
APPENDIX D
MANAGEMENT AND SETTING PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CAVES

COLORADO RIVER VALLEY FIELD OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND SETTING PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CAVES

These setting prescriptions apply to all caves within CRVFO unless deemed not significant. Subsequent surface and subsurface management prescriptions, allowable uses and stipulations will preserve the area's current physical setting.

Cave Management Goal.

CAV-GOAL-01. *Preserve the biotic, mineralogical, paleontological, hydrologic, and cultural values in caves defined as significant under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act.*

Cave Management Objective.

CAV-OBJ-01. *Protect significant cave and karst values per the standards identified by the Colorado Cave Survey in coordination with the BLM while providing opportunities for people to engage in caving, research, and scientific exploration at significant caves to the extent consistent with the targeted outcomes and the protection of cave resources (e.g., biota, cultural, geologic, mineralogic, hydrologic).*

Targeted Activities and Outcomes.

All management actions will be focused on specific activity outcomes for caving and research. Experience outcomes will be for participants to enjoy and learn more about cave and karst resources. Specific benefit outcomes will be for environmental benefits such as; increased environmental stewardship, preservation/protection of unique biotic, paleontological, and mineralogical aspects of caves. Social benefits will be to provide environmental learning and appreciation of cave and karst systems.

Setting Prescriptions.

Physical. All significant caves will be managed to maintain the current level of remoteness (backcountry in nature) from motorized and mechanized vehicles and to preserve the natural appearance of the cave. No new facilities, roads or trails will be built to access the caves. Allow for only minor (tape, signage, rescue caches) modifications for scientific purposes and to accommodate safe use. Evidence of use and other people will remain low.

Social. Visitor use limits, group size, season of use, will be managed in coordination with the Colorado Cave Survey (CCS) through monitoring and subsequent implementation decisions described through cave management plans for each significant cave, group of caves, or complex of caves.

Operational. Appropriate access will continue to be allowed while addressing issues and concerns relating to visitor safety and preservation of the caves values. If issues or concerns arise, necessary managerial controls such as closures, permits, trip requirements, and/or gating may be put in place in coordination with the CCS. BLM will administer and authorize research, inventory, work projects, and digging trips. Information and education materials will be provided to authorized visitors. Cave and karst resources will not be marketed or promoted. The CRVFO will follow management guidance as described in the Colorado White-Nose Syndrome Adaptive Management Strategy Final Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-CO-931-2014-0001-EA, as revised.

Management Action and Allowable Use Decisions in the CRVFO Approved RMP.

CAV-MA-01. Manage caves to retain their current physical, social, and operational settings.

CAV-MA-02. Identify La Sunder Cave as a significant cave and manage the cave in accordance with the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act. Initiate the nomination, evaluation, and designation of other potentially significant caves.

CAV-MA-03. Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-24: Cave and Karst Resources including the Deep Creek Cave Area. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities to the extent (at a minimum this stipulation extends to 5,000 feet below the surface) of known cave and karst resources, unless determined not significant, to protect the scientific and wildlife values associated with cave openings provided by these caves and to avoid the difficulties inherent in drilling such locations (5,300 acres/100 acres federal mineral estate).

Also see Lands and Realty section (LRT-MA-11) noting Deep Creek ACEC is recommended for withdrawal from locatable exploration or development.
