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BULLHEAD TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN



BUREAU MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.



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BULLHEAD TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN

November 2008

I. INTRODUCTION

The Bullhead transportation and travel management planning area includes public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A route inventory was completed for the project area in 2006 under an interagency project involving the State of Arizona Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) program, Arizona State Land Department, BLM and user interest groups.

Participants involved in route evaluation included representatives of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, BLM, OHV user organizations, and other interested parties. The evaluation identified generally supported goals and objectives for the study area, addressing multiple use and resource protection concerns related to recreation access and travel management. The evaluation was conducted using the Route Evaluation Tree procedure and was facilitated by an independent contractor¹. The route evaluation identified four alternatives for accommodating motorized vehicle access, with different access and resource protection emphasis (Appendix A). The Route Reports are available for inspection on the web at http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/travel_mgmt/bullhead.html as well as on CD.

The proposed plan is based on the route inventory completed in 2006 and alternatives were developed in 2007. The draft alternative maps have been available on the web for public comment since early 2008. Public and agency comments received were considered in the development of EA-AZ-330-2007-50 and the Bullhead Travel Management Plan. The decision on the transportation plan and travel management designations will be made after a 30 day public review and comment period, and any appeals are resolved. Following approval by decision of the Field Manager, a notice of use restrictions pursuant 43CFR8342 will be published in the Federal Register to establish rules necessary to implement the travel management designations. A visitor access guide will be published.

This is the implementation plan for EA-AZ-330-2007-50, which analyzes the designation of routes as required by Executive Order 11644 (Appendix B) and codified as 43 CFR 8342. The Bullhead Area is the first of six Travel Management Areas (TMA), within the Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO), Bureau of Land Management, Arizona. This plan is intended to provide a range of methods and techniques to 1) implement the designation of routes in a comprehensive manner and 2) manage public use and natural resources. The route decisions are presented in the EA and authorized by the Decision Record (DR), therein.

¹ ARS Route Evaluation Tree, Advanced Resource Solutions, Bureau of Land Management Contract, 2003.

Comprehensive Travel Management is the proactive management of public access, natural resources and regulatory needs to ensure that all aspects of road and trail system planning and on the ground management are considered. This includes natural/cultural resource management, road and trail design, maintenance, and recreation/non-recreation uses of the roads, primitive roads, and trails. Travel activities in this context incorporate access needs and the effects of all forms of travel, both motorized and non-motorized.

The Bullhead Area Travel Management Planning (TMP) area is a mix of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Fort Mohave Indian Reservation, Arizona State Lands, Arizona Department of Game and Fish, and private lands (Table 1). This planning applies only to BLM lands; no attempt to manage or restrict legal access to lands under any other jurisdiction is implied nor expressed.



II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently, the majority of the public land in the planning area is designated “limited to existing roads and trails”. The Bullhead Travel Management Area is allocated entirely as an Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA), except for the Colorado River Nature Center (CRNC), which is a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). SRMAs are areas where a specific visitor market, seeking a specific structured recreation experience, can be identified, and where it will take recreation management objectives and actions, supported by the market, to bring about the benefits those visitors were seeking. All other public lands in the planning area are allocated as Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMA), where recreation management is custodial; in other words, management seeks only to resolve land health issues, conflicts between users, and challenges to the health and safety of the visitor. This means ERMAs get no specific planning or budget except to resolve custodial management issues or meet the Bureau’s stewardship responsibilities in these areas. In contrast, SRMAs are where BLM management works with partners and visitors to produce specific recreation experiences that

the visitor is seeking, and to do this usually requires active partnerships along with recreation-focused planning and budgeting.

Areas that require more management, and/or have greater existing recreation use, demand, and potential to realize targeted benefits are designated as SRMAs. All other public lands in the planning area are ERMA. This means no specific planning or budget for recreation opportunity will be focused upon the ERMA. The management of these areas is “custodial”. Meaning that the recreation opportunities in these areas are “limited” and explicit recreation management is generally not expected or required. Minimal management actions related to the Bureau’s stewardship responsibilities are adequate in these areas. Resource protection and visitor safety are paramount.

The primary objectives for this TMA do not include an intentional range of OHV opportunities, specific challenges, settings, or activities, or meeting needs of a specific user group, except at the Colorado River Nature Center. Instead, the route designation decisions are in response to resource conditions, conflicts, or safety issues, versus providing for improved motorized recreation opportunity.

The intent of this plan is to present the route designations that were selected and provide a range of available strategies and techniques that could be applied to meet management objectives, as funding becomes available. When management actions are proposed to be implemented, individual NEPA analysis of the action will occur prior to any implementation.

The decision, requiring NEPA analysis in this action are only the route designation decisions to designate all inventoried routes, in the planning areas as “open” “closed” or “limited” (Appendix C). These designation decisions were deferred until after completion of the LHFO RMP of 2007. Monitoring data is not yet available but will be obtained during the life of this plan. Therefore, route specific treatments cannot be presented in this plan.

A. Motorized Recreation (OHV)

All uses of motorized vehicles on public lands are not considered OHV recreation. Commercial use of motorized vehicles, such as haul trucks and utility company vehicles are not motorized recreation. Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation is more closely associated with the use of specialized two, three and four wheel vehicles, intended for recreation or racing uses, i.e. dirt bikes, quads, go carts, utility terrain vehicles(UTV’s or side-by-sides) and specially prepared 4x4 units (Appendix D). This form of motorized use is more correctly categorized as OHV recreation, particularly when the specialized vehicle is used to test ones abilities or equipment or is specifically brought to the area to ride for the pleasure of the ride itself.

B. Planning Area Location

The Bullhead TMP area is located north of I-40, south and east of Bullhead City, in western Arizona and east of I-40 and north and south of Needles, in eastern California. The area is separated by the Colorado River as it flows south where it becomes Lake Havasu. The area is the northernmost portion of the Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO). The Needles (CA) Field Office boundaries are to the west and the Kingman Field Office boundaries are to the east. (See Map 1 Bullhead Travel Management Area with Surface Management) The area covers Townships 8 – 11 North and Range 22 – 23 East of the San Bernardino Meridian in California and Townships 16 - 21 North and Range 20 – 21 West of the Gila & Salt River Meridian in Arizona.

Table 1: Land Ownership

OWNERSHIP	ACRES	PERCENTAGE
BLM	47,400	25
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	14,357	7
U.S. National Park Service	1,626	1
Tribal	28,780	15
Private	78,773	41
State Lands	21,461	11
State Wildlife	464	0
TOTAL	192,861	100

C. Purpose and Need

The purpose of this plan is to identify a comprehensive route network needed to provide motorized and non-motorized access to public lands and existing recreation opportunity in the planning area. BLM will identify management actions needed to protect public safety and resources on the public lands, or when needed to prevent or minimize conflict among uses or visitors. Comprehensive implementation level management action is needed primarily in response to growing public demands and growing impacts on recreational, cultural and natural resources. The network presented in this plan may be found on the attached maps. Specific route-by-route designation of individual routes may be found on the 600+ Route Evaluation forms which are located as Appendix G of the associated EA.

III. PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The TMP identifies the BLM system of roads, primitive roads and trails, and the designations for their use and maintenance, and associated visitor management actions. The LHFO RMP of 2007 directed that route designation would occur within five years. Route specific designations are indicated on Map 2 Bullhead Travel Management Plan Route Network, and in Appendix E, listed by route inventory number. The designations define the transportation Asset Types, Functional Classification, and Maintenance Intensity for each route. The routes will be assigned BLM agency standard transportation numbers after approval of this transportation plan, which will be different from the inventory numbers. Retrieval of downed game will not be allowed off-route on BLM land, unless approved in advance, in writing by the appropriate BLM authorized officer.

Implementation Strategy:

Following approval of the proposed plan, a notice will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with 43CFR8340 to establish new use restrictions needed to enforce the

designations. The notice will specify the motorized route designations and other use restrictions that will be enforced.

1. Post appropriate signs to inform visitors as to changes in route designations and to clearly mark routes that are "open" to use.
2. Pursue opportunities to involve volunteers and local clubs in implementation efforts; consider holding volunteer special events in the area to emphasize education and self regulation of recreation groups.
3. Identify vehicle turn around areas, and staging areas for motorized recreation uses, mostly when needed as a tool to manage visitors and protect resources. Consistent with ERMA status.
4. Only in very rare situations pursue easements across private or State land where necessary to ensure future public access to the Bullhead TMA. Where clear public safety and resource protection benefits will be realized and in conformance with ERMA status.
5. Evaluate the need for development of trails or trailheads in the planning area for motorized and non-motorized uses such as hiking, horseback riding, or mountain bicycling. Where clear public safety and resource protection benefits will be realized and in conformance with ERMA status.
6. The designated routes will be entered into the BLM Facility Asset Management System.
7. Initial implementation phase will focus on signing of the open route network so that it stands out well, thus discouraging interest in closed routes. The signing of closed routes will be done very infrequently, since they have been found to be more of an attractant than a deterrent to unauthorized use (See Ord Mountain Route Designation Pilot Project, California Desert District 1999). An Access Guide and map will be produced, as funding becomes available. Condition surveys will be completed for road and trail maintenance, erosion control and stabilization projects, when funding and staffing become available.
8. Road, primitive road and trail maintenance will be scheduled as necessary to correct serious drainage and erosion problems. Easements will be pursued, in only very rare circumstances to support resource and visitor protection.
9. Funding to implement the TMP will be pursued through the Bureau's normal budget process, subject to available appropriated funds, and all other forms of funding and assistance, such as grants and volunteerism.
10. Challenge Cost Share projects, State OHV Grants and assistance agreements and/or cooperative management plans will be pursued to leverage external contributions to the greatest extent possible.
11. Minimal funding will be needed for labor costs to provide law enforcement, recreation visitor services, and to cover maintenance and operational costs (supplies, materials, tools, equipment, vehicles, communications etc).
12. For the initial implementation phase, approximately seven work months for Park Ranger staff and maintenance workers can be projected to install signing and establish an open route network, which attracts visitors to make use of it.
13. Funding for other resource specialists and maintenance crews and equipment, will be sought. Operations funding for cultural surveys, upland health assessments, wildlife surveys, transportation maintenance and related costs will be determined on an ongoing project basis, and planned annually.
14. Grants from various sources will be pursued, including Arizona OHV Program, Arizona Trails Heritage Program, and others as opportunities arise to implement elements of the travel management plan.

15. Site specific project plans, EAs and agreements will be produced for development and maintenance of the site specific Project plans. However, being ERMA these efforts will be minimal.

A. Proposed Transportation and Travel Management Designations:

The designations identify the transportation asset types, functional classification, maintenance intensity, and access vehicle type for each route proposed for the Bullhead TMP.

1. Asset Types:

The proposed asset type summary is shown on the table below, and for each route on Appendix E. Transportation asset definitions are in accordance with Bureau Technical Note 422.

Approximately 27.7 miles of inventoried routes route will not be designated into the BLM transportation system, and closed to motor vehicle to avoid impacts to sensitive resources on the public lands.

Table 2: Proposed BLM Transportation Asset Type Designation Summary

ASSET TYPE	DESIGNATION	MILES	SUM-MILES
Road			15.0
	Open	14.7	
	Limited	0.0	
	Closed	0.3	
Primitive Road			124.8
	Open	81.0	
	Limited	17.4	
	Closed	26.4	
Trails			1.5
	Open	0.4	
	Limited	0.1	
	Closed	1.0	
TOTAL			141.3

a. Road (14.7 miles)

These routes will be open to all motorized vehicle use year-round. Roads will generally accommodate two way recreational, and commercial rural traffic, and may be passable by passenger car and large vehicle types (motor homes, trailer combination vehicles, haul trucks). Some roads may accommodate resource extraction traffic by heavy trucks. They will be maintained as funding becomes available. These include the main access roads from the public highways to the public land. Typical travel way width is 22 ft. or wider depending on traffic type, alignment and topography, with or without shoulders. State vehicle laws do apply on use of these routes.

b. Primitive Road (81.0 miles)

These routes will be open to all motorized vehicle use year-round. They are existing unimproved routes. They are typically single lane 8 to 10 ft wide and accommodate full size 4WD vehicles. They will generally accommodate single lane travel, with passing turnouts or widening as needed. They may be passable by passenger car, but rough between many spots. Typically these are routes with a Local or Resource functional class, and Level 1 maintenance intensity. Maintenance will be very infrequent. State vehicle laws apply to motor vehicle use on these routes.

c. Trails (0.5 miles)

These routes will be open to motor vehicle use year round. These include locally known non-motorized trails, and very rough roads intended to be kept in that condition. Special use restrictions may be established for these routes to require minimum equipment standards following publication of Federal Register Notice. Physical barriers or restrictive devices, and signing may be installed. Monitoring will be carried out to detect change and take corrective action

2. BLM Functional Classifications:

The proposed functional class designations summary is shown on the table below, and for each route in Appendix E. Most of the routes in the planning area are designated as Resource Roads, unpaved, single lane, with very low traffic volume (ADT \leq 200) and very low traffic speeds.

Table 3: Proposed Functional Classes: Mileage Summary

FUNCTIONAL CLASS	MILES
Collector	0.0
Local	5.1
Resource	136.9

The functional classes indicate the relative importance of a route’s transportation and access functions, and are the basis for geometric design standards and maintenance guidelines. The functional classifications are determined according to guidance in BLM Manual 9113 Roads.

3. Transportation Maintenance Intensity Classes:

The proposed maintenance intensity class summary is shown in Table 4 below, and for each route in Appendix E. These will provide the basis for updating the BLM Facility Asset Maintenance System (FAMS) database for the project area. No existing BLM transportation assets are presently identified in the facility management system, and maintenance on roads and trails over the past 10 year has been minimal to none. Authorized users (mineral materials operations, grazing permits, utilities) also perform intermittent road maintenance on routes needed for their permitted activities. Under BLM policy, transportation maintenance and repairs may be done on Bureau routes on a case by case basis depending on need with appropriate NEPA review. The maintenance intensity classes will help direct maintenance work to priority needs based on the importance of a route, route conditions, access objectives, or resource conditions on adjacent lands.

Table 4: This table shows the proposed Maintenance Intensity classes for travel routes on BLM land in the planning area.

Table 4: Maintenance Intensity

MAINTENANCE INTENSITY	SUM-MILES
Level 0	27.6
Level 1	114.5

4. Typical Access Vehicles and Route Maintenance Guidelines/Standards:

The proposed access objectives identify the typical vehicle considered in maintaining physical access conditions for BLM routes. The typical vehicle for a given route largely dictates the physical characteristics required for a route to be passable by that vehicle and others with similar or lesser requirements. The route width, roughness, grade, curve radius, side clearance, and associated physical parameters vary depending on the type of access vehicle and the use desired for a route. Presently, nearly all the existing routes on public land are primitive roads -- unimproved, very low volume, and very low speed.

- a. *Typical vehicles:* Vehicles used on the travel routes (all three asset categories) in the planning area include mineral materials hauling trucks, motor home, passenger car, high clearance 2WD, 4WD, ATV<50", UTV>50", trail motorcycle, extreme 4WD, mountain bike, riding horse, foot/hike. Informal staging areas are available at sites on non-BLM lands along the main access roads to the planning area, used by the public for loading and unloading transportation maintenance equipment.
- b. *Road Condition and Design Standards and Guidelines:* Standards exist for BLM roads based on average daily traffic, functional classification and terrain type². Standards also exist for trails based on hiking and equestrian user needs³. No geometric standards or guidelines exist for BLM primitive roads
- c. *Speed Limits/Design Speed:* The proposed transportation system consists of existing routes presently traveled at various speeds depending on a route's physical conditions, the vehicles used and type of driver using the routes. There are no posted speed limits on BLM roads, primitive roads or trails. Driving speed on BLM lands is generally governed by 43CFR8340, which basically provides for reasonable and safe speed. Presently, roads users travel at low speeds, largely limited by rough conditions: irregular vertical and horizontal alignment, short radius curves, blind curves, steep grades help promote safe driving speeds on the roads, and help protect resources and public safety. The speed limit of 25 miles per hour by the interagency Desert Tortoise Team will be adopted for routes in desert tortoise Class 2 habitat (LHFO RMP Map 11).

Primitive Roads: 15 – 25 miles per hour

² Road Standards, BLM Manual 9113 Roads, June 1985.

³ Trail Standards, BLM Manual 9114 Trails, July 1987.

5. Road Standards and Guidelines

Under the Plan standards and guidelines will be developed for BLM road and primitive road maintenance, new construction or reconstruction. The standards and guidelines for primitive roads will be based on the functional requirements of the various types of recreational motorized users. BLM will not develop, endorse or publish road or trail ratings. BLM will simply describe the physical aspects of a route.

- a. Maintenance standards for each designated route will be documented and route modifications will be identified and recommended if necessary. Maintenance will be kept at an absolute minimum only to support resource and public protection.
- b. Maintenance of routes may be done to minimize soil erosion and other resource degradation. This maintenance will be done on a case-by-case basis.
- c. Maintenance procedures and schedules will be developed for signs and markers. This will include anticipated replacement needs. A sign inventory and database will be created to facilitate tracking of sign maintenance. It is expected that during the first five years many signs will be removed or destroyed. Especially "closed" route signs, which will be used at an absolute minimum.
- d. Maintenance procedures for physical barriers will be developed, once the number and type of barriers is determined.
- e. Any significant future modifications of the Bullhead TMP could only occur through an amendment to the LHFO RMP 2007, including full NEPA compliance, public involvement, interagency coordination, and the preparation of a decision document for the amendment.
- f. Minor modifications of the road network during plan implementation would be allowed, however, without the necessity of a formal plan amendment. FLPMA allows BLM resource management plans (such as the RMP) to be "maintained as necessary to reflect minor changes in data" (Section 1610.5-4) Plan maintenance is limited, in that it cannot result in the expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions, or change the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan. It is limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. In view of these limitations, "minor realignments" of the route network would be considered to be Plan Maintenance, and could be made without formal amendment of the plan. "Minor realignments" include the following:
 1. Minor realignments of a route necessary to avoid cultural resources sites identified during the process of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
 2. Minor realignments of a route necessary to reduce impact on sensitive species or their habitats.
 3. Minor realignments of a route that would substantially increase the quality of a recreational experience, but that would not affect sensitive species or their habitat, or any other sensitive resource value.
 4. Opening or "limited" opening of a route where valid rights of way or easements of record were not accurately identified in the route designation process.
- g. The term "minor realignment" refers to a change of no more than one linear mile of one designated route. It could include the opening of an existing, but previously "closed", route that serves the same access need as the "open" route that is to be "realigned". It does not include the construction of a new access

route involving new ground disturbance, except where new construction is necessary to avoid a cultural resource site or sensitive species.

- h.* Minor realignments must be documented in the official record. The reason for the alignment change shall be recorded and kept on file in the LHFO, and the change noted in the RMP.
- i.* Route designation on newly acquired lands would occur every five years (or sooner, if judged to be prudent), and would comply with applicable federal regulations and statutes, and be incorporated into the overall route implementation process. New route networks on acquired lands would be required to facilitate conservation programs and be complimentary to the existing network.
- j.* Once each year, at a specific time (to be established) any person, organization or governmental body may propose, for any reason, that any current route designations be changed to another designation. This means from “open”, “closed” or “limited” to another designation of “open”, “closed” or “limited”. An LHFO specific form and application materials will be developed to facilitate application, and an annual deadline will be established.
- k.* Upon receipt of a complete application package it will be reviewed by the authorized officer. Since the designation of routes is a discretionary action the authorized officer may determine whether or not the proposal has merit and whether or not the proposal constitutes a significant or minor modification. If the application is rejected a letter will be sent to the applicant indicating the reasons for rejection. If accepted the application will be forwarded to the LHFO OHV coordinator, Branch of Recreation and Visitor Services for further action. The application will be reviewed by the LHFO NEPA team, and LHFO recreation planning staff and a recommendation shall be made to the authorized officer as to appropriateness of the proposal and magnitude of NEPA requirements. Further, a recommendation shall be forwarded as to whether or not the proposed action is significant or minor. If the authorized officer determines that LHFO does not have the staff or the funding to undertake a single significant NEPA project or a collection of route proposals, the authorized officer may reject one or all proposals.
- l.* The proposed Public Land Access routes consist of roads or primitive roads that provide the principal access from the public highway system to public lands in the planning area. These routes are the main connectors of the planning area’s existing travel route network under current and foreseeable traffic patterns. These routes function as BLM Local or Collector roads, although road standards may vary depending on type of use or to meet specific management objectives. Physical route conditions may be up to Road standards near access points, but generally will be up to Primitive Road standards depending in the most remote back country areas. These routes will generally be the priorities for pursuing legal access acquisition (or adjudicating existing access rights) across non-federal land, and for completing maintenance to ensure long term, legal public access to the public lands in the planning area. These routes will generally be the highest transportation maintenance priority, although the maintenance standard will vary depending on the situation. A minor goal under the proposed plan is to have the route segments from the public highways to the public land entrance under Mohave County right of way or maintenance agreement. These routes will be posted with ‘Public Land Access Route’ signs.

When accepting a proposal the authorized officer should consider cost recovery. Further only after NEPA analysis will a formal decision to accept or reject a specific route change, be made.

B. Site Improvements/Developments:

Under this Plan, the area will be managed with minimal improvements and developments for public recreational use. Minor site work and improvements may be completed at portal sites, trailhead sites, dispersed campsites, generally aimed at correcting safety problems, deficiencies, and mitigating unacceptable impacts.

Development of interpretive sites/signs shall only be considered when as a tool for management to mitigate resource conflict. Since this is an ERMA, a custodial management strategy is applied to the area.

C. Easements/Rights or Ways:

Acquisition of road or trail easement, or adjudication of existing or historic physical access, will be pursued only in areas where; when in the considered opinion of management those actions will contribute to the protection of natural resources, and not for the sole enhancement of recreation opportunity.

Easements may be acquired through donation. In keeping with the ERMA status very little action will be taken to acquire routes in this area.

D. Route Closures:

“Closed” routes on BLM land will typically be allowed to reclaim naturally, when feasible. Most of these routes include lightly travelled routes that serve “minimal” access purposes. The LHFO recognizes that simply posting a “closed” sign has little effect on user behavior and that for a route closure to be most effective; the specific route should be obliterated from public view to at least the “visual horizon”, as seen from its intersection with an “open” route. The application of rehabilitation techniques to “closed” routes, may be used where necessary, to speed the healing process, discourage use of “closed” routes, and minimize the impact on visual resources. Monitoring will drive the need for heavier and more costly forms of restoration.

E. Special Recreation Permits:

A special Recreation Permit (SRP) is required for use of public land in connection with commercial, competitive, and organized group activities in accordance with public land regulations. Permits are not required for private, non-commercial recreational use. There have been minimal SRP's issued in this area to date.

F. Visitor Services and Enforcement:

1. Park Rangers and other BLM staff

BLM park rangers will begin high profile, routine patrols into the area to make public contact, hand-out maps and brochures, serve as the “eyes and ears of management” and to represent BLM in the field in an ambassadorial role. They may initiate emergency or law enforcement response simply by being first on-scene. Given the remoteness of this area it is recommended that all BLM park rangers be certified as First Responders and/or EMTs. Other BLM staff will create a visual deterrent as well.

2. Signs and markers:

Presently, very little signing is found throughout the planning area. Some standard Bureau signing is found at gates and several locations for special purposes.

Past experience in BLM's California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) has generally shown that the most effective signing protocol (i.e. greatest public compliance) is one in which the routes designated "open" would be signed. "Closed" routes would not generally be signed. "Closed" routes would be reclaimed, either naturally or using proactive techniques such as vertical mulching. Due to budget and staffing constraints routes designated "closed" would be left to natural reclamation where possible and where this would be effective. In those areas where environmental concerns are more profound or where the intensity of use is such that it is necessitated, vertical mulching to the line-of-sight would be favored over natural reclamation.

The LHFO would prioritize the routes to be addressed first. The range of actions and their intensity would vary based upon a number of factors assessed. Available resources could include law enforcement, various forms of public education and other means, as well as signing and vertical mulching. LHFO will involve the public as it prioritizes these efforts and could employ options like those discussed below for monitoring route needs or prioritizing the maintenance of routes.

Initial Phase Implementation Projects Upon Designation

The implementation of the route system and its maintenance, depending upon budget and staffing, would begin with a first phase consisting of route management actions such as:

- a. "Open" route signing and signage on "open" routes adjacent to private property indicating private property boundary.
- b. "Open" route maintenance, with an emphasis on making the "open" network of routes more obvious and attractive to use than the "closed" routes. Existing park ranger and maintenance staff would do this work during route signing and sign maintenance.
- c. Hand raking and disguise of prominent "closed" routes, including lining small rocks across "closed" routes to help discourage use.
- d. Proactive route rehabilitation work would be utilized where the first phase has not proven to be successful or where route conditions were clearly beyond the capability of the first phase to address. Although rehabilitation is recognized as a second phase, planning for this phase, including the securing of funding, should begin early.
- e. Having route designations in place enhances the availability of funds, and would allow the BLM to pursue external sources of rehabilitation funding such as State OHV Grants, the National Fish and Wildlife Habitat Fund (USFWS), and contributions of volunteer labor from local, state, and national interest organizations.

A minimal signing plan will be prepared for the planning area to include information kiosks, standard signs, and special signs. Presently, very little signing is found throughout the planning area. Some standard Bureau signing is found at gates and several locations for special purposes. Various types of signs and markers will be installed according to current BLM policy and guidance for travel management signing. Signs will be placed along roads and trails, and will include: area and public land

identification, information kiosks, bulletin boards, route numbers/route names and the designation status of a route. The location of portal signs and kiosks may be considered. Signing will be kept to the minimum necessary only for visitor management and as a tool for resource protection, regulatory and informational purposes.

As of this date, the types and magnitude of signing has not been determined. Initially all routes will be signed at intersections, then every one-half mile beyond that and other points which may be confusing to visitors. The initial purpose of signing shall be to provide the public with the correct information to avoid off-network travel and other resource conflict. Law enforcement staff in order to issue citations must be able to prove to a magistrate there was ample information readily available for the visitor to do the right thing.

Through monitoring other strategies will be developed to make the signing more effective.

In general, signing will be minimal and will consist of Carsonite signs, and possibly three to five informational kiosks throughout the planning area. In a few cases truncated triangles may be used to project authority and a more formal message. Since the planning area is ERMA, interpretive signing will be produced more as a tool for management to improve resource protection rather than for public enhancement of the recreation opportunity.

Designated Routes will be marked with brown flexible markers with standard decals as follows:

- a. Designated "Open" routes will be marked with "Designated Route" or white arrow decals at intersections and at one half mile intervals along the route as necessary to indicate routes that are "open" for vehicle travel.
- b. "Non-Motorized Use Only" routes will be marked with standard symbol decals, indicating that the route is "closed" to motor vehicles.
- c. "Administrative Use Only" routes will be marked with standard "Closed" route signs most prominent then the standard Admin use only sign will be shown
- d. "Closed" routes will be marked with "No Motor Vehicle" or "Route Closed" decals with standard vehicle symbols. As "closed" routes heal through natural re-vegetation or reclamation efforts, and markers are no longer necessary, they will be removed. "Closed" route markers will be sited only where absolutely necessary for resource protection or public safety.
- e. Where there is a potential for an "open" route to be extended past its current end point by vehicle travel, "Motorized Route Ends" signs decals may be used.

General visitor information about access and recreation opportunities in the planning area will be provided by BLM and partner agencies. The purpose will be to better protect resources and to obtain the highest degree of voluntary compliance by visitors. Visitor educational programs will be limited to outreach activities, including working with volunteers and organized groups to promote Tread Lightly and Leave No Trace ethics, as funding and availability of BLM staff permits. Interpretation programs will be developed as a tool to educate the public and promote resource protection and ethical use of public lands, rather than the enhancement of the recreation experience.

A map for the area shall be produced to enhance resource protection and to help/encourage visitors to remain on “open” routes only. An official map will be produced for public distribution showing access routes and related visitor information.

An official Bullhead Travel Management Map will identify the designated routes. The official map will be based on Map C: “Alternative C, the proposed action” found in the associated EA. Routes will be identified, at a minimum by route number, then “open”, “closed” or “limited”.

3. Enforcement:

BLM Law enforcement patrol on public lands in the planning area is provided by LHFO BLM Rangers stationed in the LHFO Office. Enforcement actions are in response to complaints, and patrols are on a sporadic basis depending on priorities in all patrol areas. The Mohave County Sheriff also provides law enforcement on public lands in the area on an infrequent basis, to include The Colorado River Nature Center area where teenagers gather on weekend evenings. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) provides enforcement related to hunting laws. Law enforcement concerns with public use in the area include accidents, DUI, cross country motorized vehicle use and creation of new routes and trails by visitors. Goals related to law enforcement are to increase visibility of BLM personnel in the area as a deterrent, continue and expand cooperative interagency operations, and increased public education efforts to promote voluntary awareness and compliance with use restrictions, regulations and public safety concerns.

4. Traffic Controls/Barriers

Implementation of the travel management designations may require installation of gates and barriers to prevent vehicle traffic in areas not designated for motorized travel. The location and design of gates and barriers will depend on site conditions where they are needed. Typically, gates will be made of steel and designed to be vandal resistant. Fencing may be used, including barb wire, post and cable, or other materials. Barriers or barricades may be temporary or permanent, and may be made of stone, boulders, steel or wood. Appropriate site specific surveys will be in conformance with Instruction Memorandum No. 2008-091, BLM Travel Management Signage, March 2008. EAs and clearances will be obtained prior to surface disturbance related to installation of traffic control devices.

G. Restoration and Rehabilitation

“Closed” routes on BLM land will typically be allowed to reclaim naturally, when at all feasible. Most of these routes include lightly travelled routes that serve “limited” access purpose. The LHFO recognizes that simply posting a “closed” sign has little effect on user behavior and that for a route closure to be most effective, the specific route should be obliterated from public view to at least the visual horizon, as seen from the intersection with an “open” route. The application of rehabilitation techniques to “closed” routes, may be used where necessary, to speed the healing process, discourage use of “closed” routes, and minimize the impact on visual resources. Monitoring will drive the need for heavier forms of restoration.

“Closed” routes in sensitive areas, or those that are causing unacceptable impacts will generally receive a higher priority for reclaiming the route to the visual horizon. Some of these routes may be ripped, ditched, re-graded or re-contoured entirely or in part to aid

reclamation, if indicated by site conditions. In only rare situations will a “closed” route be rehabilitated beyond the visual horizon.

Other methods to close routes may be such techniques as posting with signs and/or blocking with barriers to prevent vehicle entry as determined reasonable. In a low desert environment it is difficult to block a route with simple barriers or tank traps because the terrain allows for circumvention of the barrier, in most cases.

Appropriate surveys , clearances and EA’s will be obtained prior to any ground disturbance, and impacts to cultural resources, or other resource values, that may be discovered will be mitigated or avoided.

Rehabilitation actions will be determined according to the following options:

1. Leave route to natural re-vegetation, route is not currently visible.
2. Install some form of barrier and reclaim the portion of the route that is visible from all intersections with “open” routes.
3. Reclaim the entire route. Seeding will be done where necessary to aid rehabilitation of “closed” routes. Appropriate seed mixtures will be selected for each site based on individual site conditions. Native species only are allowed for reclamation.
4. Recommended reclamation techniques include ripping the road surface with a small dozer to break up compacted soil and allow maximum moisture retention. Broadcast seeding would generally be done in the fall. After the seed has been distributed uniformly over the area by mechanical broadcasting devices, the ground would be raked or dragged to cover the seed. After the first year, seeded areas would be fertilized if seedling establishment is sparse. Techniques such as hydraulic seeding, seed drilling, mulching, water barring, pitting, roughening, contour furrowing, or similar methods may be used as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.
5. Weed treatment and control measures would be implemented as needed to promote re-vegetation with native plants and prevent any new weed establishment and/or control of existing weed sources.

H. Monitoring/Adaptive Management

Ongoing monitoring activities will assess the condition of roads and trails, traffic and use volume, patterns, distribution, public use areas, and compliance with planned designations and use restrictions. The assessment of benefits based management goals will be reviewed on a cursory level. The results of monitoring will be used to evaluate implementation progress and the effectiveness of the Plan in achieving desired outcomes and conditions, to identify adaptive measures as adverse impacts are discovered. The monitoring effort shall identify specific actions, including timeframes, methods, and anticipated resource needs for environmental monitoring. From a natural resource perspective the overall goal of monitoring will be to maintain and/or enhance the health and functionality of upland and riparian habitats in conformance with the LHFO RMP 2007. Monitoring will also evaluate road condition, public safety and changes in visitor demand/preference

1. Lake Havasu BLM employees and volunteers will be encouraged to use the OHV Observation report booklets while in the field to document vehicle use and assist in monitoring and compliance.
2. Photo-monitoring points will be established in key locations to monitor implementation actions and their effectiveness. For example, photo points can be

- established to monitor where cross-country travel has occurred, activity on “closed” routes has occurred, success of rehabilitation projects, extent of erosion mitigation areas, as well as areas of good road quality for future reference. Photo monitoring points will be documented using GPS and a monitoring schedule will be established.
3. The monitoring data collected will be used to assess the effectiveness of the plan and associated implementation actions.
 4. “Closed” routes would be monitored for indications of use, rehabilitated routes will be monitored to determine effectiveness of seeding and water drainage and the plan area will be monitored for signing conditions. Modifications to the plan would be considered if monitoring indicates that the goals and objectives are not being met.
 5. Recreation demand/preference will be captured by survey whenever funding and staffing allow. This type of project is well suited to be done by college students for academic projects.
 6. Upland health assessments will be conducted annually.
 7. Riparian health assessments will be conducted annually.

I. Prioritization of Work Areas/Sites

Specific prioritization of work areas/sites would be guided by four factors, all of which are related to the location of the route:

1. Factor 1: Are located within an area of high resource value,
2. Factor 2: Have above-average density of important sensitive species.
3. Factor 3: Have higher than average vehicle disturbance and;
4. Factor 4: Have significant urban interface issues.

The highest priority would be given to areas for which all four factors apply. The second priority would be those routes characterized by factors 1-3; the third priority would be routes characterized by factors 1 and 2; fourth priority to routes characterized by factor 1 only; and fifth priority to remaining routes.

Past experience, such as that obtained through the implementation of the Ord Mountain route designation pilot Project in the CDCA, can give valuable insight into not only which actions, but in what order they should occur. Implementation of the Ord Mountain Pilot plan revealed that the most effective short-term action taken was an increase in enforcement and visitor service patrolling, which resulted in a commensurate increase in visitor contacts. Through this increased number of contacts visitors realized that BLM was aggressively and successfully implementing the new network. Visitors generally responded to this in one of two ways. Those who were seeking a cross-country driving experience and did not want to be limited to routes gradually moved to the “Open Areas” where they could continue to recreate in a more unrestricted manner. Others continued to recreate in the Ord Mountains, generally staying on “open” routes.

The least effective short-term action taken in the Ord Mountains was signing the “closed” route network. Not only did this effort consume a great deal of staff time; in addition, signs were removed almost as quickly as they were put up. The need to re-sign routes placed additional demands on scarce staff time and material.

Given the lessons learned from the Ord Mountain experience, the successful implementation of a new route network should proceed by carrying out these steps in the following order:

1. Pursue funding for signage and the staff necessary to implement the route signing effort (i.e. law enforcement, park rangers and maintenance staff).
2. Pursue funding for route rehabilitation.
3. Sign the “open” route network (do not sign the “closed” route network).
4. Maintain the “open” route network with the principal goal being to make the “open” route network more attractive for use than the “closed” route network.
5. Install informational kiosks and signing where they would be most effective. Site these facilities where it would reach the greatest number of visitors and where it would target an audience that might be the most receptive to such facilities. For example such facilities might be most beneficial at major trailheads and campgrounds that are heavily visited by families enjoying camping.
6. Develop and publish maps that are up-to-date, readily available and have an easily understandable and useful format. For example, many visitors are familiar with the informational format employed by USGS quadrangle sheets.
7. Regularly maintain signs, kiosks, routes, maps and brochures.

At such time as additional funds are available for law enforcement and rehabilitation, the following steps should be taken:

1. Begin route rehabilitation in priority areas.
2. Route rehabilitation would require active maintenance for at least one year.
3. Initiate enforcement and visitor service patrols with the following caveats:
 - a. Do not over-commit; funding must be available to sustain the new patrol for a period of at least two years.
 - b. As enforcement efforts move into new areas, inappropriate use could migrate back to areas where it is not desired, this behavior pattern will be monitored.

Table 5: Implementation Time Frames

ACTION	COMPLETION TIME	COMMENTS
Pursue funding and FTE for enforcement, visitor services and maintenance.	Year 3 - Ongoing	BLM works on a three-year budget cycle. There may be some infusion earlier.
Pursue funding for route rehabilitation.	Year 2 - Ongoing	This would likely come from both federal appropriations and external sources.
Sign open route network.	Year 1 - Ongoing	Assumes funding in year 1.
Maintain open route network.	Year 1 - Ongoing	Assumes funding in year 1.
Install informational kiosks and interpretive signing.	Year 1 - Ongoing	Assumes funding in year 1.
Develop and publish maps and brochures.	Year 1 - Ongoing	Assumes funding in year 1.
Routinely maintain signs, kiosks, routes, maps and brochures.	Year 2 - Ongoing	Assumes ongoing funding.

Generally, the initial implementation phase (1 to 3 years) will focus on developing public outreach, producing a public access guide and map, other visitor information, and signing, installing barriers, providing on-site visitor services and enforcement presence. Conditions surveys will be completed to identify areas where more aggressive means of restoration may be needed. Necessary easements will be pursued as opportunities arise.

1. Funding Strategy:

Funds for labor, supplies and equipment will be pursued through the Bureau's normal budget process, and will be subject to appropriation of funds. Needed work will be proposed through Challenge Cost Share projects, assistance agreements or cooperative management plans to leverage external contributions to the greatest extent possible. Grants from various sources will be pursued, including Arizona OHV Program, Arizona Trails Heritage Program, and others as opportunities arise to implement elements of the travel management plan.

2. Route maintenance and construction costs

The following costs are 2003 costs. Annual inflation should be added for each year since. These figures are for rough planning purposes and should not be considered as a definitive guide to costs.

Table 6: Potential Route Maintenance Costs (Estimated)

Trail Repairs			Rehabilitation		
	Cost in \$	Unit/Quantity		Cost in \$	Unit/Quantity
Rolling Dip	105	each	Trails < 48" Wide		
Outslope	10.5	feet	Stabilization	3,400	mile
Grading	1,050	mile	Obliteration	17,000	mile
Brushcutting	2,000	acre			
Remove Berm	10.5	feet	Trails < 96" Wide		
Berm Drain	65	each	Stabilization	6,800	mile
Fill Ditch	1,050	mile	Obliteration	27,000	mile
Re-Route	4,000	mile			
Waterbar	55	each	Trails < 144" Wide		
Energy Dissipater	650	each	Stabilization	13,600	mile
			Obliteration	55,000	mile
Stream and Drainage Crossings			Trails > 144" Wide		
Correct Drainage	Obliteration	each	Stabilization	21,250	mile
Clean Inlet (Culvert)	35	each	Obliteration	85,000	mile
Clean Outlet (Culvert)	170	each	Revegetation	25	sq. yd.
Flume	250	each			
Reset Flume	125	each	Facilities		
Drop Inlet	150	each	Visitor Contact Sta.	40,000	each
Excavate Crossing	3,500	each	Vault Latrines	18,000	each
Ford Crossing		each	Campground/1 site	4,000	each
Install Culvert	2,000	each	Info kiosk 3-Panel/roof	2,500	each
Retaining Wall	125	sq. ft	Info kiosk 2-Panel/roof	2,000	each
			Info kiosk 1-Panel/roof	1,000	each
Habitat Protection			Info Board	450	each
Sign	50	each	Gate, Type 1	3,000	each
Fence	4	feet	Gate, Type 2	2,000	each
Repair Fence	100	each	Gate, Type 3	1,000	each
Pipe Barrier	25	feet			

IV. Environmental Assessment



Bureau of Land Management

Lake Havasu Field Office
2610 Sweetwater Avenue
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406



Bullhead Travel Management Plan

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA-AZ-330-2007-050

Mohave County, Arizona
San Bernardino County, California

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Project Location

The project location is north of I-40, south and east of Bullhead City, in western Arizona and east of I-40 and north and south of Needles, in eastern California. The area is separated by the Colorado River as it flows south becoming Lake Havasu. The area is the northernmost portion of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO). The Needles Field Office (NFO) boundaries are to the west and the Kingman Field Office (KFO) boundaries are to the east (See Map 1).

2. Project Background

In the early 1980s, responding to Presidential Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, the BLM began designating all public lands in one of three Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) designation categories "open", "closed", and "limited". Since then, BLM has been working towards designating roads and trails on BLM-administered lands. The LHFO Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved in May 2007, committed the LHFO to completing a Travel Management Plan (TMP) for the field office within five years. When completed, the TMP will include six planning units (Bullhead, Havasu, Cactus Plain, Alamo, Bouse, Wenden), referred to as Travel Management Areas (TMAs) encompassing over 1.3 million acres. The first phase of the TMP is the completion of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Bullhead TMP.

3. Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of this EA is to analyze the impacts associated with the BLM's proposal to designate routes within the Bullhead TMP as "open", "closed" or "limited". The BLM, Lake Havasu Field Office, proposes to designate (inventoried routes of existing roads and trails Map 1) routes on approximately 33,150 acres of BLM public lands north of I-40, east of the Colorado River and the portion of the Bullhead TMP in California managed by LHFO.

The proposed action is necessary because BLM committed to designating a Travel Network (TN), consisting of all routes of travel for the planning area in the RMP. These routes include motorized and non-motorized (including but not limited to foot travel, equestrian and bicycle). The proposed TN would protect soil, vegetation and wildlife habitat conditions by designating routes "open", "closed" or "limited" and are prioritized based on the impacts of both motorized and non-motorized use to the natural and cultural resources.

The specific goals of the Bullhead TMP are to:

- Designate routes of travel in the planning area consistent with 43 CFR 8340-8342.1
- Implement route designations that enhance desert ecosystem functions and habitat attributes to protect Federal and State threatened and endangered (T&E) and BLM special status species as well as improving the condition of the land in general.
- Recognize effects of changes to land ownership on continued public access
- Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and counties

4. Decision to be Made

The EA analyzes the trails identified in the LHFO RMP and whether they should be designated as "open", "closed", and "limited" to motorized and/or non-motorized travel. The RMP designates motorized use as "Limited" to existing roads and trails to the field route inventories by BLM staff and contractors using GPS between 1990 and 2004. Additional routes were added in 2006 to complete the route inventory in the RMP. The proposed action addresses the

main issue in the planning process by designating routes of travel for motorized and non-motorized use. The Travel Management Plan implements the decision of this EA.

BLM will designate 142 miles of existing routes across public land within the Bullhead planning area.

- A designation of “**open**” typically means that the route is recommended open to all use for access (other than limits that may be required by law).
- A designation of “**closed**” typically means that the route is recommended for closure to all use. Physical closure for a route may include restoring the route to the degree possible to blend with surrounding landscape, as well as installation of physical barriers and signing at the original departure point, if necessary.
- A designation of “**limited**” typically means the route is recommended limited for use by certain parties or entities, vehicle types, or seasons, etc. For example, a route may be limited to administrative or to motorized use during seasons when impacts to sensitive resources are minimized.

5. Scoping and Issues

Public scoping and involvement throughout the TMP process is critical to its viability and implementation. BLM began the TMP process with public meetings in the Fall of 2006 for the Bullhead Travel Management Area (TMA). In November two public scoping meetings were held in Bullhead City to help gather and collect data, comments, issues and concerns. Over 100 people participated in these meetings and expressed strong opinions for the importance of protecting public access to and across public land. In September 2006 and again in September 2007 meetings were held with representatives and officers of OHV clubs including the Havasu, Bullhead, Hualapai and Parker 4-Wheelers to better inform organized user groups of the planning process and the purpose of the TMP.

The following are the primary issues identified:

- Continued Access for OHV use as Recreation Opportunities on public land
- Access to Private Lands and Resources for Economic and Social Needs
- Effects of Changes to Land Ownership on Continued Public Access
- Coordination with Adjacent Jurisdictions and Counties

In March 2008, the three action alternative maps were posted to BLM’s Arizona State website at http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/travel_mgmt/bullhead.html. The alternatives are described as No Action, Protection, Proposed and Access. The public was invited to comment for 30 days on the alternatives (Evaluation Phase). Sixteen comments were received and considered for preparing this environmental assessment.

B. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

BLM has adopted the Route Evaluation Tree (Tree) for designating routes. The Tree and the basic evaluation criteria are in Appendix F. The Tree applies a set, analytical method to all inventoried routes to determine each route’s designation and if any limitations are necessary to protect or enhance recreation, cultural, and/or natural resources. An interdisciplinary team evaluated each route, using the Tree process. The team was comprised of LHFO staff, the neighboring BLM offices, cooperating agencies and tribal representatives (who requested to be included). The team included specialists in wildlife, cultural, recreation, lands/realty, minerals, wilderness and others (See Section V for list of participants in the route evaluation process).

The existing and accumulated GIS data is integral to the route evaluations. A contractor, Advanced Resource Solutions (ARS) has developed a database for applying the Tree process facilitating and capturing each routes resource criteria, which is the basis for designation. Appendix G contains the specific route designation reports.

BLM LHFO proposes to designate almost 142 miles of inventoried travel routes (269 routes) on approximately 33,150 acres of BLM lands in Arizona and California north of I-40, east and west of the Colorado River within the Bullhead TMA of the Lake Havasu TMP. As discussed above, the EA designates routes inventoried in the RMP as of 2006.

Designation	B Miles	B %	C Miles	C %	D Miles	D %
Open	56.0	39.6	96.5	68.0	119.0	84.0
Limited: non-motorized	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0
Limited: to authorized use	40.5	28.8	17.0	12.0	7.5	4.9
Closed	44.5	30.9	28.0	19.6	15.5	11.1
Totals	142.0	100.0	142.0	100.0	142.0	100.0

When the TMP and EA are complete, they will be on the internet at http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/travel_mgmt/bullhead.html, CD and at public locations (i.e. Mohave County Library and the Bullhead City Chamber of Commerce) for public review and comment. The TMP presents four alternative route networks (Maps A, B, C, & D). The final TMP decisions will designate each route, “open”, “closed” or “limited”. An access guide will be published implementing the TN and replace any previous maps.

Common to all except the No Action Alternative

All the alternatives, except the No Action Alternative, would close some routes. However, it is assumed that the amount of OHV use would not change greatly. Rather the OHV use would be concentrated on the routes designated “open”.

The TMP identifies on the ground management actions and projects including, but not limited to:

- Signs and Markers
- Restoration and Rehabilitation
- Prioritization of Work Areas/Sites
- Implementation Time Frames
- Visitor Information, Education, Interpretation
- Traffic Controls/Barriers
- Monitoring/Adaptive Management
- Law Enforcement

Alternative A - No Action (Map A)

This alternative would be a continuation of existing conditions. Travel would be allowed on the 142 miles of existing roads and trails without specific route designation, or any mitigation or rehabilitation efforts. A network of OHV routes would not be analyzed and designated, leaving

the area susceptible to route proliferation and illegal cross-country travel. The increasing OHV use and visitation would continue contributing to the diminishing resource conditions.

OHV management necessary to address public and administrative access needs, protect resources, promote public safety and minimize conflicts among various uses of public lands would not be implemented. The OHV designations decision in the LHFO RMP of “limited to designated roads and trails” would not be implemented. This alternative is not preferred for the stated criteria and because it would not be in conformance with the RMP.

Alternative B - Protection (Map B)

This alternative’s primary management emphasis would be the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resource values through a significant reduction in the miles and routes of travel available for OHV use. The 142 miles available for OHV use would be reduced by 85 miles (60%). Approximately 56 miles of routes would be designated “open” for motorized recreation when compared to the No Action Alternative. This alternative would provide for a minimum of OHV routes and miles within a Limited to Designated Roads and Trails management setting. Reclamation of closed routes would be prioritized based on wildlife habitat, soil loss potential, cultural resource impacts, or other resource protection needs

Alternative B strives for non-motorized recreation opportunities including but not limited to hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian sports. Alternative B allows OHV access for administrative purposes, including but not limited to maintenance of utility corridors, range improvements and mining claims. This would be the most restrictive to public access while providing maximum protection to natural, scenic and cultural values.

This alternative is not preferred because it disproportionately restricts OHV access and recreational opportunities on BLM managed public land. This alternative places a greater emphasis on non-motorized access and resource protection and less consideration of many users and visitors to public land are not able bodied and may experience one or more physical disability limiting their non-motorized opportunities.

Alternative C - Proposed Action (Map C)

This alternative strives to balance the protection of the natural and cultural resources on public land, while providing opportunity for motorized and non-motorized travel on public land. The number of OHV route miles “closed” (28 miles) and “limited” (17 miles) would represent 31.6% of the near 142 miles of existing routes. Conversely, just over 96.5 miles (68%) of the 142 miles travel routes would be designated “open” and available for OHV use when compared to the No Action Alternative.

In most cases, routes connecting locations and destinations would remain “open” unless an alternate route is determined more suitable and less of an impact. When evaluating a route, routes that damage or have increased potential for resource damage or user conflicts would be “closed” or “limited”. The integrity of the TN providing access to destinations for OHV and other forms of travel is valued over a specific route or route segment. This factor is instrumental in selecting the most effective TN.

Alternative D - Access (Map D)

This alternative would provide the most OHV opportunity within the Limited to Designated Roads and Trails management setting. The number of miles available to the public for motorized use would be reduced by about 22 miles (16%). Approximately, 119 miles (84%) of travel routes would be designated “open” for motorized recreation when compared to the No

Action Alternative. This alternative would be the least restrictive allowing the most public access. The OHV designations decision in the LHFO RMP of “limited to designated roads and trails” would be implemented.

A network of OHV travel routes would be designated that would reduce route proliferation and illegal cross-country travel. However, the increasing OHV use and visitation is likely to continue contributing to the decline of resource conditions. This alternative is not preferred because the level of OHV management required for addressing public and administrative access; protecting natural and cultural resources; promoting public safety and minimizing conflicts among users would be cost and time restrictive and would not be implemented.

Conformance with Land Use Plan

The Proposed Action (Alternative C) would conform to the decisions of the Lake Havasu Field Office RMP (2007) as identified with the decisions and excerpts shown in Appendix H.

Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

Management direction is in compliance of the following: Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, National Environmental Policy Act 1969, Wilderness Act of 1964, Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, Sikes Act of 1974, Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 as amended, Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 as amended 1992, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, and the Master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department of Interior BLM, 1987 (AGFC-BLM MOU)

C. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

1. General Project Setting

The planning area includes both the California (15,668 acres) and Arizona (129,793 acres) sides of the Colorado River, containing the populated areas of Needles on the California-side and Bullhead City, Mohave Valley and Golden Shores on the Arizona-side. Public lands administered by the LHFO comprise 47,400 acres (25%) of the TMA. Meaning 75 percent (145,431 acres) of the planning area is managed or owned by the respective states, private and/or tribal property. The planning area’s surface management acreage information is shown in the table below.

Table 8			
Bullhead TMP (Acres)			
	Arizona	California	Planning Area / Total
Non-BLM (State/private/tribal)	129,793	15,668	145,431 (75%)
BLM public land	31,139	16,261	47,400 (25%)

2. Supplemental Authorities Not Affected

The following Supplemental Authorities are not present or not affected by the Proposed Action, and are not discussed further:

- Environmental Justice
- Rangeland
- Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

3. Supplemental Authorities Present or Could be Affected

Much of the information is contained in the LHFO RMP and Record of Decision, May 2007, Chapter Three Affected Environment. The complete description of the Affected Environment is attached as Appendix I.

Air and Atmospheric Values

Climate Change

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Bullhead Bajada Natural and Cultural

Beale Slough Riparian and Cultural

Cultural Resources

Floodplains (includes Washes)

Native American Religious Concerns

Soils

Threatened or Endangered Species (Appendix J), Priority Wildlife (Appendix K)

Water Quality, Drinking or Ground

Wetlands/Riparian Zones (Appendix L)

Wildlife Resources (including Migratory Birds)

Beale Slough

Needles Revegetation Project

Colorado River Nature Center

Wilderness

Warm Springs Wilderness

Dead Mountains Wilderness

Chemehuevi Mountains Wilderness

4. Other Resources/Concerns Not Affected

The following resources/concerns have been evaluated and are not present or not affected by the Proposed Action, and are not discussed further:

- Farm Lands (Prime or Unique)
- Fuels/Fire Management
- Human Health and Public Safety
- Socio-economics

5. Other Resources/Concerns Present or Could be Affected

Attached as Appendix I

Lands and Realty Management

Law Enforcement

Mineral Resources

Recreation Management

Colorado River Nature Center SRMA

Travel Management
Vegetation (Appendix M)
Visual Resource Management
Weeds, Invasive and Noxious (Appendix N)
Wild Horse and Burros

D. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

1. Potential Direct and Indirect Effects

This section analyzes the environmental impacts and effects of implementing each alternative described in Section III. Existing conditions described comprise the baseline used for projecting impacts. Management that could impact resources or resource uses has been analyzed and the conclusions drawn are described under the appropriate resource consequence section.

Many management actions are common to all alternatives or more than one alternative. Similarly, the impacts associated with implementation of a given set of management actions may be common to more than one alternative or even to several seemingly disparate resources. When a proposed activity is not addressed in a specific section, no impact is anticipated. Under each resource topic, Section IV discusses the consequences of no action in management Alternative A and then describes the changes in impacts (direct and indirect) by alternative. It's important to understand that every route (269) may not affect each resource; hence the varying numbers of routes analyzed in most instances.

See Table 7 for miles and percentage of routes by alternative for each route designation. See Appendix G for individual route designation reports (*approximately 600 pages*). Appendix G is available on CD or BLM's Arizona State website at http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/travel_mgmt/bullhead.html

a. Air Quality and Atmospheric Change

Common to All Alternatives except the No Action

All the alternatives would close some routes. However, the amount of OHV use would not change greatly, rather users would continue using the routes left "open". This would concentrate dust accumulation in some areas and on routes "open" for use under all alternatives. While the concentration of the dust clouds would vary by alternative it is unlikely that the current impact from dust clouds to the existing air shed would change. Any unauthorized routes will likely increase the amount of dust accumulation in the air shed. However, it is assumed that the number of riders would not significantly change. Therefore, the impact to the existing air shed would not change.

Alternative A - No Action

This alternative would allow the current situation to continue and not designate routes. The illegal new routes caused from cross country travel, hill climbing and the additional surface disturbance would increase dust accumulation in the affected areas and on routes "open" for use under alternatives B, C, and D. This alternative would allow the existing 36 routes to remain as "open" access with potential for motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate seven (7) routes "open", "close" nineteen (19) routes to all uses by restoring to the visual horizon, and ten (10) as "limited" use by limiting use to motorized administrative use.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 24 routes “open”, “close” eight (8) routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and four (4) routes “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative designates routes as “open” access for 30 routes without monitoring management concerns and “closes” six (6) routes to all uses by restoring the route to some extent the visual horizon.

b. Climate Change

Changes in climate can influence the timing and length of seasons, which in turn can have a direct effect on plants and animals. This includes changes in ranges, abundances, phenology (timing of an event such as breeding), morphology and physiology, and community composition, biotic interactions and behavior. Changes are being seen in all different types of taxa, from insects to mammals, in North America as well as on many other continents. Climate change analyses are comprised of several factors, including greenhouse gases (GHGs), land use management practices, the albedo effect, etc. The tools necessary to quantify climatic impacts are presently unavailable. As a consequence, impact assessment of specific effects of anthropogenic activities cannot be determined. Additionally, specific levels of significance have not yet been established. Therefore, climate change analysis for the purpose of this document is limited to accounting and disclosing of factors that contribute to climate change.

Alternative A - No Action

The area that undergoes this transition of continuing to keep all roads and trails “open” would contribute to climate change via changes in reflectivity of the vegetation, changes in ground cover (more exposed soil), thermal balance, changes as biomass composition, or changes in carbon cycling rates. This would decrease carbon sequestration or increase GHG emissions.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative would close the most routes and could increase the number of plants in the area; therefore, expanding the area where plants could grow increases carbon sequestration and/or reduces GHG emissions.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

This alternative would close approximately half of the existing routes and could increase plant growth within the area; therefore, carbon sequestration within the area could improve over time.

Alternative D - Access

The area that undergoes this transition of continuing to keep as many roads “open” as possible may contribute to climate change via changes in reflectivity of the vegetation, changes in ground cover (more exposed soil), changes in thermal balance, changes as biomass composition, or changes in carbon cycling rates. This would decrease carbon sequestration or increase GHG emissions.

c. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The Bullhead Bajada Natural and Cultural ACEC, as defined in the LHFO RMP, is an area of concern for the Bullhead TMP. The Bullhead Bajada Natural and Cultural ACEC will be managed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant characteristics or important values designated for the ACEC. Relevant characteristics within the ACEC include the historic Beale’s Wagon Road, adjacent prehistoric resources, habitat for Arizona State-listed Sonoran

Desert tortoise and other special status or sensitive species present throughout the area. The road system comprises a site complex that is eligible for the NRHP and is of regional, if not national, importance.

Alternative A - No Action

The area that undergoes this transition of continuing to keep all roads and trails “open” would contribute to the deterioration or displacement of cultural resources via road construction and maintenance activities, vandalism, and would lead ultimately to a negative impact upon the sacred or ceremonial value ascribed to cultural resources within the ACEC by Native Americans. This alternative would allow the existing 172 routes to remain as “open” with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative would close the most routes. Meanwhile a proactive approach to biological and cultural resource management within the ACEC that uses stewardship education, networking, research, planning, land protection, and regulatory and technical tools should be initiated to produce long-term strategies that ultimately protect the ACEC to benefit present and future generations. This alternative would designate 26 routes “open”, “close” 98 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 48 as “limited” OHV use to administrative use.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

This alternative would close approximately half of the existing routes and could increase adverse affect upon biological and cultural resources within the ACEC. Reasonable precautions must be taken to ensure that land use does not inadvertently impact these resources. This alternative would designate 83 routes “open”, “close” 72 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 17 routes “limited”.

Alternative D - Access

The area that undergoes this transition of continuing to keep as many roads “open” as possible may contribute to intrusions or alterations to a cultural property or biological resource that may affect the integrity of the resource. Landscape deterioration caused by an increase in off road vehicles within the ACEC could lead to physical changes that could affect the values of cultural properties. This loss would affect the completeness and accuracy of the information used by scientists for interpreting cultural resources. This alternative designates routes as “open” access for 113 routes without monitoring management concerns, “closes” 57 routes to all uses by restoring the route to some extent the visual horizon and two (2) routes “limited”.

d. Cultural Resources/ Paleontological Resources

The BLM will actively manage Bullhead Planning Unit Travel Management Plan archaeological sites as high value site areas. Designated travel routes within the area not inventoried for their archaeological value will be evaluated. Any sites found will be mitigated by rerouting or other means. Any new routes proposed will be evaluated, if sites are identified, they will be either avoided or mitigated. Appropriate steps will be taken to reduce or eliminate OHV impacts on important sites. Preservation in place through avoidance is the most commonly applied mitigation measure; however, this mitigation strategy requires long-term, systematic monitoring. Excavation or data recovery in those cases where avoidance is not feasible is an acceptable form of mitigation if conducted under an approved research design.

It is anticipated the use of roads and trails will cause some impact to non-renewable cultural resources due to surface disturbance. An increase in the number of roads and trails increase the probability of direct, long-term, adverse impacts on archaeological sites.

Compliance with management measures as prescribed by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) for authorized actions requires consultation with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), federally recognized Native American tribes and other members of the interested public, the identification and evaluation of cultural resources, and adherence to procedures for resolution of adverse effects and mitigation of impacts. The Tree database breaks down known cultural sites and areas into three categories: Known Cultural Sites, National Register of Historic Places and Special Cultural Resource Management Areas.

Alternative A - No Action

With the no action alternative, no new authorized trail or road development would occur. Although the no action alternative would have the least direct impacts on non-renewable cultural resources the indirect impacts of increased visitor use as population increases would result in the creation of unauthorized trails and roads that would have adverse affects on cultural resources. Unauthorized user created routes, continuing use of those routes and lack of a travel management plan for the area would compound the damage done to archaeological and historical sites. Cultural resources would continue to be adversely impacted under the no action alternative due to the lack of proactive management and associated mitigation or avoidance measures, resulting in a permanent resource loss.

Table 9			
Number of Routes Alternative A			
	Known Cultural Sites	National Register (Eligible)	Special Cultural Management Areas
Open	245	157	32
Closed	0	0	0
Limited	0	0	0

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative would close the most routes and that action could serve to preserve and protect cultural resources for present and future generations.

Table 10			
Number of Routes Alternative B			
	Known Cultural Sites	National Register (Eligible)	Special Cultural Management Areas
Open	46	30	2
Closed	135	77	19
Limited	64	50	11

Alternative C - Proposed Action

This alternative would close approximately half of the existing routes. The indirect impacts of increased access and visitation (i.e., surface collection, vehicle and foot traffic, vandalism, etc.) may be more harmful than the direct effects of trail and route building. Increasing recreation in general and opening up new access to the Bullhead Planning Unit has an adverse affect on non-renewable cultural resources. Impacts on known and unknown cultural resources have cumulative impacts through incremental degradation of the resource base from a variety of

sources reducing scientific information and interpretative potential or affecting values important to Native American communities. Cumulative impacts cannot be directly measured, but because we are dealing with non-renewable cultural resources, damaged or destroyed resources are permanent resource losses.

Table 11			
Number of Routes Alternative C			
	Known Cultural Sites	National Register (Eligible)	Special Cultural Management Areas
Open	125	82	16
Closed	97	59	10
Limited	23	16	6

Alternative D - Access

This alternative keeps as many roads and trails “open” as possible and may lead to direct impacts to archaeological and historical sites. More access equates to more routes raising the potential for creating illegal unauthorized routes. OHV use could directly affect cultural resources through direct disturbance, soil compaction, altered surface drainage, and erosion. The direct effects are loss of archaeological materials and deposits and the information they contain.

Table 12			
Number of Routes Alternative D			
	Known Cultural Sites	National Register (Eligible)	Special Cultural Management Areas
Open	162	103	24
Closed	77	49	8
Limited	6	5	0

Mitigation Common to All Alternatives -- Except the No Action

Current management actions that direct travel through designation of roads and trails for all uses would enhance the protection of cultural resources.

Class III inventories performed in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA would be completed prior to all surface-disturbing activities, and mitigation measures would be taken to avoid or reduce impacts on resources and mitigation of adverse effects identified through the Section 106 process will be concluded prior to construction. A proactive monitoring plan to evaluate the condition of known archaeological sites and historic resources should be developed for the area. The effects of vandalism caused by increased visitation may be mitigated through education and interpretative programs. Adverse impacts to unknown sites would decrease if systematic Class III inventories were scheduled throughout the area.

e. Floodplain (includes Washes)

Common to All Alternatives

All the alternatives, except the No Action Alternative, would close some routes. However, it is assumed that the amount of OHV use would not change greatly. Rather they would use the

routes left “open”. BLM has not determined the location of floodplains on any of the routes. Therefore, BLM cannot determine the impact to floodplains that may occur on for sites that will have increased use, for routes closed, or be limited to administrative use. However, it is anticipated that no significant change under all alternatives to floodplains on the inventoried routes will occur within the various watersheds.

Alternative A - No Action

BLM has not determined the location of floodplains on any of the routes. Therefore, BLM cannot determine the impact to floodplains that may occur on for sites that will have increased use, for routes closed, or be limited to administrative use. This alternative would allow the existing situation to continue where it is likely number of riders and routes would keep increasing and is not preferred.

Under this alternative, route management would occur in a custodial manner or on an as needed basis. There would be greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current route network and the proliferation of routes would continue. This alternative would continue to disturb additional ground. This alternative would allow the existing 151 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate 35 routes “open”, “close” 71 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 45 as “limited”.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 86 routes “open”, “close” 55 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 11 as “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate 106 routes “open”, “close” 42 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and four (4) as “limited”.

f. Lands and Realty Management

Common to All Alternatives

Under all alternatives, the BLM Lands and Realty program will continue to have the authority to issue right-of-ways, land use permits and other authorizations that may affect the continuity of existing routes. The BLM will evaluate the impacts to the existing routes and may recommend the creation of a new route(s) using the Tree or the rehabilitation of the existing route(s).

g. Law Enforcement

Common to All Alternatives - Except the No Action

BLM rangers enforce federal laws and regulations on public lands. Once routes are designated “open”, “closed”, and “limited” they are to be signed giving law enforcement rangers greater authority to issue warnings and citations. This will result in better compliance and resource protection.

Common to All Alternatives

The Tree database identified routes designated due to “Dumping” and “Hazards”. These classifications are included under the Law Enforcement classification. See the individual alternatives for routes designated “open”, “closed” and “limited”.

Alternative A - No Action

This alternative would allow the “limited to existing roads and trails” designation to continue for OHVs on public land and not designate specific OHV routes. Specific routes would not be signed and marked, updated recreation and travel maps would not be a high priority. OHV users and visitors to the area would have a greater potential of getting lost, having accidents and/or needing rescue services. Overall, public safety and resource protection would not increase. This alternative would allow the existing 269 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate 43 routes “open”, “close” 88 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 48 as “limited”.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 84 routes “open”, “close” 74 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 21 as “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate 116 routes “open”, “close” 58 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and five (5) as “limited”.

h. Mineral Resources

Saleable Minerals

Common to All Alternatives

Route designation will not impact the administration of the mineral materials program since the roads used to access the mineral material sites are authorized as a part of the contract/permit issued.

Locatable Minerals

Common to All Alternatives

Route designation will have minimal impact on mineral exploration and development since the route use is generally authorized as part of the action. The impact that may occur is if a route is identified to be used by the operator that has been designated closed. The route would be made available for use to the operator as limited to authorized users if there were no other existing feasible alternate routes. Upon completion of the mining project the route would be closed and reclaimed.

Alternative A - No Action

This alternative would not impact access to mining claims since all of the routes would remain “open”.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative limits and closes many routes that could be used by the public to access their mining claims to perform casual use, exploration and mining activities. This may result in more mining notices and/or plans being filed by claimants and operators to access their claims since previously used routes may be “closed”.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

This alternative would close one (1) route HN16C that accesses mining claims within the vicinity of the Moss Mine. If the claimant and/or operator were to want to access these claims they would have to file a mining notice and/or plan of operations.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative would generally not impact access to mining claims since the majority of the roads would remain “open”.

i. Native American Religious Concerns

Common to All Alternatives

The Bullhead Planning Unit area has locations of religious or cultural concern to Native Americans, the Fort Mohave Tribe, among others. Such areas identified or that become known through Native American notification and consultation will need to be considered during the implementation phase. The BLM will take no action that would adversely affect areas or sites where Native American Religious Concerns are present without Section 106 and government-to-government consultations with the appropriate Native Americans. Refer to Cultural Resources for numbers of routes and designation.

j. Recreation Management

Alternative A - No Action

This alternative would allow the “limited to existing roads and trails” designation to continue for OHVs on public land. The existing route inventory would be designated as “open” without any distinction between motorized and non-motorized use, or for make a distinction for limiting routes to a particular, season, or other type of use.

Loop routes are not encouraged; allowing some routes to dead end and raise potential for OHV cross country travel and/or hill climbing. This alternative does not address factors to avoid or reduce user conflicts from the variety of recreation opportunities on public land. This alternative does not adequately address affects to specific resources, including:

- Wildlife, habitat, soils, historic, cultural, etc.
- Commercial access
- Administrative access

There are 142 miles of inventoried existing miles of routes in the area that are “open” to motorized OHV use. This alternative does not address route widening from a single track to double track to full sized vehicles to continue: this contributes to vegetation and habitat loss increasing potential of erosion, route cutting, and increasing maintenance and may affect public safety. This alternative is not preferred due to the reduced recreational benefits and resource impacts.

Table 13		
Number of Routes Alternative A		
	Recreation Settings	Special Recreation Management Areas
Open	262	4
Closed	0	0
Limited	7	0

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative has the highest reduction in the number of routes available for motorized recreation. About 60 percent of the miles available for OHV use are either closed or limited to administrative or authorized use. Non-motorized users would find larger areas available without the noise and interruptions generated by OHVs. This alternative would reduce route widening from a single track to two tracks to a full size Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs). The routes remaining “open” would have increased use that may result in an increase of conflict between users and would result in decreased opportunities for ATV and motorcycle users. There is also the potential safety issue of increased accidents due to a higher volume of traffic on a relatively small number of routes.

Access for hunting and game retrieval would be reduced; this could decrease the hunter success and satisfaction. There are no provisions for relocating routes in more sustainable locations.

Table 14		
Number of Routes Alternative B		
	Recreation Settings	Special Recreation Management Areas
Open	54	1
Closed	148	3
Limited	67	0

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The management actions being proposed would have varying impacts to the recreational opportunities. A closure of many parallel and stem trails could result in a decrease in the number of less attractive motorized trails. The impact on OHV users would be fewer miles of routes; however, those that remain would be signed and likely be maintained as needed to allow for increased use. The strategy of signing, access maps and bulletin board information would reduce the number of users getting lost and the potential for riding cross-country and route proliferation. With fewer roads and trails and greater trail use compliance, less soil compaction and vegetative damage would occur. This alternative may reduce the attractiveness of a more naturalized setting and could displace some non-motorized users.

There are many riding opportunities; both loop and destination routes and some dispersed camping opportunities exist in less travelled areas. One of the issues during the hunting seasons is the cross-country motorized travel that occurs for scouting and game retrieval. A single trip across the vegetation generally leaves little evidence of vegetation damage. However, multiple vehicles in groups or multiple trips by a single vehicle can result in creation of an unauthorized route. Hunters or other riders may view this as an existing route if they are unfamiliar with the area. Driving vehicles off existing routes to park for camping, picnicking, or hunting use has created additional disturbance and new spur routes.

Route proliferation would be reduced through implementing route designation and public education. Closure of routes would reduce OHV opportunities; however, most of these routes were created by illegal cross-country travel. By applying the identified Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) categories would help ensure the appropriate range of recreation opportunities are available.

Table 15		
Number of Routes Alternative C		
	Recreation Settings	Special Recreation Management Areas
Open	136	1
Closed	108	3
Limited	25	0

Alternative D - Access

This alternative provides the maximum availability of routes for motorized access, closer to the No Action Alternative and less protection for wildlife, habitat, soils, historic, cultural and other resources. Though this alternative would designate routes “open”, “closed”, and “limited”, the additional routes would allow the present resource impacts including runoff and erosion to continue and not provide adequate resource protection. This alternative would have more potential for invasive species to spread in areas that may have been closed under the proposed action.

Table 16		
Number of Routes Alternative D		
	Recreation Settings	Special Recreation Management Areas
Open	179	1
Closed	84	3
Limited	6	0

k. Soils

Common to All Alternatives

All the alternatives, except the No Action Alternative, would close some routes. However, it is assumed that the number of riders using the area would not change greatly, rather that they would use the existing routes left “open”. However, it is anticipated that no significant change to the rate of soil erosion will occur within the various watersheds.

Alternative A – No Action

This alternative would allow the existing 78 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate 22 routes “open”, “close” 39 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 17 as “limited”.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 47 routes “open”, “close” 23 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and eight (8) as “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate 58 routes “open”, “close” 19 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and one (1) as “limited”.

I. Threatened or Endangered and Special Status Species

Common to All Alternatives

Reducing the availability of “open” roads does not equate to a reduction in the number of OHV operators. By implementing a road network system, OHV operators will become more concentrated in greater numbers on “open” roads and staging areas. These roads and staging areas will more than likely increase in use, width and size overtime. Significant localized impacts could potentially degrade areas important to threatened, endangered and special status species as roads and staging areas become larger, wider and more braided.

Alternative A - No Action

Under the no action alternative, road management would occur in a custodial manner and/or as problems occurred. There would be a greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current road network and create additional routes overtime. Current routes would increase in use, width and size. Potential disturbance of threatened, endangered and special status species, particularly the Mohave Desert tortoise in California and the Sonoran desert tortoise in Arizona, would be greater probability than Alternatives B and C. This alternative is the least beneficial to these species although the level of impact would be similar in magnitude as it is currently. This alternative would allow the existing 255 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative provides the greatest benefits to all threatened, endangered and special status species. Under this alternative, the greatest number and miles of the current road network would be closed to OHV. This will result in a benefit to habitat quality/quantity utilized by these species. The probability of human and threatened, endangered and special status species encounters would be reduced the greatest extent under this alternative. This alternative would designate 47 routes “open”, “close” 141 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 67 as “limited”.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The intent of this alternative is to improve the TN to balance OHV access and reduce the disturbance to threatened, endangered and special status species. Cover, forage and space should become greater in availability, habitat fragmentation should be reduced and habitat quality/quantity would be increased. The probability of human and threatened, endangered and special status species encounters would be reduced. This alternative would designate 128 routes “open”, “close” 102 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 25 as “limited”.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative provides the least benefits to threatened, endangered and special status species other than Alternative A. Although this alternative closes a portion of the current road network, disturbance to wildlife would remain similar to that of the No Action Alternative (Alternative A). Under this alternative, habitat quality/quantity would be reduced over time and the probability of human and threatened, endangered and special status species encounters would be similar to that of Alternative A. This alternative would designate 170 routes “open”, “close” 79 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and six (6) as “limited”.

m. Travel Management

Common to All Alternatives -- Except the No Action

All OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Common to All Alternatives

- Install, maintain, and replace signs on all routes to indicate whether they are “open”, “closed”, and “limited”.
- Develop maps, brochures, and bulletin boards displaying the designated route network and other recreation opportunities in the area.
- Develop agreements with user groups and individuals to provide volunteers for route signing, maintenance and monitoring for better compliance and resource protection.
- Develop a monitoring plan to monitor use levels and route conditions to determine a maintenance schedule and prioritize routes.
- Conduct regular law enforcement patrols for improving compliance with designations and limitations.
- Design and maintain routes to better assure public safety, minimize impacts to soils, water, and wildlife and enhance OHV travel opportunities.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, there would be no change to the “existing roads and trails” designation. However, its presumed OHV use, both vehicles and users would continue to increase, or at a minimum remain at, or near present levels. Any maintenance would continue to be sparse, infrequent and at a very minimal level by BLM and volunteer groups through grants or other outside funding sources. This situation has failed to manage or control route proliferation produced by the increasing levels of OHV use and illegal cross-country travel, in turn causing the degradation of natural, cultural and scenic resources. This alternative is not preferred. This alternative would allow the existing 189 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B - Protection

All OHV use would be “limited” to designated routes and more routes that may contribute to resource damage or conflicts would be “closed” or “limited” than Alternatives C and D. Alternative B strives to enhance non-motorized recreation opportunities including but not limited to hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian sports. Alternative B allows OHV access for private property and administrative purposes, including but not limited to maintenance of utility corridors, range improvements and mining claims. This would be the most restrictive to public access while providing maximum protection to natural, scenic and cultural values.

This alternative is not preferred because it would not recognize OHV access and travel as a valid recreation opportunity of BLM managed public land. This alternative places an over emphasis on non-motorized access without considering many users and visitors to public land are not able bodied and may experience one or more physical disability limiting their ability to participate in non-motorized access opportunity. This alternative would designate 30 routes “open”, “close” 107 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 52 as “limited”.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

More routes that have resource damage or conflicts would be “closed” or “limited” in use than Alternatives A and D. This alternative establishes a travel network of “open”, “closed”, and “limited” routes providing reasonable, safe, and environmentally sound access to public land.

The travel network includes opportunities for a variety of OHV access and a balance of resource values found on public lands. This alternative would designate 86 routes “open”, “close” 84 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 19 as “limited”.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative designates routes while closing the least number and miles of routes, providing a greater amount of access to OHV use when compared to Alternatives B and C. By allowing more OHV access and a larger route network, OHV opportunities would increase. However, this alternative would continue the trend of the No Action Alternative and not adequately address the resource impacts of increasing route proliferation from illegal cross-country travel and/or hill climbing. This alternative is not preferred because it could increase niches favorable to invasive and noxious weeds and not significantly reduce disturbance to vegetation, habitat and ground surfaces increasing erosion from soil loss. This alternative would designate 117 routes “open”, “close” 67 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and five (5) as “limited”.

n. Vegetation

Common to All Alternatives except the No Action

Reducing the availability of “open” roads does not equate to a reduction in the number of OHV operators. By implementing a route network system, OHV operators will become more concentrated in greater numbers on the “open” routes. These routes will more likely increase in use, width and size overtime. These actions steadily disturb additional ground, removing more plants and significantly impeding any potential for recruitment. These areas can overtime essentially become void of any vegetation. Refer to Weeds (Invasive and Non-Native) and Wetlands/Riparian section for numbers of routes and designation.

Alternative A - No Action

Under the no action alternative, route management would occur on an as needed basis. There would be a greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current TN and contribute to the proliferation of additional routes. Routes would also increase in use, width and size. This alternative would continue to disturb additional ground, remove more plants and significantly impede the potential for natural recruitment.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative closes the greatest number and miles of road in the planning area. Under this alternative, vegetation would be the least impacted. Fragmentation of habitat would be reduced, habitat quality/quantity would be improved and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The intent of this alternative is to improve the TN balance for OHV access and reduce the disturbance to vegetation. Under this alternative, impacts and the loss of vegetation would be reduced. Fragmentation of habitat, habitat quality/quantity would be improved and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative closes the least number and miles of routes while providing a greater amount of access to OHV use as compared to Alternatives B and C. This alternative does close a portion of the TN. However, disturbance to vegetation would remain similar to that of the No Action Alternative. A limited benefit to vegetation overall would be expected.

o. Visual Resource Management

Common to All Alternatives Except the No Action

Visual resources would be impacted through reclamation efforts and rehabilitation of closed routes, returning the area to a more natural appearance. Implementing route designations to create a travel network of routes would control illegal cross-country travel and route proliferation resulting in adverse visual effects. Visual quality could be affected by the increased number of signs, route markers and man-made barriers. However, this impact would be mitigated using the appropriate desert environment colors for signs, decals and markers. All of the routes receiving designations occur in VRM Class III & IV areas. All alternatives are similar enough that the proposed action of designating routes would deem a detailed analysis by area unnecessary.

All of the route closures, overtime and lack of OHV use would naturally reclaim, increasing surface stability, additional and increased vegetation would improve the natural appearance and visual quality. A portion of the route closures would be rehabilitated and reclaimed.

Rehabilitation efforts such as ripping route surfaces with a harrow or other equipment would create a more blended terrain and improved visual quality.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, the existing 269 routes would remain “open” to both motorized and non-motorized use. However, its presumed OHV use, both vehicles and users would continue to increase, or at a minimum remain at, or near present levels. This situation has failed to manage or control route proliferation produced by the increasing levels of OHV use and illegal cross-country travel, in turn causing the degradation in visual qualities.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate 54 routes “open”, “close” 148 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 67 as “limited”.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 136 routes “open”, “close” 108 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 25 as “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate 179 routes “open”, “close” 84 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and six (6) as “limited”.

p. Water Quality, Drinking or Ground

Common to All Alternatives except the No Action

All the alternatives would close some routes. However, it is assumed that the number of riders would not change and riders would use the remaining routes left “open”. It is anticipated that no change to ground water quality will occur under any of the alternatives.

BLM has not determined what impacts, if any, the use of the existing routes has to the Water Quality of the Colorado River (River). It is anticipated that the closure of routes adjacent to the River would move riders to routes left “open” near the River and that this increase in use might impact water quality of the River at certain sites. However, it’s anticipated that the overall water quality of the River will not change under any of the alternatives.

q. Weeds (Invasive and Non-Native)

Common to All Alternatives except the No Action

Reducing the availability of “open” routes does not equal a reduction in the amount of OHV use. By implementing a route network, OHV use will become more concentrated on “open” routes. These routes will likely increase in use, width and size. These actions may disturb additional ground, removing more plants and impede any potential for recruitment. These areas can overtime become void of any vegetation and create areas highly susceptible to invasive and noxious weeds.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, route management would occur in a custodial manner or on an as needed basis. There would be a greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current route network and the proliferation of routes would continue. This alternative would continue disturbing additional ground, removing more plants and any potential for natural recruitment. This alternative creates niches favorable to invasive and noxious weeds. This alternative would allow the existing 93 routes to remain as “open” access with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative closes the greatest number and miles of routes overall. Under this alternative, vegetation would be least impacted. Fragmentation of habitat would be reduced, habitat quality/quantity would improve, and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit. Although the risk of invasive and noxious weeds becoming established is still present, the likelihood is decreased. This alternative would designate 23 routes “open”, “close” 51 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 19 as “limited”.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The intent of this alternative is to improve the TN to balance OHV access and reduce the disturbance to vegetation. Under this alternative, impacts and the loss of vegetation would be reduced. Fragmentation of habitat would be reduced, habitat quality/quantity would be improved and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit. Although the risk of invasive and noxious weeds becoming established is still present, the likelihood is decreased. This alternative would designate 36 routes “open”, “close” 50 routes to all uses by restoring to the visual horizon, and seven (7) as “limited”.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative closes the least number and miles of routes while providing a greater amount of access to OHV use as compared to Alternatives B and C. This alternative does close a portion of the current route network and disturbance to vegetation would remain similar to that of the No Action Alternative. This alternative would continue to disturb additional ground, removing more plants and impede potential for natural recruitment. This alternative overtime, would create niches favorable to invasive and noxious weeds.

r. Wetlands/Riparian Zones

Common to All Alternatives except the No Action

Reducing the availability of “open” routes does not equate to a reduction in the amount of OHV use. By implementing a route network, OHV use will become more concentrated in greater numbers on “open” routes. These routes will more than likely increase in use, width and size

overtime. Actions steadily disturb additional ground, removing more plants and impeding potential for recruitment.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, route management would occur in a custodial manner or on an as needed basis. There would be a greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current route network and create additional routes overtime. Current routes would increase in use, width and size. This alternative would continue to disturb additional ground, remove more plants and impede potential for recruitment. This alternative creates “open” areas and contributes to the degrading of wetland/riparian function overtime.

Table 17		
Number of Routes Alternative A		
	Multi Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) Habitat	Riparian Vegetation
Open	14	82
Closed	0	0
Limited	0	0

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative closes the greatest number and miles of routes. Under this alternative, riparian areas would be least impacted. Fragmentation of habitat would be less, habitat quality/quantity would be improved and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit. This alternative maintains healthy functioning blocks of wet/riparian habitat.

Table 18		
Number of Routes Alternative B		
	MSCP Habitat	Riparian Vegetation
Open	8	25
Closed	6	36
Limited	0	21

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The intent of this alternative is to improve the TN to balance OHV access and reduce disturbance to vegetation overall. Under this alternative the impacts and the loss of riparian habitat would be less. Fragmentation of habitat would be less, habitat quality/quantity would be improved and the abundance and distribution of species would benefit. This alternative sustains healthy functioning blocks of wetland/riparian habitat.

Table 19		
Number of Routes Alternative C		
	MSCP Habitat	Riparian Vegetation
Open	9	42
Closed	5	35
Limited	0	5

Alternative D - Access

This alternative closes the least number and miles of routes thus allowing for more OHV access as compared to Alternatives B and C. Although this alternative does close a portion of the TN, disturbance to riparian areas would remain similar to that of the No Action Alternative. Less benefits to health and function of wetland/riparian areas overall would be experienced.

Table 20		
Number of Routes Alternative D		
	MSCP Habitat	Riparian Vegetation
Open	10	52
Closed	4	27
Limited	0	3

s. Wilderness

Common to All Alternatives

Reducing the availability of “open” routes does not equal a reduction in the amount of OHV use. By implementing a route network, OHV use will become more concentrated on “open” routes. These routes will more than likely increase in use, width, and size overtime. Reducing the availability of routes will reduce the potential for unauthorized motorized vehicle intrusion locations into wilderness.

Alternative A – No Action

Under this alternative, route management would occur in a custodial manner or on an as needed basis. There would be greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current route network and the proliferation of routes would continue. This alternative would continue to disturb additional ground. This alternative would allow the existing 10 routes to remain as “open” access leading to wilderness with the potential for continued motorized vehicle intrusions from these routes.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative closes the greatest number and miles of road in the planning area leading to wilderness. Under this alternative, wilderness would be the least impacted by motorized vehicle intrusions. This alternative would designate four (4) routes “open”, “close” three (3) routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and three (3) routes as “limited”.

Alternative C – Proposed

The intent of this alternative is to improve the road network to allow OHV access and reduce the degree of disturbance to wilderness. This alternative would designate six (6) routes “open”, “close” three (3) routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and one (1) route as “limited”.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate six (6) routes as “open”, “close” three (3) routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and one (1) route as “limited”. This alternative allows for less restrictive OHV controls while increasing the potential for motorized vehicle intrusions to wilderness.

t. Wild Horse and Burros

Alternative A – No Action

This alternative would allow the existing 114 routes to remain as “open” access within both the herd area and the herd management area.

Alternative B – Protection

This alternative would designate 29 routes “open”, “close” 59 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 26 as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

Alternative C – Proposed

This alternative would designate 66 routes “open”, “close” 36 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 12 as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

Alternative D – Access

This alternative would designate 80 routes “open”, “close” 29 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and four (4) as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

u. Wildlife Resources (including Migratory Birds)

Common to All Alternatives

Reducing the availability of “open” routes does not equate to reducing the number of OHV use. By implementing a route network, OHV use will become concentrated “open” routes. These routes will more likely increase in use, width and size overtime. Creating localized impacts to habitat quality/quantity as routes become larger, wider and more braided.

Alternative A - No Action

Under this alternative, route management would occur in a custodial manner or on an as needed basis. There would be a greater distribution of OHV use over a larger area that would sustain the current route network and create additional routes overtime. Current routes would increase in use, width and size overtime. Disturbance to species would occur more frequently and the fragmenting of habitat would be significant. Habitat quality/quantity providing cover, forage and space would decrease over time.

Alternative B - Protection

This alternative closes the greatest number and miles of routes. Cover, forage and space would become greater in availability and habitat fragmentation would be reduced. Habitat quality/quantity would improve and the abundance and distribution of species would increase. This alternative would designate 25 routes “open”, “close” 55 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 30 as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The intent of this alternative is to improve the TN to balance OHV access and reduce the disturbance to wildlife overall. Cover, forage and space should become greater in availability and habitat fragmentation reduced. Habitat quality/quantity and increased abundance and distribution of species would occur. This alternative would designate 49 routes “open”, and “close” 48 to all uses by restoring the visual horizon and 13 as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

Alternative D - Access

This alternative closes the least number and miles of roads while providing a greater amount of access to OHV use than Alternatives B and C. Although this alternative does close some routes, disturbance to wildlife would remain similar to the No action Alternative. Limited benefits to wildlife overall would be experienced. This alternative would designate 67 routes “open”, “close” 38 routes to all uses by restoring the visual horizon, and five (5) as “limited” within both the herd area and herd management area.

2. Mitigating Measures for the Proposed Action

A monitoring plan will be developed and implemented to analyze OHV impacts. The data will be for baseline information for future land-use decisions and management actions to be consistent with plan goals and objectives. Monitoring will be performed by BLM staff and volunteers.

1. Monitoring will include public contact, traffic count, resource inspections, and field patrols.
2. Photo monitoring of specific locations will aid in the evaluation of impacts. Photographic trend plots, designed to document changes in plant cover and erosion, will be employed to evaluate the effectiveness of the management methods.
3. Visitor counts and surveys used as part of the ongoing monitoring.
4. Route surveys used to quantify level of OHV activity.
5. Route assessments will track compliance and effectiveness of routes closed. And will also be used as a method documenting route proliferation.
6. If route monitoring determines an authorized route’s use contributes to illegal new route creation, said route and the unauthorized routes are to be closed. Priority locations are the Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough ACECs, and the Colorado River Nature Center SRMA.
7. Upland health assessments

3. Cumulative Impacts

Management designation of a transportation network of routes “open”, “closed”, and “limited” is expected to address public and administrative access needs, protect resources, promote public safety, and minimize conflicts among the various uses of public lands. Implementing the Bullhead TMP would end the slow process of resource degradation, which if not attended to, will have long-term impacts in this desert ecosystem. The overall effect of implementing the Bullhead TMP would be higher quality wildlife habitat, higher quality visual resources, and higher quality OHV opportunities. Motorized OHV use and other forms of outdoor recreation are expected to continue increasing with the population, and may contribute to user conflicts in some recreation areas. As the OHV designations in the LHFO RMP 2007 are implemented, there would be an increase in limitations on OHVs and increased enforcement of the designations. Cumulatively, this would increase management presence throughout the Bullhead TMA in the form of signs, markers, law enforcement, staff and volunteer monitoring.

Cumulative effects are not anticipated for Environmental Justice, Farm Lands (Prime or Unique), Fuels/Fire Management, Human Health and Public Safety, Lands and Realty, , Minerals, Rangeland, Socio-economics, Wastes (Hazardous or Solid), Water Quality (Drinking), Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness or Wild Horses/Burros.

Alternative A - No Action

Alternative A would be a continuation of existing conditions. Route designation would not occur and a transportation network of routes, closures and rehabilitation activities would not be established. This would leave the Bullhead area susceptible to route proliferation and the creation of illegal routes (i.e. cross-country travel, hill climbing) and the associated ground disturbances. This will in turn continue to increase route densities, which in turn could affect upland health standards by impacting soils, air quality, ground water quality, floodplains, vegetation, visual resources, wildlife, threatened, endangered and special status species, riparian areas, flood plains, fish and wildlife habitat, and cultural resources through continued resource damage. Potential for noxious weed spread increases as vehicle use increases and route proliferation continues. Issues related to resource protection, public safety, and conflicts between various uses of public lands would not be addressed.

Alternative A would leave the cultural and natural resources within the Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough Areas of Environmental Concern susceptible to threats and potential conflicts from natural and human-caused deterioration.

Federal agencies are responsible for informing tribes of proposed actions that could restrict future access to or ceremonial use of, or adversely affect the physical integrity of, sacred sites. The Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough ACECs contain significant cultural resources as well as places of traditional Native American importance; thus, Alternative A would leave the cultural resources and Traditional Cultural Places within the ACEC susceptible to threats and potential conflicts from natural and human-caused deterioration.

Alternative B - Protection

Alternative B is intended to provide the greatest protection of resources by reducing the number of roads available to OHV users. It is anticipated that by significantly reducing the number roads through closures and rehabilitation, upland health standards will be maintained and impact to vegetation, visual resources, wildlife, and cultural resources would be reduced. This will more than likely occur in areas where roads are "closed" and rehabilitated. However, it cannot be assumed that the numbers of OHV users will be reduced. It is reasonable to assume that OHV users will be concentrated on fewer remaining "open" roads and staging areas. Impacts to resources as discussed in Alternative A will occur but more localized route proliferation could occur at a greater rate. This alternative also increases the potential for effects on threatened, endangered, special status species and other wildlife species habitat on adjacent state, private lands, and public lands managed by other agencies by redirecting OHV users.

Unauthorized (illegal) routes and activities (i.e. cross-country travel, hill climbing) have the potential to occur. Any new routes have the potential to degrade upland health standards by increasing the potential impacts to riparian areas and fish and wildlife habitat. There would still be a potential for noxious weed spread as vehicle use is concentrated on fewer roads and route proliferation continues. These illegal routes and activities would create new impacts to soils, floodplains, air, and possibly water quality.

Alternative B would provide the greatest protection to cultural and natural resources by reducing the number of roads available to OHV use within the Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough ACECs. Traditional Cultural Places and other areas of Native American Religious Concerns would also be afforded the greatest protection.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

Alternative C is intended to provide a substantial amount of resource protection while still providing an optimal TN for OHV users. The impacts to resources have the potential to be similar to those discussed in Alternative B but not to the extent of Alternative D. It is anticipated that through a significant reduction in the number routes and miles through closures and rehabilitation, upland health standards will be maintained and impact to vegetation, visual resources, wildlife, and cultural resources would be reduced. This will occur in any area where routes are “closed” and/or rehabilitated. However, it cannot be assumed that the numbers of OHV use will be reduced. It is reasonable to assume that OHV users will therefore be concentrated on the remaining routes.

Impacts to resources as discussed in Alternative A will occur but will be more localized due to less route proliferation and could occur at a greater anticipated rate. Illegal routes and activities (i.e. cross country travel, hill climbing) may still occur, although they will be more localized, causing a downward trend in upland health standards and increasing the potential of erosion and degradation of riparian areas and wildlife habitat. This alternative also increases the potential for effects on threatened, endangered, special status species and other wildlife species habitat on adjacent state, private lands, and public lands managed by other agencies by redirecting OHV users.

Illegal routes and activities would create new impacts to soils, floodplains, air quality, and possibly water quality. However, the closure of routes would lessen the impacts from the creation of new illegal routes. There would be a potential for noxious weed spread as OHV use is concentrated on fewer roads and if route proliferation continues.

The Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough ACECs will be managed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to the historic Beale’s Wagon Road and Sonoran Desert tortoise habitat that may be caused by cumulative impacts from the area’s use. In regard to Native American Religious Concerns, motorized use will not be permitted on cultural resource sites as public access will be restricted to designated “open” roads and trails. The BLM will review requests for vehicular access by tribal members to sacred areas not normally “open” to vehicles and consider authorizing such use on a case-by-case basis if Indian tribes identify such areas. BLM will consult with American Indian tribes in accordance with policy. Tribal concerns will be given due consideration. Consultation will include the consideration of any cumulative impacts.

Alternative D - Access

Alternative D allows the route network with the greatest amount of access that likely would provide least amount of resource protection. This alternative’s impacts would approach those felt to be similar to Alternative A. Under Alternative D, a smaller number of roads will be limited, closed or rehabilitated. Unauthorized illegal routes, the result of route proliferation (i.e. cross-country travel, hill climbing) creating more routes would continue to increase and the associated resource impacts would continue to grow. This situation would increase the impacts to air quality, flood plains, soils, vegetation, visual resources, wildlife, threatened, endangered and special status species, cultural resources and possibly to ground water quality. Upland health standards will likely degrade overtime. Potential for noxious and invasive weed spread increases with the greater number of routes and miles available to access.

Alternative D allows the route network within the Bullhead Bajada and Beale Slough ACECs with the greatest amount of access; however, this alternative would provide less protection for the cultural and natural resources of the area. This is also true regarding Native American religious concerns over access to Traditional Cultural Places.

E. TRIBES, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

Tribes

The BLM included all Tribes within the area during the public involvement process.

The Public, Individuals and Organizations

BLM began the TMP process with public meetings in the fall of 2006. In November, two public scoping meetings were held in Bullhead City to help gather and collect data, comments, issues and concerns. Over 100 people participated in these meetings and expressed strong opinions for the importance of protecting public access to and across public land. In September 2006 and again in September 2007 meetings were held with representatives and officers of OHV clubs including the Havasu, Bullhead, Hualapai and Parker 4-Wheelers to better inform organized user groups of the planning process and the purpose of the TMP.

In March 2008, the three action alternative maps were posted to BLM's Arizona State website at http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/travel_mgmt/bullhead.html. The alternatives are described as No Action, Protection, Proposed and Access. The public was invited to comment for 30 days on the alternatives (Evaluation Phase). Sixteen comments were received and considered for the compilation of this environmental assessment.

Agencies - Interdisciplinary Team

Bureau of Land Management (BLM Lake Havasu FO)

Jill Miller-Allert, Wilderness Coordinator (retired)
Myron McCoy, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Cindy Barnes, GIS Specialist
Sarah C. Murray, Archaeologist
Angela Gatto, Wildlife Biologist
Cory Bodman, Realty Specialist
Amanda Dodson, Geologist
Gina Trafton, Planning & Environmental Coordinator
Jim Priest, Wildlife Biologist
Dr. George Shannon, Archaeologist
Doug Adams, Fisheries Biologist

Bureau of Land Management Kingman Field Office

Len Marceau, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Bruce Asbjorn, Outdoor Recreation Planner

Bureau of Land Management Needles Field Office

David Roan, Outdoor Recreation Planner

Arizona Game & Fish Department

Bill Knowles, Habitat Specialist, Region IV
Steve Goodman, Wildlife Biologist, Region III
Brian Cary, Wildlife Biologist, Region III

Arizona Dept of Transportation

Julie Alpert, District Environmental Coordinator

IDP Contractor, Advanced Resource Solutions (ARS)

Les Weeks, President
Les Allert, GIS/IT Support
Harold Johnson, IT Support

Technical Review:					
Supplemental Authorities /Other Resources or Concerns	May Be Affected		If May affect / Mitigations Assigned	Signature Name/Title	Date
	Yes	No			
Air Quality				<i>Cory Bodman</i>	
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern				<i>George Shannon / Jim Priest</i>	
Cultural Resources/ Paleontological Resources				<i>George Shannon</i>	
Environmental Justice				<i>Project Lead</i>	
Farm Lands (Prime or Unique)		X	By definition, there are no "prime farmlands" on BLM-administered lands within LHFO.	<i>Project Lead</i>	
Floodplain				<i>Jim Priest/Cory Bodman</i>	
Fuels / Fire Management				<i>Tim Duck</i>	
Human Health and Public Safety				<i>Bill Parry</i>	
Lands/Realty				<i>Cory Bodman</i>	
Migratory Birds				<i>Jim Priest</i>	
Minerals				<i>Amanda Dodson</i>	
Native American Religious Concerns				<i>George Shannon</i>	
Law Enforcement				<i>Mike Dodson</i>	
Operations/Engineering Review				<i>Mike Henderson</i>	
Recreation				<i>Myron McCoy</i>	
Rangeland				<i>Roger Oyler/Project Lead</i>	
Socio-economics				<i>Project Lead</i>	
Soils				<i>Cory Bodman</i>	
Threatened or Endangered Species				<i>Jim Priest / Doug Adams</i>	
Travel Management				<i>Myron McCoy</i>	

Technical Review:

Supplemental Authorities /Other Resources or Concerns	May Be Affected		If May affect / Mitigations Assigned	Signature Name/Title	Date
	Yes	No			
Vegetation				<i>Jim Priest / Doug Adams</i>	
Visual Resources Management				<i>Myron McCoy</i>	
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid				<i>Cathy Wolff-White</i>	
Water Quality, Drinking or Ground				<i>Cory Bodman</i>	
Weeds (Invasive & Non Native)				<i>Jim Priest / Doug Adams</i>	
Wetlands/Riparian Zones				<i>Jim Priest / Doug Adams</i>	
Wild and Scenic Rivers				<i>Mike Henderson</i>	
Wild Horses/ Burros				<i>Roger Oyler/Project Lead</i>	
Wilderness & WSA				<i>Project Lead</i>	
Wildlife				<i>Jim Priest / Doug Adams</i>	

Review:

Prepared by: _____ Date _____
 Myron McCoy
 Project Lead

Reviewed by: _____ Date _____
 Gina B. Trafton
 NEPA Coordinator

Reviewed by: _____ Date _____
 Mike Henderson
 Assistant Field Manager
 Recreation and Visitor Services

Compliance and assignment of responsibility (Type Program or Employee):

Biologist and Outdoor Recreation Planner

Monitoring and assignment of responsibility: (Type Program or Employee):

Biologist and Outdoor Recreation Planner

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION RECORD
Bullhead Travel Management Plan Environmental Assessment
EA-AZ330-2007-050**

Project Description: The proposed action analyzes the impacts associated with the BLM’s proposal to designate 142 miles of routes within the Bullhead TMP as “open”, “closed” or “limited”. Lake Havasu Field Office proposes to designate routes on approximately 47,400 acres of BLM-administered public lands north of I-40, east of the Colorado River and the portion of the Bullhead TMP in California. The number of OHV route miles “closed” (28) and “limited” (17) would represent 31.6% of the near 142 miles of existing routes. Conversely, just over 68% (96.5) miles of travel routes would be designated “open” and available for OHV use when compared to the No Action Alternative. The “open”, “limited” to non-motorized use would be .04% (.5 mi).

This alternative strives to protect the many natural and cultural resources on public land, while recognizing motorized and non-motorized travel as a valid use of public land. Travel and access are the key components of the Bullhead TMP EA. In most cases, routes connecting locations and destinations would remain “open” unless an alternate route is determined more suitable. When evaluating a route for designation routes that damage or have potential for resource damage or user conflicts would be “closed” or “limited” to minimize impacts. The integrity of the Travel Network providing access to destinations for OHV travel is valued over a specific route or route segment. This factor is instrumental in selecting the most effective Travel Network and is the objective of the proposed action.

The proposed action would be implemented through the Bullhead TMP. The TMP identifies on the ground management actions and projects including, but not limited to the following:

Signs and Markers, Restoration and Rehabilitation, Prioritization of Work Areas/Sites, Implementation Time Frames, Visitor Information, Education, Interpretation, Traffic Controls/Barriers, Monitoring/Adaptive Management, Law Enforcement

I have reviewed this environmental assessment including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts. I have determined that the proposed action with the mitigation measures described below will not have any significant impacts on the human environment and that an EIS is not required. I have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan. It is my decision to implement the project with the stipulations (if applicable) identified below.

The action will be subject to the stipulations attached to this environmental assessment.

Acting Field Manager
Lake Havasu Field Office

Date