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To: [Bowman, Randal](#)
Cc: [John Ruhs](#); [Kathleen Benedetto](#); [Michael Nedd](#); [McAlear, Christopher](#); [Sally Butts](#); [Timothy Fisher](#); [Timothy Spisak](#); [Kristin Bail](#); [Matthew Allen](#); [Peter Mali](#); [Aaron Moody](#); [Karen Kelleher](#); [Rawhouser, Deborah](#); [Kenneth Mahoney](#); [Raymond M Suazo](#)
Subject: Sonoran Desert NM Initial Data Request Exec Summary, Data Summary, New Information Request Responses
Date: Thursday, June 08, 2017 8:40:08 AM
Attachments: [Sonoran Data Summary 6 5 2017.docx](#)
[Sonoran Executive Summary 6 5 2017.docx](#)
[Sonoran New Information Request 6 5 2017.docx](#)

Hi Randy,

We have completed our review of the initial responses provided in response to the April 26, 2017 Executive Order 13792 and initial data request for the Sonoran Desert National Monument. Please find attached an executive summary and data summary. These two summary documents along with the requested data and supporting sources of information have been uploaded to the respective Google Drive folder for the Sonoran Desert Mountain National Monument.

Per your request, I have also attached the responses to the new, additional information requested in a word document. ("Sonoran _New Information Request_6_5_2017")

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Call for Data Related to Review of National Monuments under EO 13792 (April 26, 2017)

Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM)

1. Documents Requested

a. Resource Management Plans/Land Use Plans

The 2012 Sonoran Desert National Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final EIS is on the BLM ePlanning web site at [FEIS PRMP](#).

b. Record of Decision

The RMP Record of Decision (ROD) is titled [01-SDNM ROD-ARMP FINAL.pdf](#) within this Drive folder.

c. Public Scoping Documents

Consultation and coordination for the RMP and ROD is titled [02-Chapter 5-Consultation and Coordination LSFO SDNM FEIS](#) within this Drive folder.

d. Presidential Proclamation

The Presidential Proclamation is titled [03-SDNM-Presidential Proclamation](#) within this Drive folder.

2. Information on activities permitted at the Monument, including annual levels of activity from the **date of designation to the present** (Proclamation 7397 of January 17, 2001)

a. Recreation - annual visits to site

The most common recreational activities on SDNM include hiking, hunting, camping and OHV travel on designated routes. Six trailheads provide access to four established hiking trails within designated wilderness areas. The Anza National Historic Trail passes through the SDNM, providing recreational experiences along this historical resource. The SDNM utilizes the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) to calculate visitation numbers for the monument. A temporary vehicle closure in a portion of SDNM was implemented due to resource damage in 2008 causing visitation numbers to drop in FY2009. Visitation numbers have continued to increase from that point however, as more people become aware of SDNM through a variety of sources. The SDNM is just outside of the Phoenix metropolitan area and within Maricopa County, having 4.2 million residents and the highest population growth in the country in 2016.

FY 2002: 17,911 visits

FY 2003: 21,738 visits

FY 2004: 18,157 visits

FY 2005: 30,058 visits

FY 2006: 36,852 visits
FY 2007: 31,328 visits
FY 2008: 34,349 visits
FY 2009: 14,304 visits
FY 2010: 17,287 visits
FY2011: 26,069 visits
FY2012: 26,835 visits
FY 2013: 26,560 visits
FY 2014: 29,894 visits
FY 2015: 40,310 visits
FY 2016: 51,278 visits

- b. Energy - annual production of coal, oil, gas and renewables (if any) on site;
amount of energy transmission infrastructure on site (if any)
There are no utility corridors inside the Monument boundary.
- c. Minerals - annual mineral production on site.
 - i. No locatable minerals have been produced within the Monument since designation. The Monument was withdrawn from mineral entry by its Proclamation, and it no longer contains any active legacy mining claims, so there can be no future production.
 - ii. No salable minerals have been produced within the Monument since designation, as the regulation at 43 CFR 3601.12(a) prohibits disposal of mineral materials from national monuments.
 - iii. Within the Monument, along Interstate 8, there are three authorized Title 23 material site rights-of-way (AZA-27836, AZA-28344, & AZA-30769), issued to the Federal Highway Administration, for the purpose of supplying construction materials to aid federal highway projects. The material sites are sand and gravel pits that are intermittently used to supply highway maintenance projects on Interstate 8.
 - iv. Since Monument designation, two of the three material sites (AZA-27836 & AZA-30769) have been active sporadically, each producing an annual average of less than 1,000 tons of sand & gravel, for a total of less than 2,000 tons per year within the Monument. The royalty value of that sand and gravel would have been roughly \$1.00/ton had the material been sold to a private party, but since it went to aid a federal highway project no royalties were collected by

BLM. The third site (AZA-28344) has not been active since Monument designation. Exact production figures are not available since the Federal Highway Administration is not required to report production to BLM, and so the figures above are estimates based on site inspections and the use of Google Earth.

- v. No leasable minerals have been produced within the Monument since designation.
 - vi. There are no mineral developments or process facilities adjacent to or impacted by the National Monument designation.
- d. Timber - annual timber production on site (in board-feet, CCF, or similar measure).
The Sonoran Desert vegetation is dominated by columnar cacti, saguaro, and legume trees like ironwood, mesquite, and palo verde. Currently none of these products are harvested as timber in the area.
- e. Grazing - annual grazing on site (AUMs permitted and sold)
- i. Grazing AUMs/ Active and billed (SDNM AUMs by Allotment Table.docx is located within this Drive folder).
 - ii. Prior to Monument designation there were 16,433 active AUMs. As permits expired in areas south of Interstate 8, they were not renewed. This reduced the active AUM's to 8,706 on SDNM.
 - iii. In the 2012 SDNM RMP/Final EIS, an adjustment in AUM levels was proposed in order to reflect areas closed due to not meeting rangeland health standards. This decision was litigated and the decision was stayed. This prevented permits from being renewed until the litigation is resolved. This litigation is currently unresolved. Today, the remaining active grazing permits on the Monument retain 776 active AUMs.
- f. Subsistence - participation rates for subsistence activities occurring on site (fishing, hunting, gathering); quantities harvested; other quantifiable information where available.
Subsistence activities to provide the bare essentials for living: food, water, and shelter. The Federal Subsistence Management Program provides opportunities for subsistence way of life in Alaska on federal public lands and waters. There are no formal subsistence programs outside of Alaska. SDNM provides for the collection of certain natural materials, by Native American Indians, under a free

BLM permit.

- g. Cultural - list of cultural uses/values for site; number of sites; other quantifiable information where available

The cultural resources information available for the SDNM derives from project-driven surveys in response to Section 106 undertakings (54 USC, Section 306108) conducted over several decades. At present, the BLM has inventoried approximately 6 percent of the SDNM and has records for 250 sites. This is a small sample compared to the overall size the SDNM. However, in areas where the BLM does have information, site densities of 5 to 15 archaeological sites per square mile are common. Sites range in type from evidence of occupation and upland farming to scatters of lithics and pottery possible indication of other activities, including trading. Based on existing data, and taking consideration of landforms and proximity to reliable water sources, it is probable similar site densities are present throughout the SDNM. The BLM estimates, when completely inventoried, the SDNM may contain more than 5,000 sites.

3. Information on activities occurring during the **5 years prior to designation**

- a. Recreation - annual visits to site.
 - i. Recreational activities in the SDNM prior to designation were much the same as they are today. Hiking, hunting, camping and OHV use accounted for most of the recreation activities in the area before 2001. Only one developed trailhead and hiking trail was present at that time. The SDNM utilizes the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) calculate visitation numbers for the monument, however RMIS only has visitation data back to 1999.

FY 1999: 14,640 visits

FY 2000: 16,334 visits

FY 2001: 21,003 visits

- b. Energy - annual production of coal, oil, gas and renewables (if any) on site; amount of energy transmission infrastructure on site (if any).
 - i. There was no energy production from coal, oil, gas, or renewables during the five years prior to designation.
- c. Minerals - annual mineral production on site
 - i. No locatable or salable minerals were produced within the Monument during the 5 years prior to designation.

- ii. Records indicate that only one of the three material site rights-of-way locations (AZA-27836) may have produced sand & gravel during the 5 years prior to designation, at an estimated annual average of less than 1,000 tons of sand & gravel.
 - iii. No leasable minerals were produced within the Monument during the 5 years prior to designation.
 - iv. There are no mineral developments or processing facilities adjacent to or impacted by the National Monument designation.
- d. Timber - annual timber production on site (in board-feet, CCF, or similar measure).
 - i. There was no timber production during the five years prior to designation. Typically used wood products do not exist within the Sonoran Desert ecosystem.
- e. Grazing - annual grazing on site (AUMs permitted and sold)
 - i. Grazing AUMs/ Active and billed (SDNM AUMs by Allotment Table.docx is located within this Drive folder).
 - ii. There were 16,433 total AUMs, all of which were active during those 5 years (SDNM AUMs by Allotment Table.docx is located within this Drive folder).
 - iii. The grazing management of the area during the 5 years prior to Monument designation abided by all applicable grazing laws and regulations (43 CFR 4100).

A Standards and Guidelines Allotment Evaluation conducted in that area during the 5 years prior to Monument designation indicated that all Standards for Rangeland Health were being met.

- f. Subsistence - participation rates for subsistence activities occurring on site (fishing, hunting, gathering); quantities harvested; other quantifiable information where available.

Subsistence activities provide the bare essentials for living: food, water, and shelter. The Federal Subsistence Management Program provides opportunities for subsistence way of life in Alaska on federal public lands and waters. There are no formal subsistence programs outside of Alaska. SDNM does provide for the

collection of certain natural materials, by Native American Indians, under BLM permit.

- g. Cultural - list of cultural uses/values for site; number of sites; other quantifiable information where available.
 - i. A large portion of the SDNM contains traditional cultural places of importance to the Four Southern O'odham Tribes of Arizona. Extensive stands of saguaro cactus and other traditional plant resources within the SDNM indicate significant potential for prehistoric and historic resource utilization. Rock outcroppings and lithic artifacts made of local-appearing materials suggest the probability of prehistoric quarries in the area.
 - ii. A Class 1 Cultural Resources Overview titled Class 1 Archaeology survey prior to designation in this Drive folder. 108 prehistoric and historic sites were reported during that project alone, suggesting a high probability for many other sites to be present in the SDNM.

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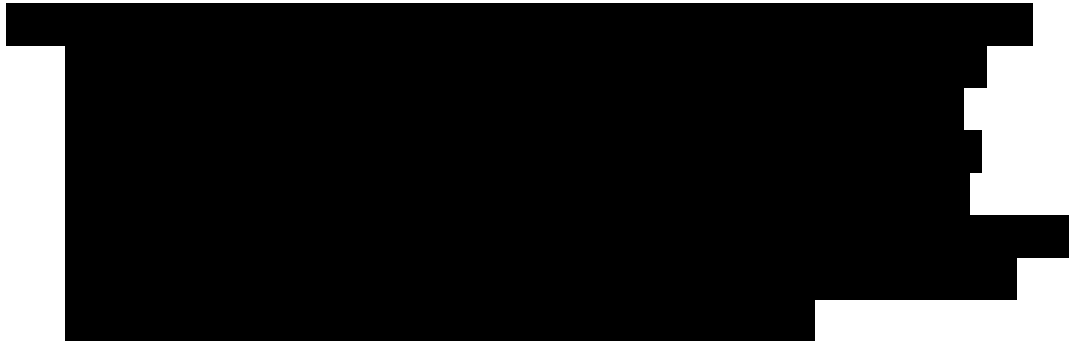
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5. Changes to boundaries - dates and changes in size
[There have been no changes to the monument boundaries.](#)
6. Public Outreach prior to Designation - outreach activities conducted and opportunities for public comment.
[Support for a proposed Sonoran Desert National Monument came largely from individuals and organizations interested in the area. Meetings occurred and written materials were produced. Some public hearings were held. See the following documents in this Drive folder: Biological Resources of the Sonoran Desert National Monument-Drylands Institute \(see pages 3 & 5\) and Outreach and correspondence prior to designation.pdf.](#)
7. Terms of Designation
[Refer to Proclamation for the terms of designation. The Presidential Proclamation is titled 03-SDNM-Presidential Proclamation within this Drive folder.](#)

Executive Summary of Review of National Monuments under EO 13792 (April 26, 2017)

Key Information about Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM)

SDNM (486,400 acres) was established by Presidential Proclamation on January 17, 2001. Prior to designation, the area was managed by the BLM and continues to be following designation.

The BLM manages for multiple uses within SDNM, including hunting, recreation, grazing, and valid existing rights such as rights of way, while protecting the vast array of historical and scientific resources identified in the Proclamation and providing opportunities for scientific study of those resources. The resources identified in the Proclamation include the plants and animals that make the Sonoran Desert the most biologically diverse of the North American deserts. The SDNM harbors rare plants, vulnerable wildlife and significant archaeological and historic sites, including rock art sites, lithic quarries, and scattered artifacts.

The SDNM includes three designated wilderness areas (North Maricopa Mountains, South Maricopa Mountains and Table Top - totaling 158,516 acres) and the Sand Tank Mountains, Highlighted in the Proclamation as an area of rich diversity, density and distribution of plants, the area has also been under a military withdrawal since 1941.

Overall, multiple use activities are allowed in SDNM when compatible with the protection of resources and objects identified in the Presidential Proclamation. Multiple use activities are subject to decisions made in current and future BLM resource management planning efforts, which include public participation. National Monuments and other conservation areas managed by the BLM continue to allow for multiple uses according to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Summary of Public Engagement Prior to Designation

Prior to monument designation, the Secretary of the Interior accepted an invitation to tour the potential new monument with local constituents. Several organizations endorsed the proposed SDNM included: Arizona Archaeological Council, Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, Defenders of Wildlife, Desert Botanical Gardens (Phoenix), Friends of Cabeza Prieta, Land and Water Fund of the Rockies, National Parks Conservation Association, The Nature Conservancy of Arizona, The Phoenix Zoo, Sierra Club-Southwest Regional Office, Sky Island Alliance, Sonoran Desert National Park Project, Southwest Forest Alliance, Tucson Audubon Society, Tucson Herpetology Society, and The Wilderness Society.

Summary of Public Scoping in Development of Resource Management Plan

BLM performed a variety of public outreach programs to increase involvement in the planning process. BLM took a two-pronged approach to public involvement. The first has been traditional

public involvement through scheduled and announced public meetings, such as the public meetings at the scoping and draft comment periods. The second approach was public interaction through BLM participation at community meetings, special interest group meetings, and coordination with elected representatives. BLM staff were invited to speak at meetings in the communities of Tonopah, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Ajo, and Mobile as well as at numerous environmental and recreation groups. These informal meetings provided the BLM an opportunity to explain the planning process and timeline, and to encourage citizen participation in the planning efforts.

BLM conducted 11 public scoping meetings during February and March of 2003. The open house scoping meetings were held in the Arizona communities of Maricopa, Gila Bend, Casa Grande, Globe-Miami, Ajo, Sells, Tucson, Buckeye, Mesa, Phoenix, and Yuma. Each of the 11 meetings was conducted in an open house format, allowing meeting participants to review maps and display boards of each planning area and to ask specific questions one-on-one with BLM staff about the RMP/EIS process. Comments received during the initial scoping period largely fell into the following three categories:

1. Public Activities – those activities that the public noted doing on public lands, such as hiking, hunting, sight-seeing, camping, wildlife observation, and driving and motorized touring;
2. Desired Management – the public’s ideas and input for how BLM should manage the public lands in the Lower Sonoran Field Office area and SDNM, focused on managing for resource protection and to provide public access; and
3. Public Values – those features or qualities valued by various members of the public, such as an area’s natural beauty, the quiet peaceful surroundings, and a place to “get away from it all” without having to travel great distances.

Summary of National Monument Activities since Designation

As directed in the SDNM Proclamation, grazing permits on federal lands within the monument south of Interstate Highway 8 were not renewed at the end of their term following monument designation. This affected five grazing allotments and 7,727 AUMs (Animal Unit Months).

Summary of Activities in Area for Five years Preceding Pre-Designation (Fact sheet dated November 30, 2000 in [Outreach and correspondence prior to designation.pdf](#))

NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION

In the five years preceding designation of SDNM, recreation in the area saw a growing number of hikers, backpackers, and birdwatchers evidenced by increased registration at trailheads.

HUNTING

The area was open to hunting for mule deer, desert bighorn, javelina, dove, quail, and other game

species. The rugged nature of the terrain and limited roads make hunts challenging.

MOTORIZED RECREATION

Growth of motorized backcountry recreation use was occurring in the area during the five years prior to SDNM designation. 33% of the area was already designated wilderness and thus closed to all motorized recreation. Only vehicles licensed for highway use were permitted in Sand Tank Mountains area, effectively prohibiting use of ATV and dune buggy-type vehicles.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

In the five years preceding designation of SDNM, BLM administered 11 livestock grazing allotments across the area. Two of the allotments were permitted for "ephemeral grazing", meaning open for grazing only after unusually wet winters. The area contained a number of grazing developments, including fences, corrals and stock ponds.

MINING

The area except for designated wilderness and the Sand Tank Mountains was open for mineral location and entry. No claims were producing significant quantities of minerals. The State of Arizona and Maricopa and Pinal counties operated a small number of gravel pits in proximity to major roadways.

UTILITY CORRIDORS

Prior to designation, one utility corridor along Highway 238 traversed the area that became SDNM.

Summary of Available Economic Information since Designation

The SDNM supported an estimated \$4,335,516 of total economic output in 2016. ([Sonoran Desert NM-Economic Snapshot \(1\).pdf](#))

Summary of Any Boundary Adjustments since Designation

There have been no boundary adjustments since designation.

June 5, 2017
**New Information Requested on Executive Order on the Review
of Designations Under the Antiquities Act**

BLM Responses to Additional Questions for Sonoran Desert National Monument

a) Any legislative language, including legislation in appropriations bills

There has been no additional legislative language or legislation in appropriations bills for the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) since the designation on January 17, 2001; however there are three Wilderness Areas designated by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 (PL 101-628) located within the monument.

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c) Designated wilderness areas (name, acreage), Wilderness Study Areas (name if there is one, acreage, type), and/or areas managed to preserve wilderness or roadless characteristics that are not WSAs.

The SDNM has three wilderness areas: North Maricopa Wilderness (63,639 acres), South Maricopa Wilderness (60,431 acres), and Table Top Wilderness (34,446 acres). These three areas total 158,516 acres, about 33% of the SDNM. These areas were designated by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 (PL 101-628).

Additionally, approximately 108,100 acres of public lands in the SDNM south of Interstate 8 are managed to protect wilderness characteristics.

d) Outstanding R.S. 2477 claims within a monument – type of road claimed and history
There are no R.S. 2477 claims within the SDNM.

e) Maps

Sonoran_Desert_National_Monument_map.pdf is in the drive folder.

f)

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g) **Other – general questions or comments**

None