

San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area RMP Newsletter

Tracking the development of the
San Pedro Riparian
National Conservation Area
Resource Management Plan

Vol. 1, November 2013



Welcome to the first issue of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan Newsletter.

"The San Pedro Riparian NCA Resource Management Plan will give us the opportunity to develop specific goals and objectives for the SPRNCA. Developing a shared vision, with public involvement, for the future of the SPRNCA is imperative to successful management."

-Vi Hillman, BLM
Tucson Field Office Manager

The BLM is currently preparing a Resource Management Plan for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA) in southeastern Arizona. The plan will guide the management of the conservation area over the next two decades. The SPRNCA is located in Cochise County, and comprises more than 40 miles of the upper San Pedro River flowing north from the U.S.-Mexico border near Palominas to St. David near Benson. It is part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System.

What is a Resource Management Plan?

A Resource Management Plan (RMP) is a land use plan that describes broad multiple-use guidance for managing public lands administered by the BLM. An RMP consists of comprehensive long-range decisions that guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. The planning area for the SPRNCA RMP is focused on the conservation area, but could extend to BLM-administered land in the watershed outside the NCA boundary if public feedback suggests this is necessary.



In July and August more than 100 people participated in a series of five Educational Forums and three scoping meetings in Sierra Vista, Benson and Tucson. Read more about these sessions on Page 3.



Public involvement is critical

There are multiple opportunities for the public to participate in the development of the Resource Management Plan.

Scoping is the first opportunity for public input during a planning process. *Scoping* is a collaborative process to identify the most important issues to be addressed in the Resource Management Plan. During scoping, feedback from individuals, groups and agencies helps to formulate a set of planning issues that will guide the remainder of the planning process. (See Preliminary Planning Issues

below.) *Scoping* for the SPRNCA RMP began on April 30, with the publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register, and ended on September 27, 2013.

The next opportunity for public involvement will be in the Winter of 2013, when we will convene *Issue Groups* to further explore the issues outlined in the final scoping report (anticipated in November 2013). The *Issue*

Groups will be open to anyone who wishes to participate. The work of the *Issue Groups* will inform the development of the management alternatives for the Draft Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Preliminary Planning Issues

Before scoping began, the BLM Tucson Field Office staff developed an initial set of **planning issues** to help stimulate dialogue and discussion during scoping. This list will be modified and added to based upon the input received during scoping. The final set of issues will be presented in the scoping report (anticipated in November 2013).

- Recreation
- Visual Resources
- Lands and Realty
- Urban Interface
- Water Resources (Surface and Groundwater)
- Land Health (Uplands and Watershed Function)
- Riparian Areas, Floodplains, Wetlands, Aquatic
- Cultural/Paleontological Resources
- Special Designations
- Livestock Grazing





Participants at the Educational Forum on Wildlife and Threatened and Endangered Species listen to talk from the AZ Game and Fish Department

What has happened so far?

The SPRNCA RMP is taking a unique approach. Public education forums in July and August provided an opportunity to learn more about key resource issues from over 20 subject matter experts.

The public scoping period for the SPRNCA RMP began on April 30, 2013 and ended on September 27, 2013. Public feedback during an initial set of meetings in June 2013 (in Sierra Vista, Benson and Tucson,) suggested that people wanted a chance to learn more about the resource issues in the SPRNCA before providing official scoping comments.

In response to this, the BLM designed and hosted a series of five **Educational Forums** in July and August, providing a rich background on the broad array of resource issues that will be addressed in the Resource Management Plan.

The Educational Forums offered a new approach to scoping, allowing the public, partners and BLM to learn more about the issues together.

More than 100 participants over the series heard from 22 experts on the topics of **Water and Riparian Resources, Watershed and Rangeland Management, Wildlife and Special Status Species, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Recreation, and Socioeconomics**. The BLM also hosted open scoping meetings in Tucson, Benson and Sierra Vista.

Videos of every educational forum presentation can be viewed on the project Tumblr site: sanpedronca.tumblr.com.

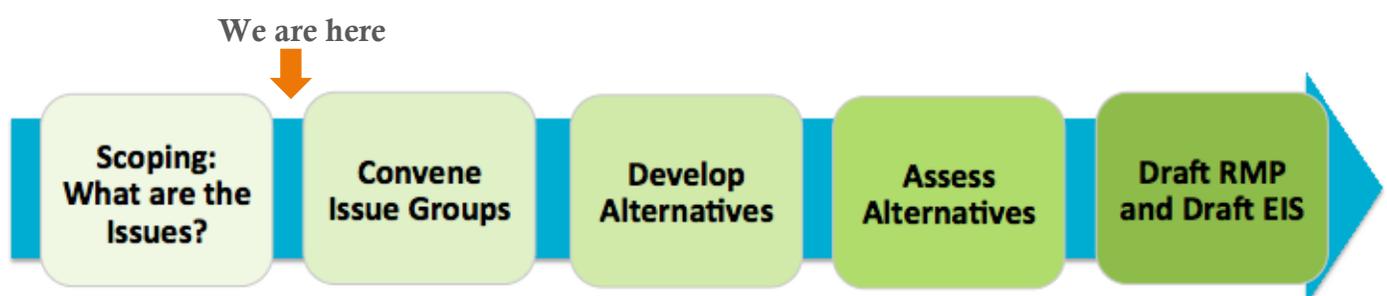
All **presentations** can be downloaded from the BLM website: <http://on.doi.gov/11YKfGO>

Why not host a viewing party with your friends and colleagues to explore the issues that are most important to you?



Jim Mahoney, BLM Tucson Field Office, speaks about recreation during an Educational Forum in Sierra Vista.

Project Timeline





How to contact us

Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or concerns.

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Follow the Progress!

Find us on Facebook:
[facebook.com/pages/San-Pedro-Riparian-National-Conservation-Area-Planning/447638165332813](https://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Pedro-Riparian-National-Conservation-Area-Planning/447638165332813)

Follow us on Tumblr:
www.sanpedronca.tumblr.com

Check out the BLM
 SPRNCA website:
<http://on.doi.gov/11YKfGO>

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 Pg3 – C. Whitaker, Pg4 – T. Robertson

What's Next?

We will be taking a short break from public engagements at the end of the scoping period. We anticipate the draft scoping report and summary will be available in the middle of November. At that time we will reach out again to convene **Issue Groups** to further explore the issues outlined in the scoping report.

The issue groups will be open to anyone who wishes to participate. The work of the issue groups will inform the development of the management alternatives for the Draft Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement. To receive

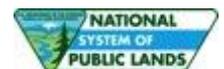
information about the **Issue Groups**, please make sure you are on the SPRNCA RMP mailing list. Send an email to: blm_az_tfo_sprnca_rmp@blm.gov with your name and contact information.

We at the BLM are looking forward to the next phase of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan development.

Thank you to everyone who has participated so far!



The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area is located in Cochise County, Arizona east of Sierra Vista along the San Pedro River.



The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.