Ironwood Forest National Monument
Introduction to the Planning Process Public Meetings
March 29, 2004
Comment Summary

The following are summarized comments from both the afternoon and evening public meetings conducted Monday, March 29, 2004 at the Pima County Parks and Recreation Center in Tucson, Arizona. The meeting recapped the March 8, 2004 meeting and presented the draft overarching goals for the monument. The meeting also included a presentation by Mark Dimmitt during the afternoon workshop and Tom VanDevender during the evening workshop, both from the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum. Mr. Dimmitt and Mr. VanDevender presented some facts on ecology of the monument during their respective meeting. Information presented by the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum can be found on their web site:
http://www.desertmuseum.org/programs/scidept_index.htm

The afternoon meeting attendance (2:00 to 4:30 p.m.) included 24 individuals from agencies (outside of BLM) and the general public. During the afternoon workshop, attendees worked in three break-out discussion groups to discuss the overarching goals. The evening meeting attendance (6:00 to 8:30 p.m.) included 15 individuals from agencies (outside of BLM) and the general public. During the evening workshop, attendees worked in two break-out discussion groups to discuss the overarching goals.

The comment summary below combines comments from both the afternoon and evening sessions.

General Comments

- BLM should make PowerPoint presentation slides available to the public for those who were not able to attend.
- BLM needs to address geocaching activities.
- A glossary for terminology used in the goals would be beneficial at the next workshop to ensure everyone has the same understanding of the terms used.
- Some of the suggested terms needing definitions include population viability, stakeholder, landscape-based approach, sustainable use, compatible use, community, biotic community, and cultural resources.
- There needs to be a list of "can dos" and a list of "can't dos" and define "allowable uses" within the IFNM.
- Are lands within the IFNM part of the latest State Trust Land initiative (coordinated by Ed Fox's group)?

General Comments on the Draft Overarching Goals

- The term "multiple use" needs to be included in at least one of the overarching goals.
- May need to add the term "education" as a separate overarching goal.*
- Goals should include (1) protection, (2) conservation, and (3) education (terminology).
- Incorporate undocumented immigrants into the goals (e.g., safety is important to the multiple use concept of the monument).
- Include language on accommodation requirements for disabled people who visit the monument.*
- Add a new overarching goal to include protection and conservation of primitive values and natural primitive areas.
- Incorporate language that will allow for maintaining access to administer wildlife management activities.*
- Create an overarching goal that has language that is consistent with the Proclamation.
- Create an overarching goal that acknowledges existing valid rights/uses.
- The overarching goals need to incorporate "geologic resources" as these are stated throughout the Proclamation.*
- The order of the overarching goals is important (e.g., biotic first, then cultural because with it presented last, it might be missed).
- Visual values may be important enough to have a separate overarching goal.*
- The overarching goals need to be adaptable and flexible to changing conditions.

Specific Comments on the Draft Overarching Goals

Overarching Goal: *Protect, conserve, enhance, and restore biodiversity, habitat integrity, and population viability of the biotic community.*

- Some of the "multiple uses" BLM allows end up being "single uses" (e.g., recreation could dominate over other uses in the monument).
- Provide examples of "enhancing" to clarify the meaning.
- Are exotics included in the " biotic" community terminology?
- Biotic community does not include cultural, geology, etc.
- Need to address wildlife corridors and migration needs in the goals and the RMP.
- Include "native" plant and animal communities.
- Language on protection from human uses and/or conservation for human uses needs to be well defined.
- Protection vs. conservation are two separate management prescriptions and should not be included under one goal.
- Where do species with special habitat requirements fit in this goal?
- Create two separate goals: (1) protection oriented, and (2) conservation oriented
- "Protection" may be better associated with smaller areas (e.g., threatened and endangered species).

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*NOTE: In some cases discussion suggested that it may be most appropriate to consider this comment for resource-specific goals and/or objectives rather than specifically within the overarching goals.

- BLM needs to determine management areas/units that range from fenced areas to open areas.
- Biodiversity tends to be higher in disturbed areas (i.e., be careful what is meant in goal).
- Where would a good inventory/baseline of existing conditions fit in this goal (e.g., monitoring and adapting)?
- Do not include "research" in goal language because it could compromise conservation – management/conservation efforts get caught in "analysis paralysis."
- Including "research" seems appropriate for this goal and/or have a separate goal stating research is a sustainable multiple use.
- Is viability or connectivity a part of habitat integrity?
- Determine the baseline for "restore" (i.e., restore to what?).
- Consider species population ability to persist over time (e.g., buffelgrass is invading and threatening viability of other species).
- Establish a process/criteria to identify what needs restoration and further identify what needs to be protected, conserved, or enhanced while leaving the door open for specific activities (to protect, enhance, etc.).

Overarching Goal: *Provide for compatible, sustainable public use and enjoyment of public land.*

- What does "compatible" mean (e.g., human uses with one another and the environment)?
- Add safety and law enforcement goals.
- Add the term "access."
- Include the word "balance."
- Eliminate the term "sustainable."
- Define "sustainable."
- Define "compatible" and/or add "appropriate."
- The term sustainable conflicts with "public use" (e.g., unlimited OHV uses could prevent solitude recreational uses).
- Consider adding "existing" or "accepted" terminology.

Overarching Goal: *Encourage community and agency collaboration for managing and protecting the Monument.*

- BLM should ensure that the Arizona State Land Department is involved in the planning process.
- Determine how the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan fits into this goal.
- Add "coordination" in addition to "collaboration" – these have different meanings.

Overarching Goal: *Expand understanding and appreciation of the IFNM and its natural and cultural resources.*

- Suggested rewording was "Expand the educational resources to enhance understanding of the monument."
- The suggested goal (under the first bullet above) seems to refer to materials such as books, computers, etc.
- Education of the local population/residents on how to "live" with wildlife. *
- Identify "to whom" the understanding will be expanded.*
- Include the term "research" in this goal.
- Emphasize "research" as an objective under this goal.
- Identify how this goal relates to the RMP.
- Does this goal include an education component?*

Overarching Goal: *Use a landscape-based approach to maintain and enhance the natural and cultural values of the IFNM.*

- Should managing uses be included in this goal?
- Incorporate community equestrian access points.
- Need to provide definition of "landscape-based."
- The term landscape may be confusing and needs to be defined. This goal should specify "regional" and/or "local."
- How would Silverbell Mine be affected by a goal like this (e.g., blasting activities)?
- The term "value" needs a definition, as it is not clear whether values include auditory or visual impacts. A goal on specific values may be necessary.
- Determine "landscape-based" terminology vs. "ecosystem" (e.g., ecosystem would not necessarily include visual component.
- "Landscape-based approach" may imply visual perspective, but that does not seem to relate to cultural and natural values.
- Include wildlife habitat language.
- Differentiate between micro and macro scale land management.
- Consider revising the term "landscape" to "land use."

Overarching Goal: *Manage public land and pursue partnerships to provide social and economic benefits to local residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations.*

- Separate social and economic benefits into two goals.
- "Partnership" does not necessarily indicate a business partnership.
- Manage the monument to benefit the community.
- "Provide" is too strong of a word regarding economic benefit (with exceptions – mining constraints).
- Consider including language about organizations/interest groups.

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- Determine whether "economic benefits" is the responsibility of BLM and if the term should be in the goals.
- Consider removing "economic benefit" as it could imply increase uses.
- Economic benefits need to include a recognized positive economic benefit that generates value to the community.
- Add manage for "aesthetics."
- Create a separate goal for economics to include language about the economic benefits to be received from having natural areas and helping people to appreciate the economic benefits – it was suggested that this terminology could be a resource-specific objective.*
- Include language that this goal is consistent with the Proclamation.
- Wordsmith this goal to reflect comments received at this meeting.

Overarching Goal: *Manage cultural resources to protect and conserve their integrity and values.*

- Emphasize protection.
- Use the monument for scientific/educational/ interpretation purposes.
- Include language on traditional cultural properties/places.
- Include "biological resources" in this goal.
- Define "cultural resources" – the goal/definition of cultural resources should include "traditional cultural places" (e.g., cultural resources can be physical, values, or people).
- Include managing "uses" with this goal.
- This goal should be a high priority.
- Include "traditional lifeways" and include historic ranches and mine sites.
- Need to wordsmith because "protect" means to leave alone and "preserve" means to manage appropriately – or "protect" needs to be written before "manage"
- Add "restore" and "enhance."
- The Proclamation does not use the term "cultural resources."
- This goal should be reviewed by a representative from the Tohono O'Odham.

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