

but does not provide any form of statutory protection or withdrawal.

During the scoping process for the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan, a large area including and surrounding the Red Rock Canyon NCA was nominated for ACEC status. The pursuit of considering the ACEC designation has been dropped, because the protective measures provided through the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area Establishment Act already exceed any protective measures which could be implemented through an ACEC plan.

Oliver Ranch

A specific site plan will be developed for this area. One proposal that will be pursued is the development of an environmental education center. Other issues will involve the preservation or removal of the existing structures and additional potential uses of the site:

Red Spring Site Plan

This sensitive area of natural and cultural resources includes threatened and endangered plant and animal species, natural springs, and significant archeological resources. A new site plan will be developed and will focus on restoring Red Spring to a more natural condition and reducing the vehicle access.

Scenic Drive Mass-Transit System

Preliminary analysis for implementation of a shuttle system for the Scenic Drive has proven to be very complex, as there are a multitude of factors that must be considered. The concept has received strong support through public comment and with the rapidly expanding Las Vegas community, actions will need to be taken to handle the increasing visitor use.

The BLM will have an in-depth mass-transit feasibility analysis conducted by a qualified contractor to determine the most suitable option to pursue.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The following management guidance applies to, and is a part of, the Proposed Management Prescription. All Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are based on existing laws, regulations and policy.

Allowable Uses

The public lands will be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Any authorized use, occupancy, or development of the public lands that conforms with the GMP will be considered. Those uses, including rights-of-way, leases, and permits, will be subject to environmental review and may require limitations or stipulations to protect and preserve natural resources. Limitations may also be imposed on either the type or intensity of use, or both, because of environmental values, hazards, or special management considerations. Some limitations have already been identified for specific areas, and are included in the management objectives in this plan.

Coordination With Other Agencies, State and Local Governments, and Indian Tribes

BLM will ensure that the detailed management plans and individual projects resulting from the GMP are consistent with officially adopted and approved plans, policies, and programs of other agencies, state and local governments, and Indian Tribes. Cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding will be developed as needed to promote close cooperation between BLM and other federal agencies, state and local governments, organizations and Indian Tribes.

Air Quality

Under the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977), BLM administered lands were given a Class II air quality classification, which allows moderate deterioration associated with moderate, well controlled industrial and population growth. BLM will manage all public lands as Class II unless they are reclassified by the state as a result of the procedures prescribed in the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977). Administrative actions on the public lands will comply with the air quality classification for that specific area and appropriate State Implementation Plans.

When applicable (activities with the potential to affect air quality), the BLM would determine and document "conformity " with local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations, and standards (per 40 CFR 93.100 et seq). Conformity determinations would be included in site-specific activity plans and/or NEPA documentation.

Hazardous Materials

Prevent hazardous materials contamination of public lands.

Minimize releases of hazardous materials through compliance with current regulations. When hazardous materials are released into the environment, assess their impacts on each resource and determine the appropriate response, removal, and remedial actions to take.

Reduce risks associated with hazardous materials on public lands.

Evaluate all actions (including land use authorizations and disposals, mining and milling activities, and unauthorized land uses) for hazardous materials, waste minimization and pollution prevention.

Complete site-specific inventories when lands are being disposed or acquired. It is departmental policy to minimize potential liability of the Department and its bureaus by acquiring property that is not contaminated, unless directed by Congress, court mandate, or as determined by the Secretary.

Inspect mining and milling sites to determine appropriate management for hazardous materials.

Barrier-Free Access

Access for and use by the physically challenged will be considered in all project planning.

Land Acquisition

The BLM will consider acquiring undeveloped inholdings within the NCA through exchange, donation, purchase or transfer in order to:

1. Facilitate access to public lands and resources
2. Maintain or enhance important public values and uses
3. Maintain or enhance local social and economic values
4. Improve Management efficiency through the blocking up of public lands
5. Facilitate implementation of other aspects of the GMP.

Developed inholdings will only be considered for acquisition if they would contribute to better management of the NCA.

Utility/Rights-of-Way (ROW) Exclusion and Avoidance

Utility and transportation development are not normally compatible with the objectives of RRCNCA. Therefore, RRCNCA would be designated as a Right-of-Way exclusion area. In rare cases, due to public land boundaries and private inholdings, rights-of-way may be permitted based on consideration of the following criteria:

1. Type of and need for the proposed facility (local service to inholdings would receive priority consideration)
2. Conflicts with other existing or potential resource values and uses, particularly visual resource impacts
3. Availability of alternatives and/or mitigation measures.

Unauthorized Use

It is BLM policy to identify, abate and prevent unauthorized use of public land. Existing unauthorized uses of public land will be resolved either through termination, temporary authorization by short-term permit, issuance of rights-of-way, leasing through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, or other appropriate manner.

Vegetative Management

There will be no sales of desert vegetation.

No firewood permits will be issued.

Feed provided for horses used in all commercial guiding operations must be weed free.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project-level planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the sensitivity and importance of wildlife habitat in the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to assure compatibility of projects with management objectives for wildlife habitat. Habitat improvement projects will be implemented where necessary to stabilize or improve unsatisfactory or declining wildlife habitat condition. Such projects will be identified through habitat management plans or project plans.

Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Habitat

Whenever possible, management activities in habitat for threatened,

endangered or sensitive species will be designed to benefit those species through habitat improvement.

The Nevada Division of Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted prior to implementing projects that may affect habitat for threatened and endangered species. If a "may affect" determination is made by a qualified BLM wildlife biologist, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be initiated in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

Soil and Water Resources

Soil and water resources will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project level planning. Such an evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed projects and the sensitivity of the resources. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to prevent adverse impacts to soil and water resources.

Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with state and federal standards. State agencies will be consulted on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality. Management actions on public land within municipal watersheds will be designed to protect water quality and quantity.

The following apply to water development:

1. Free water for use by wildlife shall be maintained at or within 1/4 mile of all spring developments.
2. Adequate water shall remain at spring developments to maintain any associated riparian zone.
3. Height of troughs or other water containers shall not exceed 20 inches above ground level.
4. Bird ladders or other appropriate wildlife escape devices will be installed and maintained in all water troughs.

All BLM initiated or authorized actions potentially affecting wetland-riparian areas will comply with the spirit and intent of Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands Act) and BLM Manual Section 6740.06. These directives stress the avoidance of (1) "...long and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetland-riparian areas" and (2) the preservation and enhancement of "the natural and beneficial values of wetland-riparian areas which may include constraining or excluding those uses that cause significant, long-term ecological damage."

Recreation

A broad range of outdoor recreational opportunities will continue to be provided for all segments of the public. Trails and other means of public access will continue to be maintained and developed where necessary to enhance recreation opportunities and allow public use. Developed recreation facilities receiving the heaviest use will receive first priority for operation and maintenance funds. Sites that cannot be maintained to acceptable health and safety standards will be closed until deficiencies are corrected.

Recreation resources will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project-level planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the sensitivity of recreation resources in the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to assure compatibility of projects with recreation management objectives.

Visual Resources

Visual Resource Management (VRM) is discussed in Chapter 3 and Class assignments are represented on the accompanying map. Visual resources will continue to be managed as discussed under "Visual Resources" in Chapter 3, although assignments may be modified if future VRM analysis suggest more accurate ratings.

Visual resources will be evaluated as a part of activity and project planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the visual sensitivity of the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to maintain visual resources.

Wilderness Resources

The La Madre Mountains and Pine Creek Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will continue to be managed in compliance with the *Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review*, H-8550-1(IMP) until reviewed and acted upon by Congress. If all or part of these areas are designated as wilderness by Congress, they will be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy. A site-specific wilderness management plan will be developed to guide future management.

If all or part of the La Madre Mountains and Pine Creek WSAs are not designated as wilderness, those portions will be managed under the multiple use guidelines set forth in this GMP.

Cultural Resources

BLM is required to identify, evaluate and protect cultural resources on public land under its jurisdiction and to ensure that Bureau authorized actions do not inadvertently harm or destroy non-federal

cultural resources. These requirements are mandated by the Antiquities Act of 1906, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and amendments, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Executive Order 11593 (1971), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, together with 36 CFR 800.

Prior to starting any Bureau initiated or authorized action that involves surface disturbing activities, the BLM will conduct, or cause to be conducted, a Class III (intensive) inventory as specified in BLM Manual Section 8111.4. This intensive inventory supplements previous surveys and will be done to locate, identify, and evaluate cultural resource properties in the affected areas. If properties that may be eligible for the National Register are discovered, the BLM will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and forward the documentation to the Keeper of the National Register to obtain a determination of eligibility in accordance with 36 CFR Part 63.

Since any Bureau authorized or initiated action recognizes and accommodates cultural resources by virtue of standard operating procedures, the only activity that may damage these resources is unplanned public use. Such activities include unauthorized recreational vehicle use, artifact collection, and illegal excavation for materials and antiquities. The location of these activities is impossible to predict and may occur in spite of measures designed to eliminate or limit them.

Cultural resource values discovered in a proposed project or authorized action area will be protected by adhering to the following methods:

- Avoidance - Cultural resources would be protected by redesigning or relocating the project or excluding significant cultural resource areas from development, use or disposal.
- Salvaging - If a project cannot be redesigned or relocated, cultural resource values will be salvaged through controlled, scientific methods pursuant to the SHPO agreement.
- Project/Action Abandonment - If the site is determined to be of significant value or the above mentioned methods are not considered adequate, the project will be abandoned.

All cultural sites identified as special management areas will be closed to off-road vehicle use, vegetation manipulation, and surface occupancy.

All cultural sites known to be eligible for National Register

nomination or listed on the National Register will be protected from deterioration and be retained in federal ownership.

American Indian human remains will not be held or stored. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, remains and/or grave goods will be returned to the appropriate tribe upon their written request. (No items are known to be in the RRCNCA inventory.)

Inadvertent filed discovery of American Indian human remains and/or grave goods will not be disturbed until the appropriate tribe is notified. All activity around the discovery will be halted, in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, until the tribe has determined their recommendations.

American Indians may gather or tend traditional native plants or materials for personal use and/or use traditional religious sites without obtaining a special use permit. Non-native plants may not be introduced. American Indians will be asked to inform the Visitor Center staff if they are gathering, tending or using traditional religious sites in the area of the Scenic Drive so that there will not be a possibility of conflict with visitors who may not understand the activity occurring and think that, and report to the BLM that, unauthorized collection or use is occurring.

Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources will be managed to protect specimens and maintain or enhance sites or areas for their scientific and educational values.

The potential impacts to the paleontologic resources of the NCA are unknown, as an inventory has not yet been completed. Once an inventory is completed and site clearances become standard practice, the resource will be adequately protected.

Cadastral Survey

Cadastral surveys will be performed when needed in support of resource management programs. Survey requirements and priorities will be determined on a yearly basis as a part of the annual work planning process.

Site Specific Project Plans

The GMP provides general guidance for the NCA. More detailed management plans called "project plans" will be prepared to deal with site specific resource projects. Project plans include a detailed plan for completion of a particular project and an environmental assessment to evaluate any potential resource impacts.

Economic and Social Considerations

BLM will ensure that any management action undertaken in connection with this plan is cost-effective and takes into account local social and economic factors. Cost-effectiveness may be determined by any method deemed appropriate by the Bureau for the specific management action involved.

Environmental Review

Prior to implementation of proposed projects, a review will be done to determine if criteria is met for a categorical exclusion. Projects not meeting the criteria will require an Environmental Assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impacts. If the assessment suggests a major federal action that would significantly affect the human environment, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared under the direction of the BLM Nevada State Director.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation

The process of implementation of the GMP is gradual and takes place throughout the life of the GMP on a project by project basis, with priority based on need and available funding.

This plan is designed to maintain flexibility in order to maximize its useful life. This is done by incorporating a "Management Emphasis Area" (MEA) concept. All areas within the NCA are assigned a land classification value, which, in the future, determines what actions/changes are appropriate and in which areas of the NCA they may occur. Proposed actions that are not consistent with the standards for future condition will not be permitted. Proposed actions that are consistent with NCA resource management goals and the standards for the MEA zone in which they are proposed, will be evaluated. In this manner, future options may be considered and the Plan is not limited to our present awareness, information on RRCNCA resources or only one set of actions (MEAs are described in more detail in the Plan section of this document).

Implementation of all management actions, whether already included in the GMP or proposed at a future date, will require an environmental review. If the criteria is met, the action may qualify for a categorical exclusion. Projects not meeting the criteria will require an Environmental Assessment (EA) and "finding of no significant impact" (FONSI). If the analysis suggests a major federal action that would significantly affect the human environment, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared under the direction of the BLM Nevada State Director.

There are four actions in this plan that will require a separate in-depth planning effort, thus specific actions are not proposed in this plan, because it is unknown what future analysis will determine to be most appropriate. The four plans to be completed include a specific plan for technical rock climbing, a new design and emphasis for the Red Spring site in the Calico Basin area, a feasibility study and plan for mass-transit on the Scenic Drive, and a site plan for Oliver Ranch. All four plans are actions that should begin within the first year after the General Management Plan is finalized.

Monitoring

Several actions and programs proposed in this plan also include a monitoring program as part of the proposal. There are specific references to monitoring in regards to wildlife, ecosystem management, commercial uses, wild horses and burros, and other concerns. Monitoring is actually an integral part of all actions and programs in order to measure the effectiveness of actions implemented or record the impacts to the natural resources. Whenever monitoring shows impacts that are considered significant or surpass the limits of acceptable change (LAC), mitigation will be taken to reverse the situation. This may include a reduction in or elimination of the action or situation causing the impact.

Some program areas have monitoring systems developed or in place while others would need to have monitoring techniques developed and tested to determine how to best evaluate conditions and implementation results.