

KASHA-KATUWE TENT ROCKS NATIONAL MONUMENT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rio Puerco Field Office has prepared this Resource Management Plan (RMP) to address the management of public land within Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument and Planning Area in Sandoval County, New Mexico. The Approved RMP provides a framework for managing the public land within the Monument and Planning Area. Preparation of the RMP was guided by the BLM's planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations 1600-1610), issued under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and by the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1601-1), and associated regulations.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

Presidential Proclamation 7394 (Appendix A) designated Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument on January 17, 2001 to provide opportunities for visitors to observe, study, and experience the geologic processes and cultural and biological objects of interest found in the area, as well as to protect these resources. The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes the President, at his or her discretion, to declare national monuments by public proclamation; these are usually historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, or other objects of historic and scientific interest on lands owned and controlled by the U.S. Government.

Before this area was proclaimed a national monument, the BLM had administratively designated it as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) through the *Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan* (USDI, BLM 1986, maintained and reprinted 1992). An ACEC is an area requiring special management attention to

protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish and wildlife resources; or other natural systems or processes on the public lands. Since comparable formations are found only in the surrounding area of New Mexico and in Turkey, the Tent Rocks ACEC was designated to protect the volcanic formations that give the area its name.

Through the *Protection Plan for Tent Rocks ACEC* (USDI, BLM 1987), the BLM developed management prescriptions to maintain the geologic, scenic, recreational, and natural components of the ACEC. Management emphasis for this area prior to monument designation was on interpreting its geologic and scenic values while allowing semi-primitive non-motorized recreation. To provide for more consistent, effective, and collaborative management of the Federal and Pueblo lands within and adjacent to the Tent Rocks ACEC, the BLM and the Pueblo de Cochiti entered into an Inter-Governmental Cooperative Agreement in 1997. This original agreement has been followed by several others promoting cooperation between the Pueblo and the BLM in managing the area. Management of the area that is now Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument as an ACEC helped to preserve the area for use and enjoyment by the public and educational institutions.

Proclamation 7394 required that the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, prepare a management plan for the new Monument. This RMP meets that requirement and provides the framework for using and managing the Monument, a unit of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), for the next 15 to 20 years. The BLM worked closely with the Pueblo de Cochiti in the development of this RMP which establishes the basis for continued

cooperation, as required by the Proclamation, as the RMP is implemented.

Under the BLM's current planning policy, a RMP must be prepared for the Monument separate from any other plan (a "stand-alone plan"). Policy also requires that the draft and proposed RMP be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The Proposed RMP/Final EIS published in October 2006 fulfilled this requirement. The EIS disclosed to the public and BLM managers the impacts likely to result from implementation of this RMP. With the signing of the Record of Decision adopting the Proposed RMP as the Approved RMP, compliance with NEPA is complete and only the Approved RMP is presented in this document. The decisions made through this RMP apply to (1) Federal lands administered by the BLM within the Monument; (2) inholdings identified in the Proclamation for acquisition, if and when they are acquired; (3) the Southwest Acquisition, recently acquired; and (4) the North Edgeland, if and when it is acquired.

PLANNING AREA

Located in north-central New Mexico in the foothills of the Jemez Mountains on the southwestern edge of the Pajarito Plateau, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument is in Sandoval County about 5 miles west of the Rio Grande (see Maps 1 and 2 in the map section). It lies about 35 miles southwest of Santa Fe and 52 miles northeast of Albuquerque. Access to the area from these cities is by State Road (SR) 16 or SR 22 from Interstate Highway 25 (I-25), then by Tribal Route 92 which connects to BLM Road 1011 (also referred to locally as Forest Service Road 266). Adjacent to the Monument are the Pueblo de Cochiti on the east and south; Santo Domingo Pueblo, Jemez Pueblo and the Santa Fe National Forest on the west; and State lands to the north. The Monument is located within New Mexico Congressional District 3. The Pueblo de Cochiti is the gateway community to the Monument.

Within the Monument boundary are approximately 5,402 acres. The BLM manages 4,124 surface acres and 4,565 acres of minerals, the State of New Mexico owns approximately 521 acres (both surface and mineral), and the balance (approximately 757 surface acres and 316 acres of minerals) is privately owned (see Table 1-1 and Map 3 in the map section). Within the 15,635-acre Planning Area, the BLM manages 5,089 surface acres (4,124 in the Monument and the 956-acre Southwest Acquisition), the State owns 9,789 acres, and 757 acres are privately owned. The BLM manages 5,530 acres of minerals (all) within the Planning Area and 9,268 acres of minerals (gold, silver, and quicksilver only). The State of New Mexico owns 521 acres of minerals. There are 316 acres of private minerals (all) and 9,268 acres of private minerals (all minerals except gold, silver, and quicksilver).

PLANNING PROCESS

The BLM planning process is designed to result in an RMP that provides a framework for managing the Monument and Planning Area. The RMP establishes areas for limited or restricted uses; allowable resource uses; resource condition objectives; program constraints; and general management direction. The BLM makes three primary levels of land use planning decisions: the RMP level, the activity level, and the site-specific level. This stand-alone RMP for the Monument and Planning Area focuses mainly on broad resource objectives and direction, but also provides some activity-level guidance and site-specific decisions. The KKTR RMP was developed using the nine basic steps of the BLM planning process, which are listed below.

- Identification of issues
- Development of planning criteria
- Data and information collection
- Analysis of the management situation
- Formulation of alternatives
- Estimation of effects of the alternatives
- Selection of the preferred alternative(s)
- Selection of the plan
- Monitoring and evaluation

TABLE 1-1

OWNERSHIP OF THE MONUMENT AND PLANNING AREA

Area & Ownership ^a	Legal Acres ^b	GIS Acres ^b	Difference	
			Number of Acres	Percent of Legal Acres
<u>Monument</u>				
<u>Surface</u>				
Federal	4,114	4,124	10	0.24
State	521	521	0	0
Private (Total)	760	757	-3	-0.40
<u>Minerals</u>				
Federal	4,554	4,565	11	0.24
State	521	521	0	0
Private (Total)	320	316	-4	-1.27
Monument Total	5,395	5,402	7	0.13
<u>Planning Area</u>				
<u>Surface</u>				
Federal	5,077	5,089 ^c	12	0.24
State	9,909	9,789 ^a	-120	-1.20
Private	760	757	-3	-0.39
<u>Minerals</u>				
Federal (all minerals)	5,517	5,530	13	.24
(gold, silver & quicksilver only)	9,388	9,268	-120	-1.28
State (all minerals)	521	521	0	0
Private (all minerals)	320	316	-4	-1.27
(all minerals except gold, silver & quicksilver)	9,388	9,268 ^a	-120	-1.28
Planning Area Total	15,746	15,635	-111	-.70

Notes: ^a During the preparation of this RMP, 9,268 acres of the Planning Area (surface only) changed from private to State ownership. The State Land Office has informed the BLM that the minerals (except gold, silver & quicksilver, which are in Federal ownership) remain in private ownership. This does not change the BLM's decision to pursue acquisition of this mineral ownership for the protection of resource values similar to those of the Monument.

^b As the result of minor boundary discrepancies, the figures in Table 1-1 show some slight differences between the recorded legal acreages for the Monument and Planning Area, and the acreages calculated using the BLM's Geographic Information System (GIS), which allows production of maps and analyses based on computerized data. Because the acreage differences are small and the time and cost to adjust them was uncertain, the BLM Planning Team elected to show the differences on this table while using the GIS figures throughout the RMP.

^c Includes 4,124 acres within the Monument boundaries and the 965-acre Southwest Acquisition.

Each of the steps in the planning process is described in greater detail in the November 2005 Draft RMP/EIS and October 2006 Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The attached Record of Decision represents the adoption of the Proposed RMP as the Plan to be implemented. Monitoring and evaluation of the resources and resource uses within Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument and Planning Area will be ongoing throughout the life of the RMP as described in Chapters 2 and 3.

Scoping/Issues Addressed

Five issues were identified for the Planning Area associated with Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument during the scoping period; no other issues were raised. These were the issues addressed by the alternatives. Issues are considered the “drivers” of the land use planning process; that is, they are topics of conflict or controversy between resource uses and management to be resolved in the RMP. Because Presidential Proclamation 7394 sets limits on how the Monument is to be managed, and because the area is small compared to most other units within the National Landscape Conservation System, conflicts among resource uses to be resolved were few. However, the BLM addressed the following topics of concern in this RMP and refers to them as “issues.” The BLM has also addressed other basic environmental and management concerns to provide comprehensive management guidance for resources within the Monument and Planning Area, as well as to satisfy legal requirements. The following issues were addressed through alternative development, data collection, and impact analysis:

- Issue 1 - *Land tenure adjustment* and how land ownership will be incorporated into the RMP for the Planning Area, including the Monument.

Within the boundary of the Monument are 521 acres of State land and 757 acres of private land. Other parcels of non-Federal land adjoin the boundary of the Monument.

- Issue 2 - How *access and transportation* will be managed in the Monument and Planning Area.

The Proclamation directs that the BLM, through this management plan, consider road closures or travel restrictions to protect the objects of interest in the Monument.

- Issue 3 - How *recreational activities* and visitor use will be managed.

Recreational use of the Monument has been increasing over the past few years. The BLM has provided additional facilities and upgrades for visitor use and enjoyment, health and safety, and resource protection.

- Issue 4 - How *ecosystem restoration* will benefit the public and the Planning Area, especially the Monument.

Oneseed juniper trees are encroaching into the grasslands and shrublands of the Monument and Planning Area. The woodlands and forest stands are overstocked, need thinning, and are being affected by drought conditions and beetle attacks.

- Issue 5 - How *American Indian uses and traditional cultural practices* will be incorporated into the management of the Planning Area, particularly the Monument.

The Monument is adjacent to lands owned by several Indian pueblos and has special meaning to local American Indians.

Issues Considered but Not Further Analyzed

The comments on the Draft RMP/EIS raised four issues or concerns related to the reintroduction of wildlife species, the use of firearms and hunting in the Monument, dogs in the Monument, and aircraft over the Monument. All of the concerns raised in the comments were addressed. Two were not within the scope of BLM planning, while the others could be addressed administratively.

The reintroduction of wildlife species is not within the scope of BLM planning since management of wildlife and hunting are under the jurisdiction of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. The BLM could cooperate through the improvement of habitat on Federal lands for reintroduced species. Likewise, because the nation's airspace is managed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), aircraft over the Monument is not within the scope of BLM planning. The BLM will work with the FAA, the Department of Defense, and any other applicable agencies to ensure that authorized aviation activities affecting the Planning Area are done in a safe and appropriate manner, with minimal noise and other impacts on resource values, uses, and visitors' experiences. The BLM will work with commercial air tour companies to determine if the tours are appropriate and, if so, under what conditions. Aircraft landings, except for administrative and emergency purposes (e.g., fire, law enforcement, search and rescue), will not be authorized.

Shooting, hunting, and trapping are specifically prohibited at the BLM's developed recreation sites in New Mexico. Currently, dogs must be on a leash no longer than 6 feet in the BLM's developed recreation areas.

Planning Criteria

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610) require that planning criteria be prepared to guide development of RMPs. These criteria ensure that BLM plans are tailored to the identified issues and that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Criteria are based on applicable law, agency guidance, public comments, and coordination with other Federal, State, local, and American Indian tribal governments.

The planning criteria established to guide development of this RMP for Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument and Planning Area are listed below:

- The Plan will be completed in compliance with FLPMA and all other applicable laws. It will meet the requirements of Presidential

Proclamation 7394 (Appendix A) to protect the objects of geologic, cultural, and biological interest within the Monument.

- The BLM Planning Team will work cooperatively with the Pueblo de Cochiti and other tribal governments, the State of New Mexico, county and municipal governments, other Federal agencies, and other interest groups, agencies, and individuals.
- The Plan will establish the guidance upon which the BLM will rely in managing the Planning Area.
- The Plan will be accompanied by an EIS based on NEPA standards.
- The Plan will provide opportunities for visitors to study, observe, and experience the geologic processes as well as other cultural and biological objects of interest within the Planning Area.
- Consistent with Proclamation 7394, the Plan will set forth a framework for managing recreational activities and experiences.
- The Plan will recognize valid existing rights within the Monument and Planning Area.
- Livestock grazing management is prescribed by laws and regulations; however, the Proclamation excludes livestock grazing from within the Monument unless it can be determined that grazing will advance the purposes of the Proclamation. [Through the RMP, the BLM has determined that grazing, used properly, may serve this function.]
- The lifestyles of area residents will be recognized in the Plan.
- The Plan will recognize the State of New Mexico's responsibility and authority to manage wildlife, including hunting, within the Planning Area.
- The acquisition of State and private inholdings within the Monument and adjacent non-Federal lands will be considered.
- The Plan alternatives will address transportation, vehicular, and other types of access to the Planning Area.

Legislative Constraints

Numerous Federal laws, executive orders, and policies guide development of BLM RMPs. Key laws applicable to this planning effort and

the development of the planning criteria include the following:

- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended
- American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, as amended
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended
- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968
- Clean Air Act of 1963, as amended
- Clean Water Act of 1948, as amended
- Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended
- National Trails System Act of 1968, as amended
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

Relationship to BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs

The BLM uses an ongoing planning process to ensure that land use plans and implementation decisions remain consistent with applicable laws, regulations, orders, and policies. The planning process thus far has involved public participation, assessment, and decision making. Approval of the RMP initiates a new phase of implementation, plan monitoring, and evaluation, as well as adjustment through plan maintenance, amendment, and revision. This process allows continuous adjustment to respond to new issues and changes in circumstances. The BLM makes decisions using the best information available; these decisions may be modified through the maintenance and amendment process as the BLM acquires new information and knowledge of new circumstances relevant to land and resource values, uses, and environmental concerns. Modifying land use plans through maintenance and amendment on a regu-

lar basis reduces the need for major revisions of land use plans. Changes in program emphasis and guidance may also require plan maintenance and amendment.

Collaboration

Intergovernmental, Inter-Agency, and Tribal Relationships

The BLM coordinated with Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies in managing this area as an ACEC prior to designation as a national monument. This coordination continued during development of this RMP, and will continue as the RMP is implemented. The Pueblo de Cochiti has participated in the management of the area under Cooperative Management Agreements since 1997. As called for by the Proclamation, the BLM will continue to manage the Monument in close cooperation with the Pueblo de Cochiti to implement the purposes of the Proclamation. In addition, the Pueblo has been a cooperating agency in this planning effort. Consultation has been carried out with the Pueblo de Cochiti and nine other American Indian Pueblos and Tribes in compliance with BLM's consultation policy.

The BLM must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 before beginning any project that may affect any Federally listed special status plant or wildlife species or its habitat. Since this Plan is considered to be a major Federal action, the BLM initiated the informal consultation process. Letters documenting this consultation are contained in Appendix F. The BLM has made a "No Affect" determination for this RMP for all Federally listed species.

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the BLM must consider the effects of its actions on sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places before a decision is made. In New Mexico, the BLM complies with Section 106 through a Protocol Agreement between the BLM and the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) signed in June 2004. The various planning documents were submitted to the SHPO with no response.

Although the Pueblo de Cochiti was the only formal cooperating agency, and consultation was required legislatively only with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer, the BLM worked closely with many other agencies throughout the planning process. The New Mexico Governor's Office and affiliated State agencies have been involved and provided input into the Draft RMP/EIS and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The Sandoval County Board of Commissioners has also been involved and kept up to date on the development of the RMP.

Other Stakeholder Relationships

Other stakeholders with widely varied interests have also been invited to participate collaboratively in the planning process. The various documents or notifications of online availability were sent to 12 businesses and 57 interest groups, as well as numerous individuals. Comments were received from several of these stakeholders.

RELATED PLANS

Relationship to BLM Plans

The BLM makes three primary levels of land use planning decisions: the RMP level, the activity level, and the site-specific level. One RMP-level plan and two activity-level plans provided guidance for managing the Tent Rocks ACEC before its designation as Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument: the *Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan* (USDI, BLM 1986, maintained and reprinted 1992; as amended), the *Final Protection Plan for Tent Rocks ACEC* (USDI, BLM 1987), and the *Albuquerque Field Office Fire Management Plan* (USDI, BLM 2004a). Decisions from these three land use documents have been incorporated into this RMP. This stand-alone RMP now replaces these other plans for lands within the Monument and Southwest Acquisition, as well as for lands that may be acquired within the Planning Area.

Relationship to Other Agencies' Plans

BLM planning regulations require that RMPs be consistent with officially approved, resource-related plans of other Federal agencies, state and local governments, and American Indian tribes, so long as these plans are also consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of the Federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands. This RMP is consistent with the following officially approved, resource-related plans of other Federal agencies, and local and tribal governments.

- The *Sandoval County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance* (Sandoval County 2005), which applies to private lands within the Planning Area.
- The *Master Plan, Design Memorandum No. 13—Cochiti Lake, Rio Grande, New Mexico* (U.S. DOA, COE 1973). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, prepared this plan in 1973 in cooperation with the Pueblo de Cochiti. The lake lies a few miles east of the Monument (see Map 2 in the map section).
- The *Santa Fe National Forest Plan* (USDA, FS 1987), which applies to lands near the northern and western boundaries of the Planning Area.
- The National Park Service's *Business Plan* for the nearby Bandelier National Monument (USDI, NPS 2001).

POLICY CONSTRAINTS

Presidential Proclamation 7394 designated Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument to protect the area's special geologic and landscape values. The Proclamation also identified management requirements intended to protect the special resource values. These requirements have become part of the RMP decisions. In June 2000, the BLM responded to growing concern over the loss of open space by creating the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). The NLCS brings into a single system some of the BLM's premier specially designated areas. As a national monument, KKTR is a component of the NLCS.

OVERALL VISION

Presidential Proclamation 7394 provides the vision for management of KKTR: Manage Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument to protect the resources that make the Monument “a remarkable outdoor laboratory, offering an opportunity to observe, study, and experience the geologic processes that shape natural landscapes, as well as other cultural and biological objects of interest” while allowing as many visitors as possible to enjoy these resources without degrading them.

DECISIONS APPEALABLE AT RECORD OF DECISION SIGNING

Some of the land use planning decisions made through this resource management plan became effective upon the signing of the Record of Decision. These are implementable decisions and require no further authorization requiring public involvement prior to their taking effect. Therefore, they may be appealed under the Department of the Interior’s appeal regulations (43 CFR Part 4). Any party adversely affected by the decisions listed immediately below may appeal within 30 days of receipt of this decision in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR Part 4.4. Publication of the Notice of Availability for the ROD/RMP in the Federal Register will be considered the date of receipt of this decision.

- Motorized and mechanized access for recreational visits to the Monument and Planning Area will be provided on 5.95 miles of road designated as “open” for public access. An additional 7.8 miles of road will have “limited” access for authorized administrative and emergency uses only. Resource protection will be provided by closing 11.5 miles of existing roads (see Tables 2-1 and 2-2 and Map 4 in the map pocket for designation of road segments).
- The off-highway vehicle (OHV) designation for the entire Planning Area will be “OHV use limited to designated roads and trails” for motorized and mechanized modes of travel.
- Under the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum classification, public motorized access is provided to approximately 1,987 Federal acres of the Planning Area. Limited motorized access for authorized administrative or emergency uses only is provided to another 2,048 acres. Non-motorized access is available to approximately 1,054 Federal acres (see Map 7 in the map section).
- Designated hiking and equestrian trails provide 8.13 miles of access to Federal lands (see Table 2-3 and Map 4 in the map pocket for trail segment designations).
- Designate 0.7 mile of converted road to “Open” trail for pedestrian use.
- Designate 0.9 mile of new trail “Open” for pedestrian and equestrian use.
- The 5,402 acres designated by Presidential Proclamation 7394 as the National Monument will also continue to be designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The Monument/ACEC will be managed for Proclamation and ACEC resource values.
- The BLM will designate Federal lands within the Planning Area (including any acquired lands) as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). Acquired lands will be operated under the rules at 43 CFR 8365 as they support the purposes of the Proclamation.
- While recognizing valid existing rights, the BLM will consider the Planning Area to be a right-of-way exclusion area. Rights-of-way for uses that do not currently exist will not be considered except for those that would support Monument purposes.
- Special geologic features will be protected on 167 acres of Federally owned Monument lands for visitor viewing and observation.
- Visual Resource Management Classes II and III will be used to guide management actions on the public lands within the Planning Area.

- In areas of intensive recreational use and along the existing primary vehicular route (BLM Road 1011) through the Monument, VRM Class III has been assigned to 1,202 acres that encompass the immediate foreground ($\frac{1}{4}$ mile) surrounding the developed facilities (see Map 11 in the map section). On the Class III lands, only activities and structures that would attract attention but not dominate the view of the casual observer will be allowed. Any changes would borrow from the basic elements found in the natural features of the surrounding characteristic landscape.
- VRM Class II has been assigned to the 3,887 remaining acres of public lands, where the intent will be to retain the existing character of the landscape by keeping implementation actions from attracting attention.



Tent Rock formations viewed from Upper Slot Canyon.