



JAMES KENT ASSOCIATES
Global Cultural Analysts

Summary Report of Community Fieldwork for Southern Bradshaw Planning

Presented by
Kevin Preister, Ph.D.
James Kent Associates
Social Ecology Associates

A Report Presented to
The Phoenix Field Office of the
Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior

February 7, 2001

Post Office Box 3165, Aspen, Colorado 81612 Phone: (970) 927-4424
Post Office Box 3493, Ashland, Oregon 97520 Phone: (541) 488-6978
970 N. Kalaheo Blvd., Kailua, Hawaii 96734 Phone: (808) 263-2422
1702 Doe Run Road, Sequim, WA 98382 Phone: (360) 683-1427

Fax: (970) 927-4443 kentj@csn.net
Fax: (541) 552-9683 kevpreis@jeffnet.org
Fax: (808) 263-1242 bruceisd@igc.org
Fax: (360) 683-9431 dmerritt@olympus.net

[Creating Productive Harmony between Human and Natural Environments](#)

Summary Report of Community Fieldwork for
Southern Bradshaw Planning

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Regional Human Influences on the Southern Bradshaws	3
The Wickenburg Area	6
The Black Canyon Corridor	10
The West Valley Area	15
Future Research and Planning Needs	19
References Cited	23
Figure One: The Biosocial Model of Ecosystem Management	2
Figure Two: Human Geographic Map of the Southern Bradshaws	4

Acknowledgements: The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of these people to the project described in this report: Mike Taylor, Phoenix Field Office Manager of BLM, for leadership in promoting a community-based approach to ecosystem stewardship; Deb Rawhouser, Assistant Field Office Manager for guiding the project; BLM project lead, Chris Horyza, who has shown the first hand value of direct citizen contact; BLM staff people, Jack Ragsdale and Dave Scarbrough, for their commitment and skill in conducting community fieldwork; Joan Resnick, BLM liaison to the Southwest Strategy, for her leadership in getting two National Training Center courses to the area to jump start the process; JKA personnel, Jim Kent and Luis Ibanez, for conceptual and fieldwork support throughout the project; and finally, the citizens of Wickenburg, Black Canyon Corridor, and West Valley, who gave so generously of their time, observations, and ideas for better public land management.

Summary Report of Community Fieldwork for Southern Bradshaw Planning

Introduction

Under Assistance Agreement Number 1422P850A80015 between James Kent Associates (JKA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), JKA began work in September, 1999 under Task Order #2 to assist the Phoenix Field Office (PFO) of the BLM in conducting community fieldwork in residential areas surrounding the Southern Bradshaw Mountains.

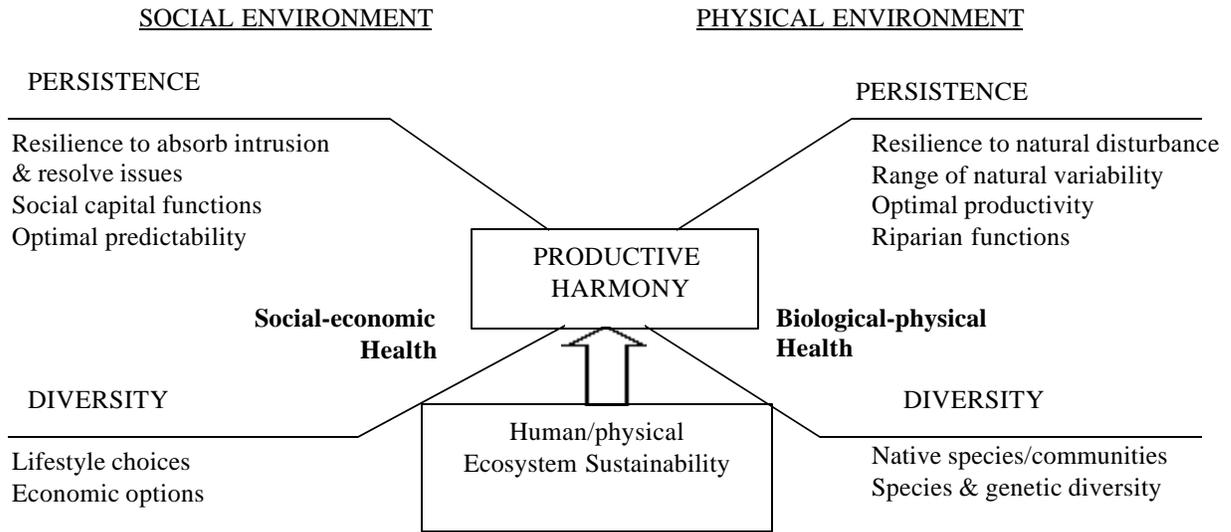
The Southern Bradshaws have experienced increasing impacts because of the urbanization from the Phoenix area. In recent years, the area has been subject to increasing residential and recreation development, improved, expanded and sometimes degraded roads, expanded utility corridors, and increased recreational use of public lands. The PFO has felt that only with broad public participation and partnership with other jurisdictions would it be able satisfactorily to manage the many impacts in the area.

James Kent Associates (JKA) was asked to train and guide BLM staff in engaging in fieldwork in nearby communities and to participate with them in the fieldwork process. Using The Discovery Process™, the goal was to “enter the routines” of the communities, engaging in informal discussions, and identifying the social networks and communication patterns. In particular, the team wanted to know citizen issues related to the management of the Bradshaws, opportunities for collaborative stewardship and participation in the long-term management of public lands in the Bradshaws, and contributions to BLM urban policy.

The JKA approach is based on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that calls for “productive harmony” between people and nature by considering not only biological and physical components of the environment, but the social and economic components as well (Preister and Kent 2001). Figure One below displays the notion of productive harmony. In our view, the goal of natural resource decisionmaking is productive harmony. Decisions should move an ecosystem towards productive harmony and not away from it. For this reason, efforts to understand both the social and physical environments are important (see Preister and Kent 1997).

In practice, we contacted and listened to as many people as we could, to hear their stories of the land, their family history, changes they are seeing on the land and in their community, their use of BLM lands and ideas for improving management. We learned how BLM activities affect different kinds of people and what they think could be done to minimize the negative effects and enhance the positive ones. We always asked people whom else we could talk with, and those people whose names came up several times we made a special point of contacting. In addition, we frequented the gathering places in the

Figure One:
A Biosocial Approach to Ecosystem Management



© 2001 James Kent Associates

area—the restaurants, the laundromats, churches, and stores, engaging residents in conversation.

In addition to direct fieldwork, the PFO, through the Southwest Strategy, engaged BLM’s National Training Center to conduct two courses designed to foster collaborative approaches: 1) “Learning Community: Linking People, Place and Perspective”, held at Lake Pleasant, November 20-December 2, 1999; and, 2) “Community-Based Partnerships and Ecosystems for a Healthy Environment”, held on April 11-13, 2000. Both of these courses were well received and led to direct, collaborative action on the ground with citizens.

This report summarizes the results of these collective efforts. It is divided into the following sections:

1. Regional Human Influences on the Southern Bradshaws;
2. The Wickenburg Area;
3. The Black Canyon Corridor Area;
4. The West Valley Area;
5. Future Research and Planning Needs.

Each geographic section will identify the current conditions discovered through fieldwork, the public issues identified with natural resource management in the area, and opportunities identified for ongoing communication and issue resolution. Quotes are used frequently so that people speak for themselves. The value of a report like this is not only the information generated but the relationships established. Most of the people contacted

during this research have interest in ongoing discussions with BLM about public land management. Subsequent fieldwork during the formal planning process will include further contact with these individuals in order to create a truly community-based approach to planning.

Regional Human Influences on the Southern Bradshaws

Figure Two below shows the human geographic map developed with citizens and agency representatives during fieldwork and the National Training Center courses. Using JKA's method of community assessment using seven Cultural Descriptors (settlement patterns, publics, informal networks, work routines, recreational activities, support services, and geographic features), the blue lines represent Human Resource Units (HRUs), within which people have face-to-face recognition, caretaking systems, and common activities and lifestyle routines. It was discovered that the Southern Bradshaws are influenced by three HRUs—The Wickenburg Area, the Black Canyon/New River Area, and the West Valley Area. In addition, the map shows a higher level of aggregation. Marked in red, the Social Resource Units (SRUs) are HRUs aggregated to reflect cultural boundaries separating one area from another. SRUs often correspond to watershed basins and, although face-to-face knowledge of others is much reduced, they nonetheless are areas with common history, lifestyles and values. The map shows a red cultural line separating Phoenix from the Prescott area just north of Black Canyon City as the elevation rises to create Perry Mesa. Another red cultural line separates Phoenix from Wickenburg near the Castle Hot Springs Road. Although there are mutual influences among these areas, in lifestyle, values, and preferences, Prescott and Wickenburg people define themselves culturally different than Phoenix.

Finally, the map displays the public land use patterns in the area. Shown in brown, the lines show the general area of use from Wickenburg, West Valley, and Black Canyon people in the southern Bradshaws. Nor surprisingly, the Phoenix urban influence through the West Valley overlaps the other areas and dominates in scale. The area of Interstate 17, Crown King and Hells Canyon Wilderness is the one with the most overlap and, correspondingly, the area with the most land use conflicts.

The most frequently cited uses of the land are as follows:

- Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use, four-wheel drive vehicles, motorcycles, dirt bikes, and All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)
- Boating at Lake Pleasant Recreation Area
- Hiking and camping
- Hunting of quail, dove, javelinas, deer, and lion

Figure Two: Human Geographic Map of the Southern Bradshaws

- Mountain biking
- Long-distance running
- Horse riding
- Fuels gathering
- Grazing
- Recreational mining
- Recreational events: OHV, mountain biking, running

The sections that follow detail the citizen issues identified in each of the three Human Resource Units. As a whole, residents were clear in their desires that the Southern Bradshaws remain in public ownership and oriented to recreation. The worries about urbanization were very widespread (“I make my living with growth, but...”). Residents believed sound management in the Bradshaws will preserve leisure and recreation interests that are otherwise not met in a metropolitan area. Most people had strong interest in the value of the land for open space and buffers in an increasingly urbanized setting. The recent burst of urban growth has made the desert environment of the southern Bradshaws, particularly because of their close proximity to Phoenix, a highly valued resource (“Where can people go to recreate from Phoenix in one hour?”). OHV impacts were consistently believed to be widespread and negative, but most people were clear in their value for not closing off public lands. People thought that a collaborative approach to manage this activity was especially appropriate. Finally, there was a split in our findings between people that wanted increased access to the Southern Bradshaws and others who wanted to lessen access in order to manage impacts and preserve lower-density uses.

Concerns about growth permeated the entire region. The following quotes were typical in describing these concerns:

“The government should stop selling land to developers.” [Concerns about land exchanges were a major community theme of fieldwork.]

“We know that public lands are used by many people, but people have to share.”

“More people are coming out to the rural area to live. I’d like to see newcomers use public land in a responsible manner.”

Many residents felt that urban growth was making effective public land management impossible. A good number associated BLM with trading or selling land which for most represented a loss of public land but also which fueled development. Many positive attitudes about BLM were discovered:

“I like what the BLM is doing to protect the desert and the cultural sites for the public. ‘Keep it public!’”

“BLM takes good care of the land. I am very pleased by their approach.”

Many residents felt that BLM did not communicate enough with them and they expressed gratitude for the effort BLM has undertaken to listen to community concerns:

“In the nearly 30 years I have lived in Black Canyon City, this is the first time I have met someone from the BLM.”

“I love that BLM is putting this effort forward.”

“I really appreciate BLM including the community early in the process.”

“I like that you are getting information from the real users. People who use the land most will not show up to a public meeting. They feel out of place.”

The Wickenburg Area

Description

Settlement patterns in the Wickenburg area occur along economic lines, with lower and middle classes in the interior areas and the newer and more expensive homes along the river and in the outlying areas. Outlying homes tend to have big acreage and up-scale homes. High priced winter homes are common. Many residents we talked to in Wickenburg moved there to get away from Phoenix. Apparently, retired people that want out of the “rat race” in Phoenix move to Wickenburg. Wickenburg is segmented by the railroad running north and south and by Highways 60 and 93, creating distinct neighborhood areas.

“People like the laid back style that Wickenburg has to offer. People think of Wickenburg as a nice small town.”

“Wickenburg is a genuine small town, and people like that.”

Wickenburg is known as a horse area. The economy is based on wealthy retirement and specialty dude ranches catering to the wealthy and to those with special needs such as bulimia, drug and alcohol addiction and other human ailments. Employers are having trouble keeping workers because of the high cost of living in the Wickenburg area. The economic and equestrian interests of the population network it to other areas of the globe. The recreation and services economy is well-developed in Wickenburg. Horse trails in town and on private lands, for example, link to trails on BLM lands and is important to the dude ranch operations.

“Our tourism caters to the people who are looking for the ‘Old West’. We use the southern Bradshaws for horseback rides, cattle drives, and hummer tours.”

“Wickenburg is known as a fashionable horse place. It’s becoming more and more upscale. Prices in the last three years have risen dramatically.”

There is a strong value for protecting the equestrian lifestyle in the area. However, a number of residents pointed out that in-town housing of horses has declined, partly because of increased densities and partly because of concerns about water quality and other environmental considerations within the city limits.

The twin values we heard are economic development and preserving the character and western heritage of the area.

“I want to keep open space around here the way it is.”

“More of our kids are coming back. I tease my kids, how long are they going to wait, but they are not yet sick of city life and career challenges.”

”Wickenburg is changing into a major playground for the Phoenix folks.”

“The goal should be to keep the land healthy amidst the pressures of growth.”

“We figured we’re safe from growth but we’re not. We thought BLM and state lands nearby would save us, but not so. State lands will be sold. We are having growing pains.”

People in Wickenburg pride themselves on their community spirit, pointing to classical music concerts and other accomplishments. The proposed highway by-pass has polarized the community and represents a temporary overlay on a dominant tradition of successful consensus building in the community. Morristown is a communication hub to area ranchers. Both Morristown and Wittman are known for mobile home residences and as an area of affordable housing. Wittman was a migrant labor area in earlier years. It is spread out and diverse. Some buildings are burned out and others will be torn down for the widening of the highway. Area residents expressed concern about education and gang activity in the schools.

People in this area voiced a preference for the isolation of the land, and concerns about growth. In reference to public lands, the theme was, “Leave it the way it is.”

Public Issues

Natural resource and land use issues in this zone related to the rural outlook of Wickenburg residents and its equestrian orientation. Many residents pointed to the non-motorized uses of the Bradshaws—riding horses, hunting, hiking, and picnicking. These are the activities that are valued culturally—that is, they are the preferred and traditional activities. Jeep activity has been a successful overlay on this underlying pattern because it is contained through company tours and is consistent with the upper middle and upper

class recreation economy that has been established. The clear value was to continue to foster traditional uses and to designate motorized uses in order to manage the influence of greater population.

The most widespread citizen issue related to public lands was trash dumping. It seems everyone had a story about how bad it was. Much of the problem was attributed to the lack of landfills and transfer stations. Residents said that Wickenburg does not charge fees, but county residents must pay. The Wittman dump reportedly charges \$50 a truckload for big items like furniture and appliances, but they do not take garbage. Morristown takes garbage but not big items. So, two stops are required and fees are involved. It seems that a multi-jurisdictional approach will be necessary to resolve the problem.

“I want to make a display of all the trash I’ve collected out on our jeep runs.”

“There are so many Detroit tumbleweeds [plastic grocery sacks] around here.”

“Desert dumping has gotten worse since the landfill closed.”

“Box Canyon is trashed by high school people. It’s the only running water around and they drive through it. A ten cent deposit on bottles would protect the land more.”

“I picked up 750 rifle casings at ____.”

“It’s not so bad out here on the land, but as you get closer to town you find spot after spot of trash. This can hurt business.”

“I guided a trail ride that went past a dumpsite. I was angry and embarrassed at the same time.”

“Big items are the problem. The city doesn’t allow big stuff, but once a year, they make an exception. That helps.”

An informal network of residents formed Desert Watch to do clean-ups in the desert. A local store has an area map where members put in pins at points where they have observed trash dumping. The members undertake on a regular basis to clean up these sites. A jeep company attaches oversized jeans to the back of their vehicles. These jeans are clipped at the knees and sewn shut and are the receptacles for trash that drivers pick up on their tours. The jeans are called “litter britches.” In short, there is a stewardship ethic in the Wickenburg culture that BLM can (and has) utilized to create community partnerships.

The second most frequent public issue related to natural resource management was the concern of off-highway uses and their effects on the land.

“There are too many ATVs [All Terrain Vehicles] tearing up the land.”

“OHVs [off highway vehicles] are trashing the land and leaving garbage.”

“The backcountry should have well-defined roads and activity zones.”

“I would like to see more people trails in this area. There are lots of trails, but they are used by horseback riders and ATVs. People and these two don’t work very well.”

Continued access to public lands was the third major natural resource issue of residents.

“Many people are afraid of losing access to public lands, especially long timers.”

“Keep reasonable access for the general public while protecting the rugged terrain.”

On the flip side of losing access is the fear of designated trails. A number of people expressed concern about the rules and regulations, as well as the risk of closure that accompanies trail designation. Designated people might bring in more people, some residents thought.

“I’m worried about dedicated horse trails. It could lead to OHV restrictions.”

Finally, one person was concerned about the Vulture Mine.

“The Vulture Mine could be an economic generator for the community. It’s the most important non-Indian site around. As Phoenix gets closer, these sites will become even more important.”

Management Opportunities

Opportunities for resolving issues are many. The following are some of the ideas of citizens for working together in the future.

“Keep up the communication.” [common]

Back country users could offer assistance in being the “eyes and ears” for land management agencies related to trash dumping, monitoring, and restoration. They have been willing to be participants in clean up activities.

BLM could facilitate a multi-jurisdictional approach to create landfill options. Public education projects and recognition efforts could be utilized.

“We need to educate high schoolers about clean up of the desert, even in elementary schools.”

Although a quick solution to resolve recreation conflicts is not likely, there were enough reasonable voices to be optimistic that a public process to develop a community-based solution is possible. People at all points on the spectrum were unified in their value of maintaining access to public lands for all. How that could be done while protecting resource values is a topic that could unite BLM and area residents.

“Keep the recreation uses separate. There are problems when horses and ATVs use the same land.”

“BLM should let people know where they can go and what they can do. They need information so they know where to go. Interpreting the natural resources would go a long way in helping people appreciate what they have.”

“Maps could help people know where to go and recreate without conflicts.”

BLM has opportunity to work with local residents regarding the preservation of Vulture Mine. The Desert Caballeros Museum could be a catalyst to develop a community vision related to the site.

The Black Canyon Corridor

Description

The Black Canyon Corridor Human Resource Unit goes from Crown King on the west to the New River Mountains on the east and from I-17 just south of Perry Mesa to Highway 74 on the south. It includes the communities of Black Canyon City, New River, Anthem, Cave Creek and Carefree. These community areas have been distinct in the past, but urban growth is creating a single unit with a common future.

The New River area has had a reputation of isolated residents shut off intentionally from others with prevalent fencing and dispersed settlement. This half truth is complemented by an ethic of self-sufficiency and strong network caretaking that has contributed to the survival of the community. Although the lack of a town center inhibits an identity or solidarity from developing, network caretaking in times of trouble is common. The settlement pattern in the past has been low density, mobile, modular, and lower-end homes, mainly oriented around retirement, with boats and RVs in abundance. Equestrian uses have been widespread and without frills, reflecting a lower and middle class orientation. The local ambience is rapidly shifting because of a new layer of wealthier commuters and retired people. Newer settlement indicates higher densities, higher value homes, and a changing demographic profile. Newer homes are more expensive and built at higher elevations. Settlement is characterized by mixed uses: low-end homes, modest homes and high-end homes. Home-based businesses are common and appears to be an increasing, though little recognized, economic activity.

New River residents expressed frustration and anger at recent growth, particularly the approval of the Anthem housing development. While their values remain rural, they feel their area will change irreversibly to an urban future. They feel increasingly unable to direct their destiny and believe their area will be absorbed by urbanization.

New River values its linkage to the desert environment and its western heritage. Striking demographic change and economic pressures appear to be occurring in New River, however, and public forums focusing on land management and urban growth issues could be expected to reveal sharp divisions and conflicts. Communication at the informal level of the community could bring out local strengths and areas of common vision and action.

Black Canyon City, on the other hand, has a town center, an established identity and history, and a perception that it can still handle the changes underway. Black Canyon City has key gathering places with identified caretakers that make future communication easy. A retirement presence is emerging in new housing, a retirement center, and RV Park, along with “no trespassing” signs. Residents of Black Canyon City are not oriented north toward Perry Mesa, despite its proximity, but south to Phoenix and the approaching urbanization. Urbanization is viewed both as a concern for threat to local lifestyles and as economic opportunity for area residents. The commuting pattern to Phoenix for employment has been established for some time. The sharp rise of elevation north of Black Canyon City represents a cultural boundary, as evidenced by lack of strong social ties between Black Canyon City and the Cordes Junction/Mayer area.

Geographic zones are present in the Black Canyon City community area. In the southern part, huge expensive new homes are being constructed at sites with dramatic views of the Bradshaw Mountains and Agua Fria River canyon. Called “Snob Hill” by some, realty signs in this area advertise breathtaking views, hiking and equestrian trails, and a medical center and heliport in Black Canyon City. The central part of town is old and appears to be characterized by low income, long established residents, turnover in the population, and a weak local economy. In the northern part of town, an influx of seniors is occurring and the market is driven by the retirement community and that age group’s needs—churches and other religious institutions, retirement and assisted-living facilities and inexpensive housing.

“Real estate turnover in this town is constant and high.”

“About half of the people who come to Black Canyon City are seasonal, winter residents. Some leave for three months a year, and some are just ‘stopovers.’”

“There are more ‘characters’ here because there can be more characters here.”

“We moved here to escape from all the development of Phoenix. We don’t want Black Canyon City to just become an extension of the city.”

“Most people moved here because it was completely unlike Phoenix. We call Phoenix ‘the pit’, or ‘down there,’ or ‘that place.’”

Cave Creek started as a retirement town but has always been “working retired” with many semi-retired, partially employed residents. In recent years, many families have moved in, levelly out the demographic dominance of seniors. Retired people typically leave in the summer for their homes in the Midwest and Cave Creek has had to adapt to its seasonal population. The community has a good deal of low income residents, especially Latinos, that live in the mobile home parks. They are an important labor supply for construction and service jobs.

“Lots of these houses are vacant half the year and the people come out only in the winter.”

“When too much development happens, you lose something.”

The Cave Creek economy is strongly centered to services of local retired residents as well as visitors. It is known as an area that Phoenix residents visit on weekends and has numerous restaurants and shops catering to these interests. It also houses many people in the construction trades and commuters who drive to the city for employment.

Carefree was a planned retirement community dating from the 1960s. Its population is wealthier and more seasonal the Cave Creek. Carefree and Cave Creek historically were separate communities but growth is blending them together. They have also had a separate identity in the past from the communities of New River and Black Canyon City on the freeway, but the approval of Anthem is changing that separation. Anthem is visible from Cave Creek. The Black Canyon Corridor Area is developing a single identity and future. There is an increasing blending of people, housing and interests. Connecting roads are becoming more developed.

The dominant recreation pattern appears to be toward the mountains to the northeast, and toward Lake Pleasant to the southwest. Lake Pleasant is popular because of its proximity and because its size makes it attractive for water skiing. The working population of the area seems quite active in recreation activities, and they describe patterns of use that not only includes the mountain forests, but the southern Bradshaws as well, such as camping in the Crown King area. The use pattern for these residents is seasonally driven—to the Tonto National Forest in hot summer months, and to the Bradshaws for spring and fall uses.

Key gathering places were identified that are important for communication, and for absorbing equestrian newcomers.

Public Issues

Community themes expressed by residents relate to wanting “no change”, equity about “benefits to a select few,” high turnover of residents in the community (“every other

house”), and no more land exchanges. Residents pride their community on tolerance of “characters” who “come up” (from Phoenix) to stay. People value the area for the “easy going lifestyle.” Many middle-aged people have settled the area to be near their retired parents.

“We leave for six months and everything is different when you come back.”

Community issues include the following:

“I can’t see these \$10 million homes. They keep you out.” [Many were concerned about the effects of increased wealth in their community.]

“Open space should be preserved—that’s desert untouched by anything.”

“There is not enough for youth in the community. They either get in trouble or leave town.”

“Heavy traffic on the I-17 frontage road causes problems. That is the main north/south street through Black Canyon City.”

“We are terrified and furious about Anthem. We don’t want the area to become one big corridor of development and people. We know we can’t stop growth in our area, but maybe we can preserve the character, views and opportunities that we have today.”

Communication towers and powerline projects have mobilized and sometimes polarized the New River and Black Canyon areas in the last few years. Black Canyon City is considering incorporating in order to control better its urban influences.

Natural resource and land use issues relate to:

Trash everywhere in Cave Creek and surrounding public lands:

“We had an Improvement Association that had clean up days. A week later you couldn’t tell we had done anything. Now, everywhere you look there is trash.”

“I used to pick it up when I hiked, but I don’t anymore.”

Land trades, exchanges and sales. Again, many people associated this activity with BLM whereas the primary agency involved in this activity has been the Division of State Lands.

“We don’t want federal land traded or sold for development.”

Lack of access to public lands:

“There is not good access to BLM to the west across the Agua Fria. In the past, it has not been difficult to cross private land to access public land, but that is becoming more difficult.” [Black Canyon resident]

There appears to be strong support for the maintenance of public lands, especially with regard to recreation, wildlife, and visual resources.

“We want to preserve the views of the desert and the Bradshaws from town. All the houses we see going up on the hillsides mar the views we have had for years. We don’t want to look like New River!” [two Black Canyon residents]

Recreation impacts on public lands is a widespread public issue:

“There are too many uninformed and uneducated recreationists. They get lost, they get stuck, they don’t respect the land, they do not understand the needs of wildlife.”

“People are too worried about having fun and don’t take responsibility.”

“It used to be that people could come up here and do as they pleased, but there are just too many people here today, so we must have rules.”

“Fees are the only way to protect the land.”

“I’ve already paid taxes. I don’t want to pay fees.”

“We want to get a trailhead from High Desert Park to the Black Canyon Trail.”

Many people were unaware of BLM’s Black Canyon Trail and pleased to learn of it. The interest in trail corridors between Lake Pleasant and points north was high.

Many members of the Prescott Open Trails Association were concerned about loss of access to public lands for OHV and quads. They make frequent use of the Black Canyon corridor.

People do not want the visual landscape disturbed and want no building “across the river” on public lands. Poor roads in newly developed areas was a concern to a few individuals.

A number of people were disturbed at the prospect of divesting BLM lands near the New River area to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, feeling like the latter does not have the resources for proper management.

Many community residents in Black Canyon City have been active in developing an equestrian facility and in linking horse trails with BLM’s Black Canyon Trail.

“Water is a big issue—the water table is dropping. Some wells are contaminated with arsenic. Some people have to haul water to their homes.”

Management Opportunities

Residents suggested many opportunities for ongoing communication with BLM and for better land management:

Provide BLM information at the Chamber of Commerce information stop, especially recreation opportunities for visitors.

An OHV network was discovered in the Mayer area that could serve as a stewardship group that would help with inventory, maintenance, and links with other groups.

Partnerships between the BLM, the horse club and the park club in Black Canyon City, as well as Yavapai County, could establish the means to create access from settled areas into the public lands in the Black Canyon corridor.

Residents were clear in wanting ongoing communication with BLM regarding the Agua Fria National Monument and its effects on local communities.

The West Valley Area

Description

The West Valley Area generally corresponds from Phoenix north into the Bradshaws from Interstate 17 west to Castle Hot Springs Road. Whereas the northern edges of this area has shared the value and history of the Wickenburg and Black Canyon Corridor Areas, the rapid urbanization of Phoenix in the last fifteen years has forever changed this area. The City of Peoria, for example, has recently annexed north to the middle of Lake Pleasant at the county line. The dispersed, rural or semi-rural nature of settlement in this area is being rapidly supplanted by high density subdivision development. Talk of growth and its consequences permeate discussion across all publics and in political circles. Themes of hopelessness and anger characterize these discussions. It appears as if the rate and nature of growth has superceded the ability of residents to comfortably absorb and has led to a decline in perceived quality of life. Many people have felt victimized by these events—that things have happened *to* them and not *with* them.

The research strategy for this area was to contact residents in the dispersed area in the north part of the zone, primarily the Castle Hot Springs community, and to contact businesses in the urban area that cater to recreational user groups that utilize the area. The research revealed that, rather than the entire urban area making use of the Bradshaws, it is primarily West Valley residents who use the area. Residents from other metropolitan areas tend to use public lands closer to them, that is, to the north, east, and southwest,

although OHV clubs, for example, rotate their areas of use and so utilize the Bradshaws on an intermittent basis.

Urban businesses contacted include tack shops for equestrians, mountain bike stores, and off highway vehicle stores. In addition, some four wheel drive clubs were contacted with good results. Some citizen contact was begun in Northwest Phoenix in the cities of Glendale and Surprise that resulted in a good description of Bradshaw interests as well as further contacts for future discussions.

The preliminary findings related to our work in the urban zone, to be confirmed in subsequent contact, are these:

- Most people in the West Valley did not seem to relate to the term “Bradshaw Mountains” or the “Southern Bradshaw Foothills.” However, “Lake Pleasant” was a readily recognized geographic term. In conversations we noticed that people would readily begin to use the term “Southern Bradshaws.”
- Many low-density, equestrian interests in Northwest Phoenix were displaced several years ago. Recent growth has again presented a whole set of people with the question of whether or not to move again, given their interest in preserving their equestrian and lower-density lifestyles. Old time residents are in a process of relocation to New River, Wickenburg, Prescott and other outlying areas. There is underlying anger at their lack of power to influence this trend. Horse people do not use the Bradshaws much because of lack of water, but did use the New River area prior to being shut out by the Anthem development.
- Many motorcycle people prefer in-town parks, such as Canyon Raceway and Speedworld. Those interested in trails go to the mountains, not the foothills. Dirt bike stores in the West Valley direct customers to Lake Pleasant and Black Canyon City as an area with “lots of trails.”
- Mountain bikers also prefer opportunities that are close in. They either go to the developed parks like White Tanks and McDowell Mountain Park, or they go “north to the forest.” If mountain bikers leave town, they tend to go to Prescott or Sedona, looking for “fun trails.”
- People who use quads or four-wheel drives like to go to Lake Pleasant and Black Canyon because there are many four-wheel drive roads. Other recreationists, especially motorcycle riders, tended to ascribe to four wheel drivers more of the land use impacts of trash, road degradation and so on. These folks are believed to have less “back country ethics” or be more of the newcomers to desert environments, and also to be more capable of carrying tools, guns and other implements of destruction.

- The non-retired population of the westside urban areas is active in fishing, hunting, mountain biking, and off highway vehicle use. Opportunities are identified for further contact with this population to understand scope and level of use. At this point, it is fair to say that interest in the southern Bradshaws is high.
- There is a proliferation of citizen movements on the westside related to concerns of growth, open space, density, and environmental protection. These people are natural partners in considering future land uses of the Bradshaws.
- Recreation interests in the urban zones are active in trying to create parks and recreation corridors in the washes and river bottoms, with attendant interest in conservation and habitat protection, as well as linkage to the Southern Bradshaws.
- Although signs posted in rural areas tend to get shot up, the Arizona Trail Riders posted signs 18 months ago at nearly every access point from Highway 74 announcing the entering of BLM or State lands. Remarkably, these signs have not been vandalized, pointing to the value of citizen/government partnerships in management.

Public Issues

The urban users of the Southern Bradshaws and the Hot Springs community and other residents near Lake Pleasant share a number of interests. Most people want to see access to public lands protected. Even though access has created environmental or social problems for local residents, these people share a strong value of the rights of access to public land. This shared value creates common ground for developing workable solutions. In addition, most people we talked with do not believe that homes should be allowed around Lake Pleasant—that those lands should be preserved as open space and as recreation areas for everyone.

“Where would they get the water [for development]?”

Issues of the Castle Hot Springs Community.

“There has been a continuous increase of people, mainly ATV users. Rutting and wash boarding of the roads, shooting up signs, some vandalism of buildings, trespass on private lands, and dumping of trash, vehicles, and dead bodies have been the result.” [common]

“People come out unprepared for the roads, the desert, the distance from services, and without a ‘use ethic.’”

“We are losing our private property rights. People on motorcycles or quads don’t know or don’t care when they trespass on private lands.”

“City people do not know about land ownership. They see a gate and they go through it and do not realize it is there to keep horses or cows in.”

“With the paved road at Lake Pleasant, ATVs are able to get much further up before they unload and play. They are going farther and farther in.”

“There used to be 15 people there [north end of Lake Pleasant] on a Sunday. Now there are 100 because no fee is charged there.”

“Yavapai Sheriff and Commissioners do not give us much attention here.”

“Could BLM land be made available for our new school?”

Issues of Urban Publics.

Issues of the urban users of the Bradshaws relate to reduced road maintenance of the last several years, leading to erosion and road degradation, vandalism, and high traffic speeds of some recreation users.

“There are more kids out there, partying, and trashing things up.”

“The area around Lake Pleasant and Crown King has lots of trails and four-wheel drive roads that spur off that are good riding. But they are kind of rough.”

“Residential people want roads maintained so you can do at least 30 or 40 MPH.”

“Fees are OK if they help keep the trails open and maintained.”

“We wouldn’t oppose fees, if the money was used on the ground.”

“I would be willing to pay to keep areas open. I don’t like the Green Sticker program of California but it is a way to make all pay their fair share and to educate users.” [ATV user]

“A fee will eventually have to be put in here. It will upset people, but it will really be their own fault.”

“I don’t like to be charged to recreate in places I have used free my whole life. I already paid my taxes to use the land, and I shouldn’t have to pay twice.”

“It has gotten harder and harder to get permits for four wheel drive events on the desert. Government organizations just won’t participate.”

“We try to weed out destructive people with guidelines they have to follow in order to be a member in hopes of keeping the bad apples out. This seems to be working for the most part but not totally.” [Phoenix Four Wheelers]

Management Opportunities

Get color coded maps that show ownership patterns so that recreationists know when they are on private or public lands, or which public lands. Such maps could urge users to respect private lands and posted signs.

BLM could facilitate multi-agency discussion on law enforcement issues around Lake Pleasant.

A short, but informative brochure could be required issue with hunting and fishing licenses, or with the purchase of any off highway vehicle or back country equipment regarding “back country etiquette.”

Brochures and other educational material could be provided to supply stores and other commercial establishments catering to recreation users.

The Lake Pleasant Arizona Access Guide is a map that shows numbering of roads and other pertinent information. Apparently, it has been well-received but not widespread in distribution. The Guide could be distributed more widely and perhaps used as a model for other areas.

BLM could work with other recreation groups for the joint monitoring and management of key areas, with joint signage and educational brochures.

“A ‘pay pass’ might make some of the people who don’t care clean up more after themselves. If land is shut down because of destruction, it will be better treated when it is reopened.”

Set up a trailer in Lake Pleasant to give out public maps for public benefit. A volunteer network could be present to meet and educate public users in the Lake Pleasant area.

Future Research and Planning Needs

The two National Training Center workshops sponsored by the Southwest Strategy included BLM management and staff, elected officials, representatives from sister agencies and jurisdictions, and a good number of citizen activists. The evaluations for these workshops were quite positive. The value of the workshops was the opportunity for agency and citizens to share concerns and ideas for the future, as well as to practice action on the ground. BLM staff was afforded the opportunity to learn and practice new skills related to citizen contact and mutual action. The goal of the Learning Community course was to create successful action in each of the three community zones. This was accomplished in the following ways:

- BLM learned about concerns in the Wickenburg area related to frequent trash dumping on a BLM road. Staff successfully facilitated a community-based effort to clean up the road.
- Through a gathering place in Black Canyon City, the Discovery Team and BLM staff learned of local caretakers and their efforts to maintain a city park called the “Filthy Five” Park. . As it turns out, the park is BLM land obtained through a BLM lease (Recreation and Public Purposes Lease). BLM staff was able to inform this network of the regulations and opportunities pertaining to the lease and expedited long-term improvements to the park.
- Active discussions were held in the community of Castle Hot Springs with BLM staff related to common issues of OHV use, dust from visitor traffic, and vandalism. Together participants have researched dust abatement options, road ownership and maintenance questions, and methods to improve the stewardship among visitors. Ongoing relations have been created to mutually resolve these issues.

Both the research findings reported here and these management actions must be considered preliminary in scope. The resources were simply not present to do an adequate job of citizen contact, communication, and issue resolution. Moreover, the multi-jurisdictional, longer term vision for the area has not been established that will guide future land use decisions in the area.

In keeping with the Washington Office direction on Preparation Plans for New Planning Starts, the following information needs and process steps are necessary to create a community-based, multi-jurisdictional vision for land use management in the Southern Bradshaws:

1. Complete community descriptions in three geographic zones--Wickenburg, the Black Canyon Corridor and the West Valley. A more complete description of the publics that reside in each area, what is important to them, and how they communicate, is important in each zone. The trends reported by residents that are affecting the community are necessary to identify. Both the community issues and natural resource issues that have a bearing on future management of the Bradshaws must be more fully identified to minimize surprise and to ensure public support for a land use vision. A communication strategy to maintain ongoing dialogue with informal networks and organized groups in each area will be developed. Obscure, or difficult to reach publics, such as miners or absentee landowners, will be given a chance to participate. Environmental Justice guidelines, that require that special attention be paid to minority and low income populations, can be met in this way.

2. Identify management concerns. Management concerns are items of importance to formal bodies, such as agencies, elected government officials, and organized groups. In

particular, the following entities need to be networked with to identify concerns about future management of the Bradshaws:

- Bureau of Land Management staff
- Forest Service
- State Lands
- State Fish and Game
- Maricopa and Yavapai County government, planning commissions
- Parks and Recreation Departments
- City governments--Wickenburg, Peoria, Glendale, Phoenix, Cave Creek, Carefree
- Flood and water districts
- Community groups
- Environmental organizations
- Recreation user groups
- Development companies
- Others, as needed

Particular attention will be paid to BLM staff--concerns related to their areas of responsibility, their knowledge of and contacts in local communities, and the process of creating community-based approaches to natural resource management. A public document will be written at the end of this step, summarizing public issues and management concerns for the Bradshaws.

3. In addition to data gathering, action and planning on the ground are essential as well. We plan to engage in a process that will lead to ongoing public issue resolution throughout the process so that public interest and support of the planning process will be sustained. BLM staff and its contractors will be responsible for this effort following a well developed methodology. In addition, citizens and formal bodies will be asked to participate in a twelve month coalition for the purpose of review, issue resolution, and policy formation. Citizens should comprise 50% of the coalition to avoid the process being driven by formal bodies only. It is desired that top officials and agency heads participate directly in this endeavor. The coalition will:

- Review the work of the fieldteam in identifying public issues and management concerns;
- Review the social, economic, and ecological data assembled about the area;
- Facilitate short-term action on issues that can be resolved through the course of the visioning process;
- Facilitate partnership formation;
- Develop policy guidance, not intended to be prescriptive or limiting the autonomy of coalition partners, for the long-term actions necessary for successful management of the Bradshaws;

- Institute a periodic review process, if appropriate, based on available monitoring data.

During the twelve month life of the coalition, it is expected that each agency will direct its respective staff in issue resolution with citizens, data gathering and analysis as appropriate. For example, BLM could be expected to use the baseline information generated for purposes of NEPA documentation and RMP amendments.

4. Ongoing resolution of public issues and management concerns. In addition to policy and planning goals, the project is intended to be action-oriented. Many public issues and management concerns can be resolved during the course of this project. BLM project staff will work in coordination with JKA, agency staff and coalition members to foster action on key items whenever appropriate. This effort will create empowerment and community capacity to undertake ever greater responsibility for stewardship as time goes on, avoiding the “burn out” effect of long planning processes that do not include action.

5. Ongoing stewardship and partnership. For complex, multi-jurisdictional, or long-term issues, the coalition will develop a range of strategies or alternative courses of action. These will be researched and analyzed by appropriate staff, and reviewed with citizens throughout the region. Ongoing discussion with citizens will improve the strategies and further create citizen ownership in the outcomes. Partnership development for ongoing stewardship is an expected outcome of the project.

6. Create a vision statement of short and long-term management in the Bradshaws. This will be a short, readable document summarizing the project and the collective vision for the management of the land. It will offer BLM urban policy guidance to citizens and coalition partners.

References Cited

Preister, Kevin & James A. Kent

2001 Using Social Ecology to Meet the Productive Harmony Intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Hastings West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, Volume 7, Issue 3, Spring, University of California, Hastings College of the Law, (forthcoming).

Preister, Kevin & James A. Kent

1997 Social Ecology: A New Pathway to Watershed Restoration.in Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices, by Jack E. Williams, Michael P. Dombeck and Christopher A. Wood, Editors. Bethesda, Md.: The American Fisheries Society.