

## Munds Park Roads and Trails

This project focused on the development of road and trail systems for uses of the forest area surrounding the Munds Park community. During the summer of 2005, the district worked with the Munds Park Trail Stewards to implement the project. Work included the construction of a new motorized trail off Janice Place that routes motorized traffic away from adjacent homes. In addition, Forest Service employees and Munds Park volunteers reconstructed the trailhead fence at Forest Road 240 to ensure public compliance with seasonal road closures.

To continue construction in 2006, the Forest Service will utilize a \$50,000 grant from the Arizona State Parks and Federal Highway Administration Recreational Trails Program Motorized Grant fund.

## Thinning and Burning in the Wildland-Urban Interface around Flagstaff

One of Coconino National Forest's priorities is to plan and implement forest restoration projects around Greater Flagstaff. In nearly every case, thinning densely forested areas is necessary in maintaining forest health, and reducing the risk of catastrophic fire. The various thinning projects in the WUI were planned and are being conducted in cooperation with the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership (GFFP). These include the Fort Valley, Kachina Village, Mountainair, Woody Ridge, Mount Elden, The Arboretum, and the Eastside projects.

After Phase One of the Fort Valley Forest Restoration Project, Phase Two will be offered as a stewardship contract this year.

The Kachina Village Forest Health Restoration Project is in progress and is expected to be completed within the next year.



The Eastside project is being planned through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This planning process is also expected to be completed within the next year.

## Red Rock/ Verde Valley Administration Site

The Coconino and Prescott National Forests are coordinating a project to develop two new administrative sites in the Verde Valley. The Arizona National Forest Improvement Act of 2000 gave the Forest Service legislative authority to sell the existing Sedona and Camp Verde administrative sites. The proceeds from these sales will be used to develop new administrative facilities. The new Red Rock Ranger Station will be located one mile south of the Village of Oak Creek and the Verde Valley Ranger Station will remain in the town of Camp Verde either on the existing site or at a new

## **WHERE DO I GO NOW?**

**After leaving their current location, while the new facility is under construction, employees of the Red Rock Ranger District Office will be working out of the old Beaver Creek office—1.5 miles SE of I-17 on SR 179. Stay tuned for dates and details.**

site on Middle Verde Road.

Groundbreaking for the new Red Rock Station should take place in the summer of 2006. The sale of the Verde Valley property and plans for its replacement are expected to occur that same season.

## Bar T Bar/ Anderson Springs Allotment Management Plan

Incorporating recommendations from the Diablo Trust, the Coconino National Forest developed a comprehensive plan that permits livestock grazing on the Bar T Bar and Anderson Springs Allotments for a 10-year period. It will also address vegetation management and wildlife habitat needs.

Following the review of this proposed action, an alternative that will incorporate site-specific details is now being implemented. Fences were already constructed at Cow and Yeager Lakes, and funding is being provided to build three stock tanks to replace water for wetland fences in the spring and summer of 2006.

## Lowell Observatory's Discovery Channel Telescope

A special-use permit has been approved for Lowell Observatory to build a new facility and telescope to expand research capacity. The new observatory will be built north of Happy Jack along Forest Highway 3 to accommodate the fifth largest telescope in the Continental U.S. This site offers unique conditions necessary for astronomical research with dark skies and obstruction-free views. In fact, very few sites within the continental U.S. possess the characteristics that would justify the cost of building and operating this telescope. The NEPA process of this project is complete and construction is underway.

## Smashed Cars Used to Renovate

### Campgrounds

The Mogollon Rim has two newly renovated facilities: The Blue Ridge and Rock Crossing Campgrounds. New tent pads, grills and picnic tables were constructed with Impact Post, a Canadian based product. This unique and environmentally safe product is formed from whole vehicles, smashed and condensed into a powder form. The Coconino National Forest and Inter Mountain West Civil Constructors, Inc. worked together to fully refurbish both campgrounds. Work schedules were timed to avoid disturbing the Mexican Spotted Owl (an endangered species) during breeding season.

### Fossil Creek Fish Restoration

Native Arizona fish are among the most endangered aquatic species in the country. In addition to living in a region with little water, Arizona's native fish have withstood significant impacts to their habitat for decades. More recently, native species are increasingly

threatened by the presence and spread of non-native aquatic animals. The Fossil Creek Fish Restoration Project, located on the border of the Coconino and Tonto National Forests, represents a successful collaboration between Arizona Public Service, environmental groups, Native American Tribes, educational institutions, and numerous state and federal agencies.

This project is comprised of three activities: native fish restoration, hydroelectric facility decommissioning, and research and monitoring.

A fish barrier was built in the Lower Fossil Creek area. The removal of non-native fish began and native fish were reintroduced. Decommissioning of the Childs and Irving Powerplants will continue through December 2009. Native fish in Fossil Creek include headwater chub, roundtail chub, speckled dace, Sonora sucker, and Desert sucker.

## **REMEMBER!!**

**Fossil Creek is closed to fishing until 2007. Contact your local Game and Fish office for more information.**

## **RED ROCK PASS**

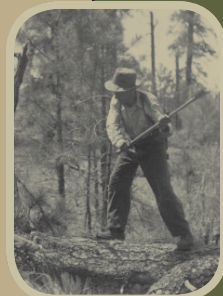
The Red Rock Pass program is a conservation tool designed to protect, enhance, and maintain Sedona's awe-inspiring red rock landscape for the American public today and into the future. Purchasing a pass helps fund the National Forest in making a difference to provide improved visitor information and environmental and cultural site protection! As a "high impact recreation area," the level of care and maintenance required for the Red Rock landscape exceeds that needed in other National Forest areas.

A Red Rock Pass can be purchased at one of our local Forest Service offices or participating vendors in the Sedona area. Once purchased, a pass is to be displayed in the vehicle windshield when recreating on the National Forest. A pass is not required for incidental stopping along National Forest roads, such as taking a photo or to view the scenery.

### **Benefits of the Red Rock Pass program include:**

- Funding approximately one third of the Red Rock District programs and accomplishments.
- Increased visitor information services, staffing at several gateway information centers and increased field patrol.
- Contacts with over 500,000 visitors per year providing trip planning and "Leave No Trace" information.
- Increased public convenience and partnership services with the Chamber of Commerce and other community-based organizations.
- Expanded recreation, cultural heritage, and wilderness resource accomplishments including: the collection of 1000's of pounds of trash, numerous dump sites cleaned, numerous abandoned campfires extinguished, hundreds of miles of trail maintained, soil and vegetation impacts restored and the quick repair of vandalized sites.
- Restoration of watershed and soil conditions from long-term visitor use impacts.

The pass program generates over \$800,000 and is incrementally growing each year. These funds are invaluable in providing for quality recreation, needed maintenance and for the protection and restoration of natural and cultural resources on approximately 160,000 acres of Red Rock Country on the Coconino National Forest.





# FIRE MANAGEMENT

**Note: WUI Refers to the Wildland/Urban Interface Initial entry broadcast burn WUI Accomplishments:**

Prescribed Burns (WUI)	<b>Total: 5950</b>
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Prescribed Burns (NonWUI)	<b>Total: 8650</b>
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Number of Wildfires:

Human Caused	128
Lightening	198
<b>Total:</b>	<b>326</b>

Wildfire Acres Burned:

Human Caused	304.5 acres
Lightening	1303 acres
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,607.5 acres</b>

**2006 WUI Planned Broadcast Burns, Hand Pile Burns and Thinning Projects:**

Project	Type	Target
Bald Mesa Fuels Reduction Project	Thinning	200 acres
Bear Park	Hand Pile Burn	50 acres
Fort Valley <b>Phase 2</b>	Thinning	985 acres
Kachina Village	Thinning	100 acres
Kachina Village (different contract)	Thinning	977 acres
Kachina Village	Broadcast Burn	540 acres
Kachina Village	Pile Burn	650 acres
Lake Mary	Hand Pile Burn	300 acres
Oak Creek	Hand Pile Burn	10 acres
Oak Creek	Hand Pile Burn	70 acres
Oak Creek	Thinning	70 acres
Spearmint (NON-WUI)	Hand Pile Burn	350 acres
Valley (NON WUI)	Broadcast Burn	2,400 acres
Victorine (NON WUI)	Thinning	570 acres

## UPCOMING PROJECTS 2006

### Wildland Fire Use: Another Tool in the Fire Management Toolbox

The forests of Arizona are born to burn. Researchers have helped us realize that these forests need fire to be healthy ecosystems. However, with overly dense forests and neighborhoods bordering wildlands, it's not as simple as allowing any fire ignited by Mother Nature to burn whenever, wherever it will. In addition to fire suppression and prescribed fire, the Coconino National Forest is developing another tool to have in its Fire Management Toolbox: a Wildland Fire Use Plan. The plan will define specific conditions and areas where naturally-ignited fires can be managed to meet resource objectives such as recycling nutrients into the soil, enhancing habitat for wildlife, and reducing the risk of high-intensity wildland fires. Thus the term "Wildland Fire Use" - fire used to benefit the ecosystem.

A team of Coconino National Forest employees are working together to complete the plan in 2006. Elements such as fire's effects on wildlife habitat and cultural sites, proximity to urban areas and wilderness areas will be considered. Wildland fire use is another step in restoring fire-adapted forest and grassland ecosystems of northern Arizona.

### **OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLE POLICIES**

#### National Transportation Policy Implementation

Cross-country travel is a significant issue on the Coconino Forest as well as nationally. Roads created by off-highway vehicle travel have created resource damage to soil, vegetation and the overall visual quality of national forest lands.

A four-year process will begin this year to implement a national policy on cross-country travel. The NEPA process will be a

collaborative effort to bring motorized users, non-users, and Forest Service personnel together to implement the national policy. The focus of this policy is to create a map which documents the existing system of motorized routes and will potentially include additional routes. Public involvement will be an important part of this process.

#### **5 Forest OHV Project**

Meanwhile, five national forests in Arizona are continuing to develop a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that would create a policy prohibiting cross-country travel. During the implementation process travel would only be allowed on existing motorized routes. The aim of the five forest project is to eliminate cross-country travel and to reduce the number of user-created routes as soon as possible; while the National Transportation Policy aims to achieve this within a four year period. Implementation of the National Transportation Policy would evaluate and designate which specific routes would continue to be open to motorized travel. The two policies will converge during the implementation process when the Forest Service works with the public to develop maps designating routes for off-highway vehicle use.

#### Forest Plan Revision

The Coconino National Forest will be initiating the Forest Plan Revision this year. The Forest Service has a new planning policy that provides the framework for all forest plan revisions. This planning timeline is expected to be briefer than prior efforts and should be complete in about three years. Contrary to the former planning policy, plans under this new rule will be more strategic in light of changing conditions, science and technology. Plan revisions will be based on the need for change where additional direction or more appropriate information is necessary.

**This report was prepared by Amber Ramirez and Brienne Untalan**

# RECREATION AND LANDS:

Number of Individual Campsites Maintained:

District:	Total Number of Sites
Peaks Ranger District	78
Mormon Lake Ranger District	185
Mogollon Rim Ranger District	196
Red Rock Ranger District	93
<b>Total:</b>	<b>552</b>

Number of Group Campsites Maintained:

District:	Total Number of Sites
Peaks Ranger District	3
Mormon Lake Ranger District	1
Mogollon Rim Ranger District	2
Red Rock Ranger District	5
<b>Total:</b>	<b>11</b>

Recreation Areas:

<b>Picnic Areas</b>	9
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<b>Cabin Rentals</b>	3
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<b>Miles of Trail</b>	641 miles
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<b>Number of Trailheads</b>	43
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<b>Miles of Forest Roads</b>	5,914 miles
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#### Volunteer Information

District	Volunteers	Hours	Value
Red Rock Ranger District	400	40,000	\$472,800
Mormon Lake/ Peaks Ranger Districts	328	11,710	\$133,473
Mogollon Rim Ranger District	839	10,756	\$141,922
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>62,466</b>	<b>\$748,195</b>

#### Law Enforcement Statistics:

Total Incidents	2,145
Warnings Issued	288
Arrests	48
Public Assists	65
Agency Assists	155
Violation Fines Collected	\$61,169.50
Total Value of Damage to FS Property	\$93,087.00
Total Value of FS Resource Damage	\$2,949.00
Incidents/Violations Responded to:	
Fire Investigations	136
Cannabis Plots Eradicated	1 (consisting of 19,953 plants)
Other Agency and Public Contacts	22,294

#### Stewardship

Acres of Noxious Weed Treatment	1,937 acres
Acres of Soil and Water Improvement	155 acres
Acres of Wildlife Habitat Restored or Enhanced	4,090 acres
Acres of Lake Habitat Restored	20 acres
Miles of Stream Habitat Restored	5 miles

Plan components consist of:

- Desired social, economic and ecological conditions
- Concise, time-specific objectives
- Guidelines
- Suitability of areas for uses compatible with desired conditions and objectives for that area
- Special areas: areas are designated for unique or special characteristics, including areas designated by statute such as wilderness

Plan revisions will be developed in a collaborative environment.

Although plans under this new rule will not typically contain final decisions that approve projects or activities, they will contain the above five components which set forth broad policies to help guide future on-the-ground decisions.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Coconino National Forest Supervisor's Office**  
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Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
(928) 527-3600

**Mormon Lake Ranger District**  
4373 S. Lake Mary Rd.  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
(928) 774-1147

**Peaks Ranger District**  
5075 N. Highway 89  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004  
(928) 526-0866

**Red Rock Ranger District**  
PO Box 20429  
Sedona, AZ 86341  
(928) 282-4119

**Mogollon Rim Ranger District**  
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Visit our website at: [www.coconinoforest.us](http://www.coconinoforest.us)