

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Farmington District  
Farmington Field Office  
6251 N College Blvd., Ste. A  
Farmington, NM 87402

**DECISION RECORD  
for the  
Farmington Field Office  
Glade Run Recreation Area  
Recreation and Travel Management Plan  
NEPA No. DOI-BLM-NM-F010-2013-0197-EA**

## **I. Background**

In 2010, the Farmington Field Office (FFO) began to develop alternatives for recreation and transportation in the Glade Run Recreation Area (GRRRA) that included changes to the boundary, designation of areas as open, limited, or closed to off-highway vehicles, motorized and non-motorized routes, and recreation management framework. The Glade Run Recreation Area (GRRRA) Recreation and Travel Management Plan (R&TMP) Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA)/Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzed the effects of area designations, transportation system designation and development, and the recreation management framework within the GRRRA. The EA considered a range of alternatives for the designation and use of the transportation network, the location and extent of area designations, the expansion or contraction of the overall boundary, and the overall recreation framework for identified areas within the GRRRA.

The September 2014 EA identified Alternative A as the Proposed Alternative, in conjunction with management common to all action alternatives. The decision is to implement the boundary and area designation changes and implement the recreation and travel management plan for the GRRRA to meet the Purpose and Need for the EA and provide a system of designated routes to ensure a wide variety of recreation opportunities while protecting important resource values.

## **II. Decision**

I have decided to implement Alternative A, including all management common to all alternatives, management common to all action alternatives, and Appendices A through E, hereby referred to as the proposed action, as described within the GRRRA R&TMP RMPA/EA as the Glade Run Recreation Area Recreation and Travel Management Plan. This decision is based on site-specific analysis in the EA, the supporting project record, public and agency comments, as well as management direction contained in the Farmington Resource Management Plan (RMP, as amended, 2003), which are incorporated by reference within the EA. I have concluded that this decision was analyzed in sufficient detail to allow me to make an informed decision. The following is a description of that alternative.

## **III. Other Alternatives Considered**

The EA considered four alternatives in detail; the No Action Alternative, Alternative A (Proposed Alternative), Alternative B, and Alternative C.

Although the No Action Alternative would provide for current levels of motorized use, it does not take into account future recreation needs and would not meet the Purpose and Need as described on page 4 in the EA. The No Action Alternative was not selected because it would not identify a system of roads and trails

that would meet both non-motorized and motorized recreation needs within the area. There would be no potential for the development of new facilities to support recreation use and would not provide the framework for the designation of new routes within the transportation network.

Alternative B was not selected because it provided few non-motorized recreation opportunities and did not meet the Purpose and Need, as described on page 4 in the EA. This alternative emphasizes OHV recreation opportunities over other resources within the planning area. A small percentage of routes would be designated as limited to protect identified resources (i.e., sensitive status species). Additionally, there would be substantial changes to the GRRRA boundary as a whole as well as the open area that could impact other resources within the area.

Alternative C was not selected because it provided for few motorized recreation opportunities and did not meet the Purpose and Need, as described on page 4 in the EA. This alternative emphasizes non-motorized recreation. Although no boundary adjustments would be made to the GRRRA boundary as a whole, the open area would be re-designated as a limited to designated OHV area and there would be established a closed to OHV area in the northeast portion of the planning area. This alternative was the most restrictive for general public access to the GRRRA.

Table 1 provides a summary comparison of the alternatives. A more through description of each alternative is available in Chapter 2 of the EA.

## **IV. Conformance and Compliance**

My decision is in conformance with the 2003 Farmington RMP (BLM 2003b) in that it provides for the designation of SRMAs and R&TMP pending the completion of all appropriate NEPA.

Alternative A was selected as the proposed action because it best meets the Purpose and Need described in the EA on page 4, and best responds to all the issues identified in the EA on pages 7-16. This alternative was developed in response to protecting the important resources of the area (cultural, wildlife, vegetation, soil and water), while at the same time providing a system of designated roads and trails to serve the needs of a wide variety of area users while reducing conflicts.

Implementation of the proposed action is dependent on securing the funding and obtaining site-specific clearances for surface disturbing activities unless otherwise provided for within the EA.

Changing the designation of lands open, limited, or closed to off-highway vehicles (43 CFR 8342); changing the boundary of the GRRRA Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA); and changing areas available for Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases are allocations that requires an amendment to the RMP. Thus, the EA was prepared as part of a RMP Amendment. My decision is consistent with other allocations made in the 2003 Farmington RMP.

This decision is in compliance with other major laws to minimize environmental impacts to public lands, including: Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 94-325); Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. 703-712); Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1948 (Clean Water Act), as amended (33 U.S.C. Chap. 26); Clean Air Act of 1963, as amended (P.L. 88-206); Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-629, 7 U.S.C. 2801 *et seq*); National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (P.L. 89-665); Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (P.L. 86- 253); Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended (P.L. 96-95); and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-601).

**Table 1. Summary Comparison of Alternatives**

	No Action Alternative	Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)	Alternative B	Alternative C
<b>GRRRA (acres<sup>1</sup>)</b>				
SRMA Designation	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
GRRRA Size	21,500 <sup>2</sup>	26,500	31,800	21,100
RMZ 1 Area Size	0	6,100	0	6,400
RMZ 2 Area Size	0	17,000	27,300	14,700
RMZ 3 Area Size	0	3,300	4,500	0
New City of Farmington R&PP Lease	0	980	0	700
Existing City of Farmington R&PP Lease List for Disposal	0	500	0	500
<b>OHV Area Designations (acres)</b>				
Open to Cross-Country Motorized Vehicle Use	3,800	3,300	4,500	0
Motorized Use Limited to Designated Routes	17,700	23,100	27,300	14,700
Closed to Motorized Vehicle Use	0	0	0	6,400
<b>Route Designations (miles)</b>				
Open	196	104	193	0
Limited	0	0.6	1	75
Closed	0	90	84	97
Permitted Use Only	0	36	3	20
Administrative Use Only	0	1.5	0.5	1
<b>Trail Designations (miles)</b>				
4WD	0	22	22	21
ATV	0	54	62	35
Motorcycle	38	50	78	26
Bicycle	38	28	0	38
Equestrian	0	3	3	3
<sup>1</sup> Acres may not add due to rounding.				
<sup>2</sup> The acreage of the GRTS was originally identified as 27,400 in the 1995 GRTS EA. The 2003 Farmington RMP carried forward this acreage on page 2-1, but then reduced it to 17,935 surface acres and 18,796 subsurface acres on page C-113. GIS data indicates the total acreage of the area intended to be managed as the GRRRA in the 2003 RMP is 21,500.				

## V. Finding of No Significant Impact

I have reviewed the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed action documented in the EA, public comments, and this decision record. I have also reviewed the project record for this analysis. No new information was provided during the public comment periods for the EA to lead me to believe the analysis, data, or conclusions related to environmental effects of the proposed action are in error or that the selected action needs to be altered. The effects of the proposed action and alternatives are disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Consequences sections of the EA. The Finding of No Significant Impact is documented in a separate document. That document was made available with the EA. No new information was provided during public comment periods to lead me to believe the conclusions in that document are in error or need to be altered. Thus, I have determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

## V. Rationale for the Decision

This decision is based on accommodating access to public lands managed by BLM for administrative purposes and public use related to multiple uses, while protecting the resources of the public lands, promoting public safety, and minimizing conflicts among the various uses as required by current regulation. The recreation and travel management plan represents a balance between these concerns, and will serve as the framework for implementation of on the ground actions, visitor education, monitoring and enforcement. This decision is consistent with the applicable public land regulations (43 CFR 8340 and 43 CFR 8360), the current RMP, and current recreation and travel management planning guidance. This decision was arrived at following consideration of public comments and a summary of the rational for specific issues raised during public review is provided below.

Overall, the recreation and travel management designations were carefully designed to accommodate access related to the multiple uses of public lands, including a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, as well as mineral exploration, livestock grazing operations, utilities, and Recreation and Public Purposes leases. The designations will facilitate management of the BLM transportation system with minimum damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air quality, cultural resources, wildlife and plant habitat, and other resource values found in the area. The plan will help BLM implement priorities for public education, visitor services, transportation maintenance, legal public access acquisition, and enforcement.

The BLM transportation system being established consists of roads, primitive roads and trails, and includes route segments across non-BLM lands which are essential for access to BLM lands and movement within the planning area. Guidelines and objectives are identified for maintaining the condition of roads, primitive roads and trails depending on the access purpose they serve. Access to recreational opportunities is preserved for the variety of activities visitors engage in, which include driving off-road for pleasure, camping, mountain biking, cultural resource viewing, and hiking, to name a few.

Impacts on natural and cultural resources will be reduced throughout the planning area. Resource impacts were fully assessed in the accompanying EA, Chapter 3 and are summarized below:

*Wildlife habitat:* The designated network of roads and primitive roads will reduce the extent of disturbance related to vehicle traffic, helping minimize harassment of wildlife and minimizing significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Reducing the amount of motorized vehicle routes in sensitive habitat areas, including the La Plata River riparian management area will benefit a variety of wildlife species that depend on those areas. A reduction in upland routes open to motorized use will minimize disruption of wildlife, limit habitat fragmentation, and preserve natural habitat qualities.

*Cultural resources:* The risk of potential impacts on known cultural resource values is reduced by avoiding known sensitive areas in the route designations. Public outreach efforts will be pursued to help educate visitors about cultural resource protection. Cultural resource inventories will continue to be completed for the designated transportation system, and for related activities that require new surface disturbance, in accordance with current BLM policy, procedures and regulations. Information gained will be used to adjust travel management if needed to ensure resource values are protected.

*Soils/watershed:* Travel management will help protect watershed values by reducing road related erosion and protecting fragile soils. Road maintenance and repair/stabilization efforts (including restoration) will improve drainage and control erosion, reducing damage and erosion of the roadway and adjacent land.

*Special Management Species:* Travel management will help reduce the impacts of roads and associated use within Brack's hardwall cactus and Aztec gilia habitat by reducing the extent and distribution of motorized routes, including proliferating routes in washes and identified potential habitat. Some habitat disturbance and disruption will remain due to the route network designated to accommodate motor vehicle access, but the impact will be off-set by the overall reduction in motorized routes.

*Air Quality:* Air quality concerns related to vehicle traffic on soils prone to fugitive dust will be alleviated by avoiding those soils to the extent possible in the route designations, and by route design features that would serve to minimize fugitive dust.

*Coordination with adjacent non-BLM land owners:* Potential conflicts between public land visitors entering/using adjacent non-BLM lands will be reduced by coordinating and working with adjacent land owners and management agencies to address mutual concerns. Public lands are intermingled with private property, leading to conflicts between public recreational use and adjacent private lands. The plan alleviates potential conflicts by minimizing crossing private land with the designated route system. Visitor information and education efforts, signing, and cooperative boundary marking efforts with private land owners will be considered on a case-by-case basis to reduce potential conflicts. Several routes important for the BLM transportation system are identified for further planning to preserve or obtain legal public access across private lands deemed essential for the use and administration of public lands. Any acquisition would be from willing parties only, and in accordance with BLM policies, procedures and regulations for right of way acquisition.

*State Trust land:* Public lands are intermingled with State Trust lands throughout the planning area, presenting manageability issues related to public use and travel management. State Trust lands are available for public recreational use with a permit issued by the New Mexico State Lands Department according to State regulations. The existing roads and trails across State Trust lands are used and maintained by land use authorization holders (county, grazing, utilities, etc.), and are not subject to BLM travel management designations unless provided for under a right of way. Several existing routes important for the BLM transportation system are currently under rights of way authorizations and will be maintained in the future for continue public access.

*Site improvements:* The planned site improvements and developments needed to support public use are minimal, and limited to staging areas/trailheads at public land entrances and special interpretive sites. Existing dispersed camp sites and recreation activity areas will be monitored and cleaned up as needed, and action may be taken to project resources that may occur at these sites. Additional facilities may be developed based on public need. Information kiosks, wayside displays, signs, traffic control barriers, gates and fencing will be installed at various locations where needed to implement the plan. Site specific project plans, surveys, compliance review, clearances and permits will be completed prior to site work involving ground disturbance.

*Route closures and restoration:* A number of routes identified in the transportation inventory will be closed to motorized travel to protect habitat and cultural resources, prevent user conflicts, decrease damage to natural and cultural resources, and prevent route proliferation. All motorized and non-motorized use will be prohibited on closed routes. Any restoration work will be completed on a site-specific basis, pending all necessary surveys and clearances being completed as needed prior to new ground disturbance. Closed routes may be re-opened to accommodate access on a case by case basis as land use changes over time, as new access needs are developed, or trail development plans are implemented, subject to project planning, surveys, compliance review and amendment of the travel management plan.

*Special Recreation Permits:* Permits will continue to be required for commercial, competitive or organized recreational use in accordance with current regulations at 43 CFR 2930 and BLM policies. A programmatic special recreation permit system may be considered in the future as a separate action.

*Visitor Services:* The plan establishes the system of motorized routes and related use restrictions, which will facilitate visitor education, compliance and law enforcement. A visitor access guide with maps of the roads, primitive roads and trails will be made available to promote public awareness, education and compliance. Signing, kiosks and waysides will be installed to mark the routes and promote awareness of the travel management plan, the use restrictions and the sensitive resource values in the area.

*Implementation:* Planned designations and related actions will be implemented subject to available funds, beginning with public outreach through the publication of a transportation map. A phased approach will allow limited resources and funding to be used for the highest priorities over a period of time, allowing for fundraising efforts and reducing costs in a given year to make implementation feasible. The plan will facilitate preparation of budget packages for funding through the normal BLM financial system, as well as applications for grants, and volunteer projects under partnerships.

*Plan revision and amendment:* This plan will be in effect until rescinded or amended. Monitoring and adaptive management will help respond to changing land use conditions and related access needs. New information on land use and resource values from proposals, surveys and studies will be used to evaluate this plan, and identify needs for updates or revisions through an adaptive approach on a case by case basis.

## **VI. Public Involvement**

Interested user groups, authorization holders, other Federal, State, county and local agencies, local land owners and land users participated in the development of the plan during its various stages. Public input shaped the plan and contributed in the route evaluation to identify management alternatives for the designated routes in the area. Public involvement during the travel management stakeholders workshops helped define consensus for the proposed management plan, and identify areas of disagreement.

During the scoping period, the BLM received approximately 514 comment letters. Public comments addressed a variety of issues and concerns regarding recreation and resources, as well as management considerations. The BLM contacted local, state, and federal agencies including USFWS, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO), San Juan County, and New Mexico Historical Preservation Division. BLM also contacted four Native American tribes to initiate consultation and solicit information about issues of concern for this planning effort. Comments received during the public review and comment on the proposed plan and environmental assessment, summarized in Appendix G, helped finalize the plan and arrive at this decision.

The preliminary EA and unsigned FONSI were put out for public comment for a 45-day comment period beginning February 20, 2103 and a 15-day comment period beginning February 5, 2014. Forty-one comments and 56 comments were received, respectively.

A 30-day protest period on planning-level decisions began on September 15, 2014 with the posting of the final EA and unsigned FONSI. Decisions available for protest included the designation of OHV use areas as open, limited, or closed; route selection criteria; SRMA size and designation; and the identification of areas open to Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases. One protest letter was received. This protest was dismissed as documented in the Director's Protest Resolution Report for the Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment (RMPA/EA) for the Glade Run Recreation Area Recreation and Transportation Management Plan on March 10, 2015.

## **VII. Administrative Review and Appeal**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of this decision.

Any notice of appeal must be filed with Gary Torres, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Farmington Field Office, 6251 College Boulevard, Suite A, Farmington, NM 87402, with a copy to United States Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Southwest Regional Office, 505 Marquette Avenue NW, Suite 1800, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

The appellant shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs on each adverse party named in the decision, not later than 15 days after filing such document (see 43 CFR 4.413(a)). Failure to serve within the time required will subject the appeal to summary dismissal (see 43 CFR 4.413(b)). If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the IBLA, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U. S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with Garry Torres, Farmington Field Office Manager.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the

effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal.

A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In the event a request for stay or an appeal is filed, the person/party requesting the stay or filing the appeal must serve a copy of the appeal on the Office of the Field Solicitor: United States Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Southwest Regional Office, 505 Marquette Avenue NW, Suite 1800, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

### VIII. Signatures:

**Recommended By:**



Victoria Barr  
Farmington District Manager

5/22/15

Date

**Approved By:**



Aden L. Seidlitz  
Acting State Director, BLM New Mexico

5/22/15

Date