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A Social - Economic Community Assessment Related to Bureau of Land Management Activities in the Phoenix Field Office

Supporting Documentation for an Environmental Impact Statement for
Resource Management Plans (RMP) for the
Agua Fria National Monument
And the
Bradshaw Foothills - Harquahala Mountains

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Creating Productive Harmony between Human and Natural Environments

A Social And Economic Community Assessment Related to Bureau of Land Management Activities in the Phoenix District Office

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Phoenix Field Office (PFO), is undertaking a land use planning effort for approximately one million acres of BLM-administered public lands. The resulting documents will include a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Agua Fria National Monument and a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for BLM-administered lands north and west of the Phoenix metropolitan area including the Bradshaw Foothills and the Harquahala Mountains. As part of that effort, James Kent Associates (JKA) has been asked to help BLM develop a collaborative, citizen-based approach to planning and to identify the citizen issues and opportunities that are related to BLM activities.

Under Cooperative Agreement Number 1422-P850-A8-0015 between James Kent Associates (JKA) and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), JKA began work in November, 2001 under Task Order Number 003 to assist the Phoenix Field Office conducting community fieldwork.

The documentation provided in this report will be used in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is required for an RMP. The information will complement traditional agency approaches for scoping issues of concern that directs the EIS. It will also form the basis of the social and economic portions of the EIS that deal with the affected environment, alternatives, effects analysis, and mitigations. Most importantly, it will be used to maintain ongoing dialogue with people who are affected by BLM decisions so that they are participants and partners in the outcomes.

The JKA team was composed of Dave Schultz, Kristine Komar, Kevin Preister, and Luis Ibañez. In addition, James Kent provided special guidance throughout the project, especially in the delivery of Discovery training to BLM employees and in identifying Human Geographic Boundaries for the planning area. Approximately 175 professional days were spent during the past year conducting community fieldwork.

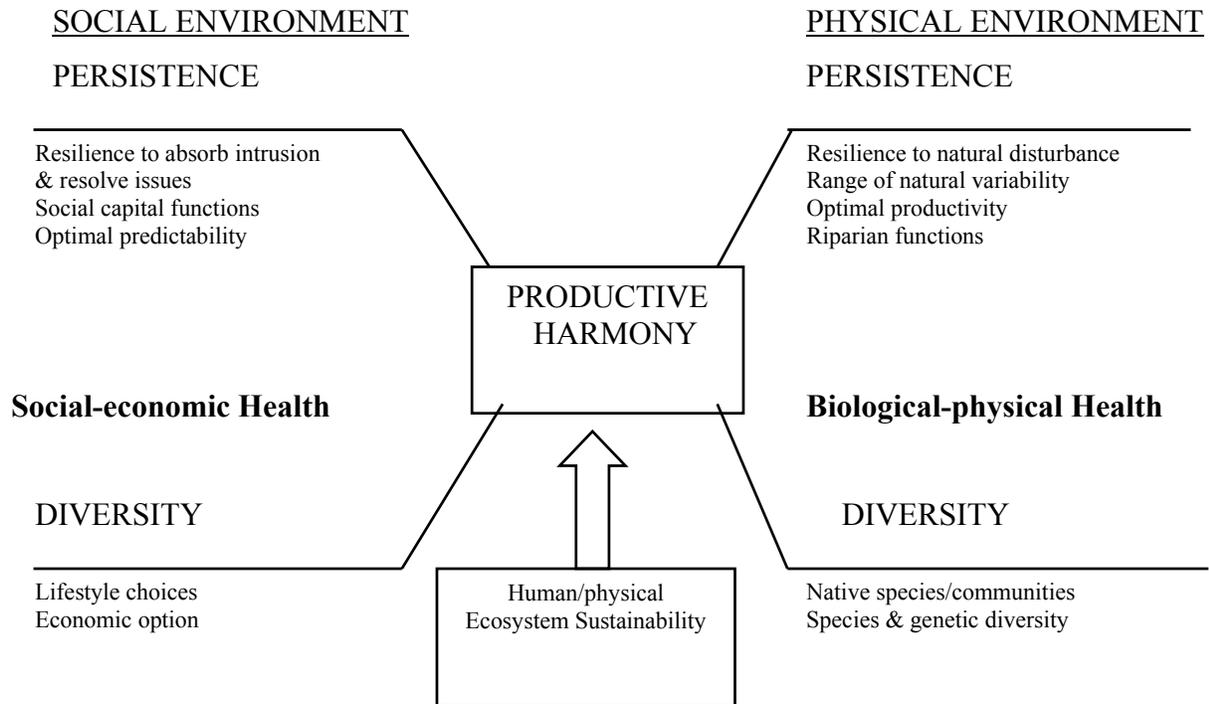
The JKA Approach

The JKA philosophy 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.¹ Figure One below displays the notion of productive harmony. The

¹ Preister, Kevin, Ph.D., and James A. Kent, J.D., “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, Berkeley, CA.: Hastings College of the Law, 2001.

goal of natural resource decision making is to contribute to productive harmony in an area, and not detract from it. For this reason, efforts to understand both the social and physical environments are important.²

Figure One:
The Biosocial Model of Ecosystem Management



Our approach for learning about communities is called The Discovery Process.TM It involves “entering the routines” of the community in order to see the world as residents do. We look for descriptions from residents about: settlement patterns, publics, informal networks, work routines, recreation activities, support services and geographic features. The reader is referred to Kent and Preister³ for a fuller discussion of the methodology,

² Preister, Kevin, Ph.D. and James A. Kent, “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, 1997.

³ Kent, James A., J.D., Kevin Preister, Ph.D., “Methods for the Development of Human Geographic Boundaries and Their Uses”, in partial completion of Cooperative Agreement No. 1422-P850-A8-0015 between James Kent Associates and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Task Order No. 001, 1999.

and Appendix B contains the seven cultural descriptors used in the community assessment.

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 area - the restaurants, the community centers, the laundromats, churches, and stores, engaging residents in conversation.

We made a point of talking with a wide variety of people - long time residents and newcomers, young and old, farmers and ranchers, full-time and seasonal residents, urban and rural people, commuters, and storeowners. We talked to several kinds of recreationists - recreation permittees, horseback riders, hunters, recreational prospectors, recreational shooters, off-highway vehicle enthusiasts, campers, and hikers. We talked to those citizens living on the landscape and those from outside the area who use the landscape. Our contacts included officials from the many local, state, and federal agencies engaged in natural resource issues, staff from social agencies, county commissioners, and city council members.

One of the products of the Discovery Process is a human geographic map that shows how people in communities relate to their landscape. Figure Two presents the human geographic map for the five Human Resource Units (HRUs)TM that make up the planning area. These are the social and economic units identified by area residents and are considered the primary impact zones for purposes of the Environmental Impact Statement to follow. People everywhere develop an attachment to a geographic place, characterized by a set of natural boundaries created by physical, biological, social, cultural and economic systems. The map represents the culture of a geographic area, especially the informal systems through which people adapt to changes in their environment, take care of each other, and sustain their values and lifestyles. The map represents the boundaries within which people already mobilize to meet life's challenges.

For this project, three scales of human geography were used, the Social Resource Unit (SRU), the Human Resource Unit (HRU), and the Community Resource Unit (CRU).

Social Resource Units (SRUs) are the aggregation of HRUs on the basis of geographic features of the landscape, often a river basin, for example, and are the basis of shared history, lifestyle, livelihood, and outlook. At this scale, face-to-face knowledge is much reduced. Rather, social ties are created by action around issues that transcend the smaller HRUs and by invoking common values ("We love the high desert.").

SRUs are characterized by a sense of belonging. These are rather large areas and one's perception as to the Unit's boundary is that when you cross the SRU boundary you are in

an entirely different culture. There is a general feeling of “oneness” as being a part of this regional Unit. There is a general understanding and agreement on beliefs, traditions, stories and the attributes of being a part of the Unit. Parts of two SRUs are shown in Figure Two, the Bill Williams and the Salt River. These units are not analyzed further in the report because their scale is too large but the line between them is important for distinguishing the culture of Phoenix from that of Wickenburg/Prescott. As people north of the line say, “We are NOT Phoenix.”

Human Resource Units (HRUs) are roughly equivalent in size to a county but seldom correspond to county boundaries. HRU boundaries are derived from the seven Cultural Descriptors outlined in Appendix A. HRUs are characterized by frequent and customary interaction. They reveal face-to-face human society within which people have personal knowledge of each other and well-developed caretaking systems sustained through informal network relationships. People's daily activities occur primarily within their HRU including work, school, shopping, social activities and recreation. Health, education, welfare and other public service activities are highly organized at this level with a town or community almost always as its focal point.

Through this research, we determined that there were five Human Resource Units (HRUs) that make up the planning area, each of which will have a chapter in the following pages:

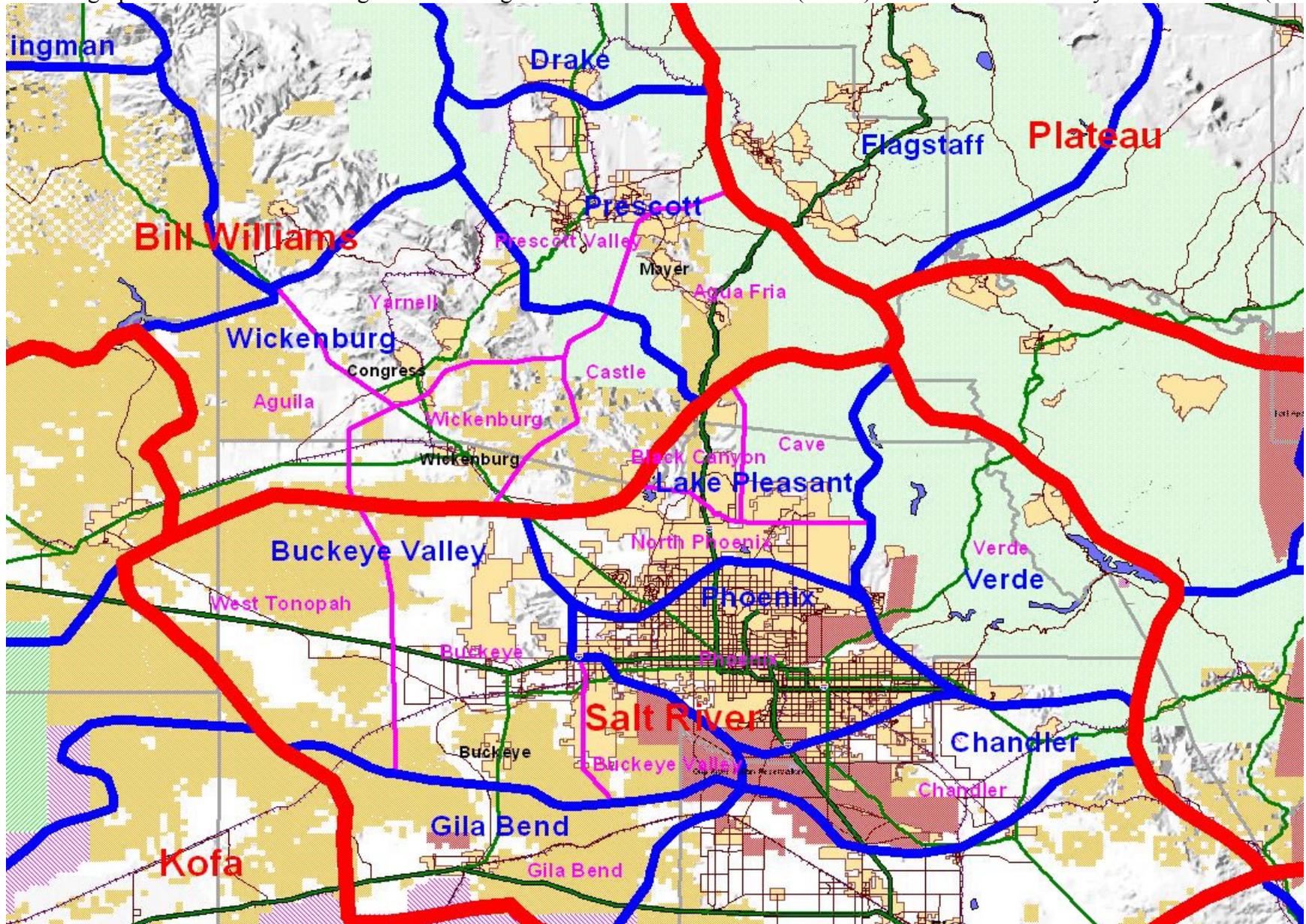
Wickenburg
Prescott
Lake Pleasant

Phoenix
Buckeye Valley

Community Resource Units (CRUs) show the “catchment area” of a community, or its zone of influence, beyond which people relate to another community. Geographic features and settlement patterns often determine these boundaries. At this scale, there is great face-to-face knowledge, and the caretaking systems through informal networks are the strongest. The five HRUs contain a total of 11 CRUs, analyzed within their respective chapters, while the Phoenix metropolitan area is analyzed at a lower scale using incorporated cities.

In addition to the JKA research summarized here, the report includes census data from 1990 and 2000, which will be used to augment the understanding of local social and economic conditions. By downloading census data into human geographic boundaries, analysis can be improved. For example, relying simply on county-level data for Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, which are very large and diverse, would obscure important regional variations. By breaking data into not only more discrete units, but units that make sense to residents who live there, a more fine-grained analysis is possible.

Figure Two:
Human Geographic Units of the Planning Area Showing Five Human Resource Units (HRUs) and Eleven Community Resource Units (CRUs)



This report is organized by Human Geographic Units (HRU) and around major topics that the BLM will address in developing its Resource Management Plans. Each chapter contains a description of baseline social and economic conditions, as reported by citizens and census data. Each chapter also reports the community themes, citizen issues, management concerns, and management opportunities identified during the Discovery Process.⁴ *Community themes* are attitudes, perceptions, or values of people that are widely shared in a community setting. They are ways of looking at the world that come up repeatedly in local conversations. In and of themselves, themes cannot be acted upon because they are too general. By contrast, *citizen issues* are statements people make that can be acted upon. By linking the public issues discovered in fieldwork with the *management concerns* of BLM and others with professional responsibility in public land stewardship, a way is created to mobilize citizens in support of land use planning and decisions. Moreover, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that public issues be identified and considered in the decision making process. *Management opportunities* are ideas people have for improving ecosystem management and for collaborative partnerships in which they could participate. Upon analysis, opportunities may become mitigations, or requirements to reduce the level of negative effects or enhance positive effects, which NEPA also requires to be identified and considered.

In this report, we wanted to let people speak for themselves so we relied on the frequent use of quotes. Citizen and official comments can be traced back to the speaker so that contact can be maintained with the people that expressed particular interests.

The information contained in this report will contribute to a community-based collaborative Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in the following ways:

1. The report represents the many relationships begun with area residents to gain their perspectives on public land management. Ongoing contact with these and other individuals to work out the ideas discussed in this report will spread the ownership of this process and of the final document in the community.
2. This information is used to supplement agency understanding of public interests obtained from more traditional “scoping” meetings.
3. This information will directly shape the alternatives to be considered in the EIS process.
4. The effects analysis for the alternatives will be gauged against the preferences and issues people expressed. In other words, while science is neutral and objective, the “good” and the “bad” of the data are determined

⁴ Schultz, David, Bradshaw Foothills, Agua Fria National Monument, and Harquahala Mountains Planning Effort: Issues, Management Concerns, and Management and Partnership Opportunities by Community Resource Units (CRUs), James Kent Associates, June 1, 2002.

by what local people value and want in their ecosystem, as well as by the mission mandated to BLM by Congress.

5. Local residents will participate in developing mitigation measures that are practical, affordable, and responsive.

Chapter Two

The Wickenburg Human Resource Unit

1. A Social and Economic Description of the Wickenburg Human Resource Unit (HRU)

Geographic Features and Settlement Patterns

The Wickenburg HRU is a relatively large area including the southern Bradshaw Mountains extending westward from Black Canyon to Alamo Reservoir and the Harcuvar Mountains. It includes the incorporated town of Wickenburg and unincorporated settlements of Wilhoit, Skull Valley, Kirkland, Peeples Valley, Yarnell, Congress, Aguila, Crown King, Morristown, and Castle Hot Springs.

JKA identified four subareas, or Community Resource Units (CRUs), of importance to residents within the Wickenburg HRU: Yarnell, Aguila, Wickenburg, and Castle Hot Springs. Figure Two (Chapter One) shows a map of this area. For purposes of this analysis, Castle Hot Springs was included in the Wickenburg CRU. In addition, although residents defined Congress as belonging to the Yarnell CRU in terms of family and social ties and other lifestyle routines, technical limitations required Congress to be included in the Aguila data. Figure Eight and Nine in Appendix C is a map showing the overlap of the human geographic units with census block groups so that the reader may see how these designations were derived. Table One in Appendix C compares census data in this area between 1990 and 2000. These data are referred to in the discussion below.

Early European settlement of this HRU came about because of farming and ranching and gold mining in the 1860s. Settlement was gradual until Henry Wickenburg discovered the Vulture Mine in 1863 and a small town eventually bearing his name formed on the Hassayampa River nearby. Wickenburg boasted about 500 residents by 1870. The mining boom would continue over the next 40 years with placer and lode discoveries throughout the area, especially near Congress in 1883, Rich Hill north of Wickenburg, and at Antelope Peak near Yarnell in the 1890s. Cattle ranching grew steadily during this period, especially in Peeples Valley, Kirkland, and lands west of Wickenburg. The railroad passed through the area in the 1890s linking Phoenix and Prescott. The large mines were generally played out by the 1920s. Farming for alfalfa, grain, cotton and eventually melons in the Aguila area flourished in the post World War II era. Today, farming focuses on alfalfa and melons.

A legacy of the early mining settlement pattern is the dozens of mining claims scattered throughout the mountains between Wickenburg and Prescott and along the Agua Fria River toward Black Canyon. Many of these claims are today owned and worked by recreational prospector clubs, as well as by individuals. Cattle ranching is still an important element of the social and economic fabric throughout the area from Peeples Valley, Wickenburg, Aguila, Morristown, and Castle Hot Springs. Staff persons at Wickenburg's Desert Caballeros Western Museum estimates there are 60 active cattle

ranches in the HRU, although a recent trend is the consolidation of smaller ranches into larger ones by absentee owners.

The second settlement pattern evolved out of the ranching industry in the 1920s. During that decade, Arizona tourism began to flourish and the automobile became a greater transporter of tourists than the railroad. Some Wickenburg area ranches began inviting guests to experience ranch lifestyle and the healthy wide-open spaces. Thus began the hospitality industry of dude or guest ranches. During the depression of the 1930s many traditional ranch operations failed, while dude ranches seemed depression-proof. At its height the area around Wickenburg listed more than a dozen active dude ranches. Tourist interest in dude ranches has waned the past couple of decades. However Wickenburg still calls itself the “Dude Ranch Capital of the World”. Four active dude ranches remain and several other seasonal businesses, which offer trail rides for tourists. Tourism is still a strong component of the Wickenburg economy. In addition to horseback activities, the town hosts numerous attractions for tourists based on the western town theme “Out Wickenburg Way.” Rodeos, fiestas, music festivals, art galleries, jeep tours, and western celebrations provide a full range of activities. The hospitality theme is also represented in Wickenburg by the Remuda Ranch complex, a rehabilitation care facility serving clients with various addictions and employing several hundred workers.

The current settlement pattern began in the 1980s and consists of people moving into the HRU with the express purpose of living a slower, rural lifestyle. A significant number of arrivals are from the Phoenix metropolitan area who are either retirees or still working in Phoenix and want to enjoy a smaller town lifestyle. A good number of retirees interviewed by JKA stated that they had come to Wickenburg because “it was not Phoenix.” The pattern currently described is that retired people land in Phoenix but after a year or two become disenchanted with the urban life.

Hence, recent growth in Wickenburg represents overflow from the urban growth of Phoenix. Two recent examples of planned residential development are the Escapees North Park south of Congress and the planned North Ranch subdivision north of Wickenburg. In addition, urban development has been steadily advancing along Highway 89 from Phoenix toward Wickenburg. The business and commuting ties between Wickenburg and Phoenix appear much more pronounced than years past, and residents are keenly ambivalent about them. Phoenix clearly represents a labor market that allows residents to remain or migrate to Wickenburg, but that very phenomenon is threatening the rural lifestyle that people value about Wickenburg. Current growth is causing some Wickenburg residents concern that the Phoenix metropolitan area is threatening to engulf their town and destroy their small western town lifestyle. This pattern is playing out mostly near Wickenburg and hasn’t yet shown up in smaller outlying communities.

Lifestyle Routines

Two values of social life important to residents in Wickenburg are the rural, western character of the area, which they want to preserve, and economic development that fits their area.

“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.”

“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.

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.”⁵

The people who live in the Wickenburg HRU can be categorized as different “publics” according to key characteristics. The major publics in this area are retired people, business people, youth, young families, and Hispanics. The publics with particular interest in public lands include ranchers, recreational miners, dude ranchers, recreational trail users (horse, mountain bike, off road vehicle, four wheelers), hunters, and cultural resources enthusiasts.

The 2000 census reveals interesting figures related to population, age and ethnicity in the Wickenburg HRU, as reported in Table One (Appendix C):

- The population of the HRU increased 22%, from 8363 in 1990 to 10,744 in 2000, while population in Yavapai County increased 36%, from 107,714 to 167,517.

⁵ Preister, Kevin, Summary Report of Community Fieldwork for Southern Bradshaw Planning, A Report to the Phoenix Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management, James Kent Associates, February 7, 2001.

- Of the incorporated Cities and Census Designated Places (CDP), Wickenburg grew the least (10%), while Congress (44%), Peoples Valley (29%) Wilhoit (29%), and Yarnell (30%) grew substantially more.
- The proportion of new population under 18 grew substantially in Wilhoit, indicating the new presence of younger families, while persons under 18 as a percentage of the population declined substantially in Congress and somewhat in Yarnell.
- The proportion of residents 65 years and over grew significantly more than the population in Congress, while it declined in Wilhoit, and remained flat in the other communities.
- The Hispanic population, as a proportion of total population, increased in Congress and Wickenburg, remaining insignificant in the other communities.
- While the population in Wickenburg grew by 10%, single parent households grew by 25%.
- In the Wickenburg HRU, more people now own the house they are living in. While the percentage of owner occupied units decreased in Yarnell, it increased in the rest of the area, especially in Congress and somewhat in Wickenburg.
- The migration patterns reveal a trend of somewhat more stability. Whereas 22% of the population in 1990 migrated from another state, only 20% did in 2000. Similarly, 44% of residents lived in the same house in 1985, and in the Aguila CRU it was 55%.

Economic Livelihood and Well-Being

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.”

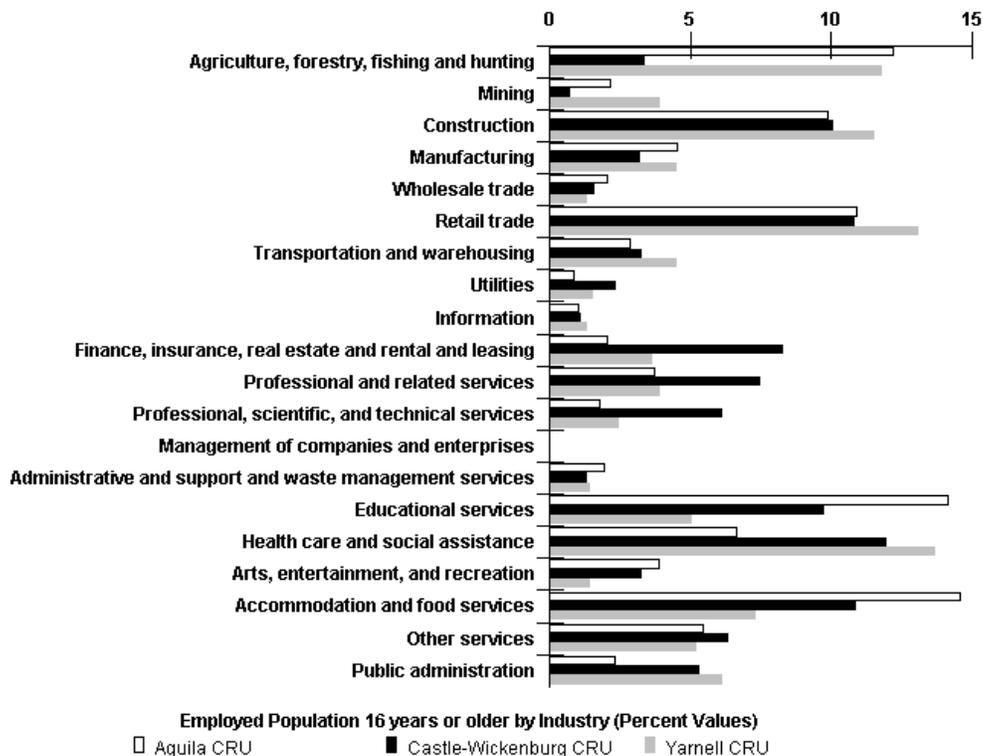
“Wickenburg is known as a fashionable horse place. It’s becoming more and more upscale. Prices in the last three years have risen dramatically.”

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 economy of the Wickenburg Human Resource Unit has historically been centered around agriculture and mining. As the census shows, agriculture declined from 8 to 7% of total jobs between 1990 and 2000 while mining declined from 3 to 2% of total jobs. Of much greater significance, economically speaking, during the last few decades has been retirement and services oriented around a recreational horse culture and specialty treatment facilities emphasizing a western, rural setting. The census shows a broad increase in services—health services (from 9 to 11% of total jobs), and educational services (from 7 to 10%). Retail trade in the HRU dropped from 20 to 11% of jobs.

Figure Three compares the subarea Community Resource Units (CRUs) within the Wickenburg HRU. It shows that agriculture is strongest in the Aguila and Yarnell CRUs, while the Castle-Wickenburg CRU is strongest in fire, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing, as well as in professional services. The Aguila CRU has the largest percentage of jobs in educational services, accommodation and food services, while Yarnell has the largest proportion of jobs in health care and social assistance.

Figure Three
The Economic Sectors of the Wickenburg Human Resource Unit



lived below the poverty level in 1990, only 14% did in 2000. The subareas of the

Aguila and Castle-Wickenburg CRUs declined even more, while the Yarnell area increased in poverty by a percent.

- The average household income increased by 29% in the HRU, to \$40,864; Aguila has the lowest average household income (\$33,544), Yarnell was \$35,987, and Castle-Wickenburg was \$45,537.
- Wage and salary income increased 24% in the Wickenburg HRU, to \$36,663, but other income sources rose significantly more. Interest/dividend/rental income increased 42% (\$15,360); Social Security income increased 36% (\$11,934); public assistance increased by 70% (\$8817); and retirement income by 44% (\$16,138). This means that wage income, as a proportion of all income sources, became less important while income generated from non-work related sources increased. In particular, the importance of the retirement community, as reflected in dividend, social security and retirement income, has become more pronounced. This trend held across the county and the subarea CRUs.
- Commuting time in the HRU increased from 20 to 24 minutes, while in the Yarnell CRU it increased the most, from 27 to 37 minutes.
- The Nativity measure indicates that more foreign-born people are residing in the area, Hispanics in this case, and also that in-migration to this part of Arizona has slowed. The percentage of residents who were born in another state declined throughout the area, much more markedly in the Wickenburg HRU than in Yavapai County as a whole.

2. Community Themes

People don't trust the government in general (federal, state, county) and see evidence of unwanted government intrusion into their lives - evidence offered was the State Department of Environmental Quality lead cleanup in the Hassayampa River in Wickenburg, the ADOT Bypass/Interim Bypass/CanaMex Highway, and the Agua Fria National Monument designation.

People don't trust government, but people like and trust individual BLM employees they feel they have relationships with and with whom they've worked - examples whose names have come up in conversations are Mike Taylor and Jack Ragsdale.

Many users of open lands within the planning area do not always distinguish between different agency jurisdictions. They know that there are mixed jurisdictions, but are often unclear about where boundaries are and what the different user regulations are. For example, for many years some Wickenburg trail users have freely used State Trust lands, thinking they are public lands and without knowing that permits are required.

Several individuals in the Kirkland, Skull Valley, and Wilhoit area are advocates of private property rights and are somewhat suspicious of government planning efforts.

In spite of some suspicion and caution, generally, citizens want to be involved in BLM planning. Some citizens expressed their belief that the BLM planning and EIS process is difficult to understand and to engage.

3. Citizen Issues

Community Issues

Selection of the Hwy 93 Bypass location has polarized citizens of Wickenburg over the past year or so. The controversy has eased in Wickenburg in recent months (or shifted somewhat to Morristown). The Hwy 93 issue will again be discussed in coming years as the CanaMex route through the area is selected.

A number of citizens are unhappy about The Nature Conservancy's establishment of the Hassayampa River Preserve. They complain about loss of access to the river for activities they previously enjoyed - fishing, ATV travel, and camping.

Several citizens and a local church representative expressed concern over increasingly insufficient low cost housing in Wickenburg. Lower income workers and citizens are looking westward toward Aguila and northward toward Congress for affordable housing.

Growth - there is a strong community desire for no growth in Yarnell, although some elements of Yarnell want growth and jobs. Peoples Valley is characterized as generally pro-growth.

The remote location of Castle Hot Springs cause long response times for Yavapai County emergency services - fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services.

Traveling rough roads providing access to homes and ranches on a daily basis takes a heavy toll on residents' vehicles, but improving the roads would bring more residents to the area. The current roads are a temporary barrier to more development.

“I spend three hours every day on these roads, but it’s worth it to live up here”
(Pleasant View Estates resident)

Ranching

Some ranchers are finding it more difficult to preserve ranching as a viable business and lifestyle. Prospects of leaving a viable ranching operation to kids are quickly diminishing.

Ranchers believe the recreating public does not appreciate the role or value of ranching in land stewardship, preserving open space, or as a cultural/historical presence.

Natural Resource Issues

Constellation Road is often in bad shape. Some residents want improvements and consistent maintenance of this road. Those expressing the need were unaware of who owns the road or is responsible for maintenance.

Many citizens regularly use the Hassayampa River Box Canyon and want to be able to protect the unique resources in the Canyon, yet permit reasonable access and use by hikers, picnickers, road use, trail use. Currently, trashing and environmental damage occurs regularly.

Trash is an ongoing problem, especially in more heavily used areas, such as Box Canyon, Blue Tanks, and the Constellation Road. Wickenburg citizen groups regularly have clean-up days to remove trash. In recent years it has been harder to get people and groups out to clean it up. Around Yarnell there is some trash dumping associated with OHV and hunting activities, although it is not yet seen as a large problem.

Trails

Trails are an important aspect of Wickenburg western history and heritage. Some citizens feel a strong need to locate and designate trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Some trail access has already been lost to private development. Some trail segments cross State Trust Lands and private lands. Until recently, a few citizens have been reluctant to designate and map trail locations for fear of government intrusion or attracting too many users.

“If we tell people where the trails are or produce maps, we will be overrun.”
[Local trails user]

ATV and motorcycle use is increasing in the Wickenburg area as population of users increase north and west of Phoenix. Increased use brings more conflict with other users as well as more renegade users who cause proportionately more resource damage and potential user conflicts.

OHV and other trail users in the Lake Pleasant area expressed concern and pessimism about eventually being displaced by advancing urban development.

“We’ve seen it happen over and over, here and in California. What can we do about it? We’ll just go to another place farther from town.” (Father of OHV user family)

Land Tenure and Open Space

Vulture Peak is important to Wickenburg as a vista and from an historic perspective. Many citizens want to make sure it is protected from intrusive development, or development which would degrade visual quality.

Many people expressed confusion about land ownership. At times they don't know when they are on State Trust lands or BLM lands. In everyday conversations, it was obvious that people were not clear in distinguishing the two, whenever talking about public lands close to town or the location of trails and so on. There is a "buried head in the sand" mentality about State Trust lands, a sense that it will always be there.

"We just ride out on the desert west of town - we always have." (Wickenburg winter resident)

Several citizens advocated retaining BLM lands to the south and west of Wickenburg as a buffer against urban encroachment from metro Phoenix.

"State Trust lands in the Wickenburg area will be liquidated some day; there needs to be a buffer between Phoenix and Wickenburg" [Wickenburg City Council member]

Some long time residents of Castle Hot Springs who once opposed Wilderness designations are now seeing such designations as a way of preserving the landscape, open space, and the western lifestyle.

Several citizens at a Wickenburg meeting urged BLM to get the Arizona State Land Department involved in the BLM planning process - their experience is that State Lands avoids involvement in planning and is not responsive to citizens.

Some residents near Yarnell and Wickenburg are concerned about conflicts between open range and traffic.

"Vulture Mine Road needs to be fenced off because of cattle. It is paved and is becoming a commuting road with fast traffic". (Rancher near Vulture Mine Road)

"One of the big problems we have is cows walking down main street here in Yarnell." (Yarnell resident)

A citizens group in Yarnell has fought off a gold mining proposal in recent years. They are concerned that another proposal could resurface when gold prices are higher.

As Phoenix metro area grows, there are more ATV and off-road users traveling Castle Hot Springs road, resulting in more trash dumping, cutting ranch fences, speeding on narrow county roads, and shooting around ranch buildings and windmills.

4. Management concerns

Trash dumping continues to occur on many public and private lands. Periodic cleanup days co-sponsored by State Lands, BLM, and OHV groups provide only temporary relief and cost the BLM several thousand dollars annually just for dumpster rentals.

Formal OHV groups who regularly use the area are very concerned that urban development will push OHV users out of the area, a continuing pattern for them.

New subdivision with a golf course (Quintero) is being built on old mining claim surrounded by BLM land and in wild burro habitat. Burros, cattle, javelina, and other critters will be attracted to grass and will be seen as a nuisance to residents. Some BLM managers are concerned that BLM will be expected to mitigate the burro conflict. The concerns may also involve the Arizona Fish and Game as well.

The State Land Department is concerned that people recreate on State Trust lands without having permits and that there is widespread citizen misunderstanding about where State Trust lands are located and how they are managed.

Recreational prospectors, or prospecting clubs, have group and family outings to work their claims. Numbers of people who show up are sometimes greater than planned. Sometimes, the need for camping and parking space causes conflicts with other groups using that particular area. [BLM]

There are numerous abandoned mines in nearby hills pose a safety hazard because of unmarked open shafts, as well as possible water quality problems. BLM has insufficient staff to inventory and safeguard dangerous sites. (BLM water specialist)

Yarnell Chamber of Commerce representatives are concerned about stimulating economic development in Yarnell. They need trails and possibly land for summer camping and outdoor experiences.

The Prescott National Forest is concerned about wild land-urban interface issues in communities adjacent to National Forest lands, especially related to fire safety. The problem has been exacerbated in recent years by a large amount of bug-killed timber. Prescott National Forest is working with the community to address this concern.

5. Management Opportunities

This planning effort presents a good opportunity to address several important issues related to land jurisdiction and land tenure. The opportunity is to engage key citizens and groups, the State Land Department, and local government and discuss land tenure options for BLM lands. Specifically, corridors for trail systems which currently pass through private, State Trust and BLM lands could be identified and dedicated for long term community use.

The Yavapai County General Plan revision and the Wickenburg General Plan are both well underway. This is an excellent time to align community vision and planning elements for overall consistency between plans.

While Vulture Mine is private land, the larger portion of Vulture Peak is largely on BLM land. The viewshed and historical perspective the community values can be addressed in

the planning process as lands to be retained, or preserved using other options such as with R&PP leases.

Work with citizens to identify BLM lands which could serve as a buffer between Phoenix urban development and Wickenburg and designate them appropriately in the plan.

The jurisdiction and responsibility for improvement and maintenance for Constellation Road can easily be determined and communicated to interested citizens. BLM can also facilitate a process for getting and keeping the road in shape. This is an example of a community issue that takes relatively little BLM resources to help resolve, yet builds significant trust and capacity in the community.

Work with recreation users to determine appropriate community-based strategies for trail designation, use, and maintenance. Is designation appropriate? Have one local organization act as the community sponsor of the overall effort. Designations could be associated with “adopt-a-trail” by individual clubs and groups, both local and non-local.

There is strong citizen identification with and a caretaking ethic for the Hassayampa Box Canyon. This support can easily evolve into a full stewardship effort for the Canyon. Work with local user groups and local government to develop a management framework for Box Canyon and follow through with appropriate designations or agreements.

Key citizens and groups in the Yarnell CRU know they have important interests to protect. There is an opportunity to demonstrate how their interests can be considered through a citizen-driven planning process. One proposal the Yarnell Chamber has for economic development is getting BLM cooperation to develop a trail system, including Antelope Peak on BLM land. They are also interested in knowing more about R&PP leases for public facilities.

There is an opportunity to employ youth from a local non-profit organization to locate, inventory, and sign abandoned mines in the Yarnell area.

Formal OHV organizations have indicated a strong desire to work with BLM and other landowners and users to inventory routes, collaborate in decision making, maintain routes, and monitor use on routes. They and other users want their interests represented in the process. This is a good opportunity to have the groups help develop a citizen-based process to make the route decisions early in the planning process.

The Gold Prospectors Association of America (GPAA) has volunteered to work on BLM projects near Association claims. One such project could be identifying and inventorying abandoned mines and accomplishing some basic safeguarding at mines. This would not only get needed work done, but also build cooperation and trust between BLM and prospecting clubs.

“Just bring us a list of projects you want done.” [GPAA local president]

Ranching and recreation

There is an opportunity here to educate the recreating public about ranch living, integrating ranching and recreational activities in ways that support both, economically and socially. A starting place might be putting local ranchers in touch with Rural Conservation & Development specialists and the Wickenburg Western Heritage Museum.

Arizona Game and Fish has a state wide program (Sportsman/Landowner Respect Program) to encourage user organizations to adopt ranches in order to preserve access on and across private land for hunting and other uses - this program may have application in the Castle Hot Springs area. The BLM could become a partner in the program as well.

Chapter Three: The Prescott Human Resource Unit

1. A Social and Economic Description of the Prescott Human Resource Unit (HRU)

Geographic Features and Settlement Patterns

The Prescott HRU includes two Community Resource Units (CRUs). The Prescott Valley CRU is the northwestern half of the HRU and includes the incorporated cities of Prescott and Prescott Valley and also the Chino Valley area. The Agua Fria CRU is the more rural southeastern portion of the HRU and includes the unincorporated villages of Dewey, Humboldt, Poland Junction, Mayer, Spring Valley, and Cordes Lakes. It also includes the Agua Fria National Monument and the very small historic settlements of Cordes, Bumble Bee, and Cleator.

Prescott was a center of early European settlement in cattle ranching since the mid 1800s. Gold was discovered in the area as early as 1838, with large placer strikes found in 1863. Fort Whipple was established in the Prescott area at about the same time to protect miners, ranchers and farmers who were settling in the general area. Prescott as a center of military presence in the territory was a key factor in the settling of the area. Railroad links reached Prescott in the 1880s and 1890s. Farming, ranching, mining, and the military were the economic foundation for settlement until the 1960s and 1970s. Prescott grew slowly and steadily until the 1980s. Tourism also contributed economically beginning in the 1920s and is a key economic sector today. For example more than 100,000 out-of-towners attend the annual Fourth of July Frontier Days annually.

The small communities known today as Dewey, Humboldt, and Mayer sprang up along the stagecoach route between Prescott and Phoenix during the 1880s. Growth in these smaller communities was generally slow until the 1950s and 1960s when the highway between Phoenix and Prescott was paved and Interstate 17 was constructed in Black Canyon. With better transportation between Phoenix and Prescott, growth in the general area began a steady but slow increase. Cordes Lakes was founded in 1957 by a land development company, followed by Prescott Valley and Spring Valley in the mid 1960s. These small communities grew rather slowly for the next twenty years, depending on the ranching, farming, and forestry economy of the general area.

The current settlement pattern of rapid growth throughout the HRU began in the early 1980s as ranches in the Prescott Valley area were subdivided and sold as residential developments. This growth spurt was somewhat generated by the rapid growth in the Phoenix valley and Arizona in general. Retired folks from out of state and Phoenix residents wanting a second home were attracted to the pleasant climate and forested settings. Prescott and Prescott Valley became real estate “hot spots”.

The census data for 2000 show interesting growth patterns for the Prescott HRU, as shown in Table Two (Appendix D). From 1990 to 2000 the population for the entire

Prescott HRU grew from 59,515 to 92,826, a population change of 36%, which matched overall growth in Yavapai County.

Growth within the HRU showed interesting variances. The Dewey Humboldt population increased from 3532 to 6295, a change of 44%; the Cordes Lakes population increased from 1222 to 2058, a change of 41%. Mayer increased from 1035 to 1408, a change of 27%. Prescott Valley increased from 9846 to 23,535, a change of 58%. Prescott Valley touts itself as northern Arizona's fastest growing community. In 1980 it had only 2200 residents.

Prescott Valley (62%), Spring Valley (52%), and Chino Valley (51%) had substantial increases of residents under 18 years of age, indicating a greater percentage of families with younger children were attracted to those communities than to other parts of the HRU. Prescott, on the other hand, only showed a 7% growth rate for people under 18 years. The growth rate of younger residents in Cordes Lakes (34%) and Dewey Humboldt (38%) were similar to overall population growth rates.

Growth rates for population segment over 65 years of age was 33% for the HRU. The population growth for older residents was much greater for Chino Valley (49%), Dewey-Humboldt (46%), and for Prescott Valley (47%) than for other parts of the HRU such as Spring Valley (31%), Prescott (22%), and for Mayer (0%). The figures show that retirement growth did not keep pace with population growth, reflecting a slowing of immigration.

Prescott is the largest city in Yavapai County. It grew from 27,692 residents to 33,938, an increase of 18% and half the average growth rate of Yavapai County. Prescott's population of people under 18 increased only 7%, but its population of those over 65 years old increased 22%. A larger proportion of Prescott's increase is due to older residents, probably more affluent retirees, compared to the rest of the HRU. Private land for development is also less available and more expensive within the City of Prescott than in the more rural areas.

Throughout the HRU, there was a proportionately larger increase of Hispanic residents (55%) than the general population increase (36%). The greatest Hispanic percentage rates occurred in Chino Valley (78%), Prescott Valley (79%), Dewey-Humboldt (64%), Spring Valley (60%) and Mayer (45%), which tend to be the more rural areas of the HRU. By contrast, growth rate of Hispanic population is significantly less in Prescott (31%).

For Native American population, the rate of growth overall in the HRU matched the general population growth of 36%. Within the HRU, some differences were indicated - Chino Valley (50%), Dewey-Humboldt (78%), Mayer (76%), Prescott Valley (67%), Prescott (25%). The Spring Valley and Cordes Lakes area showed a 10% loss of Native American residents. The vast majority (93.4%) of the 1067 Native Americans living in the HRU in 2000 lived in Prescott or Prescott Valley, while the rest were dispersed throughout the rural areas.

While the general population growth was 36%, single parent households increased by 43% in Yavapai County, and by 44% throughout the HRU. However a greater proportion of that increase occurred in Prescott Valley (72%), Chino Valley (62%), and Cordes Lakes (61%), where also a greater proportion of younger families live. The presence of large numbers of single parent households often indicates increased poverty.

Communities throughout the HRU share a geographical identity, being some 3000 feet above the Phoenix valley—enough elevation change to have a mild four-season climate and be 1 to 1-1/2 hours from the Phoenix metro area.

Lifestyle Routines

The majority of residents in the small unincorporated towns of Dewey, Humboldt, Poland Junction, Mayer, Spring Valley, and Cordes Lakes have moved there in the last 20 years. Residents of the smaller communities share strong values of wanting to live a rural lifestyle with an abundance of open space. They also want to be actively involved in land use decisions, in order to preserve their preferred lifestyles. These values are shared with the larger incorporated cities of Prescott and Prescott Valley, as well, and have recently been validated during community meetings held as part of Yavapai County's General Plan revision process. During public meetings the following Land Use goals were identified:

- Maintain compatible land use patterns
- Sustain the County's rural character
- Preserve open lands and the County's attractive image
- Establish public participation criteria for land use decisions

These general goals are continuously tested because of the rapid residential and commercial growth in the HRU. New residential and commercial developments continue to be planned and proposed throughout the area. Yavapai County struggles to provide infrastructure, law enforcement, and other support services to a larger, more diverse, and more dispersed population.

More recently, citizens throughout the HRU have become more concerned about long-term water supply for existing communities and projected growth. To many citizens, the need to maintain adequate water supply for existing uses translates into limiting future development and preservation of public lands as undeveloped open space.

Shopping routines are clearly centered around Prescott and Prescott Valley. Commercial retail, industrial, and construction service growth is centered almost entirely there, especially along State Highway 69. Commercial retail development in the smaller

communities consists of mainly travel-related businesses—motels, restaurants, fuel stations, and a few antique shops in Mayer.

The communities share supporting services centered in Prescott, the county seat of Yavapai County. Law enforcement, social services, county government, justice services, and health services mostly originate in Prescott.

Prescott is the home of three institutions of higher learning - Yavapai College, Prescott College, and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. These colleges attract a significant number of young people to the community. The colleges also provide excellent academic and cultural opportunities to the general community.

Economic Livelihood and Well-Being

The majority of working people throughout the Prescott HRU are employed in Prescott and Prescott Valley. The smaller rural communities also provide a limited amount of jobs. A significant number of workers make the daily commute to Phoenix, especially those living in the Spring Valley and Cordes Lakes communities. There is also a large contingent of retired residents spread throughout the HRU, especially in Prescott, Cordes Lakes and Spring Valley.

Citizens living below the poverty line (Table Two) dropped from 17% to 15% in the Agua Fria CRU while it climbed in the Prescott Valley CRU from 8% to 11%. The increase in poverty level population is likely related to a concurrent increase in single parent households noted in Prescott Valley (72%) and Chino Valley (62%).

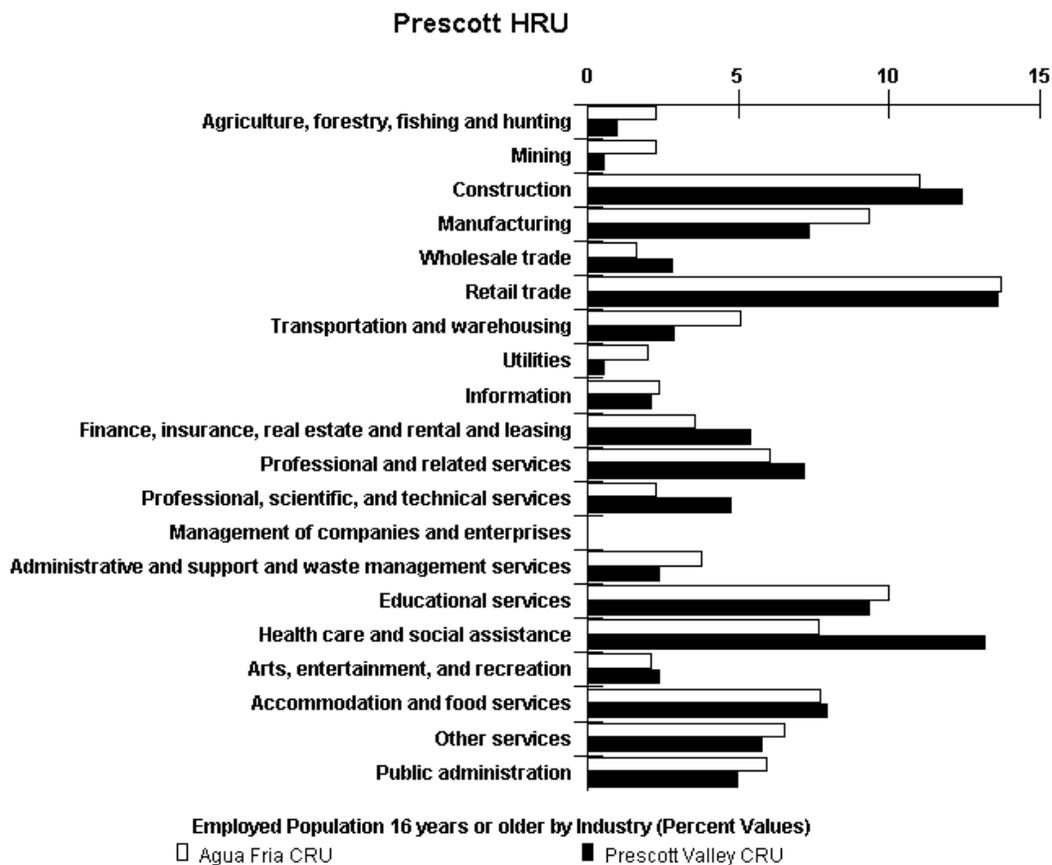
Average household income rose 48% in Agua Fria CRU to \$40,787 and it rose 17% to \$47,446 in the Prescott Valley CRU. Between 1990 and 2000, household incomes in the rural areas began to catch up with incomes in the more urban areas, but they still lag behind significantly. The higher increase in the rural areas is likely due to higher income people moving into the rural areas such as Dewey-Humboldt and Mayer, as well as more rural workers driving to higher-paying professional jobs.

For the more rural Agua Fria CRU, the largest job gains were in the health and social service sector (from 4% to 8%), educational services (from 4% to 10%), and public administration, entertainment, recreation, and other professional services (from 10% to 15%).

For the more urban Prescott Valley CRU construction jobs increased from 7% to 12% of total jobs, health services increased from 8% to 13%, and education services increased from 7% to 9%.

Jobs in the manufacturing sector dropped from 11% to 8% of total jobs the entire HRU. For agriculture and forestry sector, jobs dropped from 7% to 2% of total jobs in the more rural Agua Fria CRU and from 4% to 1% in the Prescott Valley CRU. Figure Four displays the economic sectors of the Prescott HRU.

Figure Four
The Economic Sectors of the Prescott HRU



Numbers of farms in Yavapai County dropped 6% between 1987 and 1997, while overall farm acreage dropped 67% and cropland acreage dropped 15%. Livestock inventory also dropped 6% during that period.

Overall in Yavapai County, full and part time employment grew 69%, with construction (92%), wholesale trade (124%) and service industries (93%) representing the greatest increases (Table Two).

Reported crime rates per 100,000 people in Yavapai County for 2000 dropped significantly since 1990. Some examples are burglaries (-34%), robberies (-33%), arson (-44%), rapes (-36%), larcenies (-21%), murders (-61%), and vehicle thefts (-19%). Crime rates per 100,000 people were significantly lower than for Phoenix, in almost

every category. Lower crime rates are an important attractor to a community, especially for families and older residents.

2. Community Themes

Many people live here because of the open space, vistas, and the rural lifestyle available. Many residents of smaller communities are concerned about growth and the demands that development puts on community resources, especially water supply.

Citizens want public lands retained in public ownership and they want access to those public lands.

“We don’t want our public lands sold or traded away just so some developer can get rich.”

Many people expressed a general mistrust of government, especially federal government. Although people don't trust government, they do like and trust individual BLM employees they feel they have relationships with and who they've done work with. With a few exceptions, people feel disconnected from the BLM and the Phoenix Field Office (PFO). For example, some citizens say they have tried to contact someone in the Field Office about their issues, but they don't get calls returned, they don't know who to talk to, and feel intimidated by the thought of going to the Phoenix Field Office.

“We can’t find out what’s going on until it’s too late to do anything about it - I don’t trust them.”

There is widespread resentment for the way the Agua Fria National Monument was designated, but general support for protecting the resources within the Monument. There is a general lack of accurate information about the rules regarding the Agua Fria National Monument at the citizen level.

“ I don’t have a problem with protecting the area, I just don’t like how Clinton and Babbitt did it.”

3. Citizen Issues

Community Issues

Cordes Lakes would like to have an alternate route south through Black Canyon corridor paralleling I-17 for emergencies when I-17 is blocked by accident, or in case of emergency. Cordes Lakes also wants the primitive road heading south and east of town improved for an alternate escape route in case of fire or other emergency at Cordes Junction.

In Spring Valley, the residents are primarily focused on internal management of their community. They are negotiating the appropriate Covenants, Codes and Restrictions

(CC&R's) to regulate development and coordinating volunteers to complete construction of some features in their community park.

The Cordes Lakes Homeowners Association needs more facilities for young people and is currently trying to acquire land and facilities for Boys and Girls Clubs.

"There is nothing for kids to do around here, to keep them out of trouble."

Big Bug Economic Alliance wants the County to develop regional transportation for senior citizens who don't drive well any more to travel from small communities to Prescott and to Phoenix for medical and other needs.

Several of the smaller communities struggle with growth issues - zoning, frequent development proposals, and local control of growth in unincorporated areas.

"Why have a zoning plan if we approve every request for variances?"

"Maybe it's time for us to incorporate."

"Every month a new development plan is submitted, pushing higher density development and expensive homes."

Natural Resource Issues

Land Exchange

An active contingent of citizens is very focused on stopping the proposed Aranda land exchange, which would redesignate approximately 17,000 acres of BLM lands currently categorized as "Lands Designated For Retention" and instead make the lands available for exchange, sale or development. They are also upset because they cannot seem to find out the current status of the proposal.

"Why won't anyone tell us anything - is the proposal dead or not?"

"We have given our comments to the BLM several times about the land exchange, and they want us to comment again. We don't trust them. They aren't listening to us."

Fire Safety and Forest Health

Citizens in many Prescott neighborhoods live in forested settings, adjacent to National Forest lands. They are very concerned about life and property safety because of recent seasons of catastrophic fires in the west and, particularly, because of the large amount of beetle-killed timber present as well. Citizens in some of the smaller communities, such as Mayer, are also concerned about fire safety.

Access to public lands

Some recent residential developments on private lands have cut off traditionally used trails accessing public lands.

“Our use of the public lands are being cut off by developers. Is that legal?”

Water issues

This includes having adequate water supply for current use, as well as for population growth in region, and relationships of the Chino, Verde, and Aqua Fria watersheds. This is a huge issue, one related to keeping BLM lands as open space rather than exchanging them. Currently, there is no accurate way to predict amounts of available water for future growth.

“The question is not whether we will run out of water; the only question is when.”

The large developments will suck our aquifer dry - they assure us there is plenty of water, but we know better.”

Trails

There are constituent groups supporting designated trails for motorized use and other support groups for non-motorized use. One current project is the location and designation of the Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trail from state highway 69 northward to the Prescott National Forest boundary.

Trash

Illegal trash dumping on public and private lands is a chronic problem, which seems to be getting worse and has no easy solution or a clear constituency.

“I picked up a trailer load of trash off public land and then had to pay a fee for taking it to the transfer station. I’m not doing that any more.” (Mayer resident)

“I’m sick and tired of hearing complaints about trash - I don’t want to talk about trash.” (A county supervisor at a community meeting)

“The people who are dumping trash around here are your neighbors, not people from outside the area.” (Cordes community leader)

Agua Fria National Monument

Individuals and organized groups, especially in the Prescott area, are concerned that unique values of Agua Fria National Monument are well protected. There are specific concerns about route designations, area closures, public access to sites, and facility

development. Their interests seem to be more focused on getting the regulations written into the plan, rather than actively taking part in on the ground stewardship or “friends” organizations.

4. Management Concerns

Prescott National Forest officials are concerned about wild land-urban interface issues around Prescott and other nearby communities, especially related to fire safety. This has become urgent because of drought in the area and a large amount beetle-killed timber adjacent to communities. Forest officials are working with communities in the Prescott area to address this concern.

Officials of the National Forests of Arizona are concerned about having a consistent set of policies to manage Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use on National Forest lands. The Prescott National Forest is leading an effort among National Forests in Arizona to develop consistent policies.

The State Land Department is concerned that people recreate on State Trust lands without having permits and that there is widespread citizen misunderstanding about where State Trust lands are located and how they are managed. For example, most residents at a community meeting in Cordes Junction were unaware the community is almost entirely surrounded by State Trust lands and that citizens need a permit to walk on them.

Yavapai County is concerned about planning and securing enough transportation corridors between Cordes and Prescott to meet future needs of a rapidly growing population.

Yavapai County is concerned with retaining quality of life aspects of the area and also accommodating rapid residential and commercial growth.

5. Management Opportunities

Planning – The Big Bug Economic Alliance has offered to help coordinate a citizen based planning effort for BLM lands from Dewey-Humboldt to Black Canyon City and the communities in between, using community-based process similar to the one used in 1996.

Fire Safety - One BLM employee is working with the local officials in Mayer discussing ways to demonstrate community and residential fire safety practices to local citizens. This is an immediate and relatively easy way to build social capital (trust and cooperation) within the community and with the BLM. This can easily be extended to other small communities.

Trails - BLM is currently working with the Yavapai County Trails Council to locate, designate and protect an extension of the Black Canyon Hiking and Equestrian Trail. The work so far has built a great deal of trust between the Council and BLM. Follow

through on the project will be a huge win-win for both parties and for the hiking/equestrian public.

Agua Fria National Monument

A local citizen has offered to coordinate the development of a visitor information center at Cordes Junction serving Cordes Lakes communities, Agua Fria National Monument, other BLM lands, Prescott and Tonto National Forest attractions, State Trust lands, and surrounding communities. This citizen also offered to help organize community efforts to help with stewardship, such as monitor conditions and patrol roads on the Monument.

Most Monument interest comes from Prescott and Phoenix citizens and is focused on making sure the Resource Management Plan for the Monument adequately protects the unique features and resources of the Monument. There is also some citizen interest in the Monument, scattered around the general area. Citizens in Cordes Lakes, Mayer, and Black Canyon City have expressed interest in Monument tourism and stewardship. There is definitely enough interest to develop a community-based stewardship entity, perhaps a “Friends of Agua Fria National Monument”, an organization to focus the interests and energies of citizens of local communities and citizens from Phoenix, Prescott, and elsewhere. The organization could be involved with stewardship, fund raising, education, and publicity for the Monument. Citizens in these communities need a little help with the vision, with organizing, and supportive responses from the BLM.

Chapter Four

Lake Pleasant Human Resource Unit

1. A Social and Economic Description of the Lake Pleasant Human Resource Unit (HRU)

Geographic Features and Settlement Patterns

The Lake Pleasant HRU consists of the area immediately north of the Phoenix metropolitan area, including Lake Pleasant Regional Park and extending up the Black Canyon Corridor north of Black Canyon City and northeast to Cook's Mesa and Bloody Basin on the Tonto National Forest. It includes the communities of Rock Springs, Carefree, Cave Creek, New River and the northern tip of Scottsdale. These community areas have been distinct in the past, but urban growth is creating a single unit with a common future. Figures Twelve and Thirteen (Appendix E) shows a map of this area as it relates to census block groups.

Early European settlement began in the 1860s. New River, Rock Springs, and present day Black Canyon City were stations on a military road and a stagecoach and wagon freight route between the Prescott area and Phoenix. Small farming settlements formed around the stations and eventually a post office and school were established in Black Canyon City in the 1890s. Cave Creek began as a small settlement around a gold strike in 1874.

The Black Canyon Corridor has always been an important transportation corridor and a defining feature for settlement patterns in the area. Cattle and sheep ranchers drove their stock through the Canyon between pastures and markets until the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1960s Interstate 17 followed the corridor to tie Phoenix to Flagstaff and Interstate 40. Growth occurred slowly in area settlements through the 1960s. Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s a second settlement pattern began as some people preferred small, informal communities to the urban and suburban lifestyle of Phoenix. New River and Carefree have evolved as a series of planned developments.

Lifestyle Routines

Black Canyon City 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. Many city problems are handled informally. 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 its threat to local lifestyles and as an 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 (Figure Two, Chapter One).

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.’”

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, informal 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.

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.

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, leveling 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 than 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.⁶

⁶ Preister, Kevin, Summary Report of Community Fieldwork for Southern Bradshaw Planning, A Report to the Phoenix Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management, James Kent Associates, February 7, 2001.

North Phoenix refers to suburbs located at the northern end of the Phoenix metropolitan area. It includes portions of Peoria (which has now annexed to the middle of Lake Pleasant), Sun City, Surprise, Sun City West, and El Mirage. Table Six summarizes census data for these communities. Only one community, Sun City grew less (4%) than Maricopa County as a whole. All other communities have grown much faster than the County figure of 31%, with Surprise growing the most with a 74% growth rate over the decade.

A comparison of 1990 and 2000 census data for the Lake Pleasant area is contained in Table Three in Appendix E. The data revealed the following observations:

- The population in the Lake Pleasant HRU grew from 117,996 in 1990 to 292,540 in 2000 (60%).
- The Lake Pleasant HRU and its CRUs grew almost double the rate of Maricopa County. While the county grew 31% over the decade, the Lake Pleasant HRU grew by 60%, the Black Canyon CRU by 58%, Cave CRU by 51% and North Phoenix CRU by 60%.
- While the proportion of the population under 18 years of remained about the same in Maricopa County (33%), in the Lake Pleasant HRU, the proportion grew much more than the population. For example, the population in the North Phoenix CRU grew by 60% but the proportion of the population under 18 grew by 73%. Families with children have come to the area more than other kinds of people.
- While the proportion of the population 65 years and older declined in Maricopa County, the decline was much more substantial in the Lake Pleasant HRU. In 1990, seniors accounted for 12.5% of the population in Maricopa County, and only 11.7% of the population in 2000. By contrast, seniors accounted for 44.6% of the population of the Lake Pleasant HRU in 1990, but only 28.1% in 2000. The immigration of retired people into the Lake Pleasant area has slowed significantly.
- Hispanic or Latino people are by far the fastest growing minority group. They accounted for an increasing proportion of population in Maricopa County, increasing by 55%, while the population only increased 31%. Their proportion increased slower than the population in the Lake Pleasant HRU. Black Canyon and Cave CRUs experienced a greater proportion of Hispanics over the decade, while their proportion declined in North Phoenix.
- The proportion of residents living in owner-occupied units increased slightly in Maricopa County but declined in the Lake Pleasant HRU, especially in Black Canyon City. While the population in Black Canyon grew by 58%, home ownership only increased by 38%, indicating a larger rental market. Similarly, North Phoenix grew by 60% but homeownership only by 56%. The Cave CRU had slightly improved home ownership.

- The proportion of single parent households in the population remained about the same in Maricopa County but increased substantially in the Lake Pleasant HRU. For example, the North Phoenix population grew by 60% but single parent households increased by 71%, by nearly 3000 households. Single parent households are often a good predictor of poverty.
- In 1990, 20% of residents were from a different state, while in 2000, only 17% were. In the Black Canyon CRU, 11% were from a different state in 1990 and 16% in 2000. In the Cave CRU, 19% in 1990 were from a different state, and 23% in 2000.

Economic Livelihood and Well-Being

The economy of the Lake Pleasant HRU is dominated by the same five major sectors that are most important for Maricopa County as well:

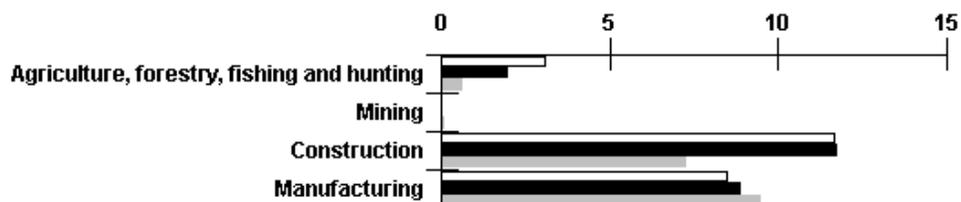
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing
- Retail trade
- Professional and related services
- Health care and social assistance
- Total manufacturing

For both Maricopa County and Lake Pleasant HRU, total manufacturing and retail trade have declined in relative importance, while business and professional services have increased in the proportion of total jobs. In contrast, agriculture and forestry jobs declined in Maricopa County from 20,147 in 1990 to 7734 in 2000, a loss of 12,413 jobs, 426 jobs of which were located in Lake Pleasant HRU. In both units, agriculture is now just 1% of the total jobs. Mining jobs in Maricopa County numbered 1417 in 2000 yet just hovers above 0% of total jobs. Mining jobs increased in the Lake Pleasant HRU from 40 to 103, but accounts for just above 0% of total jobs also.

Figure Five below shows the breakdown of jobs within the CRUs of the Lake Pleasant HRU: Black Canyon, Cave, and North Phoenix. North Phoenix, of course, has the greatest number of jobs, 98,557, the Cave CRU has 9017 jobs, and Black Canyon has 3490 jobs. What Figure Five shows is that:

- The Cave CRU economy is dominated by professional services and retail trade;
- Manufacturing is fairly proportional across the three geographic areas;
- Agriculture, forestry and hunting are more important in Black Canyon than other areas of the Lake Pleasant HRU;

Figure Five
The Economic Sectors of the
Lake Pleasant Human Resource Unit



- Construction is nearly twice as important in Black Canyon and Cave than it is in North Phoenix, relative to the total number of jobs in the area;
- Health care and social assistance dominate in North Phoenix.

A comparison of the census data contained in Table Three (Appendix E) shows the following findings related to the economy in the Lake Pleasant HRU:

- While the rate of poverty in Maricopa remained the same during the last decade (12%), it declined in the Lake Pleasant HRU (from 8 to 5%), and declined substantially in the North Phoenix CRU (from 12 to 5%).
- Poverty is experienced more by Hispanics than Anglos. About 51% of Hispanics in Maricopa County live in poverty, 29% in the Lake Pleasant HRU, and 30% in the North Phoenix CRU.

- Without controlling for inflation, the average household income increased 35% in Maricopa County, but much more in the Lake Pleasant HRU (46%), Black Canyon CRU (45%), Cave CRU (45%), and North Phoenix CRU (57%).
- Wage and salary income increased 35% in Maricopa County but 50% in the Lake Pleasant HRU.
- Interest, dividend, and rent income increased in Maricopa County by 35%, but only 19% in the Lake Pleasant HRU, and 68% in the Black Canyon CRU.
- Social Security payments remained fairly equal across the five geographic units, the increase ranging from 29 to 32%.
- Public Assistance grew 60% in Maricopa County but only 46% in the Lake Pleasant HRU, and a whopping 90% in the Black Canyon CRU.
- Retirement income increased by 43% in Maricopa County, but 39% in the Lake Pleasant HRU and 55% in the Black Canyon CRU.
- The Black Canyon CRU had the highest increase in the interest and dividend income, retirement income, and public assistance income, indicating a rich/poor split that may be more significant there than elsewhere.

These findings reveal a general pattern of higher wealth in the HRU than the county as a whole.

Finally, JKA research found that home-based businesses are common and appear to be an increasing, though little recognized, economic activity.⁷

2. Community Themes

People are cautious about working with government in general and working with BLM planning in particular.

"Been there, done that already and we haven't seen any results of our involvement yet". (Black Canyon City citizen)

"BLM folks have said they want to work with us, but somehow the ball gets dropped; nothing happens on the ground". (Black Canyon City trails enthusiast)

Citizens in the Lake Pleasant HRU have strong attachments to public lands (primarily BLM, State Trust Lands and USFS) around their communities. They have strong opinions that public lands need to remain in public ownership.

⁶Ibid.

Citizens in the Lake Pleasant HRU are in the path of northward expansion of the Phoenix metropolitan area. They consider public lands valuable as open space and buffer areas.

Many citizens expressed that the best management for public lands is to continue allowing access to the lands and to the activities they currently enjoy. Many expressed the belief that “land use planning and management” means more restrictions on their use.

“Just leave it alone - we don’t want it managed“ (Black Canyon City school employee)

There is widespread resentment for the way the Agua Fria National Monument was designated, but general support for protecting the resources within the Monument. There is currently a general lack of accurate information at the citizen level about the operating rules and general management goals for the Monument.

People appreciate that the BLM is asking them for their opinions on how the BLM lands should be managed and what their current issues are.

3. Citizen Issues

Community Issues

Both New River and Black Canyon City have tried to incorporate in past; the issue comes up every few years. This issue seems to center around a desire to have more local control of growth, planning, and zoning versus the additional requirements and costs of incorporation.

Many citizens believe they get inadequate share of Yavapai County services, such as law enforcement, road maintenance, parks, and medical emergency services.

Some citizens believe Black Canyon City needs to incorporate in order to avoid being annexed by Peoria or Phoenix. This issue has come up every few years as a topic of community debate but not enough support has yet existed to move it forward. The latest Phoenix annexation actions have extended Phoenix city limits northward to the Table Mesa Road.

Some citizens expressed the need for more activities for young people, in addition to the BMX track. A related opinion expressed by Canon School administrators is that, in general, it is difficult to get local parents involved with their children's education or other activities.

Natural Resource Issues

Many residential areas in New River consist of 1-2 acre tracts - as more people move “into the country” they buy an ATV and take off across countryside without regard to

ownership or regulations or environmental concerns. It is a growing problem as reported by a newspaper publisher and others.

New River is in the process of expanding or adding to a BLM R&PP (Recreation and Public Purpose) lease for the Kiwanis Park and Senior Center on north edge of village.

Trash is left by users of desert lands (public and private) and by travelers from I-17. Community groups and local ranchers regularly clean up trash left by others.

Access

Many citizens want access preserved to public lands and the activities they currently enjoy, such as horseback riding, hiking, off-road riding, ATV riding, recreational prospecting, rock-hounding, shooting, hunting. Citizens in Black Canyon City have expressed concern about losing access to public lands.

"Just leave things the way they are". [Longtime local resident]

Local members of OHV groups believe they are continually forced out of areas they use because of encroaching urban development. They would like to be involved in a planning process that results in retaining access to roads and trails in the future.

Several citizens expressed frustration in not having easy access to maps of public lands in the area.

Some citizens don't agree with the way State Trust lands are managed. For example, they resent needing to have permits to enter State Trust Lands.

Illegal Dumping

Many citizens are frustrated about illegal dumping of trash on public and private lands, especially items which are expensive to take to the transfer station, such as appliances, furniture, automobiles, and tires.

Some citizens have expressed concern with target shooting in areas where residences and other public land users are present.

4. Management concerns

Cave Creek residents and Tonto National Forest are concerned about shooting on Forest land adjacent to Cave Creek and Carefree. The Tonto National Forest has instituted closure on shooting for 80,000 acres on Forest land.

Cave Creek and New River and Carefree are experiencing rapid growth, resulting in heavy impacts on National Forest resources adjacent to those communities and increased user conflicts. (Tonto NF planner)

User groups have complained about confusing regulations on Forest lands and are pressuring National Forests to develop consistent off-road policies for all Forests.

Arizona Game and Fish Department is concerned about losing access by hunters to use of private lands for hunting and losing access across private lands to public lands. They have a program to have OHV and hunting groups work cooperatively with ranchers and landowners.

The BLM and the Forest Service are concerned about fire danger in and around communities adjacent to public lands.

The Black Canyon City Fire Department is concerned about fire safety of local residents, especially during this drought season.

People use State Trust lands without permits, leases, or licenses, and often without knowing. There is a lack of citizen understanding of regulations for use of and locations of State Trust lands. [State Lands department OHV specialist]

5. Management Opportunities

A goal expressed by several citizens in the New River community is to someday have a place dedicated for families to safely enjoy off-road and ATV activities. Currently, many ATV enthusiasts use private and State Trust lands, often without permission.

An idea discussed by a local rancher and an off-road club is to develop a creed/ethics card for off-roading, emphasizing safety, environmental respect, respect for private property rights, respect for other users, etc. Off-road groups and public land agencies could co-sponsor such an approach.

Arizona Game and Fish has a program (Sportsman/Landowner Respect Program) to encourage user organizations to adopt ranches in order to preserve access on and across private land for hunting and other uses. One example is on East Table Mesa Road. This program could be expanded.

Illegal Dumping

There is a lot of energy in the community to work toward resolution of this issue. Local individuals, OHV clubs, a gold prospector association, local media, local businesses, and federal, state, and local government agencies all express a need to address the problem.

Fire Safety

The BLM and the Black Canyon City Fire Department have recently begun discussing ways to demonstrate community and residential fire safety practices to local citizens. This is an immediate and relatively easy to build social capital (trust and cooperation) within the community and with the BLM.

Access

Representatives of OHV groups have offered to help BLM inventory routes, monitor environmental conditions on roads, perform maintenance, and collaborate with other route users to develop integrated management strategies and decisions.

The Black Canyon City Riders are working with the BLM to locate and designate several sections of trails in order to enhance riding and hiking opportunities around the community and to tie in with the Black Canyon Trail system. They are willing to help maintain and monitor the trails as well. Very recently, BLM signed a volunteer agreement with Black Canyon City Community Association to help locate, maintain, and manage trails in the area. This is an excellent beginning to wider partnering opportunities in the Black Canyon City area.

Land Tenure

There are several opportunities for partnering between BLM and citizen groups to acquire BLM lands for community uses. The High Desert Helpers are in the process of acquiring the use of BLM land for expansion of High Desert Park. Some citizens are interested in BLM lands on west side of Agua Fria as a community greenbelt. The Helpers are getting assistance from a BLM specialist in the application processes and this needs to continue on a deliberate and timely basis (staffing the culture).

The Black Canyon City Community Association is interested in longer-term acquisition of BLM lands or leases in order to provide private land for future community expansion as well as for public uses such as schools, fire stations, and community centers. The Association is exploring ways to identify their long-term needs and to express that in the BLM planning process.

Many citizens of Black Canyon City want to have BLM retain much of the lands in the Black Canyon area in public ownership, which provide a buffer against urban development, and for their value as view sheds, vistas and open space. The opportunity is to help the community understand the planning options available and the appropriate ways to provide the BLM guidance for land tenure decisions in the plan.

Agua Fria National Monument

Although not likely as a “gateway” village to the Agua Fria National Monument, several citizens and the Chamber of Commerce have expressed interests in participating in

economic aspects of managing the Monument, such as tourism information, guided tours, maps, and special events.

Canyon Creek Ranch, a local outfitter, has offered to perform trail maintenance and monitor resource condition in conjunction with permitted use on the Monument.

The local rock hounding club, the Braggin' Rock Club, is interested in volunteering to help the BLM gather information on the Monument and to help monitor sites.

Chapter Five

Phoenix Human Resource Unit

1. A Social and Economic Description of the Phoenix Human Resource Unit (HRU)

The Phoenix HRU basically consists of the urban and suburban metropolitan area known generally as Phoenix. The HRU includes most of the incorporated cities of Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Paradise Valley, Gilbert, Glendale, and parts of Scottsdale, Peoria, Sun City, Litchfield Park, Tolleson, and Apache Junction. The Phoenix HRU boundaries are generally defined by relatively high-density suburban neighborhoods on the edge of the metropolitan area (Figure Two, Chapter One). The boundaries are very fluid because of the rapid conversion of open lands to new residential developments in recent years.

The first significant settlement pattern for what is now the Phoenix metropolitan area formed around agriculture. Early Phoenix began as an agricultural area along the Salt River in the mid 1800s, especially after the Civil War. European settlers dug irrigation canals to grow hay, wheat, barley, corn, beans, citrus, cotton, and other crops, often following ancient canal patterns of the Hohokam people. In 1887 the railroad reached Phoenix and in 1889 Phoenix was made the capital of the Arizona Territory. By 1890, there were 11,000 residents in the area cultivating 50,000 irrigated acres, which grew rapidly to 130,000 acres by 1895. Floods, droughts and water rights disputes kept the population generally stable until Roosevelt Dam, finished in 1911, reduced the frequency and severity of floods and ensured a more reliable supply of irrigation water. Roosevelt Dam was followed by construction of four more dams on the Salt River.

Two world wars, the Great Depression, and western water legislation contributed to a succession of booms and busts in the agricultural economy to the Salt River Valley. While agriculture continued as an economic foundation for the area, growth in the manufacturing sector provided the impetus for the second significant settlement pattern of Phoenix. The growth of the manufacturing economy began in the late 1930s and expanded significantly in aerospace, electronics, and other defense industries as a result of World War II and the post-war boom. This settlement pattern was significant for several reasons. The overall growth rate was enormous. Also, the people attracted to jobs in the manufacturing sectors during this period were younger and more well educated technical and professional employees than agricultural-based workers of previous settlement periods. Phoenix population increased from 65,000 in 1940 to 107,000 in 1950 and to 439,000 in 1960. The nearby towns of Tempe, Glendale, Mesa, and Scottsdale also experienced the inflow of people. Between 1940 and 1960, Glendale went from 4800 to 16,000 residents, Mesa grew from 7000 to 33,000 residents, Tempe grew from 2900 to 25,000 residents, and Scottsdale grew from 1000 to 10,000 residents. In addition, what was previously “nearby small towns” melded together with Phoenix to form the beginnings of a major metropolitan area.

The next settlement pattern began in 1960s and can be characterized by the term “the Arizona lifestyle.” The “lifestyle” consisted of a ranch style tract home with a two-car

carport on a small lot in a planned community and often a backyard swimming pool, at a price affordable to a growing middle class. The fast growth of high-tech industries, real estate speculation, deregulation of the banking and the savings and loan industry, widespread availability of air conditioning, and the proliferation of so-called “planned communities” helped fuel the rapid growth of the Phoenix metropolitan area. In addition, the Arizona desert became the destination of large numbers of retirees from northern and northeastern states. Also, national companies began relocating their national and regional headquarters to Phoenix because of lower property values and taxes, pleasant climate, attractive lifestyles for employees, nearby lakes and mountains for recreation, and the outlook for strong economic growth for the area. Most people moving to Phoenix in this period were new to the southwest and to the desert environment. Many saw the desert around Phoenix and the mountain ranges as an empty, lifeless, wasteland good enough as a playground for off-road recreation until it could be developed.

Urbanization of the state. In 1900 84% of the State’s population lived in rural settings. By 1990, more than 87% of Arizonans lived in cities or towns, especially in the Phoenix area, which by the year 2000 had grown to approximately 3.5 million residents. This urbanization trend is accompanied by statewide shifts of economic, political, and social values from rural to urban.

The settlement pattern begun in the 1960s continues today. The outlook for the coming decade is for continuing aggressive commercial, retail, and residential growth north and west of the current metropolitan area. Cities such as Peoria, Phoenix, and Buckeye have recently annexed large areas extending well into the RMP planning area toward the Bradshaw foothills and toward Morristown/Wickenburg. Phoenix and Peoria seem to be racing each other to annex northward toward the Black Canyon corridor. Large residential/commercial/retail developments are planned and approved, often in leap-frog patterns, bypassing large expanses of open space to establish a planned community some distance from existing development. The areas skipped over are soon filled in. Any State Trust lands within the skipped over areas are targeted to be exchanged or purchased for development. BLM lands in skipped over areas are often exchanged for private lands or incorporated into urban parks and open space areas. Leap-frog expansion patterns tend to disrupt contiguous plant and animal habitat.

The current settlement pattern is populated by two components—retirees relocating from out of state and people attracted to good jobs and a pleasant climate. In contrast to earlier settlement patterns, today’s recent Phoenician is more mobile, more urban/suburban, and not connected to the landscape. Residential developments on the edge of the city advertising their homesites list amenities such as controlled access, common use swimming pools, after school activities, public safety, golf courses, and proximity to shopping centers and freeways. Advertisements seldom refer to adjacent natural resources or landscapes as amenities.

Although significant numbers of Phoenix residents recreate on public lands around Phoenix, they are a very small percentage of the urban population. Usual forms of

recreation on public lands are hiking, OHV driving, recreational prospecting, horseback riding, and target shooting. The average Phoenix resident does not use public lands.

Work routines are completely defined by the urban character and the boundaries of the metropolitan area and the HRU. Service, commercial, retail, manufacturing, construction, professional, governmental job sectors provide a wide spectrum of work experiences and earnings.

A comparison of the census data for 1990 and 2000 for the Phoenix HRU (Table Four) and its incorporated cities yields the following general observations:

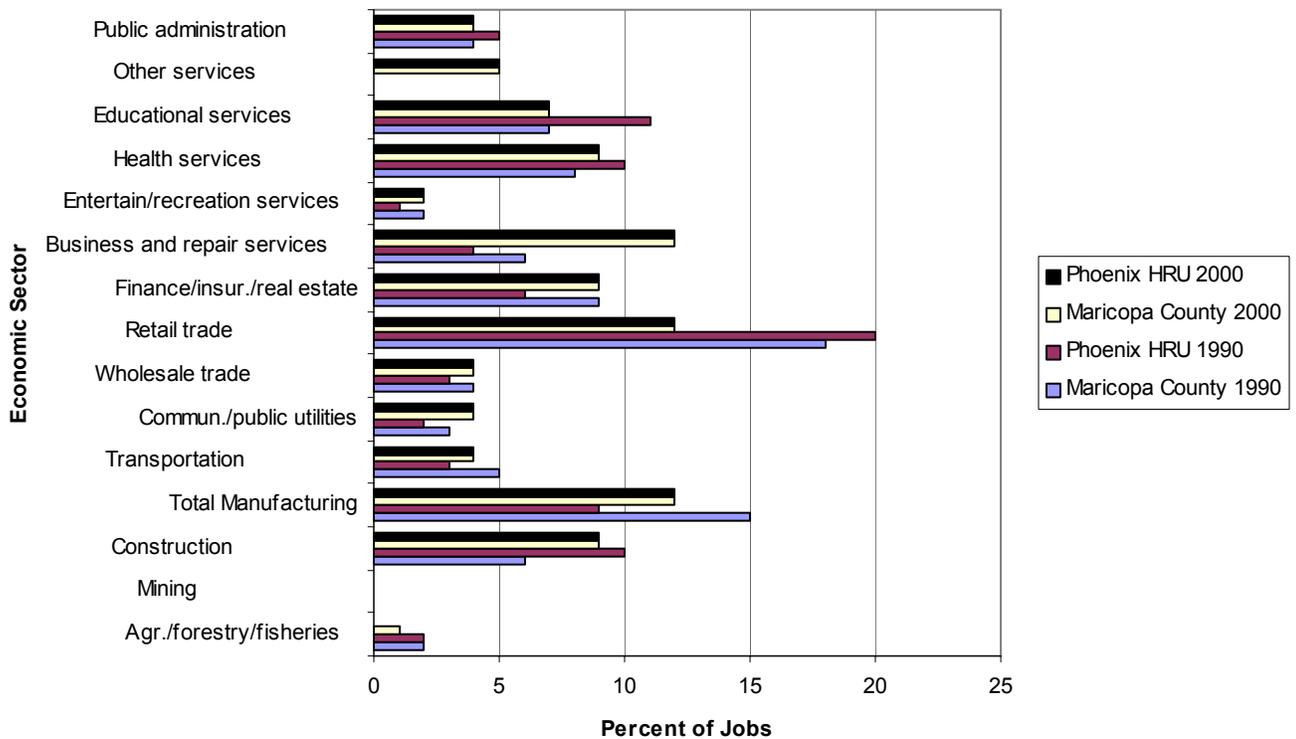
- While Maricopa County grew at 31% in the decade from 1990 to 2000, the Phoenix HRU grew at 27%, indicating that outlying areas in the county grew at a higher rate.
- The proportion of children in the population increased, while the proportion of senior citizens in the population decreased.
- The Hispanic population grew at a rate slower than the population.
- The rate of home ownership increased slightly in both Maricopa County and the Phoenix HRU.
- In contrast to other areas described in this report, the rate of single-parent households, often a proxy measure for poverty, held steady in Maricopa County and the Phoenix HRU, at 28-30%.
- In the Phoenix HRU for the 1990 census, 15% of respondents said they lived in a different county five years earlier, while in the 2000 census, only 2% of respondents did. Similarly, 23% in 1990 said they lived in a different state 5 years earlier, while in 2000, only 16% said that. The population is becoming less transitory.
- The poverty level remained steady at about 12% across the decade and across both geographic units. Poverty varied across ethnic lines. In Maricopa County, 8% of whites were below the poverty line, 11% of Asians, 19% of blacks, 24% of Hispanics, and 25% of American Indians.

Shifts in the economic sectors of the Phoenix HRU are summarized in Figure Six below. It shows that:

- While there were differences in importance in the economic sectors between Maricopa County and the Phoenix HRU, they virtually disappeared by 2000.
- The economy is dominated by retail trade, total manufacturing, services, finance, insurance and real estate, and construction.

- The economy has become more diverse over the decade, with several sectors showing high job numbers and not just domination by one or two sectors.

Figure Six
The Economic Sectors of the Phoenix Human Resource Unit



2. Community Themes

Officials in local government planning departments expect growth and development to continue outward from the current metropolitan area, with few limiting factors.

“We don’t foresee any limits to growth in the Phoenix area. Depending on which report you read, there is enough water for 10 - 12 million people here. And air quality is the State’s concern.” (Maricopa County long-range planner)

The Cities of Buckeye, Peoria, and Phoenix are actively annexing open land, expanding their city boundaries to the west and north of the metropolitan area.

BLM lands annexed by cities are seen by some citizens and local government planners as assets for future open space and regional parks.

3. Citizen Issues

Community Issues

Urban Sprawl and Annexation

The owner of an off-road racetrack on leased State Trust land northwest of Phoenix is concerned that some day he will need to close or move his business because of residential development. His neighbor, the operator of an "old west town" set on private land northwest of Phoenix, fears his operation will be eventually swallowed up and zoned out of business.

The owner of an RV park annexed by Peoria found out his business was in Peoria three years later when he was hit with a bill for back taxes and an order to comply with city ordinances or be closed down.

"Growth is so fast, the city can't even keep up with it themselves." [Peoria RV park owner]

Natural Resource Issues

OHV and Recreation Activities

The trend around Phoenix is that OHV users get pushed out farther and farther as urban development overtakes areas used for OHV use. OHV users we talked to on site expect to be eventually displaced.

Many people using the desert in the southern Bradshaws are unclear whether they are on State Trust lands, BLM lands, Forest Service lands, or private lands. They are also unclear about regulations for using different lands. This includes not knowing that a permit is needed to be on State Trust lands.

"The problem is that State lands have different regs than federal lands do and out in the desert it's difficult to know whose land you're on". [Motorcycle racetrack operator near Hwy 74]

Fast growth in the Phoenix metropolitan area and the jobs created attract people from all over the country, many of whom have little understanding or appreciation of desert ecosystems, land ownership patterns, and public land policies. Many people we talked to either expressed confusion about these topics or expressed the need for better education by the public land agencies.

"What public lands? You mean the desert? The desert is the desert; there is nothing out there." [Young hotel worker in northern Phoenix]

Target Shooting

The Caswell shooting range manager (Tempe) is unhappy about shooters who shoot unsafely on public lands, damage property, and leave trash at shooting sites. He thinks it gives shooting and shooters a bad name with the general public, and eventually will result in public lands being off-limits to shooting other than hunting.

"We're in real danger of losing our rights to use open areas for shooting - look at what happened on the Tonto Forest." [Shooting range manager, referring to the recent ban by the Tonto Forest of recreational shooting]

4. Management concerns

As urban population expands there is continuing need for gravel and aggregate pits, communication sites and corridors for transportation routes, electric transmission lines, and natural gas lines feeding power generation plants west of Phoenix. Many of these facilities cross BLM lands, impacting resources and requiring extensive analyses. We need the cities and Maricopa County involved with planning out their saleable mineral needs so the BLM can be more proactive. [BLM realty staff]

As urban development moves into previously undeveloped areas, target shooting in those areas pose a danger to residents and users of public lands. [BLM manager]

OHV use in the southern Bradshaws is growing and resulting in heavier impacts to the land and resources. Impacts include soil erosion on hillsides and in washes, wildlife disturbance, and vegetation is damaged. [BLM biologist]

The Arizona State Lands department is concerned that people use State Trust lands without permits, leases, or licenses, and often without knowing where they are or what the regulations are.

Maricopa County is concerned about having adequate transportation corridors in place for future needs.

Maricopa County is concerned about its ability to maintain 10 - 15 % of land set aside for open space in future growth areas. It is looking at BLM and State Trust lands as sources of future open space.

Staffing and volunteerism

Staffing for law enforcement, environmental education, and field specialists is inadequate to keep up with growing pressure on BLM lands. Many specialists feel overwhelmed by workload and feel like they are always in a reactive mode. [BLM biologist]

The BLM Phoenix Field Office managers have numerous offers from numerous groups and individuals to volunteer in a wide variety of capacities. Some volunteers Managers would like to take advantage of additional volunteer opportunities, but believe they don't have time or staffing to effectively manage volunteer programs.

5. Management Opportunities

The Caswell commercial shooting range (Tempe) has offered to work with other shooting ranges, with public land agencies, sporting goods stores, and shooting organizations such as NRA and Friends of NRA to promote shooting and conservation safety and ethics on public lands. Ideas include sponsoring ads in NRA/sporting publications, sponsoring public service announcements, posting flyers in stores and ranges, publicizing ethics in shooting safety courses, publicizing phone numbers of law enforcement contacts to report unsafe shooting and illegal trash dumping on public lands.

The local chapters of two national gold prospecting associations have offered to do volunteer projects on BLM lands. This could be matched with the need to locate and inventory abandoned mines in the Wickenburg and Castle Hot_Springs Springs CRUs.

Chapter Six

Buckeye Valley Human Resource Unit

1. A Social and Economic Description of the Buckeye Valley Human Resource Unit (HRU)

Geographic Features and Settlement Patterns

The Buckeye Valley HRU is the land immediately west and southwest of the Phoenix metropolitan area straddling Interstate 10 from Litchfield Park westward to the Little Harquahala Mountains. Geographically, it is a large basin bounded on the south by the Gila Bend and the Maricopa Mountain ranges, on the west by the Eagle Tail, Harquahala, and the Little Harquahala Mountains, and by the Vulture Mountains on the north. The HRU includes Saddle Mountain, Flatiron Mountain, White Tanks Mountains, and Buckeye Hill as well as the Hassayampa Plain, the Harquahala Plains and the Tonopah Desert. The incorporated town of Buckeye and unincorporated community of Tonopah are included as well as parts of the communities of Litchfield Park, Goodyear, and Avondale.

The Buckeye Valley HRU includes three Community Resource Units (CRUs)—from east to west, they are the Buckeye Valley CRU, the Buckeye CRU and the West Tonopah CRU. Figure Two (Chapter One) shows a map of this area.

Early European settlement began in the 1860s as prospectors combed the Vultures, Harquahalas, and other mountain ranges throughout the HRU looking for gold and silver. Settlement associated with early mining in this area was very sparse. By the 1870s and 1880s farming along the Hassayampa, Salt, and Gila Rivers and, associated canal building, brought significant permanent settlements to the area near present day Buckeye. The Buckeye Canal was built in 1889 and named by its builder for his home state of Ohio. Buckeye was incorporated in 1931 and at the time was touted as the “alfalfa seed capital of Arizona”.

The cattle and sheep ranching boom and bust cycles of the late 1800s extended into the area as well, again with sparse numbers as compared to stocking levels in the eastern and southern ranges of the Arizona territory. Farming has been more central to the early settlement patterns than ranching.

Areas nearer Phoenix such as Avondale, Goodyear, and Litchfield Park have experienced the settlement patterns of the greater Phoenix area. The communities of Goodyear and Litchfield Park were started by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in 1916 as ideal locations for growing long-staple cotton. The area prospered during World War I as cotton was essential for tires, uniforms, and airplane fabric needed for the war effort. Although crops have changed, the area is still known as a productive farming community. In recent years, Buckeye has aggressively annexed open land northward toward Wickenburg and westward. The traditional farming communities of Goodyear, Litchfield

Park, Avondale, and Glendale are beginning to transform into residential and commercial developments, part of a growing 3.5 million person metropolis.

The power generating industry has been a driver of a settlement pattern in the HRU in recent decades. Near Tonopah and Wintersburg the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS) went on-line in the late 1980s. Since then several more natural gas fueled power generating facilities have been authorized for this area and construction is currently underway. Arizona lies between the abundant natural gas deposits of Texas and the lucrative energy markets of California. Natural gas pipelines and electrical transmission lines pass through the Buckeye Valley HRU and more are planned. While many workers commute from Phoenix, many also are beginning to settle in the West Tonopah CRU, especially near Interstate 10 near the community of Tonopah and southward.

Lifestyle Routines

As shown in Table Five (Appendix G), the Buckeye Valley HRU grew 47% between 1990 and 2000. However there were wide growth rate variations within the HRU. Most of the growth in the last decade has occurred around Goodyear (73%) and Avondale (49%). In contrast, populations of the Town of Buckeye (23%) and of Litchfield Park (13%) grew at a much slower rate. West Tonopah CRU, the western half of the HRU, experienced a 39% increase. As is expected, most of the growth is nearer the Phoenix metro area.

Growth of older residents, those 65 years and older, was 39% for the entire HRU and was 48% for Buckeye Valley CRU, 36% for Buckeye CRU, and 38% for West Tonopah CRU. Growth for the younger residents, those 18 years and younger, was 40% for the entire HRU and was 48% for Buckeye Valley CRU, 33% for Buckeye CRU, and 44% for West Tonopah CRU. These numbers indicate that key age segments grew proportionately in Buckeye Valley CRU, the area nearest the Phoenix metro area. In the rest of the HRU farther west of the metro area, the 18 - 65 year old segment grew substantially more than both the younger residents and older residents. Retired people and younger families tend to live closer to the metro area.

Hispanics have become a larger proportion of the population since the 1990 census. While overall population growth in Buckeye Valley HRU was 47%, the Hispanic population increased 54%. Hispanics were 22% of the population in 1990 and increased to 26% in 2000. The Hispanic population growth rate was greater in Buckeye CRU (57%) and Buckeye Valley CRU (53%) than it was farther west in the Tonopah CRU (39%).

The Town of Buckeye is currently a small town of approximately 6500 residents. In recent years the Town has taken an aggressive approach to annexation. Buckeye city limits extend northward to within a few miles of Highway 74 near Wickenburg. In recent months development plans have been announced to build thousands of new homes south of White Tanks Mountains.

Economic Livelihood and Well-Being

The percentage of people living below the poverty level within the HRU dropped significantly (from 25% to 17%) between 1990 and 2000. For the West Tonopah CRU the drop was from 26% to 21%, for Buckeye CRU it dropped from 21% to 17%, and for Buckeye Valley CRU it dropped from 33% to 21%. Current percentages are still significantly greater than for Maricopa County (12%), but show that much fewer people are living in poverty in this HRU in 2000 than were in 1990.

Increase in home ownership was greater than the population growth between 1990 and 2000. A greater proportion of residents were buying homes rather than renting in 2000. For the entire Buckeye Valley HRU, with a population increase of 46%, the increase of owner-occupied units was 49% and the increase of renter-occupied units was 21%. This trend was especially true for Buckeye Valley CRU for which owner-occupied units increased 65% and renter-occupied units increased only 2%.

Average household income for 2000 was \$49,873 for the HRU, an increase of 38% compared to 1990. This was a larger increase than the average for Maricopa County (35%). There were significant differences in income change within the HRU. Average household income in Buckeye CRU increased 44% to \$56,255 and household income for Buckeye Valley CRU increased 47% to \$54,789. But household income for West Tonopah increased only 22% to \$37,497. The farther the distance from Phoenix, the smaller was the average household income and rate of increase.

For Buckeye Valley HRU employment growth generally kept pace with the 47% population growth in every job sector except agriculture, which dropped from 15% to 7% of total jobs between 1990 and 2000. Construction jobs increased from 6% to 10%. Managerial, executive, and professional occupations increased from 16% to 24% of total jobs. Generally, as Phoenix continues to grow westward, agricultural lands and jobs are replaced by construction jobs, manufacturing jobs, and higher-paying white-collar jobs. Figure Seven below shows how the economic sectors are distributed within Buckeye Valley.

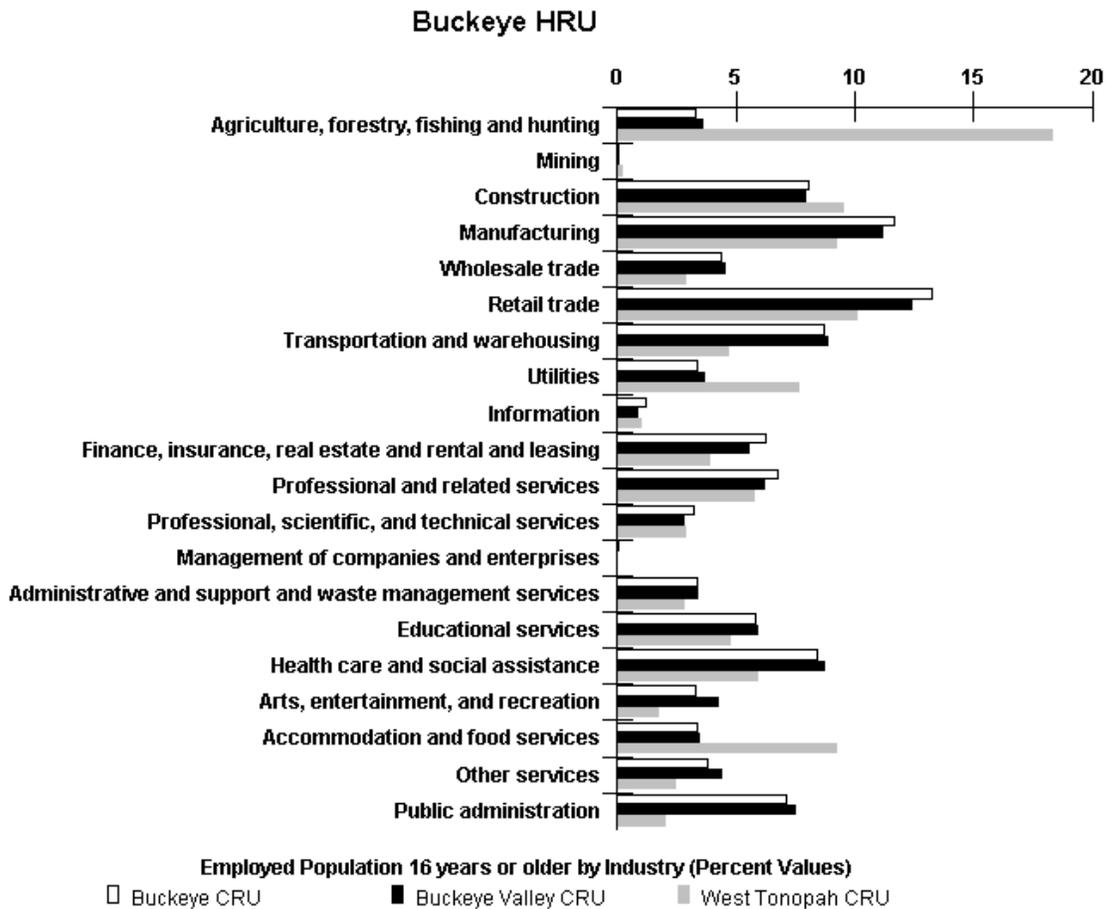
2. Community Themes

There is a strong pro-growth orientation in the urban communities of Buckeye, Avondale, Goodyear, and Litchfield Park. Buckeye is aggressively annexing open land to the north and west and has a very active economic development sector.

There is significant citizen support for preserving the old town flavor of the downtown Buckeye, while Buckeye expands to the west and north.

Citizens from less populated areas like Tonopah are concerned about Phoenix area overtaking their open space.

Figure Seven: The Economic Sectors of the Buckeye Valley HRU



Tonopah and Saddle Mountain area citizens are interested in preserving open spaces, landscape values, and natural resource habitats.

3. Citizen Issues

Community Issues

Some second- and third-generation farming families are looking to sell their land. The children do not want to farm. So the lands will likely be sold for development.

"The farmers are becoming realtors around here" [Buckeye realtor]

Buckeye city limits stretch northward almost to Highway 74 near Morristown. Growth seems to be a foregone conclusion, although not everybody is in favor of it. Several citizens expressed the need to keep working with developers so that open space, affordable housing, and community amenities are included.

In Tonopah Valley, residents have an ongoing concern about efforts to locate more power plants and transmission lines and large prisons, especially private prisons. They have fought off several attempts in recent years by developers to locate prisons there. Several large power generation plants are planned for construction near the Palo Verde facility. Communities must react to periodic fast growth with accompanying demand for infrastructure and schools.

Natural Resource issues

Ranchers and other residents are experiencing more damage from ATV users running through private lands and public lands. OHV use occurs on desert land in general, with little apparent distinction between jurisdictions. Some ATV and other off-road users drive all over the area without regard to existing routes, land ownership, or environmental impact. Use is increasing, as Phoenix and Buckeye grow westward.

"They're destroying public lands." [Rancher in Rainbow Valley]

Monuments - Several citizens showed a lack of understanding of the regulations for using BLM National Monument lands. A few expressed their belief that the Monuments were closed to vehicular travel.

Open space and natural corridors - There is interest in the Buckeye community to understand how R&PP leases work. Several citizens are interested in options available for using public lands for open space and community public purposes. They believe all State Trust lands will be fully developed eventually.

Some citizens in Buckeye and the White Tanks area see benefits of leaving open space areas and natural corridors linking open spaces. The corridors would include room for plant and animal habitat and for citizen trails.

Some White Tanks area residents want to enlarge White Tanks Park. They also advocate limiting development to slopes of 15% or less, including on BLM lands which might eventually be exchanged and become available for development.

Illegal dumping - Trash and illegal dumping is an ever increasing issue on public and private lands. As the Phoenix area grows, the problem grows with it. As Buckeye develops, commuting time to Tonopah, with cheaper land and more open space, is less than an hour. Trash dumping is becoming a larger issue as more people settle in the area and as metro Phoenix spreads westward.

4. Management Concerns

The State Land Department is concerned that people recreate on State Trust lands without having permits and that there is widespread citizen misunderstanding about where State Trust lands are located and how they are managed.

The park ranger at White Tanks expressed concern about impacts of the heavily increasing visitor use and inadequate staffing by Maricopa County. Some of the increasing impacts are trash dumping, graffiti, and rowdy behavior. A recent fee increase hasn't apparently lessened the public use.

Maricopa County and City of Buckeye are concerned about having adequate transportation corridors identified for future needs.

Maricopa County is concerned about its ability to maintain 10 - 15 % of land set aside for open space in future growth areas. It is looking at BLM and State Trust lands as sources of future open space.

Tonopah Valley Community Council and Tonopah Valley Association want to be actively involved in RMP planning process, especially for designation of motorized routes and land tenure decisions. These two organizations have offered the use of their regular meetings and newsletters to communicate planning information to Tonopah Valley and Harquahala Valley citizens and to help facilitate the citizen involvement process.

Tonopah Valley Community Council and Tonopah Valley Association have ongoing concerns about locations of power generating plants and associated transmission lines.

5. Management Opportunities

Multi-jurisdictional planning

Buckeye seems to be in an early stage of growth and at an appropriate time to define specific needs for future open spaces and corridors. The BLM planning process involving the City of Buckeye, Maricopa County, Native American Tribes, Arizona Game and Fish, and the State Land Department, through a citizen-driven process, could explore ways to meet the collective goals of citizens and agencies.

The planning process is an excellent vehicle for citizens to learn current regulations and future management options for various land categories, including State Trust lands, BLM Monument lands, and other BLM lands.

An R&PP lease application is apparently underway for a Motocross park in Buckeye. There is some interest in exploring other potential applications as well, such as a senior citizen center or parks.

The BLM planning effort presents an opportunity to work with Tonopah Valley citizens to identify and designate BLM lands for future open space and parks using Conservation

Agreements, R&PP leases or other means. Citizen based planning could also identify needs of Maricopa County and energy companies for transportation and utility corridors well in advance of their actual needs.

Tonopah Valley citizens want to help identify and designate travel routes in the CRU as a means of controlling cross-country travel and protecting the desert environment and private lands.

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