

APPENDIX H: SPECIAL CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS

SCRMA – An area containing cultural resources (archaeological sites, historic sites or places of traditional cultural importance) that are particularly important for public use, scientific use, traditional use or other uses as defined in BLM Manual 8110.4. Management prescriptions for these areas should reflect and support the primary values for which the areas are allocated. For example, management prescriptions for a SCRMA allocated primarily for public use should focus on developing and interpreting sites for public visitation, including heritage tourism. Management prescriptions for a SCRMA allocated primarily for scientific use should focus on protecting sites for study, supporting field schools and other research efforts. Management prescriptions for a SCRMA allocated primarily for traditional use should seek to accommodate the traditional cultural practices of Native American tribes or other cultural groups that ascribe religious or other heritage values to specific cultural properties or places within the area. Management prescriptions for a SCRMA allocated primarily to protect scarce sites of singular importance that should not be subjected to invasive studies or other uses that would threaten their present condition should focus on conserving sites for the future.

Management prescriptions for a single SCRMA can focus on more than one type of use, just as a single cultural property can be allocated to more than one of the use categories described in Manual 8110.4. For example, a SCRMA might contain a set of cultural properties that, linked together and interpreted as a group, would make a good auto tour route for heritage tourism. At the same time, the area might contain several cultural properties of unusual historic importance that should be segregated from land or resources uses that might impair their present condition or setting. While both kinds of properties should receive management emphasis, they can be subsumed within a single land use allocation with management prescriptions tailored to support public visitation of the sites along the auto tour route, and protection for the sites that warrant segregation.

The primary purpose of this land use allocation is to differentiate some portions of a planning area from others in terms of cultural resource values. The allocation can denote priority for the expenditure of time and funds or the need for special protection to achieve management objectives. The allocation might also indicate priority areas for proactive inventory. However, highlighting a geographic area for its special cultural resource values does not diminish the importance of cultural resources in other areas. Cultural resources on lands not included within SCRMA's still need to be managed for the values they contain and opportunities they afford.

This land use allocation carries no inherent restrictions on competing land uses. Decisions about proposed land uses that may affect individual cultural properties within SCRMA's will be made on a case-by-case basis, weighing the cultural resource values in the balance along with all other considerations. Enclosing cultural properties within SCRMA's does not add value to those

properties beyond what they would have if they were not within SCRMA's. SCRMA allocations provide focus to management but they do not in themselves increase the scientific, public, traditional or other values that cultural properties possess. Some cultural properties within SCRMA's may, in fact, have little or no value beyond the information gathered by documenting them in the field.

ACEC is a designation that can be used to protect and provide special management attention to areas with significant cultural resource values. ACEC designation should be considered whenever an area containing important cultural resources meets the criteria for designation. However, allocation of a SCRMA can be useful in focusing management attention on an area not meeting the criteria for designation as an ACEC or where designation of an ACEC would be inappropriate. In such cases, a SCRMA can be allocated, incorporating management prescriptions that will provide the special protection or other emphasis needed to achieve management objectives.