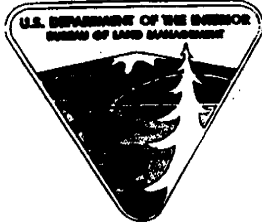




U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Arizona State Office

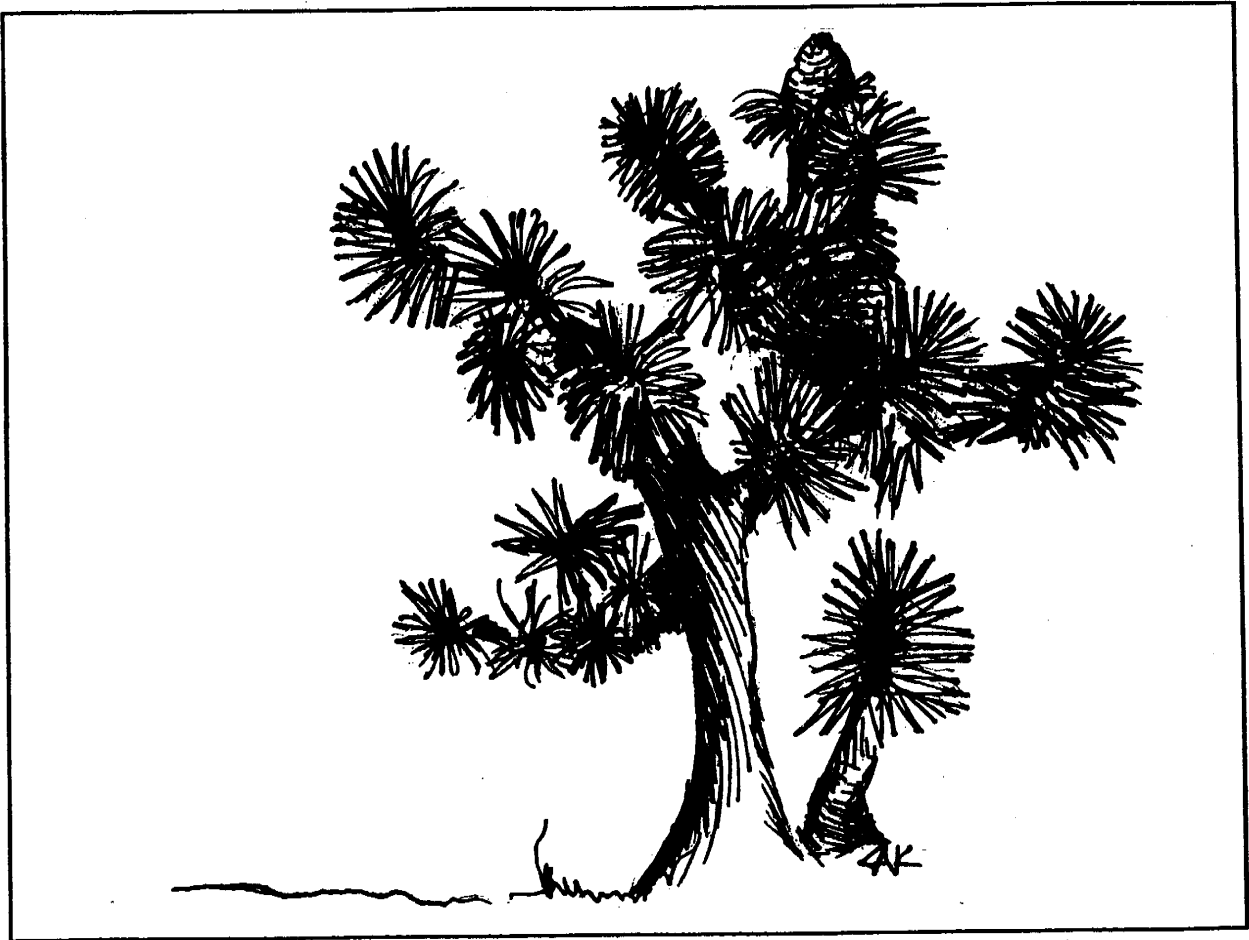


Kingman Field Office

September 2000

**FINAL**

**Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan and  
Environmental Assessment**

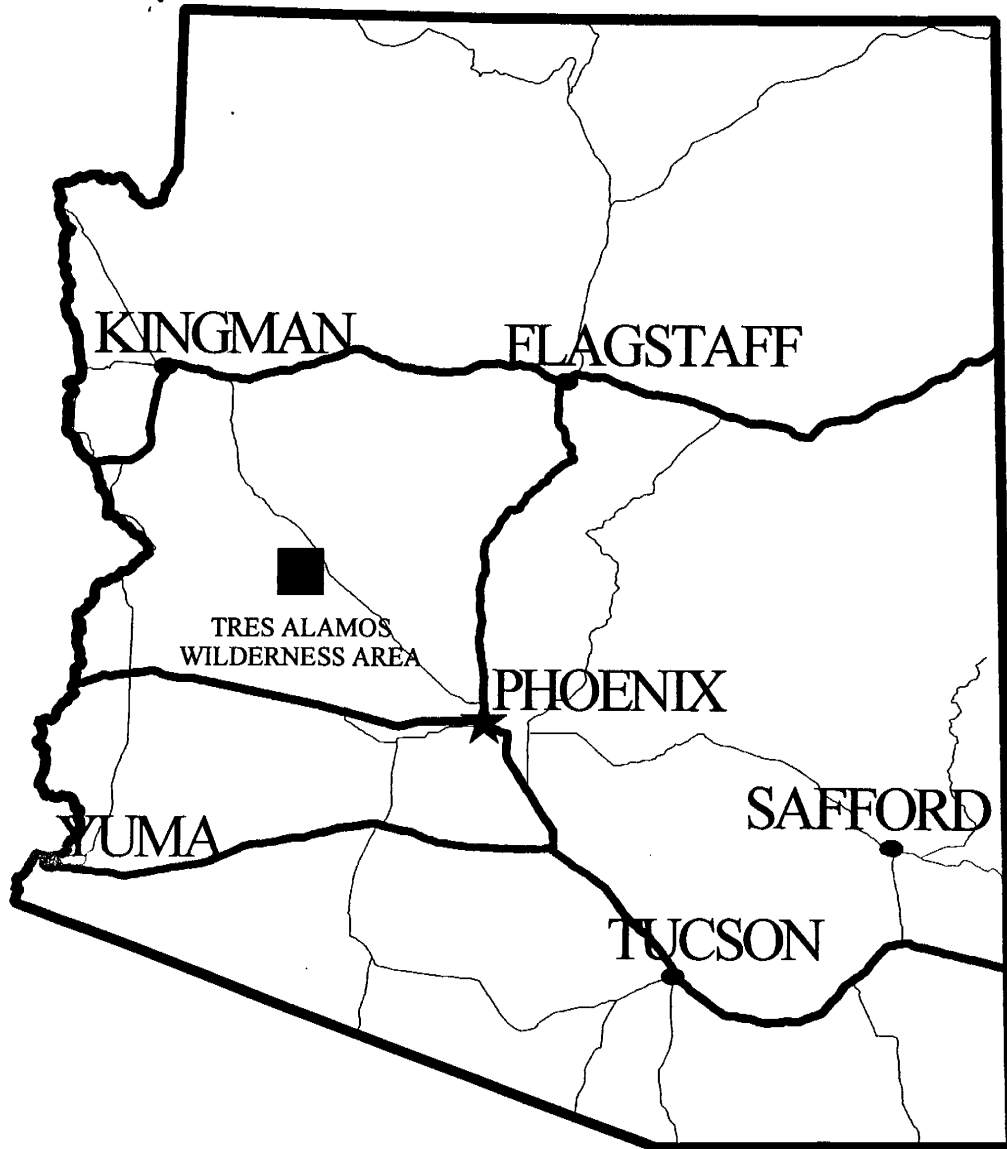


**Tres Alamos  
Wilderness Management Plan  
and  
Environmental Assessment**

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

**EA Number: EA-AZ-020-097-084**

# ARIZONA



Tres Alamos Wilderness Area  
Location within Arizona

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## **PLAN SUMMARY**

### **Background**

- The Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 designated the 8,700-acre Tres Alamos Wilderness.
- Priorities are protecting current wilderness conditions.
- Public meetings and mailings assisted the BLM in developing the Tres Alamos wilderness issues.
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM) policy requires the development of a management plan that will:
  - Protect wilderness values,
  - Allow for visitor use and enjoyment,
  - Allow for the minimum tool to be used to accomplish resource objectives inside the wilderness, and
  - Allow legislatively accepted uses, such as livestock grazing and mining.

### **Main Features of the Proposed Plan**

- The BLM will reevaluate management objectives and actions periodically and update them as needed.
- Three objectives are established: preserve naturalness, maintain vegetation communities, and protect cultural resources.
- Vegetation conditions will be monitored to ensure that naturalness values are maintained or improved.
- Existing livestock operations will continue.
- No vegetation gathering permits, i.e., firewood, jojoba, will be issued.
- No new foot or equestrian trails are planned.
- Motorized/mechanized use within the wilderness is limited to:
  - Response to life and property-threatening emergencies
  - Pursuit of felons, suspected felons or game law violators
  - Emergency recovery of sick or injured livestock, and major maintenance of existing fencelines
  - Arizona Game and Fish Department census flights for javelina, mule deer and bighorn sheep
  - BLM census flight for wild burros and possible annual burro capture
  - Use of equipment to speed rehabilitation of manmade disturbances if natural rehabilitation fails to occur
- Former vehicle routes and abandoned earthen reservoirs will be allowed to rehabilitate naturally
- Legal access to wilderness boundaries will be pursued
- All wildfires will be suppressed in an Appropriate Management Response
- Grazing utilization will be limited to 50% of annual production within wilderness on grazing allotments

# Part I

## Introduction

### Background

The Wilderness Act of 1964 laid the foundation for the National Wilderness Preservation System. On November 28, 1990, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, Public Law 101-628, designated 39 areas in Arizona, including Tres Alamos, as wilderness and added them to the system. The Tres Alamos Wilderness is located in the southeast portion of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Kingman Field Office.

### Plan Purpose

This plan will provide direction for managing the Tres Alamos Wilderness. The planning area contains the entire Tres Alamos Wilderness totaling 8,700 acres.

Management direction will be guided by: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Wilderness Act of 1964; the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990; Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 8560 (43 CFR 8560); and BLM Manual 8560. This is an interdisciplinary plan that incorporates and amends the portions of the following plans that address this planning area:

- Wildlife Operations and Maintenance Plan (1994)
- Phoenix District Interim Guidance for Fire Suppression in Wilderness (1991)
- Range Improvement Maintenance Plan - Tres Alamos Wilderness (1991)
- Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan (1983)
- Lower Gila North Habitat Management Plan (1983)
- Pipeline Allotment Management Plan (1976)
- Tres Alamos Coordinated Range Management Plan (1984)

Any subsequent planning effort whose sphere of influence extends into this planning area shall include the provisions of this document.

### Wilderness Overview

Tres Alamos Wilderness is in Yavapai County, Arizona, 80 miles northwest of Phoenix. Primary access is from the south using the BLM-maintained Pipeline Ranch Road. The Pipeline Ranch Road crosses private and State Trust land in the vicinity of Date Creek. A primitive dirt road off of Pipeline Ranch Road provides access to the west and north boundaries. This route also crosses State Trust land in Section 32, T.11N., R.9W. Access to the east side of the wilderness is hampered by poor roads crossing a large block of state-owned land

and some private lands.

Though these roads are commonly used by the public, it is illegal to use or cross State Trust property unless: (1) you hold a valid Arizona hunting or fishing license (and are in pursuit of those activities), or (2) you have obtained an Arizona State Land Recreational Use Permit.

Roads crossing private lands are unsecured by easements or rights-of-way. The continued use of these roads by the general public may be jeopardized if landowners desire to close them.

### Wilderness Boundary

The wilderness is bounded on the north by a primitive dirt road, by state land on the east, by a combination of maintained dirt roads, the north bank of Date Creek, and by private and state land on the south, and by primitive roads and state land on the west (see Map 1).

### Ownership/Land Use

The BLM administers all surface and sub-surface land within the wilderness. A large block of state land is found to the east and private and state lands form parts of the north, west and south boundaries. Private parcels bordering the wilderness on the south contain several residences and the Pipeline Ranch headquarters.

### Wilderness Values & Unique Attributes

#### Topography & Climate

The planning area lies in west-central Arizona within the Basin and Range physiographic province. The wilderness encompasses Sawyer Peak, the highest point in the Black Mountains at 4,293 feet, and the colorful monolith of Tres Alamos. To the southwest and west the Black Mountains descend to a desert plain.

The planning area's climate is influenced by tropical Atlantic and Pacific air masses during the warm weather months and by middle latitude storms from the north during the cooler months. Temperatures may reach as low as 20° F during December and January to highs up to 120° F in June through August. Annual precipitation generally ranges from 2 to 7 inches per year with 40% percent falling from December through March, and the remainder coming during thunderstorms July through September.

## General Management Situation

### Wildlife

The Arizona Game and Fish Department manages all resident wildlife species and has the primary responsibility to promulgate regulations for the harvest of these resources (as provided for under A.R.S. 17), and shares management authority for migratory and threatened and endangered species with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Wildlife species in the planning area are those commonly associated with the Sonoran desert scrub habitat type. Wildlife species include mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, coyote, mountain lion, grey fox, badger, javelina, bobcat, black-tailed jackrabbit, desert cottontail, western diamondback and Mohave rattlesnakes, turkey vulture, raven, red-tailed hawk, mourning dove, and Gambel's quail, as well as numerous invertebrate species. Desert tortoise have been identified in the northern and eastern parts of the wilderness.

The planning area contains suitable habitat for the following special status species: the endangered peregrine falcon and the BLM-sensitive desert tortoise. The peregrine falcon has been documented nesting on the steep cliff-faces along the Santa Maria River north of Tres Alamos in the Arrastra Mountains Wilderness. There are similar cliff strata located within the Tres Alamos Wilderness; however, peregrine use has not been documented to date. The Sonoran population of the desert tortoise is a former Federal Category 2 Candidate species. It is now considered a BLM sensitive species and is protected by the State of Arizona.

No wildlife water developments are within the wilderness. One concrete apron catchment (#720 see Map 2) is cherry-stemmed out of the wilderness on the western boundary. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) conducts aerial census or inspection flights within the wilderness area at less than 2,000 feet above ground level (AGL) as needed for wildlife management. Information regarding flights will be described under Part V, Wilderness Management.

Wildlife management actions within wilderness are guided by policy statements in the February 6, 1987 *Master Memorandum of Understanding* between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the Department of the Interior, BLM.

### Wild Burros

Approximately 2,692 acres of the wilderness area lie within the boundaries of the Alamo Herd

Management Area (HMA) (see Map 1). The Alamo HMA is managed to maintain wild burros in a thriving ecological balance with their habitat. About 500 wild burros roam freely throughout this 341,000 acre Herd Management Area. The wilderness area comprises 8% of the HMA. A census of the wild burro population occurs every three years while burro removals occur infrequently. Both census and removal of wild burros include the use of helicopters. Equipment used in removal of wild burros is located outside of wilderness, however helicopter overflights do occur.

### Livestock Grazing

Portions of the Pipeline (#3066) and Tres Alamos (#5021) Allotments lie within the wilderness. Map 2 indicates allotment boundaries and range developments located within the wilderness area. Two groupings of developments were cherry-stemmed outside the wilderness; on the north, Black Burro Pipeline and Corral, and on the south, Burro Tank, a pipeline and a corral. There has been no mechanized entry into the wilderness for range management purposes since the area was designated wilderness.

The Pipeline Allotment is operated as a yearlong cow-calf operation in conjunction with a three pasture rest-rotation grazing system. The grazing preference is 1,837 Animal Unit Months (AUMs), based on 176 cows yearlong at 86 percent federal range. The total allotment acreage is 34,530, with 6,002 acres found within the wilderness. About 1.4 miles of fence in good condition is located within the wilderness.

The Tres Alamos allotment is operated as a yearlong cow-calf operation in conjunction with a four-pasture "next best" pasture grazing system. The allotment BLM grazing preference is 600 AUMs, based on 125 cows yearlong at 40 percent federal range. The allotment acreage is 37,861 acres, with 2,698 acres within wilderness. A total of 2.3 miles of fence in good condition is located within the wilderness.

As part of the range management program, inventory data consists of both ocular reconnaissance and soil and vegetative inventory information collected in 1980 and 1982, including several study plots on both grazing allotments (portions of the Pipeline (#3066) and Tres Alamos (#5021)).

### Vegetation

The area is located along the northern boundary of the Sonoran Desert and the southern boundary of the Mohave Desert. This comprises a vegetative



ecotone of the two deserts; with species from both regions being represented here. Sonoran Desertscrub is found throughout the wilderness, while Mohave Desertscrub is more localized along the southern and western wilderness boundaries. Vegetative communities have been inventoried on several occasions.

Vegetation varieties of the Sonoran Desertscrub associations are characterized by woody species such as creosote which dot the plains; blue paloverde and littleleaf paloverde; and white bursage; triangle leaf bursage cover hills and bajadas; and catclaw acacia line the washes. Dominant perennial grasses in the study area include: big galleta, tobosa grass, three-awn, and bush muhly. The Mohave Desertscrub formation is characterized by Joshua tree.

Adequate fall-winter precipitation supports numerous winter annuals in this area. Many of these, such as red brome, filaree, and Mediterranean grass are non-native to this area. Native winter annual species include indian wheat, owl-clover and fiddleneck.

### **Soils**

Soils in the planning area have formed in alluvium and colluvium from various parent materials. The area's hot dry climate has limited the degree of soil development. The soils are generally limited by texture, depth, water-holding capacity, surface rock and slopes contributing to their low productivity. Soils in the area are hyperthermic, extreme soil temperatures lead to lower productivity.

Soil erosion hazards vary, with no areas in the planning area having significant erosion problems. Elevations of the area range from over 4,000 feet above sea level (Black Mountains area) to approximately 2,000 feet above sea level in the alluvial plains region.

### **Mineral Resources**

The Tres Alamos Wilderness was withdrawn from mineral entry upon wilderness designation. As of 12/31/96 there are no mining claims and no mineral leases within the area.

### **Water**

With the passage of the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-628), Congress reserved a quantity of water for each wilderness area sufficient to fulfill the purposes of the Act, with a priority date established as the date of the Act's passage (November 28, 1990). BLM must identify and quantify its water needs and submit notification of its federal reserved water rights

for wilderness to the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)

The Tres Alamos Wilderness Area is drained by Date Creek, a portion of the Bill Williams River Watershed. A water source inventory was begun in late 1994 and completed in 1995. Three springs and two stockponds are located within the wilderness area. These sources are described in Table II (Wilderness Water Sources) and III (Range Developments) and shown on Map 2. Two pools at Tres Alamos Falls in the area's southeast corner provide permanent water and are included in the water inventory. Quantification and notification of the federal reserved water rights were submitted to ADWR in September 1997.

### **Air Quality**

The area is classified under the Clean Air Act as Class II. No site-specific air quality data exists for the Tres Alamos Wilderness.

### **Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources have not been systematically inventoried. Of the four sites recorded in the wilderness, one is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This site is a rock-shelter with cultural deposits and was used as a habitation for a period of time. The other recorded sites are small temporary campsites. No eligibility determinations or allocations of Use Categories have been made for these properties. Three Native American groups, the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe, the Colorado River Indian Tribes and the Yavapai Prescott Indian Tribe, were contacted as part of this planning effort and asked to identify any issues or concerns they had in the planning area. No issues or concerns were identified. No traditional or sacred use of the area has been identified.

Historically, use of the area was limited and represents travel through the area, grazing, mineral prospecting, and mining.

### **Recreation**

Wilderness visitation is estimated at less than 200 visits annually. Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hunting, hiking, sightseeing, horseback riding, camping and nature study. Extended backpacking opportunities within the area are not considered good because of the small size of the area. There are no hiking trails, but visitors can hike closed jeep routes in the southern and northern parts of the wilderness, or travel cross-country. Some hikers climb to the summit of Sawyer Peak and Tres Alamos. Visitation is not expected to increase significantly in the foreseeable future, as

the area is remote and access is difficult.

and two breached and abandoned livestock reservoirs (see Map 2).

### **Law Enforcement and Emergency Services**

Two documented motorized vehicle violations occurred in fiscal year 94 and one in fiscal year 95 within the wilderness. Vehicles have been driven up closed jeep trails in the southern part of the area occasionally. The number of violations are slight and decreasing because of thorough boundary signing/identification and patrols. Moreover, the area is remote and seldom visited, and access roads on the west and north are rough, rocky and eroded. There are no records of incidents requiring the use of emergency services.

### **Military Aircraft Overflight**

Luke Air Force Base has one Military Training Route, VR-242, which transits the western portion of the wilderness from the northeast to the southwest. VR-242 is assessed for flight down to 300 feet above ground level (AGL) over Tres Alamos though student sorties are flown at a minimum of 500 feet AGL with the normal altitude being between 800 and 1000 feet AGL. This flight route was scheduled and flown by 71 flights in fiscal year 1997 for an average of approximately 6 per month. All of the flights were flown from Monday to Friday. VR-242 is considered by the Air Force to be an essential training route.

### **Fire**

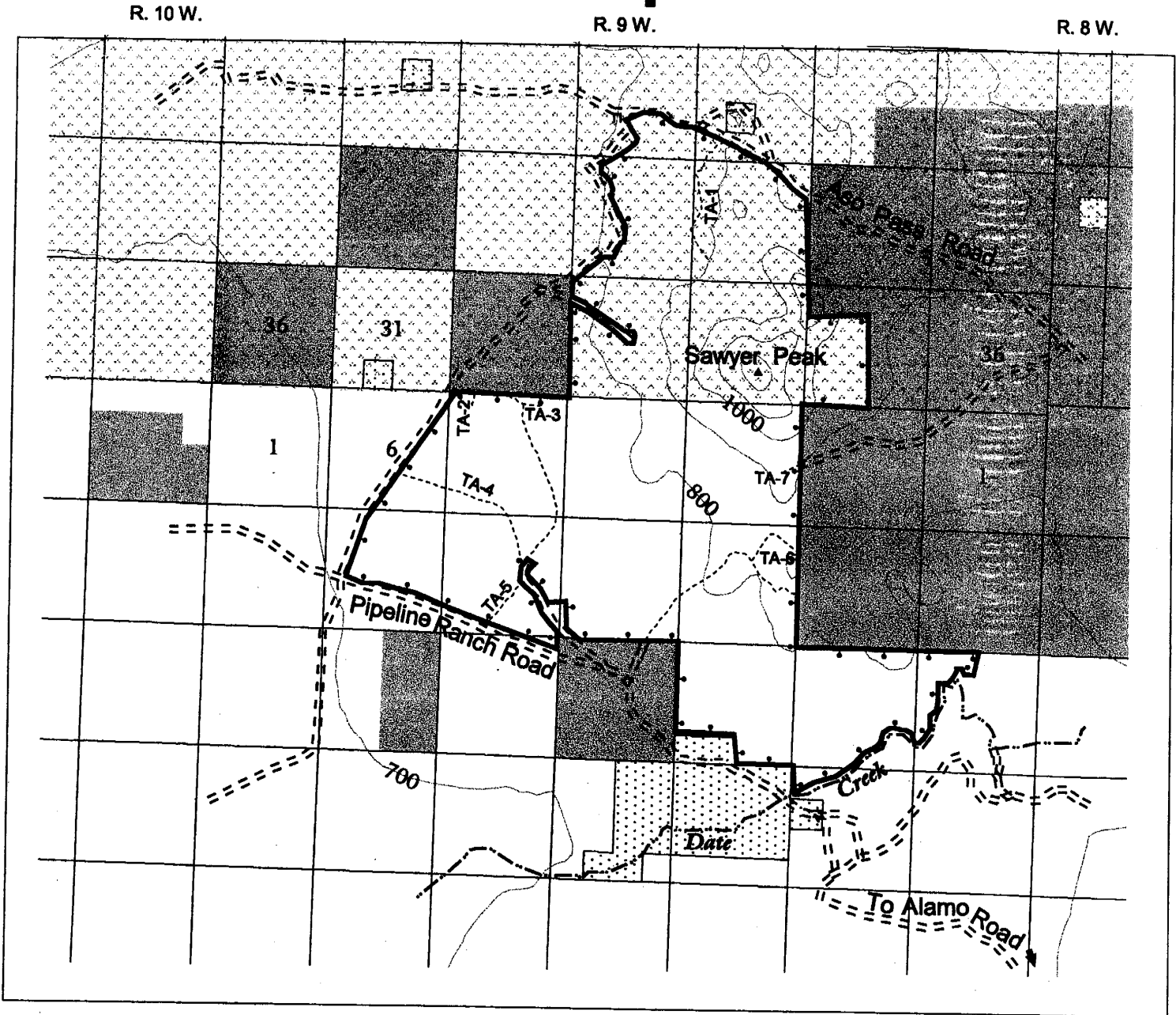
No fires larger than 100 acres have occurred within the planning area since 1980 when record-keeping began. Fire potential varies from year to year depending on the amount of winter rain, vegetation and other factors. Small natural fires of less than 100 acres have occurred in the region. Although fire has not influenced the vegetative community to any great extent, there is a concern that large fires could significantly change the native vegetation.

Arizona BLM's Fire Management Plan call for holding 85 percent of wildfires in the state to 300 acres or less during the summer months.

### **Existing Developments**

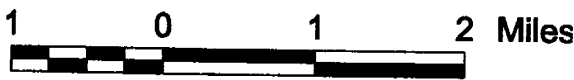
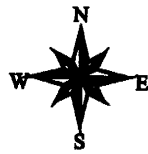
The wilderness is natural in appearance, and the core of the area is pristine. Human imprints, some which would be rated as having a "moderate" degree of contrast under the BLM's Visual Contrast Rating System, are present. These imprints include six vehicle trails totaling 7.5 miles, 3.7 miles of fence,

# Tres Alamos Wilderness Map 1

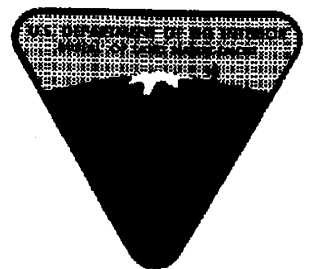


**LEGEND**

- Wilderness Boundary
- Former Vehicle Way & Reference Number
- Roads
- State land
- Private land
- Alamo Herd Mgt. Area



CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 METERS



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
KINGMAN FIELD OFFICE

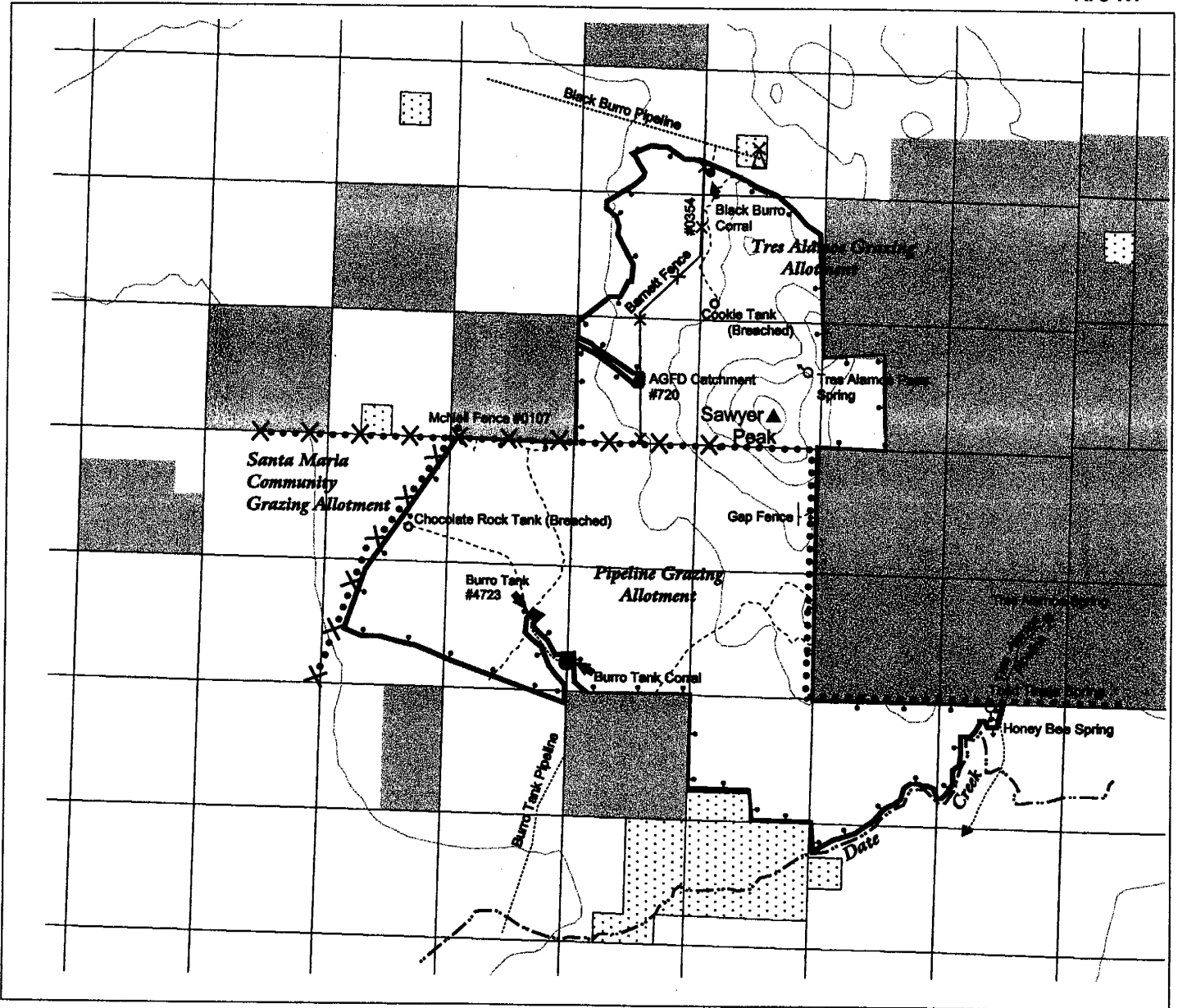
JULY 1999

# Tres Alamos Wilderness Map 2

R. 10 W.

R. 9 W.

R. 8 W.

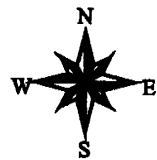


T. 11 N.

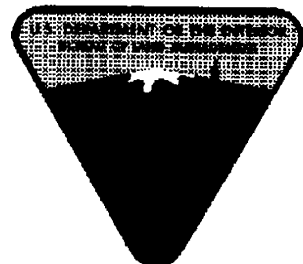
T. 10 N.

**LEGEND**

- Former Vehicle Way
- Wilderness Boundary
- State land
- Private land
- x-x-x-x Fenced Allotment Boundary
- ..... Unfenced Allotment Boundary
- x-x- Interior Pasture Fence
- s Spring
- X Windmill
- ..... Water Pipeline



CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 METERS



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
KINGMAN FIELD OFFICE

JULY 1999

Allotment name	Total BLM animal unit months (AUMs)	Percentage of wilderness acres in allotment	Percentage of allotment acres in wilderness
Pipeline Allotment	1,837	68%	17.4%
Tres Alamos Allotment	600	32%	7.1%

## Part II National Wilderness Management Goals

Four standard management goals have been established by the BLM for its designated wilderness areas. The goals are as follows:

1. To provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of non-degradation. The area's natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value present will be managed so that they will remain unimpaired.
2. To manage the wilderness area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness and visitor use.
3. To manage the area using the minimum tool, equipment, or structure necessary to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objective. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.
4. To manage nonconforming but accepted uses (ie. grazing) permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character. Accepted uses are the exception rather than the rule; therefore, emphasis

is placed on maintaining wilderness character.

## Part III Issues

In the scoping process, issues were identified by Lower Gila Resource Area and Phoenix District staff January through March 1994. Members of the public (Part VIII - Public Involvement) further refined the issues. A BLM interdisciplinary team (Part IX - List of Preparers) compiled the final list of issues.

Identified issues are separated into three categories; Management Plan Issues, Issues Solved Through Policy, and Issues Beyond the Scope of This Plan. Management Plan Issues will be resolved in the Objectives and Management Actions of this plan. Issues Solved Through Policy and Issues Beyond the Scope of This Plan will not be addressed further. Following is the list of issues that resulted from the scoping process.

### Management Plan Issues

#### 1. Long-Term Protection of Wilderness Values.

The Wilderness Act requires the long-term preservation of wilderness values. Decisions will be made to answer the following questions and issues.

- How will boundaries be managed to prevent illegal vehicle use?
- How will closed vehicle routes and two abandoned range developments be rehabilitated to improve naturalness?
- To what extent are visitor facilities needed (trail heads, information, displays and trails)?
- What actions are needed to maintain solitude?
- What actions are needed to establish legal access?
- Reclamation of closed vehicle routes by weathering or plant growth may be the best

procedure as the desert can renew itself naturally. Mechanized means will not be needed in this area.

- Minimizing or eliminating wilderness management costs spent on reclamation procedures is common sense and is the most cost-effective use of federal taxpayer dollars and workforce.
- Fencelines within the wilderness have been maintained by horseback to date (See Map 2).
- The corral on the north boundary of the wilderness is the only one in this portion of the Tres Alamos allotment (See Map 2). The corral is serviceable and was functional in 1979.
- The Tres Alamos allotment managers have no interest in the repair of the non-operational reservoir called Cookie Tank (See Map 2). This reservoir has been non-operational since the wilderness inventory review in 1979. The closed access route to the tank is overgrown with vegetation with some creosote over 8 feet in height, and eroded areas are common.

**2. Vegetation Management.** The Tres Alamos Wilderness is recognized for its diverse plant assemblages. Decisions will be made to address the following:

- How will the fire regime be managed to maintain natural values?
- Vegetation condition in the two allotments is static, with an upward trend in native perennials
- How will livestock be managed?

**3. Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources are known to exist within the planning area. The plan will address the following questions:

- How will cultural resources be allocated for scientific, conservation, management, socio-cultural and public uses and be protected for those uses?

## **Issues Solved Through Policy Or Administrative Action**

**1. Law Enforcement and Emergency Services.** Wilderness management policy and regulations (BLM Manual 8560.39 and 43 CFR 8560.3) provide for emergency law enforcement access to pursue suspects or to address health and safety concerns during emergencies. Historically, there have been no law enforcement problems in the Tres Alamos Wilderness that required mechanized or motorized access. In the event of a problem, existing policy

guidance is adequate.

**2. Threatened, Endangered, or Special Status Species.** All habitat of special status species, such as the peregrine falcon and the desert tortoise will be managed under existing policy in BLM Manual 8560 and 6840. Although no Federally listed species are known to occur in the planning area, any species listed in the future will be managed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

**3. Widespread Exotic Vegetation.** Red brome grass and other species are widely dispersed throughout the area. Removal of these exotic species are not ecologically or economically feasible. Established exotic species will be managed in accordance with BLM Manual 8560.

**4. Minerals Management.** The area was withdrawn from mineral entry by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. Currently there are no mining claims and no mineral leases in the Wilderness.

**5. Hunting.** Hunting is regulated by the State. Activities must be conducted by non-mechanized and non-motorized means in the wilderness.

**6. Military Overflights.** Military flight restrictions are addressed in the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. The Act states: "Nothing in this title shall preclude low level overflights of military aircraft, the designation of new units of special airspace, or the use or establishment of military flight training routes over wilderness areas designated by this title." The BLM will continue to cooperate with the military in seeking mutually beneficial opportunities to protect the integrity of wilderness airspace, and the natural quiet of this area.

**7. Access for the Physically Challenged.** Special facilities to accommodate wilderness use by those with disabilities are not required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Wheelchairs are allowed in wilderness by individuals whose disability requires the use of a wheelchair. Wheelchairs suitable for use in wilderness are those which would be suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area.

**8. Management of Traditional Cultural Properties.** There have been no identification of current use of the area for Native American religious or traditional purposes. If such use is identified in the future, the BLM will act in accordance with public Law 95-341 and applicable Federal policy.

**9. Car-camping and Parking on Wilderness Boundaries.** Car-camping and parking are permitted between access roads and the Congressionally designated wilderness boundaries. Where the wilderness boundary parallels existing roads, the boundary is posted at a standard setback of 30 feet from the center line of the road.

## **Issues Beyond The Scope Of This Plan**

**1. Sights and Sounds from Outside Land Uses on Private, State and Federal Lands.** Some public comments have expressed concern about the potential for short-term, temporary impacts to solitude and naturalness caused by off-site land uses like mining, grazing or rights-of-way use. Senate Report 101-359 in the Section-by-Section Analysis addressed the issue of outside sights and sounds as follows:

"Subsection (d) clarifies that the designation of wilderness areas does not imply the creation of 'protective perimeters' or buffer zones around any of the areas.

**2. Public Notification Process.** The public expressed concern that the process Federal agencies use to notify the public of major environmental actions is not adequate. This issue does not require a plan for resolution. Public outreach is being addressed in the Customer Service Initiative and other BLM programs.

## **Part IV Management Strategy**

This plan has been designed to serve as the management guidance for the Tres Alamos Wilderness. Implementation will commence following public review and final approval.

The public comments received during scoping revealed that respondents wished that the area be "minimally" managed, with little expenditure of federal dollars and staff time. The public wanted no trails, facilities or other amenities. They supported occasional patrols and signing, but opposed active mechanical rehabilitation of human impacts. Generally, BLM has adopted this overall management strategy in the development of this plan.

An interdisciplinary team developed three general management objectives from meeting the National Wilderness Management Goals (see Part II). The objectives and associated management actions were designed to help meet the goals of preserving the wilderness and vegetative characteristics of the area while providing protection of cultural resources, primitive recreational opportunities, solitude and the continuation of accepted uses permitted by the Wilderness Act.

The planned actions and monitoring of their effectiveness are designed to ensure that the characteristics which define the wilderness remain stable or actually improve.

Future issues, actions or opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If, through evaluation, actions are determined to be consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives, they will be incorporated into the plan without amendment of the plan. Inconsistent or incompatible actions will be further evaluated and be subject to public review and comment.

Management objectives will be reevaluated periodically maintained, and updated as needed.

## **Part V Wilderness Management**

### **Introduction**

In this section, objectives are established to address activity plan issues. Management actions to meet national wilderness management goals and plan objectives are outlined. Monitoring will be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of outlined management actions and to determine if plan objectives are being met.

A rationale is included immediately below certain items in this section when needed to provide additional clarification.

## **OBJECTIVE 1. Wilderness Values.**

Maintain or enhance the wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and special features in the Tres Alamos Wilderness by:

- Managing the boundaries to eliminate unauthorized vehicle use.
- Reducing the degree of contrast of all closed vehicle routes and the two abandoned range developments from the baseline ratings (established during first year of monitoring) to "weak" or none."
- Acquiring legal access to the wilderness boundary.
- Minimizing the authorized use of motorized or mechanical equipment.

**Rationale:** The objective allows the preservation of wilderness values with minimum management costs. Opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation will be maintained. The area does not require intensive management because of its' remoteness and low visitation.

### **Management Actions**

1. Post all wilderness boundaries accessible by road every 1/10 mile and post inaccessible boundaries at ½-mile intervals..

**Rationale:** Signing at 1/10 mile intervals is adequate to notify the public of the existence of wilderness alongside access roads. Boundary areas not accessible by road do not require close post spacing.

2. Install vehicle barriers (fence-line or post/cable) as necessary if repeated (more than three annually) vehicle violations occur in a given area.

3. Patrol wilderness boundaries monthly during the cool season (October 1 to May 1) and twice during hot weather (May 1 to October 1).

4. Allow former vehicle routes and two abandoned range developments (shown on Maps 1 and 2) to rehabilitate naturally. Active rehabilitation (including mechanical) may be undertaken if natural and non-mechanical rehabilitation does not reduce visual contrast to "weak" or "none" by 2008. Mechanized equipment (vehicles, backhoe, or wheelbarrows) may be used for active reclamation

or to repair new damage caused by authorized or unauthorized mechanized entry.

**Rationale:** Presently, natural rehabilitation appears adequate to reduce visual contrast. Slow vegetation growth rates will require at least seven to ten years to determine if natural rehabilitation is satisfactory. This is the most cost effective approach to achieve desired result.

5. No recreational facilities, including trails, will be constructed within the wilderness.

**Rationale:** Recreational facilities, including trails, are not needed. Naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities would be diminished with construction of such facilities. Any signing or information needed to manage the area will be located outside the wilderness.

6. Emphasize low impact and Leave No Trace recreation activities in any public information developed for the wilderness and surrounding area.

7. Acquire legal access from state, county, or private interests on Alamo and Pipeline roads, and associated ranch roads.

8. Provide for the following flight operations in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the BLM. If possible, the AGFD will provide 2-week advance notification of planned flights.

- One annual low-level javelina and mule deer survey during the time period of January 1 through March 31. These flights may include an occasional helicopter landing to inspect sick or dead animals or to retrieve radio collars.

- One low-level bighorn sheep survey during the time period of October 1 through November 30.

- As needed, flights for monitoring water levels or in response to emergency situations.

- Additional flights and helicopter landings may occur to transplant (capture or release) bighorn sheep or to retrieve telemetry equipment.

9. Conduct aerial census of wild burro population once every three years. This may include



approximately 15 minutes of low level (less than 500 feet) helicopter flight. Low level helicopter flights associated with wild burro removals may occur in the area but are not anticipated to intrude within the boundaries of the wilderness area.

10. Conduct routine maintenance of livestock fences without mechanized or motorized equipment. Conduct major fence repairs (i.e. reconstruction of significant sections of fence) using "minimum tool," which may include chain saws and augers. The grazing permittee will request approval for use of motorized or mechanized equipment at least four weeks prior to commencement of work. Major fence repairs could occur approximately every five years.

#### **Monitoring**

1. Record unauthorized vehicle use detected during monthly wilderness patrols. Evaluate the effectiveness of current efforts to eliminate unauthorized vehicle use.

2. Establish photo points at key observation points on former vehicle routes TA1, TA3, and TA6, and at the two breached reservoirs. Photograph viewpoints every five years to record the progress of rehabilitation of vehicle routes toward a natural appearance. Using the visual contrast rating system, evaluate contrast every five years until a "weak" or "none" rating is achieved.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2. Vegetation.**

Maintain or allow for natural succession of the vegetation. Manage fire and grazing prescription to maintain naturally occurring and existing plant communities.

#### **Management Actions**

1. Take the Appropriate Management Response in suppressing all human- or natural-caused fires within wilderness, using the minimum tool necessary. Appendix C describes BLM procedural steps used in suppressing wildfire in wilderness.

**Rationale:** There is no history of large fires in the area. Plant communities are not fire-adapted. Consideration of the Appropriate Management Response in fire suppression will allow a "common sense" approach to fire suppression, based on fire behavior. Suppressing wildfires will allow plant succession to proceed naturally.

2. Allow livestock utilization levels of no more than 50% of current year's production of key species at study plot #5 in the Pipeline Allotment and Study Plot #1 in the Tres Alamos Allotment. Key species are tobosa grass, big galleta, twinberry, and mormon tea.

**Rationale:** Livestock grazing levels of less than 50% utilization of these key species will maintain or improve naturally occurring plant communities.

3. Maintain the existing grazing rotation systems in the Tres Alamos and Pipeline Allotment Management Plans.

#### **Monitoring**

1. Burned areas will be monitored annually for 5 years using the pace frequency trend method to determine the extent of native versus non-native recruitment. A study plot will be established within the burned area and adjacent to the burned area for comparison.

2. Grazing use of key species will be monitored by range management specialists or wildlife biologists at existing study sites. Current data collection regarding wildlife/livestock sign will continue. If the standards are exceeded, the animal species responsible will be determined through analysis of the animal sign data and appropriate corrective action will be implemented.

#### **OBJECTIVE 3. Cultural Resources.**

Manage the cultural resources in the area for long term protection.

#### **Management Actions:**

1. Record the rock shelter, determine its eligibility nomination to the National Register, and allocate it to scientific use, within three years of plan approval.

2. Allocate all other cultural sites to scientific use.

3. Continue notification and consultation with the three tribes regarding any new finding(s).

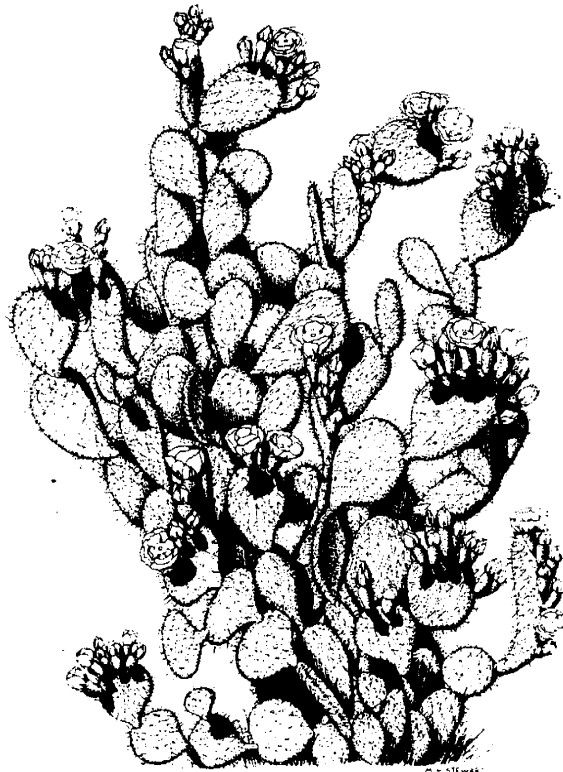
**Monitoring:** No need for monitoring known sites is anticipated at this time.

## **Part VI**

### **Plan Evaluation**

The BLM's Kingman Field Office will annually evaluate the effectiveness of plan implementation. This evaluation will be completed prior to preparing the annual budget to accurately reflect the possibility of changing needs and priorities. Evaluation will include the following:

1. Document completed management actions. Identify management actions to be completed the following year.
2. Analyze monitoring data to determine if plan objectives and national goals are being met.
3. If needed, recommend and select new management actions.



<b>Table II. Wilderness Water Sources - Tres Alamos</b>	
<b>Source</b>	<b>Location</b>
Cookie Tank (breached)	T11N, R09W, Sec 27 SESWSW
Chocolate Rock Tank (breached-not claimed)	T10N, R09W, Sec 06 NWNESE
Tres Alamos Pass Spring	T11N, R09W, Sec 34 NENESE
Toad Tinaja Spring	T10N, R09W, Sec 13 NWNENW
Honey Bee Spring	T10N, R09W, Sec 13 NWNENW

<b>Table III. Range Developments - Tres Alamos</b>					
<b>Development</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Allotment</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Barnett Fence	0354	T11N R9W Sec 21, 22, 27, 28, 33	TA-1 TA-3	Tres Alamos	Good
McNeil Fence	0107	T11N R9W Sec 32 T10N R9W Sec 4	TA-3	Tres Alamos & Pipeline	Good
Gap Fence	-	T10N R9W Sec 27	TA-7	Pipeline	Good
Cookie Tank	-	T11N R9W Sec 27	TA-1	Tres Alamos	Poor
Chocolate Rock Tank	-	T10N R9W Sec 6	TA-4	Pipeline	Poor

**Part VII - Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimate**

<b>Table IV. - Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimate</b>			
<b>Planned Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>BLM Workmonths</b>	<b>Non-Labor Costs</b>
Boundary Signage	Wilderness Staff	.25/yr	\$100.00
Install Vehicle Barriers	Wilderness Staff	.25/yr	\$500.00
Boundary Patrol	Wilderness/Law Enforcement.	.25/yr	0
Rehab Former Trails	Wilderness Staff	.50/yr	\$100.00
Public Education	Wilderness Staff	.50/yr	\$ 50.00
Acquire Access	Lands Staff	unknown	unknown
Game Inventory	Arizona Game & Fish	0	0
Maintain Range Development	Permittee	0	0
Monitor Range Development	Range Staff	0	0

**Part VIII  
Public Involvement And Scoping**

Public input has been an important feature of the planning process. The Bureau of Land Management held three public meetings. These meetings were announced by letter to other interested agencies, groups, and private citizens. Written comments were solicited from those who would be unable to attend the public meetings. These meetings were held in Gila Bend October 4, 1994; Wickenburg October 5, 1994, and the third in Phoenix October 6, 1994. Some citizens participated further in the planning process in-the-field by sharing their knowledge of the area, evaluating the work of the interdisciplinary team, expressing their concerns regarding current management and providing their vision for the Tres Alamos Wilderness. They assembled at the wilderness to tour the area, review many of the potential issues, and to suggest overall plan direction and content. The time and effort contributed by the public is greatly appreciated. These comments have shaped this plan.

A draft of this Wilderness Management Plan was mailed to 206 interested parties on the Arizona BLM's wilderness mailing list on April 21, 1998. Five comment letters were received by BLM in response to this mail-out.

**Part IX  
List of Preparers**

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## Glossary

**Accepted uses** (formerly known as nonconforming uses): Uses allowed by the Wilderness Act of 1964 that are prior in nature and not necessarily compatible with preserving wilderness values, e.g., mining, livestock grazing.

**Biological diversity (biodiversity):** Biodiversity is the aggregate of species assemblages (communities), individual species and genetic variation within species and the process by which these components interact within and among themselves. For classification purposes, biodiversity can be divided into three levels --

community diversity (habitat, ecosystem), species diversity and genetic diversity within species; all three levels change through time.

**Degree of contrast:** The degree to which a management activity affects the visual quality of a landscape depends on the visual contrast created between the project and the existing landscape.

**Ecological (range) site:** A characteristic natural plant community which is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development.

## Bibliography

### **U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management**

1983 *Lower Gila North Management Framework Plan*. Phoenix District Office. Phoenix.

1987 *Upper Sonoran Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement*, Arizona State Office. Phoenix.

1988a *Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan*. Division of Wildlife and Fisheries. Washington D.C.

1990 *Strategy for Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on Public Lands in Arizona*. Arizona State Office. Phoenix.

## Appendix A - Vegetation And Wildlife Species List

Wildlife Species List	Vegetation
mourning dove ( <i>Zenaida macroura</i> )	fiddleneck ( <i>Cryptantha spp.</i> )
Gambel's quail ( <i>Callipepla gambelii</i> )	owl-clover ( <i>Orthocarpus purpurascens</i> )
raven ( <i>Corvus corax</i> )	Indian wheat ( <i>Plantago insularis</i> )
turkey vulture ( <i>Cathartes aura</i> )	red brome ( <i>Bromus rubens</i> )
red-tailed hawk ( <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i> )	filaree ( <i>Erodium cicutarium</i> )
prairie falcon ( <i>Falco mexicanus</i> )*	mesquite ( <i>Prosopis spp.</i> )
peregrine falcon ( <i>Falco peregrinum</i> )*	desert broom ( <i>Baccharis sarathroides</i> )
golden eagle ( <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> )*	wolfberry ( <i>Lycium spp.</i> )
Gila monster ( <i>Heloderma suspectum</i> )*	range ratany ( <i>Krameria spp.</i> )
Sonoran desert tortoise ( <i>Gopherus agassizii</i> **)	brittlebush ( <i>Encelia farinosa</i> )
Western diamondback ( <i>Crotalus atrox</i> )	mormon tea ( <i>Ephedra spp.</i> )
Mohave rattlesnake ( <i>Crotalus scutulatus</i> )	desert mallow ( <i>Sphaeralcea spp.</i> )
Mexican free-tailed bat ( <i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i> )	desert willow ( <i>Chilopsis linearis</i> )
kit fox ( <i>Vulpes macrotis</i> )*	bush muhly ( <i>Muhlenbergia porterii</i> )
javelina ( <i>Dicotyles tajacu</i> )	blue and littleleaf paloverde ( <i>Cercidium floridum</i> and <i>C. microphyllum</i> )
desert bighorn sheep ( <i>Ovis canadensis</i> )	catclaw acacia ( <i>Acacia greggii</i> )
badger ( <i>Taxidea taxa</i> )	creosote ( <i>Larrea tridentata</i> )
black-tailed jackrabbit ( <i>Lepus californicus</i> )	Joshua tree ( <i>Yucca brevifolia</i> )
bobcat ( <i>Felis rufus</i> )	triangle leaf bur-sage ( <i>Ambrosia deltoidea</i> )
coyote ( <i>Canis latrans</i> )	white bur-sage ( <i>Ambrosia dumosa</i> )
desert cottontail ( <i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i> )	big galleta ( <i>Hilaria rigida</i> )
mountain lion ( <i>Puma concolor</i> )	tobosa grass ( <i>Hilaria mutica</i> )
mule deer ( <i>Odocoileus hemionus</i> )	Three-awn ( <i>Aristida sp.</i> )
raccoon ( <i>Procyon lotor</i> )	Bigelow onion ( <i>Allium bigelovii</i> ***)
grey fox ( <i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i> )	varied fishhook cactus ( <i>Mammillaria viridiflora</i> ***)

\* Suitable habitat for these Special Status Species

\*\* Former Federal Category 2 candidate species, now a BLM sensitive species.

\*\*\* Salvage Restricted plants. Plants that are not in the Highly Safeguarded category, but have a high potential for theft or vandalism, as described by the Arizona Native Plant Law (1993)

**Appendix B**  
**Cultural Resource Use Categories**

Cultural resources have not been systematically inventoried. Of the four sites recorded in the wilderness, one is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This site is a rock-shelter with cultural deposits and was used as a habitation for a period of time. The other recorded sites are small temporary campsites. No eligibility determinations or allocations of Use Categories have been made for these properties.



**Appendix C  
Steps to Full Fire Suppression in Tres  
Alamos Wilderness**

1. Inform the Field Manager of a fire in the wilderness.
2. Designate an initial attack Incident Commander.
3. Using ground or aerial reconnaissance, determine:
  - fire location, size, rate of spread and behavior;
  - current and probable fuels, weather and topography including locations of natural barriers, and;
  - threats to life, property or sensitive wilderness resources.

Authority is given to the Incident Commander to fly at levels below 2000 feet in reconnaissance efforts when it is determined to be the minimum tool to assess the fire.

4. Designate and dispatch a Resource Advisor to the fire.
5. The field Manager will consult with the Incident Commander and/or the Resource Advisor to determine the appropriate level of initial attack and fire suppression strategy considering such variables as weather conditions, time of year, current and predicted fire behavior and other pertinent factors.
6. Take action to suppress the fire, utilizing the most effective tactics while considering the concept of minimum tool.
7. Use of temporary structures, chainsaws, portable pumps, initial attack aircraft, retardant airtankers, helicopters, aerial ignition systems, helispot construction, wilderness camps, motorized vehicles, and motorized earth-moving equipment requires Field Manager approval when they are determined to be the minimum tool necessary to meet wilderness fire objectives.

8. If the Field Manager or acting cannot be contacted within a 15-minute notification window after arrival of the Incident Commander at the fire, the Incident Commander has discretion to authorize helicopter landings, use Single Engine Air Tankers (with fugitive fire retardant) and helicopter water bucket drops after consulting with the resource advisor if he/she is available. Justification for such actions could include:
  - imminent danger to structures or people
  - serious threats to significant wilderness resources.
9. Complete an escaped fire situation analysis if the fire escapes initial attack as determined by the Incident Commander. Analysis will be completed by the Incident Commander, Resource Advisor and Field Manager.
10. A memorandum will be completed by the Resource Advisor and/or the Incident Commander, for the Field Manager, describing the use of motorized vehicles/mechanized equipment following the fire, with copies submitted to the State director and placed in the wilderness case file.
11. All human impacts created during suppression efforts will be reclaimed following the fire.

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

## Introduction

### Background

The Tres Alamos Wilderness was designated by Congress on November 1990. A management plan was developed to provide management guidance for the area in conformance with the Arizona Wilderness Act and Public Law 101-628, which designated 39 areas in Arizona, including Tres Alamos, as wilderness. This environmental assessment analyzes the potential impacts of proposed actions and management alternatives that were considered for the plan.

Background information which includes location, access, and general management situation descriptions is provided on pages 1 to 6 of the proposed Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan.

### Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the actions proposed in the Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan is to fulfill the intent of Congress to protect and preserve the area for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations as wilderness. A series of actions were proposed to accomplish objectives that address BLM's national wilderness goals and issues identified during the development of the wilderness management plan.

### Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

The proposed plan actions comply with mandates of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Wilderness Act of 1964, and the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. and are guided by wilderness management policy as outlined in BLM Manual 8560.

### Alternative A Proposed Action

The proposed action is the adoption and implementation of the Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan as described in Part V. In general, the proposed action would provide for the protection and enhancement of wilderness values within a ten-year time frame. The proposal includes measures to protect existing natural resources and values. Under the

proposed action, opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be maintained or enhanced. Scenic qualities and values of naturalness would be enhanced.

### Alternative B No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, management guidance would be provided by the national BLM Wilderness Management Policy (BLM Manual 8560). No specific actions would be proposed for the rehabilitation of existing disturbances or the enhancement of wilderness values. In a course that may take several centuries, weathering processes would eventually restore the natural appearance of surface disturbances. Current conditions and values would be maintained under this alternative.

### Affected Environment

A description of the affected environment can be found on Page 2 of the proposed Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan.

### Environmental Consequences

The following critical elements have been analyzed and would not be affected by either the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative:

1. Air Quality
2. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
3. Cultural Resources
4. Prime or Unique Farmlands
5. Floodplains
6. Native American Religious Concerns
7. Threatened or Endangered Species
8. Solid or Hazardous Wastes
9. Water Quality (Surface and Ground)
10. Wetlands or Riparian Zones
11. Wild and Scenic Rivers
12. Environmental Justice/Impacts on Minority and Low Income Communities
13. Invasive, Non-native Species

### Impacts of Alternative A

Wilderness values would be maintained and enhanced within 10 years under the provisions of the proposed action. Barriers and fencing to prevent motorized vehicle violations, signs, and educational displays would be located outside the wilderness. Promoting "Leave No Trace" land use ethics within the planning area would assist in preventing new visitor use impacts to natural

values and would protect cultural resources.

Fencing, signs, and displays would reduce motorized vehicle trespass and thereby provide for the enhancement of wilderness values by allowing natural weathering processes to reclaim minor surface disturbances without interruption.

Visual Impacts from the signs and displays would be mitigated by using materials with a minimal background contrast. Minimal impacts to visual resources from the fences, signs, and displays would be offset by the long-term benefits of enhancing and maintaining wilderness values and opportunities for primitive recreation.

There would be short-term impacts to solitude from wilderness patrols and other monitoring activities that would be offset by the long-term benefits of enhancing and maintaining wilderness values and opportunities for primitive recreation.

Temporary adverse impacts to wilderness values from proposed rehabilitation efforts would be limited to the vicinity of existing disturbances for the duration of each project (usually 2-3 days) and would ultimately result in the long-term enhancement of natural values, by encouraging re-vegetation. Opportunities for unconfined primitive recreation would continue and improve as the rehabilitation of existing surface disturbances and abandoned range developments occurs.

Allowing for fire to play a natural role would provide for the protection of wilderness resources and would minimize potential impacts from fire suppression activities. In the event that fire suppression activities are required, resulting disturbances would be rehabilitated.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

Implementing the proposed action would reduce the potential for cumulative impacts to wilderness values from unmonitored recreation use and the related buildup of campfire rings.

The proposed minimum tool for maintaining existing range and wildlife developments also reduces the potential for cumulative impacts to wilderness values.

No other cumulative impacts have been identified with any of the proposed actions. Additionally, implementing the proposed action would not have any significant cumulative effects.

### **Impacts of Alternative B - No Action Alternative**

Current conditions and opportunities would be

maintained with this alternative. Existing laws, regulations, and policies would be followed without an integrated management strategy. There would be no temporary adverse impacts from rehabilitation efforts. In the long term, there could be a lower quality of naturalness due to the continuing presence of existing human disturbances.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative impacts were analyzed for wilderness values within the boundaries of the wilderness for a period of 10 years. The proposed action provides for the protection of wilderness values from potential cumulative impacts that would be likely if visitor use was left unrestricted and was not monitored.

### **Mitigation**

Mitigation for the proposed action or no action alternative are guided by the National BLM Wilderness Management Policy and are therefore the same. Mitigation measures specific to the Tres Alamos Wilderness are as follows:

1. Administrative actions would be scheduled for periods when there is the least potential for impacts to the wilderness visitors, such as during the weekdays when visitor use is likely to be the lowest.
2. Only the minimum tool or action necessary to reasonably accomplish management objectives would be authorized for use.

### **Environmental Justice**

No direct and indirect effects from the proposed Tres Alamos wilderness management plan were determined to impact minority and low-income populations or communities. There are no direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on people. Further, there are no minority communities in the locality of the Tres Alamos wilderness or adjoining public lands. BLM contacted all stakeholders, interested public groups and public land users in this area to ensure their opportunity to participate in the wilderness planning process. These plan participants did not identify any environmental justice considerations to address in the scoping, preparation or implementation of the Tres Alamos wilderness management plan.

**Consultation and Coordination**

For consultation, coordination and public involvement see Part VIII of the proposed Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan.

## Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record

Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan

Environmental Assessment No.AZ-020-097-084

Case File AZA 25491

**Decision:** It is my decision to approve the Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan. The plan establishes management direction for the Tres Alamos Wilderness.

**Finding of No Significant Impact:** Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

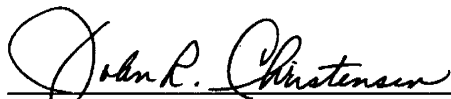
**Rationale for Decision:** The plan provides for the continued maintenance of wilderness values and the rehabilitation of existing disturbances.

**Other Alternatives Considered:** The Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative were considered.

### Mitigation/Stipulations:

1. Administrative actions would be scheduled for periods when there is the least potential for impacts to the wilderness visitors, such as during the weekdays when visitor use is likely to be the lowest.
2. Only the minimum tool or action necessary to reasonably accomplish management objectives would be authorized for use.

Approved by:

  
Field Manager, Kingman Field Office

10-10-2000  
Date

**RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS**  
**EA# AZ-020-97-084**

<u>LETTER NUMBER</u>	<u>RESPONSE</u>
1-1:	The information you provided has been added to the General Management Situation section of the document on Page 5.
2-1:	<p>The draft Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Tres Alamos Wilderness incorrectly stated that there was potential southwestern willow flycatcher habitat within the plan area. There are no riparian areas located within the boundaries of the plan area to support the habitat components needed by this species.</p> <p>This finding is also supported by comment letter provided by the Arizona Game and Fish Department in their review of this same draft plan. Therefore, mention of potential southwestern willow flycatcher habitat has been removed.</p>
3-1:	In the event it is decided that remote wildlife water developments are to be built in this wilderness, they would likely be planned in areas inaccessible to vehicles. The BLM will coordinate the design of any future developments with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society. These designs would require the development to best blend into the natural surroundings to reduce visual resource concerns, function optimally to limit the need for future redevelopment and maintenance, and to allow summer inspections from aircraft.
3-2:	The BLM has no authority to define major wildlife law violations. Wilderness management policy and regulations provide for emergency law enforcement access. Major wildlife violations would be covered under this existing policy guidance.
3-3:	The plan has been modified to allow for occasional helicopter landings by AGFD to retrieve radio collars and/or to examine sick or dead animals. There are currently no wildlife water catchments in the wilderness that require examination. Aerial access to future developments will be addressed in site-specific environmental assessments.
4-1:	The statement regarding civilian overflights has been removed from the document, as it is not a feature of the plan.

- 4-2: The wording in this paragraph has been revised to more clearly explain the situation regarding public access.
- 4-3: The nearest weather station to the Tres Alamos Wilderness in distance and elevation is located at Alamo Dam. Mean annual precipitation from this station is 7.47 inches.
- 4-4: The wording has been added to the section as requested.
- 4-5: The mentioned sensitive wildlife and plant species have been included in the plan as requested, with one exception. The BLM has no knowledge of suitable Mohave fringe-toed lizard habitat within the plan area. The plan area is located well east of this species distribution according to the literature.
- 4-6: As noted, bighorn sheep have been included in the narrative and on the wildlife species list in Appendix A.
- 4-7: The paragraph has been re-written to clarify what is meant by Special Status species.
- 4-8: As noted, this statement has been removed from the plan.
- 4-9: The paragraph has been re-written as requested.
- 4-10: As noted, desert shrub has been changed to desertscrub throughout the document. Vegetation description was prepared by visual observation of the plan area based on Brown and Lowe.
- 4-11: The wilderness map has been modified to clarify the boundary line.
- 4-12: The paragraph has been removed from the document.
- 4-13: The document has been revised to fully address wild burro management within wilderness.
- 4-14: The sentence regarding "target dates" has been removed from the document.
- 4-15: Management Action 8 has been re-written as suggested:
- 4-16: Portions of the Tres Alamos Wilderness were evaluated as part of the 1999 Arizona Game and Fish Department report "Evaluation of bighorn sheep habitat in Arizona" (1999). Twenty-one bighorn were transplanted in the evaluation area in 1985; of which to date, few sheep remain. The evaluation

specifically states that water is not a limiting factor, "waters are relatively well distributed and relatively abundant in the evaluation area". Specific information needs to be presented to support the need for a possible water development at high elevations in the wilderness area. Future consideration would have to be evaluated in a separate environmental assessment.

4-17: The change in wording was made as requested.

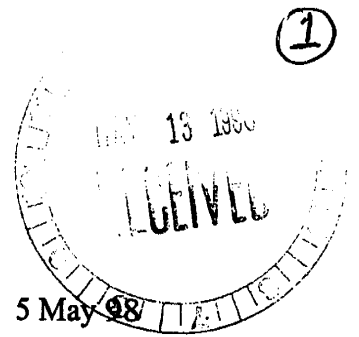
5-1: The BLM does not plan to conduct an intensive survey of the Tres Alamos Wilderness. However, if there are proposed developments or activities that have the potential to adversely effect cultural resources, the BLM will perform site-specific cultural inventory and clearance for those projects. Wilderness designation provides cultural resources a high degree of protection through restrictions on access, use, and ground disturbing activities, and wilderness regulations allow access to traditional properties.







**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND**



Colonel David L. White  
Director, Range Management Office  
6605 N 140th Dr  
Luke AFB AZ 85309-1933

Mr. John R. Christensen  
Bureau of Land Management  
2475 Beverly Avenue  
Kingman AZ 86401

Dear Mr. Christensen

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Tres Alamos Wilderness area. Luke AFB has one Military Training Route, VR-242, which transits the western portion of Tres Alamos from the northeast to the southwest.

VR-242 is assessed for flight down to 300 feet above ground level (AGL) over Tres Alamos though student training sorties are flown at a minimum of 500 feet AGL with the normal altitude being between 800 and 1000 feet AGL. VR-242 was scheduled and flown by 71 flights in fiscal year 1997 for an average of approximately 6 per month. All of the flights were flown from Monday thru Friday. While VR-242 is not heavily utilized it is an essential training route for specific syllabus training that requires entry into the northeastern portion of the Barry M. Goldwater Range from the northwest.

If you have any questions regarding VR-242 operations please contact Mr. Gary Blake, 56RMO Airspace Manager, at (602) 856-5855.

Sincerely

  
DAVID L. WHITE, Colonel, USAF



United States Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service

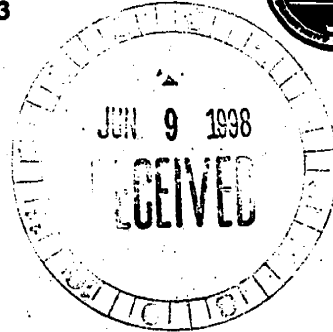
Arizona Ecological Services Field Office  
2321 W. Royal Palm Road, Suite 103  
Phoenix, Arizona 85021-4951  
(602) 640-2720 Fax (602) 640-2730



In Reply Refer To:

AESO/SE  
980839

June 4, 1998



MEMORANDUM

TO: Field Manager, Kingman Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Kingman, Arizona

FROM: Acting Field Supervisor

SUBJECT: Draft Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Tres Alamos Wilderness

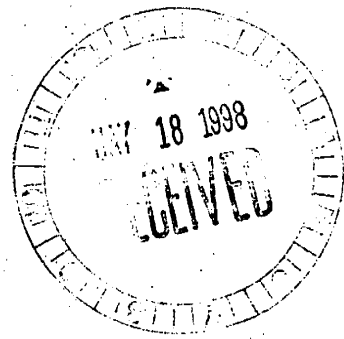
2-1 | The Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed the subject document and offers the following comment. The document states that there is "potential" habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) on the wilderness area, and from the analysis provided, the Bureau of Land Management is assuming there are no flycatchers using these habitats. We recommend that surveys for the flycatcher be conducted. If any are present additional consultation on the management plan and specific actions undertaken to implement it would be required.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft management plan. Please send us a copy of the final plan once it is released. If you have any questions, please contact Lesley Fitzpatrick or Ted Cordery.

Jerry J. Brabander

# ARIZONA DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. Drawer 7545 • Phoenix, Arizona 85011  
(602) 912-5300 • FAX (602) 957-4828



May 15, 1998

Mr. John Christensen  
Field Manager, Kingman Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
2475 Beverly Avenue  
Kingman, AZ 86401-3629

Re: Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA-AZ-020-097-084)

Dear Mr. Christensen:

The Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Tres Alamos Wilderness. The comments and suggestions in this letter are submitted on behalf of our membership, which numbers over 1000.

The Society greatly appreciates the wording in the plan which states that it must be flexible enough to allow for future reintroduction of desert bighorn sheep and the possibility of installing a high elevation water source in the wilderness to accommodate that reintroduction. We have urged the BLM to include such a statement in previous wilderness management plans we have reviewed, and we are encouraged to see it incorporated into this plan.

Because of the potential remoteness of future water development in the wilderness, it may not be possible to safely inspect them on foot during the critical summer months. For this reason, the Society would like the plan to authorize the Arizona Game and Fish Department to inspect future water developments by motorized vehicle (aircraft or truck, as appropriate) and make any necessary repairs to the catchments during these visits. Less frequent inspection may not be adequate to guarantee availability of water to bighorn sheep and other wildlife that are highly dependent on it at this critical time of year.

We support the use of motorized vehicles, to include helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, to enforce game laws in the wilderness area. Specifically, we would like to see the illegal taking of a desert bighorn sheep defined as a major wildlife violation warranting such pursuit.

3-1

3-2

3-3

Aircraft performing surveys or other operations within the wilderness area should be allowed to make an unscheduled landing for either of the following reasons:

1. To retrieve a radio collar from a dead or dying animal. The collars are expensive, and the knowledge gained by examining the animal could be essential to maintaining the health of the herd.
2. To examine a water catchment that has gone dry or has obviously been damaged.

The Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society looks forward to working with the Bureau for the benefit of desert bighorn sheep and other wildlife in the development of the management plan for this area.

Sincerely,

*G. Allen*

Gary Allen  
President

cc: Art Fuller, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region III

4

THE STATE



OF ARIZONA

# GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT

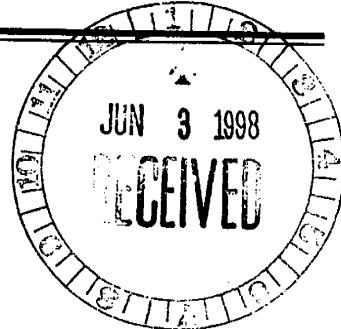
2221 West Greenway Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85023-4399 (602) 942-3000  
www.gf.state.az.us

Governor  
Jane Dee Hull  
Commissioners:  
Chairman, Herb Guenther, Tacna  
Michael M. Golightly, Flagstaff  
William Berlat, Tucson  
M. Jean Hassell, Scottsdale  
Dennis D. Manning, Alpine

Director  
Duane L. Shroufe  
Deputy Director  
Thomas W. Spalding

May 29, 1998

Mr. John R. Christensen  
Field Manager  
Kingman Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
2475 Beverly Avenue  
Kingman, AZ 86401



Re: Draft Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Christensen:

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) has reviewed the Draft Tres Alamos Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment and the following page-specific comments are provided.

**Page 1, Civilian Overflights**

4-1

Civilian overflights are not restricted by BLM (Federal Aviation Regulations govern aircraft operations) and not to only 2000 feet above ground level (agl) (greater than 2000 feet agl). We recommend the statement reads, "The Federal Aviation Administration recommends that civilian overflights be greater than 2000 feet agl." The Department's low-level flight operations have been approved by the Federal Aviation Administration.

**Page 2, Wilderness Overview**

4-2

Please clarify what is meant by "not legal access to the wilderness" and add a period at the end of the sentence.

**Page 2, Topography & Climate**

4-3

An annual maximum of 7 inches of rainfall seems low as a "general range" for precipitation in this area.

**Page 2, General Management Situation, Wildlife**

4-4

Please add the following statement regarding Arizona Game and Fish Department's role in managing wildlife: "The Arizona Game and Fish Department manages all resident wildlife species and has the primary responsibility to promulgate regulations for the harvest of these resources (as provided for under A.R.S.17), and shares management authority for migratory and threatened and endangered species with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." Wildlife management actions within the wilderness area should be consistent with the February 6, 1987, Master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the Department of Interior, BLM, which includes Policies and Guidelines for Fish and

Wildlife Management in National Forest and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness.

**Page 2, General Management Situation, Wildlife**

4-5 | For your information, the Department's Heritage Data Management System has been accessed and current records show that the special status species on the attached list have been documented as occurring in the vicinity of Tres Alamos Wilderness Area.

**Page 2, Wildlife**

4-6 | Since desert bighorn sheep currently occur within the wilderness boundary, add desert bighorn sheep to the sentence beginning with "Wildlife species include" and remove last sentence on sheep habitat.

**Page 3, First Paragraph, Special Status Species**

4-7 | Please indicate who designated the species listed as "special status species" and define what is meant by "special status species" in this case.

**Page 3, First Paragraph, Potential Flycatcher Habitat**

4-8 | The Department is not aware of any area, within the wilderness boundary, that represents potential southwestern willow flycatcher habitat.

**Page 3, Second Paragraph**

4-9 | Please delete everything after the second sentence and replace with a general statement such as: "The Arizona Game and Fish Department will conduct fixed wing or helicopter flights within the wilderness area at less than 2000 feet agl as needed for wildlife management." Information regarding flights will be described under Part V, Wilderness Management.

**Page 3, Vegetation**

4-10 | Please cite the source for vegetation type description used. Change Desertshrub to Desertscrub throughout document. Also, Microphyllum should be changed to microphyllum.

**Page 5, Map**

4-11 | ~~The wilderness area boundary~~ is not clearly defined on the map.

**Page 7, Desert Bighorn Sheep**

4-12 | We recommend removing this paragraph because the issue is covered (with other recommended changes) under Section V Wilderness Management.

**Page 8, Part V, Wilderness Management**

4-13 | The Department believes that burro management should be addressed in this plan because the wilderness area is outside of any herd area and burros have been seen within the wilderness boundary.

**Page 8, Part V, Wilderness Management, Introduction**

4-14 | In the Introduction it states: "Target dates to accomplish the proposed actions are assigned." However, no dates are provided

Mr. John R. Christensen

May 29, 1998

3

4-14 under the proposed actions. Either remove this statement or provide dates under the individual actions.

**Page 9, Management Action 8**

This management action should be rewritten in the following manner: Provide for the following flight operations in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the BLM. If possible, the Arizona Game and Fish Department will provide 2-week advance notification of planned flights.

- 4-15
- One low-level javelina and mule deer survey during the time period of January 1 through March 31.
  - One low-level bighorn sheep survey during the time period of October 1 through November 30.
  - In addition, flights for monitoring water levels or in response to emergency situations may occur.
  - Additional flights and helicopter landing may occur in order to transplant (capture or release) bighorn sheep and retrieve telemetry equipment.

**Page 9, Additional Management Action (From Page 7)**

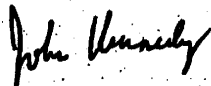
4-16 Please add a Management Action that states: "Provide for the possible development, inspection, and maintenance of a high elevation water source."

**Page 10, Management Action 3**

4-17 We recommend adding "of current years production" after 40%.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft management plan and environmental assessment. If you have any questions, please contact me at (602) 789-3602.

Sincerely,



John Kennedy  
Project Evaluation Program Supervisor  
Habitat Branch

JFK;rke

Enclosure

cc: Larry Voyles, Regional Supervisor, Region IV, Yuma  
Dave Conrad, Field Supervisor, Region IV, Yuma  
Russ Engel, Acting Habitat Program Manger, Region IV, Yuma

AGFD# 04-24-98(04)



## SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

### IN THE VICINITY OF TRES ALAMOS WILDERNESS AREA

<u>COMMON NAME</u>	<u>SCIENTIFIC NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
Bigelow onion	<i>Allium bigelovii</i>	SR
Gila monster	<i>Heloderma suspectum</i>	S
Mohave fringe-toed lizard	<i>Uma scoparia</i>	WC
Sonoran desert tortoise	<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	WC,S
varied fishhook cactus	<i>Mammillaria viridiflora</i>	SR

#### STATUS DEFINITIONS

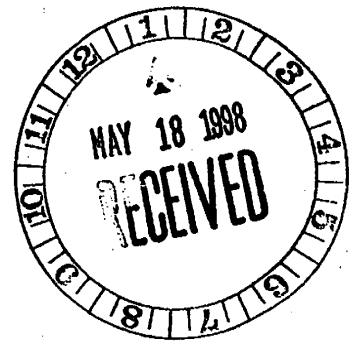
- WC - **Wildlife of Special Concern in Arizona.** Species whose occurrence in Arizona is or may be in jeopardy, or with known or perceived threats or population declines, as described by the Department's listing of **Wildlife of Special Concern in Arizona** (WSCA, in prep.). Species included in WSCA are currently the same as those in **Threatened Native Wildlife in Arizona** (1988).
- S - **Sensitive.** Species classified as "sensitive" by the Regional Forester when occurring on lands managed by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.
- SR - **Salvage Restricted.** Those Arizona native plants not included in the Highly Safeguarded Category, but that have a high potential for theft or vandalism, as described by the Arizona Native Plant Law (1993).



YAVAPAI

PRESCOTT ♦ INDIAN ♦ TRIBE

May 6, 1998



John R. Christensen, Field Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
Kingman Field Office  
2475 Beverly Avenue  
Kingman, Arizona 86401

Refer to: 8560 (020)

Dear Mr. Christensen:

We have received your Draft Wilderness Management Plan for the Tres Alamos Wilderness Area.

We note on page 4 that "Cultural resources have not been systematically inventoried" for the subject area. Since this region lies within the aboriginal territory of Yavapai Indians we strongly believe that a greater percentage of inventory needs to be accomplished. The location of four sites in an area of 8,700 acres is certainly not sufficient to comply properly with federal cultural resources laws.

5-1

We shall appreciate you response to these concerns.

I should add that the reason the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe did not voice any issues or concerns, is primarily because your archaeological inventories have been so meager, we did not have enough information to comment.

Sincerely,

*Bob Euler*

Robert C. Euler, Ph.D.,  
Tribal Anthropologist

RCE:lj:38



**SUMMARY OF CHANGES MADE TO DOCUMENT  
BASED ON COMMENTS RECEIVED  
EA# AZ-020-97-084**

**Page 2, Wilderness Overview:**

The description of the road situation around the wilderness was changed to clarify the legality of access across private and State Trust lands.

**Page 3, General Management Situation, Wildlife:**

This section was re-written to better explain the role the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) in wildlife management of this area. A description of the existing peregrine falcon situation was added.

**Page 3, General Management Situation, Wild Burros:**

This section was omitted in the draft document and has now been added.

**Page 4, General Management Situation, Vegetation:**

Changes were made to the description of vegetative communities found in the wilderness.

**Page 5, General Management Situation, Military Aircraft Overflight:**

This section was omitted in the draft document and has now been added.

**Pages 6 and 7, Maps:**

Both maps were re-done to make them more readable.

**Page 9, Issues Solved Through Policy or Administrative Action, Threatened, Endangered or Special Status Species:**

A paragraph on Desert bighorn sheep was removed.

**Pages 11 and 12, Management Actions associated with Objective 1:**

Item 8, addressing AGFD monitoring flights was re-written. Item 9, describing census and capture activities for wild burros was added.

**Page 12, Management Actions associated with Objective 2:**

Items 1 and 2 were re-written into Mgt. Action #1. Livestock utilization levels were corrected to read 50%, rather than 40%, to be in conformance with the Lower Gila North Grazing EIS and grazing management plans.

**Page 20, Appendix C: Steps to Full Fire Suppression:**

This appendix was added to clarify BLM's fire suppression procedures in wilderness.