR 74, 1/2 mile on either side of the highway centerline.

Public access would be acquired from Highway 74 to Castle Hot Springs Road through Morgan

City Wash across several Arizona Trust and private land parcels in Township 6 North, Range 1 West, sections 6, 9, 22, and 23; Township 7 North, Range 2 West, sections 2 and 36; and in Township 7 North, Range 1 West, section 31 (Map 2-90).

Select and develop an improved route north of Lake Pleasant to Table Mesa, extending from French Creek Road to Interstate 17, for public safety, administrative, and recreation access.

To ensure long-term public access, secure easements or rights-of-way crossing private or State parcels, when identified. This action would secure motorized legal public access from the Castle Hot Springs community to Interstate 17.

### **2.6.2.2.2.3 Biological Resources**

No allocations would be made for biological resources within Castle Hot Springs MU. Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area.

### **2.6.2.2.2.4 Cultural Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Lake Pleasant/Agua Fria SCRMA (27,240 acres BLM)

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Selected prehistoric and historic sites are interpreted for public education and visitation. Interpretive projects are completed in a manner that monitors and protects sites while allowing for public use. For further information on public use of cultural resources, see Appendix E.

### ***Management Actions***

The following sites north of Lake Pleasant are allocated to public use: Agua Fria Fort and AZ T:4:1 (PC), which are prehistoric hilltop sites, and the historic Humbug hydraulic mining complex.

Select other sites for public use by considering the following:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development,
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails,
- site condition and the feasibility of stabilizing selected areas or features to withstand visitation,
- visitor safety,
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans,
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

Implement a combination of the some or all of following and other actions at selected sites:

- platforms,
- restrooms,
- picnic tables,
- benches,
- trash receptacles,
- signs along routes and trails to direct visitors to interpreted sites,
- hard-surfaced walking trails,
- interpretive signs and register boxes, and
- brochures and related educational materials or programs.

Stabilize, repair, and maintain sites in good condition. Regularly monitor the condition of sites.

Authorize commercial and noncommercial group tours, if they are conducted with

protective stipulations, in accordance with BLM's regulations and, where required, SRPs.

### *Administrative Actions*

Select sites for public use by considering the following:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development,
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails,
- condition of the site and the feasibility of stabilizing selected areas or features to withstand visitation,
- visitor safety,
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans,
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

The BLM recreation program would participate in developing sites for public use.

Cooperate with agencies, tribes, and local communities in supporting heritage tourism programs that benefit local economies. Develop historic properties for heritage tourism to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

BLM continues to work with the Site Steward Program to regularly monitor the condition of sites.

## **2.6.2.2.2.5 Recreation Resources**

### *Land Use Allocation*

The entire Management Unit would be allocated to the Castle Hot Springs SRMA (112,430 acres BLM) containing the following Recreation Management Zones:

- Hieroglyphic Mountains RMZ.
- Sheep Mountain RMZ.
- Baldy Mountain RMZ

### *Desired Future Condition*

Emphasize preserving open space and retaining scenic and visual qualities. Sustain recreation, cultural, and biological assets while recognizing and protecting private property rights. Retain and acquire legal access to public lands.

Management emphasizes a wide range of regional recreation needs, while accomplishing the following:

- maintaining the quality of life for local communities,
- preserving open space and natural landscapes, and
- ensuring resource conservation.

Partnerships and collaborative efforts play a key role in successfully managing this SRMA.

Maintain an array of recreation settings (rural, roaded-natural, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized) and opportunities. Recreation activities include the following:

- intense route-based motorized use,
- permitted recreation events,
- developed facilities,
- developed hiking and equestrian trails, and
- remote semi-primitive wilderness settings with non-motorized recreation opportunities.

Intensively manage all recreation uses with a significant BLM ground presence by using signing, facilities, law enforcement, and volunteers.

Establish over the long term a system of high-quality OHV and hiking trails affording many opportunities for hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, four-wheel drivers, ATVs, and motorcycle enthusiasts.

### ***Management Actions***

Manage recreational target shooting consistent with the "Recreational Target Shooting" guidelines in the Recreation discussion of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this Chapter.

Analyze the feasibility and manageability of establishing parts of the SRMA as a fee-for-use area. The feasibility study would include an analysis to determine if fees are necessary to maintain or enhance the recreation opportunities and conditions of the area. Fees would be used to:

- maintain motorized and non-motorized trails and facilities,
- improve law enforcement, and
- enhance user and community education, stewardship, and volunteer programs.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.2.7 (Map 2-75).

Evaluate and designate all existing and potentially mechanized (OHV), non-mechanized trails and routes on public land in the Castle Hot Springs SRMA within three years of plan approval using a structured process, such as the one described in Appendix D.

Design and develop a comprehensive motorized and non-motorized vehicle route system.

Identify, analyze, build, and designate new single-use and multi-use hiking, equestrian, and OHV/vehicle routes. Network design emphasizes connections that would link them to local trail systems and communities. Routes include a proposed motorized and non-motorized Wickenburg-Lake Pleasant Regional Park-Black Canyon Trail corridor. Planning for this network requires collaboration with the AGFD, Prescott National Forest, Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, and Lake Pleasant Regional Park, to link to trails on BLM's land. Activities

envisioned in this area include trail development for:

- differentiated use (motorized and non-motorized travel),
- single use (e.g. hiking or ATVs only),
- multi-use (vehicles, bicycles, hiking, and equestrian use),
- single-track use (e.g. motorcycles or mountain bicycles only), and
- multi-use trails and foot, bike, and horse trails linking Wickenburg and the Lake Pleasant Regional Park, with other links to Peoria and Phoenix trail systems, and the Black Canyon Trail.

Locate and develop staging areas, trails, signs, trailheads, and other sites when needed for resource protection, visitor health and safety, or maintaining recreation opportunities.

Locate and develop small day-use areas for up to ten vehicles with trailers to provide the following:

- parking,
- unloading OHVs and horses, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signing,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to two acres the area of exposed barren soil for each site. Mark or delineate the perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Confine motorized competitive races to the Hieroglyphic Mountains RMZ.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Hieroglyphic Mountains RMZ (16,510 acres BLM).

***Desired Future Condition***

Manage mainly for intensive camping and OHV use. The area would include motorized single and two-track routes for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events and competitive races.

Emphasize acceptable dust control and compatibility with neighboring communities and landowners.

Maintain semi-primitive motorized and roaded-natural recreation settings with users concentrated in some areas.

Develop facilities with a variety of amenities consistent with the desired recreation setting. Provide nonintrusive directional route signs and user information in the RMZ.

***Management Actions***

Make all designated routes within this zone available for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events and competitive races.

The number of miles of single and two-track motorized routes allocated to motorized competitive races will be determined by trail sustainability and durability along with our ability to reduce environmental issues and social conflicts. A course of routes used for competitive races would optimally provide for an array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Locate at least 20 miles of single and two-track motorized routes to provide a unique array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Limit the number of motorized competitive races to two per year.

Locate and develop the Boulders staging area for the following purposes:

- meeting intense motorized recreation demands,
- parking,
- unloading of OHVs,
- overnight camping, and
- large special-event operations.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- vault toilets,
- campground host facilities, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 25 acres the area of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter to prevent further expansion.

Manage recreational target shooting consistent with the "Recreational Target shooting" guidelines in the Recreation discussion of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this Chapter.

Locate and develop at least one small staging and camping area for up to ten vehicles with trailers for the following purposes:

- parking,
- unloading OHVs, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 5 acres the areas of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter to prevent expansion.

Apply proactive adaptive management to manage potential conflicts with surrounding communities and landowners, and potential

impacts to resources. Mitigation may be needed to reduce these problems. The following are examples of mitigation:

- implementing speed limits on routes to reduce fugitive dust,
- stabilizing soil on routes,
- closing routes for some types of activities,
- imposing stricter noise reduction standards, and
- establishing seasonal or time-of-day use restrictions or both.

Determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,
- define desired conditions and standards, and
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses.

Conduct these assessments with public collaboration involving interested residents, users, and other interested parties.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.7.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Sheep Mountain RMZ (4,270 acres).

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Preserve Sheep Mountain's natural landscape, open-space values, and wildlife habitat.

Maintain a semi-primitive non-motorized recreation setting.

### ***Management Actions***

Close all vehicle routes identified as reclaimed during our route inventory, except those

evaluated to be needed for administrative access to the area.

Prohibit the building of new motorized routes and commercial rights-of-way.

Prohibit discretionary surface-disturbing activities not compatible with achieving the DFC.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Establish a citizen, Government, and organization-based partnership to guide management of the SRMA, including community groups, the City of Peoria, Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, user groups, and other interested parties.

Work closely with law enforcement authorities with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Yavapai County, Maricopa County, City of Peoria, and other agencies with jurisdiction to:

- enhance visitor and resident safety,
- improve resource protection, and
- ensure BLM's compliance with county, State, or Federal environmental laws.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Baldy Mountain RMZ (6,550 acres)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Retain a natural landscape between the Hells Canyon Wilderness and Lake Pleasant Regional Park. This area complements the landscape and recreation opportunities in the regional county park and the entire Castle Hot Springs SRMA. Provide high-quality non-motorized recreation in a region otherwise allocated to motorized recreation. Preserve desert tortoise habitat, sustain riparian areas, and maintain the area's value for use by a wild burro herd. Maintain semi-primitive motorized recreation setting along designated routes. Manage areas beyond ½ mile from a designated route for a semi-primitive non-motorized setting.

***Management Actions***

Limit motorized vehicle use to designated routes.

Develop up to five non-motorized trails and trailheads to link with the Hells Canyon trail system and ultimately to the Maricopa County trail system. Emphasize hiking, bicycling and equestrian opportunities in recreation management planning.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.2.7.

**2.6.2.2.2.6 Wilderness Characteristics*****Land Use Allocation***

No allocation to maintain wilderness characteristics would be made within the Castle Hot Springs MU.

**2.6.2.2.2.7 Visual Resources*****Land Use Allocations***

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75.

Within the Castle Hot Springs Management Unit, allocate:

- Hells Canyon Wilderness Area is allocated to VRM Class I,
- Constellation Mine Road/Buckhorn Mine Road to Class II standards ½ mile to either side of the road's centerline, and
- Castle Hot Springs SRMA to Class II objectives, except Hieroglyphics Mountain RMZ to Class III objectives.

**2.6.2.2.2.8 Mineral Resource Management*****Management Actions***

Withdraw Tule Creek ACEC from mineral entry; close it to mineral and geothermal leasing, and close to mineral material disposal.

**2.6.2.2.2.9 Travel Management*****Land Use Allocation***

The Castle Hot Springs Management Unit would be allocated as a limited use area, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16). Until such time that final route designations are made, motorized and mechanized vehicles are restricted to currently inventoried routes. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

***Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions***

ACECs are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.2.1.

SCRMA and cultural resource sites allocated to Public Use are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.2.4.

SRMAs and other recreation allocations are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.2.5.

***Management Actions***

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in chapter 3.

Close the fenced area within the Tule Creek ACEC (640 acres) to motor vehicles.

The Castle Hot Springs SRMA (112,430 acres BLM) would include two Recreation Management Zones as allocated in the Recreation section of this plan, the Hieroglyphic Mountains RMZ and the Sheep Mountain RMZ, with specific vehicle and access prescriptions. Evaluate and designate all existing and potentially mechanized (OHV), non-mechanized trails and routes on public land in the Castle Hot Springs SRMA within three years of plan approval using a structured process, such as the one described in Appendix D. Design and develop a comprehensive motorized and non-motorized vehicle route system.

The Hieroglyphic Mountains RMZ (16,510 acres BLM) would include motorized single and two-track routes for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events, and competitive races. Make all designated routes within this zone available for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events, and competitive races. Locate at least 20 miles of single and two-track motorized routes to provide a unique array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Within the Sheep Mountain RMZ (4,270 acres) all vehicle routes identified as reclaimed through the route designation process would be closed except those necessary to facilitate administrative access to the area. Prohibit the building of new motorized routes.

Consider development of hard-surfaced walking trails at selected cultural sites within the Lake Pleasant/Agua Fria SCRMA (27,240 acres BLM) for interpretation, education, and visitation to prehistoric and historic sites.

### ***Implementation Actions***

Designation of a route network within 3 years of plan completion will be considered an implementation action.

## **2.6.2.2.3 Hassayampa Management Unit**

The Hassayampa MU is bounded on the east by Prescott National Forest and the Castle Hot Springs MU and on the west by Harquahala MU. The southern edge is south of the Vulture Mountains, and the northern boundary is north of Yarnell. The Town of Wickenburg is located at the MU's center (Map 2-85). The MU contains the following land:

- 181,910 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 130,580 acres of Arizona State land,
- 50,610 acres of private land, and
- 460 acres of county-administered lands in Maricopa and Yavapai Counties

### **2.6.2.2.3.1 Special Designations**

Current Special Designations within the Management Unit would be managed consistent with management actions described in Section 2.7.3.2 in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this chapter.

### **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

#### **Vulture Mountain ACEC (6,120 acres BLM)**

##### ***Relevance***

The cliffs along the crest of Vulture and Caballeros Peaks are significant habitat features used by many raptor species. Also, they are a pristine, scenic landmark. These cliffs are essential to maintaining the current biological diversity of the surrounding area. Large concentrations of nesting hawks and falcons use these spectacular cliff faces.

##### ***Importance***

The value of the cliffs for nesting raptors is significant for a large area. These cliffs are virtually the only suitable nesting cliffs for many miles. Nesting raptors are sensitive to

construction-related activities. If the cliffs and surrounding area are not protected from these activities, cliff-nesting raptors would disappear from much of the area.

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Maintain the raptor nesting habitat values of the cliffs and the surrounding foraging habitat.

### ***Management Actions***

Consider building new routes only when necessary to meet natural resource objectives and where routes would not degrade the resources for which the ACEC is being created.

Prohibit building new recreation sites; however, maintain the Vulture Peak Trail and trailheads to their current condition and standards.

Mitigate vehicle routes that conflict with maintaining wildlife values to ensure achieving the DFC. Mitigation measures include relocating routes, limiting season, and closing routes.

Prohibit rock climbing within the ACEC.

Acquire non-Federal lands within the ACEC as available.

## **2.6.2.2.3.2 Lands and Realty**

### **Land Tenure Adjustments**

*Alternative E* proposes 741 acres in Hassayampa MU as suitable for disposal. These lands were selected in accordance with resource management prescriptions in this land use plan as limited by criteria described in Section 2.7.1.2 Lands and Realty.

### **Communication Sites**

No designated communication sites are within this MU, and *Alternative E* proposes none for this area.

## **Utility and Transportation Corridors (Map 2-79)**

### ***Multiple-Purpose Corridors***

Designate a new 1-mile-wide corridor leg on the Meade-Phoenix corridor (partly in Hassayampa MU, partly in Harquahala MU).

### ***Transportation Corridors***

Transportation corridors are discussed in Section 2.6.2.1.1.

Two locations for the Wickenburg Bypass are currently under consideration by Arizona Department of Transportation. Once the route is chosen, a 1-mile-wide transportation corridor will be designated along the route. The corridor may not be centered on the right-of-way, but will be located with the bypass within it, and the boundaries adjusted to minimize conflict with resources or management objectives.

## **2.6.2.2.3.3 Biological Resources**

*Alternative E* proposes no biological designations for the Hassayampa MU. Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area.

## **2.6.2.2.3.4 Cultural Resources**

### ***Land Use Allocations***

Wickenburg/Vulture SCRMA (124,000 acres BLM)

Weaver/Octave SCRMA (2,730 acres BLM)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Manage selected prehistoric and historic sites for interpretive development, educational uses, and

public visitation. For further information on public use of cultural resources, see Appendix E.

Coordinate with the BLM's recreation program in developing sites for public use.

Cooperate with agencies, tribes, and local communities in supporting heritage tourism programs that benefit local economies. Develop historic properties for heritage tourism in a manner that contributes to their long-term preservation and productive use.

### ***Management Actions***

Develop the following historic sites for public use: Vulture City Cemetery, Constellation Road, Monte Cristo Mine, and a cemetery and stone structures in Weaver.

Select other sites for public use by considering the following factors:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development,
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails,
- site condition and the feasibility of stabilizing selected areas or features to withstand visitation,
- visitor safety,
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans,
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

A combination of the some or all of the following and other actions could be implemented at selected sites:

- platforms,
- restrooms,
- picnic tables,
- benches,
- trash receptacles,

- signs along routes and trails to direct visitors to interpreted sites
- hard-surfaced walking trails,
- interpretive signs and register boxes, and
- brochures and related educational materials or programs.

Stabilize, repair, and maintain sites in good condition. Regularly monitor the condition of sites.

Authorize commercial and noncommercial group tours, conducted with protective stipulations in accordance with BLM's regulations and, where required, SRPs.

### **2.6.2.2.3.5 Recreation Resources**

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

The entire Management Unit would be allocated to the Hassayampa SRMA (181,910 acres BLM) with the following Recreation Management Zones (Map 2-85):

- Stanton RMZ,
- Wickenburg Community RMZ,
- San Domingo Wash RMZ,
- Vulture Mine RMZ.

#### ***Desired Future Condition***

The long-term goals for the area are to:

- conserve the area's natural, scenic, recreation, and cultural resources,
- recognize and protect private property rights, and
- maintain diverse recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

Management emphasizes meeting a range of local and tourism-based regional recreation needs while maintaining the quality of life for local communities. Recreation activities include the following:

- intense motorized uses,
- permitted recreation events,
- developed facilities, and
- intense non-motorized trail system.

Intensively manage all recreation uses with a significant BLM and citizen volunteer ground presence through signing, facilities, and law enforcement.

Establish a system of high-quality equestrian and motorized trails surrounding Wickenburg. This trail system would afford many opportunities for all recreationists and enhance the lifestyle, culture, and cultural history of community residents.

Emphasize and maintain, in suitable areas, an array of rural, roaded-natural, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized settings; and experiences and opportunities for residents, tourists, and winter visitors. Maintain current recreation settings as depicted on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum on Map 3-11, except where otherwise stipulated in RMZ allocations.

Maintain long-term public access to the Yarnell hang gliding launching area and landing zones (Map 2-32). This site is one of the most valued in Arizona for successful launching of long-distance nonpowered flights.

### ***Management Actions***

Work closely with law enforcement authorities; including the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Yavapai County, Maricopa County, City of Peoria, and other agencies with jurisdiction to:

- enhance visitor and resident safety,
- improve resource protection, and
- ensure BLM's compliance with county, State, or Federal environmental laws.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.7 (Map 2-75).

Limit motorized use to designated routes. Develop and designate a comprehensive motorized and non-motorized trail system.

Identify, analyze, build, and designate new single- and multi-use, hiking, equestrian, and vehicle routes, and link them to local trail systems and communities. Routes include a proposed motorized and non-motorized Wickenburg-Lake Pleasant Regional Park-Black Canyon Trail corridor. Activities envisioned in this area include trail development as follows:

- Differentiated use (motorized and non-motorized travel),
- Single use (e.g. hiking or ATVs only),
- Multi-use (vehicles, bicycles, hiking, and equestrian use),
- Single-track use (e.g. motorcycles or mountain bicycles only), and
- Multi-use trails and foot, bicycle, and horse trails linking Wickenburg and Lake Pleasant Regional Park, with other links to the Peoria/Phoenix trail systems and the Black Canyon Trail.

Confine motorized competitive races to the San Domingo, Stanton, and Vulture RMZs.

Trial sustainability will determine the uses on the trail systems and the extent of the number of miles allocated to races. Sustainability determination will consider environmental factors (including, but not limited to: soil erosion, wildlife or cultural resource conflicts, conflicts with grazing management, air quality) as well as social concerns (including, but not limited to: noise, conflict with casual uses or other organized events, conflicts with other recreation activities such as hunting.)

### ***Administrative Actions***

Establish a working group to provide recommendations for managing the SRMA, including community groups, the Town of Wickenburg, Maricopa County, civic organizations, user groups, and other interested parties.

Complete a detailed, comprehensive, site-specific inventory and designation of all existing and proposed motorized (OHV) routes and non-motorized trails on public land in the SRMA within 3 years of plan approval.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Stanton RMZ (6,050 acres BLM)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Provide diverse recreation experiences while reducing unacceptable environmental impacts from the following recreation uses:

- excessive and unregulated camping,
- activities of prospecting clubs, and
- motorized activities

Maintain a variety of recreation settings and opportunities with an emphasis on semi-primitive motorized and roaded-natural settings and opportunities.

### ***Management Actions***

Allow for up to two motorized competitive races between October 1 and March 30. The number of miles of single and two-track motorized routes allocated to motorized competitive races will be determined by trail sustainability and durability along with our ability to reduce environmental issues and social conflicts. A course of routes used for competitive races would optimally provide for an array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Locate and develop trailheads, staging and camping areas, and other facilities as needed for resource protection. Provide for visitor safety. Resolve social conflicts. Improve the quality of recreation experiences. Increase recreation opportunities.

Develop a diverse network of motorized vehicle routes for a range of OHV experiences and

challenges, compatible with the existing non-motorized trails in the RMZ.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.7.

Install informational, educational, and interpretive kiosks and trail signs where needed and suitable. Placement of interpretive signs along the Stanton-Octave-Yarnell road, as proposed under the Lower Gila North MFP, would be consistent with this management action.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,
- define desired conditions and standards, and
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Wickenburg Community RMZ (72,040 acres BLM) including the Red Top Trail System and "The Box" (Map 2-91).

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Collaborate with a diverse group of Wickenburg citizens and organizations in a collective effort to conserve the ecological, cultural, open space, and recreation values of the Wickenburg area, so that it remains a place where people want to live, work, and recreate.

Preserve open space and provide a wide array of landscape-based recreation while conserving scenic landscapes and maintaining cultural and biological assets.

Offer quality recreation and tourism with proper management and marketing. Users exhibit a

strong land ethic for conserving and protecting the natural resources and cultural heritage of the Wickenburg RMZ.

Develop a system of high-quality equestrian and hiking trails that surround Wickenburg, buffer the area from urban sprawl, and preserve the open space of the local landscape. This trail system affords many opportunities for recreationists and enhances the lifestyle and cultural history of community residents.

Emphasize and maintain an array of rural, roaded-natural, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized settings; and opportunities in suitable areas for the enjoyment of residents, tourists, and winter visitors.

Conserve the canyon on the Hassayampa River known as "The Box" and surrounding lands as a recreation area for hiking, horseback riding, limited motorized use, picnicking, camping, and social gatherings, while protecting and enhancing the values of the riparian habitat.

### ***Management Actions***

Acquire the 19,396 acres of Arizona State land within the SRMA. Prioritize and pursue acquisition using the criteria in the Lands and Realty discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of Chapter 2. Lands will be acquired according to the following priorities:

- maintaining access and securing trail alignments,
- enhancing recreation opportunities,
- preserving scenery and open space, and
- conserving riparian values.

Maintain and upgrade the Vulture Peak Trail by rerouting or reengineering eroded trail segments.

Develop and install facilities for horse camping south of Vulture Peak and south of Congress. Amenities could range from developed to more primitive facilities.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.7.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Complete a comprehensive strategy and trails plan to select and develop new single- and multi-use hiking, equestrian, and OHV trails for all lands in the RMZ.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Red Top Trail System within the Wickenburg Community RMZ

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Provide a high-quality non-motorized trail network and amenities in the Red Top Mountain area. Allow another route system for motorized uses where appropriate to avoid conflicting uses.

### ***Management Actions***

Identify, analyze, build and designate new trails less than 52 inches wide, as needed, for resource protection, visitor safety, or meeting management objectives.

Locate and develop a large non-motorized trailhead and staging area for the Red Top Trail System for the following purposes:

- meeting the high demand for non-motorized recreation,
- parking,
- unloading horses,
- overnight camping, and
- organized events.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- hitching posts,
- troughs for water hauled to the site, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 10 acres the area of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter as needed to prevent expansion.

Locate and develop a small day use motorized trailhead and staging area for the Red Top Trail System, to accommodate up to ten vehicles with trailers, for the following purposes:

- meeting motorized recreation demand
- reduce user conflicts,
- parking,
- unloading OHVs, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 2 acres the area of exposed barren soil for each site. Mark the area's perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Identify, analyze, build, and designate an ATV and a motorcycle trail network in the Red Top Trail area to give the local community opportunities to shift motorized use from the designated non-motorized trails. Use existing designated motorized vehicle routes and create new trails less than 52 inches wide, if needed, to meet management objectives.

#### ***Administrative Actions***

Revise the existing Red Top Trail Project Plan, in cooperation with the local community and interested user groups, to expand the non-motorized Red Top Trail network. The revised plan would address actions to meet the high demand for non-motorized recreation.

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

"The Box" RMZ (Map 2-91)

#### ***Desired Future Condition***

Provide a high-quality non-motorized recreation use area with amenities in Box Canyon, known as "The Box".

#### ***Management Actions***

Locate and develop picnic, camping, and public use areas and develop access to these sites.

Designate access routes for varied uses such as hiking and horseback riding.

Identify, analyze, build, and designate four-wheel drive, jeep, ATV, sand rail, and dirt bike trails with suitable use areas and limitations. Close areas where sustainability cannot be achieved.

Develop facilities such as toilets, tables, parking, campsites, and other amenities where needed to protect resources or reduce user conflicts.

#### ***Administrative Actions***

Establish partnerships with the Town of Wickenburg, Yavapai County, and community groups to pursue management endeavors in this area. Such endeavors include developing and implementing a site plan to guide recreation use.

Create a volunteer service and community partnership program to aid in visitor outreach efforts and organize community cleanup efforts.

Develop and conduct monitoring as facilities are built or designated so that suitable use limits can be set for picnic areas and campsites.

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

San Domingo Wash RMZ (16,040 acres BLM)

#### ***Desired Future Condition***

Provide a Sonoran Desert wash and upland environment suitable for an array of motorized

and non-motorized uses. Manage for semi-primitive motorized and some roaded-natural settings.

Provide opportunities for the following while protecting the natural and cultural resources in the area:

- intensive camping,
- OHV activities,
- equestrian use,
- recreation activities of prospecting clubs,
- event operations, and
- motorized single and two-track routes for general motorized recreation use and competitive races

### ***Management Actions***

The number of miles of single and two-track motorized routes allocated to motorized competitive races will be determined by trail sustainability and durability along with our ability to reduce environmental issues and social conflicts. A course of routes used for competitive races would optimally provide for an array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Limit the number of motorized competitive to 2 per year.

When needed for resource protection, visitor health and safety, or maintaining recreation opportunities, develop facilities such as the following:

- staging areas,
- trails,
- signs,
- trailheads, and
- other sites.

Locate and develop one large motorized and non-motorized staging and camping area for the following purposes:

- meeting the high motorized and non-motorized recreation demand,

- parking and unloading OHVs and horses,
- overnight camping, and
- event operations.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 20 acres the site's areas of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Locate and develop at least one day-use staging area for the following purposes:

- meeting the high motorized and non-motorized recreation demand and
- parking and unloading OHVs and horses, and picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 5 acres the site's areas of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.7.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,

- define desired conditions and standards, and
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Vulture Mine RMZ (30,100 acres BLM)

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Provide a Sonoran Desert landscape suitable for intensive motorized single and two-track routes for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events and competitive races.

Emphasize and maintain the roaded-natural and semi-primitive motorized recreation settings.

Preserve the site and interpret mining and settlement history of the Vulture City Cemetery.

### ***Management Actions***

The number of miles of single and two-track motorized routes allocated to motorized competitive races will be determined by trail sustainability and durability along with our ability to reduce environmental issues and social conflicts. A course of routes used for competitive races would optimally provide for an array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races.

Limit the number of motorized competitive races to 4 per year.

Locate and develop one large motorized staging and camping area for the following purposes:

- meeting the high motorized recreation demand,
- parking,
- unloading OHVs,
- overnight camping, and
- event operations.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement

Limit to 20 acres the area of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Manage recreational target shooting consistent with guidelines for target shooting in the Recreation discussion of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area section of this chapter.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.7.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,
- define desired conditions and standards, and
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses.

Develop a site management and interpretation plan for the Vulture City Cemetery.

### **2.6.2.2.3.6 Wilderness Characteristics**

*Alternative E* proposes no allocations to maintain wilderness characteristics for the Hassayampa MU.

### 2.6.2.2.3.7 Visual Resources

#### *Land Use Allocations*

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75.

Within the Hassayampa Management Unit, allocate:

- Constellation Mine Road/Buckhorn Mind Road (½ mile to either side of the road's centerline) to VRM Class II,
- Hassayampa SRMA to VRM Class II except
  - San Domingo Wash RMZ to VRM Class III,
  - Vulture Mine RMZ to VRM Class III,
  - Stanton RMZ to VRM Class III, and
  - Wickenburg Community RMZ to VRM Class II where desired recreation settings are semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive non-motorized and VRM Class III where desired settings are Rural or Roaded Natural.
- Utility corridors would be allocated to VRM Class III or IV.
- Areas not listed above, VRM classes would be as portrayed on Map 2-75.

### 2.6.2.2.3.8 Mineral Resources Management

*Alternative E* proposes no mineral withdrawals or closures within the Hassayampa MU.

### 2.6.2.2.3.9 Travel Management

#### *Land Use Allocation*

The Hassayampa Management Unit would be allocated as a limited use area, with

motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16). Until such time that final route designations are made, motorized and mechanized vehicles are restricted to currently inventoried routes. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

#### *Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions*

ACECs are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.1.

SCRMA and cultural resource sites allocated to Public Use are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.4.

SRMAs and other recreation allocations are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.3.5.

#### *Management Actions*

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in Chapter 3.

Mitigate vehicle routes within the Vulture Mountain ACEC (6,120 acres BLM) that conflict with maintaining wildlife values to ensure achieving the DFC. Mitigation measures include relocating routes, limiting season or time-of-day use, and closing routes.

Consider building new routes only when needed to meet natural resource objectives. Maintain the Vulture Peak Trail to the current condition and standards.

The Hassayampa SRMA (181,910 acres BLM) would include four Recreation Management Zones. These are the Stanton RMZ, the Wickenburg Community RMZ, the San Domingo Wash RMZ, and the Vulture Mine RMZ. All the RMZs have motorized and non-motorized use prescriptions, which have been discussed in the Recreation sections of this plan.

The Hassayampa SRMA would include a system of high-quality equestrian and motorized trails surrounding Wickenburg. Travel management prescriptions include: develop and designate a comprehensive motorized and non-motorized trail system; identify, analyze, build, and designate new single- and multi-use hiking, equestrian, and vehicle routes; and link trails to local trail systems and communities. New proposed routes for the route system would include a motorized and non-motorized Wickenburg-Lake Pleasant Regional Park-Black Canyon Trail corridor. BLM will complete a detailed, comprehensive, site-specific inventory and designation of all existing and proposed motorized routes and non-motorized trails on public land in the SRMA within three years of plan approval.

The Wickenburg Community RMZ (72,040 acres BLM) would include the Red Top Trail System and "The Box" (Map 2-91). Develop a system of high-quality equestrian and hiking trails surround Wickenburg. Maintain and upgrade the Vulture Peak Trail by rerouting or re-engineering eroded trail segments. Complete a comprehensive strategy and trails plan to select and develop new single- and multi-use hiking, equestrian, and OHV trails for all lands in the RMZ.

The Stanton RMZ (6,050 acres BLM) would offer a diverse network of motorized vehicle routes for a range of OHV experiences and challenges, compatible with the existing non-motorized trails in the RMZ. No more than two competitive races may occur in this RMZ based on trail sustainability. Sustainability determination will consider environmental factors (including, but not limited to: soil erosion, wildlife or cultural resource conflicts, conflicts with grazing management, air quality) as well as social concerns (including, but not limited to: noise, conflict with casual uses or other organized events, conflicts with other recreation activities such as hunting.)

Establish the Red Top Trail System to provide high-quality non-motorized trail network experiences. Allow for motorized uses where

appropriate to avoid conflicting uses. Identify, analyze, build, and designate new trails less than 52 inches wide, as needed, for resource protection, visitor safety, or meeting management objectives. Identify, analyze, build, and designate an ATV and motorcycle trail network in the Red Top Trail area. Use existing designated motorized vehicle routes and create new trails less than 52 inches wide, if needed, to meet management objectives.

"The Box" area would be designed to provide a high-quality non-motorized recreation use experience. Develop passenger car access to these sites. Designate access routes for varied uses such as hiking and horseback riding. Identify, analyze, build, and designate four-wheel drive, jeep, ATV, sand rail, and dirt bike trails with suitable use areas and limitations. Close areas where improper vehicle activity is occurring.

The San Domingo Wash RMZ (16,040 acres BLM) would offer a Sonoran Desert wash and upland environment experience suitable for an array of motorized and non-motorized uses. Single and two-track motorized routes *would* provide an array of challenges for ATV, and motorcycle competitive races. No more than 2 competitive races may occur in this area based on trail sustainability.

The Vulture Mine RMZ (30,100 acres BLM) would offer intensive motorized single and two-track routes for general motorized recreation use, commercial use, organized OHV events and competitive races. Single- and two-track motorized routes ~~to~~ would provide an array of challenges for truck, buggy, ATV, and motorcycle competitive races. No more than 4 competitive races may take place in area based on trail sustainability.

Consider development of hard-surfaced walking trails at selected cultural sites within the Wickenburg/Vulture SCRMA (124,000 acres BLM) and the Weaver/Octave SCRMA (2,730 acres BLM) where needed for for interpretation, education, and visitation to prehistoric and historic sites.

### *Administrative Actions*

Develop a Wickenburg RMZ Travel and Public Access Plan.

Revise the existing Red Top Trail Project Plan, in cooperation with the local community and interested user groups, to expand the non-motorized Red Top Trail network.

### **2.6.2.2.4 Harquahala Management Unit**

The Harquahala is bounded on the east by the Hassayampa MU and extends west to the Hassayampa Field Office boundary near the town of Wenden. However, the MU would include private and State land south to Interstate 10. The northern boundary still follows the BLM's property line south of State Route 60, which goes west of Wickenburg through Aguila and Wenden (Map 2-86). The Harquahala MU contains the following land:

- 420,730 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 48,410 acres of Arizona State land, and
- 29,616 acres of private land.

### **2.6.2.2.4.1 Special Designations**

#### **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

**Harquahala Mountains ACEC (74,950 acres BLM).**

#### *Relevance*

The area constitutes a rare intact, mountaintop vegetation community surrounded by low desert. As the highest topographic feature in the region, the mountains contain a biologically diverse system, in stark contrast to the surrounding landscape. The mountain range supports a diverse sky island ecosystem, with many species not found in the surrounding Sonoran Desert. The mountains are a natural area with few noticeable human intrusions in a primitive landscape setting. The mountain range is high

enough that, from the summit, mountains in Mexico are visible during very clear air conditions. Conversely, the mountain range is a dominant landscape feature for travelers in many areas of southwest Arizona, visible from major highways (such as Interstate 10 and US Highway 60) as much as a hundred miles away.

#### *Importance*

The ACEC designation would protect unique biological resources and significant cultural resources, including prehistoric and historic sites. This area also is of cultural importance to the Yavapai Tribe, as it was a major area of settlement for the Western Yavapai groups.

The biological richness of the Harquahala Mountains is unique within southwest Arizona. The Harquahala Mountains and surrounding bajadas provide important wildlife habitat to a diverse array of species. The area is an ecoregional conservation site with important biodiversity values.

The ACEC contains the Harquahala Mountain Observatory, which is within a National Register of Historic Places district. The historic Harquahala Peak Pack Trail, Ellison's Camp, and other sites are components of the historic district. The area also includes many well-preserved prehistoric sites along with historic ranching and mining sites. Some archaeological sites may be related to the use of the mountain range by a regional group of the Western Yavapai tribe. The ACEC will safeguard important and unfragmented wildlife habitat.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Protect sensitive resources discussed in the statements of relevance and importance. Minimize the visual intrusion of any management activity so as to retain the outstanding scenic quality and natural landscape appearance consistent with VRM Class II standards.

Achieve long-term conservation of scenic, natural resource, and cultural values.

Preserve outstanding opportunities for high-quality hiking, backpacking, hunting, wildlife observation, and cultural study prospects. Permit vehicle access only on designated routes.

Maintain the plant diversity and richness of the chaparral, riparian/wetland, and Sonoran Desert scrub vegetation communities.

Achieve and maintain unfragmented wildlife habitat, which provides adequate forage, cover, and access to water for healthy wildlife populations.

Maintain the existing interpretive facilities in good condition to promote public education and appreciation of the area's cultural traditions and history. Allocate selected sites to public use to support public education in conjunction with heritage tourism along the existing back-country byway and hiking trails.

### ***Management Actions***

Limit motorized vehicle use to designated routes.

Continue to manage the existing Harquahala Mountain Back Country Byway as described in Section 2.7.3.1.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.4.7.

Mitigate surface disturbance inconsistent with achieving the DFC.

Unless new vehicle routes and fences are needed to mitigate resource conflicts and achieve DFC, prohibit such construction.

In the Inner Basin, which encompasses a valley just below and east of the summit, prohibit grazing improvements that encourage concentrated livestock use.

Approve improvements in this area if they

- are needed to meet resource objectives,
- would help achieve DFC, and

- conform to the standards and objectives for the area.

Restore and protect all spring sources and the wildlife habitat values of springs.

Acquire from willing parties State and private lands containing resource values that are consistent with the relevance and importance of the ACEC.

Identify, monitor, and protect important cultural resources.

Maintain the Harquahala Observatory historical site and its interpretive facilities to current standards and conditions.

Select specific cultural sites for public use by considering the following factors:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development,
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails,
- site condition and the feasibility of stabilizing selected areas or features to withstand visitation,
- visitor safety,
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans,
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

Implement the following actions:

- build visitor facilities,
- install signs along routes and trails to direct visitors to interpreted sites,
- build hardened walking trails,
- install interpretive signs and register boxes, and
- prepare brochures and related educational materials or programs.

Implement actions to stabilize, repair, and maintain selected cultural sites in a condition that preserves their value to scientific or public uses as needed. Regularly monitor the condition of these sites for possible remedial action. Authorize commercial and noncommercial group tours if they are conducted with protective stipulations, in accordance with BLM's regulations and, where required, special SRPs.

### ***Administrative Actions***

The BLM's recreation program would help develop sites for public use. Cooperate with agencies, tribes, and local communities in supporting heritage tourism programs that benefit local economies. Develop historic properties for heritage tourism to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

### **Black Butte ACEC (8,260 acres BLM)**

#### ***Relevance***

The area contains the Vulture obsidian source, which was a major source of "Apache tears" used to make stone tools during prehistoric times. The cliffs at the crest of Black Butte are significant habitat features used by raptor species and are a pristine, scenic landmark. These cliffs are essential to maintaining the biological diversity of the surrounding area.

#### ***Importance***

Archaeologists recognize the Vulture obsidian source as one of the major sources of a valuable trade commodity in prehistoric Arizona. Obsidian (volcanic glass) was used widely in making stone tools. Nodules of Vulture obsidian have a distinctive chemical composition that allows archaeologists to map changes in its distribution, use, and trade by prehistoric peoples. Vulture obsidian has been traced to prehistoric sites within at least a 100-mile radius of Black Butte.

The value of the cliffs for nesting raptors is significant for a large area. Nesting raptors are sensitive to construction-related human activities. If these cliffs are not protected from

these activities, cliff-nesting raptors would disappear from much of the surrounding area.

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Manage the area to emphasize protecting the sensitive resources discussed in the statements of relevance and importance. Maintain current natural conditions and open space. Minimize the visual intrusion of any management activity so as to preserve the outstanding scenic quality and natural landscape appearance.

Manage the area surrounding Black Butte and Jackrabbit Wash to:

- preserve good non-motorized recreation opportunities and settings,
- conserve scenic volcanic landscapes,
- Maintain a semi-primitive non-motorized recreation setting.

Retain Black Butte's cultural significance as an important source of material for prehistoric tool production. Sustain important raptor nesting habitat in the central Black Butte cliffs area. Restore, enhance, and maintain wildlife and plant diversity and species richness of this Sonoran Desert vegetation community. Set as ACEC priorities conserving vegetation communities and managing for healthy wildlife populations.

### ***Management Actions***

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.4.7.

Mitigate surface disturbance that conflicts with the protection of biological and cultural resources for which the ACEC is designated.

Prohibit building new recreation sites that conflict with raptor management or cultural prescriptions. Build non-motorized trails and recreation facilities, if needed, to ensure resource protection, protect wildlife habitat, or enhance recreation opportunities.

Manage the ACEC to preserve the Vulture obsidian source, permit scientific study of it, and implement actions to restrict activities that threaten its integrity.

Prohibit rock climbing in the ACEC.

### **2.6.2.2.4.2 Lands and Realty**

#### **Land Tenure Adjustments**

The land in the Harquahala MU proposed as suitable for disposal amounts to 3,528 acres (Map 2-78). This land has been selected in accordance with the resource management prescriptions in this land use plan as limited by criteria described in Section 2.7.1.2 Lands and Realty.

#### **Communication Sites**

The Harquahala Peak communication site is the only such designated site within this MU.

#### **Utility and Transportation Corridors (Map 2-79)**

##### *Multiple-Purpose Corridors*

- Shift the Central Arizona Project (CAP) corridor to the north, extending it one mile north from the southern CAP right-of-way boundary.
- Add a new 1-mile-wide corridor leg on the Meade-Phoenix corridor (partly in Harquahala MU, partly in Hassayampa MU).

##### *Transportation Corridors*

Transportation corridors are discussed in Section 2.6.2.1.1.

### **2.6.2.2.4.3 Biological Resources**

Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this

chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area.

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Belmont/Big Horn Mountains Wildlife Habitat Area (140,310 acres BLM)

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Restore, enhance, and maintain the wildlife, plant diversity, and species richness of the Sonoran Desert scrub vegetation community. Unfragmented wildlife habitat provides adequate forage, cover, and access to water for healthy wildlife populations. Conserving and managing for healthy wildlife populations are priorities in managing the area.

#### *Management Actions*

Modify existing fences and incorporate design features in new fences to ensure free movement of mule deer and bighorn sheep.

Mitigate vehicle routes that conflict with maintaining wildlife habitat values to ensure achieving DFC. Mitigation includes the following:

- relocating route segments,
- building wildlife passes,
- limiting seasonal or time-of-day use, and
- closing routes.

Acquire State and private lands within the WHA from willing sellers.

Mitigate the impact of future vehicle route improvements on priority wildlife species, especially desert bighorn sheep and desert tortoise to ensure achieving DFC.

Mitigate recreation use and development to minimize impacts on priority wildlife species to ensure achieving DFC.

#### **2.6.2.2.4.4 Cultural Resources**

Nearly the entire area of the Harquahala SCRMA is included within the Harquahala Mountains ACEC. Management of cultural resources in the Harquahala SCRMA within the Harquahala Mountains ACEC can be found in Section 2.6.2.2.4.1. The historic Harquahala Peak Smithsonian Observatory and the Harquahala Peak Pack Trail would be allocated to public use. Allocate other sites for public use and interpretive development consistent with management actions described for the Harquahala Mountains ACEC.

Manage cultural resources to conform to prescriptions for the Harquahala Mountains ACEC. Acquire significant cultural sites on other State and private lands within the MU on a willing seller/willing buyer basis, consistent with priorities in the Lands and Realty discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of Chapter 2.

#### **2.6.2.2.4.5 Recreation Resources**

Though the entire Harquahala MU would be allocated as an ERMA, the following recreation management would apply in addition to those actions described in the Recreation and Public Access - Travel and Transportation Planning discussions of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area:

##### *Implementation Actions*

Select, plan, and develop at least one staging and camping area to meet motorized and non-motorized recreation demand. Have this area provide accommodation for the following:

- parking,
- unloading OHVs and horses,
- overnight camping, and
- large organized event operations.

Development may include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- hitching posts,
- troughs for water hauled to the site,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to 20 acres the area of exposed barren soil. Mark or delineate the perimeter with barriers to prevent expansion.

Develop at least one day-use area near or adjacent to lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics in the Belmont Mountains. The development would be designed for up to 50 vehicles with trailers to meet the non-motorized recreation demand. The facility would provide for parking, unloading horses, picnicking, and small special event operations. Development may include:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- hitching posts,
- loading ramp, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Mark or delineate the perimeter of the Belmont Mountain day-use area to prevent expansion. Limit to 5 acres the site's area of exposed barren soil.

#### **2.6.2.2.4.6 Wilderness Characteristics**

##### *Land Use Allocation*

Within the Harquahala Management Unit, 53,789 acres would be allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics as shown on Map 2-89.

##### *Desired Future Condition*

Maintain and manage wilderness characteristics, open space, and wildlife habitat. Retain natural landscapes. Provide opportunities for solitude

and outstanding primitive recreation opportunities in a remote setting. Preserve an array of scenic and special features. Restore, enhance, and maintain the wildlife/plant diversity and species richness of this Sonoran Desert scrub vegetation community. Wildlife populations and habitat are important aspects of the naturalness and will be actively managed. Maintain important and unfragmented habitat for desert tortoises and desert bighorn sheep.

### ***Management Actions***

Limit motorized vehicle use to designated routes

Manage the recreation setting along designated routes for a semi-primitive motorized setting. Manage areas away from designated motorized routes as semi-primitive non-motorized.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.4.7.

Prohibit building new fences, unless their construction helps to achieve the DFC.

Acquire State and private lands on a willing seller/willing buyer basis.

Prohibit building new recreation sites that would conflict with wildlife management, habitat, or movement, or would affect sensitive cultural or botanical resources. Build non-motorized trails and recreation facilities only if needed for the following purposes:

- to ensure resource protection,
- to protect wilderness characteristics, and
- to protect wildlife habitat

### **2.6.2.2.4.7 Visual Resources**

#### ***Land Use Allocations***

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75.

Within the Harquahala Management Unit, allocate:

- Harquahala Mountains ACEC, Black Butte ACEC, VRM Class II.
- Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics VRM Class II and continue VRM Class I in designated wilderness.
- Utility corridors would be allocated to VRM Class III or IV.
- The rest of the Management Unit would be allocated to VRM classes as portrayed on the above referenced map.

### **2.6.2.2.4.8 Mineral Resource Management**

*Alternative E* proposes no withdrawals or mining closures.

### **2.6.2.2.4.9 Travel Management**

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

The Harquahala Management Unit (420,730 acres of BLM-administered lands) would be allocated as a limited use area, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16). Motorized and Mechanized travel is limited to currently inventoried routes until final route designations are completed. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

#### ***Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions***

ACECs are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.4.1.

WHAs are discussed in the Biological Resources Section 2.6.2.2.4.3.

Allocations to maintain wilderness characteristics are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.4.6.

### ***Management Actions***

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Limit motorized vehicle use to designated routes within the Harquahala Mountains ACEC (74,950 acres BLM). Prohibit new vehicle routes unless needed to mitigate resource conflicts and achieve DFC. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in chapter 3.

Limit motorized vehicle use to designated routes within the Black Butte ACEC (8,260 acres BLM). Build non-motorized trails and recreation facilities within the Black Butte ACEC if needed, to ensure resource protection, protect wildlife habitat, or enhance recreation opportunities.

Mitigate vehicle routes within the Belmont/Big Horn Mountains WHA (140,310 acres BLM) by relocating route segments, building wildlife passes, limiting seasonal or time-of-day use, or closing routes that conflict with maintaining wildlife habitat values to ensure achieving DFC.

Coordinate the route system designation with the Lake Havasu Field Office for connectivity as outlined in Common to All Section 2.7.3.7.

### ***Implementation Actions***

BLM requires a standard evaluation process, supported by software and database and that is compatible with GIS functionality. Designation of a route network using a process described in Appendix D, or one similar, would be considered an implementation action. Route designation will be done within 5 years of RMP signing.

### **2.6.2.2.5 Harcuvar Management Unit**

The Harcuvar MU encompasses the easternmost end of the Harcuvar Mountains within the PD's administrative area. Most of the Harcuvar Mountain range is administered by BLM's Lake Havasu Field Office. The Harcuvar MU is bounded on the west and north by the PD boundary with the Lake Havasu Field Office, and on the east and south by the boundary between BLM and non-BLM-administered lands (Map 2-87). The MU contains the following land:

- 53,200 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 6,280 acres of Arizona State land, and
- 3,360 acres of private land.

The MU contains no proposed Special Area Designations. VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75. The entire Management Unit would be allocated as an Extensive Recreation Management Area and managed consistent with the discussion in Section 2.7.3.7 of the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area portion of this Chapter. Connectivity of the route system with BLM Lake Havasu and Kingman Field Offices would be addressed consistent with the long distance route network discussions under Common to All Section 2.7.3.7.

No allocations would be made for biological resources within Harcuvar MU. Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area.

### **2.6.2.2.6 Upper Agua Fria River Basin Management Unit**

The Upper Agua Fria River Basin MU is sandwiched between Prescott National Forest's Bradshaw Mountains and Verde Ranger Districts. The MU stretches from Cordes Lakes in the south to the Town of Prescott Valley in the north (Map 2-88). The MU contains the following lands:

- 21,520 acres of BLM-administered lands,
- 36,990 acres of Arizona State land, and
- 39,290 acres of private land.

#### **2.6.2.2.6.1 Special Area Designations**

##### **Nomination to National Recreation Trails System**

##### **Black Canyon Trail**

##### *Desired Future Conditions*

Provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding urban population to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Black Canyon corridor. A non-motorized National Recreation Trail should be established primarily, near urban areas; secondarily, within scenic areas and along historic travel routes of the area.

##### *Management Actions*

Consider and study the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543).

Issue a right-of-way for the non-motorized, mechanized use trail, of approximately 69 miles, and ancillary trails and facilities to preserve public access and long-term character.

Acquire easements or rights-of-way on non-Federal lands if the trail or facilities are proposed for any of these lands.

Continue to work with the Black Canyon Trail Coalition and other public groups to build and maintain the trail. Engage motorized vehicle groups and other interested groups to build and maintain the parallel motorized route.

Recognize and accommodate long-term continuation of the trail and facilities in land tenure actions. Retain a 1/4-mile wide corridor (1/8 mile each side of the trail) along the trail and any ancillary facility for a permanent trail location. Ensure public access to the trail and related facilities through easements, rights-of-way, deed restrictions, or other suitable means. A motorized route will generally parallel the Black Canyon Trail to improve administrative access and public long distance travel using vehicles.

#### **2.6.2.2.6.2 Lands and Realty**

##### **Land Tenure**

No lands would be disposed of within the Upper Agua Fria River Basin MU.

##### **Communication Sites**

No designated communication sites are proposed for this MU.

##### **Utility and Transportation Corridors**

##### *Multiple-Purpose Corridors*

Establish a new 1-mile-wide corridor leg centered on the El Paso Natural Gas Line.

##### *Transportation Corridors*

Designate all State highway system routes as transportation corridors, including a new 1-mile-wide corridor along SR-69, a 1/2-mile on each side of the centerline.

### 2.6.2.2.6.3 Biological Resources

Biological resources would be subject to management guidance in Section 2.7.1.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter and in Section 2.7.3.4 - Biological Resources in the Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. No biological allocations would be made within the Upper Agua Fria River Basin MU.

### 2.6.2.2.6.4 Cultural Resources

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Galena Gulch SCRMA (2,500 acres BLM). Allocate to public use selected sites that are suitable for interpretive development, as described below under *Administrative Actions*.

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Selected prehistoric and historic sites are interpreted for public education and visitation. Interpretive projects are completed in a manner that monitors and protects sites while allowing for public use. For more information on public use of cultural resources, see Appendix E.

#### *Management Actions*

Build trails to link public use sites to the Black Canyon trail. Local site types potentially suitable for public use include the following:

- prehistoric hilltop structures,
- rock art,
- mining camps, and
- features of the historic Black Canyon sheep driveway.

Develop historic properties for heritage tourism to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

Implement a combination of some or all of following and other actions at selected sites:

- platforms,
- restrooms,
- picnic tables,
- benches,
- trash receptacles,
- signs along routes and trails to direct visitors to interpreted sites,
- hard-surfaced walking trails,
- interpretive signs and register boxes, and
- brochures and related educational materials or programs.

Take actions to stabilize, repair, and maintain sites in good condition. Regularly monitor site conditions.

Authorize commercial and noncommercial group tours if they are conducted with protective stipulations in accordance with BLM regulations. Where required, issue SRPs.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Select sites for public use by considering the following factors:

- presence of aboveground features of interest to the public and amenable to interpretive development.
- accessibility to communities, travel routes, and recreation trails.
- condition of the site and the feasibility of stabilizing selected areas or features to withstand visitation.
- visitor safety.
- compatibility with other land uses and site values, such as traditional use by Native Americans.
- feasibility of regular inspections by BLM's staff and volunteers, and
- partnership opportunities for interpretive and educational projects.

The BLM recreation program would participate in developing sites for public use.

BLM would cooperate with agencies, tribes, and local communities in supporting heritage tourism programs that benefit local

economies. Develop historic properties for heritage tourism to contribute to their long-term preservation and productive use.

### **2.6.2.2.6.5 Recreation Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Upper Agua Fria River Basin SRMA (21,440 acres BLM)

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Maintain the SRMA's natural landscape and open space. Offer visitors recreation opportunities, scenic views, access to the Black Canyon Trail, and other trail systems.

The open space character of the land is retained, maintaining natural landscapes and recreation opportunities for the future.

Emphasize rural, roaded-natural, and semi-primitive motorized recreation settings where suitable.

#### *Management Actions*

Locate, and develop new trails, parking, and staging areas, where suitable, for motorized and non-motorized use.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.6.6 (Map 2-75).

#### *Land Use Allocation*

North Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ (3,210 acres BLM)

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Complete the Black Canyon Trail north and east of Highway 69 to connect with trails in Prescott National Forest. Analyze, build and designate the trail to provide a non-motorized experience along the historic sheep driveway. Identify

exact locations of the trail and facilities in conjunction with the Yavapai Trails Association and other interested citizens. Maintain rural roaded-natural and semi-primitive motorized settings as suitable. Consider and study the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 1968 (P.L.90-543).

#### *Management Actions*

Locate and develop staging, or camping areas near communities and vehicle access points to service the north Black Canyon Trail and adjoining public lands for the following purposes:

- parking,
- unloading OHVs and horses, and
- picnicking.

Development could include the following:

- informational signs,
- kiosks,
- picnic tables,
- loading ramps, and
- soil stabilization for dust abatement.

Limit to five acres the area of exposed barren soil on each site. Mark or delineate the perimeters to prevent expansion.

Issue a right-of-way for the trail and facilities to preserve public access and protect the trail from incompatible land uses.

Acquire access easements or rights-of-way for non-Federal lands where the trail or facilities are proposed.

Recognize the trail and facilities in any land tenure actions. Retain a 1/4-mile corridor (1/8 mile each side) along the trail.

Allocations for Visual Resource Management designed to achieve Desired Future Conditions are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.6.6.

Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543).

### *Administrative Actions*

Work with citizen volunteer groups to complete a comprehensive strategy and trails plan for selecting and developing new single- and multi-use hiking, equestrian, and OHV trails for all lands in the SRMA. Collaborate with the following entities:

- Arizona Game & Fish Department,
- Prescott National Forest,
- Yavapai County,
- Yavapai County Trails Association, and land managers of other trails.

Establish a citizens' working group to help with trail and facility sites, designs, and management. Develop a Black Canyon Trail management and partnership plan with community and citizen input in conjunction with the Black Canyon Trail Plan for the Black Canyon SRMA. Within one year of plan approval define the following:

- proposed trail alignments,
- trailheads,
- linking trails, and
- other alignments.

Complete this master plan within 2 years of plan approval.

### **2.6.2.2.6.6 Visual Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocations*

VRM classes for *Alternative E* throughout the planning area would be allocated as described in Table 2-2 and as portrayed on Map 2-75. The entire Upper Agua Fria River Basin MU would be allocated to VRM Class III objectives.

### **2.6.2.2.6.7 Mineral Resource Management**

*Alternative E* proposes no mineral withdrawals or closures within the MU.

### **2.6.2.2.6.8 Travel Management**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

The Upper Agua Fria River Basin Management Unit, 21,520 acres of BLM-managed lands, would be allocated as a limited use area, with motorized and mechanized vehicle uses limited to designated routes (Map 2-16). Motorized and Mechanized travel is limited to currently inventoried routes until final route designations are completed. See Section 2.7.3.7 for a more detailed description of limitations.

#### *Other Resource Allocations with Travel Management Prescriptions*

SCRMA's and cultural resource sites allocated to Public Use are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.6.4.

SRMA's and other recreation allocations are discussed in Section 2.6.2.2.6.5.

#### *Desired Future Conditions*

Define, designate, implement, and monitor a designated and travel management network. The travel management network and associated recreation opportunities would be consistent with other resource management objectives for the area.

#### *Management Actions*

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. No cross-country motorized travel would be permitted except in cases of emergency or for approved administrative purposes. Until route designation is completed, all vehicle travel is restricted to inventoried routes as shown in Chapter 3.

The Upper Agua Fria River Basin SRMA (21,440 acres BLM) would offer visitors' access to the Black Canyon Trail and other trail systems. Locate, and develop new trails, where suitable, for motorized and non-motorized uses.

Locate a motorized route generally parallel to the Black Canyon Trail to support a long distance motor vehicle route network.

Within the North Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trails RMZ (3,210 acres BLM), locate and develop staging, or camping areas near communities and vehicle access points to service the north Black Canyon Trail. Issue a right-of-way for the trail and facilities to preserve public access and protect the trail from incompatible land uses. Acquire access easements or rights-of-way for non-Federal lands, where the trail or facilities are proposed. Recognize the trail and facilities in any land tenure actions. Retain a 1/4-mile corridor (1/8 mile each side) along the trail. Evaluate the Black Canyon Trail for inclusion into the National Recreation Trail System, as described in the National Trails System Act of 2002 (P.L.90-543). Complete a new BCT this master plan within 2 years of plan approval.

Build trails to link cultural public use sites to the Black Canyon Trail. Trails could lead to suitable sites including prehistoric hilltop structures, rock art, mining camps, and features of the historic Black Canyon sheep driveway.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Apply an evaluation process, similar to one described in Appendix D, to guide establishment of a designated public access and route system to support resource objectives consistent with *Alternative B*.

Develop a Travel Management Plan. This plan would implement the designated route system for the Management Unit.

## **2.7 Management Common to All Action Alternatives**

### **Introduction**

While certain planning components vary across the Alternatives, others apply to all Alternatives. Some components common to all Alternatives result from previous land use decisions determined still to be valid and carried forward into the revised plans. Others originate from new planning decisions made since adopting the pre-existing plans. The common actions that apply to both planning areas appear first; those that apply only to Agua Fria National Monument are presented second, and those that apply only to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area are presented third.

Many scattered, isolated BLM-administered parcels are located outside the planning area boundaries (Map 1-2). These parcels are included in this plan as BLM is responsible for managing them. Some of the lands are managed under the *Kingman RMP* (BLM 1993a), whereas others are managed under the *Phoenix RMP* (BLM 1988a). They are difficult to manage because of their isolation and the small size of the individual parcels. As in the *Kingman RMP* and the *Phoenix RMP*, BLM has elected to deal with these lands more generally than with lands inside the planning areas. Still, the scattered parcels are included in the land tenure decisions for each Alternative. The actions or components described below are common to all Action Alternatives.

### **2.7.1 Management Common to Both Planning Areas**

#### **2.7.1.1 Land Health Standards**

In managing and implementing all resource programs, BLM must consider the Land Health Standards described in *Arizona Standards for*

*Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration* (Rangeland Management). The Land Health Standards were developed, pursuant to 43 CFR 4180, through a collaborative process involving BLM's staff and the Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The Land Health Standards were approved by the Secretary of the Interior in April 1997. These standards have been developed to determine the characteristics of healthy ecosystems on public lands and management actions to promote them. When approved, the Land Health Standards became BLM Arizona policy, guiding the planning for and management of BLM-administered lands. The Land Health Standards, therefore, have been incorporated into both the Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw-Harquahala RMPs. Listed below are the standards that describe the conditions needed to encourage proper functioning of ecological processes and that have been adopted as the Land Health Standards applicable program wide to BLM Arizona.

### **Standard One: Upland Sites**

Upland soils exhibit infiltration, permeability, and erosion rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform (ecological site).

#### **Criteria for Meeting Standard One**

Soil conditions support the proper functioning of hydrologic, energy, and nutrient cycles. Many factors interact to maintain stable soils and healthy soil conditions, including suitable amounts of vegetation cover, litter, and soil porosity and organic matter. Under proper functioning conditions, rates of soil loss and infiltration are consistent with the site's potential.

Ground cover in the form of plants, litter, or rock is present in pattern, kind, and amount sufficient to prevent accelerated erosion for the ecological site; or ground cover is increasing as determined by monitoring over an established period of time.

Signs of accelerated erosion are minimal or diminishing for the ecological site as determined by monitoring over an established period of time.

As indicated by such factors as:

- ground cover,
- litter,
- live vegetation (e.g., grass, shrubs, trees) amount and type,
- rock ,
- signs of erosion,
- flow pattern,
- gullies, and
- rills and plant pedestaling.

Exceptions and exemptions (where applicable):

- None.

### **Standard Two: Riparian-Wetland Sites**

Riparian-wetland areas are in properly functioning condition.

#### **Criteria for Meeting Standard Two**

Stream channel morphology and functions are appropriate for proper functioning condition for existing climate, landform, and channel reach characteristics. Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris is present to dissipate the stream energy of high-water flows.

Riparian-wetland functioning condition assessments are based on examination of hydrologic, vegetation, soil and erosion-deposition factors. BLM has developed a standard checklist to address these factors and make functional assessments. Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly as shown by the results of applying the appropriate checklist.

The checklist for riparian areas is in Technical Reference 1737-9, Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition (BLM 1993d). The checklist for wetlands is in Technical Reference 1737-11, Process for Assessing Proper

Functioning Condition for Lentic Riparian-Wetland Areas (BLM 1994c).

As indicated by such factors as the following:

- gradient,
- width/depth ratio,
- channel roughness and sinuosity of stream channel,
- bank stabilization,
- reduced erosion,
- captured sediment,
- ground water recharge, and
- dissipation of energy by vegetation.

Exceptions and exemptions (where applicable):

- Dirt tanks, wells, and other water facilities built or placed at a location to provide water for livestock or wildlife and not determined through local planning to provide for riparian or wetland habitat are exempt.
- Water impoundments permitted for construction, mining, or other similar activities are exempt.

### **Standard Three: Desired Future Conditions**

Productive, diverse upland and riparian-wetland plant communities of native species exist and are maintained.

#### **Criteria for Meeting Standard Three**

Upland and riparian-wetland plant communities meet DPC objectives. Plant community objectives are determined with consideration for all multiple uses. Objectives also address native species and the requirements of the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA); FLPMA; Endangered Species Act (ESA); Clean Water Act (CWA); and suitable laws, regulations, and policies.

DPC objectives will be developed to assure that soil conditions and ecosystem function described in Standards 1 and 2 are met. These objectives detail a site-specific plant community, which when obtained, will assure rangeland health; State water quality standards; and habitat

for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. Thus, DPC objectives will be used as an indicator of ecosystem function and rangeland health.

As indicated by such factors as the following:

- composition,
- structure, and
- distribution.

Exceptions and exemptions (where applicable):

Ecological sites or stream reaches on which a change in existing vegetation is physically, biologically, or economically impractical are exempt.

## **2.7.1.2 Lands and Realty**

### **Land Tenure Adjustment**

#### *Management Actions*

Land tenure decisions determine which lands will be retained, which will be proposed for disposal, and which will be proposed for acquisition. These decisions must achieve the goals, standards, and objectives in the land use plan.

Lands found to be potentially suitable for disposal by sale or exchange in this land use plan meet the criteria in Sections 203 and 206 of the FLPMA of 1976, and other laws and regulations.

For land tenure adjustments, BLM prioritizes acquiring lands that contain habitat recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as needed for the recovery of federally listed threatened or endangered species.

BLM does not dispose of land:

- occupied by species that are listed or proposed to be listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA,

- with designated or proposed critical habitat for a listed or proposed threatened or endangered species,
- supporting listed or proposed threatened or endangered species if such transfer would conflict with recovery needs and objectives or would likely impede the recovery of the listed or proposed species, and/or
- supporting Federal candidate species if such action would contribute to the need to list the species as threatened or endangered.

Exceptions to the above may occur if the recipient of the lands would protect the species or critical habitat equally well under the ESA, such as disposal to a non-Federal governmental agency or private organization if conservation purposes for the species would still be achieved and ensured.

Maintain, obtain, and secure access rights to all BLM-administered lands to meet BLM goals and objectives. This action is accomplished by requiring reciprocal grants (where needed) when granting rights-of-way across BLM-administered lands and pursuing land disposal actions.

Issue right-of-way reservations to BLM on existing designated routes that are needed for implementing the RMP.

In determining whether to adjust land tenure (including land exchange, purchase, sale, and donation), consider the following:

- Evaluate and balance all resource requirements and consolidate land ownership to achieve management efficiency and reduced costs of administration, thereby improving Federal land management.
- Evaluate the effects of land adjustments on sensitive species habitat. Avoid land adjustments that could result in a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability for sensitive species.
- Acquire land that contains resources determined to be important in contributing toward BLM resource management goals and objectives, when these resources are threatened by land use change or when management may be enhanced by public ownership. Resources so identified may include historical or heritage resources, outstanding scenic values, critical ecosystems, or potential recreation opportunities.
- Acquire land that reduces conflicts between public and private landowner objectives.
- Evaluate the long-term effects of adjustments in jurisdiction near urban and rural communities on community economic and social stability and environmental sustainability. Work with a diverse network of residents, user groups, and governments to determine if land tenure adjustments could enhance both local communities and environmental health.

### *Land Use Allocations*

### *Transportation Corridors*

A designated transportation corridor means a *designated* parcel of land with specific boundaries identified by law, Secretarial Order, the land-use planning process, or other management decision, as being a proposed location for one or more transportation rights-of-way and other compatible facilities. The designated transportation corridor may be suitable to accommodate more than one type of right-of-way use or facility or one or more right-of-way uses or facilities which are similar, identical, or compatible.

Title V, Section 503 of [43 U.S.C. 1763] provides the guidelines in which transportation corridors will be identified and designated. Any existing transportation corridor may be

designated as a transportation corridor without further review.

A corridor differs from a right-of-way in that a right-of-way authorizes a holder to use or occupy public lands under a grant, and is specific in its location. A transportation corridor will be *identified by law, Secretarial Order, the land-use planning process, or other management decision*, and is general in location and is designated to accommodate one or more rights-of-way.

Facilities significant enough to be the basis for corridor designation are the following:

- natural gas and other pipelines at least 10 inches in diameter,
- electric transmission facilities accommodating 115 kV lines or greater voltage, and
- significant canals delivering water to urban areas.

### ***Management Actions***

Route major utility systems through designated corridors. Encourage new rights-of-way within designated corridors to promote the maximum use of existing routes. Encourage joint use whenever possible.

Collocate smaller utility lines needed for local service near corridors or within a corridor unless doing so would limit the opportunity to collocate other major utility lines in the corridor.

Whenever possible, promote energy transfer efficiency and support alternative energy sources, such as the use of photovoltaic cells (solar energy) and wind power.

Whenever possible, design or route utility transmission lines to minimize adverse visual impacts to the surrounding lands and vistas.

Designate BLM utility corridors consistent with authorities granted under the following:

- FLPMA Title V, Sections 501-511 (43 USC 1761-1771),
- Mineral Leasing Act of 1928 (CFR 2880), and
- BLM Right-of-Way Manual, Sections 2801.11 and 2801.12.

### ***Administrative Actions***

BLM will continue to cooperate as a partner (with the Forest Service, Arizona Public Service, and Salt River Project, in Arizona) in the Western Utility Group, whose mission is to facilitate an exchange of information and coordinate planning between Federal agencies and utility providers throughout the western United States.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Communication Sites

### ***Management Actions***

BLM planning related to communication infrastructure must, in accordance with the Telecommunications Act of 1996, help facilitate implementing wireless telephone systems, in compliance with existing law, by making Federal lands and facilities available for communication sites.

Accept applications for communication sites on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the resource management prescriptions in this land use plan.

Consider communication site applications on lands that have been identified for disposal on a case by case basis. If an application is approved and the lands are subsequently exchanged or sold, reserve the communication site, subject to valid existing rights. Retain and make subject to valid existing rights previously designated communication sites. On lands that have been acquired or identified for retention, limit communication site development to previously designated sites. Develop communication site plans for all designated sites.

Design communication sites following guidelines developed by the USFWS to minimize impacts to migratory birds.

### ***Administrative Actions***

As suitable, coordinate communication-related planning with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Land Use Authorizations

### ***Management Actions***

Continue to issue land use authorizations (rights-of-way, leases, permits, easements) on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with resource management prescriptions in this land use plan.

Prohibit apiary (bee keeping) permits within 1/4 mile of facilities such as the following:

- high-use recreation areas such as campgrounds, trailheads, and staging areas,
- designated non-motorized trails,
- areas or routes with permitted recreation activities, and
- active scientific and research areas.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act

### ***Management Actions***

Under the R&PP Act, accept applications from State and local governments and non-profit organizations on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with resource management prescriptions in this land use plan.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Public Land Withdrawals and Classifications

### ***Management Actions***

Consider public land withdrawals and classifications on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with resource management prescriptions in the land use plans. Actions prohibited by the terms of the withdrawal or classification remain in effect until such withdrawals are revoked or classifications terminated.

## **2.7.1.3 Soil, Air, and Water Resources**

Implementing the *Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration* (Land Health Standards) (BLM 1997a) would meet the requirement for soils to support proper functioning of hydrologic, energy, and nutrient cycles.

Identify, quantify, and secure legal entitlement to all existing water sources on the public lands and seek to acquire water rights, when possible, to ensure water availability to meet multiple-resource needs. Assert Federal reserved water rights, where suitable, in Agua Fria National Monument and the five wilderness areas to secure water for the purposes of the reservations.

Monitor and protect water quality to meet Federal and State standards. Ensure that the water needs of flora and fauna are met.

Ensure that all land tenure decisions are reviewed for their impacts to water resources, including protection of instream flows.

## **2.7.1.4 Biological Resources**

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat

### ***Desired Future Conditions - Desert Tortoise***

Desert tortoise habitat, by habitat category, will be managed to achieve the following desired conditions:

- Category I - Maintain stable, viable populations and protect existing tortoise habitat values and increase populations where possible,
- Category II - Maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat values, and
- Category III - Limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible through mitigation.

Categories I and II desert tortoise habitat will be managed to retain all natural sheltersites (boulders or caliche caves or similar features used by tortoises for sheltering) and be unfragmented.

Vegetation will consist of at least 5 percent native perennial grasses, at least 10 percent native perennial forbs or subshrubs, at least 30 percent native trees and cacti, by dry weight, as limited by the potential of the ecological site as described by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) ecological site guides.

### ***Management Actions - Desert Tortoise***

Standardize desert tortoise management throughout its habitat. Management will be consistent with the following documents:

- Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan (BLM 1988b).
- Strategy for Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on Public Lands in Arizona, Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-91-16 (BLM 1990a)
- Strategy for Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on Public Lands in Arizona: New Guidance on Compensation for the Desert Tortoise, Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-92-46 (BLM 1992), and
- Supplemental Guidance for Desert Tortoise Compensation, Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-99-008 (BLM 1999).

Desert tortoise habitat will be managed according to the categories shown on Map 2-92. Habitat management categories and boundaries will be revised as new population information becomes available. The criteria that will be used in revising categories and boundaries are those in the 1988 Rangeland Plan (BLM 1988b).

The criteria for Category I tortoise habitat areas are the following:

- Habitat areas are essential to maintenance of large, viable populations.
- Conflicts are resolvable.
- Populations are medium to high density or low density contiguous with medium or high density.
- Populations are increasing, stable, or decreasing.

The criteria for Category II tortoise habitat areas are the following:

- Habitat areas may be essential to maintenance of viable populations.
- Most conflicts are resolvable.
- Populations are medium to high density or low density contiguous with medium or high density.
- Populations are stable, or decreasing.

Category III tortoise habitat areas are the following:

- Habitat areas are not essential to maintenance of viable populations.
- Most conflicts are not resolvable.
- Populations are low to medium density not contiguous with medium or high density.
- Populations are stable or decreasing.

No net loss will occur in the quality or quantity of Category I and II desert tortoise habitat to the extent practicable. BLM will address and include mitigation measures in decision documents to offset the loss of quality or quantity of Category I, II, and III tortoise habitats.

Compensation may be required to mitigate residual impacts from authorized actions.

Evaluate on a case-by-case basis all proposed activities, including the following, for impacts to desert tortoise population or habitats:

- requests for rights-of-way,
- easements,
- withdrawals,
- other land tenure actions,
- range improvements,
- wildlife habitat projects,
- mineral material sales, and
- commercial and organized group SRP applications.

Mitigation for adverse impacts is permissible to achieve no net loss in quantity or quality of desert tortoise habitat.

In Category I and II tortoise habitats, all motorized competitive races will be prohibited from March 31 through October 15. All other use requests during this time will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may be denied or adjusted to avoid conflict with tortoise activity and habitat. Mitigation for conflicts will be permissible to achieve no net loss in quantity or quality of desert tortoise habitat.

All mining plans of operations will be assessed for impacts to desert tortoise habitat on a case-by-case basis. Adverse impacts to desert tortoise would be mitigated to the extent allowable in the 3809 regulations.

#### ***Administrative Actions - Desert Tortoise***

Maintain and develop a proactive public education program on the desert tortoise and its habitat requirements, including participation in public events with tortoise habitat information. Update existing tortoise brochure every five years or as needed.

Continue to work with and support other agencies and public entities in desert tortoise conservation.

#### ***Management Actions - Priority Species and Priority Habitats***

Emphasize and give priority to managing priority species and priority habitats in the event of conflicts between resource management objectives. Priority species include the following:

- game species,
- special status species,
- birds of conservation concern, and
- raptors.

See Appendix H for a complete list of priority species.

Priority habitats include areas allocated as WHAs (pronghorn fawning habitat, pronghorn movement corridors, and bighorn sheep habitat), ACECs, riparian areas, springs, bat roosts, and desert tortoise habitat.

Reintroductions, transplants, and supplemental stockings (augmentations) of wildlife populations will be carried out in collaboration with AGFD or the USFWS for the following purposes:

- to maintain current populations, distributions, and genetic diversity,
- to conserve or recover threatened or endangered species, and
- to restore or enhance native wildlife species diversity and distribution.

Species that may be reintroduced, transplanted, or augmented include but are not limited to pronghorn; desert bighorn sheep; mule deer; desert tortoise; beavers; lowland leopard frogs; Mexican garter snakes; and native fishes like spikedace, Gila chub, Gila topminnow, desert pupfish, longfin dace, speckled dace, and desert sucker.

#### ***Management Actions - Threatened or Endangered Species***

The actions described below implement the relevant Terms and Conditions and Conservation

Recommendations contained in the following Biological Opinions and Conference Opinion:

- [2-21-88-F-167] The Phoenix Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.
- [2-21-96-F-421] The Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan (1983), and Lower Gila North Grazing EIS (1982).
- [2-21-96-F-422] The Eastern Arizona Grazing EIS, Phoenix District Portion.
- [2-21-99-F-031] Reintroduction of Gila Topminnow and Desert Pupfish into Three Tributaries of the Agua Fria River.
- [2-21-03-C-409] Existing Phoenix Resource Management Plan for the Agua Fria National Monument.
- [2-21-03-F-210] BLM Arizona Statewide Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire, Fuels, and Air Quality Management.

Acquisition criteria for non-Federal lands will include the potential

- to enhance the conserving and managing of threatened or endangered species habitat, riparian habitat, desert tortoise habitat, key big game habitat and
- to improve the overall manageability of wildlife habitat.

BLM will not transfer from Federal ownership the following:

- designated or proposed critical habitat for a listed or proposed threatened or endangered species,
- lands supporting listed or proposed threatened or endangered species if such transfer would be inconsistent with recovery needs and objectives or would likely affect the recovery of the listed or proposed species, and
- lands supporting Federal candidate species if such action would contribute to the need to list the species as threatened or endangered.

Exceptions to the above could occur if the recipient of the lands would protect the species or critical habitat equally well under the ESA, such as disposal to a non-Federal governmental agency or private organization if conservation purposes for the species would still be achieved and ensured.

Wildlife and prescribed fire management will incorporate the T/E Species Conservation Measures described in Appendix P which resulted from the BLM Arizona Statewide Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire, Fuels, and Air Quality Management (BO #2-21-03-F-210).

***Desired Future Condition - Gila Topminnow, Gila Chub and Desert Pupfish***

All biologically suitable perennial waters on public lands in the planning areas will be occupied by thriving populations of Gila topminnow, Gila chub, and desert pupfish.

***Management Actions - Gila Topminnow, Gila Chub and Desert Pupfish***

In cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, re-establish Gila topminnow, Gila chub and desert pupfish into suitable habitat sites throughout the planning area.

Stream bank alteration due to recreation activities and livestock grazing in areas occupied by Gila topminnow, Gila chub, and desert pupfish will be limited to 25 percent annually.

Domestic livestock utilization of native riparian trees seedlings along streams occupied by Gila chub, Gila topminnow, and desert pupfish will be limited to 30 percent of the apical stems per growing season.

Fuels treatments on watersheds for habitat occupied by Gila topminnow, Gila chub, and desert pupfish will be limited to no more than 1/2 the watershed in any 2-year period.

***Administrative Actions - Gila Topminnow, Gila Chub and Desert Pupfish***

In coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, monitor all Gila topminnow, Gila chub and desert pupfish populations annually.

Monitor for mortality of Gila topminnow, Gila chub and desert pupfish populations following significant runoff events within a year of treating the watershed with prescribed burns.

All monitoring results will be shared with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service annually.

BLM will coordinate all fire suppression actions in watersheds occupied by Gila topminnow, desert pupfish and Gila chub with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). If incidental take of these species is likely to occur due to suppression actions, BLM will cooperate with appropriate agencies to collect and salvage fish, if collection and salvage operations can be accomplished safely. BLM will renovate/restore the population site(s) and aid in the re-establishment of the species into the original site(s). If repatriation is not possible due to extreme effects at the site, BLM will coordinate with the FWS to locate or restore a substitute site. Once conditions are suitable for the fish or a substitute site has been selected, the salvaged fish shall be reintroduced. BLM shall coordinate the salvage and release with the FWS and AGFD.

The BLM will monitor the effects of fire suppression actions on Gila topminnow, desert pupfish and Gila chub using approved protocols. Where fire suppression actions may have resulted in fish mortality, the BLM will investigate fire suppression related fish mortality and determine if there have been measurable reductions in abundance from that previously determined by status reviews. The BLM will monitor post-fire levels of sediment, debris, and fire-fighting chemicals and water quality at Gila topminnow, desert pupfish and Gila chub sites to ensure the habitat remains capable of supporting these fish. Water quality data will include temperature, pH (acidity), dissolved oxygen,

total dissolved solids, and turbidity. This monitoring will occur as soon as practicable after the fire and will be coordinated with FWS.

BLM will provide a brief report of monitoring results to the FWS by February of each year following monitoring efforts along with the Wildfire Suppression Documentation forms which will contain the data agreed upon (see FWS File # 02-21-03-F-0210).

At Silver Creek and Indian Creek:

- Monitor stream bank alteration and vegetation two times annually, during and following livestock seasonal use period.
- Monitor functional condition and trend every 3 years.

At Tule Creek:

- Inspect and maintain the fenced enclosure two times annually when livestock are present in the area.
- Monitor stream bank alteration and vegetation annually when livestock are present.
- Monitor functional condition and trend every 3 years.

***Desired Future Condition - Spikedace***

The Agua Fria River, where biologically suitable, is occupied by a thriving population of spikedace.

***Management Actions - Spikedace***

In cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, re-establish a spikedace population in the Agua Fria River.

***Desired Future Condition - Southwestern Willow Flycatcher***

Riparian areas that could physically support (due to floodplain width and gradient) southwestern willow flycatcher habitats will attain the

vegetation structure, plant species diversity, density, and canopy cover to constitute suitable habitat. Vegetation in these riparian areas will be sufficiently dense and structurally complex to inhibit flycatcher predators and cowbirds from finding flycatcher nests. Livestock management facilities or other facilities will not be located so that they would attract cowbirds to suitable flycatcher habitat.

### ***Management Actions - Southwestern Willow Flycatcher***

Within the range of southwestern willow flycatcher, livestock grazing will conform to the guidelines described in the "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" section of Guidance Criteria for Determinations of Effects of Grazing Permit Issuance and Renewal on Threatened and Endangered Species (BLM and US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona and New Mexico 1999) or any subsequent agreed-upon amendment to these guidelines.

The current guidance criteria for Not Likely to Adversely Affect states:

1. Disturbance of individuals or nests, predation, or parasitism would not be likely because livestock use would not occur in occupied habitat during any time of the year.
2. Suitability for nesting flycatchers would not be reduced because livestock grazing in unoccupied suitable habitat would not occur during the growing season (key vegetation characteristics are maintained or enhanced and conditions promoting cowbird parasitism are avoided).
3. Cowbird parasitism would be unlikely because grazing would occur greater than five miles from occupied habitat during the breeding season, or
4. Monitoring of flycatcher nests demonstrates that no cowbird parasitism is occurring when livestock use occurs closer than 5 miles, but not within, occupied habitat, or
5. Cowbird parasitism would be unlikely due to the physical juxtapositions of habitat type, terrain, facilities, elevation, and other factors.
6. Progression of potential habitat towards becoming suitable within 10 years would not be impeded by livestock grazing (e.g. regeneration or maintenance of woody vegetation is not impaired by trampling, bedding, or feeding).
7. Sufficient monitoring is in place to demonstrate that habitat suitability is being maintained or enhanced in accordance with two and four above. Such monitoring would continue through the life of the grazing action under consideration.

### ***Desired Future Condition - Bald Eagle***

Habitat quality and quantity of riparian areas within the foraging range of bald eagles in the Lake Pleasant area is maintained and nesting and habitat for wintering birds in the Agua Fria River drainage is maintained. Sufficient quantity and quality of these riparian areas provide roosting and potential nesting trees and adequate prey.

### ***Desired Future Condition - Yellow-billed Cuckoo***

Riparian areas that could physically support (due to floodplain width and gradient) yellow-billed cuckoo habitats will attain the vegetation structure, plant species diversity, density, and canopy cover to constitute suitable habitat. Livestock utilization will not substantially reduce the abundance, density or distribution of native riparian tree species through herbivory.

### ***Management Actions – Other Priority Species – Desert Bighorn Sheep***

Domestic sheep and goat grazing will be prohibited within nine miles of occupied desert bighorn sheep habitat to avoid disease transmission and comply with Bureau

guidelines. Desert bighorn sheep habitat is depicted on Map 3-10.

***Management Actions – Other Priority Species – Birds of Conservation Concern***

Management of habitat for Birds of Conservation Concern will emphasize avoidance or minimizing impacts and restoring and enhancing habitat quality to implement Executive Order 13186. Through the permitting process for all land use authorizations, ensure the maintenance of habitat quantity and quality. Take (as defined in the Glossary) of migratory birds from authorized activities will be minimized or avoided.

***Desired Future Condition – Riparian Habitat***

Riparian areas will include a plant community that consists of streambanks dominated (> 50 percent) by native species from the genera *Scirpus*, *Carex*, *Juncus*, and *Eleocharis*. The size class distribution of native riparian obligate trees will be > 15 percent seedlings, > 15 percent mid-size, and > 15 percent large size (depending on existing conditions and the site potential). Size classes are defined as follows:

- Seedlings are < 1 inch in basal diameter.
- Mid-sizes are 1 to 6 inches in basal diameter.
- Large sizes are > 6 inches in basal diameter.

***Management Actions - Springs***

Developed springs, seeps, and other projects affecting water and related resources will be designed to protect ecological functions and processes and to continue to provide habitat at the source for endemic invertebrates, native fishes, and other native aquatic species that may be present.

Water rights needs will be quantified, filed for, and protected, including those for instream flows, streams, springs, and other water sources important to wildlife, fish, and riparian values.

Water quality will be monitored and protected to meet Federal and State standards and to ensure that the needs of fish and wildlife are met along with the needs of people.

***Desired Future Conditions – Bat Roosts***

The bat roost habitats values associated with natural caves and abandoned mine features are protected and these sites do not pose a threat to human safety.

***Management Actions - Bat Roosts***

Authorized activities will ensure the maintenance of bat roost habitat quantity and quality, using mitigation to achieve the DFC.

***Desired Future Conditions – Wildlife Habitat Across All Areas***

Maintain, restore, or enhance the diversity, distribution, and viability of populations of native plants and wildlife, and maintain, restore, or enhance overall ecosystem health. Discretionary activities in the planning areas will be managed to ensure connectivity of habitats and maintenance of unrestricted wildlife movement.

All upland areas will include:

- a plant community that consists of native perennial grass and ground cover adequate to improve wildlife habitat and
- improved watershed function based on monitoring and ecological site potential. Upland sites include five percent or greater dry-weight composition of native perennial grass, as limited by the potential of the ecological site as described by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) ecological site guides.

The Desired Plant Community for upland sites will have a long-term stable population of columnar cacti and paniculate agave, where the sites have the potential for such plant communities.

### ***Management Actions - Wildlife Habitat Across All Areas***

Identify, minimize, and mitigate for wildlife habitat degradation, loss, and fragmentation to achieve the DFC.

The *Land Health Standards described in Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration* (BLM 1997a) will be applied to all activities on the public land.

The density and distribution of wildlife waters will be maintained, improved, or increased throughout the planning areas to sustain and enhance wildlife populations across their range.

All existing wildlife waters will be maintained or improved as needed to maintain the presence of perennial water for wildlife.

New wildlife waters will be built when needed to maintain, restore, or enhance native wildlife populations or distributions.

Reasonable administrative vehicular access will be allowed for AGFD staff to wildlife water facilities for maintenance, repair, or research.

Water developments, including those for purposes other than wildlife will include design features to ensure safe and continued access to water by wildlife.

The planning areas contain suitable habitat for relocating and releasing individual animals and release of rehabilitated wildlife. These types of wildlife releases are not intended to establish new populations but are appropriate in areas of suitable habitat. Wildlife species that can be released include but are not limited to black bears; mountain lions; burrowing owls; and other raptors, reptiles, and game species.

The evaluation of vehicle routes, in conjunction with the route designation process, will consider the effect of routes on wildlife habitat values. Routes that conflict with maintaining sensitive wildlife habitat will be mitigated to achieve

DFC. Mitigation will include, but not be limited to the following:

- route closure,
- seasonal use restrictions,
- rerouting,
- vehicle type restrictions,
- vehicle speed restrictions, and
- other mitigation suitable to the nature of the conflict.

Administrative access will be allowed by law for enforcement and AGFD and USFWS staff for natural resource management. AGFD's use of motorized and mechanized equipment off designated routes is considered an administrative use and will be allowed in suitable locations (as agreed to by BLM and AGFD) for such purposes including, but not limited to the following:

- water supplementation,
- collar retrieval,
- capture and release of wildlife, and
- maintenance, repair, and building or rebuilding of wildlife waters.

### ***Administrative Actions - Wildlife Habitat Across All Areas***

Through cooperative partnerships with AGFD and other State and private entities, BLM will conserve, enhance, and restore wildlife habitats, including natural springs, wetlands, and streams.

Continue to implement wildlife habitat management through wildlife HMPs, developed in cooperation with AGFD to meet the requirements of the Sikes Act and address site-specific habitat management objectives. Existing HMPs will be used until new plans are developed.

### ***Desired Future Condition – Invasive Species***

The distribution and abundance of invasive plants and animals will be limited to current levels and through active management, the impact of invasive species on native ecosystems will be reduced from current levels.

### ***Management Actions – Invasive Species***

Adverse impacts to natural plant and animal communities from invasive species would be reduced. Efforts to control or eradicate invasive wildlife species will be carried out in cooperation and collaboration with AGFD or suitable weed management associations or other organizations.

Nonintrusive, non-native plant species will be considered suitable where native species:

- are not available,
- are not economically feasible,
- cannot achieve ecological objectives as well as non-native species, and
- cannot compete with already established non-native species.

The use and perpetuation of native plant species will be emphasized when restoring or rehabilitating disturbed or degraded rangelands.

### ***Administrative Actions – Invasive Species***

A monitoring, management, and educational program will be established to reduce the spread of plants classified as invasive by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

## **2.7.1.5 Cultural Resources**

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Allocate sites to one or more of the six use categories defined in BLM's Manual 8110.4:

- scientific use,
- conservation for future use,
- traditional use,
- public use,
- experimental use, and
- discharged from management.

Manage sites in accordance with the guidelines in Manual 8110.4. See Appendix E for information on these use categories.

Permit scientific and historical studies by qualified researchers at selected sites allocated to scientific use. The highest priority for study will be assigned to significant sites that are threatened by vandalism or other types of disturbance. Scientific studies will be guided by historic contexts and research designs. Priorities will also emphasize sites that have the potential to yield important information, as defined in approved research designs.

Allocate selected sites to public use for long-term preservation and public visitation.

Consider the following factors in selecting sites suitable for this type of use:

- presence of aboveground features, such as structures or rock art, that are of interest to the public and are amenable to interpretive development,
- the condition of the site and the feasibility of treating or stabilizing selected areas to withstand visitation,
- accessibility to travel routes, and
- visitor safety.

### ***Desired Future Condition***

Cultural resources are protected to sustain their irreplaceable scientific, heritage, and educational values. Actions are implemented to monitor, limit, and repair damage. Partnerships and volunteers are utilized to support these objectives and management actions. Selected sites are interpreted to further public knowledge, enjoyment, and stewardship of cultural heritage values.

### ***Management Actions***

Design and maintain facilities to preserve the visual integrity of cultural resource settings and cultural landscapes consistent with VRM objectives established in the RMP. These measures include, but are not limited to:

Implement physical and administrative protection measures to stop, limit, or repair damage and vandalism to sites. A variety of protection measures, described in BLM's

Manual 8140, may be used to protect the integrity of sites at risk:

- closing routes,
- restricting grazing or other uses,
- building fences or other barriers,
- installing erosion control devices,
- placing soil into exposed vandal pits or rooms,
- erecting signs, and
- repairing, shoring up, or stabilizing walls or other parts of structures.

Install and maintain protective signs, including carsonite posts, with the message of the Arizona Site Steward Program on sites that are vulnerable to vandalism. Install protective signs in a manner to avoid drawing attention to sites.

In evaluating project designs and proposed activities, seek to avoid disturbing or removing Native American human remains and associated items. Avoid directing site visitors toward areas where these items could be observed or disturbed.

Include stipulations in Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) to ensure that commercial tour operations will not damage cultural resources. Require tour operators to report any new vandalism or damage to sites.

Limit groups visiting archaeological sites to 25 people/sites at a time. BLM may permit larger groups on a case-by-case basis for educational events, if it implements mitigation to minimize adverse impacts.

### *Administrative Actions*

Ensure that all proposed undertakings and authorizations are reviewed and conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), and other applicable laws.

Continue to consult with Indian tribes to identify places of traditional importance and associated access needs. Develop measures for managing and protecting places that might be identified by tribes during the life of the plan.

Complete documentary research and oral histories to gain a better understanding of cultural resources from homesteading, mining, ranching, and other historical period activities.

Restrict public information about the locations of sites that are not allocated to public use (selected for interpretive and educational uses).

Establish collaborative research partnerships with academic institutions, professional and non-profit organizations, and avocational organizations. Provide opportunities for volunteer training and participation in site documentation, research, protection, and educational projects.

Continue to participate in Arizona Archaeology Awareness Month events, along with other educational outreach that highlights the values of cultural heritage resources and the need to protect these resources.

Provide opportunities for tribal participation in research and interpretation.

Honor tribal requests to protect the confidentiality of sensitive information, to the extent permitted by law.

Complete Class II (sample) and Class III (intensive) field inventories to identify cultural resources and evaluate the condition of sites, in accordance with Section 110 of the NHPA. Use the information obtained through these surveys to allocate sites to proper use categories, develop protection measures, and integrate survey results into research designs and interpretation efforts.

Map and document sites before interpretive development for public use, as needed to

- preserve archaeological data,
- plan for interpretive facilities, and

- establish a baseline condition assessment for monitoring changes resulting from visitor use.

Complete interpretive plans for sites allocated to public use through interpretive development.

Implement procedures for systematic monitoring of all sites developed or authorized for public visitation. Restrict visitor access or group tours to prevent any damage from visitor use.

Require that holders of SRPs give site visitors suitable educational information on archaeological site etiquette and resource conservation.

### **2.7.1.6 Wilderness Characteristics**

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics.

This allocation complies with guidance in Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2003-275 Change 1, (Appendix I). This allocation is managed consistently with the directions in the referenced IM to maintain the landscape values described in Attachment 1 of that IM (which can be found in Appendix I).

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics contain few human intrusions with primitive and natural landscape settings, providing self-reliant and self-directed visitor experiences. These characteristics have been determined to be reasonably present and of sufficient value (condition, uniqueness, relevance, importance) and need (trend, risk), and to be practical to manage. Wildlife populations and habitat are recognized as important aspects of the naturalness and will be actively managed.

Lands and resources within these areas exhibit a high degree of naturalness. These areas are affected mainly by the forces of nature, and the imprint of human activity is substantially unnoticeable. Naturalness is evaluated by the following:

- occurrence of vehicle routes, fences, wildlife, and range facilities,
- nature and extent of landscape modifications,
- presence of native plant and wildlife communities, and
- habitat connectivity.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation may be present. Travel will generally occur through non-motorized and non-mechanical means. Motorized use that does not degrade natural and cultural resources or conflict with DFC may be allowed on designated routes. Non-motorized conveyances (such as bicycles) will be allowed on designated trails. The use of wheeled game carriers will be allowed away from designated routes.

There will be no or minimal developed recreation facilities. Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics will provide opportunities for visitor adventure, challenge, solitude, and discovery. Recreation settings and associated experiences will be semi-primitive non-motorized to primitive with limited areas of semi-primitive motorized around designated vehicle routes. Hunting, hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, wildlife observation, photography, and historic/cultural study will be the chief activities with foot or horseback the customary means of travel.

Non-motorized access may include developing some trails, or simply marking foot routes with posts for minimal disturbance of the ground surface. Installing trails may be considered, where needed; to protect resources, to ensure public safety, or to advance public education and interpretation of objectives.

The rapid urbanization of central Arizona is expected to continue and demands on public lands are expected to increase. During the life of the plan, lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics will constitute some of the remaining large unaltered natural vistas within near proximity to the urbanizing areas. This "open space" would be maintained by careful project planning and design to minimize the visual intrusion of any management activity.

### ***Management Actions***

Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics will be managed to protect primitive characteristics. The management actions are designed to

- maintain low interaction among users away from designated routes,
- provide opportunities for experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of other humans.

Lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics will be managed to have limited evidence of human-induced management restrictions and controls. Visitors will be encouraged to practice Leave No Trace skills to avoid human-induced impacts.

Motorized vehicle routes within lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics will be designated in the Travel Management Plan within 5 years of plan approval. Vehicle routes would be mitigated to resolve conflicts with cultural, biological, or other resources to achieve DFC objectives (which may allow for motorized access in these areas). Mitigation measures may include the following:

- rerouting conflicting route segments,
- engineering to reduce conflicts ,
- limiting seasons of use, vehicle type, vehicle speed, or vehicle numbers, and
- closing routes.

BLM would consider building new routes only as a mitigation measure for route and resource

conflicts or where necessary to meet approved administrative actions.

Sites and areas affected by human activities would be reclaimed when such locales or sites are no longer needed by authorized land uses.

Commercial recreation and vending operations, guided hunt and associated activities, and concession leases would be allowed when such activities conform to to the following:

- land use plan objectives,
- desired recreation settings,
- VRM classes, and
- other social and managerial settings.

AGFD's use of motorized and mechanized equipment off designated routes is considered an administrative use and will be allowed in suitable locations (as agreed to by BLM and AGFD) for such purposes including, but not limited to the following:

- water supplementation,
- collar retrieval,
- capture and release of wildlife, and
- maintenance, repair, and building or rebuilding of wildlife waters.

Discretionary surface-disturbing activities that involve excavations or the use of motorized or mechanized equipment and are not compatible with achieving the DFC or specifically described for each area would be prohibited.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Develop and adopt measurement standards for limits of acceptable change for the following:

- trail conditions,
- visitor-to-visitor encounters,
- vegetation changes,
- applying Arizona Land Health Standards, and
- approved motorized and mechanized activities.

A permit system would be applied, if needed, for the following purposes:

- to conserve solitude and primitive recreation opportunities,
- to preserve desired social and managerial settings,
- to safeguard resources, and
- to mitigate resource impacts.

Any permit system would include coordination with other State and Federal entities that issue use permits on Federal lands to assure that authorized permittees have fair and reasonable access to their permitted activity. For example, should a permit system be implemented, BLM will coordinate with AGFD to allow access for hunters with valid hunting licenses.

### **2.7.1.7 Paleontological Resources**

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Paleontological resources will be managed for their scientific, educational, recreation values, and adverse impacts to these resources will be mitigated. BLM will preserve and protect significant vertebrate paleontological resources for present and future generations. Scientifically significant invertebrates (to be determined by a qualified paleontologist) will also be protected.

#### *Land Use Allocations*

Areas will be classified according to their potential to contain vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils. Paleontological Sensitivity Classes are listed in Table 2-6.

#### *Management Actions*

BLM will identify and protect significant fossils and allow for scientific research at paleontological sites, in accordance with permitting procedures.

Should paleontological resources be discovered within the planning area, the sites will be evaluated for sensitivity. The sites would then be classified and managed consistent with the land use allocation classifications described above.

#### *Administrative Actions*

BLM will include paleontological resources in its cultural resources public education. Educational programs will:

- provide information directly related to procedures to be followed if fossils are found, and
- identify types of fossils that cannot be collected without a permit from the BLM.

BLM will analyze the potential for paleontological resources and do the following:

- Develop a sensitivity map for paleontological resources and require screening for all projects against potential for the project to impact vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils.
- Allocate through plan amendment if appropriate, all lands within the planning areas as Paleontological Sensitivity Class One, Two, Three, or Four as described in Table 2-6.
- Evaluate newly found vertebrate localities to determine their importance and the potential threat of loss to determine an adequate monitoring program.

<b>Table 2-6. Paleontological Sensitivity Classes</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Class 1 (Low sensitivity)	Igneous and metamorphic geologic units and sedimentary geologic units where vertebrate fossils or uncommon invertebrate fossils are unlikely to occur.
Class 2 (Moderate sensitivity)	Sedimentary geologic units that are known to contain or have unknown potential to contain fossils that vary in significance, abundance, and predictable occurrence.
Class 3 (Moderate sensitivity)	Areas where geologic units are known to contain fossils but have little or no risk of human-caused adverse impacts or low risk of natural degradation.
Class 4 (High sensitivity)	Areas where geologic units regularly and predictably contain vertebrate fossils or uncommon invertebrate fossils and are at risk of natural degradation or human-caused adverse impacts.

### 2.7.1.8 Visual Resources

#### *Land Use Allocations*

Visual Resource Management Areas

#### *Desired Future Conditions*

As defined in BLM's Handbook H-8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory, (Section B, one through four) objectives for the four VRM classes are described below:

VRM Class I Objective: The objective of this landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes, but it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.

VRM Class II Objective: The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low.

Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

VRM Class III Objective: The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

VRM Class IV Objectives: The objective of this class is to provide for management activities that require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer's attention. Every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

#### *Management Actions*

Project proposals that could result in surface disturbance or may contain visible components would be analyzed using procedures outlined in BLM Handbook H-8431-1, Visual Contrast Rating, to determine their conformance with the VRM allocation of the project area. If necessary, modifications would be made to the project, including design changes or a change of location, for the project to meet the VRM Class objective. In any case, regardless of VRM Class, an effort will be made to make any project proposal with a visible component as visually compatible with its surroundings as practical.

### 2.7.1.9 Rangeland Management

The following actions would apply to Alternatives in which grazing is permitted.

They would also apply to grazing management in the interim period from when grazing is prohibited to the final removal of livestock:

BLM has implemented the application of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (Land Health Standards). Allotment evaluations to determine if grazing practices are achieving the desired standards are conducted before the grazing permit or lease is renewed. Changes in grazing practices needed to achieve the standards are then incorporated in the stipulations of the reissued permit or lease. Rest-rotation, deferred-rotation, seasonal or short-duration use, or other management systems may be implemented where needs are identified through monitoring. Monitoring will be used to assess the effectiveness of changes brought about by the new management practices.

Exceptions to Standard 1 and 2 of the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health may occur on ecological sites or stream reaches where a change in existing vegetation is physically, biologically, or economically impractical.

Public Lands without a grazing permit or lease authorization would remain unauthorized for livestock grazing.

Where livestock grazing is permitted, range improvements needed for proper management of the grazing program would be determined and completed, including repair and/or installation of fences, cattle guards, water developments, and vehicle routes needed to access improvement sites. These improvements would be conducted using a variety of mechanical equipment.

Vehicular access to repair range improvements by the grazing permittee or lessee would be considered administrative access. Use of vehicle routes closed to public use but limited to administrative uses would be allowed to maintain or repair range improvements. Off-route vehicular use would require prior authorization unless the needed access is to

resolve an immediate risk to human health, safety, or property.

One-time travel off designated routes to access or retrieve; sick or injured livestock would be authorized as an administrative use for transporting the animal to obtain medical help. Retiring livestock grazing from an allotment would be considered when those lands are devoted to a public purpose that precludes continued livestock grazing.

### **Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health - Guidelines for Grazing Administration**

The Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration are a series of management practices used to ensure that grazing meets the standards for rangeland health, which are referred to in this plan as Land Health Standards. The following guidelines apply to all areas where grazing occurs.

#### ***Guidelines for Standard One***

1-1. Management activities will maintain or promote ground cover that will provide for infiltration, permeability, soil moisture storage, and soil stability appropriate for the ecological sites within MUs. The ground cover should maintain soil organisms, plants, and animals; to support the hydrologic and nutrient cycles and energy flow. Ground cover and signs of erosion are surrogate measures for hydrologic and nutrient cycles, and energy flow.

1-2. When grazing practices alone are not likely to restore areas of low infiltration or permeability, land management treatments may be designed and implemented to attain improvement.

#### ***Guidelines for Standard Two***

2-1. Management practices maintain or promote sufficient vegetation to maintain, improve or restore riparian-wetland functions of energy dissipation, sediment capture, groundwater recharge, and stream bank stability, thus promoting stream channel morphology (e.g.

gradient, width/depth ratio, channel roughness, and sinuosity), and functions suitable to climate and landform.

2-2. New facilities are located away from riparian-wetland areas if they conflict with achieving or maintaining riparian-wetland function. Existing facilities are used in a way that does not conflict with riparian-wetland functions or are relocated or modified when incompatible with these functions.

2-3. The development of springs, seeps, or other projects affecting water, and associated resources will be designed to protect ecological functions and processes.

### ***Guidelines for Standard Three***

3-1. The use and perpetuation of native species will be emphasized. When restoring or rehabilitating disturbed or degraded rangelands, nonintrusive, non-native plant species are suitable for use where native species (a) are not available, (b) are not economically feasible, (c) cannot achieve ecological objectives as well as non-native species, and/or (d) cannot compete with already established non-native species.

3-2. Conservation of Federal threatened or endangered, proposed, candidate, and other special status species is promoted by maintaining or restoring their habitats.

3-3. Management practices maintain, restore, or enhance water quality in conformance with State or Federal standards.

3-4. Intensity, season and frequency of use, and distribution of grazing use should provide for growth and reproduction of plant species needed to reach DPC (Desired Plant Community) objectives.

3-5. Grazing on designated ephemeral (annual and perennial) rangeland may be authorized if the following conditions are met:

- Ephemeral vegetation is present in draws, washes, and under shrubs, and

has grown to useable levels at the time grazing begins; as well as sufficient surface and subsurface soil moisture exists for continued plant growth.

- Serviceable waters can provide for proper grazing distribution.
- Sufficient annual vegetation will remain on site to satisfy other resource concerns (e.g. watershed, wildlife, wild horses, and burros).
- Monitoring is conducted during grazing to determine if objectives are being met.

3-6. Management practices will target populations of noxious weeds that can be controlled or eliminated by approved methods.

3-7. Management practices to achieve DPCs will consider protecting and conserving known cultural resources, including historical sites, prehistoric sites, and plants of significance to Native American people.

DPC objectives would be quantified for each allotment through the rangeland monitoring and evaluation process. Ecological site descriptions available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and other data will be used as a guide for addressing site capabilities and potentials for change over time. These DPC objectives are vegetation values that BLM is managing over the long term. Once established, DPC objectives would be updated and monitored by the use of indicators for Land Health Standard Three.

Apply management actions outlined in the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (Land Health Standards) to recognize and correct potential erosion problems that could degrade other resources, with prioritized emphasis on sites that might directly affect species that have been listed as threatened, endangered, or candidate by the USFWS.

## 2.7.1.10 Fire Management

### Desired Future Conditions

- Fire is recognized as a natural process in fire-adapted ecosystems and is used to achieve objectives for other resources.
- Fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) are maintained at non-hazardous levels to provide for public and firefighter safety.
- Prescribed fire complies with Federal and State air quality regulations.
- Each vegetation community is maintained within its natural range of variation in plant composition, structure, and function, and fuel loads are maintained below levels that are considered to be hazardous (See Table 2-7 and Appendix J for more information on each vegetation community).
- DFCs will be coordinated with the rangeland standard and guidelines allotment evaluations.

### Land Use Allocation

BLM-administered public lands will be assigned to one of the following two land use allocations for fire management (Table 2-7).

#### Allocation One - Wildland Fire Use:

##### Areas suitable for wildland fire use for resource management benefit.

Where wildland fire is desired, few or no constraints exist on its use, and conditions are suitable, unplanned and planned wildfire may be used to achieve desired objectives such as the following:

- to improve vegetation, wildlife habitat, or watershed conditions,
- to maintain non-hazardous levels of fuels,
- to reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fires, and
- to meet resource objectives.

Where fuel loading is high but conditions are not initially suitable for wildland fire, fuel loads are reduced by mechanical, chemical, or biological means to reduce hazardous fuel levels and meet resource objectives (includes WUI areas).

### Management Actions

Use suitable tools for reducing hazardous fuels, including prescribed burning, wildland fire use, and mechanical methods. Methods can include the following:

- chainsaws,
- motorized equipment for crushing brush,
- tractor and hand piling,
- thinning and pruning, and
- treatments selected on a site-specific case that are ecologically suitable and cost effective.

### Land Use Allocation

#### Allocation Two - Non Wildland Fire Use:

##### Areas not suitable for wildland fire use for resource benefit.

This allocation includes areas such as the following where mitigation and suppression are required to prevent direct threats to life or property:

- areas where fire historically never played a large role in developing and maintaining the ecosystem,
- areas where intervals between fires were very long, and
- areas (including some WUI areas) where an unplanned ignition could harm the ecosystem unless some form of mitigation is applied.

Mitigation may include mechanical, biological, chemical, or prescribed fire means to maintain non-hazardous levels of fuels, reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fires, and meet resource objectives.

The allocation of lands is based on the DFC of vegetation communities, ecological conditions, and ecological risks. The allocation of lands is determined by contrasting current and historical conditions and ecological risks of any changes (Map 2-93 Fire Land Use Allocation). The condition class concept helps describe changes in key ecosystem components such as species composition, structural stage, stand age, canopy closure, and fuel loadings. BLM fire management plans will include the two allocations and identify areas for including fire use and mechanical, biological, or chemical means to

- maintain non-hazardous levels of fuels,
- reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fires, and
- meet resource objectives.

Fire management plans will also determine which areas will be excluded from fire (through fire suppression) and which will receive chemical, mechanical, or biological treatments.

### ***Management Actions***

In areas not suitable for fire, BLM would implement programs to reduce unwanted ignitions and emphasize prevention, detection, and rapid suppression response.

In areas not suitable for fire where fuel loading is high, BLM would use biological, mechanical, or chemical treatments and some prescribed fire to maintain non-hazardous levels of fuels and meet resource objectives.

In areas suitable for fire where fuel loading is high and current conditions constrain fire use, BLM would emphasize prevention and mitigation programs to reduce unwanted fire ignitions and use mechanical, biological, or chemical treatments to mitigate the fuel loadings and meet resource objectives.

In areas suitable for fire where conditions allow, BLM would do the following:

- allow naturally ignited wildland fire,
- use prescribed fire and a combination of biological, mechanical, and chemical treatments to maintain nonhazardous levels of fuels,
- reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fires, and
- meet resource objectives.

In areas suitable for fire, BLM would monitor existing air quality levels and weather conditions to determine which prescribed fires can be ignited and which, if any, must be delayed to ensure that air quality meets Federal and State standards. If air quality approaches unhealthy levels, BLM would delay igniting prescribed fires.

In addition to both allocations, to reduce human-caused fires, BLM would undertake education, enforcement, and administrative fire prevention mitigation measures. Education measures would include the following:

- provide media information, including a signing program,
- give the public information on the natural role of fire within local ecosystems, and
- participate in fairs, parades, and public contacts.

Enforcement would train employees interested in determining the cause of fires. Administration would include expanded prevention and education programs with cooperator agencies.

For all fire management activities (wildfire suppression; appropriately managed wildfire use; prescribed fire; and mechanical, chemical, and biological vegetation treatments), conservation measures would be implemented as part of the proposed action to provide statewide consistency in reducing the effects of fire management on federally protected (threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate) species (see Appendix P).

Use suitable tools for reducing hazardous fuels, including prescribed burning, wildland fires,

and mechanical methods. Methods can include chainsaws, motorized equipment for crushing brush, tractors and hand piling, thinning and pruning, and treatments that are selected on a site-specific basis and are ecologically suitable and cost effective.

Conservation measures noted as “recommended” are discretionary for implementation but are recommended to help minimize effects to federally protected species. Incorporated here by reference are procedures within the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Task Group 2004), including future updates, relevant to fire operations that may affect federally protected species or their habitat.

Firefighter and public safety are the first priority in every fire management activity. Setting priorities among protecting human communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources must be based on the following:

- values to be protected,
- human health and safety, and
- costs of protection (BLM 2001b).

Implementing, to the extent possible, the following conservation measures during fire suppression and during proposed fire management activities, as required, would minimize or eliminate the effects to federally protected species and habitats.

During fire suppression resource advisors may be designated to coordinate concerns on federally protected species and to serve as liaison between the field office manager and the incident commander and the incident management team. Resource advisors will also serve as field contact representatives responsible for coordinating with the USFWS. Resource advisors will have the needed information on federally protected species and habitats in the area and the available conservation measures for the species. They will be briefed on the intended suppression actions for the fire and will provide input on which conservation measures

are suitable within the standard constraints of safety and operational procedures. The incident commander has the final decision making authority on implementation of conservation measures during fire suppression.

Conflicts may occur in attempting to implement all conservation measures for every species potentially affected by a particular activity, because of the number of species within the action area for the proposed statewide land use plan amendment (Dynamac Corporation 2004); and the variety of fire suppression and proposed fire management activities. Implementing these conservation measures would depend on:

- the number of federally protected species and
- their individual life histories or habitat requirements within a particular location that is being affected by either fire suppression or a proposed fire management activity.

Conflicts could particularly arise from timing restrictions on fuel treatment if the ranges of several species with differing restrictions overlap. It could; therefore, be impossible to effectively implement the activity. Resource advisors (in coordination with USFWS), fire management officers, incident commanders, and other resource specialists would need to coordinate to determine which conservation measures would be implemented during a particular activity. If conservation measures for a species cannot be implemented, BLM would be required to initiate Section 7 consultation with USFWS for that activity.

BLM will update local fire management plans to include site-specific actions for managing wildfire and fuels in accordance with the new Federal fire policies, based on guidance provided in the decision records for this statewide land use plan amendment (Dynamac Corporation 2004). These plans will be coordinated with USFWS and the AGFD to address site-specific concerns for federally protected species. These plans will incorporate

the conservation measures included in this statewide land use plan amendment for federally protected species occurring within each fire management zone. BLM will consult with USFWS on these project-level plans, as needed.

Categories A, B, C, and D, polygons are referenced in the 1998 Fire Management Plan (FMP). The FMP was updated in 2007 and has fire management units containing polygons based on the following:

- vegetation communities,
- fire regime condition classes, and
- closeness to urban interface areas.

As a fuels management tool, BLM uses prescribed fire and mechanical treatment to maintain semi-desert grasslands in Agua Fria National Monument. BLM has designated 24 burn units, encompassing 50,000 acres, to receive treatment on a 5- to 10-year rotation. Prescribed fire in this area is coordinated closely with similar projects conducted by Prescott and Tonto National Forests to provide an ecosystem-wide effort to maintain the Agua Fria grasslands.

Resource objectives under the current fire management plan include the following:

- reducing woody species,
- increasing ground cover,
- increasing perennial grass cover and production,
- increasing annual grass and forb production, and
- improving pronghorn antelope habitat.

Prescribed fire is used in the Weaver Mountains within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. The Weaver Mountain Hazard Fuels Reduction Project was developed to treat hazard fuel accumulations, which are located on 14,000 acres of BLM, State, and private lands in chaparral vegetation 17 miles north of Wickenburg. Project objectives are (1) to reduce the risk of large, catastrophic wildfire and (2) to maximize benefits to wildlife and livestock by reducing dense chaparral cover by

30 percent to 80 percent. During prescribed burning about 1,000 acres of chaparral will be treated annually over the next 5 to 10 years to create mosaic patterns in the mixed age class chaparral community throughout the 14,000 acre project area.

### Special Area Designations

Fire management activities in Agua Fria National Monument would ensure that no adverse effects occur to the resources listed in the proclamation (Appendix A) as the reasons for establishing the area.

In wilderness areas, when suppression actions are required, minimum impact suppression tactics (MIST, Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations [Task Group 2004]) would be applied and coordinated with wilderness area management objectives and guidelines.

Fire management efforts along river segments recommended as suitable for designation under the WSR Act would use measures that avoid degrading the outstandingly remarkable values that qualify the rivers for designation.

ACECs are established in land use plans. BLM would consider the desired conditions and management prescriptions for these Special Area Designations in implementing fire management activities.

Wildfires resulting from natural fire starts (lightning) from an adjoining ownership may be allowed to cross jurisdictional boundaries if the fire meets predetermined, prescription criteria, and the ownerships have an agreement.

#### 2.7.1.11 Recreation

Standards for Recreation Settings referred to in this document are as follows:

**Recreation Settings** - Settings described in the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS)

inventory method. Descriptions of the settings follow:

**Primitive:**

**Remoteness:** An area designated by a line generally three miles from all open roads, railroads, and motorized trails

**Evidence of Humans:** Setting is essentially an unmodified natural environment. Evidence of humans would be unnoticed by an observer wandering through the area.

Evidence of trails is acceptable but should not exceed standard to carry expected use.

Structures are extremely rare.

**Social:** Usually less than six parties per day encountered on trails and less than three parties visible at campsites.

**Managerial:** Onsite regimentation is low with controls primarily offsite.

**Semi-primitive Non-motorized:**

**Remoteness:** An area designated by a line generally 1/2 mile from any road, railroad, or trail open to public motorized use. (The guideline for applying the 1/2 mile criterion is to use 1/2 mile except where topographic or physical features closer than 1/2 miles adequately screen out the sights and sounds of humans and make access more difficult and slower. For example, if a ridge is 1/4 mile from the road, use the ridge instead of the 1/2 mile.)

Any roads, railroads, or trails within the semi-primitive non-motorized areas will have the following characteristics:

Closed to public motorized use, and

Are reclaimed, or in the process of reclaiming (when reclaiming will harmonize with the natural appearing environment). Some examples are old logging roads, old railroad beds, old

access routes to abandoned campsites, temporary roads, and gated roads that are used for occasional administrative access.

**Evidence of Humans:** Natural setting may have subtle modifications that would be noticed but not draw the attention of an observer wandering through the area.

Little or no evidence of primitive roads and the motorized use of trails and primitive roads.

Structures are rare and isolated.

**Social:** Usually 6-15 parties per day encountered on trails and six or fewer parties visible from campsite.

**Managerial:** Onsite regimentation and controls present but subtle.

**Semi-Primitive Motorized:**

**Remoteness:** An area designed by a line generally 1/2 mile from open better than primitive roads. (The guideline for applying the 1/2 mile criterion is to consistently use 1/2 mile where topographic or physical features closer than 1/2 mile adequately screen out the sights and sounds of humans, e.g. a ridge 1/4 mile from the road).

Contains open primitive roads that are not maintained for the use of standard passenger-type vehicles, normally OHVs and high-clearance vehicles, e.g. an old pickup with high clearance. These open roads are generally tracks, ruts, or rocky-rough surface and ungraded and not drained. The roadbeds and cuts are mostly vegetated with grass or native material unless they are too rocky for vegetation. The roads harmonize with the natural environment. Examples include old logging roads from before specified road years, old revegetated railroad beds, old access roads to abandoned home-sites, temporary logging roads that are revegetated, and low standard administrative roads (normally used for access to wildlife openings).

Evidence of Humans: Natural setting may have moderately dominant alterations but would not draw the attention of motorized observers on trails and primitive roads within the area. Any closed improved roads must be managed to revegetate and harmonize with the natural environment.

Strong evidence of primitive roads and the motorized use of trails and primitive roads.

Structures are rare and isolated.

Social: Low to moderate contact frequency.

Managerial: Onsite regimentation and controls present but subtle.

**Roaded Natural:**

Remoteness: No criteria

Evidence of Humans: Natural setting may have modifications, which range from being easily noticed to strongly dominant to observers within the area. But from sensitive travel routes and use areas these alterations would remain unnoticed or visually subordinate.

There is strong evidence of designed roads, highways, or both.

Structures are generally scattered, remaining visually subordinate or unnoticed to the sensitive travel route observer. Structures may include utility corridors or microwave installations.

Social: Frequency of contact is - Moderate to high on roads; Low to Moderate on trails and away from roads.

Managerial: Onsite regimentation and controls are noticeable but harmonize with the natural environment.

**Rural:**

Remoteness: No criteria

Evidence of Humans: Natural setting is culturally modified to the point that it is dominant to the sensitive travel route observer. This setting may include pastoral, agricultural, intensively managed wildland resource landscapes, or utility corridors. Pedestrian or other slow-moving observers are constantly within view of culturally changed landscape.

There is strong evidence of designed roads, highways, or both.

Structures are readily apparent and may range from scattered to small dominant clusters, including utility corridors, farm buildings, microwave installations, and recreation sites.

Social: Frequency of contact is - Moderate to High developed sites, on roads and trails, and water surfaces; Moderate away from developed sites.

Managerial: Regimentation and controls obvious and numerous, largely in harmony with the human-made environment.

**Urban:**

Remoteness: No criteria

Evidence of Humans: Setting is strongly structure dominated. Natural or natural appearing elements may play an important role but be visually subordinate. Pedestrian and other slow moving observers are constantly within view of artificial enclosure of spaces.

There is strong evidence of designed roads and/or highways and streets.

Structures and structure complexes are dominant.

Social: Large numbers of users onsite and in nearby areas.

Managerial: Regimentation and controls obvious and numerous

**Implementation:** Projects requiring environmental analysis as a part of an authorization process will include an analysis to determine compatibility or consistency with the settings as described above. This analysis will be conducted consistent with current accepted practice and documented in the project record.

### 2.7.1.12 Travel Management

All motorized and mechanized travel is limited to existing roads and trails, according to the current inventory of routes, until final route designations are made.

The boundaries of Travel Management Areas correspond to Management Unit boundaries. Travel management plans (TMPs) will be created for each Travel Management Area (TMA) as route designations are completed. The TMP will address issues such as:

- Creating a catalog for each individual route's Travel Management Objective (TMO) sheets;
- Risk management
- Coordination with adjoining jurisdictions
- Procedures for making additions and deletions from the route system;
- Signing plans and sign inventories;
- Facility development (engineering);
- Education and enforcement;
- System monitoring and compliance;
- Coordination with BLM's Facility and Asset Management System (FAMS);
- Dust management plans;
- Other topics as necessary to manage travel.

The following considerations will guide decisions on travel management.

- a. Designated wilderness areas are managed according to the existing decisions described in this plan.
- b. All areas outside of designated wilderness are limited vehicle use areas where vehicles are

limited to routes designated as open or available for vehicle use as follows:

- Non-motorized, mechanized vehicle use (e.g., bicycles, hang gliders, other devices for conveyance and stock drawn carts/wagons) is restricted to routes or sites designated as available, or open for such use. Non-motorized, hand-powered wheeled game carriers are permitted as described below.
  - Decisions regarding motorized vehicles are according to the prescriptions in the Travel Management sections of this plan.
- c. Non-mechanized travel (i.e., foot and equestrian use) is allowed off designated routes, except where otherwise prohibited. The creation of routes caused by repetitive use is discouraged. Routes not meeting land health standards or plan objectives may be closed.
  - d. All caves, mines, wells, abandoned structures, or other confined spaces are closed to public entry unless an individual site is signed open for such entry or entry is authorized under special use permit.
  - e. The use of aircraft, motorized and non-motorized, must conform to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards including the use of backcountry landing strips. There are no backcountry airstrips designated for public use on BLM land within the planning area. Use of public lands for launching or landing aircraft other than airplanes (balloons, hang gliders, etc.) may be permitted on a case-by-case basis through the appropriate permit process. The Yarnell Hang Gliding launch area is discussed in other sections of this plan.
  - f. Area closures to access and travel methods may be enacted where travel is determined to be inconsistent with the recreation management zone, harming resources, or failing to achieve the objectives of the plan.
  - g. Touring routes and trail systems, both motorized and non-motorized, are a priority and will be addressed through activity (implementation) level planning. Proposed actions that may effect proposed touring routes and trail systems will be evaluated and adjusted when possible to avoid impacts. Examples of priority routes and trail systems include the Maricopa County Regional Trail

- System and long distance vehicle touring routes with local and regional significance.
- h. Administrative and other authorized use will be approved on a case-by-case basis (see decision of administrative and emergency access below).
  - i. Temporary access and use restrictions may be enacted when needed to protect resources or public health and safety.

#### PM<sub>10</sub> Non-attainment Area Administrative TMA:

- a. All General TMA prescriptions apply.
- b. The areas described in 40 CFR 81.303 or subsequent regulation or policy as PM<sub>10</sub> air quality non-attainment areas will be managed for compliance with EPA and County standards and other applicable standards to maintain air quality. Dust mitigation measures may be implemented including, but not limited to, speed limits, adding dust reducing agents to disturbed areas, seasonal closure, or year round closure.

## 2.7.2 Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument

### 2.7.2.1 Management Units

The size and complexity of Agua Fria National Monument does not require subdivision into MUs. The monument is a MU in and of itself.

### 2.7.2.2 Special Area Designations

#### *Management Actions*

Continue to manage the suitable WSR proposals for non-impairment of free-flowing conditions and identified outstandingly remarkable values (Map 2-2).

Remove the designations of Larry Canyon and Perry Mesa ACECs because the Monument Proclamation (Appendix A) provides for a

higher level of protection and management across a more extensive landscape, rendering these designations unnecessary.

### 2.7.2.3 Lands and Realty

In accordance with the FLPMA and the National Monument Proclamation (Appendix A), no lands within the monument may be disposed of or exchanged. Acquiring non-Federal lands within the monument will be considered if they become available from a willing seller. Upon acquisition, these lands would automatically become a part of the monument. Acquiring adjacent non-Federal lands (from a willing seller) will be considered if they could be managed to enhance monument values.

#### *Land Use Allocations*

#### **Utility and Transportation Corridors and Communication Sites**

#### *Management Actions*

New utility corridors, whether interstate, intrastate, or local, would not conform to the provisions of the National Monument Proclamation. Therefore, such corridors within the monument will not be considered.

New transportation corridors, whether interstate, intrastate, or local, would not conform to the proclamation. Therefore, such corridors within the monument would not be considered.

New BLM communication site areas designated in advance of demand would not conform to the proclamation. Therefore, new communication site areas within the monument would not be considered.

Access to existing utilities on existing vehicle routes is considered an administrative use and is allowed. Continued maintenance of authorized facilities is also allowed with suitable mitigation to minimize affects to monument resources. Design maintenance of vehicle routes for access to correct hazardous or unsafe conditions,

but keep them to the smallest size and condition necessary to provide access.

### **2.7.2.4 Soil, Air, and Water Resources**

#### *Management Actions*

Maintain and protect water quantity and quality in springs and streams.

Prohibit surface water diversions and groundwater pumping that removes water from the monument or adversely affects the monument's values.

Collaborate with State and local entities to protect surface and subsurface water in the monument.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Develop and implement a water quality/quantity monitoring program to establish baseline data needed to quantify the Federal reserved water right for the monument. Monitoring may include the following:

- periodic measurements of spring and stream flows,
- periodic measurements of water levels in selected wells, and
- regular sampling and water quality analysis of surface water throughout the monument.

### **2.7.2.5 Biological Resources**

#### *Management Actions*

Fuels reduction projects may include provisions for permitting firewood collection on a case-by-case basis.

Written authorization from the monument manager is needed for collecting plant materials for scientific purposes.

Prohibit all other vegetation collection or removal.

### **2.7.2.6 Cultural Resources**

#### *Land Use Allocations*

The following sites would be allocated to the category of “conservation for future use”:

- Rattlesnake Pueblo and other prehistoric masonry structures in the back country region south of Perry Tank Canyon,
- all rock art sites larger than a single, isolated boulder, and
- the historic stone features at Arizona N:16:70 (MNA).

For more information on this use category and associated actions, see Appendix E.

Allocate to scientific use sites that would allow for study under approved research plans.

The use category of “discharged from management” would be applied in a limited manner, consistent with the protection of monument resources and the cultural landscape of the Perry Mesa National Register District. The allocation of “discharged from management” would be applied mainly to properties that have lost their heritage values through the following:

- damage or destruction by natural processes,
- unauthorized activities, and
- actions conducted before the monument was established (2000).

Selected sites would be allocated to public use for long-term preservation and public visitation. See Appendix E for more information on this use category.

#### *Management Actions*

At sites allocated to conservation for future use, scientific studies would normally be limited to

surveys, mapping, and other noninvasive documentation methods. The BLM would preserve the integrity of these sites and their settings through use restrictions and protective measures. Following BLM's Manual 8110, the BLM could specify provisions that would allow for scientific excavations, under limited circumstances. The permit applicant would need to justify why this work would be a critical component of an approved research design, and why the needed information could not be obtained elsewhere in the monument.

Scientific use allocations would allow for the following:

- detailed documentation through such techniques as mapping, photography, photogrammetry, and remote sensing,
- sample collections of artifacts,
- collections of samples for radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic, pollen, and flotation analyses, and
- limited excavations.

Studies may be conducted for the following purposes:

- to obtain critical data relevant to research objectives,
- to assess site protection and stabilization needs, and
- to support interpretive planning for properties also allocated to public use.

Research plans would ensure that most architectural features and cultural deposits remain intact at habitation sites with multiple rooms. Protection would remain a priority for sites that have been allocated to scientific uses.

Assign a high priority for detailed documentation to the following sites:

- Pueblo la Plata, Fort Silver, Baby Canyon Pueblo, and Pueblo Pato.

- Rock art sites on Black Mesa and along Baby Canyon and Perry Tank Canyon on Perry Mesa.
- The remnants of the historic Richinbar Mine water delivery system in the Agua Fria River Canyon.

Allocate specific sites to public use within Special Cultural Resource Management Areas. The degrees of interpretive development within these areas would be consistent with relatively High or Moderate levels of use. Sites would not be allocated to public use within areas set aside for low use. Actions that could be implemented at or near selected sites in each level of use area are described as follows.

### **Potential Management Actions for Special Cultural Resource Management Areas**

#### **High Public Use**

- Building visitor facilities, which may include gravel parking areas, restrooms, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and benches.
- Improving routes with signs installed along vehicle routes to direct visitors to interpreted sites and visitor facilities. Routes would not be paved.
- Closing routes within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of sites, with single- and two-track routes converted to non-motorized use to improve visitor flow and site protection.
- Establishing hardened walking trails.
- Installing interpretive signs and visitor register boxes.
- Conducting limited excavations, backfilling pueblo rooms, or stabilizing walls to protect or display portions of sites.
- Establishing interpretive loop trails connecting archaeological sites and natural features. Non-motorized or motorized trail systems could be linked to sites in Tonto National Forest.
- Preparing brochures and other educational materials or programs focused on sites.

- Showing site locations on maps, monument brochures, and BLM's websites.
- Authorizing commercial and other group tours, conducted in accordance with special SRPs.

### **Moderate Public Use**

- Installing interpretive signs and visitor register boxes.
- Establishing non-motorized trails, including hardened walking trails.
- Closing existing trails within 1/4 to 1/2 mile from sites to vehicles and converting to non-motorized use to improve site protection.
- Producing fact sheets or brochures.
- Providing limited publicity and limited access for commercial tours.
- Placing emphasis on conveying an experience of discovery.

### **Low Public Use**

- Allocating no sites to public use for interpretive development.
- Installing no interpretive signs or facilities.
- Building no trails.
- Developing no fact sheets or interpretive media about specific sites.
- Issuing no special recreation permits for commercial tours.
- Publicizing and showing no sites on maps and brochures.
- Allowing hikers and other visitors to experience a sense of discovery by encountering and observing undeveloped sites in pristine settings.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Conduct field inventories to identify significant resources in the geographic "data gap" north of Perry Mesa.

Conduct a Class III survey of 500 acres at the north end of Black Mesa to complete a 100

percent level of inventory coverage of the mesa, which north of Sunset Canyon.

Conduct Class III surveys of corridors at least 200-foot wide along 20 miles of Bloody Basin Road, Forest Road 14, and other regularly used routes on Perry Mesa.

Conduct Class III surveys of corridors at least 1/4 mile wide totaling 12 miles along the Agua Fria River, Silver Creek, Sycamore Creek, Indian Creek, and Ash Creek.

Conduct Class III surveys of at least 2,000 acres surrounding Pueblo la Plata, Baby Canyon Pueblo, and Pueblo Pato.

Continue to monitor at least 15 pueblo villages and rock art sites that are at greatest risk from vandalism, with help from partners who may include the Civil Air Patrol and volunteers from the Arizona Site Steward Program. Develop and implement systematic monitoring protocols for selected sites.

Focus monitoring on rock art sites and habitation sites with 20 or more rooms, particularly sites within 1/2 mile of travel routes. This strategy conforms to the results of a vandalism study by BLM and Tonto National Forest (Ahlstrom and others 1992).

Develop and maintain an active program of public education on the nature and values of the monument's cultural resources and the need to preserve them. Assist BLM's National Heritage Education Program and its partner organizations in pursuing and implementing grants to produce educational materials.

Actively pursue partnerships with professional and avocational organizations, academic institutions, tribal governments, and other entities for an orderly process of cultural research, recordation, and education. Coordinate with tribes and Tonto National Forest to prepare an ethno-historical study of the history of Native American uses and heritage values in the Perry Mesa National Register District.

### 2.7.2.7 Recreation Resources

Commercial permits are issued to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-served basis based on monument values and how they meet resource and public health and safety concerns.

Competitive and organized group and event activity permits are issued on a case-by-case basis based on monument values and how they meet resource and public health and safety concerns.

Permit allocations for commercial and organized groups and events could be adjusted based on monitoring of areas to be used, to accurately accommodate level of use, to sustain monument objects and resources while maintaining desired social and managerial settings.

Recreation within the monument boundaries would focus on activities or experiences that depend on the monument's resources and cannot readily be obtained elsewhere. Recreation uses that do not depend on the lands within the monument would be encouraged to move to other BLM-managed lands. Emphasis would be placed on maintaining ecological resources by monitoring and managing recreation uses.

It is highly desirable that the public understand its role in sustaining the monument's archaeological, historical, and biological resources. Partnerships with adjacent communities would play a vital role in realizing the monument's DFC. Through these partnerships, members of these communities could explore ways to benefit socially and economically from public lands by offering needed services while still protecting monument values.

The emphasis of recreation management on monument lands would be guided under provisions presented for a Special Recreation Management Area containing three Recreation Management Zones (RMZs). The RMZ allocations are as follows: Front Country, Back Country, and Passage.

#### *Land Use Allocation*

Front Country Recreation Management Zone

#### *Desired Future Condition*

This zone will be the focal point for both motorized and non-motorized visitation, concentrating public access, recreation activities, development along major travel routes, and more intensively visited use areas. The Front Country RMZ will contain more developed opportunities, such as interpretive opportunities at popular sites, and supporting recreation facilities where intensive management is needed. Management will place an emphasis on maintaining public access to the Front Country RMZ for public use, while maintaining the integrity of monument resources and values. Some areas may be designated as day use to promote visitor safety, and for resource protection.

Desired recreation opportunity experiences, and settings within the Front Country RMZ will range between rural, roaded-natural, and semi-primitive motorized. Both day use and overnight recreation uses will be acceptable unless otherwise specified in the land-use plan allocations. Day-use areas with more intensive use will be evaluated and sited within the Front Country.

Visual Resource Management DFCs related to Recreation can be found in Section 2.7.2.8.

#### *Management Actions*

Provide interpretive sites, trails, overlooks and other amenities, visitor services where appropriate to protect monument resources, or enhance public use and enjoyment. Selected cultural sites allocated to public-use levels High and Moderate would be interpreted for public visitation/education. Access to improvements may include development of non-motorized trails of dirt, pavement, or other hard surfaces in order to assist visitor travel and minimize disturbance to cultural and natural resources.

Management Actions related to motorized and non-motorized recreation routes are described in the Travel Management Section 2.7.2.10.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Back Country Recreation Management Zone

### ***Desired Future Condition***

This zone will provide an undeveloped, primitive, and self-directed visitor experience and landscape setting without provisions for motorized or mechanical access. The management emphasis will be to preserve natural, undeveloped landscapes. Back Country will be managed to maintain a natural landscape character. The Back Country RMZ will provide opportunities for adventure, challenge, solitude, and discovery. Facilities will be minimal: provided only where vital for resource protection or public safety, or for approved administrative purposes. Facilities will generally be limited to trails, signs and other amenities, which are essential to the protection of monument resources. Maintaining the integrity of the monument values and resources is integral to any activity.

The desired recreation settings and associated experiences within this zone are mainly semi-primitive and non-motorized. The Back Country RMZ will offer non-motorized access and recreation opportunities within primitive settings, where self-reliant and properly equipped visitors can experience solitude. Encounters with other users will be lower than in the Front Country RMZ. Recreation experiences will be primitive, with hunting, hiking, backpacking, wildlife observation, cultural study, photography, and camping as the main activities. Trail and cross-country foot or horseback travel may be permitted.

Visual Resource Management DFCs related to Recreation can be found in Section 2.7.2.8.

### ***Management Actions***

Management Actions related to motorized and non-motorized recreation routes are described in the Travel Management Section 2.7.2.10.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Passage Recreation Management Zone

### ***Desired Future Condition***

The Passage RMZ includes secondary travel routes and associated areas where visitor use will not be directed or encouraged but will be accommodated. Rudimentary facilities, such as the following could be provided or available where needed for resource protection or public safety:

- toilets,
- designated or dispersed primitive campsites,
- scenic turnouts,
- kiosks,
- interpretive sites,
- signs,
- parking and staging areas, and
- trailheads.

This zone will center on the designated motorized travel and transportation network within the Back Country RMZ. The Passage RMZ will be 200 feet-wide, 100 feet on each side of the centerline of designated vehicle routes.

Desired recreation opportunities, experiences, and settings within the Passage RMZ will range from roaded-natural to semi-primitive motorized. Both day use and overnight recreation use will be acceptable, unless otherwise specified in the land use plan allocations. Archaeological sites allocated to Moderate public use could be interpreted within this zone.

Visual Resource Management DFCs related to Recreation can be found in Section 2.7.2.8.

***Management Actions***

Management Actions related to motorized and non-motorized recreation routes are described in the Travel Management Section 2.7.2.10.

**General Recreation Management*****Management Actions***

Paintball activities would be prohibited within the monument.

Geocaching would be prohibited in areas managed for primitive or semi-primitive non-motorized settings. Caches would not be allowed within archaeological sites.

Equestrian use would be monitored and managed to meet Arizona Land Health Standards (Land Health Standards).

Horses or other stock animals would be prohibited at signed archaeological sites.

The use of weed-free feed would be encouraged to prevent introducing noxious, invasive weeds.

**Camping and Parking:**

Camping would be limited to 14 days within the monument unless authorized by the manager.

Visitors wishing to camp and park along designated roads and primitive routes will be strongly encouraged through visitor information, education, and signing to select and use sites with clear evidence of prior use. Such evidence is indicated by easy vehicle access to the site, lack of vegetation, bare and compacted soils and other evidence of prior use like fire rings. If such areas are to be closed to camping and rehabilitated, signs will be posted to that effect.

**Collection of Natural Resources:**

Collecting all natural organic and natural inorganic materials (except for fish and wildlife taken in accordance with state law and trash and

litter) within the monument would be prohibited except for scientific, research and other pre-approved purposes by obtaining written approval from the field office manager or the monument's manager. (See the Biological Resources discussion in the Management Common to Agua Fria National Monument section of this chapter.)

**Adaptive Management:**

Adopt limits of acceptable change indicators and standards.

New forms of recreation opportunities and technological advances affecting the monument's values would be managed to protect the monument's resources. If use is perceived as inconsistent with or deleterious to the monument, this activity would be suspended until data is collected and analyzed and the monument's manager makes a final recommendation based on research findings.

Establish criteria through external collaboration to determine when monument's values are at risk and to adjust on-the-ground management strategies and actions.

The current authority for collection of recreation user fees would not allow for collection of such fees on the Agua Fria National Monument. Under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004, P.L.108-447, fees may be charged at a site that has:

- clearly defined access points and area boundaries,
- substantial expenditure in operations and maintenance costs,
- significant investment in facilities (including roads and trails), and
- contains all of the following amenities:
  - a designated and developed parking area,
  - permanent toilet,
  - permanent trash receptacle,
  - kiosks,
  - picnic tables, and
  - security services commensurate with use levels.

Should the above criteria be met in the future, a study would be initiated to determine the need and feasibility of charging a recreation use fee.

#### Special Recreation Permits:

Issuing of SRPs is at the discretion of BLM. BLM's evaluation of permit applications would be based on applicable laws and regulations and would conform to the Monument Proclamation (Appendix A). The decision to authorize a proposed use would depend on the following:

- potential resource impacts,
- conflicts with other users,
- health and safety concerns,
- past or present performance with BLM or other agencies,
- BLM's ability to timely process the application and effectively administer the permit, and
- the number of permits issued during the 365 days (one year) prior to permit application.

#### Leases and Land Use Permits:

Recreation concession leases, long-term authorizations for the use of public lands, are authorized under 43 CFR 2920. BLM would evaluate concession leases on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they conform to the monument values. The proposed concession would need to conform to the managerial and social settings as described in the document such as recreation settings, VRM, and other special use area prescriptions.

Apiary permits would be prohibited within 1/4 mile of identified high-use areas, such as facilities, trailheads, and areas subject to SRP events, or at active scientific and research areas.

Commercial filming or still photography requiring a permit in accordance with Public Law 106-206 would be issued under the SRP guidelines when associated with permitted recreation activities. BLM would evaluate applications on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they are consistent with

monument values. The fee schedule would be used as outlined in 43 CFR 2920 commercial filming regulations. Non-recreation related commercial filming will be managed by the appropriate 2920 guidelines.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Develop partnerships and identify sustaining recreation and tourism-based economic opportunities with communities.

Support collaborative efforts with the public on monument issues and efforts.

Post a toll-free phone number for the BLM's dispatch office on kiosks, maps, brochures, permits, and other public outreach conveyances to keep the public involved in reporting emergencies and criminal activities, including damage to the monument's resources.

SRP applicants would be strongly encouraged to have a working knowledge of Leave No Trace or Tread Lightly principles. Additionally, applicants would be asked to incorporate Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly principles into their tour, program, or event activities.

To the greatest extent possible, all new construction and modifications for recreation facilities, outdoor developed areas, and any related programs and activities will be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, with later amendments. Guidance, requirements, and standards applicable to conform to the above legislation may be found in the following:

- Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards.
- Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines.
- ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines (use whichever guidance is most stringent).
- Proposed Outdoor Developed Areas Guidelines -U.S. Access Board found at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) and 43 CFR Part

17, Subpart E found at  
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.htm>

### **Interpretation and Environmental Education**

Pursue interpretation and environmental educational opportunities, outreach development, and implementation of on-site and off-site programs for adults and children.

Establish repository of photographs and images that will illustrate BLM's mission, including digital photographs and slides for program design.

Apply learning modalities and incorporate various learning styles in program design and delivery.

Encourage the use of multiple intelligence or other theories for program presentations.

Develop school curricula focusing on the BLM's mission with willing staff from schools, school districts, and other learning institutions.

Support existing educational and interpretive programs and initiatives such as Project Archaeology; Leave No Trace; Tread Lightly; Project Learning Tree; and other proven national, State, regional, and local programs.

Develop websites, brochures, maps, access guides, and information sheets to publicize OHV rules and regulations, with an emphasis on Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly practices.

### **2.7.2.8 Visual Resources**

*Desired Future Conditions related to achieving Recreation related DFCs by Recreation Management Zone*

#### **Front Country**

Visual resource objectives would emphasize retaining the current natural vistas while allowing visually sensitive visitor-related development.

#### **Back Country**

Visual resource objectives in this zone will emphasize retaining the current visual landscapes and vistas.

#### **Passage**

VRM objectives would emphasize retaining the current natural vistas while allowing visually sensitive visitor-related development.

#### **Management Actions**

Manage the visual landscape to minimize visual impacts of authorized activities. As much as possible, maintain night skies free of light pollution. Work with surrounding communities and other agencies to minimize the impact of lighting.

### **2.7.2.9 Mineral Resource Management**

#### **Management Actions**

All Federal minerals in Agua Fria National Monument would remain withdrawn or closed from all forms of location, sale, or leasing, including withdrawn from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws. Federal minerals are also withdrawn from disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing and from disposal under the Mineral Materials Act. Mineral interests may be exchanged if such exchange furthers the protective purposes of the monument. Any mineral interests acquired by the United States within the monument are reserved as part of the monument and are subject to the aforementioned withdrawals.

For lands encumbered by mining claims, no activity beyond casual use, as defined in the 43 CFR 3809 regulations, is allowed without determination of valid existing rights. A mining plan of operations is required for any activities beyond casual use.

## 2.7.2.10 Travel Management

### *Land Use Allocations*

Motorized and mechanized uses on all monument lands will be Limited to Designated Routes only.

Limited to Designated Routes = 70,900 acres

### *Desired Future Conditions*

Define, designate, implement, and monitor a comprehensive travel management network affording a range of high-quality and diverse motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. The network would consist of a system of roads, primitive roads, and trails. The designated travel management network and associated recreation opportunities would be consistent with all monument resource management objectives, recreation settings, and preservation of monument objects.

### *Management Actions*

All motorized vehicles and mechanized equipment would be limited to designated routes, except in emergency situations. Motorized use shall keep within the designated route with reasonable use of the shoulder and immediate roadside, allowing for vehicle passage, emergency stopping, or parking unless otherwise posted.

Vehicle access on designated routes may be temporarily closed when weather creates muddy conditions. When conditions are such that travel by vehicle cannot be accomplished without damaging the existing roadway, departing the roadway and traveling across cross-country, the route is closed until the roadway can once again support a vehicle without damage.

All vehicles would be limited to designated routes. Cross-country motorized vehicle or mechanized equipment travel would be prohibited except in response to emergencies, or for BLM- or interagency-authorized tasks.

Mechanized or motorized vehicles would not be used off designated routes to retrieve game. Non-motorized wheeled game-carriers would be permitted to travel cross-country.

All uses of routes, whether motorized or non-motorized would be mitigated where it is determined to be inconsistent with established monument management objectives or such use is harming monument resources. Possible mitigation measures may include the following:

- closing routes,
- limiting seasonal use,
- limiting vehicle types, speeds, and noise,
- rerouting offending route segments, and
- modifying routes to reduce or eliminate conflicts.

Vehicle routes would receive the least amount of maintenance needed to provide desired access. Many routes would be retained in a primitive condition to discourage excessive speeds so as to protect monument values and promote public safety.

Currently, the AFNM is outside the PM<sub>10</sub> Serious Non-attainment area around Phoenix. In the future, if included in this area, routes would be managed to comply with PM<sub>10</sub> rules. Managing dust would be part of the monument's ongoing monitoring effort. Proposed mitigation actions (closure, seasonal restrictions, speed limits, change in use, surfacing, surface and dust abatement treatments) would be addressed as part of the adaptive management for Travel Management. Routes with unacceptable or noncompliant use and associated air quality impacts would be closed to travel until route conditions change or are corrected.

Interconnecting routes could be developed where feasible and consistent with resource management goals and monument values. Vehicle routes may be developed if needed for protection of monument resources, visitor education and appreciation, and visitor safety.

All vehicle route construction must be consistent with other resource objectives, desired social and managerial settings, and VRM objectives.

### ***Management Actions Specific to Recreation Management Zones***

#### **Front Country**

Maintaining, enhancing, or developing routes for non-motorized and motorized visitor travel may be done within the Front Country RMZ if such actions further protect monument resources, ensure public safety, or to achieve land-use plan objectives. All closed vehicle routes may be considered for redevelopment as hiking, equestrian and/or mechanized vehicle trails.

#### **Back Country**

Non-motorized access may include development of some trails, or simply marking foot routes with fiberglass posts with minimal ground disturbance. Installation of trails may be considered where needed to protect monument resources, ensure public safety, or to further public education and interpretation objectives. Non-motorized trails may be evaluated for their potential to link areas of interest and provide a network of connecting trails. Such areas may include the following:

- Bull Tank and Baby Canyon,
- Badger Springs/Agua Fria Confluence and Pueblo Pato, and
- the Black Canyon City area into the southern part of Black Mesa.
- Motor vehicle travel routes entering or traversing the Back County RMZ will be managed under the Passage RMZ provisions. All vehicles are restricted to passage zones.

#### **Passage**

Designated routes would be maintained at their current condition except where resource degradation or user conflicts occur. No routes will be upgraded, but routes would be minimally

maintained to current standards. Routes would be maintained for the following reasons:

- to ensure access by authorized users such as BLM's permittees and lessees,
- to allow access for wildlife enhancement and maintenance projects,
- to ensure public safety by correcting hazardous conditions,
- to protect monument values, and
- to mitigate resource damage.

No new motorized routes would be built except for the following reasons:

- to protect monument values,
- to mitigate resource conflicts or damage,
- to correct hazardous travel conditions, and
- to meet other resource management objectives.

Any rerouting or building of vehicle routes must be consistent with protecting the monument resources and must meet management objectives.

## **2.7.3 Management Common to the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area**

### **2.7.3.1 Special Area Designations**

#### **Designated Wilderness Areas**

##### ***Management Actions***

Within wilderness areas and in the absence of group size limitations in existing wilderness or activity plans, group size for casual use activities will be limited to 25 people. BLM would evaluate requests for groups of more than 25 people on a case-by-case basis to ensure that resources are protected. Groups exceeding 25 people would require prior written authorization from the authorized officer. A

SRP would be required for groups over 50 people.

Commercial recreation and vending operations would not be allowed in the Harquahala Mountains, Hummingbird Springs, and Big Horn Mountains Wilderness Areas, (including, but not limited to, such activities as guided horse rides or guided hikes) except for guided hunt and outfitter services. Organized would be allowed on a case-by-case basis when consistent with wilderness management objectives. Commercial recreation operations may be allowed in the Hassayampa River Canyon and Hells Canyon Wilderness Areas when such activities conform to wilderness management plans, resource protection, and wilderness management objectives, and may be performed to the extent necessary for activities which are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.

Wilderness areas are allocated as closed to motorized vehicles. Exceptions to this closure could be allowed for such wildlife management activities when approved by the BLM's manager, and when such motorized and mechanized equipment is determined to be the minimum tool needed to do the job.

Motorized activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as the need arises in the Big Horn Mountains, Hummingbird Springs, and Harquahala Mountains Wilderness Areas. Existing wilderness management plans will guide wildlife management within Hells Canyon and Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness Areas.

Develop and adopt measurement standards for limits of acceptable change for trail conditions, visitor-to-visitor encounters, vegetation changes, Arizona Land Health Standards (Land Health Standards), and approved motorized/mechanized activities. Exceeding the limits of acceptable change could result in implementing actions such as the following:

- developing and distributing Leave-No-Trace or other educational information,
- initiating a permit system,
- closing damaged areas or trails to camping to allow natural restoration,
- realigning trails,
- reclaiming damaged areas,
- installing alternative access points,
- monitoring or removing non-native or invasive plants or animals, and
- mitigating the evidence (sights and sounds) of any authorized mechanized/mechanical uses.

### **Harquahala Mountain Summit Back Country Byway**

#### ***Management Actions***

Maintain the Harquahala Mountain Summit Back Country Byway and facilities to current standards and conditions. Management is currently conducted under an activity plan and portions of that plan not superseded by this Resource Management Plan will continue as valid guidance for management of the Back Country Byway.

### **2.7.3.2 Lands and Realty**

#### **Land Tenure Decisions**

#### ***Management Actions***

Lands are to be considered for potential acquisition under all Alternatives. Some of the criteria for selecting such lands (willing seller) are specific to each Alternative's resource program objectives. Other criteria are identified under the Lands and Realty discussion of the Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter. No land disposal management prescriptions are common to all Action Alternatives.

BLM would initiate a withdrawal, which would close to mineral location, mineral leasing, and mineral sales and prohibit all land use authorizations on 20 acres of public land in Lot 21, eastern half of the southwest quarter of

Section 6, Township 8N, Range 5W, for the BLM-Wickenburg fire station.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Utility and Transportation Corridors

### ***Management Actions***

The existing corridors contain many major transportation facilities and are major multiple-use corridors. They also house utilities at or above the threshold levels cited in the Lands and Realty discussion under Management Common to Both Planning Areas section of this chapter. Certain State routes, U.S. routes, or interstate highways would be designated as transportation corridors rather than multiple-purpose corridors. This designation would result because no current or projected demand exists for other utilities that would meet the threshold levels within these corridors.

All major utilities would be routed through designated corridors.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Communication Sites

### ***Management Actions***

In accordance with the Telecommunications Act of 1996, BLM planning for communication infrastructure must help facilitate the implementing of wireless telephone systems by making Federal lands and facilities available for communication sites.

BLM will retain the designated White Tank Mountains, Lone Mountain, Burnt Mountain, Harquahala Mountain, Valencia, and Black Canyon City communication sites.

### **Other Land Use Authorizations**

Land Use Permits for non-recreation related commercial filming will be authorized in conformance with 43 CFR 2920 guidelines.

### ***Administrative Actions***

BLM would, as appropriate, coordinate communication-related planning efforts with the FCC.

## **2.7.3.3 Soil, Air, and Water Resources**

### ***Administrative Actions***

Initiate steps with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and Maricopa County Environmental Services Department to install and operate air pollution monitors near Lake Pleasant, or an alternate location that is experiencing high emission rates of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>).

Maintain and enhance stream flows in special management areas.

## **2.7.3.4 Biological Resources**

### ***Management Actions***

Limit firewood collection to campfire use only.

Allow collection of dead, down, and detached material for campfire firewood.

Include in fuel reduction projects provisions for permitting firewood collection on a case-by-case basis.

Limit collecting of cacti skeletons, ironwood, and mesquite for personal use to 100 pounds per person per year.

Prohibit collecting cacti skeletons, ironwood, mesquite, and any other plant or plant product for commercial purposes.

Allow collecting of plant materials for scientific purposes with prior authorization.

Prohibit removal of all other vegetation material not specifically authorized by permit.

Coordinate vegetation salvage with the State of Arizona, and to the extent practicable, open it to the public.

### **2.7.3.5 Cultural Resources**

Focus proactive (Section 110) inventories on areas defined as Special Cultural Resource Management Areas. Complete at least 200 acres of proactive survey, distributed among one or more of these areas during each fiscal year (See Appendix F for a description of these areas).

Retain in public ownership BLM-managed lands within Special Cultural Resource Management Areas. Conduct Class III surveys on 10 percent of zones above 3,500 feet in elevation, which are the target areas for prescribed burns and other fuel treatment projects. Focus surveys on areas that are most likely to contain flammable historic structures, as identified by documentary research, to develop measures to protect these sites during fuel treatment projects.

Continue to monitor at least 25 sites, which are at greatest risk from vandalism or disturbance, with help from such partners as Arizona Site Steward Program Volunteers.

Allocate properties from the following classes of prehistoric sites to scientific use:

- pueblos and other residential sites,
- hilltop "forts" and masonry structures,
- pit house villages,
- rock art localities,
- caves and rock shelters,
- agricultural features,
- wells and water control features; and
- roasting pits,
- trails and camps,
- resource processing sites,
- rock features and alignments,
- intaglios ("ground figures"),
- lithic quarries,
- grinding implement production sites ,
- artifact scatters that can yield important information and meet the Arizona State Museum definition of a "site" as opposed to an isolated occurrence.

Allocate properties from the following classes of historic sites to scientific use:

- mines, mills, and associated features,
- settlements and camps,
- rock walls and features,
- ranches, homesteads, and associated features ,
- livestock driveways, roads, and trails,
- other public works,
- facilities used in commerce,
- sites of military activities ,
- agricultural features,
- wells and water control features, and
- artifact scatters that can yield important information and meet the Arizona State Museum (ASM) definition of a "site" as opposed to an isolated occurrence.

### **Allocations and Management Actions: Special Cultural Resource Management Areas**

Eight areas are regarded as Special Cultural Resource Management Areas, common to all plan Alternatives. These areas contain significant resources that, in many cases, are at risk of damage (Appendix F). Management actions within priority areas will be incorporated into annual work planning for the PD's Cultural Heritage Program. As described below, selected sites are allocated to the categories of conservation for future use, scientific use, and public use. For further information on these use categories and associated actions, refer to Appendix E.

#### **Black Mesa/Bumble Bee**

Protect significant prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, which are allocated to conservation and scientific uses. Ongoing scientific studies of occupation and use during multiple time periods, particularly the highly significant period from A.D. 900-1250, before the Perry Mesa Tradition in nearby Agua Fria National Monument.

Prepare and submit the required documentation to nominate a "Black Mesa Rim" archaeological

district to the National Register of Historic Places.

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate these sites to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs.

Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Continue to patrol at least three major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Allocate the Running Deer site (NA 5856) and Archaic site AZ N:16:224 (ASM) to scientific use for study by qualified researchers.

Install protective signs at the Running Deer site and associated sites.

Install fences or barriers to exclude livestock from the Running Deer site.

Close or reroute transportation routes that lead directly to significant sites.

### **Galena Gulch**

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Patrol at least three major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Allocate the historic McCabe Cemetery to "conservation for future use" to ensure long-term preservation.

Allocate the Humboldt Ruin (NA 4637) to scientific use.

Install signs and other suitable protection measures at the Humboldt Ruin and selected sites.

Maintain the barbed wire fence and erosion control features at the McCabe Cemetery.

### **Black Canyon Corridor**

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Continue to patrol at least five major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Complete site documentation projects at the DeNoyelles site (AZ N:12:60 (ASM)) and Spring Pueblo prehistoric habitation sites that have been damaged by vandalism. Use the information to assess and implement measures to reduce further architectural deterioration.

Allocate the Euler Site, the Spanish Hill Fort, the DeNoyelles site, and Spring Pueblo to scientific use for study by qualified researchers.

Maintain or install signs at AZ N:12:60 (ASM), Spring Pueblo, Spanish Hill Fort, and other sites.

Close or reroute transportation routes that lead directly to significant sites.

Preserve the remaining historical signs and features of the historic Black Canyon Livestock Driveway and allocate them to public use to interpret the stock driveway's history.

Allocate to public use selected sites that are accessible from the Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trail. Local site types suitable for

public use include hilltop structures, rock art, historic mining camps and ranching facilities, and historic trails. This allocation will be applied to selected sites that

- have aboveground features amenable to interpretive development,
- can be stabilized to withstand public visitation, and
- would be of interest as exhibits-in-place.

Associated actions may include interpretive signs, trails, brochures, and authorizing commercial tours.

### **Lake Pleasant/Agua Fria**

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Acquire the portions of the historic Gillette site that are outside federally administered lands.

Continue to patrol at least six major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Complete site documentation projects with scientific use allocations at the Agua Fria Fort, Fort Tule, and AZ T:4:1 (PC), a hilltop site near Lake Pleasant. *Alternatives B, C, and E* allocate these sites to public use for long-term preservation and interpretation.

Maintain protective fences at Gillette, and sites associated with the Agua Fria Fort.

Maintain or install protective signs on at least five sites.

Coordinate with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Lake Pleasant Regional Park staff in resource protection and public education.

Cooperate in nominating the historic Humbug hydraulic mining complex to the National Register of Historic Places. Under all Alternatives except *Alternative D* allocate the Humbug site to public use for long-term preservation and interpretation.

### **Wickenburg/Vulture**

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Patrol at least three major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Allocate the Vulture City Cemetery and historic engineering features along Constellation Road to "conservation for future use" to ensure long-term preservation. Ensure that road maintenance activities are implemented, to the extent possible, to preserve and stabilize the historic structural features of Constellation Road.

Allocate the unique San Domingo Mill site to scientific use, and complete a detailed documentation of the site.

Maintain the protective fence around the Vulture City Cemetery.

Under all Alternatives except *Alternative D*, allocate the Vulture City Cemetery, Constellation Road, and Monte Cristo Mine to public use for tours, interpretive development, or both.

### **Weaver/Octave**

Continue to patrol at least two major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Allocate the historic Weaver Cemetery to "conservation for future use."

Maintain the fence installed around the Weaver Cemetery.

Assess the condition of the rock cabin and other historic structures at Weaver and the feasibility of stabilization and allocation to public use.

Allocate historic mining sites and settlements to scientific use.

Under *Alternatives B* and *E*, allocate the historic Weaver Cemetery to public use. Install one or more interpretive signs outside the fence.

### **Harcuvar Mountains**

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Allocate pictograph sites (i.e. painted rock art) to “conservation for future use” for long-term preservation.

Patrol at least one site with the help of volunteer site stewards.

Coordinate with the Lake Havasu Field Office in developing strategies to manage cultural resources in the Harcuvar Mountains.

### **Harquahala Mountains**

Acquire parcels with significant sites around Eagle Eye Peak, which is south of Aguila.

Conduct cultural resource inventories (surveys) to obtain critical information needed to identify significant sites, allocate them to use categories, and integrate survey results into protective strategies and research designs. Identify survey areas in reference to geographic gaps in previous coverage and the likelihood of finding

significant sites at risk, including sites next to travel routes.

Continue to patrol at least two major sites with the help of volunteer site stewards. Add sites in selected canyons to the monitoring program.

Allocate the Harquahala Peak Smithsonian Observatory to “conservation for future use” and public use. Continue to maintain the condition of the building to ensure its long-term integrity. Continue to maintain the associated interpretive signs and visitor facilities. Allocate the historic Harquahala Peak Pack Trail to public use.

Allocate sites associated with the observatory and prehistoric sites in selected canyons to scientific use. Complete recording and documentation of site concentrations in selected canyons and near springs.

### **2.7.3.6 Recreation Resources**

The Desired Future Condition and management actions that follow will apply to all public lands, including those within MUs in the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area, unless superseded by management actions for SRMAs, RMZs, or other land use allocations. Where management actions in SRMAs, RMZs, or other land use allocations are silent on the subjects listed below, the actions listed below will apply.

#### ***Land Use Allocation***

The designated Wilderness areas will all be allocated as Special Recreation Management Areas. Wilderness Areas included in this planning area are:

- Harquahala Mountains Wilderness,
- Hummingbird Springs Wilderness,
- Big Horn Mountains Wilderness,
- Hassayampa River Wilderness, and
- Hells Canyon Wilderness.

### ***Desired Future Conditions***

Wilderness areas will be managed for primitive settings to preserve their outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and naturalness.

### ***Land Use Allocation***

Extensive Recreation Management Areas

### ***Management Actions***

#### **General Recreation**

All recreation actions such as facilities, projects, programs, amenities, and trails, as described in the sections below, would conform to land use plans, activity plans, and resource management objectives. The proposed actions need to conform to the managerial and social settings described in the document, such as recreation settings, VRM, SRMA, RMZ, lands allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics, and other management prescriptions.

#### **Camping**

Dispersed camping would be permitted on all planning area lands unless otherwise specifically designated as closed or restricted for resource protection or public safety purposes.

The current 14-day length of stay camping limit would continue to be policy for all public lands in the planning area, unless otherwise specifically designated or modified by management actions in this plan. The 14-day limit may be reached by continuously occupying one site or by occupying more than one site within a 25-mile radius within a 90-day period. Following the 14-day period, the party may not relocate to a campsite within a distance of 25 miles that was previously occupied, nor may they return to any sites previously occupied. After 14 days, the party may also choose to move to a designated camping area or move off public land. Extensions beyond the 14-day length of stay may be permitted on a case-by-

case basis where needed for resource protection and land use management provisions.

Designated camping locations and camping length of stay limits (long- and short-term) would be developed as needed for the following purposes:

- protecting resources,
- ensuring visitor safety,
- resolving social conflicts,
- improving recreation experiences, and
- increasing recreation opportunities.

All campsite construction or designation would be compatible with social and managerial recreation settings and VRM objectives. Communities, user groups, or agency staff can bring camping site proposals forward for management attention.

Self-contained or vehicle-based camping would be permitted within 100 feet of the centerline of designated routes. Visitors camping and parking along roads and routes will be strongly encouraged through visitor information, education and signing to select and use camp and parking sites with clear evidence of prior use. Such evidence is indicated or evidenced by vehicle access to the site, lack of vegetation, bare mineral soils and other dispersed campsite amenities such as fire rings.

Campsites would be designated and developed at mining sites and prospecting areas when needed for resource protection due to trail proliferation, loss of soil and vegetation cover, public health and safety concerns, or user conflicts.

Any trailhead or staging area could be closed to overnight camping upon written authorization of the authorized officer.

It is unlawful for a person to camp within 1/4 mile of a natural water hole containing water or man-made watering facility containing water in such a place that wildlife or domestic stock will be denied access to the only reasonably available

water (Arizona Revised Statute 17-308, Unlawful Camping).

### **Group Use (Non-commercial)**

Existing vehicle parking and camping sites must be large enough to accommodate the group size without increasing the footprint of the disturbance area. Large group activities and events with 75 or more people would require a special recreation permit unless otherwise specified in special management areas or designated sites where carrying capacities are established in subsequent implementation level plans, or when special management and monitoring are determined to be needed.

### **Group Use in Wilderness (Non-commercial)**

Large group activities in wilderness areas would be managed consistent with the provisions in Section 2.7.3.1 under the discussion of Designated Wilderness Areas.

### **Equestrian Activities**

Monitor and manage equestrian use according to the Arizona Land Health Standards (Land Health Standards).

Encourage the use of weed-free animal feed to prevent the introduction of noxious, invasive weeds.

### **Geocaches**

The placement of geocaches would be prohibited in archaeological and raptor nesting sites. Virtual caches may be allowed within archaeological sites with prior written authorization from the authorized officer.

Other sites may be prohibited if it is determined that the placement of these caches creates unacceptable resource impacts, conflicts with other users or health and safety concerns.

### **Paintball Activities**

Paintball activities would not be allowed in wilderness areas and ACECs. Such activities would be allowed elsewhere in the planning area, if suitable to other resource management objectives and special management allocations. The following stipulations would apply:

- Require nontoxic, biodegradable and water soluble paintball capsules.
- Allow temporary obstacles or structures to be used but require that they be removed at the end of the visit to the public lands. Allow no mechanized or motorized cross-country travel to set up or remove structures. Authorize no permanent structures.
- Require goggles and masks protecting the ears, face, and throat.
- Prohibit shooting paintballs at wildlife and saguaro cacti. Prohibit the use of natural features, such as boulders and vegetation, as paintball targets.
- Require participants to pick up and remove from the area all items related to paintball activities, including capsules and any other trash.
- Require SRPs for paintball activities with more than 15 participants, unless otherwise specified in special management areas.
- Prohibit paintball activities within 1/4 mile of
  - high-use recreation areas such as campgrounds, trailheads, and staging areas
  - designated non-motorized trails
  - areas with permitted recreation activities
  - active scientific and research areas

### **Rock Collecting**

Allow the collecting of rocks, minerals, semi-precious gemstones, invertebrate fossils, and petrified wood in reasonable amounts. In BLM Arizona, reasonable limits for personal use are

defined as up to 25 pounds per day, plus one piece, with a total of 250 pounds per person per year.

## Special Recreation Permits

### General

No permit or event limits would be established at this time for the planning area. Allow permit and/or event limits to be established later in response to monitoring of resources, users, or social conflicts.

SRPs would be authorized on a case-by-case basis for all recreation activities meeting the requirements in 43 CFR 2930 and applicable manuals, policies, and guidance. SRPs would be required for all commercial or competitive use recreation activities. SRPs may also be required for the following:

- noncommercial, noncompetitive organized group activities and events
- vending operations;
- individual noncommercial recreation use in Special Area Designations
- academic, educational, scientific or research uses

The criteria for when permits are required for these uses may be found in BLM Manual H-2930-1, Recreation Permit Administration Manual and Handbook. Definitions of the types of uses may be found in the Glossary.

Issuance of SRPs is at BLM's discretion. BLM would evaluate permit applications on the basis of applicable laws and regulations and conformance with existing land use plans, including consistency with recreation and other resource objectives. The decision to authorize a proposed use would depend on the following:

- potential resource impacts,
- conflicts with other users,
- health and safety concerns,
- past or present performance with BLM or other agencies, and

- BLM's ability to timely process the application and effectively administer the permit.

Permits would be authorized, ensuring compliance with Federal, State, county, and local air quality and noise regulations.

Permits are authorized based on the inclusion and compliance of standard and activity specific stipulations regarding the proposed activities. These stipulations for SRPs have been developed to protect natural resources, reduce user conflicts, and minimize health and safety risks. The stipulations must be adhered to keep the permit in good standing. Failure to comply with the stipulations can result in loss of permit privileges and/or lead to penalties prescribed in 43 CFR 2933.33. An example of these stipulations may be found in Appendix K.

### Vending

SRPs may be issued for vending operations at a recreation site, or in conjunction with a permitted activity or event. The SRP for the activity or event may include vending operations if the operations are directly related to the permitted activity or event, and the permittee is responsible for the vending operations. If the permittee is not responsible for the vending operations, a separate SRP for the vending would be required.

Vending may be considered at recreation sites if the service or goods for sale:

- directly enhances the recreation experience and
- cannot be readily provided by the closest local community.

Permanent structures would not be authorized under a vending permit.

### Competitive Races

All motorized competitive races would need to comply with the desert tortoise policy in the Biological Resources discussion of the

Management Common to All Action Alternatives section of this chapter.

Motorized competitive speed races would be authorized only in SRMAs or RMZs where an allocation for such use has been made.

## **Leases and Land Use Permits**

### Concession Leases

Recreation concession leases, long-term authorizations for the use of public lands, are authorized under 43 CFR 2920. BLM would evaluate concession leases on a case-by-case basis to determine if they conform to land use plans, activity plans, and resource management objectives. The proposed lease would need to conform to the managerial and social settings such as recreation settings, VRM objectives, and other special use area prescriptions. A strong public demand must also be demonstrated for the proposed products or services to be considered. Leases would be awarded on a competitive bid basis and evaluated by the following traits of the concessionaire:

- experience,
- ability to provide quality services,
- financial stability and integrity, and
- past or present performance and financial offer.

### Apiary Permits

Apiary (bee keeping) permits will be prohibited within 1/4 mile of the following:

- high-use recreation areas such as campgrounds, trailheads, and staging areas,
- designated non-motorized trails,
- areas or routes with permitted recreation activities, and
- active scientific and research areas.

### Commercial Filming Permits

Permits for commercial filming or still photography, in accordance with Public Law

106-206, would be issued under the SRP guidelines when associated with permitted recreation activities. The fee schedule would be used as outlined in 43 CFR 2920 commercial filming regulations. Proposals would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if they conform to land use plans, activity plans, and resource management objectives. Proposed activities would need to conform to the managerial and social settings as described in the document such as recreation settings, VRM objectives, and other special use area prescriptions. Land Use Permits for non-recreation related commercial filming will be authorized in conformance with 43 CFR 2920 guidelines.

## **Recreation Opportunity Spectrum**

Maintain current inventoried recreation settings within ERMAs. ROS inventory is portrayed on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum on Map 3-11. Since the areas allocated as ERMA and SRMA change by Alternative, actual desired settings also change by Alternative.

## **Facilities**

Recreation management facilities would be planned and installed where needed for:

- protecting resources,
- providing for visitor safety,
- resolving social conflicts,
- improving the quality of recreation experiences, and
- increasing recreation opportunities.

Facilities can include water sources, toilets, scenic turnouts, cultural interpretive sites, kiosks, signs, parking areas, staging areas, and trailheads. Installed facilities must be compatible with recreation management objectives and desired settings and VRM standards. Communities, user groups, or agency staff can bring facility proposals forward for management attention.

## Recreational Target Shooting

Recreational target shooting has increased in popularity on BLM-managed lands as the population in Central Arizona has increased and availability of land to shoot on has decreased. BLM land is, for the most part, open to recreational target shooting. Public lands are shared by many users. It is imperative the target shooter select a shooting site that is both safe to other public land users and considerate of natural resources. The following discussion includes criteria for selection of safe and considerate shooting sites.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the recreational target shooter to ensure the projectiles they fire are contained within the shooting site they select. While shooting is allowed in most public land areas, the shooter should make no concession concerning safety. Consideration of other people using public lands is not only considerate, *Arizona Revised Statutes Title 13-1201* says:

(A). A person commits endangerment by recklessly endangering another person with a substantial risk of imminent death or physical injury.

(B). Endangerment involving a substantial risk of imminent death is a class six felony. In all other cases, it is a class one misdemeanor.

Therefore, it is paramount that shooters continually evaluate their shooting activities and the requirements necessary to ensure those activities can be conducted with projectile/bullet containment as a primary goal.

General considerations for selecting a suitable shooting site include the following:

- Make sure you have a safe backstop. That means you can see where the bullets are hitting behind the target. A hill or pushed-up berm of dirt is perfect. Remember that bullets can ricochet off flat surfaces—that includes rocks, dirt and water. Put your targets right in front

of the backstop to ensure your bullets stop in the dirt. (Detailed guidelines for backstops and side berms can be found below.)

- Select a site that doesn't put others at risk. Do not shoot towards or across areas where other people congregate such as hiking trails, vehicle parking and staging areas, and trail heads. It is a violation of Arizona State law (*A.R.S. 17-301B*) to shoot across a maintained road. Though this law only pertains to maintained roads, there are many routes in the desert that are used by motorcycles, quads, and four-wheel drive vehicles that are not as apparent as a maintained road. Shooting in the direction, or across them, though not a violation of the reference law, could be just as dangerous to people using them. Choose a site that avoids shooting across or towards motorcycle, quad, or four-wheel-drive routes as well.
- In addition to motorized routes, there are many popular hiking, bicycling and equestrian trails. Select a site that doesn't cross or shoot in the direction of a trail that could put people at risk.
- Selection of a safe shooting site would include staying more than ¼ mile from any residence or occupied structure. When selecting a site, assume any structure is occupied. It is a violation of Arizona State Law to knowingly discharge a firearm at a structure. The statute (*A.R.S 13-1211A and B*) says:

(A). A person who knowingly discharges a firearm at a residential structure is guilty of a class two felony.

(B). A person who knowingly discharges a firearm at a nonresidential structure is guilty of a class three felony.

- Selection of a site should include avoiding such improvements as wildlife or livestock water facilities, livestock control facilities such as corrals and fences, signs or kiosks installed to

provide information, barns or other rural developments, or any other improvement that was not specifically designed to be shot at.

- It is a violation of Arizona State law (*A.R.S. 13-1603A 1*) if a person "Throws, places, drops or permits to be dropped on public property or property of another which is not a lawful dump any litter, destructive or injurious material which he does not immediately remove." This includes not only trash, but also brass or shells (including shotgun shells) from spent ammunition and items used as targets. Shooters are required to remove any targets, items on which targets are mounted, and brass from spent ammunition. BLM Phoenix District policy is to only use targets that do not produce litter, and to remove them when you are finished shooting.
- Under the Code of Federal Regulations (*43 CFR 8365.2-5(a)*) no person shall "Discharge or use firearms..." on a developed recreation site. *43 CFR 8360.0-5(c)* defines "Developed Recreation Sites and Areas" as "...sites and areas that contain structures or capital improvements primarily used by the public for recreation purposes. Such sites or areas may include such features as: delineated spaces for parking, camping or boat launching; sanitary facilities; potable water; grills or fire rings; or controlled access."

Selecting sites with side berms and backstops is optional where the shooter can be assured of safe shooting 1.5 miles downrange for pistol or 3.5 miles downrange for high powered rifles, with appropriate left and right ricochet safety zones. With the popularity of public lands for recreation and other uses, this scenario is the exception rather than the rule. Therefore, the primary purpose for selection of backstops and side berms is to protect against the injury of people, the damage of property or both.

The type of firearms being fired and the shooting activity being conducted will dictate

the extent of the backstops, side berms and safety fans required to achieve that goal.

A downrange safety fan is an area beyond the backstop and side berms that is free of people or property that can be injured or damaged by errant bullets. It is important to remember that, depending on the suitability of the backstop and side berms, a safety fan downrange will be required to assure a safe shooting area. Below are ideal specifications for both backstops and side berms. Sites with less than ideal backstops and side berms must have increasingly longer downrange safety fans, approaching the distances described above of 1.5 miles for pistols and 3.5 miles for high power rifles. Even with an ideal backstop and side berms, site selection should still consider downrange safety and a downrange safety fan.

The characteristics of safe backstops and berms recognized as needed for safe shooting practices are as follows:

- **Height.** Preferred backstops include naturally occurring hills or mountainsides, or steep-sided wash banks. Backstops of soft dirt are preferred over hard surfaces, and rocky slopes should be avoided as they create a high ricochet hazard. A minimum height of 15 feet is acceptable but 20 to 25 feet is recommended. Remember that bullet ricochet can happen even on the best backstop. Site selection should consider ricochet possibilities and backstops that exceed 20 to 25 feet should be chosen where possible to reduce ricochet away from the shooting area.
- **Width/Length.** The width of the backstop should be at least as wide as it is high. Targets should be placed directly in front of or on the backstop with sufficient backstop on either side to catch bullets. Ideally, side berms should be the same height and the full length of the shooting area from the backstop to even with the firing line.

- Slope. The range side slope (side facing the shooter) must be as steep as possible, but not less than a 45-degree slope (a ratio of one-to-one). Side berm slopes should have the same dimensions.

Remember, even with the perfect backstop and side berms, finding a suitable shooting area must include a safety fan beyond the backstop.

The bottom line is to select a shooting site in harmony with adjacent properties and other public land users. The site should prevent adjacent properties and other public land users from experiencing any risk from the shooters activities. The overall responsibility of the shooter is to stop fired bullets before they exit the selected shooting area. It is the intention of the BLM to provide a safe and pleasant experience for any public land user. If shooting areas emerge that are contrary to the above criteria they will be clearly construed as putting other public land users at risk and they may be closed to shooting by the authorized officer, either temporarily or permanently.

As the demand for recreation shooting grows along with the demand for other recreation opportunities, the need may arise to identify and designate areas as shooting ranges. Many locations within the planning area would be suitable for this use and could provide a safe and enjoyable shooting experience. Identification and future management would be defined through further site specific planning and analysis.

### **Adaptive Management**

Public lands are experiencing intensive use from motorized and non-motorized recreation. Impacts to natural resources are worsened by rapidly increasing urbanization and population growth next to the public lands. Other land uses are also contributing to the social conflicts and resource impacts on these lands. Some recreation use areas do not conform to other resource management objectives, such as Arizona Land Health Standards (Land Health Standards).

Therefore, within two years of plan approval BLM will form a collaborative partnership with universities, external agencies, and interested communities and citizens to list and prioritize these areas of concern. The effort will then focus on developing a Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) framework to determine suitable and acceptable use levels for recreation uses, considering natural resource, socio-political, and managerial factors. This process would consist of four major components:

1. specifying acceptable and achievable resource and social conditions, defined by a series of measurable indicators,
2. analyzing the relationship between existing conditions and those judged acceptable,
3. selecting management actions to best achieve these desired conditions, and
4. implementing a monitoring and evaluation process to determine if management goals and objectives are being met.

During this process, inventories, surveys, and studies of existing resource and social conditions would be conducted to obtain and establish baseline data from which standards can be set and measured. Indicators would include both resource and social impacts such as the following:

- campsite proliferation or expansion,
- social trailing,
- soil compaction and erosion, and
- the number of social encounters.

Management Actions may include the following:

- providing public information and education,
- setting use and party-size limits,
- increasing visitor contacts and enforcement, and
- closing areas seasonally or shifting use to other areas.

Monitoring strategies may include measurements, rapid site assessments, photography, or other suitable techniques.

This process will be a dynamic approach in which adaptive management practices will be applied to facilitate learning and improve effectiveness. Efforts to coordinate with other resource disciplines will also be an integral part of this process.

Thresholds may be adjusted as needed to ensure resource protection, manage recreation use, minimize user conflicts, or react to new information or research, if warranted, due to changing circumstances or changes in management objectives.

The current authority for collection of recreation user fees would not allow for collection of such fees within the Bradshaw-Harquahala planning area. Under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004, P.L.108-447, fees may be charged at a site that has:

- clearly defined access points and area boundaries,
- substantial expenditure in operations and maintenance costs,
- significant investment in facilities (including roads and trails), and
- contains all of the following amenities:
  - a designated and developed parking area
  - permanent toilet
  - permanent trash receptacle
  - kiosks
  - picnic tables
  - security services commensurate with use levels

Should the above criteria be met in the future, a study would be initiated to determine the need and feasibility of charging a recreation use fee.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Develop partnerships and determine sustaining recreation and tourism-based economic opportunities with communities.

### **Interpretation and Environmental Education**

Pursue multicultural interpretation and environmental education opportunities, outreach, development, and implementation of programs for adults and children. Apply learning modalities and incorporate various learning styles in program design and delivery. Encourage the use of multiple intelligence or other theories for program presentations.

Develop school curricula focusing on the BLM's mission with staffs from schools, school districts, and other learning institutions.

Allow cultural and natural resource interpretation signs and facilities where needed for visitor enjoyment or resource protection. Interpretive developments must be compatible with recreation management objectives, desired recreation settings, and VRM standards.

Develop websites and distribute brochures, maps, access guides, and information sheets to publicize the following:

- off-highway and specialized recreation opportunities,
- OHV rules,
- camping and non-motorized trails information,
- shooting policies, regulations and safe shooting practices, and
- applying Tread Lightly and Leave No Trace practices.

### **Accessibility**

To the highest extent possible, all new construction and modifications for recreation facilities, outdoor developed areas, and any related programs and activities will be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, with later amendments. Guidance, requirements and standards for conforming to the above legislation may be found in the following:

- Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards.
- Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, and the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines (use whichever guidance is most stringent).
- Proposed Outdoor Developed Areas Guidelines (U.S. Access Board found at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) and 43 CFR Part 17, Subpart E found at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>).

### 2.7.3.7 Travel Management

#### Motorized and Mechanized Travel and Public Access

##### *Land Use Allocations*

All designated wilderness areas are closed to motorized and mechanized vehicle uses. Motorized and mechanized uses on all other BLM's lands will be Limited to Designated Routes. Until routes are designated, motorized vehicle access is limited to currently inventoried vehicle routes.

Closed = 96,820 acres

Limited to Designated Routes = 799,820 acres

##### *Desired Future Condition*

Define, designate, implement, and monitor a designated and comprehensive travel management network affording a range of high-quality and diverse motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. The network would consist of a system of areas, roads, primitive roads and/or trails. The travel management network and associated recreation opportunities would be consistent with other resource management objectives and recreation settings for the area.

Motorized routes connect neighboring communities, local jurisdictions, and lands administered by county, State, and Federal

agencies to allow for multiple-day OHV experiences.

A regional network of motorized routes and access exists for long-distance OHV back country touring. Looping, regional routes connect the Black Canyon, Bradshaw Foothills, Wickenburg/Vulture, and Harquahala-Big Horn areas, and continue north to the Wagoner and Skull Valley area to connect to Prescott National Forest and the Great Western Trail. Economic development of local communities to the south, east, and west of Phoenix is synergistic with providing outstanding motorized recreation.

##### *Management Actions*

All motorized vehicles and mechanized human conveyances (such as bicycles) would be limited to designated routes. All routes would be designated within five years of plan approval. Until route-specific designations are made, all motorized/mechanized vehicle travel and access would be limited to currently inventoried vehicle routes. Where inventories are not complete, use will be limited to existing routes. Inventoried routes will be updated with input from BLM, partnerships, user groups, and citizens. For these purposes, livestock and game trails are not considered existing routes or trails. Cross-country travel off designated routes would be prohibited, except for the following reasons:

- public health, safety, and law enforcement emergencies;
- administrative uses; or
- BLM-authorized tasks approved by the authorized officer.

Vehicle access on designated routes may be temporarily closed when weather creates muddy conditions. When conditions are such that travel by vehicle cannot be accomplished without damaging the existing roadway or departing the roadway and traveling cross-country, the route is closed until the roadway can once again support a vehicle without damage.

BLM recommends a standard evaluation process, supported by software and database and that is compatible with GIS functionality. A structured evaluation process would be applied to develop a designated travel and transportation system for all routes within the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area. A description of the current BLM Arizona standard process used to evaluate and designate routes can be found in Appendix D (should be a link in e-Planning). These designations would apply to motorized vehicles and mechanized equipment designed to provide a mechanical advantage and intended for human conveyance, including automobiles, trucks, ATVs, motorcycles, mountain bikes, and other conveyances with one, two, three, four, or more wheels or tracks.

Once route designations are complete, changing conditions and demand may suggest a need for new routes to be added to the route network. The process for adding new routes to the designated route network, motorized or non-motorized, would include a structured analysis approach. All proposed additions to the designated route network would be processed as follows:

1. Route locations will be mapped or located using accepted Global Positioning System devices and presented to the BLM office for consideration. Locations for route proposals off of designated motorized routes must be located and mapped using non-motorized methods.
2. The route proposal submitted to BLM will include a description of the route including its proposed width, its proposed use(s), and a rationale for its need.
3. The route location will be staked and flagged for on-the-ground review by resource specialists.
4. The route location will be analyzed for potential conflicts such as, (but not limited to): wildlife habitats, cultural resources, visual resources, other recreation uses, mining claims or leases, grazing facilities, rights-of-way, and proximity to other jurisdictions (such as private land.) A structured process, such as that described in

Appendix D would be used to evaluate and document the potential route conditions.

5. The conflict assessment would lead to possible mitigation actions or alternative locations or design.
6. An environmental analysis (EA) would be conducted to determine the environmental affects of the proposed route and any Alternatives and mitigation suggested.
7. A decision would be issued by the authorized officer based on Land Use Plan compliance, resource objectives, and environmental impacts.
8. The Travel Management Plan would be updated accordingly.

Single or multiple-use OHV and technical vehicle loops, routes, specialized sport sites and management strategies would be designed and developed through interdisciplinary plans, with community and user input. Routes and areas would be developed as needed for the following purposes:

- protecting resources,
- ensuring visitor safety,
- satisfying local community needs, and
- improving recreation experiences or increasing recreation opportunities, such as for rock crawling and motorcycle trials.

Limits of acceptable change indicators and standards would be developed in site-specific planning to reduce user and resource conflicts. All motorized vehicle route construction would be compatible with social and managerial recreation settings and VRM standards. Communities, user groups, or agency staff can bring motorized vehicle route proposals forward for management attention.

Existing routes would be selected and designated for inclusion into a regional route network.

General long-distance travel corridors for OHV travel between field offices and other adjoining lands will be designated.

Loop route opportunities would be recognized and spur trails connected to augment the existing route network where no resource conflicts preclude the actions.

Easements or rights-of-way across key private and State-administered lands would be acquired to ensure long-term network viability and public access. Easements or rights-of-way actions will be undertaken when:

- route system effectiveness is or would be adversely effected by outside actions;
- opportunity becomes available and the action is consistent with recreation settings and goals;
- recreation and resource disciplines need public and/or administrative access to sites;
- portal access is desired to support resource objectives of safety and sustainability.

Where (1) a route creates a conflict between route users and natural or cultural resources, or (2) an OHV or special vehicle use conflicts with recreation management objectives, the following or other mitigation could be applied:

- closing routes;
- limiting season of use and vehicle types, speeds, and noise;
- rerouting offending route segments; or
- modifying routes to reduce or eliminate conflicts.

Motorized vehicles may not be used off designated vehicle routes to retrieve game. The cross-country use of wheeled game carriers is permitted, except in wilderness areas. Permittees, including livestock operators may not use motorized vehicles off designated routes without express permission from the Field Manager.

Recreation and Special Use permits would be authorized ensuring compliance with Federal, State, county, and local regulations for air quality and noise.

Use of transportation routes has the potential of contributing fugitive dust to the PM<sub>10</sub> non-attainment area in Maricopa County. Use of routes in PM<sub>10</sub> non-attainment areas and routes with fugitive dust issues will be part of the planning area's ongoing monitoring program. Proposed mitigation actions (closure, seasonal restrictions, speed limits, change in use, surfacing, surface and dust abatement treatments) will be addressed as part of the adaptive management for Travel and Transportation Management. Routes causing or contribution to unacceptable or noncompliant air quality impacts will be closed to travel until route conditions change or are corrected.

### *Administrative Actions*

Develop Travel Management Plans to implement route designations, technical vehicle sites and other activities associated with travel management.

To comply with Maricopa County, State of Arizona and the Environmental Protection Agency's management of airborne particulates, it is BLM's responsibility to develop site specific planning to conform to those rules. BLM will manage and conduct activities on BLM land in a manner as to not contribute to fugitive pollutants that exceed thresholds. Upon completion of this planning effort, an air quality conformance plan will be developed for activities within the Maricopa County non-attainments areas which will focus on any potential dust producing activities, especially motorized recreation.

Coordinate route designation with adjoining field offices and land management agencies.

Establish relationships and enter into agreements with local interest groups and the business community for long-term route maintenance and community support for the ongoing management of the route system and its funding.

Prior to OHV route designations, citations may be issued and other enforcement actions taken for illegal or unauthorized vehicle travel

documented by BLM and Law Enforcement personnel. BLM's completed OHV route inventory for any subject area will constitute routes open and available for vehicle travel prior to a completed route evaluation and designation. Vehicle use in areas or on "routes" not included as part of the inventoried route network will be considered illegal and unauthorized off-road or cross-country travel. Signing may or may not be present. For illegal or unauthorized vehicle travel, citations may be issued at the discretion of the Law Enforcement officer. Citations will be issued for vehicle travel on inventoried and pre-existing motorized routes when the routes are signed as closed to motorized travel. In accordance with BLM Instructional Memorandum 2005-07, vehicles may not pull off a designated route more than 100 feet.

### **Motorized Technical Vehicle Activities**

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Provide designated, managed sites for specialized vehicle use, considering the unique natural terrain required for such activities. Certain types of motorized activities, such as rock crawling and motorcycle observed trails, require extreme terrain features and are not conducive to general use by traditional stock 4-WD vehicles. These sites would not be evaluated and established during motorized route designation; however, access to these sites would be evaluated during route designation.

#### *Management Actions*

Technical vehicle sites would be evaluated and established on a case-by-case basis. Sites would be established if they result in no net loss of quality or quantity of sensitive resources such as cultural sites, wildlife habitat for priority species, sensitive soil resources, and other resources sensitive to motorized activities.

Limitations to assure the safe and intended use of these sites will be established as necessary. BLM, working with user groups and enthusiasts, would define the limitations in order to provide

and maintain challenging opportunities for specialized sport activities. In accordance with BLM Instructional Memorandum 2005-007, difficulty ratings will not be published. Motorized users would be informed of the required equipment and skills necessary to utilize these sites through signing, information sheets, and outreach programs.

#### *Administrative Actions*

Develop Travel Management Plans to implement route designations, technical vehicle sites and other activities associated with travel management.

Evaluate and establish technical vehicle sites on a case-by-case basis, with community and user input. Sites will be developed as needed for the following purposes:

- ensuring visitor safety,
- meeting enthusiast needs,
- improving recreation experiences,
- increasing recreation opportunities

Site plans will establish limits of acceptable change indicators and standards. All sites must be compatible with social and managerial recreation settings and VRM standards; satisfy biological and ecological land health standards; protect or mitigate cultural resources; and achieve water quality standards for influenced drainages and watersheds.

### **Non-motorized Trail Networks**

#### *Desired Future Condition*

Provide a local and regional network of designated non-motorized trails for short and long-distance travel by foot, horseback, and human-powered conveyances (e.g. mountain bikes). Connect communities and Sonoran Desert landscapes by linking regional areas and communities through trail planning and implementing as coordinated by a State of Arizona trails plan. Develop trails that connect Black Canyon City with the Black Canyon Trail and Agua Fria National Monument. Also, use

long-distance trails to link communities and areas such as (but not limited to) the following:

- Prescott Valley,
- Mayer,
- Black Canyon,
- Bradshaw Foothills,
- Wickenburg area,
- Vulture Mountains, and
- Harquahala Mountains.

Assist tourism and economic development of communities by providing non-motorized outdoor recreation experiences.

### ***Management Actions***

Equestrian and mountain biking activities that require SRPs could be limited to existing trails, which for these purposes do not include livestock and game trails. These limitations would be included in permit stipulations designed to protect resources and address safety concerns. Casual hiking and equestrian activities are not restricted to trails unless prescribed in the management actions of a special area designation or allocation. The authorized officer may close areas to casual hiking or equestrian use, or require these activities to be limited to trails, to mitigate resource damage.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Develop comprehensive Travel Management Plans for the management units. These plans would implement the route designations for the area.

Plan, designate, and develop new hiking, equestrian, or mountain bike trails through interdisciplinary plans with community and user input. Trails will be developed as needed for the following purposes:

- protecting resources,
- ensuring visitor safety,
- meeting community needs,
- improving recreation experiences, or
- increasing recreation opportunities.

Trails project plans will establish limits of acceptable change indicators and standards. All trail building must be compatible with social and managerial recreation settings and VRM standards. Recreation settings are established in the Recreation sections of this plan. VRM standards are established in the Visual Resources sections of this plan. Communities, user groups, or agency staff can bring trail proposals forward for management attention.

An evaluation process, similar to one described in Appendix D, will be used to establish a designated public access and route system within the Bradshaw-Harquahala area public lands, consistent with the land use plan resource management objectives.

### ***Travel Management Plans***

Travel management plans (TMPs) will be created for management units after route designation is completed. The TMP will address issues such as:

- A map depicting the final decision for route designations, including all modes of travel and primary uses.
- Guidance for seeking active public involvement throughout the route designation process and follow on management decisions.
- Guidance for using an interdisciplinary approach to identifying and mitigating resource impacts.
- Definitions and additional limitations for specific roads and trails (defined in 43 CFR 83400-5(g)).
- Creating a catalog for each individual route's Travel Management Objective (TMO) sheets;
- Indications of changes in status of existing routes and areas.
- Risk management
- Coordination with adjoining jurisdictions
- Identify long distance route corridors for connectivity with adjoining jurisdictions and general long distance touring.

- Identification of Special Recreation Management Zones where Technical Four Wheel Drive activities are authorized.
- Criteria and procedures for making additions and deletions from the route system;
- Signing plans and sign inventories;
- Facility development (engineering);
- Guidelines for education and enforcement;
- Guidelines for system monitoring and compliance;
- Coordination with BLM's Facility and Asset Management System(FAMS);
- Dust management plans;
- Indicators to guide future plan maintenance, amendments or revisions related to the travel management network.
- Needed improvements, signing, trailheads and staging areas.
- Needed maintenance intensity and easements or rights-of-way to maintain the existing or proposed road and trail network providing public land access.
- Guidelines for periodic review of the travel management plan and triggers for making updates and/or maintenance.
- Identification of existing roads, primitive roads, trails and related facilities (baseline inventory data)
- Other topics as necessary to manage travel.

General Travel Management Area boundaries correspond to Management Unit boundaries. The following considerations will guide decisions on travel management:

- a. Designated wilderness areas are managed according to the existing decisions described in this plan.
- b. All areas outside of designated wilderness are limited vehicle use areas where vehicles are limited to routes designated as open or available for vehicle use as follows:
  - Non-motorized, mechanized vehicle use (e.g., bicycles, hang gliders, other devices for conveyance and stock drawn carts/wagons) is restricted to routes or sites designated as available, or open for such use. Non-motorized, hand-powered wheeled game carriers are permitted as described below.
    - Decisions regarding motorized vehicles are according to the prescriptions in the Travel Management sections of this plan.
- c. Non-mechanized travel (i.e., foot and equestrian use) is allowed off designated routes, except where otherwise prohibited. The creation of routes caused by repetitive use is discouraged. Routes not meeting land health standards or plan objectives may be closed.
- d. All caves, mines, wells, abandoned structures, or other confined spaces are closed to public entry unless an individual site is signed open for such entry or entry is authorized under special use permit.
- e. The use of aircraft, motorized and non-motorized, must conform to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards including the use of backcountry landing strips. There are no backcountry airstrips designated for public use on BLM land within the planning area. Use of public lands for launching or landing aircraft other than airplanes (balloons, hang gliders, etc.) may be permitted on a case-by-case basis through the appropriate permit process. The Yarnell Hang Gliding launch area is discussed in other sections of this plan.
- f. Area closures to access and travel methods may be enacted where travel is determine to be inconsistent with the recreation management zone, harming resources, or failing to achieve the objectives of the plan.
- g. Touring routes and trail systems, both motorized and non-motorized, are a priority and will be addressed through activity (implementation) level planning. Proposed actions that may effect proposed touring routes and trail systems will be evaluated and adjusted when possible to avoid impacts. Examples of priority routes and trail systems include the Maricopa County Regional Trail System and long distance vehicle touring routes with local and regional significance.
- h. Administrative and other authorized use will be approved on a case-by-case basis (see

decision of administrative and emergency access below).

- i. Temporary access and use restrictions may be enacted when needed to protect resources or public health and safety.

PM<sub>10</sub> Non-attainment Area Administrative TMA:

- a. All General TMA prescriptions apply.
- b. The areas described in 40 CFR 81.303 or subsequent regulation or policy as PM<sub>10</sub> air quality non-attainment areas will be managed for compliance with EPA and County standards and other applicable standards to maintain air quality. Dust mitigation measures may be implemented including, but not limited to, speed limits, adding dust reducing agents to disturbed areas, seasonal closure, or year round closure.
- c. Management units affected in part or whole are: Castle Hot Springs, Hassayampa.

### **2.7.3.8 Visual Resource Management**

Manage visual resources to minimize the visual intrusion of any authorized activity. Apply VRM class standards consistent with other resource objectives.

If possible, avoid utilizing strobes or other lights that will affect the quality of night skies.

### **2.7.3.9 Rangeland Management**

Implement ephemeral range designation, where suitable, for managing vegetation and ecological processes as determined through the Arizona Land Health Standards (Land Health Standards) allotment evaluation process.

BLM may designate those areas for ephemeral grazing by applying criteria established in the Special Ephemeral Rule. In applying the rule, all the following criteria must be met at the same time:

1. The area is within the hot desert biome.

2. Annual precipitation is less than 8 inches.
3. The land produces less than 25 pounds/acres of desirable perennial forage.
4. The land contains less than five percent composition of desirable perennial forage plants.
5. The area is below 3,500 feet in elevation.
6. Total forage production is highly unpredictable, and forage is usually available only for a short time.
7. The growth depends upon abundant moisture and other favorable climatic conditions.
8. The area lacks potential to improve the current ecological conditions and produce a dependable supply of forage by applying intensive rangeland management.

### **2.7.3.10 Mineral Resource Management**

If mineral estate under lands now closed to mineral entry are opened to mineral entry, manage those lands, including mineral estate, will be managed consistent with the Decisions made in this plan.

Deny mineral material disposal applications if the disposal would result in a net loss of desert tortoise habitat.

On split estate lands:

- If BLM manages the Federal mineral estate but the surface is not in Federal ownership, BLM will manage the lands as public lands under FLPMA.
- Unless it is determined to be detrimental to the public interest, BLM will not normally allow mineral material disposal without the surface owner's consent.
- Where the private surface has been developed for non-mineral use, BLM will limit or forgo mineral materials sales.

- On split estate lands, BLM will not normally manage for solid mineral development without surface owner consent, unless it is determined to be detrimental to the public interest.

### **2.7.3.11 Wild Burro Management**

Management decisions from the previous RMP concerning the Lake Pleasant Herd Management Area (HMA) will be carried forward.

Management of burros within the Lake Pleasant HMA will continue in accordance with the provisions of the Lake Pleasant Herd Management Plan and managed to achieve the Appropriate Management Level (AML) set in that plan. Burros would be removed from the Lake Pleasant HMA when the population exceeds the AML or if burros are determined to be nuisance animals as defined by the Wild Horse and Burro act of 1972.

A manageability analysis of the Harquahala HA is included in Appendix G. This analysis is the basis for future burro management within the Harquahala Herd Area. In response to the manageability analysis, the Harquahala HA will not be managed as a HMA. Burros will be removed from the herd area as funding is available with the target of reaching a population of zero.

BLM will coordinate with the AGFD and other affected interests during its evaluation of any proposals for burro management.

## **2.8 Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed in Detail**

This section briefly describes management options that were suggested either during scoping or public workshops. BLM determined these management options should not be included in any Alternative. The elements are described below, along with the reasoning for excluding them from further consideration.

### **Designate Shooting Areas within Agua Fria National Monument or the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area**

Designated shooting areas were not established because of safety concerns for areas where shooting would concentrate; therefore, would not be managed as shooting ranges. In addition, the potential concentrations of lead in such areas would require compliance with EPA regulations for site cleanup and monitoring. BLM and the AGFD can issue citations for the unsafe discharge of firearms. However, maintenance of safe conditions is considered achievable under current regulations, at current enforcement levels, and with the direction written in section 2.7.3.7 under the discussion of Recreational Target Shooting.

### **Restrict Shooting in Utility Corridors**

Designating corridors as off-limits to shooting would be difficult to enforce because corridors are not physically marked on public lands. It is difficult for recreationists to know if they are in a corridor because many utilities do not include aboveground facilities. We feel enforcement of safe and proper recreational shooting is achievable with the direction written in section 2.7.3.7 regarding Recreational Target Shooting.

### **Establish Open OHV Areas**

Designating areas open to cross-country OHV use was not proposed because a complete designated route system will be prepared after the RMP is approved. The Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area vehicle routes are being inventoried, but the comprehensive inventory is not complete. The route evaluation/decision tree process used for the national monument will be applied to develop a transportation plan for rest of the planning area. Most areas with existing heavy OHV use are located within desert tortoise habitat, and more degradation of habitat would not be permitted.

### **Reclassify Some Areas of Desert Tortoise Habitat from Category II to Category I**

The classification process evaluates several characteristics, including habitat quality and manageability. If habitat areas had met the criteria for Category I during the evaluation process that produced the existing classifications, these areas would be reflected as such in the current category mapping.

### **Establish User Fees for Agua Fria National Monument**

The expected level of improvements and visitor facilities should not require extensive additional staffing or maintenance. Furthermore, fee collection on the monument under current conditions would be inconsistent with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004, P.L.108-447.

### **Establish Permit Program and User Fees in the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area**

The collaborative planning process used for this effort has resulted in multiple contacts with local community groups that BLM will continue to work with throughout the implementing of the plan. The increased community contact should result in a higher level of awareness of the value of public lands and assist in long-term management through volunteer programs and site stewardship. Therefore, BLM believes that adequate management can be maintained without imposing user fees and adding staff. Furthermore, fee collection under current conditions would be inconsistent with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004, P.L.108-447.

### **Identify Locations and Manage for Recreational Prospecting**

All forms of mining, including casual use (sometimes referred to as recreational prospecting), are managed under existing mining laws and regulations. Managing prospecting as a recreation activity would require changes to the mining laws and regulations that are beyond the purview of the RMP process.

## **2.9 Typical Management Actions and Standard Operating Procedures**

### **2.9.1 Typical Management Actions**

#### **2.9.1.1 Vegetation Treatment**

Several treatment methods and standard operating procedures will be used in a vegetation treatment program. BLM's policies and guidance for public land treatments will be followed in implementing all treatment methods. Guidelines are provided in the following documents:

- Manual Section 1740, BLM Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health (Land Health Standards).
- Programmatic documents such as BLM's Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Treatments, Watersheds and Wildlife Habitats on Public Lands Administered by the BLM in the Western United States, including Alaska (BLM 1991).
- Other general and specific program policy, procedures, and standards for implementing renewable resource improvements.

The following manual, chemical, mechanical, biological, and fire treatment methods would be used under all Alternatives.

#### **Manual Vegetation Treatment**

Hand-operated power tools and hand tools are used in manual vegetation treatment to cut, clear, or prune herbaceous and woody plants. In manual treatments workers do the following:

- cut plants above ground level,
- pull, grub, or dig out plant root systems to prevent later sprouting and regrowth,
- scalp at ground level or remove competing plants around desired vegetation, and
- place mulch around desired vegetation to limit the growth of competing vegetation.

Hand tools such as the handsaw, axe, shovel, rake, machete, grubbing hoe, mattock (combination of axe and grubbing hoe), brush hook, and hand clippers are used in manual treatments. Axes, shovels, grubbing hoes, and mattocks can dig up and cut below the surface to remove the main roots of plants such as prickly pear and mesquite that have roots that can quickly resprout in response to surface cutting or clearing. Workers also may use power tools such as chainsaws and power brush saws.

Although manual vegetation treatment is labor intensive and costly, compared to prescribed burning or herbicide application, it can be extremely species selective and can be used in areas of sensitive habitats or areas that are inaccessible to ground vehicles. Manual treatment of undesired plants would be used on sites designated as categories a, b or c, where fire (prescribed or naturally ignited) is undesirable or where significant constraints prevent widespread use of fire as a management tool. These sites comprise a range of vegetation communities or habitat types. They include areas where there may be wildlife concerns, yet it is deemed beneficial to remove trees, shrubs, or other fuel-loading vegetation. Manual vegetation treatments cause less ground disturbance and generally remove less vegetation than prescribed fire or mechanical treatments.

### **Mechanical Vegetation Treatment**

Mechanical vegetation treatments employ several different types of equipment to suppress, inhibit, or control herbaceous and woody vegetation. The goal of mechanical treatments is to kill or reduce the cover of undesirable

vegetation and thus encourage the growth of desirable plants. BLM uses wheeled tractors, crawler-type tractors, mowers, or specially designed vehicles with attached implements for mechanical vegetation treatments. Mechanical equipment is used to reduce fuel hazards in accordance with BLM established procedures. Re-seeding after mechanical treatments is important to help ensure that desirable plants and not weedy species will become established on the site. Mechanical treatment and reseeding should occur at a time to best control the undesirable vegetation and encourage the establishing of desirable vegetation. The best mechanical method for treating undesired plants in a particular location depends on the following factors:

- characteristics of the undesired species present, such as plant density stem size, woodiness, brittleness, and resprouting ability,
- need for seedbed preparation, revegetation, and improved water infiltration rates;
- topography and terrain,
- soil characteristics such as type, depth, amount and size of rocks, erosion potential, and susceptibility to compaction,
- climatic and seasonal conditions, and
- potential cost of improvement as compared to expected results.

Bulldozing consists of a wheeled or crawler tractor with a heavy hydraulic controlled blade. Bulldozers push over and uproot vegetation and leave it in windrows or piles. Bulldozing is best adapted to removing scattered stands of large brush or trees. Several different kinds of blades can be used, depending of the type of vegetation and goals of the project. The disadvantage of bulldozing is that it disturbs soil and may damage non-target plants.

Disk plowing in its various forms can be used for removing shallow-rooted herbaceous and woody plants. Disk plows should only be used where all of the vegetation is intended to be killed. Several different kinds of root plows are

specific for certain types of vegetation. In addition to killing vegetation, disk plowing loosens the soil surface to prepare it for seeding and to improve the rate of water infiltration. The disadvantage of disk plowing is that it may be expensive and usually kills all species. Also, plowing is usually not practicable on steep slopes (> 35-45 percent slope) or rocky soil. Plant species that sprout from roots may survive.

Vegetation is chained and cabled by dragging heavy anchor chains or steel cables hooked to tractors in a U-shape, half circle, or J-shaped manner. Effective on rocky soils and steep slopes, chaining and cabling are best used to control non-sprouting woody vegetation such as small trees and shrubs. Desirable shrubs may be damaged in the process. This control method normally does not injure herbaceous vegetation. It is cost effective because it can readily treat large areas. The chains or cables also scarify the soil surface in anticipation of seeding desirable species. The disadvantage is that weedy herbaceous vegetation can survive this treatment.

Various tractor attachments are used for mowing, beating, crushing, chopping, or shredding vegetation, depending on the nature of the plant stand and goals of the project. The advantage in using this type of equipment is that selective plants may be targeted to achieve specific goals. For example, mowing is effective in reducing plant height to a desirable condition, and mowing usually does not kill vegetation. Mowing is more effective on herbaceous than woody vegetation. On the other hand, a rolling cutter leaves herbaceous vegetation but can kill woody nonsprouting vegetation by breaking stems at ground level. Mowing, beating, crushing, chopping, or shredding usually do not disturb soil. Rocky soil and steep slopes may limit the use of this equipment.

Debris management after a mechanical treatment is critical in fuels reduction projects. Vegetation material that is left on a site will dry and may become more hazardous than before the treatment. Herbaceous material is usually not a

problem because it will decompose relatively fast, depending on soil moisture and ambient humidity and temperature. Woody vegetation should be piled and burned under acceptable fire management practices.

### **Biological Vegetation Treatment**

Biological methods of vegetation treatment employ living organisms to selectively suppress, inhibit, or control herbaceous and woody vegetation. This method is viewed as one of the more natural processes because it requires the proper management and plant-eating organisms and precludes the use of mechanical devices, chemical treatments, or burning.

The use of biological control agents will be conducted in accordance with procedures in BLM Manual 9014, Use of Biological Control Agents of Pests on Public Lands (BLM 1990b). Insects, pathogens, and grazing by cattle, sheep, or goats would be used as biological control methods under all Alternatives, but these methods can control only a few plant species. Insects are the main natural enemies now being used. Other natural enemies include mites, nematodes, and pathogens. This treatment method will not eradicate the target plant species but merely reduces the target plant densities to more tolerable levels. This method also reduces competition with the desired plant species for space, water, and nutrients. This treatment method will be used on larger sites where the target plant has become established and is strongly competitive.

Gradually, biological methods using cattle, sheep, or goats would avoid erosion hazard areas, areas of compactable soils, riparian areas susceptible to bank damage, and steep erodible slopes.

Biological control using cattle, sheep, or goats would be applied to treatment areas for short periods. In using grazing animals as effective biological control measures, several factors will be considered:

- target plant species present,

- size of the infestation of target plant species,
- other plant species present,
- stage of growth of both target and other plant species,
- palatability of all plant species present,
- selectivity of all plant species present by the grazing animal being considered for use,
- availability of that grazing animal within the treatment site area,
- type of management program that is logical and realistic for the treatment site, and
- potential impacts to native wildlife and their habitat.

These factors will be some of the options taken when developing the treatment for a site.

Cattle, sheep, and goats can be used to control the top growth of certain noxious weeds. The following are some advantages of using livestock, mainly sheep or goats, for noxious weed control.

- They use weeds as a food source.
- After a brief adjustment period, they sometimes consume as much as 50% of their daily diet of certain noxious weed species.
- Average daily gains of offspring grazing certain weed-infested pastures can sometimes be significantly higher than average daily gains of offspring grazing grass pastures.
- Sheep or goats can be used in combination with herbicides.

Following are some of the disadvantages of using livestock:

- They also use non-target plants as food sources;
- The use of domestic animals, like sheep or goats, may require a herder or temporary fencing;
- The animals may be killed by predators such as coyotes;

- Heavy grazing of some weed species, such as leafy spurge, tends to loosen the stool of grazing animals;
- Most weed species are less palatable than desirable vegetation, and overgrazing would result;
- Livestock may accelerate movement of non-native plants by ingesting and excreting seeds.
- Livestock may transmit parasites or pathogens to resident native wildlife species.

Particular insects, pathogens, or combinations of these biological control agents may also be introduced into an area of competing or undesired vegetation to selectively feed upon or infect target plants and eventually reduce their density within that area. Only on rare occasions will one biological control agent reduce the target plant density to the desired level of control. Therefore, a complex of biological control agents is most often needed to reduce the target plant density to a desirable level. Even with a complex of biological control agents, often 15 to 20 years are needed to bring about an economic control level, especially on creeping perennials. In most circumstances, biological control agents are not performing control. They are only creating stresses on weeds, which is not the same as control.

Some advantages of using natural enemies to control weeds are as follows:

- They are self-perpetuating.
- They can be comparatively economical once studied and established.
- They can be highly selective.
- They offer a high degree of environmental safety.
- They do not require fossil fuel energy.

Biological control does have the following imitations:

- It is a slow process.
- It does not achieve eradication but merely reduces weed densities to more tolerable levels.

- It is highly selective, attacking one weed existing among a complex of other weeds.
- It cannot be used against weeds that are valued in some situations because insects or pathogens do not recognize boundaries.
- It cannot be used against weeds that are closely related to beneficial plants because the insects or pathogens may be unable to discriminate between related plant species.
- It cannot be used against weeds when the biological control agent requires an alternate host that may be a beneficial plant.

To develop a biological weed control program, the following steps must be taken:

1. Identify weed species and determine origin.
2. Determine if any natural enemies occur at the point of origin.
3. If possible, collect natural enemies.
4. Hold preliminary screening trials on the natural enemies of the weed in the United States.
5. Hold further screening trials in the United States.
6. Raise biological control agents before the first release.
7. Release biological control agents for the first time onto selected sites.
8. If biological control agents survive and increase in numbers, collect agents and release onto other sites of weed infestation.

Usually a complex of at least three to five different biological agents, such as insects, must be used to attack a weed infestation site. Even with a complex of biological agents, often 15 to 20 years are needed to bring about an economic control level, especially on creeping perennial plants.

## Chemical

Chemical treatment would be used to control unwanted vegetation, and in some instances would be followed by a prescribed burn. Treatments would be conducted in accordance with BLM procedures and would meet or exceed individual State label standards. The chemicals can be applied by many different methods, and the selected technique depends on several variables, including the following:

- treatment objective (removal or reduction),
- accessibility, topography, and size of the treatment area,
- characteristics of the target species and the desired vegetation,
- the location of sensitive areas in the immediate vicinity (potential environmental impacts),
- expected costs and equipment limitations; and
- meteorological and vegetation conditions of the treatment area at the time of treatment.

Herbicide applications are scheduled and designed to minimize potential impacts on nontarget plants and animals, while remaining consistent with the objective of the vegetation treatment program. The rates of application depend on the target species, presence and condition of nontarget vegetation, soil type, depth to the water table, presence of other water sources, and the requirements of the label.

In many circumstances the herbicide chosen, time of treatment, and rate of application of the herbicide differs from the most ideal herbicide application for maximum control of the target plant species to minimize damage to the nontarget plant species, and to ensure minimum risk to human health and safety.

The chemicals would be applied aurally with helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft or on the ground using vehicles or manual application devices. Helicopters are more expensive to use than fixed-wing aircraft. They are more

maneuverable and effective in areas with irregular terrain and in treating specific target vegetation in areas with many vegetation types. Manual applications are used only for treating small areas or areas inaccessible by vehicle.

The typical and maximum application rates of each chemical would vary, depending on the program area being treated.

### **Prescribed Burning**

Prescribed burning is the planned application of fire to wildland fuels in their natural or modified state, under specific conditions of fuels, weather, and other variables, to allow the fire to remain in a predetermined area and to achieve site-specific fire and resource management objectives.

Management objectives of prescribed burning include the following:

- controlling of certain species,
- enhancing growth, reproduction, or vigor of certain species,
- managing fuel loads, and
- maintaining vegetation community types that best meet multiple use management objectives.

Treatments would be implemented in accordance with BLM's procedures in Prescribed Fire Management (BLM 2000c)

Before conducting a prescribed burn, a written plan must be prepared. The plan must:

- consider existing conditions (amount of fuel, fuel moisture, temperatures, terrain, weather forecasts) and
- name the people responsible for overseeing the fire.

Also, natural fire that is allowed to burn needs to be carefully monitored to ensure that it will not threaten communities, ecosystems, and other values to be protected. This monitoring may require special expertise such as fire-use management teams that support the overall fire management program. Planning and

implementation for a specific prescribed fire project entails the following four phases:

Phase One: Information/assessment includes the following:

- determining the area to be treated,
- inventorying and assessing site-specific conditions (live and dead vegetation densities, dead and down woody fuel loadings, soil types),
- analyzing historic and present fire management,
- identifying resource objectives from land use plans, and
- conducting NEPA analysis and compliance.

Phase Two: Prescribed fire plan development includes the following:

- developing the site-specific prescribed fire plan to BLM's standards,
- reviewing the plan, and
- obtaining plan approval from local BLM's field office administrators.

Phase Three: Implementation includes the following:

- preparing the prescribed fire boundary to ensure that the fire remains within prescribed boundaries,
- preparing the site, which may include building firelines and improving vehicle routes and wildlife and stock trails by limbing trees and clearing debris, and
- igniting the fire according to the plan's prescribed parameters.

Phase Four: Monitoring and evaluation includes assessment and long-term monitoring of the fire treatment to ensure that the prescribed fire has met the objectives of the approved prescribed fire plan.

## 2.9.2 Appropriate Management Response

### 2.9.2.1 Fire Management

The appropriate management response concept represents a range of available management responses to wildland fires. Responses range from full fire suppression to managing fires for resource benefits (fire use). Management responses applied to a fire will be listed in the fire management plan by the following:

- relative risk to resources, the public, and fire fighters,
- potential complexity, and
- the ability to defend management boundaries.

Any wildland fire can be aggressively suppressed, and any fire in an area designated for fire use can be managed for resource benefits if it meets the prescribed criteria from an approved fire management plan.

### Fire Suppression Actions

The following constraints to fire suppression actions are common to all Alternatives:

- Use suppression tactics that limit damage or disturbance to the habitat and landscape. Use no heavy equipment (such as dozers) unless approved.
- Use fire retardants or chemicals next to waterways in accordance with the Environmental Guidelines for Delivery of Retardant or Foam near Waterways (Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations Task Group 2004).
- Protect all known cultural resources from disturbance.
- In wilderness areas when suppression is required, use MIST and coordinate with wilderness area management objectives and resource advisors.
- Implement general and species-specific conservation measures to the extent

possible to minimize harm to federally listed, proposed, or candidate species within the action area.

## 2.9.3 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

### Standard Operating Policies and Procedures

BLM operates under a number of policies and procedures separate from the management decisions that are required to be analyzed in this planning process. The policies and procedures either already exist, or have been identified through the collaborative planning process and will be used to guide the implementation of the management decisions. The following section summarizes the policies and procedures for both the monument and the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area, for those resource categories that have identified such policies and procedures.

### General Standard Operating Procedures

All activities planned or conducted on BLM's land are subject to environmental analysis in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The process to comply with NEPA first involves making a determination whether the propose action is in conformance with the RMPs. Next, a determination of NEPA adequacy is conducted to determine if existing environmental analysis is adequate to address the proposal. And finally, if additional analysis is required, an environmental analysis (EA) is written to address site specific environmental impacts that might occur. Some projects, because of where they occur or for other reasons, may have adequate NEPA compliance through Categorical Exclusion. In any case, all projects require clearance for cultural resources and sensitive wildlife habitats. If it is determined there may be an effect to significant cultural resources, mitigation(s) is/are recommended and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer is initiated. If it is determined there may be an effect to Threatened or Endangered species or their habitat,

consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service is initiated.

## **SOPs for Agua Fria National Monument**

### **Special Recreation Permits**

#### **Non-Motorized Trail Construction**

Trails are designed to minimize surface disturbance.

Linear areas of interest would be marked with fiberglass posts or rock cairns to establish the footpath.

Consider alternative types of transportation to link areas of interest within the monument.

Develop partnerships with local clubs and organizations to help maintain and monitor trails.

#### **Motorized Trail Construction**

Minimize surface disturbance by, where possible, using existing roads for motorized recreation.

Develop partnerships with local clubs and organizations to help maintain and monitor trails.

### **Lands and Realty**

Obtain reasonable public and administrative access to BLM's managed lands within the monument in the following way:

- Require reciprocal access easements to meet specific program needs.
  - Consider and manage the use of public lands for rights-of-way, right-of-way reservations, easements, permits, leases, licenses, agreements, etc, except for those areas identified as exclusion areas.
  - Secure access easements as needed to prevent closing of access to public lands.
- Consider and evaluate acquisitions that would reduce conflicts between BLM and non-Federal landowner objectives, especially when conflicts are adversely affecting BLM's ability to meet resource goals.
  - Consider acquiring lands where lands to achieve BLM resource management objectives. Evaluate the following:
    - key wildlife habitat, fisheries management areas and habitat for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species; lands with water frontage, such as lakes, streams, flood plains, wetlands, and associated riparian ecosystems Land with important value for outdoor recreation purposes
    - land needed for visual resource protection
    - lands needed to bring existing BLM's managed land into consolidated geographical units.
    - partial interest acquisitions, such as access, minerals, water rights or conservation easements to benefit public land management within the monument
    - consider public/private land management and stewardship opportunities to assist in the management of BLM's lands within the Agua Fria National Monument

### **Communication Sites**

Any future communication sites will be designated only within the boundaries of designated utility corridors.

## **BRADSHAW-HARQUAHALA PLANNING AREA**

### **Travel and Transportation Planning**

Plan, designate, and develop single or multiple use off-highway and special recreation vehicle

areas, loops, routes, and management strategies through interdisciplinary plans, with community and user input. Plans shall adopt limits of acceptable change indicators and standards and reduce user conflicts.

Evaluate roads, routes, and trails, on a case-by-case basis, for permitted events. Determine their suitability or if they will require action such as, closure, re-routing, rehabilitation, upgrading or authorization as an approved permitted course.

Enact road, trail, or area closures or mitigation where off-highway or special vehicle use is determined to be inconsistent with established recreation management objectives, and/or such use is causing harm to resources.

Permit motorized cross-country use only when specifically authorized for completing a BLM authorized task.

Develop brochures, maps, access guides, and information sheets and disseminate off-highway and vehicle information to the public.

Develop a specific AFNM Transportation Management Plan if necessary to implement route designations and guide associated activities. Otherwise route management is guided by this plan and other applicable laws, regulation and guidance.

## **Recreation**

### ***Parking, Staging Areas, and Facilities***

Parking and staging areas will be allowed for visitors' needs to enhance recreation opportunities, to protect natural resources, to satisfy local community needs, or for public safety purposes.

Conduct site-specific planning, on a case-by-case basis.

Authorize facilities where needed for resource protection, visitor safety, improving the recreation experience or increasing recreation opportunities.

In non-designated areas, establish designated camping locations, off-highway and special recreation vehicle use areas and sites as needed for resource protection, visitor safety, improving the recreation experience or increasing recreation opportunities.

Evaluate, as needed, planning and installation of improvements for long-and short term camping areas, commercial and competitive off-highway and special recreation vehicle use areas, water, toilets, scenic turnouts, cultural interpretive sites, kiosks, hiking, equestrian or mountain bike trails, road and portal signage and road maintenance as needed and identified by communities, user groups, or agency staff.

### ***Recreation Sites***

Develop brochure guides for developed sites.

Allow cultural and natural resource interpretation where needed for visitor enjoyment or resource protection.

### ***Camping***

Close trailhead facilities to overnight camping upon authorization of the Field Manager.

### ***Recreation Management in SRMAs/RMZs***

Allow for increased recreation use in appropriate areas, while protecting natural and cultural resources through limitations in sensitive areas. Preserving a healthy, properly functioning, and natural appearing landscape is essential.

Engage a diverse group of stakeholders in a collective effort to conserve the ecological, cultural, open space and recreation values of the area so that it remains a place where people want to live, work and recreate.

Initiate acquisition of lands, easements, or establish conservation agreements through:

- exchange of private lands,
- conservation agreements for high value cultural, biological, or recreation lands,

- purchase of access agreements or rights-of-way.

Assist local community efforts to work with the Arizona State Land Department for recreation easements across State land.

Form citizen, agency, and Government working groups to identify non-public (private and State) lands with high-value biological, cultural, scenic, open space, access or recreation resources that should be protected. Deliver recommendations and objectives on land, access and open space conservation to BLM or the appropriate entity early enough so objectives can be met.

Maintain scenic and natural landscape settings while offering visitors a diverse array of recreation opportunities, including both human-powered and motorized-based activities. Emphasis would be placed on maintaining rural and natural settings, and protecting visual resources. Enter into Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases or patents with qualified entities when appropriate to achieve resource objectives.

Avoid vehicle and recreation uses/access to areas with known listed, sensitive, threatened, and/or endangered species (plant and wildlife).

Minimize recreation use and vehicular traffic when the soils are wet or during high-fire threat conditions.

Form partnership with communities and user groups to prevent and restore areas impacted by litter/dumping.

Complete comprehensive trails strategy and planning to select and develop new single-use and multi-use, hiking, equestrian, and OHV trails where appropriate to meet resource objectives. Then, implement that plan.

Work with private property owners to reduce conflicts between private owners and recreational activities.

Manage the lands within SRMAs/RMZs for multiple uses, including livestock grazing and OHV uses.

Complete a comprehensive inventory and description of all existing and potentially mechanized and non-mechanized trails and routes on public land.

Evaluate roads, routes, and trails, on a case-by-case basis for permitted events and determine suitability for closure, re-routing, rehabilitation, upgrading or authorization as an approved permitted course.

Develop brochures, maps, access guides, and information sheets and disseminate off-highway and special recreation vehicle information to the public.

Plan, designate and develop single- or multiple use off-highway and special recreation vehicle areas, loops, tours, routes and management strategies through interdisciplinary plans, with community and user input. Emphasis will be placed on all-terrain vehicle opportunities and trail linkages with the Black Canyon, New River, Anthem, Wickenburg, Cordes Lakes, and other communities. Planning shall adopt limits of acceptable change indicators and standards and emphasize reducing user conflicts.

### **Mineral Resources**

Unless otherwise restricted, all Federal mineral estates administered by BLM within the Planning Area are available for orderly and efficient development of mineral resources. Mineral exploration and development is generally encouraged on public land in keeping with BLM's multiple resource concepts. Overall guidance on the management of mineral resources appears in the *Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970*, Sec. 102(a)(12) of FLPMA, *National Materials and Minerals Policy*, *Research and Development Act of 1980* and BLM's *Mineral Resources Policy of May 29, 1984*.

Exploration and development of all mineral resources will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Acquired lands will be opened to mineral entry unless critical resource values (threatened and endangered species, riparian habitat, scenic values, etc.) or public health and safety require closure. Upon approval of proposed regulations at 43 CFR 2201.8-2(b), newly acquired lands would automatically be open to operation of the public lands and mineral laws within a specified timeframe after acceptance of title unless critical resource values such as those listed above require closure.

Issuing rights-of-way where there are active mining claims is routine and covered by legislation and regulation. The right-of-way purchaser or permittee is informed of the rights of the mining claimant. Mining might intermittently or temporarily obstruct the right-of-way.

### ***Locatable Minerals***

The 43 CFR 3715 and 3809 regulations provide for the management of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration and development including mining claim use and occupancy. The BLM reviews mining notices and plans in the time allotted as identified in the regulations. For notice level operations, if time permits, a site visit would be conducted for lands identified in a mining notice by the geologist and an archeologist and biologist if they are available. A site visit would always be conducted by BLM during the processing of a plan of operations.

Mining plans and notice level operations when mining claim occupancy is proposed are required to have the proper NEPA documentation prepared. BLM will work with operators to ensure that notices and plans are processed efficiently and in a timely manner. Reclamation plans and bonds are required for each notice and plan per regulation. The amount of such bonds is for the full amount required to complete 100% of the required

reclamation as if BLM were required to hire independent contractors to do the work.

In addition to the requirements of 43 CFR 3715 and 43 CFR 3809, State and Federal law provides for numerous other permits including, but not limited to: an Aquifer Protection Permit and a NPDES permit both issued by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, a Section 404 permit issued by the Army Corps of Engineers and a flood control permit issued by the county. Also, Arizona State law requires mining claimants to keep mining property in a safe condition. The State Mine Inspector's Office is responsible for enforcing this law. BLM will cooperate all interested agencies to ensure that operations conducted on BLM-administered lands are in full compliance with all Federal, State and local health, safety and environmental laws as required by 43 CFR 3715.5.

All occupancy of mining claims must meet the requirements of 43 CFR 3715 and must meet the specific requirements of 43 CFR 3715.2. At a minimum, all occupancies will meet the requirements and standard stipulations for occupancy contained in the BLM Arizona Programmatic EA for Mining Claim Use and Occupancy.

Surface disturbing activities at a level greater than casual use in wilderness areas, national monuments, areas of critical environmental concern and other areas identified in 43 CFR 3809.11 will require a plan of operations before mining can begin. Operations proposed for lands that are withdrawn from mineral entry will cause BLM to initiate a validity examination and will be allowed only on claims with a valid discovery and location existing before designation. Before BLM can approve mining plans of operation submitted for work in areas withdrawn from mineral entry, a BLM mineral examiner must verify that a valid claim exists. The mineral examination and mineral report must confirm that minerals have been found and the evidence is of such character that a person of ordinary prudence would be justified in the further expenditure of his labor and means with

a reasonable prospect of success in developing a valuable mine.

### ***Leasable Minerals***

Lease applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Leases will be issued with needed restrictions to protect resources. Stipulations to protect important surface values will be based on interdisciplinary review of individual proposals and environmental analysis.

### **Wild Horses and Burros**

Continue to monitor burro numbers and habitat conditions in the Lake Pleasant Herd Management Area.

During times of high water levels in Lake Pleasant, relocate burros trapped on temporary islands if they are in danger, or if there is insufficient habitat for survival.

Burros will be removed from the herd area as funding is available with the target of reaching a population of zero.

### **Lands and Realty**

#### ***Land Tenure Adjustments***

Consolidate land ownership to achieve management efficiency and reduced costs:

- Consider and evaluate the overall combination of all resource values and factors including wildlife habitat, riparian areas, wetlands, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, scenic value, watershed protection, timber and mining resources, rangelands, public access and a broad array of recreation uses.
- Consider the use of patent reservations and habitat management plans when conveying lands from Federal ownership
- Consider and evaluate making public land available for disposal to local

governments and non-profits under the Recreation & Public Purposes Act.

- Obtain reasonable public and administrative access to BLM-managed lands in the following ways:
- Require reciprocal access easements to meet specific program needs.
- Consider and manage the use of public lands for rights-of-way, right-of-way reservations, easement, permits, leases, licenses, agreements, etc, except for those areas identified exclusion areas.
- Secure access easements as needed to prevent closing of access to public lands.
- Consider and evaluate in land adjustment actions (including disposal, acquisition, sale, donation) the following:
  - Reduction of BLM administrative costs and improvement of management efficiency.
  - Identify for disposal relatively small, isolated, inaccessible tracts of BLM that do not meet resource management needs.
  - Consider and evaluate conveyances or acquisitions that would reduce conflicts between BLM and non-Federal landowner objectives, especially when conflicts are adversely affecting BLM management.

Consider opportunities to acquire non-Federal lands by purchase or exchange (willing seller) where lands are valuable for achieving BLM resource management objectives. Evaluate the following:

- key wildlife habitat, fisheries management areas and habitat for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species
- designated wilderness and other special management areas
- lands with historical or important heritage resources, outstanding scenic values, or critical ecosystems when these resources are threatened by change

- of use, or when management may be enhanced by public ownership
- lands with water frontage, such as lakes, streams, flood plains, wetlands, and associated riparian ecosystems
- land with important value for outdoor recreation purposes
- land needed for visual resource protection
- lands needed to bring existing BLM land into consolidated geographical units.
- lands that will maintain or stabilize the economies of local government
- lands where BLM programs will provide the best insurance against existing or potential uses that are incompatible with effective watershed management.
- consider partial interest acquisitions, such as access, minerals, water rights or conservation easements to benefit public land management.
- consider public/private land management and stewardship opportunities to assist in the management of BLM-managed lands
- consider disposal of Federal subsurface estate under non-Federal surface estate on a case-by-case basis. Seek opportunities to consolidate surface and mineral ownership.

### ***Utility and Transportation Corridors and Communication Sites***

Corridors to be designated in the Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and EIS should be considered on the basis of their suitability to accommodate right-of-way for facilities of particular threshold sizes or volumes. A corridor is defined only if it contains or is planned for one or more of the following major facilities:

- natural gas and other pipelines are at least 10 inches in diameter,
- electric transmission facilities have a capacity of 115 kV lines or greater voltage,

- significant canals are those which provide delivery of water to urban areas, and
- transportation facilities are those formally defined as Current or Proposed Roads of regional Significance or Current or Proposed Major Arterials (functional class) identified by a local government jurisdiction as regionally significant and projected to carry 20,000 or more vehicles per day by the year 2015.

Utilities, whether interstate, intrastate, or local, should be co-located in designated corridors to the maximum degree possible to minimize impacts to BLM-administered lands.

Transportation routes, whether interstate, intrastate, or local, should be co-located with utilities in designated corridors to the maximum degree possible to minimize impacts to BLM-administered lands.

BLM will strive to coordinate applicable transportation-related planning efforts for the Bradshaw-Harquahala Planning Area with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), and Yavapai County.

Smaller utility lines needed for local service in the vicinity of the corridors should be collocated within a corridor unless doing so would limit the opportunity to collocate additional major utility lines in the corridor.

Avoidance of sensitive or special resources is a primary consideration in future planning and designation of utility corridors.

BLM's planning should promote, whenever possible, optimal energy transfer efficiency and support alternative energy sources such as use of photovoltaic cells (solar energy) and wind power.

In February 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued the National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets (DHS 2003) which summarized the initial assessment of, and planning to protect against, vulnerabilities to the terrorist threat. As DHS continues to carry out its mandate, the designation of utility and transportation corridor location and the planning and maintenance of utilities, railroads, and Federal, State, and interstate highways that cross BLM-administered lands, will be consistent with any directives, policies, and procedures that DHS may institute to minimize vulnerabilities to the energy grid.

Whenever possible, utility transmission lines will be designed and/or routed so as to minimize adverse visual impacts to the surrounding lands and vistas.

BLM's utility corridor designations must be consistent with authority granted under FLPMA Title V, Sections 501–511 (43 USC 1761–1771), the Mineral Leasing Act of 1928 (CFR 2880) and the BLM Right-of-Way Manual, Sections 2801.11 and 2801.12.

In accordance with Executive Order No. 13212, the Energy Project Streamlining process (signed May 18, 2001), Federal energy-related planning must serve to expedite the production, transmission, or conservation of energy.

BLM will continue to cooperate as a full partner (with U.S. Forest Service, APS, and SRP, in AZ) in the Western Utility Group, whose mission is to facilitate an exchange of information and coordinate planning efforts between Federal agencies and utility providers throughout the western U.S.

BLM will, as appropriate, coordinate communication-related planning efforts with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

BLM's planning related to telecommunication infrastructure must, in accordance with the Telecommunications Act of 1996, help facilitate implementation of wireless telephone systems,

in compliance with existing law, by making Federal lands and facilities available for communication sites.

### ***Land Uses Requiring Permits***

The common land uses requiring permits are commercial photography, apiaries, geological and hydrological testing, and some military activities. The recipients of R&PP leases or patents are State and local governments and qualified nonprofit organizations.

## **ENTIRE PLANNING AREA**

### **Fire Management**

Fire suppression will be carried out in a manner consistent with Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, which is updated on an annual basis by the National Interagency Fire Center. Logistical support, operation and coordination, and policies and procedures for mobilization of fire fighting resources are outlined in the Southwest Area Mobilization Guide. This guide provides direction for Federal and State agencies Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

BLM consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in 1993 on the effects of fire management in the Perry Mesa National Register District, in what is now Agua Fria National Monument. The two agencies agreed that emphasis will be placed on avoiding direct disturbances to archaeological sites from fire initiation, management, and suppression. This approach is applicable to the entire planning area, within and beyond the monument. In the past decade, efforts have been undertaken to fulfill this objective in order to protect known sites in the national monument as well as in other areas.

Fire management will continue to avoid the physical disturbance of known archaeological sites or sites found during fire management activities. Fires will not be intentionally started at known sites. Archaeologists will serve as resource advisors for fire management and help

develop and implement fire and fuels management plans, which would address effects on cultural resources. Fire crews will be educated about the need to protect cultural resources.

### **Public Health and Safety**

Minimize releases of hazardous materials through compliance with current regulations. When hazardous materials are released into the environment, assess their impacts on each resource and determine the appropriate response, removal, and remedial actions to take.

Evaluate all actions (including land use authorizations and disposals, mining and milling activities, and unauthorized land uses) for hazardous materials, waste minimization, and pollution prevention. Identify appropriate mitigation for surface-disturbing and disruptive activities associated with all types of hazardous materials and waste management and all types of fire management.

Complete site-specific inventories when lands are being disposed or acquired. It is departmental policy to minimize potential liability of the Department and its bureaus by acquiring property that is not contaminated unless directed by Congress, court mandate, or as determined by the Secretary.

Inspect mining and milling sites to determine appropriate management for hazardous materials.

Identify parties responsible for contamination who will be liable for cleanup and resource damage costs, as prescribed by law.

### **Cultural Resources**

Reviews of proposed land use authorizations and surface disturbing activities will include records searches and field inventories, at the appropriate levels of intensity defined in BLM's Manual 8110, *Identifying and Evaluating Cultural Resources*.

Land use authorizations will include stipulations requiring users/operators to cease work and notify the BLM in the event of a discovery of cultural resources.

The BLM will develop Cultural Resource Project Plans for protection or interpretation projects that require precise descriptions of implementation procedures, workforce, scheduling, equipment, and supplies. Project planning will be implemented following guidance in BLM's Manual 8130, *Planning for Uses of Cultural Resources*.

### **Paleontological Resources**

For all authorized surface disturbing activities.

- Inventories will be conducted on a case-by-case basis, as deemed necessary by the authorized officer, for each proposed surface-disturbing activity to ensure maintenance or integrity of paleontological values.
- User/operators shall be responsible for informing all persons associated with a project that they shall be subject to prosecution for damaging, altering, excavating, or removing any vertebrate or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils on site.
- If vertebrate or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils are discovered, the user/operator shall suspend all operations that further disturb such materials and immediately contact the authorized officer.
- User/operators shall not resume until written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer.
- Within five working days, the authorized officer will evaluate the discovery and inform the operator of actions that will be necessary to prevent loss of significant scientific values.
- The user/operator shall be responsible for the cost of any mitigation required by the authorized officer.
- Upon verification from the authorized officer that the required mitigation has

been completed, the operator shall be allowed to resume operations.

### **Grazing**

Rest rotation, deferred rotation, seasonal or short duration use, or other grazing management systems may be implemented where the need has been identified through monitoring. Also, monitoring will be used to assess the effectiveness of changes brought about by new management practices.

Intensity, season and frequency, and distribution of grazing use should provide for growth and reproduction of the plant species needed to reach desired plant community objectives.

Consider deferment of livestock where possible in cooperation with lease and permit holders. This deferment may allow for the use of prescribed fire or other vegetative treatments, or the use of the area as a grass bank to allow for rest in other grazing allotments.

Administrative vehicular access to repair range improvements by the grazing lessee is assured through issuance of the grazing permit.

One time travel to access sick or injured livestock away from designated routes is authorized to transport the animal to a medical facility.

Any compensation for a loss of range improvements within these pastures will be made in accordance with 43 CFR 4120.3-6.

Livestock management changes may be made when sufficient assessment, inventory, or monitoring data are available.

Fence construction and maintenance will follow guidance provided in BLM handbook on Fencing No. 1741-1

### **Threatened or Endangered Species**

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, provides for the protection of

threatened, endangered and proposed threatened or endangered species of plants and animals.

The following requirements are prescribed in the BLM's Manual 6840:

1. The BLM shall conserve T/E species and the ecosystems upon which they depend and shall use existing authority in furtherance of the purposes of the ESA. Specifically the BLM shall:

a. Determine, to the extent practical, the occurrence and distribution of all T/E species on lands administered by BLM, and evaluate the significance of lands administered by BLM in the conservation of those species.

b. Identify land administered by BLM that is essential habitat and designated Critical Habitat of T/E species, and prescribe management for the conservation of these habitats in land use plans.

c. Develop and implement management plans that will ensure the conservation of T/E species and their habitats.

d. Evaluate ongoing management activities to ensure T/E species conservation objectives are being met.

e. Ensure that all activities affecting the populations and habitats of T/E species are designed to be consistent with recovery needs and objectives.

2. The BLM shall ensure that all actions authorized, funded, or carried out by the BLM are in compliance with the ESA. To accomplish this, the BLM shall:

a. Screen all proposed actions to determine if T/E species or their habitat may be affected. Normally the environmental analysis process is used.

b. Initiate consultation with the FWS/NMFS, as appropriate, for those actions that may affect T/E species or their habitats.

c. Not carry out any actions that would cause any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources or reduce the future management options for the species involved until the consultation proceedings are completed and a final decision has been reached.

d. Ensure that no BLM action will adversely affect the likelihood of recovery of any T/E species.

3. The BLM shall cooperate with the FWS/NMFS in planning and providing for the recovery of T/E species. To accomplish this BLM shall:

a. Participate on recovery teams and in recovery plan preparation, as well as State or regional working teams responsible for T/E species recovery.

b. Review technical and agency review drafts of recovery plans for species affected by BLM management to ensure that proposed actions assigned to BLM are technically and administratively feasible and consistent with BLM's mission and authority.

c. Ensure that the decisions, terms, and conditions of Resource Management Plans, and more detailed site-specific plans, prepared for lands covered by previously approved recovery plans are consistent with meeting recovery plan objectives.

4. The BLM shall retain in Federal ownership all habitats essential for the survival or recovery of any T/E species, including habitat used historically by these species.

5. Species proposed for listing as T/E and proposed Critical Habitat shall be managed with

the same level of protection provided for T/E species except that formal consultations are not required. The BLM shall confer with the FWS/NMFS on any action that will adversely affect a proposed species or proposed critical habitat.

6. Candidate species will be managed so as not to contribute to the need for them to become listed as threatened or endangered.

## 2.10 Implementation and Monitoring

### 2.10.1 Implementation

Many land use plan decisions are implemented or become effective upon approval of the RMP. Examples of such decisions include the following:

- land health standards and the DFC,
- land use allocations, and
- all Special Area Designations such as ACECs.

Management actions that require more site-specific project planning as funding becomes available will require further environmental analysis. Decisions to implement site-specific projects are subject to administrative review when such decisions are made.

BLM will continue to involve and collaborate with the public while implementing this plan. Opportunities to become involved in the plan implementation and monitoring will include development of partnerships and community-based citizen working groups. BLM and citizens can collaboratively develop site-specific implementation plans that mutually benefit public land resources, local communities, and the people who live, work, or play on the public lands.

## 2.10.2 Monitoring

Monitoring of management actions and their outcomes is a critical component adaptive management. Measuring changes resulting from management actions is necessary for determining success or the need for a different management approach.

BLM monitors many activities and events. For example, grazing utilization and vegetation trends are measured to support decisions on allotment Standards and Guidelines evaluations. OHV events are monitored to determine that permit stipulations are followed and necessary site rehabilitation is undertaken.

Effective monitoring is the process of collecting data and information in order to determine whether or not desired outcomes (expressed as goals and objectives in the land use plan) are being met (or progress is being made toward meeting them) as the allowable uses and management actions are being implemented. The design of monitoring protocols, sampling methods, and timing, is a site specific effort for many activities and management decisions in this document. For those activities, monitoring strategies will be developed as part of the implementation process. Strategy will identify indicators of change, acceptable thresholds, methodologies, protocols, and timeframes that will be used to evaluate and determine whether or not desired outcomes are being achieved.

Monitoring processes will be designed to collect information in the most cost-effective manner and may involve sampling or remote sensing. Some monitoring may be conducted by other agencies or by citizens. It is not necessary or desirable to monitor every management action or direction. Unnecessary detail and unacceptable costs are avoided by focusing on key monitoring questions and proper sampling methods.

Much of the monitoring conducted by BLM follows standardized methods and protocols. These standardized methodologies are usually described in program manuals or handbooks.

Monitoring methodologies conducted for grazing management can be found in:

- Indicators of Rangeland Health, Technical Reference 1734-6 Rangeland Monitoring and Evaluation
- TR - 4401 Planning for Monitoring
- TR - 4403 Utilization Studies
- TR - 4404 Sampling Vegetation Attributes
- TR - 4409 Rangeland Inventory and Monitoring

Monitoring methodologies for various wildlife studies can be found in the following.

- For monitoring stream proper functioning condition:
- PFC Monitoring is done using Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition, Technical Reference TR 1737-9 (1993), and
- A User Guide to Assessing Proper Functioning Condition and Supporting Science for Lotic Areas, TR 1737-15 (1998).
- For monitoring vegetation changes, rangeland monitoring techniques as described above may be used.
- In addition, guidance may be found in *Sampling Vegetation Attributes, Interagency Technical Reference* (1996)
- Riparian Bank Alteration monitoring is conducted according to Phoenix District protocols as document on the Riparian Woody Species Utilization Monitoring form.

Monitoring for many activities is designed as the need arises. Monitoring of many permitted activities involve determination of compliance with standards, stipulations, or restrictions in the permit. These are permit or authorization specific and would require periodic site inspections.

Other monitoring activities are designed on site. For example, monitoring for the effects of a

permitted recreation event may involve photo points to document changes caused by the event, measurements of route widths may be made at selected locations before and after the event, soil compaction may be measured before and after the event using a soil penetrometer. Each of these is designed for a particular purpose and may be of short duration.

Monitoring of recreation uses over longer durations would be designed to fit the need to measure management success. For instance, the effects of human use of the Agua Fria National Monument may include measurements of barren areas used for recreation purposes and re-measuring over time to detect changes. Vegetation character may be measured in places that have a potential to change and would be re-measured periodically to detect if change is occurring. The level and intensity of monitoring will vary, depending on the sensitivity of the resource or area and the scope of the proposed management activity.

Upon RMP implementation, recreation staff, in conjunction with interested public, will determine specific areas where comprehensive site assessments would be initiated to do the following:

- determine existing physical and social impacts of recreation activities,
- define desired conditions, settings, outcomes and standards,
- establish monitoring plans to manage camping and other recreation uses, and
- determine and establish route maintenance standards, and document the current status of each route.

For some recreation resources, such as OHV routes, we have completed a detailed, comprehensive, site-specific inventory of all motorized (OHV) routes and non-motorized trails and associated impacts on public lands within the planning area. Changes in route location, route extension, cross-country motorized travel or vehicle use in closed areas will be detected by law enforcement, staff, park

ranger and volunteer monitoring and field patrols. Furthermore, BLM and the BLM's Resource Advisory Committee are developing OHV-based Land Health Standards and Guidelines for OHV Management that will establish thresholds for continued motorized recreation use while maintaining the health of the land. Monitoring of motorized recreation will be based on these Land Health Standards when they are developed and future adjustments to motorized recreation will be conducted consistent with the Guidelines when they are approved.

## 2.11 Administrative Actions

Although BLM's intent and commitment to accomplish administrative actions are generally addressed in RMP/EIS-level documents, such activities are neither land-use-plan-level decisions nor implementation-level management-action decisions. Administrative actions are day-to-day activities conducted by BLM, often required by FLPMA but not requiring a NEPA analysis or a decision by a responsible official to be accomplished. Examples of administrative actions include mapping, surveying, inventorying, monitoring, collecting needed information such as research and studies, and completing project-specific or implementation-level plans.

## 2.12 Requirements for Further Environmental Analysis

The proposed RMP/EIS is a programmatic statement describing the impacts of implementing the proposed land use plan decisions and management actions described for the planning areas.

Land use plan decisions that are implemented upon approval of the RMP do not require any further environmental analysis or documentation. Whenever implementation-level plans (e.g. ACEC management plans) are prepared, more environmental analysis and documentation would be required. Individual management actions or projects requiring more site-specific project planning also require more environmental analysis.

Site-specific environmental analysis and documentation (including the use of categorical exclusions and determinations of NEPA adequacy where suitable) may be prepared for one or more individual projects, in accordance with management objectives and decisions established in the approved land use plan. BLM will ensure that the environmental review process which includes evaluation of all critical elements, including historic properties, traditional cultural properties, and threatened and endangered species. In the course of these reviews, the BLM will carry out any required Section 7 consultations with the USFWS and will coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to ensure compliance with the NHPA, in accordance with the BLM National Programmatic Agreement and Arizona's BLM-SHPO Protocol.

Interdisciplinary impact analysis will be based on this and other applicable EISs. If the analysis prepared for site-specific projects finds potential for significant impacts not already described in an existing EIS, another EIS or a supplement to an existing EIS may be warranted.

Upon providing public notice of a decision, supporting environmental documentation will be sent to all affected interests and made available to other publics on request. Decisions to implement site-specific projects are subject to administrative review when such decisions are made.

## 2.13 Interrelationships

BLM conducts many activities that require coordination between State, or other Federal agencies. Coordination has been ongoing throughout this planning effort. Coordination is conducted as a matter of course when implementing land use plan decisions through project development and site-specific activities.

As a part of this planning effort and in implementing on-the-ground activities, BLM has requested formal consultation with the USFWS on potential impacts to federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and designated or proposed critical habitat. In April 2003, the BLM and USFWS finalized a Consultation Agreement to establish an effective and cooperative ESA Section 7 consultation process. The Agreement defines the process, products, actions, schedule, and expectations of the BLM and USFWS regarding project consultation. The Agreement also considers effects to, and management for, candidate species. A biological assessment (BA) was prepared and submitted to determine the effect of the Proposed Plan on all relevant listed, proposed, and candidate species, and associated critical habitat. All anticipated environmental effects, conservation actions, mitigation, and monitoring were disclosed in the BA, including analysis of all direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Plan analyzed in this FEIS.

The Proposed Plan/FEIS will also be provided to the Arizona SHPO to comply with Sections 106 and 110 of the NHPA. BLM actions will also comply with other Federal environmental legislation and land use plans, such as the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act, and with applicable State and local government regulations, such as the Sikes Act (16 U.S. Code. 670 et seq., as amended; see Section 1.4 and Appendix 1.D: Relevant Laws, Executive Orders, and Memorandums). The Sikes Act authorizes the Department of the Interior, in cooperation with State agencies responsible for administering fish and game laws, to plan,

develop, maintain, and coordinate programs for conserving and rehabilitating wildlife, fish, and game on public lands within its jurisdiction. These habitat management plans (HMPs) must conform to overall land use and other management plans for the lands involved. The HMPs could include habitat improvement projects and related activities, and adequate protection for species of fish, wildlife, and plants considered endangered or threatened. BLM must also coordinate with the appropriate State agencies in managing State-listed plant and animal species when the State has formally made such designations. BLM has two habitat HMPs for lands within the planning areas. These documents have satisfied the Sikes Act requirements in the past and will be reviewed in the context of these new Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw Harquahala plans shortly after the records of decision are signed.

The BLM and AGFD work cooperatively to manage resources within the Agua Fria National Monument and the Bradshaw-Harquahala planning area. The BLM is responsible for managing wildlife habitat on BLM land and AGFD, through the authority of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, has public trust responsibility to manage fish and wildlife. Throughout the Proposed Plan/FEIS, the close, cooperative nature of the relationship is cited. The BLM has a Master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the AGFD which establishes protocols that direct the cooperative working relationship between the agencies. The MOU provides context to better enable both agencies to work in partnership and to make decisions in a consistent manner across the state. The guidelines established in the MOU apply to implementation of this RMP. In addition, a MOU has been signed giving AGFD cooperating agency status on BLM planning efforts in Arizona.

Any permit system or restriction of use or access would include coordination with other state and federal entities that issue use permits on federal lands to assure that authorized permittees have fair and reasonable access to their permitted activity. For example, should a permit system be implemented, the BLM will coordinate with

AGFD to enable coordination of access for hunters with valid hunting licenses and permits for the affected hunting unit. Coordination with AGFD during development of management plans and enhancement of wildlife habitat, species diversity, riparian health, and other activities to achieve the optimum health of wildlife species and populations will continue. Administrative access may be allowed for AGFD staff for law enforcement, natural resource management, and other purposes. AGFD's use of motorized and mechanized equipment off designated routes is considered an administrative use and will be allowed in suitable locations (as agreed to by AGFD and the BLM) for such purposes including, but not limited to the following: law enforcement activities, wildlife water supplementation (i.e. water hauling and maintenance, repair, building, or rebuilding of wildlife waters), collar retrieval, capture and release of wildlife, habitat manipulation (forage enhancement, burning, vegetation clearing, planting, etc.), fence construction (enclosures/exclosures), and research activities.

On BLM-managed lands, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) and the AGFD manage animal damage control, predator management, control of exotic wildlife species, and feral, non-permitted livestock on BLM-managed lands. A 1995 MOU recognizes the legal authority of APHIS-WS to conduct wildlife damage management on BLM-managed lands. The BLM acknowledges that authority and will continue close coordination with APHIS-WS and AGFD, as well as the State Land Department, State Brand Inspector, and other affected agencies on animal damage control efforts within the Planning Areas. AGFD predator management would continue under AGFD strategic plans as well as species management plans.

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) holds many withdrawals of BLM-managed land for many purposes. Coordination between BLM and the BOR occurs regularly regarding these lands. In some cases, other entities conduct further management of these lands, such as in the case

of the Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The park is managed by Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, but the property is held by the Bureau of Reclamation as fee simple or withdrawn land for the water storage facility. BLM, BOR, and Maricopa County coordinate closely on actions in and around the Lake Pleasant area.

Regional transportation planning and construction of roadways and highways is generally conducted by State or regional agencies, such as Arizona Department of Transportation, county departments of transportation, and city transportation departments. When these agencies plan and develop roadways that cross public lands, BLM is involved in their design and contributes to the environmental impact analysis. ADOT-managed transportation corridors within or adjacent to the planning area include: I-17, US 60, SR 74, SR71, SR 89, SR 69, SR 169, L303, and L101. Continued urban growth in the region will necessitate future modifications of transportation systems within ADOT rights-of-way.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU No. AZ-931-0309 AMENDMENT #2 signed March 21, 2006) defines the roles and responsibilities, as well as working relationships between BLM, ADOT, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA.) The MOU “outlines policies and procedures for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Arizona Division of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Arizona Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to establish and improve cooperative working relationships for implementing the BLM/FHWA Interagency Agreement Number AA-851-IA2-40 of July 27, 1982 (attached as Appendix A). Specifically by:

- 1 Developing a mutual understanding of the missions, goals, constraints, and responsibilities of the BLM, ADOT, and FHWA as they relate to land and resource management practices on public lands under or contiguous to ADOT highways; ADOT development and operation practices on highways located on

- public lands; and public lands needed for transportation purposes;
- 2 Defining BLM, ADOT, and FHWA organizational structures and identifying areas of cooperation to facilitate coordinated work efforts;
- 3 Developing procedures and standardized methods for communication and
- 4 Minimizing duplication of work and streamlining work processes.

This MOU provides for a coordinated approach to accomplish land and resource management, and transportation development and operation management in completing BLM, ADOT, and FHWA goals and objectives. Such coordination is subject to the respective authorities of each agency, and is designed to reduce and, if possible, eliminate duplication of work; to establish procedures for streamlining work processes; to ensure each agency is provided sufficient lead time for proper sequential function; to make more efficient use of and share available resources; and to develop and execute action programs which maximize responsiveness to public needs and concerns.”

The MOU divides responsibilities by establishing:

- 1 FHWA is responsible for administration and management of the Federal-aid highway program and application for right-of-way appropriation consistent with 23 C.F.R. 710.601 Subpart F.
- 2 ADOT is responsible for the design, construction and management of the highway system within Arizona for which it has responsibility.
- 3 BLM is responsible for administration and management of certain public lands and interests in lands within Arizona.

For transportation planning and construction by other agencies, BLM will coordinate with the responsible agency to develop design features that minimize the fragmenting effect of the planned roadway. BLM will work with the responsible agency to evaluate and incorporate safe and effective wildlife crossing to ensure

long term species viability and maintaining habitat connectivity. Where planned roadways potentially fragment other resources, such as (but not limited to) recreation routes or trails, grazing allotments, or mining operations, BLM will work with the responsible agency to provide continued connectivity for those purposes as well. BLM will also work with the agency to provide continued safe access to public lands from any developed roadway for recreation and other public land users.

## **2.14 Comparison of Impacts by Alternative**

A summary comparison of impacts by Alternative can be found on Table 2-8.