

San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan

The BLM is initiating a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA). An RMP is a set of comprehensive long-range decisions that guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions for BLM administered land within a planning area.

The SPRNCA RMP (for all federal land within the SPRNCA) must meet all requirements of Public Law 100-696 and contain provisions designed to assure protection of *the riparian area and the aquatic, wildlife, archeological, paleontological, scientific, cultural, educational, and recreational resources and values of the conservation area.*

The Resource Management Plan for the San Pedro National Conservation Area will:

- **Identify desired future conditions** or desired outcomes in terms of specific goals and objectives for resources and/or uses.
- **Identify management actions** anticipated to achieve the established goals and objectives. Management actions are actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health. These include proactive measures (such as actions taken to enhance watershed function and condition), as well as measures or criteria that will guide day-to-day activities.
- **Identify lands that are open and closed** to certain uses such as grazing or certain types of recreation.
- **Establish special and administrative designations** such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, recommend proposed withdrawals, land tenure zones, and recommend or make findings of suitability for congressional designations (such as components of the National Wild and Scenic River System).

The Resource Management Plan is issue-driven. Issues are the key resource challenges (i.e. concerns about management practices, use restrictions, or management opportunities) that will guide the planning process. Issues include resource use, development, and protection opportunities for consideration in the preparation of the RMP.

Issues are identified during the scoping phase. Scoping is a collaborative public involvement process to identify planning issues that will be addressed in development of the RMP. Scoping is currently underway, and will end September 27th, 2013. The BLM is soliciting comments from the public about resource issues, concerns, or opportunities that could be addressed in this RMP. The BLM staff has developed a preliminary set of issues to help initiate the scoping discussion. All of the comments received during scoping will be analyzed and summarized in the scoping report. The scoping report will identify a final set of issues to be carried forward into the next phase of the plan— alternative development.

A range of alternatives will be developed to address the final set of planning issues. Each alternative represents a different land use plan that addresses and/or resolves the identified planning issues in different ways. The alternatives will reflect the variety of issues and guidance applicable to the resource uses. One alternative will consist of the current management decisions (from existing plans and documents) called the No Action Alternative. Each alternative will include a different suite of potential planning decisions to address the issues. Some planning decisions may be common to multiple, or all alternatives. Once the alternatives have been formulated we will analyze the effects of the alternatives and select a preferred alternative. All of the different alternatives, the preferred alternative, and the effects of the alternatives will be released as the Draft RMP/EIS.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the planning area?

The planning area for the SPRNCA RMP will be focused on the 56,431 acres that make up the Riparian National Conservation Area, but may include some of the scattered parcels of BLM land adjacent to the SPRNCA. The planning area is an issue you can comment on during scoping.

What is a “Management Action”?

A management action is an action taken to reach the desired outcome or goals. Examples of management actions could be to treat x acres with removal of noxious weeds, or to do x miles of river restoration.

What is scoping?

Scoping is a collaborative public involvement process to identify planning issues to be addressed in the planning process. Public input received through official scoping comments will be analyzed and summarized to develop the final set of planning issues.

What are planning issues?

Issues are the key resource challenges that will guide the planning process and will be used to develop alternative is the plan. Planning issues are defined through public participation during the scoping phase.

What are alternatives?

An alternative is a land use plan that addresses the identified planning issues. The number and diversity of the alternatives is determined by the range of the final set of planning issues. One alternative will be the “no action” alternative, which assumes a continuation of the current management situation. Each alternative will include goals and objectives (desired outcomes), and the allowable uses and actions anticipated to achieve these outcomes.

Where are we now?



What are the “givens”?

The enabling legislation that created the SPRNCA (Public Law 100-696, Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988), established that the land must be managed “*to conserve, protect and enhance the riparian area and the aquatic, wildlife, archeological, paleontological, scientific, cultural, educational, and recreational resources of the conservation area.*” The RMP must meet all requirements of this legislation and design provisions to assure protection of the aforementioned conservation values.

There are a number of criteria that the BLM must follow in developing the Resource Management Plan:

- The RMP must comply with Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and all other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- The RMP will recognize all valid existing rights.
- All federal lands within the SPRNCA are **withdrawn** from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws; from location, entry, and patent under the United States mining laws; and from **disposition** under all laws pertaining to mineral and geothermal leasing and all amendments thereto.
- The process will follow the BLM’s policies in [Appendix C of the Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1610-1](#).
- The RMP will *not* address the National Conservation Area boundary adjustments or proposals to change Public Law 100-696.
- The BLM will consult with affiliated Native American tribes in accordance with policy to give tribal concerns full consideration in the plan.
- The planning process will include the consideration of any impacts on Native American Trust assets.
- The RMP will comply with the Endangered Species Act (and be consistent with [BLM Manual 6840 Special Status Species](#)) and follow interagency agreements with the Fish and Wildlife Service regarding Section 7 Consultation and species recovery process.

- The RMP will recognize Arizona Game and Fish Department’s authority to manage wildlife, including hunting and fishing, within the planning area pursuant to the master memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission establishing coordination and cooperation between agencies.
- Coordination with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office will be conducted throughout the planning process.

