
Monument and NCA “Fact Sheets”

DRAFT

October 2000

ALASKA

STEESE NCA

Contact: Lon Kelly (907)-474-2368
Nolan Heath (907)-271-5477

Acreage: 1,223,000 acres (includes Birch Creek National Wild River)

Date of Designation: December 2, 1980
PL 96-487, 16 USC 460mm

Nearby Cities/Population: 70 miles northeast of Fairbanks (31,600 people) along the Steese Highway.

Significant Features: The National Conservation Area is located in the northeast portion of the state. The area was designated to protect wildlife habitat, including crucial caribou calving ground and home range, and Dall sheep habitat. The NCA also includes most of the 80,640 acres contained in the wild river boundaries of the Birch Creek National Wild and Scenic River. Other values of the area include minerals development and recreation.

History/Community Advocates: The American Hiking Society provides in-kind labor for maintenance of the Pinnell Mountain Trail.

ARIZONA

AGUA FRIA

Contact: Mike Taylor (623) 580-5500
Mike Brown (623) 580-5580
Kathy Pedrick (623) 580-5568

Acreage: 72,544 acres
Federal land: 71,100
Private land: 1,444

Date of Designation: January 11, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: Approximately forty miles north of Phoenix (population of 1.2 million).

Significant Features:

Historic/Cultural Resources: At least 450 prehistoric sites known to exist within the monument. Four major settlements are recognized, including the Pueblo La Plata, Pueblo Pato, the Baby Canyon Ruin group, and the Lousy Canyon group. These settlements consist of clusters of stone-masonry pueblos, some containing at least one hundred rooms. There are also many intact petroglyphs, as well as remnants of prehistoric agricultural features. The area contains most of a National Register of Historic Places District.

Biological Significance: The area is an expansive mosaic of semi-desert grassland mixed with areas of riparian forest. The diversity of vegetative communities and relative availability of water provide habitat for a wide array of sensitive wildlife species, including the lowland leopard frog, the desert tortoise, and four species of native fish.

History/Community Advocates: The monument includes two Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (both designated in 1987) and most of a National Register of Historic Places District.

GILA BOX RIPARIAN NCA

Contact: Jon Collins (520) 348-4413
Bill Civish (520) 348-4400

Acreage: 23,487 acres
Federal land: 21,767 acres
Private land: 1,720 acres

Date of Designation: November 28, 1999
Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990
PL 101-628, 16 USC 460ddd

Nearby Cities/Population: The Gila Box RNCA is located outside of Safford, Arizona, near the New Mexico border.

Significant Features:

Geologic Significance: The NCA includes four perennial waterways--the Gila River, Bonita Creek, Eagle Creek, and San Francisco River. Comprised of patchy mesquite woodlands, mature cottonwood trees, sandy beaches, and grand buffed colored cliffs, the RNCA holds one of the most significant riparian zones in the Southwest.

Biological Diversity: The Gila Box is home to over 200 species of birds. Raptors such as the uncommon zoned tailed hawk, black hawk, and peregrine falcon can be seen, along with many of the colorful neo-tropical birds that migrate to this area in the spring and summer.

Historic/Cultural Resources: Area includes some evidence of earlier inhabitation, including a homestead cabin, rock art, and cliff dwellings.

History/Community Advocates: As evidence of the NCA's popularity in the local community; 1,000 local residents attended the Gila Box Discovery Festival last year.

GRAND CANYON-PARASHANT

Contact: Roger Taylor (435)-688-3301

Acreage: 1,054,264 acres
BLM land: 807,241 NPS land: 216,544
State land: 21,979
Private land: 8,500

Date of Designation: January 11, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: St. George (population?)

Significant Features:

Historic/Cultural Resources: Evidence of human activity dates back more than 11,000 years. The presence of pit houses, habitation rooms, agricultural features, and pueblo structures demonstrate inhabitation by Pueblo groups. Southern Paiute groups replaced the Pueblo groups and were occupying the monument at the time of Euro-American contact. By the mid 19th century, remote family ranches were scattered across the area. Ranch structures, fences, water tanks and the ruins of sawmills and mining operations tell the stories of these early homesteaders.

Geologic Significance: The monument's geologic history spans nearly 2 billion years. Its Paleozoic and Mesozoic sedimentary rock layers are relatively undeformed and unobscured by vegetation, offering a clear view to understanding the geologic history of the Colorado Plateau. The Shivwits Plateau is bounded on the west by the Grand Wash Cliffs and on the east by the Hurricane Cliffs, the major topographic barriers to travel across the area. The Plateau is capped by volcanic rocks with an array of cinder cones and basalt flows, ranging in age from 9 million to 1,000 years old.

Biological Significance: The monument is the junction of two physiographic ecoregions: the Mojave Desert and the Colorado Plateau. Giant Mojave Yucca cacti proliferate in undisturbed conditions throughout the monument. Numerous threatened or endangered species inhabit the monument, including the Mexican spotted owl, the California condor, the desert tortoise, and the southwestern willow flycatcher.

History/Community Advocates: The Grand Canyon Trust, a conservation organization, was an active participant in determining the size and shape of the monument. In 1984 Congress designated four wilderness areas, totaling about 95,000 acres, which are within the monument boundary.

IRONWOOD FOREST

Contact: Jesse Juen (520) 722-4289
Tony Herrell (520) 722-4289

Acreage: 189,731 acres
Federal Land: 129,022
State Land: 54,697
Private Land: 6,012

Date of Designation: June 9, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: 25 miles northwest of Tucson Metropolitan Area; population of around 800,000 people. 750,000 people live within an hour drive of the monument, and 50,000 within a ten minute drive.

Significant Features:

Biological Diversity: the ironwood-bursage habitat in the SilverBell Mountains is associated with more than 674 species, including several species listed as threatened or endangered. Stands of ironwood, palo verde, and saguaro blanket the monument floor. Notable are the Sonoran Desert with ancient legume and cactus forests, and the Ironwood trees, which can live in excess of 800 years and are the dominant nurse plant in the region.

Historic/Cultural Resources: Humans have inhabited the area for more than 5,000 years. More than 200 sites from the prehistoric Hohokam period have been recorded in the area. The area also contains the remnants of the Mission Santa Ana, the last mission constructed in Pimeria Alta.

History/Community Advocates: The Pima County Board of Supervisors forwarded a resolution to Secretary Babbitt in March 2000 seeking national monument designation for the area. This proposal was part of a larger attempt to implement the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. The Tohono O'odham Nation and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors also gave their support to the proposal.

SAN PEDRO RIPARIAN NCA

Contact: Bill Childress (520) 458-3559
Jesse Juen (520) 722-4289

Acreage: 55,000-58,000 acres (40 miles in length)

Date of Designation: November 18, 1988

Nearby Cities/Population: The San Pedro NCA is located outside of Sierra Vista, Arizona, between the international border and St. David, Arizona.

Significant Features:

Historic/Cultural Resources: The Clovis Culture were the first known human occupants in the upper San Pedro River Valley. Their presence there dates back 11,000 years. The Lehner Mammoth Kill Site and Murray Springs Clovis Site include remains of the Clovis Culture, including stone tools and Clovis points. Remains of other prehistoric cultures in the NCA include the Archaic people and Mogollon, Hohokam, and northern Mexico components. The history of this area from the mid 14th century forward is divided into three major historic periods. The Spanish Period began in 1539 when the Spanish first encountered this area—and its inhabitants; the Sobaipuri and Apache Native American cultures. The Mexican Period began in 1821 when Mexico declared its independence from Spain and Mexicans first moved into the upper San Pedro Valley. Anglo settlers migrated into the San Pedro area in the 1850's when the United States acquired this territory through the Gadsden Purchase of 1853—hence beginning the American Period.

Biological Diversity: The San Pedro NCA harbors the highest diversity of vertebrate fauna in the interior United States. Over 100 species of breeding birds and another 250 plus species of migrant and wintering birds occur in this area—representing half the number of known breeding species in North America. Notably, 36 species of raptors can be found within the NCA, along with over 80 species of mammals.

History/Community Advocates: Need info on Friends of the San Pedro.

CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA COASTAL

Contact: Lynda Roush (707)-825-2309

Acreage: 7,000 acres (estimate only)
The monument includes all of the islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and pinnacles off the California coast above the high water mark that are owned by the U.S. government, running along the entire 840 mile California coast and extending out for 12 miles. The number of islands, reefs, and pinnacles was estimated to be over 1,000.

Date of Designation: January 11, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: n/a

Significant Features:

Biological Diversity: The monument provides unique habitat for an estimated 200,000 breeding seabirds, including gulls, the endangered California least tern, and the brown pelican. The monument also provides forage and breeding habitat for sea lions, the threatened sea otter, and the Guadalupe fur seal.

History/Community Advocates: The Secretary of the Interior designated these areas as the “California Islands Wildlife Sanctuary” in 1983, an action which withdrew the lands from surface entry, mining, and mineral leasing and from settlement, sale, location or entry under the general land laws. In 1990 the BLM designated these areas an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. In 1998 and 1999 Representative Sam Farr introduced legislation to protect these areas under the Wilderness Act.

CALIFORNIA DESERT CONSERVATION AREA

Contact: Tim Salt (909) 697-5204
Chris Rohold (909) 697-5200

Acreage: 12.1 million acres managed by BLM
25 million total acres

Date of Designation: October 21, 1976
PL94-579; 43 USC 1781
Amended by CA Desert Protection Act of 1994, PL 103-433

Nearby Cities/Population: The CDCA is surrounded by 40 million people within a day's drive.

Significant Features: The CDCA includes 85 ACECs, 67-69 wilderness areas, 18 wilderness study areas, and two national trails. The Area also includes over 100 communities, 3,500 miles of high-capacity power transmission lines, 12,000 miles of oil and gas pipelines, and 15,000 miles of paved and maintained roads.

Geologic Significance: Scientists recognize three deserts within the California Desert: the Mojave, the Sonoran, and a small portion of the Great Basin. In the California Desert, a variety of land forms; including valleys, bajadas, pediments, alluvial fans, rough-hewn mountain ranges, washes, sand dunes, and dry lakebeds testify both to the geologic variety of this region as well as to its relative youth as a desert.

Biological Significance: The harsh climate of the CDCA has led to some novel physiological and anatomical adaptations by the flora and fauna which inhabit the desert. The desert is home to a number of T&E species, including the desert tortoise.

Historic/Cultural Significance: Human use and inhabitation of the area long preceded European contact in the mid-16th century and acquisition of the area by the United States in the mid-19th century. Native American cultures hunted and foraged for food, set down permanent and seasonal village sites, mined and quarried for common and exotic stones, flood irrigated land for agriculture, and traded goods through an elaborate network of foot trails.

History/Community Advocates:

HEADWATERS FOREST RESERVE

Contact: Lynda Roush (707) 825-2300

Acreage: 7,400 acres

Date of Designation: On March 1, 1999 the Headwaters Forest and surrounding lands were acquired from private owners by the BLM and the State of California.

Nearby Cities/Population: The Headwaters is located in the northwest portion of California, SE of Eureka and 250 miles north of San Francisco.

Significant Features: The Reserve contains the headwaters of Salmon Creek, portions of the South Fork Elk River watershed and the entire Little South Fork Elk River watershed. Approximately 3,000 acres of the Reserve is old-growth forest that does not contain roads. The remaining 4,400 acres is covered by previously logged forests of various ages. The logged areas contain numerous roads and skid trails which were used to haul the logs to the mills.

Geologic Significance: The Headwaters is located in one of the most seismically active regions of North America—the intersection of three oceanic plate boundaries called the Mendocino Triple Junction.

Biological Significance: The Elk River and Salmon Creek watersheds once supported abundant runs of native chinook salmon and coho salmon, and steelhead. Salmonid stocks of each of these species have declined significantly.

History/Community Advocates:

KING RANGE NCA

Contact: Lynda Roush (707) 825-2309

Acreage: 60,000 acres
58,000 (approx.) federal acres

Date of Designation: October 21, 1970
PL 91-476 16 USC 460y

Nearby Cities/Population: The King Range NCA is located about 230 miles north of San Francisco and 60 miles south of Eureka. The King Range extends along 35 miles of coastline between the mouth of the Mattole River and Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. This remote region is known as California's Lost Coast, and is only accessed by a few back roads.

Significant Features:

Geologic Significance: A spectacular meeting of land and sea is the dominant feature of this NCA. Geologically, the King Range is severely folded and faulted. It is at the edge of the North American Plate which is being forced upward from the two offshore plates. The King Range has risen 66 feet in 6,000 years.

Biological Significance: Offshore rocks, tidepools and kelp beds are inhabited by seals, sea lions and a variety of marine birds. The mountains are Douglas-fir forest, chaparral and grassland, providing habitat for blacktailed deer and black bear. Nearly 3,000 species of native and migratory birds have been spotted in King Range. The old growth forest is important habitat for the northern spotted owl, bald eagle, and coopers hawk.

History/Community Advocates:

COLORADO

CANYONS OF THE ANCIENTS

Contact: LouAnn Jacobsen 970-822-4811
Cal Joyner 970-385-1354

Acreage: 182,422 acres
Federal land: 163,852 acres (includes 400 acres managed by NPS)
State land: 0
Private: 18,570

Date of Designation: June 9, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: 45 miles west of Durango (population around 17,000 people) and 9 miles west of Mesa Verde National Park.

Significant Features:

Historic/Cultural Resources: With more than 20,000 sites, this monument contains the highest known density of archaeological sites in the Nation. Human settlement began roughly 10,000 years ago when the earliest known hunters crossed the area. The area was later occupied by Ancestral Puebloan farmers (the Anasazi) and Ute, Navajo and European settlers.

Geology: Area known for its sheer sandstone cliffs, with mesa tops rimmed by caprock, and deeply incised canyons. These formations are crucial habitat to a wide variety of wildlife species, including the Mesa Verde nightsnake and the long-nosed leopard lizard.

History/Community Advocates: The area within the monument was established as the Anasazi Area of Critical Environmental Concern in 1985. In August of 1999, a local Resource Advisory Council forwarded management recommendations to the Secretary based on a series of public meetings and consultation with local government. The Anasazi Heritage Center offers exhibits, archaeological sites and educational resources on the Anasazi culture.

GUNNISON GORGE NCA

Contact: Karen Tucker (970) 240-5309
Allan Belt (970) 240-5315

Acreage: 57,725 acres
(includes 17,700 acres of wilderness)

Date of Designation: October 1999

The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-76).

Nearby Cities/Population: The NCA is located about seven miles northeast of Montrose, Colorado in west central Colorado. The nearest major city is Grand Junction, Colorado. The population of the Grand Junction metropolitan area is approximately 110,000.

Significant Features: The NCA encompasses a diverse landscape ranging from “adobe badlands” to rugged pinion juniper covered slopes. The Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area features a unique double canyon system of black granite layered with red sandstones. The legislation creating the NCA notes its exceptional multiple use opportunities and natural, cultural, scenic, wilderness, and recreational resources.

History/Community Advocates: The Act made the Black Canyon of the Gunnison Gorge National Monument a National Park and expanded the Park with the transfer of 7,000 acres of adjacent BLM lands (including 400 acres of BLM wilderness). It also converted the Gunnison Gorge Special Recreation Management Area into a National Conservation Area and made most of the Gunnison Gorge WSA a full wilderness area.

IDAHO

SNAKE RIVER BIRDS OF PREY

Contact: Kate Kitchell (208) 384-3390
Barry Rose (208) 384-3393

Acreage: 601,053 acres
Federal land: 484,873 acres
State land: 39,605
Private: 66,601
Open Water: 9,974

Date of Designation: August 1993
PL 103-64

Nearby Cities/Population: 35 miles south of Boise, along 81 miles of the Snake River. Current population of Boise Metropolitan Statistical Area is around 403,817 people.

Significant Features:

Biological Significance: The Snake River canyon hosts the largest nesting concentration of birds of prey in North America and perhaps the world. More than 800 pairs of eagles, falcons, hawks, and owls gather each spring to mate and raise their young. The Area is also home to one of the world's largest populations of badgers.

Historic/Cultural Resources: Evidence of human occupation dates back at least 9,000 years. Sections of the Oregon National Historic Trail remain visible today.

History/Community Advocates: The Snake River Raptor Volunteers, Inc. (SRRV)—a non-profit “friends of” group for the NCA. Among other activities, the SRRV promotes awareness of and appreciation for the NCA, recruits and trains volunteers, and educates people about the NCA.

NEVADA

RED ROCK CANYON NCA

Contact: Greg Gnesios, (702) 363-1921

Acreage: Approximately 197,000 acres

Date of Designation: November 16, 1990
PL 101-621 (as amended by PL 105-263 10/19/98)
16 USC 460cc

Nearby Cities/Population: The Red Rock Canyon NCA is located 15 miles west of Las Vegas, Nevada. The City of Las Vegas has a population of around 400,000 and has one of the highest growth rates in the country. Red Rock NCA receives over a million visitors annually.

Significant Features:

Geologic Significance: The most significant feature of Red Rock Canyon is the Keystone Thrust Fault, which is part of a large system of thrust faults that began to develop around 65 million years ago. The gray carbonate rocks of the ancient ocean have been thrust over the tan and red sandstone in one of the most dramatic and easily identified thrust faults to be found.

Biological Significance: The Red Rock NCA is home to over 100 bird species, over 45 mammal species, and a variety of reptiles and amphibians, including the threatened desert tortoise.

Historic/Cultural Significance: As many as six different Native American cultures may have used the Red Rock area. It is speculated that the Paleo-Indians were the first to use the Red Rock area as early as 11,000 B.C. Evidence of these cultures' use of the area includes pieces of broken pottery and tools, roasting pits, and petroglyphs.

History/Community Advocates: The area was originally established as Red Rock Canyon Recreation Lands in 1967. The area was converted to an NCA in 1990, and significant boundary additions were made in 1994.

NEW MEXICO

EL MALPAIS NCA

Contact: Angela West (505) 438-7416

Acreage: 262,690 acres (includes 100,210 acres of wilderness lands)
P.L. 100-225, 16 USC 460 uu

Date of Designation: December 31, 1987

Nearby Cities/Population: 80 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, a city of about half a million people. Two state highways provide access to the NCA.

Significant Features:

Historic/Cultural Resources: Evidence of human interaction with the El Malpais landscape dates back more than 10,000 years. Contemporary Indian groups, including the Puebloan peoples of Acoma, Laguna and Zuni, and the Ramah Navajo, continue their ancestral uses of El Malpais.

Geologic Significance: El Malpais is located at elevations that range from 6,500 feet to over 8,000 feet above sea level in a semi-desert. Major features include the La Ventana Natural Arch, one of New Mexico's largest natural arches, and the Chain of Craters—a line of more than 25 cinder cones that resulted from magma finding a weak spot in the earth's crust. The NCA also includes two wilderness areas, the Cebolla Wilderness which is rich in prehistoric archaeological sites, petroglyphs, and historic homesteads, and West Malpais Wilderness.

History/Community Advocates: El Malpais National Monument (managed by the NPS) was established through the same legislation as El Malpais NCA. The National Monument, which includes roughly 115,000 acres, is mostly surrounded by the NCA.

OREGON

CASCADE-SISKIYOU

Contact: Rich Drehabl (541) 618-2331

Acreage: 85,173 acres
BLM Federal land: 52,786 acres
BOR Federal land: 4 acres
State land: 0
Private: 32,383 acres

Date of Designation: June 9, 2000

Nearby Cities/Population: 25 miles southeast of Medford, Oregon (est. population--58,000 people).

Significant Features:

Biological Diversity: Considered to be an area of biological crossroads of the Cascade, Klamath, and Siskiyou ecoregions. Plant communities include grass shrub lands, Garry and California black oak woodlands, juniper scaplands, mixed conifer and white fir forests, rosaceous chaparral and wet meadows. Monument also includes many rare and endemic plants and one of the highest diversities of butterflies species in the United States. It also contains old growth habitat crucial to the Northern spotted owl and numerous fish and bird species.

Geology: The majority of the monument is within the Cascade Mountain Range. The western edge of the monument lies within the older Klamath Mountain geologic province. Pilot Rock, a volcanic plug, is one of the more striking features of the monument.

Historic/Cultural Resources: Contains portions of the Oregon/California Trail, the region's main north/south travel route first established by Native Americans in prehistoric times, and the Applegate Trail. Surveys have located close to one hundred sites relating to native peoples' use of the area.

History/Community Advocates: Dave Willis, president of the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, worked to promote protection of the area since 1983.

UTAH

GRAND STAIRCASE ESCALANTE

Contact: Kate Cannon (435) 644-4300

Acreage: 1,885,800 acres
Federal land: 1,870,800
State land: 15,000

Date of Designation: September 18, 1996

Nearby Cities/Population: Kanab, Utah (population?)

Significant Features: The Monument's vast and austere landscape embraces a spectacular array of scientific and historic resources. The Monument is divided into four management zones. The Frontcountry Zones is intended to be the focal point for visitation by providing day-use opportunities in close proximity to adjacent communities and to nearby highways. The Passage Zone includes secondary travel routes which receive use as throughways and recreation destinations. The Outback Zone provides an undeveloped, primitive and self-directed visitor experience. The Primitive Zone provides an undeveloped, primitive and self-directed visitor experience without motorized or mechanized access.

History/Community Advocates: