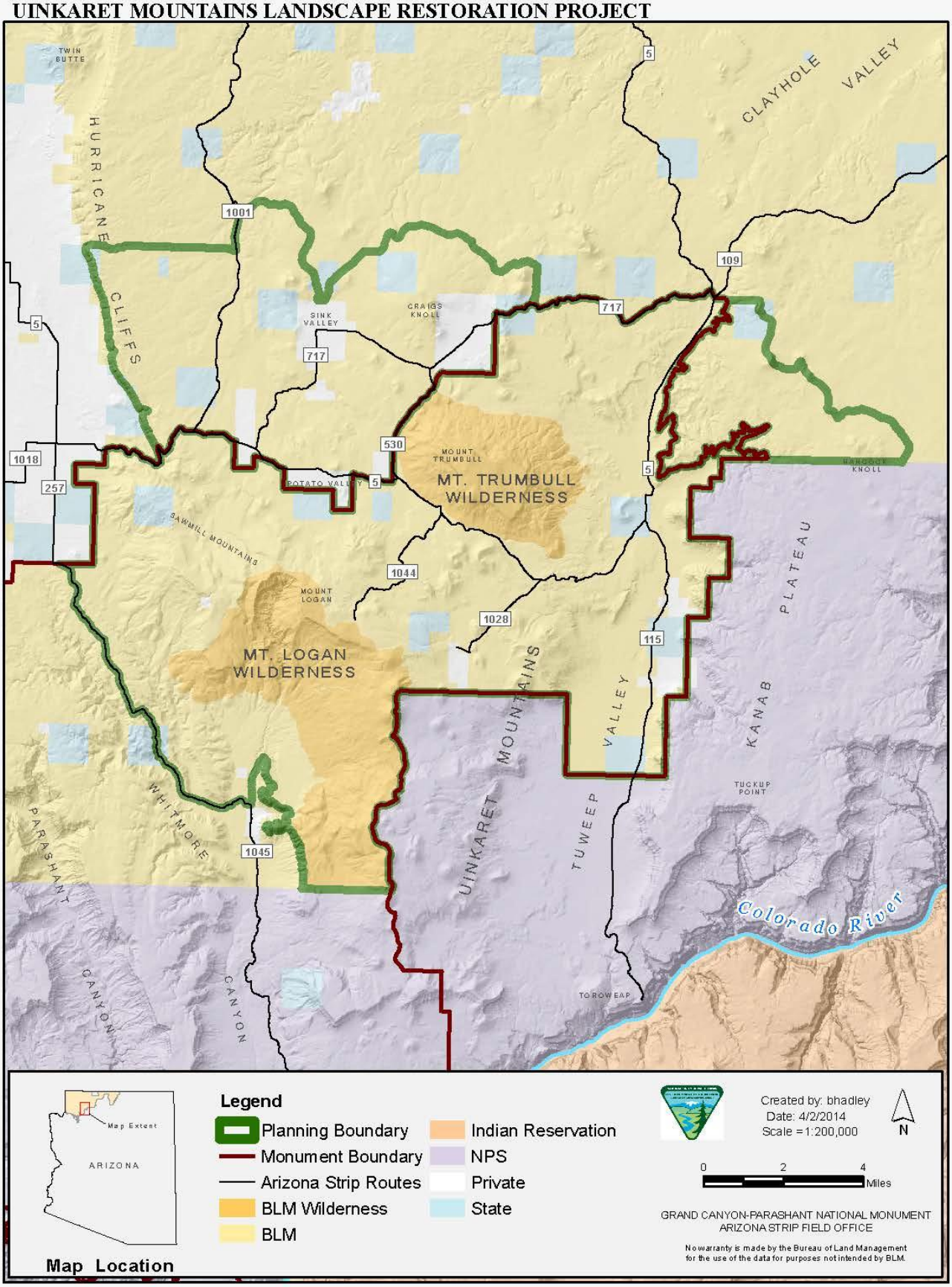
Uinkaret Mountains Landscape Restoration Project
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Fact Sheet and Map

Who/Where: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument and Arizona Strip Field Office will be analyzing landscape-level vegetation management for 128,535 acres of ponderosa pine, pinyon/juniper, and sagebrush communities in the Uinkaret Mountains (including Mount Trumbull and Mount Logan).

What/When: The BLM, in coordination with cooperating agencies and interested partners, will work together to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will analyze options for vegetation management in the Uinkaret Mountains project area. A 30-day public scoping period to solicit public input on preliminary issues will begin fall 2014 and will be used to prepare a draft EIS by fall 2015. A Final EIS and Record of Decision are expected to be issued spring 2016.

Why/How: Based on the results of land health evaluations completed by the project interdisciplinary team, the BLM has identified preliminary issues that need to be addressed in the project area. These include: 1) increased risk of high-intensity wildfire due to excessive fuel loadings and ladder fuels; 2) altered species composition, structure and function due to past management practices; 3) decline in species diversity and hydrologic function due to pinyon and juniper expansion into sagebrush and ponderosa pine communities; 4) decreased soil productivity and resource impacts due to accelerated soil erosion; and 5) lack of species diversity due to closed canopy stands and sagebrush monoculture.

Since 1996, the Mt. Trumbull Ecological Restoration Project, a cooperative effort centered on restoring the southwestern ponderosa pine ecosystem, has successfully treated approximately 3,000 acres within the project area. Treatments were designed using a scientific protocol developed by the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University and implemented by the BLM. The goal of the EIS is to evaluate the potential impacts of carrying out these types of treatments on a larger scale across the project area to continue to move vegetation communities toward more natural ranges of composition, structure, and function. The BLM proposes to treat individual areas (ranging in size from several acres to several thousand acres) using a variety of methods including manual, mechanical, chemical, management of wildfires, and use of prescribed fire. These treatments would be designed to improve ecological health and sustainability and reduce the potential for large, high-intensity wildfires, better protecting the forest ecosystems.

UINKARET MOUNTAINS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROJECT