



# SPRING MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST

August 2008

Final Issue



## Application of the Findings

The findings and recommendations will be used to guide the revision of two major documents: (1) The Conservation Agreement (CA), signed in 1998 by the US Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to provide for long-term protection of the rare and sensitive species of the NRA; and (2) the General Management Plan for the Spring Mountains NRA which provides direction for managing resources on the NRA. The findings and recommendations specifically address changes that should be considered during the revision of the two documents. The Assessment looked at each conservation action in the CA and recommended to continue, revise, or drop the action.



Photo by Kate Walker

## Landscape Assessment Completed

We are pleased to announce that the Landscape Assessment for the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (NRA) is complete and available to the public. Doing a landscape assessment for the entire NRA was an enormous task, but worth the effort. A main focus of the assessment was to look at the relationship between recreation management, species/habitat protection, and species viability. The final step of the Landscape Assessment was to identify the findings from the synthesis and develop management recommendations. A few of the more significant recommendations are highlighted in this newsletter.

### Species List Recommendation:

A significant finding was the need to refine the list of special status species for the Spring Mountains NRA. The analysis indicates that some species are more imperiled and require more attention, while other species are more secure and/or broadly distributed than previously thought. The recommendation is to group the species into three categories:

- Species to include in the revised Conservation Agreement
- Species protected through existing laws and regulations
- Species to be dropped from the special status list.

### Other Recommendations Include:

- Develop vegetation management, renovation, and operation and maintenance plans for the recreational sites that specifically address special status species and enhance resources.
- In areas where fire suppression will continue, vegetation treatment and prescriptions should involve integrated resource planning and focus on a strategic, landscape perspective for treatment. Through monitoring of various treatments, determine which species benefit from vegetation treatments and which prefer late seral habitats.
- Develop, operate, and maintain the combination of recreation services, facilities, and opportunities recommended in the *Market and Financial Analysis for the Spring Mountains NRA*.
- Use the *Adaptive Management Guidelines for Recreation* from the Southern California Forests Plan to resolve potential conflicts between recreation use and important species.



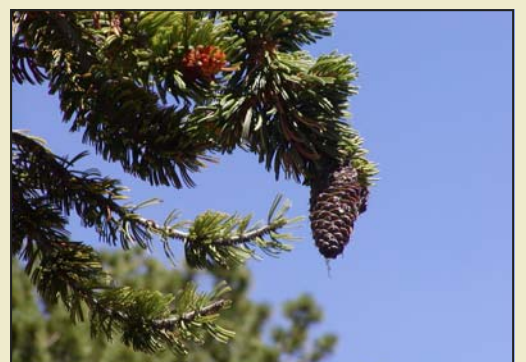
Photo by Kate Walker

## Cooperation Among Agencies

This has been a collaborative effort between the US Forest Service and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Employees from both agencies worked months on the assessment and jointly prepared the findings and management recommendations. Representatives of Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Natural Heritage Program, and Clark County Desert Conservation Program also provided data, reviewed documents, and added valuable insight and expertise to the final assessment. The partnership was essential for a quality assessment and concurrence on the findings and recommendations.

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## U.S. Forest Service

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TO:

### Process

The Landscape Assessment Team adopted the process from the “Ecosystem Analysis at the Watershed Scale” to conduct the Landscape Assessment.

The process included the following phases:

**Characterization:** Identifying physical, biological and human processes or features that affect the ecosystem.

**Issues and Key Questions:** Determining key factors, issues, and core questions that will be analyzed during the analysis.

**Current Conditions:** Documenting information about the NRA’s current conditions, which are relevant to the issues and key questions.

**Reference Conditions:** Explaining how the NRA changed over time as a result of human influences and natural disturbances.

**Synthesis and Interpretation:** Comparing the NRA’s current conditions with the reference conditions, explaining differences and why they occur, and evaluating and analyzing interactions between human uses and species.

**Recommendations:** Using all the information and findings to develop management recommendations that promote native species and habitat conservation, while providing recreation opportunities.

### How Can I Get More Information?

#### Landscape Assessment Website

Would you like to learn more about the Landscape Assessment? If so, please visit our website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/htnf/districts/smnra/major-projects.shtml>

The Landscape Assessment website contains detailed information about the project, process, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, other NRA projects, photos, and much more.

