

DRAFT

**INTERDISCIPLINARY
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

FOR

**THE SILVER SADDLE RANCH
AND
THE AMBROSE CARSON RIVER
NATURAL AREA**

April 17, 2000

INTERDISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE
SILVER SADDLE RANCH
AND
AMBROSE CARSON RIVER
NATURAL AREA

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City Field Office

Approved by: _____

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

History and Setting

The Silver Saddle Ranch (SSR) contains some of the last remaining open space and undeveloped Carson River frontage in Eagle Valley. In combination, the unique natural features that identify this ranch and a large, contiguous block of public ownership between the Pine Nut Mountains and the Prison Hill recreation area are the main reasons the SSR was acquired by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Through a land exchange with Perma-Bilt Homes and the American Land Conservancy, the privately-owned SSR was transferred into public ownership. The BLM will implement protection of the Carson River's riparian habitat and continue to provide public recreational access. This action will be accomplished with the support of many public and private partners who are also committed to the open space and recreational opportunities that the SSR can provide the Carson City community.

The proposed management plan addresses both Silver Saddle Ranch and the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area (ACRNA). The ACRNA is managed by the BLM in partnership with Carson City through the Carson City Parks and Recreation Department to provide recreational access to the Carson River. In 1998, the City and BLM completed a SYMMS grant project which improved access to the area and protected the wetland/riparian habitat from damage due to random vehicle use. Formerly known as the "BLM/Carson City Carson River Joint Access Area", the name was changed in 1999 to reflect ongoing environmental educational activities being conducted by various schools at the site.

The ACRNA is located on the east side of Carson River approximately one and a quarter miles north of SSR. Since many of the same ecological and recreational principles apply, both the SSR and the ACRNA will be addressed in this plan. In addition, this plan will focus on meshing existing and future management plans for the Prison Hill Recreation Area, Pine Nut Mountains and other public lands held adjacent to the river corridor in Eagle Valley. The plan will also maintain consistency with City plans including the Carson River Master Plan, Carson River Park Master Plan, Bicycle System Plan and the Eagle Valley Trails System Plan. Continuing partnerships with Carson City, the Carson River Advisory Committee and forming new public partnerships will be in the best interest of ACRNA and the SSR.

Public lands are managed under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. That act emphasizes that the public lands will be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scenic, ecological, environmental, and archaeological values; preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; provide habitat for wildlife; and outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. The Act also provides for harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment to the quality of the environment.

Interdisciplinary Planning Process

The interdisciplinary planning process is a simple and logical way to integrate and resolve the diverse concerns of BLM resource specialists along with public issues and expectations within a specific geographic area. The process is inclusive and depends on the participation of as many interested stakeholders as possible. Successful interdisciplinary planning requires solid teamwork, respect for diverse and sometimes conflicting ideas, knowledge regarding the issues, highly developed interpersonal skills, integrity, and above all else patience and trust.

Although plan formats are variable the fundamental framework of all interdisciplinary plans is defined by issues, goals, objectives and most importantly management actions that are crafted to achieve the identified objectives. Interdisciplinary activity plans are issue driven. Issues are identified in a scoping process that involves BLM specialists, other state and federal agencies, counties, cities, Indian Tribes, local groups and other interested parties. The purpose of the scoping process is to identify and carefully define the issues and problems associated with the planning area. Goals, objectives and associated management actions are then developed to resolve the identified issues. This is the heart of the planning process.

The Carson River Advisory Committee (CRAC) assisted in late 1997 with the formation of The Silver Saddle Advisory Task Force. This task force met from January 24, 1998 through July 16, 1998, assisting BLM with formulating the resource and recreational goals for the SSR. These goals were then put out for public comment in August of 1998. The responses indicated that there were three alternatives ranging from a wildlife orientated low impact alternative, a minimum impact broad range recreational alternative and a more heavily developed recreation/ farm attraction or an environmental education camp for at the SSR. A new direction of planning with more of a focus on a BLM internal team plus the external team consisting of half the original task force (including Carson City Parks and Recreation Department and a CRAC member) started in 1999. The Interdisciplinary Management Plan for the SSR and the ACRNA is comprised of all these efforts.

The product of an interdisciplinary planning process is expected to be ecologically sound, economically feasible, and socially acceptable. The primary intent of this process is to produce a plan that enables implementation of identified management actions that resolve issues and solve problems without further planning or analysis. Planning stops here and active on-the-ground management begins.

The final phase of the planning cycle is periodic evaluation of progress in implementation of identified management actions, and the effectiveness of implemented actions in achieving the established objectives. Monitoring data is analyzed and considered in this process. The results of this evaluation may initiate modification of the existing plan, a new planning process, or continuation of the current plan.

Conformance With the Resource Management Plan

The proposed action and alternative described below are in conformance with the recreation management decision in the approved Reno Management Framework Plan (RMP) 1982, which were incorporated by reference into the Walker Resource Management Plan (1986). The applicable decision states "Maintain a wide diversity of day use (short term) activities and recreation opportunities." The proposed action and alternatives are also clearly consistent with the objectives for wildlife, riparian, soils, water quality, and visual resource management in the Walker RMP. Other objectives in the Walker RMP have been reviewed and we have determined that no conflict exists between the proposed action, alternatives and these objectives.

The proposed action and alternatives are also consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM, Carson City District, and Carson City, Nevada for Coordinated Outdoor Recreation Management on Public Lands.

VISION STATEMENT

Keep the “Silver Saddle Ranch” green, the river clean, the paths open and the past alive for present and future generations.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The following issues were identified by public comments received during the August 1998 comment period and by both the internal and external teams developing the management plan for the Silver Saddle Ranch (SSR). Public scoping for the ACRNA was first conducted in February, 1994 during a public workshop held by Carson City to discuss the “Carson River Corridor”. The comments generated from this workshop assisted the Carson River Advisory Committee (CRAC) in developing the Carson River Master Plan (CRMP) 1996. The BLM played a key role in the development of the CRMP recommending the area now known as the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area be developed in partnership with Carson City. In 1998 the BLM completed its environmental assessment (EA) for constructing the parking and access improvements bordering this stretch of the Carson River.

Issue #1: RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGEMENT

Definition: There is an increased public demand for multi-recreational sites along the Carson River corridor that will benefit a large number of visitors. Integrating the Carson City’s Parks and Recreation Department trail system’s plan for the area, the SSR will tie into the Prison Hill, Mexican Ditch, Eagle Valley and ACRNA trail systems. SSR will also tie into the Carson River Park and Pinion Hills/Pine Nut Mountain areas, providing additional diversified recreational, cultural and educational opportunities. The Ambrose Carson River Natural Area (ACRNA) will be discussed separately, as Issue #10.

Issue #2: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Definition: When the SSR was acquired for public ownership there was little to no public use of the Ranch. When this was an operating ranch, the health and safety of the property was within acceptable limits for a professional ranching operation. These limits were not acceptable for uncontrolled public use of the area. The issue of public health and safety is identified to protect the resource from the public, the public from the resource, and the public from the public.

Issue #3: FIRE MANAGEMENT

Definition: Fire management includes all activities required for the protection of resources from wildland fire and the use of fuels treatments – most often prescribed fire – to meet land management objectives. Fire management also includes fire prevention and education, fire suppression and vegetation management.

The primary objective of fire management is to achieve a balance between fire suppression to protect life, property and resources, and to regulate fuels and maintain healthy ecosystems. Fire is an important and inevitable part of America’s wildlands, and wildland fire management is a process that affects everyone. Fire, as a critical natural process, is integrated into land and resource plans and activities and is based upon the best available science.

Issue #4: PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Definition: The SSR comprises several buildings, structures, and agricultural fields; the Ranch is in itself a significant cultural resource. The irrigation ditch extending through the Ranch is the former Mexican Ditch, once part of the Comstock Mexican Mines. The ditch served as the court ruling for the adjudication of water rights for the West. The Ranch property exemplifies the nature and structure of a working ranch from the 1920s-1950s. The buildings and structures that comprise the Ranch are not outstanding features individually, however, these features combined form a cohesive ranch property, especially the red house complex. Historical archaeological features are also on the Ranch, some predating the dominant ranch period. In addition to the built environment, the Ranch contains agricultural fields and upland and riparian vegetation that defines open space in Carson City and Nevada. This open space is a culturally-modified product of our environment and is very much a part of the SSR.

Issue #5: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Definition: The characteristics and conditions of vegetation on the landscape largely determine the presence and quality of several resource values. The 703 acres of the SSR include wildlife habitat, visual resources and aesthetics, recreational attractions and opportunities, riparian and ecological integrity, and health and productivity of the land.

The riparian corridor provides wildlife habitat, scenic quality, and abundant educational opportunities. The riparian corridor of the Carson River needs to be in a Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) in order to meet the requirements to sustain and protect the variety of wildlife available and provide the advanced ecological status desired by the public. Its condition is functional at risk due to

upstream impediments and conditions beyond BLM's immediate control. Although PFC may not be completely achievable, efforts must be made to attain it so as to sustain the optimal level of resource benefits expected by the public.

Agriculture (both livestock and crop production) represents part of the cultural legacy as well as a means to maintain scenic open space. Any agricultural practice must adhere to best conservation and management practices. Conflicts between agriculture and other uses and values must be reconciled.

All vegetation is subject to fire. Fire is a natural process which may both threaten and enhance resource values, depending upon many variables. This is addressed in Issue #3.

Issue #6: WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Definition: The SSR supports a wide variety of wildlife species because of the diverse habitat types present. The animals find food, cover, water and space to meet their needs in the riparian cottonwood and willow trees and brush clumps along the Carson River and the Mexican Ditch, in the hayfields, throughout the sagebrush/bitterbrush/desert peach dominated uplands, and in the rocky canyons of Prison Hill. The riparian habitat along the river is by far the most important, providing some or all of the life requirements for 80% of the wildlife species present. The brush fields above the river provide important habitats for the more typical desert species, including resident and migratory mule deer. Maintaining, enhancing and protecting the SSR habitats are critical to continued wildlife use of the area.

Issue #7: WATER MANAGEMENT

Definition: Water is necessary to maintain the agricultural setting of the SSR and the riparian wildlife habitat along the Carson River corridor. The Carson River is not only the necessary source of irrigation for the fields, but provides the desirable recreation the public expects. A potable water source will also provide drinking water for the visiting public at the facilities.

Issue #8: NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT

Definition: Non-point source pollution usually refers to surface runoff from watersheds which may contain sediment (eroded soils), organic matter, and chemicals (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.). Some non-point source pollutants may be the result of natural geologic processes occurring in pristine watersheds, while other events are the result of accelerated erosion and runoff from degraded or poorly managed areas.

Such pollutants also occur in return flows from irrigation and must also be considered.

Issue #9: RELATIONSHIPS TO ADJACENT EXTERNAL AREAS

Definition: The SSR is located within the developing suburban area of Carson City. Management of the Ranch will impact surrounding areas and be impacted by activities on surrounding private and City lands. Being a good neighbor, by working with adjacent land owners, utilities and the local government, opportunities to enhance Ranch values and surrounding areas will be provided, while minimizing conflicts. This issue is identified to provide a basis for working with parties owning and operating on surrounding private land to benefit them and the management of the SSR

Issue #10: MANAGEMENT OF THE AMBROSE CARSON RIVER NATURAL AREA (ACRNA)

Definition: The ACRNA provides recreational access to the Carson River corridor and Carson City's Bicycle System Plan and Eagle Valley Trail system. Since most of the lands along the river corridor are in private ownership, the ACRNA and SSR provide valuable public access to this unique river resource. Maintaining public access to the river is considered a high priority by the public. The ACRNA has been identified in the city plan as a community staging area that will ultimately connect city trails with other BLM sites including Centennial Park trail head, Prison Hill Recreation Area and the SSR. In addition, it will provide access to water-based recreation such as river rafting and fishing.

The ACRNA and related river resources offer exceptional opportunities for (Environmental Education) EE. Many schools visit the ACRNA for this purpose. Similar EE opportunities can also be found approximately 2 miles upriver at the SSR. However, public demand, scheduling conflicts, accessibility and seasonal (wildlife) constraints may limit EE opportunities at SSR.

PROPOSED PLAN

Issues are listed in order of priority

Issue #1: RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGEMENT

Definition: There is an increased public demand for multi-recreational sites along the Carson River corridor that will benefit a large number of visitors. Integrating with the Carson City Parks and Recreation Department system's plan for the area, the SSR will tie into the Prison Hill trails, the Mexican Ditch trail, Carson River Park and

the Pinion Hills area, and provide recreational, cultural and educational opportunities.

Goal 1-1: Provide safe, diversified and meaningful recreation opportunities at the SSR consistent with the vision statement.

Objective A: Provide hiking, biking, equestrian, water base recreation and environmental education opportunities at set locations within a three-year period.

Rationale: Providing planned multi-recreational sites will benefit the large majority of visitors and will reduce user conflicts and resource impacts.

Management Actions:

Coordinate planning with the Carson City Parks and Recreation Department regarding the development of the Carson River Park, the Carson River Master Plan, Eagle Valley Trail System and other planning documents. These plans use the SSR and ACRNA as locations for future pedestrian bridges over the Carson River and partnership trail building with the BLM. (See Trail Development map.)

Designate, sign and construct if necessary additional trails on the SSR for hiking, biking and equestrian use. Provide one trails along the east side of Prison Hill, construct and maintain the Mexican Ditch Trail and extend the trail system in the Pinion Hills for off highway vehicles (OHV) or Off Road Vehicles (ORV) and equestrian use. (See Trail Development and Recreation and Education Emphasis Proposed Plan Maps.)

Equestrian trails will be designated only along the Mexican Ditch, the base of Prison Hill Recreation Area on the SSR side, and the trails on the east side of the river, thus providing access into the Pine Nut Mountains. The equestrian staging area will be at the “river path” hiking trails parking area. Hiking and mountain biking activities will be allowed on all or some of the equestrian trails. Proper “yield right of way” signs will be placed on trails. When Carson City builds its pedestrian bridge along the SSR southern boundary at the Carson River, all trail systems will accommodate the *Carson River Master Plan: Carson City’s Parks & Recreation Master Plan, The Eagle Valley Trail System* and the *Carson River Master Plan*.

Establish the current road that comes in from the middle gate (next to present white house complex) as the main entrance and exit road. See Issue #2-2 Objective A.

Establish a Group Picnic Area for special events along the main access road. Locations for such a site could be in the area of the current “white house

complex” or 1/4 mile south down the road near the Mexican Ditch before the corral and barn complexes. Permanent rest room facilities may be constructed here or the group permittee will be required to provide portable rest rooms.

Establish a parking area for trail access half way between the entrance and red house complex parking. This will also be the site of the group picnic area. The trail access will be for hiking west to Prison Hill and to connect with the future Mexican Ditch trail proposed by Carson City. This parking area may be used in conjunction with the group picnic site; rest rooms and drinking water may be future additions to the site. Currently, this site is an open area with cottonwood trees banking the ditch along the road coming from the west gate.

Provide a footpath and several access points along the east side of the river corridor. Parking areas for hiking, biking, equestrian or water base recreation (fishing) will be provided along the current entrance for the “River Path Trail” and at the southern most SSR boundary. A river rafting access is already provided across the river at the Carson River Park. Close off trail spurs and roads that bisect the trail by using permanent barriers such as rocks, wooden posts or earth berms. Possible enhancements include the installation of a rest room on the east side of the river for SSR hikers, fishing and OHV/ORV activities. Install an aesthetically appropriate fence along the road with openings at designated entrances along the east side of the SSR. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis and Pastoral Ranching Emphasis.)

Establish a river portage site along the southern end of the east side down river from the Mexican Dam is private property ever turn into public property. Designate four environmental education/interpretive sites on the SSR to be used by visiting school groups as well as the general public. Major areas for conducting EE activities will be located by the Red House complex, along the field road between fields leading to the Carson River Park and along the East side of the Carson River. The program will be managed by the BLM for day use trips; reservations may be required for large groups. Special intensive EE programs may be developed along with outside partners. ACRNA will also be the site of environmental education activities.

A parking lot will be established along the main access road (the current road that leads in from the white house gate) in front and south of the sheds and pole barn structures. This lot will be constructed to accommodate approximately 30 individual parking spaces along the back sheds and an additional area for buses. Up to ten individual parking spaces will be built at the group picnic reserve site. In addition, rest rooms will be constructed for public use at both places of parking. General public parking will not be permitted in front of the “red house” complex. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis Proposed Action maps.)

Interpretive signs and three or four kiosks will be established at all parking areas, Carson River Park, Prison Hill access, the red house complex and along trails. In addition, entrance to public lands will be signed.

Objective B: Provide staging areas for Off Highway Vehicle (OHV/ORV) access to the Pinion Hills on the east side of the SSR by 2001.

Rationale: OHV/ORV use of the Pinion Hills is a continuing use in the area. Housing development and fencing of private lands on the west side of the Pinion Hills is restricting access to public lands in this area. The east side of the SSR will provide needed public access; other existing access points are restricted. Such public excess will be accomplished in a manner consistent with other uses of the area by considering: 1) mitigation of noise and dust effects on other uses and private property owners; and 2) containment of OHV/ORV entrances and exits.

Management Actions:

An OHV/ORV staging area on the east side of the Mexican Dam road along SSR eastern and southern boundaries will be established. Currently, this site is the second canyon entrance south of the “River Trail” parking area on the east side. This will provide a safe OHV/ORV entrance and exit to the trail system in the adjacent areas of the Pinion Hills by establishing routes in a manner that decreases the likelihood of multiple access points and vehicle collisions. (See Trail Development and Recreation and Education maps.) Existing unauthorized access trails will be posted closed and permanent trail barriers such as rocks, wooden posts or earth berms may be installed for closure.

Objective C: Identify and educate the public about the recreation opportunities visitors can expect at SSR. Assign recreation opportunities to different areas on SSR by plan completion date. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis maps.)

Rationale: Not all recreation activities are appropriate for the SSR; thus, the public needs to be informed as to the available and acceptable recreation opportunities and the locations of those activities on the Ranch. By providing information on the recreational opportunities available at SSR, public expectations are satisfied and management of the area becomes easier.

Management Actions:

Publish in the Federal Register Supplemental Rules regulations and policies that are in line with opportunities for SSR, within 30 days of approval.

Place signs informing the public of SSR’s regulations and existing trails within 6 months of the SSR plan’s completion at all parking and trail entrances.

Major areas of sign placement will be along the east side of the river at trail heads, Carson River Park, ACRNA, Red House complex at SSR and along portions of Prison Hill.

Design and publish a pamphlet for distribution to the public that provides information on recreation opportunities available at the SSR within 12 months of this plan's completion in both English and Spanish.

Publish a Federal Register notice stating that management has the option of temporarily closing areas for the resource protection and public safety hazards.

Within one year of the completion of this plan initiate a volunteer program that will assist with the cultural, educational, interpretive and natural resource management of the SSR. Visitation will be monitored as to its impacts of natural and cultural resources by volunteer assistance.

All permits (commercial, competitive and organized events) must meet with existing BLM regulations and be considered on a case by case event.

Objective D: Implement a fee structure that will assist with offsetting facility costs at the SSR. This fee structure will be for special recreation uses such as the group picnic area, group recreation activities, commercial or competitive events in accordance with the BLM's existing fee program.

A vehicle entrance fee to the SSR facilities maybe a future option and may entail the implementation of a low daily fee or year-long pass. A non-attendant (iron ranger) box would be used to collect fees for those individuals using formal structural facilities, but not those passing through on the regional trail system (Carson River, Mexican Ditch and Prison Hill trails) that intersects the SSR.

Rationale: The cost of managing the SSR will exceed \$100,000 annually in maintenance costs alone. Providing a revenue source for the Ranch will assist with the construction and upkeep of facilities for visitors.

Management Actions:

Decide by June of 2001 if there will be a public entrance fee to the SSR. Public use of trails that connect with the Carson City Trail system will be exempt from fees. Add this fee structure to the already existing Carson City Field Office Pilot Fee Program by September of 2001.

Install appropriate fee signs and collection stations by September of 2001. Considerations include a fee of \$5 per vehicle or a seasonal pass of \$20.

Objective E: Open SSR to the general public in the year of 2000.

Rationale: Since acquisition, the west side has been closed to the public. In order for this property to fulfill the recreation uses for which it was acquired, it must be open to the public.

Management Actions:

Construct and open for public use the first vault toilet in the year 2000.

Remove dangerous or dead limbs from trees at the red house, white house and along the Mexican Ditch by opening day.

Roads identified for public vehicle closure include the roads south of the “Pole Barn” where the vehicle parking area will be, the road leading up to the sand pit, the road (bridge area) between the barn area and red house, and the road off the Carson River Park that leads to the Red House complex. Maintenance, contractor and City Utility vehicles will be exempt from this closure. Within six months of this plan’s completion, construct gates and erect signs designating vehicle closure areas and those which are open for which approved recreation activities such as walking, bicycling or equestrian use.

Within six months of this plan’s completion, designate and sign vehicle parking areas along the corral and barn complex areas and along the main access road.

Designate vehicle entrance and exit points on the west side of the SSR along the “white house” or westernmost road (old gravel pit road). Improve the designated entrance/exit road for vehicle traffic to meet BLM specifications and Nevada Department of Transportation requirements within six months of this plan’s completion.

In the short term, place signs in appropriate locations informing the public that there is no potable water. Lock all water faucets to prevent use by the public.

Goal 1-2: Provide environmental education and interpretive opportunities at SSR.

Objective A: Identify interpretive and environmental education sites and sign for the general public by June of 2001.

Rationale: The large school age population and other interested public have expressed a need for environmental education activities for Douglas County and Carson City students and the general public. In addition, these activities provide the Carson City Field Office with an opportunity to further promote the “health of the land” concepts.

Management Actions:

Develop up to four environmental education/interpretive sites on the SSR which may be used by visiting school groups and the general public. These sites will be located at: the Red House complex, the road between fields leading to the Carson River Park and the River Path along the east side of the Carson River. No more than two school buses daily (75-student capacity) will be allowed in order to protect resources. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis and trails maps.)

Design and provide a brochure for educators and visitors that explains the basic natural science concepts by June of 2001.

Train at least two volunteers to assist with conducting interpretive and educational programs by June of 2001.

Convert the “red house” into a volunteer/visitor center unit by 2004.

Objective B: Increase public acceptance and understanding of fuels management activities – primarily prescribed fire – by providing a fuels management interpretive site commencing with the year 2000 fire field season.

Rationale: Fuels treatments, whether by prescribed burning, mechanical or chemical, can be used to achieve vegetation, safety, and recreation objectives on public lands in the West. The SSR provides an appropriate setting and opportunities to educate the public in regards to the use of these management tools.

Management Actions:

Use a progressive year fuel treatment program with interpretive signing for each of the treatment areas.

Use fire personnel to host educational talks and field sessions.

Use the treatment areas to compare different treatment options and techniques.

Issue #2: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Definition: This issue is important for both the SSR and the ACRNA. When the SSR was acquired for public ownership there was little to no public use of the Ranch. When this was an operating ranch, the health and safety of the property was within acceptable limits for a professional ranching operation. These limits were not acceptable for uncontrolled public use of the area. The issue of public health

and safety is identified to protect the resource from the public, the public from the resource, and the public from the public.

Goal 2-1: Manage the SSR and ACRNA to assure that public health and safety are fully protected from possible conflicting recreational uses.

Objective: By plan completion, identify activities for SSR and ACRNA that will not be allowed for public safety concerns.

Rationale: Enhancement of the recreational and natural resource opportunities can only be accomplished if visitors recreate in a safe environment.

Management Actions:

Publish in the Federal Register Supplemental Rules, regulations to include:

No public camping, except for permitted education groups.

Day use only (sunrise to sunset) for visitors.

Motorized vehicle use will be allowed on signed routes only, designated for such purposes. Motorized vehicles must comply with state and federal regulation with respect to spark arresters.

Mountain biking and equestrian activities will take place only on designated trails.

No vehicle traffic will be allowed off road.

No discharge of firearms, fireworks or any projectiles will be allowed.

All allowed dogs on the west side of the river must remain on a leash; their excrement must be removed from the grounds by the pet's owner or guardian.

The east side of the Carson River and the ACRNA areas may have dogs off leash. If visitor and resource problems occur due to dogs off leash, then all sections of the SSR and ACRNA will require dogs on leash and their excrement removed.

No building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, charcoal, or stove, except a portable stove using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel. Charcoal fires may be allowed when permanent approved facilities are provided.

Entrance gates will remain closed at night on the west side of Carson River

One trail head will be designated as ORV access points to the Pine Nut Mountains (Pinion Hills) on the east side of the SSR. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis and Trail maps.)

Information signs will be constructed to encourage mountain bikes to yield to hikers and horses, and hikers yield to horses to minimize conflicts.

No entry of visitors, except under BLM guided activities or permitted activities, will be along the west bank of the Carson River at the SSR; along the closed 1/4 mile portion between the Carson River Park and the Mexican Ditch trail on the west side.

Institute road and trail closures on the east side of the Carson River to reduce vehicle traffic, and restrict vehicles from the river corridor above the green vegetative line. On the east side of the river along the Mexican Dam Road, fence the west side allowing controlled access to the river. Rehabilitate some of the many roads and pull outs along the river.

All visitors fishing must carry a current Nevada state fishing license.

All refuse (trash) will be carried out by visitors or deposited in designated trash receptacles.

Goal 2-2: Design structural facilities that will enhance the recreation experience for visitors, while providing a safe environment for visitors and meeting cultural resource requirements.

Objective A: Facilities will be accessible, safe, functional and visually pleasing in the surrounding environment for visitors throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: Roads, parking lots, and new facilities need to be maintainable. They must be designed and built to BLM's engineering specifications in conformance with the SSR cultural resource management plan.

Management Actions:

Areas and facilities that are structurally unsafe or constitute a health hazard (such as hantavirus) will be posted "closed to entry" upon designation and either repaired or removed.

Consult with the cultural resource management plan before any facility or structural modifications are made.

Provide an area for a “site host” to live. Currently, this is at the red house complex. The future residence site of the SSR caretaker could be located at either of these three sites:

- A. where the current “white house” is standing and will either be upgraded for living standards or replaced by a “modular home.,” with implementation by the year 2004 if funding is available;
- B. the existing Red house; or
- C. on the north side of the Carson River Road in the northern parcel.

Designate/design a main entrance/exit gate for the ranch; possible designs include:

- A. Identify and enhance the existing middle gate (white house gate) as the main entrance and exit access for the SSR. This option may require widening the existing road to accommodate two-way traffic. (See map roads and trails.)
- B. Identify and use the western most gate on the hill (old sand pit road) as the entrance to the SSR and construct a spur road near the present three-car garage to connect with the main dirt road leading from the white house. The road will be two-way traffic from there to the pole barn parking area complex. North of the spur road, vehicles will exit via the white house gate. (See map roads and trails.)
- C. Create a loop of one-way traffic for access into and out of the SSR. Use the existing sand pit road as the entrance (westernmost gate). Designate the route as one way until the road connects with the present road leading to the pole barn parking area. The current road leading from the white house will serve as the one-way exit out of the SSR. (See map roads and trails.)

Objective B: By the date the SSR is open to the public, buildings open to the public and other structure maintenance requirements shall conform to the Office of Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Rationale: Public safety is a primary concern on the SSR. The public has the right and will expect Ranch facilities to be healthy and safe to use. BLM’s liability and public concerns will be addressed by the application of OSHA standards to facilities and improvements found on the SSR. Cultural resource concerns will be considered when making OSHA improvements.

Management Actions:

Facilities Inventory Maintenance Management System (FIMMS) requirements and support service's workload must be addressed for projects and basic maintenance requirements at the SSR.

Requirements for existing building structure integrity, tree maintenance, fire and health codes will be met.

Bridges will be inspected and maintained annually. Roads with bridges will be designated as trails for the general public; vehicular use of such bridges will be restricted to officially designated maintenance vehicles and personnel.

Facilities closed to the public will be locked and appropriate signs, window coverings, fencing or gates will be installed as necessary to meet safety requirements and standards, without unduly restricting interpretive presentations.

The access road and main parking area will be treated as appropriate to prevent or reduce air quality concerns due to dust conditions. Treatments may include but not be limited to: type two gravel application, soaping, or road surface oil application. Parking areas may be oiled or hard packed, but not paved.

The current well will be upgraded to potable water by 2001 either by chemical treatment or drilling a new well.

Issue #3: FIRE MANAGEMENT

Definition: Fire management includes all activities required for the protection of resources from wildland fire and the use of fuels treatments – most often prescribed fire – to meet land management objectives. Fire management also includes fire prevention and education, fire suppression and vegetation management.

The primary objective of fire management is to achieve a balance between fire suppression to protect life, property and resources, and to regulate fuels and maintain healthy ecosystems. Fire is an important and inevitable part of America's wildlands, and wildland fire management is a process that affects everyone. Fire, as a critical natural process, is integrated into land and resource plans and activities and is based upon the best available science.

Goal: Reduce the threat of wildfire burning on the SSR property. This includes fires that start outside or inside the Ranch property boundary.

Objective: Prevent wildfires from burning onto or on the SSR property for the life of the SSR Management Plan.

Rationale: Wildfire has the potential to damage or destroy historic structures, riparian vegetation communities, and recreational opportunities and also poses a danger to the visiting public. For these reasons wildfire should be excluded from the SSR.

Management Actions:

Identify areas where wildfire is a threat to the Ranch property during the first half of the year 2000.

Use public information programs to reduce the risk of human caused fires.

Suppress all wildfires on or threatening the SSR.

By midyear 2000, analyze and identify areas on or surrounding the Ranch property for fire restrictions and closures during high to extreme fire danger.

Use fuels treatments applications (prescribed burning, or mechanical or chemical means) to reduce hazard fuels on public lands adjacent to or just within the boundary of the Ranch property.

Use the Fire Management Plan for guidelines to wildland fire response.

The SSR is located in the Carson City Urban Area, Map Unit 5, Category A, in the Carson City Field Office's Fire Management Plan (1998).

The fire management directive in this area is aggressive initial attack with the intent of holding all unplanned ignitions to 5 acres or less 90% of the time in all fuel types. Desired burning acreage is NONE per decade. Most fires in this unit are human caused, and a strong fire prevention and education program is required. Opportunities for prescribed fire are limited to small, cautious activities. Other vegetative treatment methods such as shaded fuel breaks or managed vegetative firebreaks are practical. No dozers are to be used on Prison Hill except on gentle slopes around the edge of the feature, to protect private property. Use of air tankers in the urban area is limited for safety reasons; however, helicopter use is very appropriate.

Issue #4: ***PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES***

Definition: The SSR comprises several buildings, structures, and agricultural fields; the Ranch is in itself a significant cultural resource. The irrigation ditch extending through the Ranch is the former Mexican Ditch, once part of the Comstock Mexican Mines. The ditch served as the court ruling for the adjudication of water rights for the West. The Ranch property exemplifies the nature of a working ranch from the 1920s-1950s. The buildings and structures that comprise the

Ranch are not outstanding features individually, however, these features combined form a cohesive ranch property, especially the red house complex. Historical archaeological features are also on the Ranch, some predating the dominant ranch period. In addition to the built environment, the Ranch contains agricultural fields and upland and riparian vegetation that defines open space in Carson City and Nevada. This open space is a culturally-modified product of our environment and is very much a part of the SSR.

Goal 4-1: Manage significant cultural resources for data, conservation and public values.

Objective A: Identify all significant cultural resources located on the SSR by December 31, 2000.

Rationale: To protect and preserve significant resources, base line data is required through field investigations, background research, and completion of a report.

Management Actions:

Conduct a Class I literature search of the property at the Carson City Field Office (CCFO) of BLM and the Nevada State Museum (NSM).

Conduct a Class III pedestrian inventory of the property.

Prepare a report incorporating the background research, survey findings, historic context, and evaluation of the cultural resources identified.

Prepare a cultural management plan incorporating the above report addressing site significance and overall protection and maintenance of cultural resources.

Objective B: Maintain or improve the condition of those existing buildings and structures identified as significant or as contributing resources; specific tasks to be undertaken this calendar year and others will be completed on a periodic basis as defined in the management action.

Rationale: Periodic maintenance and improvements are required to preserve the existing significant buildings and structures in their current condition,

Management Actions:

Complete semiannual spring and fall maintenance inspections on each of the buildings.

Develop a monthly, semiannual and yearly maintenance schedules to correct problems identified during the maintenance checkup.

Prevent inadvertent impacts to the buildings, structures, and other resources in accordance with maintenance guidelines for fence painting, general repairs, ditch and field maintenance, etc. During semiannual spring and fall maintenance checks repairs will be made.

Objective C: Provide educational and preservation opportunities addressing cultural resources at the SSR; specific tasks will be completed this calendar year and others will be completed on a yearly basis.

Rationale: Public education is required to assist with the goal of successful management of significant cultural resources and provide information about the SSR and cultural resources in general.

Management Actions:

The BLM will conduct two educational tours per year, preferably during Nevada's Archaeology Awareness and Historic Preservation Week, High Sierra Workshop, or some similar activity.

At a minimum, complete one preservation project every year on those significant resources identified during the report preparation and those buildings/structures in need of repair identified during the maintenance checkup.

Develop an interpretive brochure detailing the history of the SSR and addressing cultural resource laws, values, and protection. It will be available at the Kiosks by June of 2001.

Install three to four kiosks at the red house complex, SSR/Prison Hill trail annex and trail junction of SSR and the Carson City River Park by June of 2001.

Goal 4-2: Protect buildings and structures on SSR from wildland fire.

Objective: No building or other structure will be damaged or lost to fire throughout the life of the plan.

Management Actions:

Insure adequate defensible space by removing all flammable fuels within 30' of all buildings, maintaining such space during the fire season to prevent structure damage from wildland fire.

Conduct building inspections and make recommendations on fire safe factors throughout the life of the plan. These will be conducted in cooperation with the Carson City Fire Department.

Map and catalog the resource values at risk to prioritize protection on the SSR property including buildings, structures, and archaeological sites to assist the initial attack resources responding to a wildfire.

Issue #5: *VEGETATION MANAGEMENT*

Definition: The characteristics and conditions of vegetation on the landscape largely determine the presence and quality of several resource values. The 703 acres of the SSR include wildlife habitat, visual resources and aesthetics, recreational attractions and opportunities, riparian and ecological integrity, and health and productivity of the land.

The riparian corridor of the Carson River should be managed for Properly Functioning Condition (PFC). Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation, land form, or large woody debris is present to allow a stream system to handle increases in stormflow/snowmelt runoff with limited perturbation of channel and associated riparian- wetland plant communities. Its condition currently is Functional At Risk due to upstream impediments and conditions beyond BLM's immediate control. Although Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) may not be completely achievable, efforts must be made to attain it to sustain the optimal level of resource benefits expected by the public.

Agriculture (both livestock and crop production) represents part of the cultural legacy as well as a means to maintain scenic open space. Any agricultural practice must adhere to best conservation and management practices. Conflicts between agriculture and other uses and values must be reconciled.

All vegetation is subject to fire. Fire is a natural process which may both threaten and enhance resource values, depending upon many variables. This is addressed in Issue #3.

Goal 5-1: Maintain a healthy riparian corridor on the SSR.

Objective A: Manage toward PFC in the SSR riparian corridor along the Carson River and other riparian areas on the Ranch.

Rationale: Properly functioning riparian systems meet the needs of recreation, wildlife and water quality on the SSR. PFC will also provide conditions that are expected to sustain the advanced ecological status that currently exists on the West side of the Carson River within the Ranch boundaries.

Management Action:

Complete the PFC Assessment by September 30, 1999.

Objective B: Manage vegetation along the Carson River to achieve and maintain a “Mature” Fremont cottonwood woodland.

Rationale: A “Mature” woodland as described by Woodland Suitability Group 26-59 Fremont Cottonwood is assumed to be representative of tree dominance on this site in the pristine environment. The Objective should meet the needs of recreation, wildlife and water quality on the SSR.

Management Actions:

Maintain full suppression of all fires within the riparian corridor.

Control or eradicate noxious weeds through Integrated Weed Management (IWM).

Limit public access in the riparian corridor on the west side of the Carson River within the Ranch boundaries.

Limit the number of trails in the riparian corridor.

Install signs to educate the public in the proper use of riparian areas on the Ranch.

Allow no fires (cooking or otherwise) in the riparian corridor.

No public camping, except for permitted education groups. (See Issue #2.)

Day use only (sunrise to sunset) for visitors.

All pets must remain on a leash. Feces will be removed from the grounds by the pet’s owner or guardian.

Institute road and trail closures on the east side of the Carson River to reduce vehicular traffic, restricting vehicles from the river banks.

Water management for riparian vegetation management actions (see Issue #7).

Goal 5-2: Cooperate with all interested parties to restore the Carson River Watershed.

Objective: Participate in the Carson River Integrated Management Group.

Rationale: BLM will abide by the Unified Federal Policy for Ensuring a Watershed Approach to Federal Land and Resource Management.

Management Action:

Enter into cooperative agreements, attend meetings and develop and implement guidelines for proper management of the applicable watershed area.

Goal 5-3: Keep all or part of the SSR fields under irrigated agriculture.

Objective A: By 2002, acquire sufficient quantities of water to irrigate the 125 acres under the Alpine Degree.

Rationale: The public has expressed a desire to see the SSR facility maintain the 125 acres of irrigated fields green in a manner consistent with past private ownership practices.

Management Actions:

Seek long-term commitments for irrigation water from Carson City either through donations or partnership activities, or by purchase or lease from willing sellers.

Pursue acquisition of land meeting similar criteria of SSR riparian and open space resources. Such land acquisitions should include the associated irrigation water rights.

If there is not enough water available to irrigate, then the fields will be managed to prevent noxious weeds, erosion and non-point source water pollution. If new water becomes available, then the fields may be irrigated again.

Objective B: Manage the agricultural lands in accordance with sound haying cultural practices for producing a healthy crop.

Rationale: Proper management of the farm lands will prevent poor crop harvests, noxious weed infestations and soil or water problems.

Management Actions:

The BLM or hired contractor may seed or interseed fields to maintain or improve grass hay production and prevent weeds.

Control weeds as necessary.

Graze cows on the irrigated fields or conduct agricultural field burning, only under appropriate conditions and with appropriate resources, to reduce the dead mat of previously grown hay, thus enhancing the growing potential for hay. This in turn will protect the historic structures and riparian vegetation communities from possible fire damage due to dry hay and weed fields.

Cooperate with the Carson City Utilities Operation staff to insure that the Mexican Ditch remains in a safe working order. The city must contact the BLM when they do maintenance or project work, thus, ensuring that significant natural and cultural resources are not impacted.

Acquire guidance from resource managers to properly administer sound habitat and cost-effective means for producing grass hay under contract with an appropriate agricultural operator.

Hay Contractor stipulations and Occasional Operation requirements:

Reseed fields as necessary.

Repair and maintain irrigation gates, fences and SSR ditches as necessary using appropriate methods, including the use of mechanized equipment.

Contractor will provide tractor, swather, rake, harrow, and baler, or other equipment as necessary for a viable haying operation.

Annual Operation Requirements:

Remove dead material covering (matting) from harvested fields to facilitate next year's harvesting of the hay crop. Removal may be by burning stubble or grazing stubble. Grazing could occur after a killing frost from November to snowfall. Grazing would be managed properly to maintain a residue cover sufficient to prevent erosion during the spring runoff period. Number of cattle that could be used to graze the aftermath will vary from year to year due to amount of residue and winter weather.

The irrigated fields will be posted closed to the public year round for protection of resources and public safety.

Fertilizers and soil amendments may be applied to maintain or improve production. Prior to any application, soils will be tested. Initial fertilization rates can be provided by NRCS. Subsequent fertilization, if necessary, will be based on recommendations in publications B-29RV or local Extension Service. Where water quality may be affected, appropriate Best Management Practices will be applied. An example is applying only the proper amount of fertilizer and irrigating correctly so that fertilizer moves directly into the root zone.

Aerate fields as needed (disk-not plowing to smooth and level) in the early spring.

Irrigate fields (April-September) as necessary to grow grass.

Maintain irrigation ditches ongoing through spring and summer.

First hay cutting in or around July by using a swather, rake, and baler. About 2-3 weeks after cutting the bales must be removed.

Restart irrigation after first cutting.

Second hay cutting may occur around the end of August into September. Store hay in existing “pole barn” on a temporary basis.

Objective C: Reseed fields with those plant species that are suited to the soils type, moisture regime and wildlife needs and uses if water becomes unavailable for irrigation and haying operation.

Rationale: Irrigation water that is being currently used on the ranch is not appurtenant to the property. Currently, the BLM has a three-year agreement with Carson City for the use of the water but after that period, that water may not be available. If the SSR loses the ability to irrigate the property, or amount of water available is reduced, then the fields should be reseeded with those species of plants that are adapted to the soils and local precipitation. The reseeding effort should be planned as to reduce the occurrence of weeds, provide habitat for wildlife and provide aesthetic values.

Management Action:

Prior to loss of water, prepare and seed hay fields to a dry land grass, forb and shrub mix. Seeded mix must be irrigated to get plants established before loss of irrigation water.

Plant those fields that currently are not irrigated, and cannot be irrigated due to the condition of the irrigation structures (ditches and turnouts).

Manage fields to maintain and improve seedings by appropriate methods, such as; spraying for weeds, mowing, grazing, etc.

Goal 5-4: Manage upland plant communities.

Objective A: Manage existing upland vegetation to achieve late seral to Potential Natural Community (PNC).

Rationale: Vegetation on the uplands should be managed to maintain or improve existing component of native plants for ecological function, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.

Management Action:

Inventory ecological sites and determine ecological condition and rangeland health. Control wildfire to prevent the invasion of cheatgrass.

Manage recreational use in order to minimize the impacts to vegetation and soils on the upland sites.

Objective B: Rehabilitate those areas of uplands on the SSR where the vegetation has been disturbed or removed.

Rationale: There are several areas on the SSR where upland vegetation has been removed due to past farming operations. Reseeding would provide ground cover, reduce erosion, provide cover for wildlife and improve aesthetics.

Management Action:

Plant with native species and protect sites from impacts until vegetation has established.

Issue #6: *WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT*

Definition The SSR supports a wide variety of wildlife species because of the diverse habitat types present. The animals find food, cover, water and space to meet their needs in the riparian cottonwood and willow trees and brush clumps along the Carson River and the Mexican Ditch, in the hayfields, throughout the sagebrush/bitterbrush/desert peach dominated uplands, and in the rocky canyons of Prison Hill. The riparian habitat along the river is by far the most important, providing some or all of the life requirements for 80% of the wildlife species present. The brushfields above the river provide important habitats for the more typical desert species, including resident and migratory mule deer. Maintaining, enhancing and protecting the SSR habitats are critical to continued wildlife use of the area.

Goal 6-1: Protect, enhance and maintain wildlife habitats on the SSR.

Objective A: Maintain and protect the existing raptor nesting and wintering habitat in the cottonwood and willow stands throughout the SSR.

Rationale: The hawks, eagles and other raptorial birds using the SSR are mostly to totally dependent on the riparian forest habitats for their nesting and wintering requirements. These riparian forests are one of the most rapidly disappearing habitat types in the west. Loss of the woods means loss of the birds, which means loss of one of the key attractions on the Carson River flood plain.

Management Actions:

Census annually all cottonwood and willow trees on SSR for stick and cavity nests, and for any damage by beavers.

Protect all trees six inches or more in diameter from beaver damage by wrapping them with chicken wire or field fencing.

Control beavers as needed.

Restrict public use of the riparian forest habitats within one quarter mile of any active bald eagle or golden eagle nest.

Ensure adequate survival of young cottonwood trees as replacements for the existing mature trees, as well as for those killed or damaged by beavers. See Issue #5 Vegetation Management and Issue #7 Water Management for additional management actions relevant to wildlife habitat protection.

Exclude haying, grazing and burning from the triangle field (see map); plant cottonwood saplings in the field to serve as additional and replacement raptor nesting habitat over time. See area #1 on Attached Map

Objective B: Enhance and protect the habitats for shrub, cavity and ground nesting species throughout SSR to the extent consistent with Issues #5 and #7.

Rationale: Bird watching is an important and non-consumptive use of the wildlife resources in the Carson River valley. Ground, cavity and shrub nesting species comprise the majority of the bird species present at SSR. Preservation and enhancement of existing habitats are vital to the continuation of this public use.

Management Actions:

Encourage the formation of dense brushy and grassy habitats along the edges of the hayfields by excluding haying and burning operations from the outside five (5) feet of each hayfield.

If natural reproduction is not evidenced within five years, begin a program of native shrub plantings along the perimeter of each hayfield.

To expand the presence of cavity nesting bird species, install appropriate artificial nesting boxes for mountain and western bluebirds, tree swallows, kestrels, and other cavity obligate species.

Exclude Area #2 from haying, grazing and burning; drill the field with mixture of basin wild rye and adapted forbs; removal of the fence along the river edge of the field if consistent with city park plan. See Area #2 on Attached Map.

To protect the newly establishing willow stand along the west edge of the field, alternate grazing and burning as litter removal tool; on grazing years monitor use on willows and remove livestock if use exceeds 40%; protect the willows during control burning operations. See Area #3 on Attached Map.

Interseed area #4 where possible with a bunchgrass/forb mixture; exclude from grazing (Area #4 on Attached Map).

Objective C: To the extent possible with the water available, enhance, restore and protect the wetland habitats present.

Rationale: Wetland habitats are not disappearing throughout the west as rapidly as some other habitats because most of them are already gone, and those left have some legal protection. Developments at the SSR provide an opportunity to restore some small portion of what may once have been present, with consequent increases in wildlife and bird watching opportunities.

Management Actions:

Whenever water is acquired for irrigation of the hayfields, acquire enough so that the field north of the paved road and east of the Mexican Ditch can be irrigated at the same rate as the hayfields.

In conjunction with Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and Ducks Unlimited, develop a restoration strategy for these wetlands, to include a grant request under provisions of the North American Wetland Conservation Act for this restoration.

Fence the wetland area to exclude grazing and haying; locate the fence at least 20 feet into the grass/sedge community to create ground cover sufficient for nest concealment; burn as necessary but outside of the nesting season. See Area #5 on Attached Map.

Fence the emergent wetland complex in the northeast corner of the field to exclude grazing and haying; provide water as indicated above; periodic burning may be necessary but will be conducted outside of the nesting season. See Area #6 on Attached Map.

All uplands west of Mexican Ditch, as monitoring data identifies missing vegetal and/or habitat components in the upland plant communities, begin

small-scale hand plantings of native plants to fill those voids. Seed would be broadcast and, at most, hand raked into the upper one inch of the soil profile. All cultural sites would be avoided unless broadcast seeding only would have protective benefits to those sites. Initial plantings would not exceed one acre in size, and only increased as monitoring demonstrates success. Area #7 on Attached Map.

Goal 6-2: Maintain and improve the aquatic habitats present in the Carson River to enhance aquatic species and other wildlife dependent on the river environment.

Objective A: Work to improve the SSR's aquatic environment throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: The aquatic ecosystem is an important overall habitat concern for land animals who share the river. Birds and fish also depend on a sound aquatic environment for food and shelter.

Management Action:

Develop and implement a monitoring protocol for the Carson River aquatic habitats present at SSR that includes both the biological and the non-living components of this ecosystem.

Issue #7: WATER MANAGEMENT

Definition: Water is necessary to maintain the agricultural setting of the SSR and the riparian wildlife habitat along the Carson River corridor. The Carson River is not only the necessary source of irrigation for the fields, but provides the desirable recreation the public expects. A potable water source will also provide drinking water for the visiting public at the facilities.

Goal 7-1: Maintain stream flow and/or improve water quality of the Carson River to meet state water quality standards for the river at the SSR.

Objective: Maintain sufficient water in the Carson River to support riparian resources values, provide for the needs of wildlife and support recreational uses of the area for the life of the SSR Management Plan.

Rationale: Adequate and proper stream flow in the Carson River is critical for maintenance of riparian vegetation communities, associated wildlife and recreation opportunities on the east side of the SSR. Acquiring an in-stream flow water right for this stretch of the river is one means of protecting adequate stream flow to support the uses and values found on SSR.

Management Action:

Acquire in-stream flow water rights for the Carson River where it flows through the SSR lands by 2003.

Goal 7-2: Supply safe, high quality drinking water to the visiting public at the SSR.

Objective: Develop and provide potable water sources at the SSR or bring in the water from outside which will meet State and Federal drinking water standards by 2001.

Rationale: Visitors to the SSR will expect that potable water will be provided. Drinking water availability is a characteristic of a quality facility and is needed to make recreation at SSR a more pleasant experience.

Management Actions:

In the short term (6 months to a year), place signs at the facility parking lots stating that visitors should bring their own drinking water.

In the long term (1 to 2 years) provide drinking water by either connecting with the Carson City water system or developing a potable water system at the SSR. Since the Carson City is a partner in the operation and management of the facility, providing city water will be more desirable and perhaps less expensive in the long term. The second management option is to either redesign the existing water system or develop a new one which will meet the need for safe drinking water.

Regardless of which system is put in place, periodic chemical and biological monitoring will be required to meet the drinking water standards.

Issue #8: *NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT*

Definition: Non-point source pollution usually refers to surface runoff from watersheds which may contain sediment (eroded soils), organic matter, and chemicals (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.). Some non-point source pollutants may be the result of natural geologic processes occurring in pristine watersheds, while other events are the result of accelerated erosion and runoff from degraded or poorly managed areas. Such pollutants also occur in return flows from irrigation and must also be considered.

Goal: Compliance with Section 208 Water Quality Management Plan developed by the State of Nevada under the Clean Water Act.

Objective: Minimize non-point source pollution (sediment yields) into the Carson River from the SSR for the life of the plan.

Rationale: There are Federal and State laws and statutes governing water quality standards, and compliance requirements that must be met. The Clean Water Act (33 USC 1251 et seq.) and the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 USC 300f et seq.) define the Federal standards, while Section 208 of the Nevada State Water Quality Management Plan implements local regulation.

Management Actions:

Apply Best Management Practices in management of the SSR, to reduce or stop non-point source pollution, including (but not limited to) the following actions:

Manage the agricultural fields and haying operation to minimize sediment production.

Insure that all trails and roads are properly placed and maintained to prevent non-point source pollution. No trail should be within 150 feet of the low water mark.

Repair and/or maintain in good condition all irrigation ditches and return flow channels.

Stabilize head cuts or other erosion in meadows and fields when they occur.

Photo and ocular monitoring will be done on a yearly basis.

Issue #9: *RELATIONSHIPS TO ADJACENT EXTERNAL AREAS*

Definition: The SSR is located within the developing suburban area of Carson City. Management of the Ranch will impact surrounding areas and be impacted by activities on surrounding private land. Being a good neighbor, by working with adjacent land owners, utilities and the local government, opportunities to enhance Ranch values and surrounding areas will be provided, while minimizing conflicts. This issue is identified to provide a basis for working with parties owning and operating on surrounding private land to benefit them and the management of the SSR.

Goal 9-1: Manage in partnership with adjacent landowners to enhance the recreational opportunities at the SSR.

Objective A: Coordinate with Carson City Parks and Recreation Department on the development of their Carson River Park's picnic and developed sites and the Carson River and Mexican Ditch trails over the next ten years.

Rationale: Working with Carson City will provide for better implementation of long- and short-term planning goals that yield benefits to citizens, Carson City and BLM.

Management Action:

As per the Cooperative Agreement with Carson City Parks and Recreation Department, work within the Carson City's Carson River Master Plan in the formation of the SSR and Ambrose Carson River Natural Area's (ACRNA) planning efforts. Develop a portion of the SSR adjacent to the Carson City Park in conjunction with the City's plan for a parking lot, picnic and playground facilities. Such efforts might entail relocating the existing fence 50 yards to the west and reconstructing the irrigation ditch with the City's assistance.

Objective B: Acquire access easements where possible to assist with river portage and trail alignments.

Rationale: A continuous trail and river route will benefit a large number of recreationists and prevent possible trespasses on private lands.

Management Action:

Acquire conservation easements from willing land owners adjacent to the SSR and the ACRNA. Work in conjunction with Carson City on this project.

Goal 9-2: Manage land use authorizations for rights-of-way to protect natural resource values.

Objective A: Seek to amend existing authorizations and allow new authorizations to minimize right-of-way impacts on natural resource values such as visual resources and vegetation. All existing and proposed authorizations will be analyzed for their impacts and evaluated for possible changes to reduce these impacts. Within one year of the completion of the plan existing authorizations will be analyzed and the holders of those found to be candidates for improvement will be contacted to discuss possible actions.

Rationale: The SSR is located in an area of mixed land ownership. The private land in the vicinity is being developed into home sites. From this increase in population density, come requests for utility and road access across the Ranch. By accommodating such requests while controlling impacts through mitigating measures such as confining authorizations to existing corridors, underground installation, etc., we will be able to shape and control the potential impacts.

Objective B: Coordinate with adjacent private, state and city/county landowners to ensure SSR does not necessarily adversely affect adjacent private property throughout the life of the plan when requested.

Rationale: Good relations with neighbors will enhance partnerships and the health of the land all around.

Management Actions:

Inform neighbors of any land actions that might affect them. Examples would include burning of fields, flood control, road/dust maintenance, etc.

Coordinate and meet with neighboring land owners to resolve issues regarding adverse impacts to private land resulting from management of the SSR. will complement similar opportunities found at SSR.

Goal 9-3: Seek opportunities to protect and enhance the existing rural character of low lying areas in Eagle Valley for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Objective A: Acquire additional lands or interests in lands near the SSR, from willing sellers, that will contribute to one or more of the following purposes; protect open space, promote recreational opportunities, protect wildlife habitat, prevent development of the floodplain, contribute to the objectives in the Carson City River Park's Plan by 2009.

Rationale: The Carson City area is developing rapidly. Population growth and the associated conversion of existing agricultural lands into residential developments threaten to destroy the rural character of Eagle Valley. Existing agricultural lands provide numerous benefits to the general public including; serving as functional floodplains, providing infiltration sites to recharge groundwater supplies, visual aesthetics, quality recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat, open space and in these way and others they make a substantial contribution to quality of life in this area. Protection of these attributes will benefit the general public now and in the future.

Management Actions:

Acquire conservation easements on additional lands in low lying areas of Eagle Valley that would serve to complement activities and management of the SSR.

Acquire additional lands in low lying areas of Eagle Valley that are threatened by development. Lands in the vicinity of SSR with water rights that could be used to protect wildlife habitat or maintain agricultural operations on the SSR would be considered a priority. Lands could be purchased outright or acquired through exchange. Lands would only be acquired on a willing seller, willing buyer basis.

Seek funding through the Land and Water conservation Fund, Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act or other sources to fund desired acquisitions.

Consult with Carson City, the State of Nevada, local landowners and other interested parties prior to the completion of any land acquisition.

Any lands acquired in Eagle Valley in the vicinity of the SSR would be managed under the applicable provisions of the SSR Interdisciplinary Management Plan. Additional goals, objectives and management actions could be amended to the SSR plan if deemed necessary by a BLM interdisciplinary team.

Issue #10: *MANAGEMENT OF THE AMBROSE CARSON RIVER NATURAL AREA (ACRNA)*

Definition: The ACRNA provides recreational access to the Carson River corridor, Carson City's Bicycle System Plan and Carson City's Eagle Valley Trail system. Since most of the lands along the river corridor are in private ownership, the ACRNA and SSR provide valuable public access to this unique river resource. Maintaining public access to the river is considered a high priority by the public. The ACRNA has been identified in the city plan as a community staging area that will ultimately connect city trails with other BLM sites including Centennial Park trail head, Prison Hill Recreation Area and the SSR. In addition, it will provide access to water based recreation such as river/rafting and fishing access.

The ACRNA and related river resources offer exceptional opportunities for EE. Many schools visit the ACRNA for this purpose. Similar EE opportunities can also be found approximately one mile south, at the SSR. However, public demand, scheduling conflicts, accessibility and seasonal (wildlife) constraints may limit EE opportunities at SSR.

Goal 10-1: Provide safe, controlled public access to the river corridor while concurrently protecting the river environment.

Objective A: Provide adequate information signing at all points of access to the ACRNA and related river corridor throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: Signing will provide information to the visiting public regarding acceptable uses for the area, trail head access points and boundaries.

Management Action:

Comply with the same regulations published for the SSR as stated in Issue #2. Thus, ensuring similar regulations along the river corridor on public lands.

Objective B: Limit motorized vehicle access within the ACRNA to the main access road and parking lots (2) for the life of the plan.

Rationale: Preventing motorized access to the river will reduce adverse impacts to the river environment, reduce trash, vandalism, user conflict and management costs while promoting a safe, accessible area.

Management Actions:

Maintain the existing OHV/ORV closure on ACRNA lands (consistent with 43 CFR 8364.1) Inform public of any changes to this designation by publishing such in the Federal Register.

Objective C: Maintain and/or upgrade the ACRNA access road and parking lots on an as needed basis throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: Maintaining or upgrading road and parking lot surfaces will provide safe access, and reduce dust, erosion or potential runoff to the river.

Management Actions:

Conduct quarterly inspections of the access road and parking lots to determine if maintenance is required. Coordinate such maintenance needs with Carson City.

Upgrade surface of parking lot areas with base material similar to existing road base on access road.

Goal 10-2: Provide low impact recreation and environmental education opportunities at the ACRNA.

Objective A: Coordinate with the local school districts , Nevada State Parks and Carson City Parks and Recreation Department to provide additional EE and interpretive opportunities at the ACRNA throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: The EE opportunities offered at the ACRNA will complement those available at SSR. Providing two separate EE areas along the river will provide schools and other groups other options to resolve time, scheduling, demand, accessibility or seasonal (wildlife) constraint conflicts.

Management Actions:

Work cooperatively with Carson City and schools in securing grants, developing interpretive brochure(s) and low key interpretive signing.

Allow Carson City to provide temporary rest room facilities (porta-potties) at the ACRNA during peak use.

Objective B: Provide trail loop access opportunities within the ACRNA along the Carson River throughout the life of the plan.

Rationale: The ACRNA has been identified in Carson City’s Bicycle System Plan and Eagle Valley Trail System Plan as a “community staging area,” a key component of their overall city trail plan. A trail loop design will connect to planned city trail segments and a pedestrian bridge over the Carson River, will reduce impacts to existing trails and eliminate the existing “dead end” trail alignments.

Management Actions:

Increase the trail system on BLM lands along the river from 700' to 1,700' within four (4) months of City ”footbridge” construction.

Insure that the current parking area and trail adjacent to the parking lot allow rafting and canoeing portage access. Sign the area if necessary to notify visitors of access requirements.

All persons fishing will be required to possess a fishing license as required by the State of Nevada.

Goal 10-3: Manage the ACRNA to ensure the protection of public health and safety.

Objective: Reduce visitor use conflicts, resource damage, visual “eyesores” and trash accumulation at the ACRNA throughout the life of the plan.

Management Actions:

Develop a partnership or cooperative agreement(s) with Carson City to improve current park facilities and provide law enforcement at the ACRNA.

Promote “**Pack It In Pack it Out**” concepts by signing and reducing the numbers of trash receptacles.

No public camping.

Day use only (sunrise to sunset) for visitors.

Motorized vehicle use will be allowed on signed routes only, designated for such purposes. Emergency and law enforcement operations will be an exception.

Mountain biking and equestrian activities will take place only on designated trails.

No vehicle traffic will be allowed off road.

No discharge of firearms, fireworks or any projectiles will be allowed.

The east side of the Carson River and the ACRNA areas may have dogs off leash. If visitor and resource problems occur due to dogs off leash, then all sections of the SSR and ACRNA will require dogs on leash and their excrement removed.

No building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, charcoal or stove, except a portable stove using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel.

Information signs will be constructed to encourage mountain bikes to yield to hikers and horses, and hikers yield to horses to minimize conflicts.

Institute road and trail closures on the east side of the Carson River to reduce vehicle traffic, and restrict vehicles from the river corridor above the green vegetative line.

All visitors fishing must carry a current Nevada state fishing license.

All refuse (trash) will be carried out by visitors or deposited in designated trash receptacles

IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

The monetary cost of running the Silver Saddle Ranch and Ambrose Carson River Natural Area will be shared with partnerships the BLM has with Carson City and public volunteers. The cost explanation for the following budget is as follows:

Salaried Positions: A volunteer caretaker will be needed to assist the BLM monitoring the ranch and maintenance activities. The park ranger position will assist with visitor contacts, interpretive and environmental education activities, volunteer programming and some maintenance activities. The law enforcement position is a possibility with sharing a position through Carson City's Parks and Recreation Department. The BLM Staff Assistance position is all the time various resource specialists will spend at the SSR including: an archaeologist, outdoor recreation planner, range conservationist, wildlife biologist, soil scientist, and fire personnel.

The water costs will vary on whether BLM replaces the existing wells or brings in a line of water from Carson City Utilities.

Initial Five-Year Costs (Capital Costs) are those necessary to implement the Silver Saddle/Ambrose Carson River Natural Area plan. Examples include:

- trails and parking lots will need to be built or maintained for both sites
- maintenance of buildings and sites
- providing a contact station and caretaker residence

providing interpretive facilities and a picnic site

There is a possibility of collecting fees to assist with the maintenance of the Silver Saddle Ranch. Regular fees covered for commercial, organized and competitive events will follow the standard BLM guidelines. In addition, a daily fee of \$5 per vehicle might be charged for persons parking in the SSR and using the facilities. The park ranger position or an “iron ranger” drop box would assist with the collection of fees.

PROPOSED PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

Silver Saddle Ranch and ACRNA Capital/Operating/Maintenance Costs and Projected Revenues

Estimated Costs	
- Silver Saddle Ranch -	
<u>CAPITAL COSTS</u>	
Potable Water System	
• 2 wells, or	\$30,000
• 4-inch water line (tie-in w/ city system) @\$29 per foot for 1/2 mile	\$75,000
Initial Five-Year Costs	
vault toilets	\$23,000
electrical (wiring, parking lots, etc.)	\$5,000
vegetation	\$5,000
buildings and cultural resource maintenance	\$25,000
irrigation system maintenance	\$5,000
interpretative signage	\$25,000
contact station	\$20,000
white house removal/modular home purchase	\$53,000
group picnic area development	<u>\$10,000</u>
Subtotal	\$171,000
	(\$37K annually for 5 years, inflation adjusted)
Total Capital Costs	\$201,000 – \$246,000
<u>ANNUAL OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE COSTS</u>	
Salary	
Caretaker (volunteer)	\$3,600
Park Ranger (GS-5/7)	\$28,000 – \$44,000
Law Enforcement Ranger (GS-9, seasonal)	\$23,000
BLM Resource Staff Assistance (GS-11 equivalent)	<u>\$58,000</u>
Subtotal	\$112,600 – \$128,600
Miscellaneous	
Buildings (incl. cultural resources) and Trails Maintenance	\$5,000 – \$10,000
Total Operating and Maintenance Costs	\$117,000 – \$138,600
- ACRNA -	
Annual Maintenance Costs	\$3,000 – \$4,000
Projected Revenues	
Fee Collection	
Individual Visits (20/day @\$5/person – if collected)	\$36,500
Group Picnic Area (50/year @\$100/group)	<u>\$5,000</u>
Total	\$41,500

SSR and ACRNA PLAN EVALUATION

The BLM will conduct informal evaluations of the Interdisciplinary Management Plan for the Silver Saddle Ranch and Ambrose Carson River Natural Area on an annual basis. Evaluations will be conducted by the BLM Silver Saddle Ranch Management Team. Progress in implementing the prescribed management actions and the effectiveness of the actions in achieving stated objectives will be addressed. Management actions scheduled for implementation in the following year will be reviewed and prioritized. Funding needed to complete implementation of these actions will be reviewed for adequacy and modified as necessary. Funding will be requested during the Field Office budget formulation process.

A formal evaluation will be completed every five years. The formal evaluation process will include opportunities for input by interested parties. The formal evaluation will document the following:

- 1) Document management actions that have been implemented.
- 2) Identify and prioritize management actions for future implementation.
- 3) Analyze data to determine if progress is being made toward meeting plan objectives.
- 4) Identify new management actions needed to meet established plan objectives.
- 5) Identify new issues or concerns that have arisen since plan completion.
- 6) Determine whether modifications to the existing plan are necessary.
- 7) Identify additional funding needs needed to continue implementation or make plan modifications

ALTERNATIVES

LOW IMPACT/MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE (A)

This alternative to the proposed plan focuses more on resource management than recreation management pursuits. All recreation will be low impact on resources, contain more restrictions on access and consist of less developed sites, including trails, signs, rest rooms, parking lots, irrigated agriculture and other facilities. This alternative plan will cost the least to implement, operate, and maintain.

Issue #1: RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

There will be no new trails built north of the Carson River Road or in the interior of the SSR. Trails that will partnership with the *Eagle Valley Tail System* and *Carson River Master Plan* (Mexican Ditch and West River Trail) and one new trail connecting with Prison Hill (See Alt A map) will be the only trails considered under this alternative. Existing dirt roads will be open as trails as in the Proposed Plan.

No portage site will be established along the southern end of the east side. The Carson River Park will be the main site for river day use.

If a group picnic area is planned, it will be located at the site of the present white house area. Participants will be responsible for providing portable toilets for their permitted events.

EE/interpretive walk-in-sites developed on the SSR to be used by visiting school groups as well as the general public and will be implemented at the field road between fields leading to the Carson River Park and the River Path along the east side of the Carson River. Most environmental education activities will be located at the ACRNA and along the east side of the Carson River. There will be no guided activities and no major sign age at the Red House complex. (See Alt A map and trails development maps.)

Issue #2: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

If cost effective, demolish and remove the “white house” and other associated buildings and use this area for parking and a possible location for a group picnic site. Depending on cost, the white house may receive only minimal maintenance.

Provide an area for a “site host” to live. Currently, the host resides at the red house complex and will be upgraded to acceptable living standards.

On the east side of the river along the Mexican Dam Road, fence the west side allowing controlled access to the river. Rehabilitate some of the many roads and pull outs along the river.

Since there will be zero or limited irrigation in this plan, remove interior fences that are not cultural resources.

Issue #3: FIRE MANAGEMENT

Same as Proposed Plan.

Issue #4: PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Management Actions:

Goal 4-1, Objective C: The education emphasis will be reduced. There will be fewer kiosks and interpretive signs since the majority of activity will be at the ACRNA and the east side of the Carson River/SSR area. Two special educational tours will be given each year.

The balance of the cultural management actions will remain the same.

Issue #5: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Some of the public expressed the desire to let the landscape return to a more natural state,” which means no irrigation or irrigated agriculture limited to 25 acres. The only acres irrigated would be along the road to keep the “green” appearance that the majority of the public desires. This action would still require monitoring for noxious weeds and reseeding the old fields to prevent or reduce the invasion of unwanted plants. This option would give the riparian area along the

river a chance to expand. All other actions such as PFC, acquiring water rights and managing the small irrigated areas would be the same as the Proposed Plan.

The problem and cost with eradicating noxious weeds, might lead the BLM to continue haying the existing fields of 125 acres to maintain a healthier ecosystem. This option would have to be studied and the availability of water might be the limiting factor in the amount of acreage under irrigation.

Issue #6: WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan unless there is reduced or no irrigation. Area 1,2,5, and six on the Wildlife Map will be reseeded, however, with the lack of water, seeding may not take. The animal and bird species may differ due to the variance in vegetation.

Issue #7: WATER MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

Issue #8 NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

Issue #9: RELATIONSHIPS TO ADJACENT EXTERNAL AREAS

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

Issue #10: MANAGEMENT OF THE AMBROSE CARSON RIVER NATURAL AREA (ACRNA)

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

ALTERNATIVE A: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

Silver Saddle Ranch and ACRNA Capital/Operating/Maintenance Costs and Projected Revenues

Estimated Costs	
- Silver Saddle Ranch -	
<u>CAPITAL COSTS</u>	
Potable Water System	
• 2 wells, or	\$30,000
• 4-inch water line (tie-in w/ city system) @\$29 per foot for 1/2 mile	\$75,000
Initial Five-Year Costs	
vault toilets	\$23,000
electrical (wiring, parking lots, etc.)	\$5,000
vegetation	\$5,000
buildings and cultural resource maintenance	\$10,000
irrigation system maintenance	\$10,000
interpretative signage	\$15,000
contact station	\$20,000
white house removal/modular home purchase	\$10,000
group picnic area development	<u>\$10,000</u>
Subtotal	\$108,000
	(\$23.4K annually for 5 years, inflation adjusted)
Total Capital Costs	\$138,000 – \$183,000
<u>ANNUAL OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE COSTS</u>	
Salary	
Caretaker (volunteer)	\$3,600
Law Enforcement Ranger (GS-9, seasonal)	\$23,000
BLM Resource Staff Assistance (GS-11 equivalent)	<u>\$58,000</u>
Subtotal	\$84,600
Miscellaneous	
Buildings (incl. cultural resources) and Trails Maintenance	\$5,000 – \$10,000
Total Operating and Maintenance Costs	\$89,600 – \$94,600
- ACRNA -	
Annual Maintenance Costs	\$3,000 – \$4,000
Projected Revenues	
Fee Collection	
Individual Visits (20/day @\$5/person – if collected)	\$36,500
Group Picnic Area (50/year @\$100/group)	<u>\$5,000</u>
Total	\$41,500

WORKING RANCH/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ALTERNATIVE (B)

This alternative focuses on special recreation use by one or two types of participants. More intense recreational facilities will be developed to accommodate the select type of use. Public access will be limited to about three-quarters of the SSR due to the concessionaire or not-for-profit organizations operating facilities. Recreation will be developed on the east side of the Carson River and the Prison Hill connection similar to the Proposed Plan. The historic agricultural fields may be maintained in this alternative. Alternative B is the highest in cost and the BLM would have other partners (not-for-profit/foundations) or concessionaires to support this plan. However, this plan could also produce the most revenue in terms of use and concessionaire fees paid to the BLM for operation. This plan would allow for intensive and structured regional EE programs. If the farm/ranch option is chosen, it could be used by educators and the general public to show and educate about a life style that is rapidly disappearing from the Carson, Eagle, and Washoe valleys and the Reno/Sparks area.

Issue #1: RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

Only one OHV/ORV staging area will be located on the east side of the Mexican Dam road along SSR eastern and southern boundaries. The Sedge Road location east of present housing development would remain a probable location for a staging area to mitigate scenic, noise and dust impacts.

There will be no trails north of the Carson River Road and only one new trail will be constructed to connect with Prison Hill (See Alt B map).

Public access to main Ranch complex will be controlled due to ranching/farming areas/environmental education camp. Visitors will either have to pay an entrance fee to the “farm attraction” or pay to participate at the center. Fees could range from \$5 per adult (farm attraction) to \$30/person/day for the EE program.

Living ranch interpretive programs will be provided on a scheduled basis by concessionaire (permittee). The farm attraction will not include the haying and cattle operations as that they are under permit to Carson City. Other farm activities and interpretation of the haying operation are viable options.

If an EE camp plan is chosen, dormitories, kitchen area, staff quarters, classrooms, and the like will have to be designed and built. The site for this development will be around the back main entrance road in order not to interfere with present cultural features.

Access to trails along the southern area of the SSR will have to be under guided BLM activities.

Rely on Carson City to develop picnic facilities at the Carson River Park.

Walking, hiking, horse back riding, bicycling activities will be allowed in areas away from the red house complex and will include Prison Hill, east side of the river, some portions of the Mexican Ditch.

Provide a footpath and several access points along the east side of the river corridor. Parking areas for hiking, biking, equestrian or water base recreation (fishing or river rafting access) will be provided along the current entrance for the "River Path Trail" and at the southernmost SSR boundary. Trail spurs and roads that bisect the trail will be closed by using permanent barriers such as rocks, wooden posts or earth berms. The installation of a rest room on the east side of the river for SSR hikers, fishing and OHV/ORV activities is a possibility. A fence along the road with opening at designated entrances along the east side of the SSR will be installed. (See Recreation and Education Emphasis and Pastoral Ranching Emphasis.)

White House area will be used as a BLM information/volunteer center since Red House complex is off-limits to general public due to attraction operations.

A trail from the white house/parking area must be constructed to join the planned singular trail on the east side of Prison Hill.

Establish a river portage site along the southern end of the east side.

If a group picnic area is planned, it will most likely be located on the east side of the river due to the limited space set aside for farm/ranch and camp developments on the west side.

EE/interpretive sites developed on the SSR to be used by visiting school groups and the general public will be developed along the east side of the river and at the ACRNA. Since the red house complex will be committed to the farm/ranch or EE attraction, the west side will constitute severe limitations to EE activities.

Establish Park and River Path along the east side of the Carson River. (See map trails development maps.)

Issue #2: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Management Actions:

Except for the following the same as the Proposed Plan:

The “white house” site might be the only parking site for the general public on the west side. Trail access to Prison Hill and the Mexican Ditch must start from here. The white house would be converted into a volunteer/visitor center contact for the BLM; alternatively, the white house would be demolished and replaced by a modular unit designed for this purpose.

Provide an area for a “site host” to live. This would have to be in the vicinity of the white house complex since the red house area will be used for visitors whether the farm/ranch or EE attraction is picked.

To meet BLM requirements, assist with the engineering and planning for the layout of the education camp alternative – if chosen. If more buildings are needed for the farm attraction, they must also meet BLM requirements.

On the east side of the river along the Mexican Dam Road, fence the west side to allow for controlled access to the river and rehabilitate some of the many roads and pull outs along the river.

Issue #3: FIRE MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Same as Proposed Plan.

Issue #4: PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Management Actions:

Major conflicts are possible if either the Pastoral Ranch and Environmental Education groups use much of the historic areas. Prior to the execution of any contracts or concessionaires commence operations, the archaeologist must be involved with project plans. Concessionaires would have to construct new buildings to meet and blend with the historic landscape; if old buildings are used, the exterior must have limited modifications. This could limit the types of concessionaire operations who apply for use of the area.

The rest of the management actions are the same as Proposed Plan.

Issue #5: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

If the farm/ranch attraction alternative is chosen, then 120 acres would be irrigated. In addition, there would be more cattle, horses and possibly sheep grazing the pasture areas and the attendant, but more extensive concerns with non-point source pollution, which must be monitored.

All other actions such as PFC, and acquiring water rights for irrigated areas would be the same as the Proposed Plan.

As a subsidy to pay for ranch upkeep and costs associated with the farm/ranch alternative, horses would be boarded. The concessionaire/contractor would have to be contractually responsible for fulfilling the ranching and irrigation conditions designed to meet BLM specifications as mentioned in the Proposed Plan.

Issue #6: WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

Issue #7: WATER MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

The farm/ranch concessionaire may be required to reimburse the BLM for any water costs incurred by the BLM if the City is paid for water rights used for irrigation.

If the EE camp or farm/ranch options are chosen, potable water sources and a larger developed septic system must be installed. The cost should be born by the permittee operators.

Issue #8 NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT

Management Actions:

Except for the following, the same as the Proposed Plan:

There is a greater possibility of non-point source pollution occurring, due to increased farming/ranching operations in the close proximity to the river corridor.

The additional septic systems needed for either the farm/ranch or EE options will have to be monitored in order not to cause water contamination in the Mexican Ditch or Carson River.

Issue #9: RELATIONSHIP TO ADJACENT EXTERNAL AREAS

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

Issue #10: MANAGEMENT OF THE AMBROSE CARSON RIVER NATURAL AREA (ACRNA)

Management Actions:

Same as the Proposed Plan.

ALTERNATIVE B: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

Silver Saddle Ranch and ACRNA Capital/Operating/Maintenance Costs and Projected Revenues

Estimated Costs	
<p style="text-align: center;">- Silver Saddle Ranch -</p> <p><u>CAPITAL COSTS</u></p> <p>Potable Water System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 wells, or \$30,000 • 4-inch water line (tie-in w/ city system) @\$29 per foot for 1/2 mile \$75,000 <p>Initial Five-Year Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vault toilets \$23,000 electrical (wiring, parking lots, etc.) \$5,000 vegetation \$5,000 buildings and cultural resource maintenance \$25,000 irrigation system maintenance \$15,000 interpretative signage \$25,000 contact station \$20,000 white house removal/modular home purchase \$53,000 group picnic area development <u>\$10,000</u> <p style="text-align: right;">Subtotal \$181,000</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Capital Costs \$211,000 – \$256,000</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">(\$39K annually for 5 years, inflation adjusted)</p>	
<p><u>ANNUAL OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE COSTS</u></p> <p>Salary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caretaker (volunteer) \$3,600 Park Ranger (GS-5/7) \$28,000 – \$44,000 Law Enforcement Ranger (GS-9, seasonal) \$23,000 BLM Resource Staff Assistance (GS-11 equivalent) <u>\$58,000</u> <p style="text-align: right;">Subtotal \$112,600 – \$128,600</p> <p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings (incl. cultural resources) and Trails Maintenance \$5,000 – \$10,000 <p style="text-align: right;">Total Operating and Maintenance Costs \$117,000 – \$138,600</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">- ACRNA -</p> <p>Annual Maintenance Costs \$3,000 – \$4,000</p>	
Projected Revenues	
<p>Fee Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Visits (20/day @\$5/person – if collected) \$36,500 Group Picnic Area (50/year @\$100/group) <u>\$5,000</u> <p style="text-align: right;">Total \$41,500</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3% on concessionaire (EE and Farm Attraction) profits \$20,000 <p style="text-align: right;">\$20,000</p>	

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MAPS AND FIGURES - on following pages



Map courtesy of Stantech Consulting