

RECORD OF DECISION (ROD)
FOR KASHA-KATUWE TENT ROCKS NATIONAL MONUMENT
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
Albuquerque District, Rio Puerco Field Office
In Cooperation with the Pueblo de Cochiti

INTRODUCTION

This volume includes a Record of Decision (ROD) and a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument (KKTR). The decision has been reached by managers of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to select the Proposed Plan of the October 2006 Proposed RMP and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS) as the RMP for managing the 5,402-acre Monument and an additional 10,233 acres of adjoining lands. The adjoining lands contain resources that complement the resource values of the Monument. The BLM has recently acquired the adjoining 965-acre "Southwest Acquisition." Acquisition of the adjoining 9,268-acre "North Edgeholding," as well as the remaining 1,278 acres of non-Federal land within the Monument boundaries, from willing sellers would contribute to effective and efficient Monument management. The entire Planning Area includes 15,635 acres; however, RMP implementation can only take place on the 5,089 acres of public land within the Planning Area. Decisions in this document are applicable to lands acquired within the Planning Area or lands covered by cooperative management agreements with non-Federal landowners.

DECISION

The decision is hereby made to approve the attached plan as the resource management plan for Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument and Planning Area. It is the Proposed Action (Alternative B) of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS of October 2006, with changes only to accommodate the stand-alone format of the attached RMP. This RMP was prepared under the regulations implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 CFR

1600). The EIS was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to assess the effects of implementing the RMP. Specific management decisions for public lands under the jurisdiction of the Rio Puerco Field Office are presented in Chapter 2, "Management Decisions," of the attached RMP. Key approved decisions include the following:

Land Tenure Adjustment identifies lands for acquisition or for other management options.

- Continue to acquire land and easements within the Planning Area, protect the resources for which the Monument was established, and ensure that any rights-of-way or land use permits issued are consistent with management goals for other resource programs and uses.
- The Monument is subject to valid existing rights.
- Nothing in the Proclamation revokes any existing withdrawal, reservation, or appropriation; however, the Monument is the dominant reservation.
- No person may use, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of the Monument without authorization, nor locate nor settle upon any of the lands.
- If willing sellers are available in the long term, the BLM will seek to acquire through exchange or purchase the 1,278 acres of non-Federal land within the Monument and the 9,268-acre North Edgeholding to complement management of Monument values.
- Seek Cooperative Management Agreements with non-Federal landowners to provide for some level of public use if acquisition is not possible.
- The Federal government owns 4,565 acres of minerals beneath the Monument. This

acreage has been withdrawn from mineral entry by conditions of the Proclamation.

- The 837 acres (521 acres State, 316 acres private) of non-Federal mineral ownership in the Monument will be acquired if owners are willing. As other minerals are acquired within the Monument, they will also be withdrawn from mineral entry under the Proclamation.
- All minerals under the 965-acre Southwest Acquisition are in Federal ownership. The North Edgeholding (9,268 acres) has split mineral ownership, with gold, silver, and quicksilver/mercury in Federal ownership and all other minerals in non-Federal ownership. The BLM will seek to acquire these mineral rights along with the surface. The BLM will withdraw all Federal minerals within the Planning Area, subject to valid existing rights.
- The 5,402 acres designated by Presidential Proclamation 7394 as the National Monument will continue to be designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).
- The Monument/ACEC will be managed for Proclamation and ACEC resource values. Management emphasis for the area will continue to be on the interpretation of geologic and scenic values, and on intensive recreational uses, especially semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities.
- The 965-acre Southwest Acquisition recently purchased by the BLM will be managed in conjunction with the Monument, and is recommended for inclusion as part of the Monument (which would require Congressional legislation).
- Lands and interests in lands acquired within the Monument boundary will become part of the Monument and ACEC. These will be withdrawn from entry or disposal except by exchange, as provided in the Proclamation.
- If acquired, the 9,268-acre North Edgeholding is recommended for inclusion in the Monument (which would require Congressional legislation).
- If acquisitions within the Monument boundaries are not completed, the BLM will seek to acquire a 1.05-mile easement on the

portion of BLM Road 1011 that crosses private surface through the Monument.

- 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.

Access and Transportation identifies BLM vehicle routes and hiking/equestrian trails and limits motorized and mechanized use to designated roads and trails.

- Designate 5.95 miles of “Open” transportation routes, 7.8 miles as “Limited” to authorized administrative and emergency use only, and close 11.5 miles of roads.
- Designate 6.33 miles of “Open” trails, 0.2 mile of trail as limited to authorized administrative or emergency use, and close 1.9 miles of trails to public use.
- Designate 0.9 mile of new trail “Open” and 0.7 mile of converted road to “Open” trail.
- Designate the Planning Area as limited to designated roads and trails for motorized and mechanized modes of travel.
- Access for research permits will be considered as authorized administrative use and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- If the North Edgeholding is acquired, close the area to public entry except access on existing public roads or with prior authorization from the Rio Puerco Field Manager. Allow a two-year period of resource survey and evaluation before making land and resource allocations. Provide guided tours in the interim. After consulting with potentially affected American Indian tribes, carrying out resource data inventory, including assessment of cultural resources, and after implementing measures to mitigate potential adverse effects to cultural resources and other resources, open the area with appropriate restrictions.

Recreational Uses will be managed using adequate facilities to minimize resource degradation.

- Provide a broad spectrum of resource-dependent recreational opportunities to meet public needs and demands.
- Maintain high-quality recreation facilities to meet public needs and enhance the image of the agency.
- The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum system divides the area into three visitor experience zones—semi-primitive motorized use (2,048 acres), semi-primitive non-motorized use (1,054 acres), and roaded natural use (1,987 acres).
- The designation of the Planning Area is “OHV use limited to designated roads and trails” for motorized and mechanized modes of travel.
- Allow mountain bikes and limited forms of motorized vehicles (except all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes) on BLM Road 1011 through the Planning Area when the road is open to public use.
- Authorize equestrian use on a case-by-case basis and direct to Federal lands in the Monument and Southwest Acquisition that are south and west of BLM Road 1011.
- Build new facilities, including hard-surfacing 5.9 miles of BLM Road 1011, as needed for resource protection, and visitor health, safety and convenience.
- Make drinking water available for visitors in or near the Monument.
- Designate Federal lands within the Planning Area (including any acquired lands) as a Special Recreation Management Area.
- Inventory for cultural resources 0.65 mile of “open” roads and 7.8 miles of roads limited to authorized administrative and emergency use only before further maintenance is done.
- The 11.5 miles of “closed” roads will be inventoried for cultural resources if rehabilitation is needed following closure.
- 1.72 miles of “closed” trails will be inventoried for cultural resources if rehabilitation is needed following closure.
- Address the secondary effects of recreational use on cultural resources by requiring inventory of expanded buffer areas around recreational developments. Inventories for parking areas, scenic viewing areas, picnic areas, and similar developments will include a minimum 100-meter-wide buffer.
- For hiking trails, a minimum 30-meter-wide buffer will be inventoried on each side of the trail, resulting in examination of a 60-meter-wide corridor.
- Inventory of the 6.32 miles of “open” and “limited” trails that have not yet been inventoried will be completed by the end of September 2008.
- Vegetation treatments in sensitive settings will be subject to Class III inventory if the use of fire or any form of surface disturbance is proposed, including vehicle use off road and dragging of slash.
- If lands containing water wells are acquired, the BLM will perform cultural resource inventories to ensure that no damage occurs in association with well use or maintenance.
- Discourage activities that involve excavation or collection of cultural materials. Such activities will ordinarily be considered only when such materials face an immediate threat.
- Archeological resources within the Monument and Southwest Acquisition will be available for scientific study that does not involve excavation or collection of cultural materials. Exceptions to this policy will be made only after extensive consultation with all concerned American Indian tribes.
- Apply mechanical fuel reduction and prescribed fire where applicable around vulnerable recreational facilities and prehistoric

Ecosystem Restoration identifies actions that will benefit land health and Monument resource values.

- Ensure that proposed land uses avoid inadvertent damage to Federal and non-Federal cultural resources.
- No person may use, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of this Monument without authorization, nor locate nor settle upon any of the lands.
- More stringent inventory requirements will be in effect, with larger buffers and Class III inventory, in all questionable cases.

and historic cultural resources to avoid or reduce the probability of damage from wild-land fire.

- Manage the Planning Area to treat Fire Regime Condition Class II and Class III lands to move their condition toward Class I.
- Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument is a separate Fire Management Unit (FMU). The Planning Area will be managed as FMU B/4.
- The Appropriate Management Response (AMR) for FMU B/4 is to prevent wildland fires from spreading to private lands, cultural resources or improvements on BLM lands, other agencies' lands, and to protect the public users. AMR will be used to manage all fires in accordance with management objectives based on current conditions and fire location.
- Comply with the NM Standards for Public Land Health in implementing fire management treatments.
- Discontinue livestock grazing use on the 4,088 acres of Federal land currently under two Federal grazing permits within the Monument.
- Acreage closed to grazing will be fenced and range developments removed if they are not converted to another purpose (e.g., wildlife waters, recreational uses).
- Short-duration grazing on Federal land within the Planning Area may be allowed under a non-renewable grazing permit if the BLM determines it will advance the purposes of the Proclamation.
- Privately owned range improvements will be removed by the permittee or purchased by the BLM, at fair market value, if they can be converted to other uses.
- No grazing permit will be issued for the 965-acre Southwest Acquisition, unless the BLM determines that short-duration grazing would help to achieve specific vegetative or ecological objectives.
- Monitoring and a vigorous integrated weed management program will be a part of Planning Area management (including on acquired land), in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures found in Instruction Memorandum NM-010-99-01 ("Noxious

Weed Prevention Schedule for Albuquerque Field Office").

- Emphasize noxious weed identification and treatment in the 241-acre intensive visitor use area to reduce weed introduction by recreation users.
- No person may use, injure, destroy, or remove any fossils—invertebrate and vertebrate fossils, and plant fossils.
- Evaluate, manage, and protect any fossils identified on a case-by-case basis. Visitors will be encouraged to report fossil discoveries to the BLM.
- The New Mexico Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management are carried forward. These standards include: (1) the upland sites standard; (2) the biotic communities standard (including native, threatened, endangered, and special status species); and (3) the riparian sites standard.
- Conduct hydrologic studies and analysis, including appropriate stream flow monitoring of the channel to assess the potential of Peralta Canyon to support riparian habitat. A riparian monitoring plan for these actions has been developed.
- Pursue a more intense riparian restoration program if potential is shown. Cottonwood, willow, and other riparian species will be planted if riparian conditions develop. Riparian habitat will be expanded to the extent that potential is indicated.
- Ensure that BLM management actions and objectives are consistent with soil resource capabilities.
- Maintain or improve surface and ground water quality consistent with existing and anticipated uses and applicable State and Federal water quality standards.
- Provide for the physical and legal availability of water to facilitate authorized uses of the public lands.
- Assess physical water availability and quality for visitor use, acquire water rights (if needed), and ensure continued compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- The BLM's management goal for special geologic features is to protect these important, environmentally sensitive geologic re-

sources in their natural condition (subject to ecological processes), while allowing recreation, and scientific research and collection.

- Protect special geologic features on 167 acres of Federally owned Monument lands for visitor viewing and observation. Identified acquisitions could increase this area to 2,284 acres.
- No special status plant species have been identified within the Monument or Southwest Acquisition. Any plants located will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for listed species will be carried out as required by the Endangered Species Act.
- Ensure that BLM activities that affect the habitat of candidate (and sensitive) species are carried out in a manner consistent with the objectives for those species.
- Where needed, vegetation and woodland treatments will consist of prescribed fire, mechanical methods, physical removal of excess vegetation, and chemical methods.
- Follow Best Management Practices for vegetation treatment methods. Some treatments may need to be combined with others for best results, and some areas may need to be treated repeatedly to achieve the desired results.
- In areas of intensive recreational use and along BLM Road 1011 through the Monument, VRM Class III has been assigned to the 1,202 acres that encompass the immediate foreground surrounding the developed facilities. 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 remaining 3,887 acres of public lands, where the intent will be to retain the existing character of the landscape by keeping implementation actions from attracting attention.
- Promote awareness of wildlife values.

- Nothing in the Proclamation enlarges or diminishes the jurisdiction of the State of New Mexico over fish and wildlife management.

American Indian Uses and Traditional Cultural Values will be protected in the Monument and remain available for American Indian use.

- Developments and recreation management policies will be oriented, in part, toward discouraging visitor use in sensitive areas identified by American Indians.
- With appropriate advance notice, the BLM will consider brief, temporary closures of all or portions of the Monument and Southwest Acquisition to ensure privacy for traditional uses.
- Roads and trails will be minimized in traditional use areas by road and trail closures and relocations.
- The Pueblo de Cochiti will continue to be involved in management of the Monument and Planning Area through Cooperative Management Agreements. The Pueblo will continue to have close day-to-day participation in managing the Monument.

This ROD serves as the final decision establishing the land use plan decisions outlined in the attached Approved Plan and is effective on the date it is signed.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed In Detail

The BLM considered two management strategies that were eliminated from detailed consideration in the planning process.

The BLM considered leaving the area as a pristine and peaceful environment. This alternative would require the removal of existing facilities and the restriction of visitor use in an attempt to return the area to a pristine appearance and provide a peaceful environment. This alternative

would not be feasible or prudent since the Federal government has already made a substantial investment in providing facilities and services to accommodate public use, visitor health and safety, and resource protection. In addition, this alternative is not consistent with Presidential Proclamation 7394. Therefore, this alternative was dismissed from further consideration.

The BLM also considered maximizing recreational use of the Monument. Emphasizing recreation over protection of the biological, scientific, and historical objects of interest within the Monument boundaries would not be a reasonable alternative. Such use would lead to increased recreational visits and user conflicts throughout the Monument, which would in turn lead to additional impacts on the resources for which the Monument was designated. These resources would not be protected as required by Presidential Proclamation 7394 if recreational use of the Monument were maximized. Therefore, this alternative was also dismissed from further consideration.

Alternatives Considered in the EIS

Three alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, were analyzed in detail in the Draft RMP/EIS (USDI, BLM 2005a) and in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS (USDI, BLM 2006). The alternatives were developed to address the planning issues and to provide direction for resource programs influencing management of the Monument. Each of the three alternatives presented a different blend or balance of resource allocations, uses, and protection.

Alternative A was the **No Action Alternative**, representing continuation of the existing management plans, policies, and decisions established in the 1986 Rio Puerco RMP (USDI, BLM 1986), as amended, and as implemented through the Tent Rocks ACEC Protection Plan (USDI, BLM 1987), that are in compliance with the Proclamation. Alternative A also served as the baseline for comparison with the other two alternatives.

Alternative B was the BLM's **Proposed Action**. Under this alternative, the agency's focus would

be to make resource allocations that would resolve the resource use issues and management concerns associated with the Monument and Planning Area, while complying with the Proclamation and current BLM policies, initiatives, and guidance. This alternative was also the **Environmentally Preferred Alternative**. It would provide facilities for intensive recreation use and enjoyment while protecting visitor health, safety, and natural resources. It would also provide for meeting land health standards, research and environmental education opportunities, and protecting American Indian uses and traditional cultural practices. It would result in few impacts that could not be fully mitigated and would provide the maximum public use of the outstanding Monument values without degradation of the natural resources and health of the land.

Alternative C emphasized an **Adaptive Management** approach (particularly for recreation management), with the inclusion of additional monitoring. Of the three alternatives, this alternative represented the highest accommodation of visitor access to and within the Monument and highest potential for facility development. It would require regular and specific monitoring of recreation use and natural resource conditions. The objectives of the monitoring and evaluation program would be to provide the basis for long-term adaptive management changes and ongoing planning. The monitoring results would trigger management changes to maximize recreational use, facility development, and visitors' beneficial experiences while minimizing resource degradation and depletion.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Rationale for the Decision

The Proposed Action (now the RMP) provides an effective balance between protecting Monument resource values and providing opportunities for the public to observe, study, and enjoy those values. It is consistent with the BLM's policy guidance and requirements, including the multiple use and sustained yield mandates of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the more recently established New Mexico Standards for Public Land Health

and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (USDI, BLM 2000a). Implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to improve resource conditions and result in more consistent management of recreation and public access, as well as promote public safety and resource protection in Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument. The lack of facilities and access control under the No Action Alternative would have resulted in uncontrolled use and resource degradation. Although Alternative C proposed adaptive management for the protection of resource values and the dispersal of visitors, it would have also resulted in additional disruption of and intrusion on Cochiti traditional cultural uses. For these reasons, the Proposed Action has been selected as the RMP for the Monument.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The BLM has developed Best Management Practices (BMPs; see Appendix C) designed to minimize surface disturbance and effects on resources and to improve resource conditions where disturbance has occurred. The BMPs are effective, practical ways of accomplishing the management goals and objectives of the BLM and will be used as a guide when preparing plans for individual projects. Individual projects may be subject to additional NEPA analysis and additional, project-specific mitigation measures.

PLAN MONITORING

As outlined in the attached RMP, the BLM will monitor and evaluate management strategies and resource conditions and trends to determine the effectiveness of the RMP and to ensure that its implementation is achieving the desired results. Information on resource conditions obtained through monitoring will be used to assess the effectiveness of management strategies and evaluate whether or not management should be adapted to accommodate new information, changes in demands on resources, or other considerations. This is especially important for the riparian area monitoring that could lead to riparian area expansion if potential is demonstrated and to recreational use and resource condition monitoring which could lead to changes in al-

lowed visitor use if resource conditions are being degraded.

The BLM will monitor the Monument and Southwest Acquisition to quantify the number of recreational visits, types of recreational activities and use patterns, accomplishment of management objectives, and potential adverse impacts to resources and visitor experiences from use of the areas. The results of the monitoring will provide an opportunity to identify actions to protect resources, enhance visitor experiences, and deal with health and safety needs in the area.

The monitoring program will include such actions as:

- Patrolling roads, trails, and areas to observe recreation use where it is concentrated;
- Installing trail and road traffic counters and site registers;
- Establishing photo points in critical areas to monitor change; and
- Surveying visitors to better understand their values and expectations while using the area.

Monitoring will help the BLM to detect and document natural and human-induced changes in resource conditions and visitor experiences, and offer insights into the effectiveness of resource management policies and objectives. It will also help agency personnel understand what might be driving the changes requiring intervention (corrective management actions or strategies). Both the Monument and Southwest Acquisition are experiencing increasing use that is affecting resources, infrastructure, and management. Monitoring will be directed at areas in which specific and important resource values and visitor experiences could be threatened.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Opportunities for Public Involvement in the Planning Process

Throughout the planning process, the BLM used various means to inform the public about the RMP/EIS and solicit input. The public involvement process for this effort included the following:

- Notice of Intent (NOI)—Published in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 69, No. 14; Thursday, January 22, 2004; pp. 3167-3169). The notice announced the BLM’s intent to prepare an RMP/EIS, and included information on the upcoming public scoping meetings, newsletter, availability of information on the BLM’s website, points of contact, area description, and preliminary issues and criteria.
- Newsletter (February 4, 2004)—Mailed to about 230 individuals, organizations, and government officials who had expressed interest in the BLM’s planning efforts. The newsletter invited public participation, provided information similar to that contained in the NOI, and supplied a self-addressed, postage-paid form for submitting written comments.
- Press Release (February 19, 2004)—Issued to 13 media contacts, announcing the dates, times, and locations of the scoping meetings.
- Website (made available on January 22, 2004)—The website provided information similar to that contained in the NOI and newsletter. The site was linked to another that offered information about the Monument itself.
- Public Scoping Meetings—Held in communities near the Monument on February 24 (Peña Blanca), February 25 (Rio Rancho), and February 26 (Santa Fe), 2004, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Although no formal presentations were made nor notes kept, attendees were encouraged to write down their comments for the record. Each open house featured maps, resource information, comment forms, copies of the newsletter and Presidential Proclamation, and an interdisciplinary team of BLM resource specialists who provided information and answered questions. The BLM invited a representative of the Pueblo de Cochiti to attend these meetings. In addition to BLM representatives, seven individuals registered their attendance at the three meetings. One of those individuals, representing ConservAmerica, attended all three meetings.
- Scoping Comments—The BLM received 30 submissions from interested individuals or groups during the scoping period, which ended March 12, 2004. Most of the submissions contained constructive comments ranging in content from requests to be placed on the mailing list to multiple-paged comments with attachments. Commentors provided ideas for the Planning Team to consider in finalizing the planning criteria and formulating alternative ways of managing the Monument that would resolve resource use conflicts and define management decisions.
- Draft RMP/EIS Review—The public was given an opportunity to contribute to development of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS during the public comment period on the Draft RMP/EIS, which extended from November 4, 2005 to February 2, 2006. Copies of the Draft RMP/EIS were sent to a mailing list of 333 addresses, with an additional 76 copies sent to 22 Federal agencies. Additionally, the document was available for review on the BLM’s website. The BLM received 16 comments during the 90-day public comment period. These submissions contained 48 substantive comments for which responses were prepared and published in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The BLM revised the document to address comments as appropriate.
- Governor’s Consistency Review—A 60-day Governor’s Consistency Review was initiated with the delivery of the printer-ready Proposed RMP/Final EIS to the Governor’s Office on September 8, 2006. Printed copies were mailed to the Governor’s Office and 17 other State agencies in early November 2006. No comments regarding potential inconsistencies with State and local plans, programs, and policies were received from the Governor’s Office.
- Proposed Plan/Final EIS Protest Period—In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2, a 30-day protest period (November 24, 2006 to December 26, 2006) followed publication of the Proposed Plan/Final EIS in October 2006. One letter was received during the protest period. After careful consideration of the points raised in this letter, the BLM Director concluded that the Planning Team

and decision makers followed all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and pertinent resource considerations in developing the Proposed Plan, and that the letter did not constitute an official protest. The BLM Field Manager contacted those who wrote the letter and addressed with them the concerns expressed in the letter. The reestablishment of communication has provided for the elimination of the concerns.

Cooperating Agency

To provide for more consistent, effective, and collaborative management of the Federal and Pueblo lands within and adjacent to the area known as Tent Rocks, the U.S. Department of the Interior/BLM and the Pueblo de Cochiti entered into an Inter-Governmental Cooperative Agreement in 1997. This agreement was followed in 2002 by a five-year Assistance Agreement between the Pueblo de Cochiti and the BLM. A second five-year Assistance Agreement was signed in January 2007. Under these agreements, the BLM seeks the Pueblo's participation and involvement in public land use planning by personal invitation to agency activities and meetings. The Pueblo has agreed to identify and provide appropriate staff for planning and implementing the initiatives developed under the agreement.

Scoping for the RMP/EIS began in spring 2003 with a meeting of BLM staff from a variety of professional specialties (the "Interdisciplinary Team") to discuss resource needs, program requirements, and management concerns for the Planning Area. Soon after this initial meeting, the BLM held a pre-planning meeting with officials from the Pueblo in May 2003, to talk about the planning process, steps, and preliminary issues to be addressed in the plan. The BLM and the Pueblo de Cochiti met again in August 2003 regarding traditional cultural properties. Those in attendance at this meeting included Pueblo officials, Pueblo Council members, BLM managers, the KKTR Manager, and a Cultural Resource Specialist. The Pueblo has been a cooperating agency in the preparation of the RMP.

Tribal Consultation and Coordination

The BLM mailed certified, return-receipt form letters to nine local pueblos and tribes. A separate, more detailed letter was sent to the Governor of the Pueblo de Cochiti. Through these letters, the BLM asked these groups to submit any concerns about traditional cultural practices or other issues that might be affected by this land use plan, information on how they would like to be involved in the planning process, and names of other individuals or organizations that should be notified or consulted concerning this plan. A copy of the NOI, a map of the Planning Area, and a brief description of the preliminary issues to be considered in the plan were enclosed with each of these 10 letters.

The BLM received two responses to this request, one from the Hopi Tribe and the other from the Jicarilla Apache Nation. The Jicarilla Nation did not request further involvement in the plan, but wished to be kept informed under the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The Hopi Tribe expressed concern about the moral, spiritual, and financial responsibility on local pueblos for the disposition of any ancestral remains and cultural items discovered on ancestral lands as a result of this Federal undertaking. The Tribe also supported the road closures and travel restrictions proposed for the Monument to protect natural and cultural resources. The Hopi Tribe deferred to the Pueblos of Cochiti, Jemez, and Santo Domingo for identification of places of cultural importance. Additionally, the Hopi Tribe supported the rights of the local Pueblos to access and use areas under Executive Order 13007 and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

In addition to formal tribal consultation, the various documents were sent to nine other Indian tribes.

Agency Consultation

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. This Plan is considered to be a major Federal action, so 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 of 1966, 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 BLM has submitted the various planning documents 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 the 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.

Public Participation in Implementation


Land use plans and planning decisions are the basis for every on-the-ground action the BLM undertakes. They provide a framework to guide subsequent actions or plan implementation decisions. Implementation decisions are generally site-specific land management projects or actions designed to meet direction in the planning documents and decisions. Chapter 4, “Management Plan Implementation” of the attached RMP, identifies future implementation priorities, which of course, are dependent on funding levels. Each project will be subject to additional site-specific NEPA analysis and documentation, associated Native American consultation, and appropriate National Historic Preservation Act and Endangered Species Act compliance. As each project is considered, the public will be given the opportunity to be involved in project-level planning and review.

In addition to project planning and review as an opportunity for public participation, the Rio Puerco Field Office has an active volunteer program. There will be numerous opportunities for volunteers as the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks Resource Management Plan is implemented.

APPROVAL

I approve the attached plan as the resource management plan for Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument and Planning Area.

Recommended:


Thomas E. Gow
Rio Puerco Field Office Manager

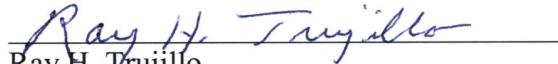
Date 10 May 2007

Concurred:


Edwin J. Singleton
Albuquerque District Manager


Date May 10, 2007

Concurred:


Ray H. Trujillo
Governor, Pueblo de Cochiti

Date May 17, 2007

Approved:


Linda S.C. Rundell
New Mexico State Director

Date May 25, 2007