



**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

Nevada

Sloan Canyon

National Conservation Area

Annual Manager's Report—Fiscal Year 2014



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1 Sloan Canyon Profile

Designating Authority

Designating Authority: The Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002, Public Law 107-282

Date of Designation: November 6, 2002

Acreage

Total Acres in Unit	48,438
BLM Acres	48,438
Other Federal Acres	0
State and Private Acres*	81

*State and Private acres are not part of the total of the unit acres

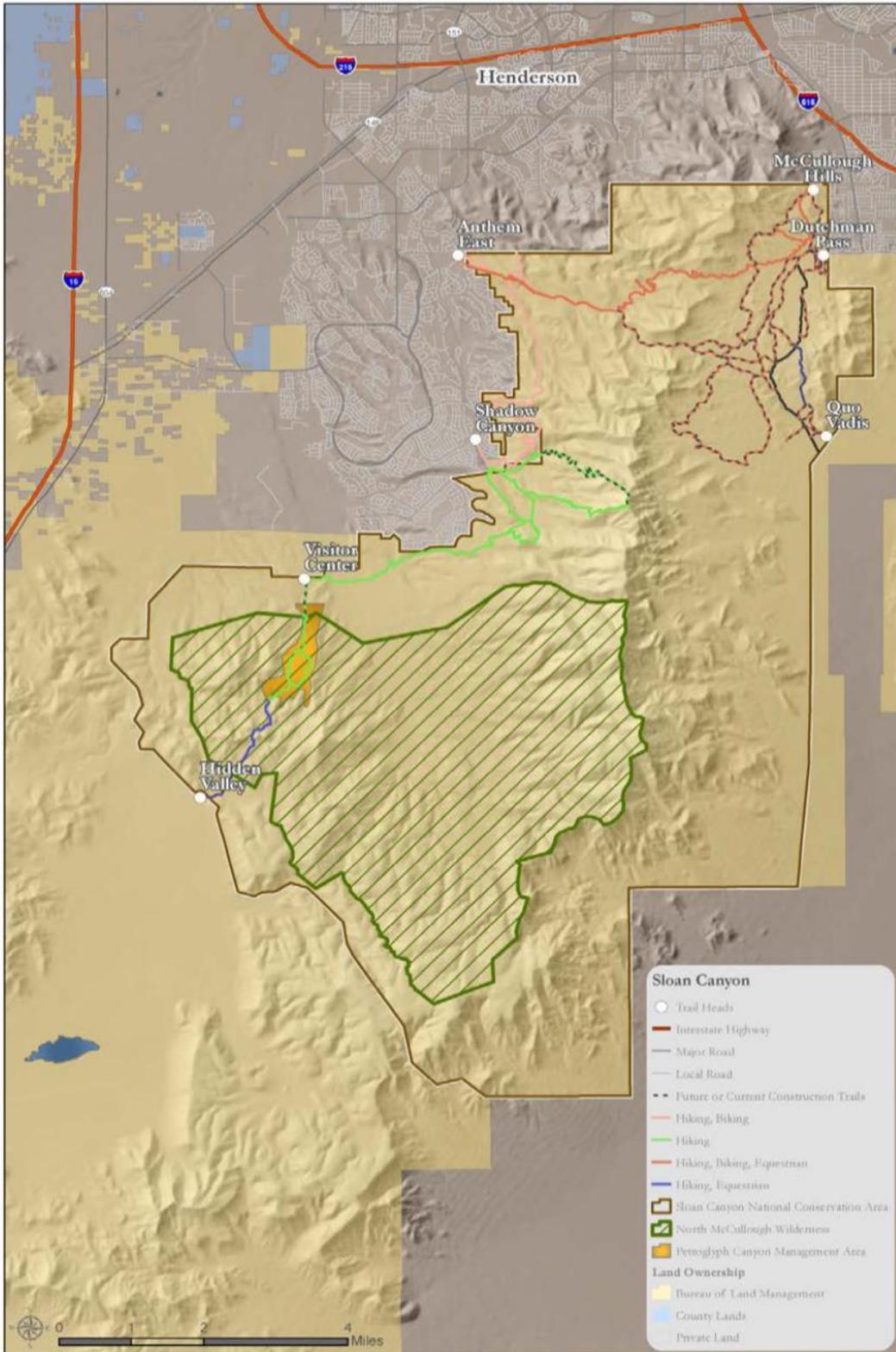
Contact Information

Unit Manager	Mark Spencer
Phone	702-515-5351
E-mail	m1spence@blm.gov
Mailing Address	4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89130
Field Office Name	Red Rock/Sloan
District Office Name	Southern Nevada
State Office Name	Nevada

Budget

Total Fiscal Year 2014 Budget	\$1,644,700
Subactivity 1711	\$386,200
Other Subactivities' Contributions	\$1,258,500
Other Funding	\$0

Map of Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area



Managing Partners

The Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area does not currently have established partnerships to assist with the management of the unit.

Staffing

With 16 full-time employees, the Red Rock-Sloan Field Office is responsible for the management of the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area as well as the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area. Two of those employees are fully dedicated to Sloan Canyon; an outdoor recreation planner and a park ranger. Shared staff members consist of a field manager, assistant field manager, management assistant, maintenance coordinator and archaeologist. The remaining staff is dedicated to Red Rock Canyon.

The Southern Nevada District Office also supports the Red Rock-Sloan Field Office operations, resource programs and projects. Support is provided in the form of routine administrative services, human resource guidance, acquisition assistance and financial (budget) management.

Assigned district resource staff (e.g. wildlife biologist, law enforcement, botanist) provide oversight and management recommendations for protecting/enhancing the natural resources of the conservation areas. This support is generally project specific and does not occur on a routine basis.

The Red Rock-Sloan Field Office is also responsible for the management of Walking Box Ranch, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, in Searchlight, NV.

2 Planning and NEPA

Status of the Resource Management Plan

The enacting legislation required the BLM to develop a resource management plan for the appropriate use and management of the conservation area and Wilderness within three years of enactment. The BLM fulfilled this requirement with the completion of the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the North McCullough Wilderness Management Plan in 2006. Both plans provide the BLM Red Rock-Sloan Field Office with a comprehensive framework for managing the NCA and Wilderness. The RMP was last evaluated in 2011 and is scheduled for re-evaluation in 2016.

The approved Sloan Canyon RMP contains the following decision elements and guiding documents: a monitoring plan; a cultural resource management plan; a visual resource management plan; an interpretive and environmental education strategy; a litter cleanup strategy; a public lands awareness campaign; a vegetation restoration strategy; and a biological management strategy.

Status of Activity Plans

Sloan began implementation of the approved Trails Master Plan utilizing the Great Basin Institute in 2011. There are approximately 44 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails approved for construction/designation currently identified in the plan. Of that, nearly 22 miles are complete and the remaining 22 miles are on task for completion by spring of 2015.

As we move forward towards completion of the approved, existing trail system, a large segment of the visiting public to Sloan Canyon has suggested that additional trails need to be considered for future designation. This is also evident by the sheer number of user created routes that have been documented in areas immediately adjacent to the community.

Commensurate with the restoration and monitoring plans previously mentioned, approximately two acres of disturbance was restored and signed, site stewards continued monitoring activities of cultural sites in Petroglyph Canyon and other areas throughout the NCA, and outreach and interpretive programs were expanded. NCA staff also continued to monitor trends in visitation using magnetic and infra-red trail counters to ascertain recreational use and demand.

Status of the RMP Implementation Strategy

The 2014 Annual Partner Workplan developed in coordination with the Red Rock Canyon NCA and a number of partner organizations, serve as the Sloan Canyon RMP

Implementation Strategy. The annual workplan focuses on implementing elements identified in the National Landscape Conservation System 15-Year Strategy while incorporating components from the RMP.

The annual workplan is updated on a yearly basis and is geared towards the necessary steps required to be fully compliant with the Nevada 3-Year NLCS Strategy. In 2014, Sloan focused on developing a public awareness initiative, advancing and strengthening partnerships, expanding the use of volunteers, increasing stewardship through education and interpretation, engaging in cross jurisdictional, community based landscape level planning and planning facilities with resource protection in mind. These efforts will be expounded upon in Section 3, Year's projects and Accomplishments.



Field Manager, Mark Spencer, facilitates group discussion during development of the annual workplan.

Key National Environmental Policy Act Actions and/or Project Authorizations

- A right-of-way application was submitted to amend the Sloan Trail Master Plan and relocate the existing Petroglyph Canyon and Hidden Valley trailheads, requiring an Environmental Assessment.
- An Environmental Assessment was initiated for the Nevada Department of Wildlife Resources to install a guzzler to support bighorn sheep in Sloan. Decision and constructions activities anticipated for early spring 2015.
- Participated in the development of the West Henderson Land Use Plan. While this plan covers areas outside of BLM managed lands, the plan prescribes management direction for areas immediate adjacent to Sloan Canyon.
- An Environmental Assessment was initiated for a Special Recreation Permit application for bike tours in Sloan Canyon.

3 Year's Projects and Accomplishments

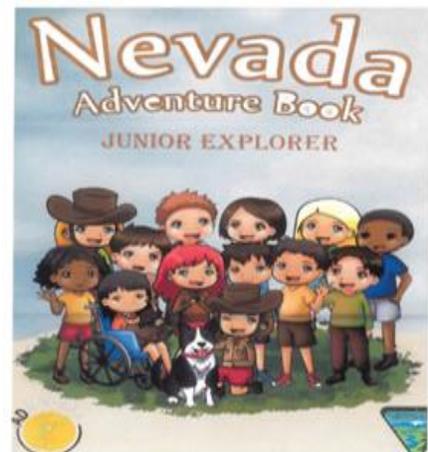
General Accomplishments

- Restoration activities continue to be a priority in Sloan Canyon. Recent site visits show a continued interest in users creating routes within the conservation area. Despite earlier attempts to restore and sign restoration activities, routes are re-opened and signage removed.
- We continued to utilize trail counters to refine visitation estimates. Visitation at Sloan Canyon is estimated at 136,125 for FY 14, which is an increase of nearly 50,000 visits from FY 13.



Dell Webb Middle School Supporting Restoration Activities

- In coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office, site stewards monitored three cultural sites in Sloan Canyon. They also removed graffiti from rocks in the area even though they did not contain rock art.
- Plans were drawn to relocate the Petroglyph Canyon and Hidden Valley trailheads. Actual relocation will be accomplished in early 2015. This effort will increase capacity at both trailheads and allow for visitors to access the sites in a safe, responsible manner.
- Sloan Canyon participated in several Wilderness 50 celebration activities. The park ranger for Sloan conducted five powerpoint presentations to the public to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.
- Sloan participated in celebrating the 150th anniversary of the State of Nevada. The NV-150 Celebration activities included the production of a Nevada Junior Explorer Adventure Book in which Sloan is showcased.
- As a secondary activity geared towards getting people out to explore Nevada, Sloan Canyon was also designated as a NV-150 geocache site (actual geocache located just outside of the NCA within the Hidden Valley Trailhead). Feedback from the public regarding this site has been extremely positive. Learn



Junior Explorer Book

more about the Sloan geocache site by visiting:
http://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC5F0EJ_blm-sndo-nv-150-adventure-site-sloan-canyon-nca

- Sloan continues to participate in the annual Back to School Fair for the Clark County School District. This serves as an opportunity to reach teachers in Southern Nevada and provide information related to the educational opportunities the Sloan Park Ranger can provide via classroom educational presentations or guided interpretative hikes.



NCC Youth Crew Removing Debris From Sloan

- Drafted a public awareness plan building upon the strategy included in the Resource Management Plan.
- Issued a contract for the development of the Sloan Canyon Implementation Plan.
- Participated in the City of Henderson’s West Henderson Land Use Plan development process. The plan can be found on the City of Henderson’s website at: <http://www.cityofhenderson.com/community-development/special-projects/west-henderson-land-use-plan-update>.
- Supported youth initiatives by hiring the Great Basin Institute/Nevada Conservation Corp for trail construction and restoration activities.
- Held the second Desert Dash race in Sloan—a special recreation permit issued in partnership with the City of Henderson.
- Worked with the Conservation Lands Foundation to prepare a grant submitted to the Caesar Foundation to fund restoration activities.

Current Areas of Focus

As the City of Henderson continues to grow and as more local and regional residents and visitors learn more about the great opportunities for outdoor recreation that can be experienced at Sloan, we have gotten an increase in interest regarding the management of Sloan Canyon and how the special account funding set aside for the long-term operation and management of the conservation area is being utilized. Of primary importance is the continued designation and construction of hiking, biking and equestrian trails and the need for the construction of developed facilities to support the increased demand while protecting the resources.

In response to this interest and the need to finalize the draft business plan developed for Sloan in 2006, we entered into a contract with Logan, Simpson Design to facilitate the development of the Sloan Canyon Implementation Plan. The goal of the implementation plan is to serve as the guiding document for the future use of the Sloan funding as well as set guidelines for the development of future facilities at Sloan.

Education, Outreach, and Interpretation

In fiscal year 2014 Sloan conducted 42 environmental education and interpretative programs consisting of guided hikes, table tops, community fairs and school programs reaching 1,814 participants of which 589 were elementary school students. While this constitutes successful outreach efforts utilizing the only park ranger at Sloan who also manages the Sloan volunteer program, our efforts in 2015 will focus on expanding outreach opportunities. Our goal for 2015 is to explore the option of becoming an official Hands on the Land site.



Group enjoying an interpretive hike in Petroglyph Canyon



Sloan Park Ranger Partners with Law Enforcement Ranger to host a booth at the local Day of the Dead Festival

Partnerships

Sloan continues to work closely with the City of Henderson, the Outside Las Vegas Foundation, Friends of Red Rock Canyon, the Red Rock Canyon Interpretative Association, the Friends of Sloan, the Conservation Lands Foundation and a number of user groups and individuals on planning, interpretive and stewardship activities. A primary focus going into 2015 is to formalize a relationship with an organized group who is willing to support the BLM and serve as a mission oriented support group to expand upon outreach efforts, assist with increasing volunteer opportunities and help build stewardship in surrounding communities.

Volunteers



Volunteers replacing cable fencing in Sloan



Volunteers transport materials for sign project

Volunteers at Sloan assisted with monitoring trails, conducting interpretive hikes, nature programs, hosting special events, staffing table tops and kiosk maintenance. 29 volunteers donated 140 hours resulting in \$3,080 in savings to Sloan. Going into 2015 our goal is to place more emphasis on increasing volunteer opportunities at Sloan Canyon to reach a larger segment of visitors to increase stewardship that hopefully results in a reduction of user created disturbance.

Land (or Interests in Land) Acquisitions

There were no land acquisitions or interests in lands activities for Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area completed in fiscal year 2014.



Installed trail sign

4 Science

Science

Project Title:

Managing Federal Lands and Human Health: Preventing Human Exposure to Carcinogenic Minerals in Southern Nevada

The Study Addresses:

1. Where on BLM managed lands in southern Nevada do these minerals occur?
2. What geologic variables coincide with their occurrence? (e.g. how do they form so that we can predict occurrence elsewhere in this region?)

Funding:

\$180,000 provided through BPS

Principal Investigator:

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Lisa Christensen, BLM Project Point of Contact

5 Resources, Objects, Values, and Stressors

Wilderness

The North McCullough Wilderness covers the northern portion of the north-south trending McCullough Mountain Range. Unlike surrounding areas, the northern portion of this range is comprised of ancient volcanic rock.



North McCullough Wilderness

Though a short distance from the lights and sounds of Las Vegas, silence is common on the peaks and in most canyons. Low visitation levels in the southern portion of this wilderness provide opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Diverse non-developed recreational opportunities include hiking, backpacking, rock scrambling, nature study, photography, horseback riding, hunting, and general exploration.

Wilderness Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Stable

Wilderness Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored in FY14
48,438	14,765	14,765	9,00

Stressors Affecting Wilderness

The North McCullough Wilderness has experienced an increase in visitation and public interest over the past year. Illegal OHV use and the creation of user created routes is becoming more of a problem in some areas. Efforts are currently underway to partner with the Friends of Nevada Wilderness to restore some of these incursions.

Cultural/Archaeological Resources

Archaeological evidence suggests that resources within Sloan Canyon may have been used for nearly 7,000 years. The Sloan Canyon Petroglyph Site, often considered the cultural “center piece” of the conservation area and located within the North McCullough Wilderness, contains over 300 panels displaying more than 1,700 individual rock art designs.



Petroglyphs in Sloan Canyon

Cultural/Archaeological Resources Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Stable

Cultural/Archaeological Resources Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored in FY14
75 Prehistoric Sites 13 Historic Sites	75 Prehistoric Sites 13 Historic Sites	75 Prehistoric Sites 13 Historic Sites	4 Prehistoric Sites Monitored

Stressors Affecting Cultural/Archaeological Resources

Site stewards have taken care to closely document and monitor cultural resources in Sloan Canyon. Although minimal disturbance has been reported, no sites have been damaged. Disturbance has largely been attributed to increased visitation. Visitors tend to climb along canyon walls in an effort to better view or photograph the petroglyphs and this has resulted in user trails and erosion.

Scenic (Visual) Resources

A visual resource inventory was conducted in 2003 as part of the resource planning process. Three classes are present and mapped in Sloan: Class I –preserve the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention; Class II – retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low and Class III –

partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate.

Scenic (Visual) Resources Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Fair	Stable

Scenic (Visual) Resources Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored in FY14
48,438	48,438	Class I—14,763 Class II—27,089 Class III—6,596	N/A

Stressors Affecting Scenic (Visual) Resources

Visual resources are primarily impacted by illegal OHV use and the creation of user created routes.

6 Summary of Performance Measure

The ability to identify, inventory and monitor some resources, values, and objects in Sloan Canyon is constrained by a limited staff and budget. Cultural and archaeological resource inventories and monitoring have occurred due to available funding for the archaeologist to accomplish that work.

Resources, Objects, and Values Status Summary Table		
Resource, Object, or Value	Status	Trend
Wilderness	Good	Stable—Improving in some areas
Cultural/Archaeological	Good	Stable
Visual	Fair—Good in areas further away from the urban interface.	Stable

7 Manager's Letter

We are pleased to present the FY 2014 Manager's Report for the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA). Sloan Canyon NCA is a small jewel hidden near southern Las Vegas that is generating increasing attention and interest from the public and nearby communities.

For a number of years, we've had to hold off on proposing certain facilities at Sloan Canyon because of limited access and providing appropriate access was cost prohibitive. We are excited to share that over the past few months, we have been in close communication with the City of Henderson and are hopeful to resolve some of our access issues within the 2015 fiscal year. What this means for our neighbors and visitors to Sloan Canyon is the possibility of having a modest visitor contact station at the entrance to Petroglyph Canyon within a relatively short timeframe. As the City of Henderson continues to expand in the vicinity of Petroglyph Canyon and more people visit the site, the need for an on-site presence will increase and will be required for continued protection of Petroglyph Canyon. Having a facility on-site will allow us to expand partnership opportunities, and increase public awareness and public services by providing more educational and interpretative activities, as well as increase volunteer opportunities.

A key component in getting to that point is the completion of the Sloan Canyon Implementation Plan. We are well underway with this effort and on schedule to have this guiding document completed by the spring of 2015. We are anxious to share our findings with the public and begin implementation of action items utilizing the Sloan special account funding early within the next fiscal year.

We have accomplished great things at Sloan Canyon this year because of the dedication from our partners, volunteers and BLM staff. We look forward to how much more we can accomplish together in the next year.

Sincerely,
Robbie McAboy, Assistant Field Manager
Red Rock-Sloan Field Office



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Sloan Canyon

National Conservation Area

Bureau of Land Management
Southern Nevada District
Red Rock/Sloan Field Office
4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr.
Las Vegas, NV 89130
Phone: 702-515-5350

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