

considered for exchange under prescribed circumstances; and 1,100 acres of BLM lands that may be available for sale or disposal under other authorized processes. The ARMP also provides criteria for the acquisition of lands, or interests in lands, where such acquisition would meet objectives of the various resource programs. The plan allocates approximately 600 acres as right-of-way exclusion areas and 146,700 acres as right-of-way avoidance areas.

Special Recreation and Visual Resource Management Areas: The ARMP/ROD identifies seven Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), including four existing (Loon Lake/East Shore, Dean Creek Elk Viewing, Coos Bay Shorelands, and New River) and three new (Tioga, Gregory Point (Bal'diyaka), and Sixes River). The existing SRMAs total approximately 3,700 acres and the new SRMAs total approximately 25,700 acres. The ARMP/ROD allocates approximately 2,065 acres of BLM-administered lands for 23 existing or potential recreation sites. The plan also allocates lands for 12 existing or potential trails, totaling between 42 and 56 miles. The plan also identifies management objectives for four visual resource management classifications.

Mineral and Energy Resource Management: Most BLM-administered lands will remain available for mineral leasing and location of mining claims, but 1,600 acres will be closed to leasing for oil and gas and geothermal resources, and 12,500 acres will be closed to location of claims.

Dated: June 5, 1995.

Michael R. Crouse.

Acting Coos Bay District Manager.

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Notice of Approval of the Maricopa Complex Wilderness Management Plan

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: The Maricopa Complex Wilderness Management Plan is approved. In accordance with 43 CFR part 4, this action is subject to appeal for a period of 30 days from the date of this notice. Barring appeal, the plan will be implemented.

SUMMARY: (1) Scope of the Approved Plan: The plan prescribes actions and policies for the management of four Wilderness Areas: the Sierra Estrella,

the North Maricopa Mountains, South Maricopa Mountains and the Table Top for a period of ten years. An environmental assessment document was prepared describing the impacts of the plan along with three other alternatives.

(2) Geographic Areas Involved: Four separate wilderness areas, totaling 172,100 acres in the Sonoran Desert of Southwestern Arizona, southern Maricopa and western Pinal Counties, and 12 to 45 miles south of the metropolitan Phoenix. Other nearby towns are Gila Bend, Maricopa, Casa Grande, and Buckeye, Arizona.

(3) Summary of Plan Actions: Seventy nine miles of former vehicle ways reclaimed; 16 miles converted to pedestrian and/or equestrian trails. Three access routes may be shortened slightly. Twenty five vehicle barriers constructed. Four new trails and seven trailheads established and one existing trail and trailhead improved and maintained. Signs, defined parking areas, and minimal camping facilities provided at some trailheads. Maps and other information provided. Two vehicle safety shoulders may be created along Interstate 8. Commercial recreation outfitters may be permitted. Six wildlife water catchments and associated fencing modified, and along with two others, maintained. One wildlife well pump replaced. Transplants of desert bighorn sheep and aircraft telemetry following sanctioned. Installation of future wildlife catchments evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Non-mechanized animal damage control allowed. Five earthen livestock water tanks abandoned. Thirteen livestock control fences maintained. No new livestock watering facilities constructed. Coordination with multi-jurisdictional law enforcement and search and rescue agencies and organizations improved. Five thousand seven hundred and sixty two acres of State of Arizona surface and subsurface inholdings identified for acquisition plus some access easements. All wildfire suppressed; protocol for fire suppression activities established. Reduction in low-level civilian aircraft flights encouraged. Thirty three instances of motorized/mechanized use allowed annually over 9 years dropping to 22 per year thereafter, to: maintain 8 livestock fences, modify 6 wildlife catchments, maintain and haul water to these and two other catchments, pump one well for wildlife, census or track wildlife, check wildlife water levels in wildlife catchments, respond to life-threatening emergencies, rescue sick livestock, and pursue felons or major

game violators. Monitoring standards adopted and response actions described.

(4) Proposed Restrictions: Campfires, charcoal fires, wood gathering or wood cutting, and other surface disturbances are prohibited. Dogs are prohibited on one trail; horses on another. Camping within 200 feet or within sight of established trails is prohibited; camping at some trailheads will be limited to a five day period. Pack stock associated with permitted activities confined to naturally hardened areas during long rest periods. Pack stock feed provided by outfitters.

(5) Summary of Alternatives Analyzed: A visitor use and wildlife enhancement alternative with additional hiking and/or riding trails and wildlife developments; a naturalness enhancement alternative without maintained trails, with mostly non-mechanized maintenance of developments, and 15 instances of low level aircraft use occurring yearly for wildlife census, checking water levels of wildlife water catchments and hauling water; and a no action alternative.

(6) Extent of Public Comment: A draft plan with an environmental assessment document was distributed for public review and comment for a 45 day period on September 13, 1994. Availability notice was via the **Federal Register** and local media. More than 400 copies of the draft plan were mailed to a wide spectrum of publics, governing bodies, organizations, and institutions expressing interest or directly affected. Two public meetings, in Gila Bend and Phoenix, Arizona, were held. A total of 14 individuals participated in these meetings and providing comments; eight written comments were also received. Comments were analyzed and appear in the final plan. Some changes were made due to the comments. Most notable are: The addition of a management action to disallow the construction of future livestock watering facilities within the wilderness; the addition of some mechanized wildlife management activities; and changes to the Naturalness Alternative and associated impact analysis.

NEXT STEP IN THE PLANNING PROCESS: The decision to adopt this plan is subject to appeal for a period of 30 days following the publication of this notice. Barring appeal, implementation will follow. Appeals must be filed in accordance with the procedures found in 43 CFR 4.4110 through 4.415.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Jamrog, Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix District Office, Lower Gila Resource Area, 2015 West Deer Valley