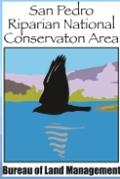


San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area

RMP Newsletter



Tracking the development of a collaborative plan for one of the Southwest's most cherished rivers



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Bureau of Land Management,
Tucson Field Office

“We recognize what the San Pedro means for southern Arizona and the greater Southwest – for its people, its history and ecosystem. This planning effort is one of BLM’s best tools for protecting, conserving and enhancing this irreplaceable resource set aside by the American people.”

- David McIntyre,
BLM Planning Team Leader



The Bureau of Land Management’s Gila District, Tucson Field Office is currently preparing a Resource Management Plan for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA) in southeastern Arizona that will guide the management of the area for the next 15 to 20 years. Located in Cochise County, the SPRNCA protects more than 44 miles of the San Pedro River as it flows north from the U.S.- Mexico border near Palominas, to St. David near Benson. It is a key component of the BLM’s National Conservation Lands, a system of special places covering 30 million acres nationwide.

Where are we now?

The BLM is currently in the **alternative development phase** of the San Pedro Resource Management Plan (RMP). Alternatives are a key component of the federal land use planning process, a step that requires the BLM and other agencies to formulate various management options and analyze their potential effects. The goal is to provide a logical and accurate basis for the selection of final plan.

In order to effectively address the robust public feedback gathered during scoping, the BLM is taking a measured and deliberate approach to alternative development. The updated timeline for the RMP effort can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Planning guidance requires the BLM to develop a broad and reasonable range of alternatives grounded in the issues raised during scoping. The alternatives process recognizes that for any given issue, there may be multiple options to resolve it.

Choices, Choices...

There's more than one way to crack an egg (or conserve a river). The alternative development and analysis process is at the core of the National Environmental Policy Act, serving as a means to weigh the pros and cons of various land stewardship options. Public and stakeholder input have been essential in helping the BLM craft a range of alternatives.

The planning process began by asking:

What are the management issues on the SPRNCA by that need to be addressed in the future?

This was the focus of the scoping phase (April to September 2013), and helped set the stage for the remainder of the planning process. Scoping helped the BLM identify the following issues:

- Planning area boundary
- Recreation and Travel Management

- Special Designations
- Fish and Wildlife
- Special Status Species
- Grazing and Range
- International Border
- Cultural Resources
- Socioeconomics

Fast forward to 2015 and the BLM is nearly finished with the process of crafting a range of alternatives that would each address the relevant issues in different ways.

Each alternative will strike a unique balance of management objectives, land use allocations, and strategies. One alternative, the "no action" alternative, will depict current management and decisions moving forward unchanged. All other alternatives suggest modification or additions to the current land use decisions.



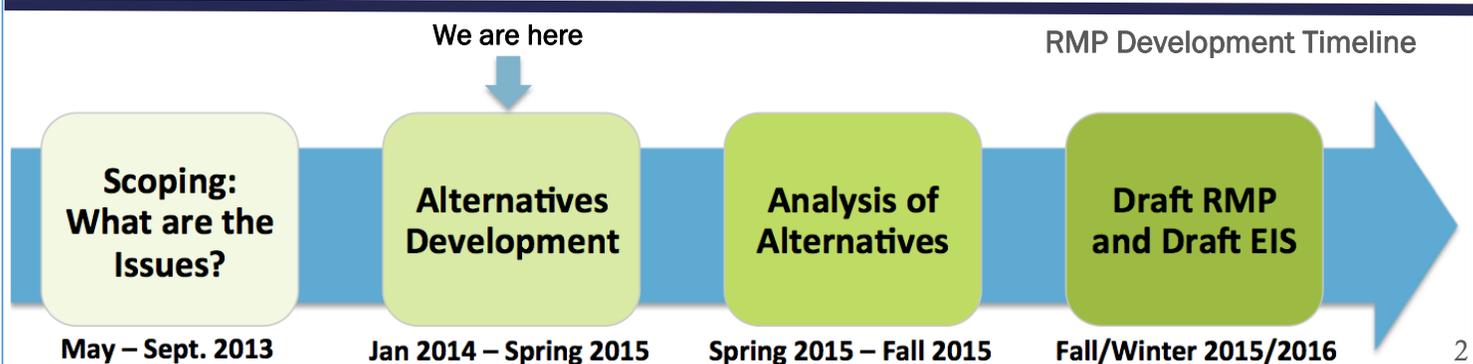
A Note about Adaptive Management

Adaptive Management is a core component of BLM's planning effort. As a continual learning and feedback process, it promotes flexible decision-making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood. Careful monitoring of these outcomes both advances scientific understanding and helps adjust policies or operations as part of an iterative learning process.

Adaptive management recognizes the importance of natural variability in contributing to ecological resilience and productivity. It is not a 'trial and error' process, but rather emphasizes learning while doing. Adaptive management is not an end in itself, but rather a means to more effective decisions and enhanced benefits. Its true measure is in how well it helps meet environmental, social, and economic goals; increases scientific knowledge; and reduces tensions among stakeholders.



Panel participants at the July 2014 Adaptive Management meeting: Ian Tomlinson (Vera Earl Ranch), Karen Simms (BLM), Gita Bodner (The Nature Conservancy), Doug Duncan (USFWS)



Welcome to the Office

Five full-day field trips in 2014 offered BLM staff and stakeholders the opportunity to see issues first hand, discuss ideas and learn together

Early in the Resource Management Plan development process, participants emphasized the importance of “getting out on the land,” seeing resource values and issues first hand, and having the chance to discuss these issues in detail with BLM resource specialists.

From March to May 2014, BLM resource specialists hosted five full-day field trips to the SPRNCA focusing on five topics: Range Management, Fish and Wildlife, Recreation, Hydrology and Cultural Resources.

Field trip groups visited key sites all across the SPRNCA to

observe together and share ideas about possible management actions and strategies.

“These discussions in the field offered everyone – including us the chance to learn something new about the SPRNCA,” according to BLM planner Amy Marksten.

Over the five field trips nearly 60 people participated, offering their own insights, questions and suggestions for how the SPRNCA could be managed into the future.

Notes from all five field trips are available on the [BLM e-planning site](#). You can also view a



[slideshow](#) of photographs taken during the field trips.

A big thank you to everyone who took time out of their schedules to come out and spend some beautiful days on the SPRNCA!

A Year of Collaboration: 2014 Field Trips and Public Meetings

Resource Field Trips

Range Management - March 21, 2014

Fish and Wildlife - March 28, 2014

Recreation - April 4, 2014

Hydrology - May 9, 2014

Cultural Resources - May 20, 2014

Public Meetings

Alternatives Development - Feb 22, 2014

Alternatives Development - March 22, 2014

Adaptive Management Forum - July 22, 2014



What's Next?



In late spring 2015, BLM will present the draft range of alternatives to the public, cooperators and other stakeholders in order to solicit feedback. Details of this phase of outreach will be distributed once they are finalized.

introduce stakeholders to the DRMP and DEIS. These sessions will provide for focused discussion on key areas for input and will offer guidelines on how to comment effectively on drafts during the official comment period. After carefully considering all comments on the DRMP/DEIS, the BLM will share a proposed RMP/Final EIS (FEIS).

BLM's work over the next several months will be geared towards the completion of the **Draft Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement** (DRMP/DEIS). The DRMP/DEIS will take the finalized alternatives and analyze their likely effects.

Remember to take advantage of the great resources created so far, including [videos of expert presentations](#) from the summer 2013 Educational Forums and detailed [notes from the 2014 Alternatives Development meetings and Resource Field trips](#). All past meeting materials can be found on the [BLM e-planning webpage](#).

Once the DRMP/DEIS is complete, the public will be notified and a series of meetings will be announced to help

Contact Us

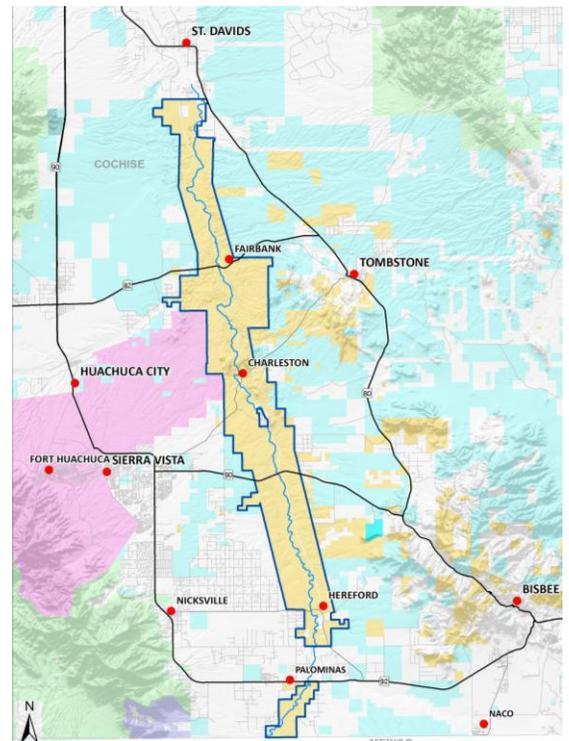


Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions, concerns or ideas.

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The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area is located in Cochise County, Arizona, east of Sierra Vista along the San Pedro River. The boundary is shown in blue in the image at right.



Follow the progress!

BLM planning website
<http://on.doi.gov/11YKfGO>

Tumblr
www.sanpedronca.tumblr.com

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.