

Ironwood Forest National Monument
Draft Goals and Objectives on Transportation and Access
June 30, 2004
Comment Summary

The following are summarized comments from the public meeting conducted Wednesday, June 30, 2004 at the Pima County Parks and Recreation Center in Tucson, Arizona regarding the draft goals and objectives for transportation and access within the monument.

The meeting attendance included 23 individuals from the general public and agencies (outside of BLM). Attendees worked in one discussion group and discussed the draft goals and objectives.

General Items and Comments:

A representative of the Sierra Club presented the proposal for public roads in the IFNM that they submitted to BLM during scoping. Group discussion centered on a map distributed, along with a copy of the letter they submitted. Questions/comments on the proposal included:

- Did you consider private property rights?
- Did you consult with OHV groups?
- Consider Sierra Club proposal as an alternative.
- Question: How many miles of road are remaining with the proposal? Answer: Not sure.
- Think the retention of some additional roads is needed. Where does historic use occur? The range of alternatives should consider various degrees of reasonable reduction of road mileage (e.g., reduce 400 miles to 200 miles).

Transportation and Access Comments:

GOAL NUMBER 1: *Provide adequate legal access for administrative purposes and administrative use.*

- Figure out what is needed to protect resources, then consider transportation and access needs.
- Question: Any roads that are “grand-fathered” in? Answer: There are routes that have certain legal authorities with them and there are those that were considered part of the 1989 inventory, when the last Resource Management Plan (RMP) was implemented.
- Look at how roads inventoried in 1989 are different from those in the current inventory.
- First look at roads that are clearly causing a problem.
- Limiting access points will close roads (in effect).
- Move concept in Goal 2, Objective 2 (Incorporate multiple uses and managerial needs [including land use authorizations and law enforcement] in the development and implementation of the Travel and Transportation System Management Plan

- for the monument) to Goal 1 (Goal 2 regards recreation, but this objective does not specifically regard recreation).
- New Goal 1 could be “Develop and implement a Travel and Transportation System Management Plan for the monument.”
 - None of these goals and objectives talk about protection.
 - Should be part of the goal.
 - Goes without saying.
 - Or add “while protecting the resources of the monument” to the end of the new simplified goal.
 - Break Goal 1 into 2 “new” goals – one for administrative access/use and one for public access/use (i.e., “New” Goal 2: “Provide adequate legal access for public use” and “New” Goal 3: “Provide adequate legal access for public access for administrative use.”)
 - A map was suggested for each.
 - A date should be set for both.
 - A suggestion was made that it should read, “allowable access/use” instead of “public access/use.”
 - Designate/control all vehicle access points to the monument (consider as one of the goals if not captured here).
 - Question: What about within [the monument] Answer: addressed by 1st 2 “new” goals and objectives for “new” Goal 3 by June 2006 identify roads to close (when the Environmental Impact Statement [EIS] is completed and Record of Decision [ROD] signed).
 - There should be a separate objective for Border Patrol access.
 - It may be more appropriate to generalize Border Patrol to law enforcement.
 - Question: In other areas, Border Patrol has undergone sensitivity training, should that be considered here? Answer: BLM Tucson Field Office has done some of this (tread lightly, video, mustards, memoranda of understanding [MOUs]) and needs to do this right now (outside the RMP process).
 - Consider that Border Patrol has the right to go off road to save lives or to pursue consistent with Border Patrol mission.
 - Maintenance-related issue for rights-of-way (electrical/telephone) may require off-road—would like to see some kind of protection for such activities.
 - Is Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society considered public or administrative?
 - Maybe a third category is needed for such organization.
 - Sometimes Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society is considered administrative, other times not (e.g., Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge); make clear.
 - Need to define administrative access more clearly – authorized activities, etc.
 - Also, define legal public access and use.
 - Would it be appropriate to incorporate an objective to use the permit process to address this type of access?
 - May need an objective to provide administrative access to authorized/volunteer organizations for purposes/support of the monument.

- Clarification regarding access within the monument may also apply to or be needed for rights-of-way (e.g., a utility may require access for maintenance, which differs from public access needs).

Objective 1: *Secure legal and safe access, appropriate for achieving and maintaining monument management objectives, for both motorized and non-motorized entry to the monument. Where appropriate and in accordance with the purposes of the monument, use easements or reciprocal rights-of-way to achieve legal access to the monument or contiguous public lands. Consider the need for public access when granting or acquiring access routes.*

Stop after 1st sentence, add a date (for both new Goals 1 and 2).

- Assess where objects are and how they are being impacted.
 - Considerations taken into account in range of alternatives
- Make sure “use” goals and objectives and “protection” goals and objectives are not inconsistent.
- Take second sentence “*Where appropriate and in accordance with the purposes of the monument, use easements or reciprocal rights-of-way to achieve legal access to the monument or contiguous public lands*” and make it a second objective. Delete the last sentence.
- Question: Why is the last phrase “or contiguous public lands” needed? Answer: It provides access for ranch west of Silver Bell Mine.

Objective 2: *Eliminate use of unauthorized routes or access points within six months of the detection of such routes or access points and initiate restoration, reclamation, or other corrective actions to repair damage to the monument from these routes or access points within one year.*

- There was a suggestion to move this objective under Goal 2 (“new” Goal 3), but the point was made that it doesn’t specifically regard recreation and Goal 2 (“new” Goal 3) is focused on recreation.
- Could go to all of them, but is most appropriate under “new” Goal 3.
- Question: why within one year? Answer: limitations in funding and manpower.

Objective 3: *Coordinate with the military to promote awareness of any resource impacts and to lessen resource impacts from military overflights when possible in context of the military mission. Coordinate with civilian airspace planners/users to realign overflight routes, where needed and practicable, along the most environmentally acceptable corridors.*

- Do we know resource impacts of military overflights?
- Tucson soaring club interested in how to cooperate in order to minimize and understand impacts.
- In line with the first 2 “new” goals.
 - An objective regarding civilian airspace use belongs under public access.
 - An objective regarding military overflights belongs under administrative access.

- Administrative access for Border Patrol (both air and land)- they patrol in the IFNM also, get their input on areas of use.
- May be able to identify areas of sensitivity (to overflights) and develop predictability criteria to minimize impacts.

GOAL NUMBER 2: *Implement a comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management System that designates routes for motorized, mechanized, and non-motorized recreation.*

- This would be “new” Goal 4.
- “Implement” implies something is already developed – change “implement” to something like “develop.”
- Change “recreation” to “use” / “travel” (preferably “travel”).
- Include protection of monument resources.
- Need to provide for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use somewhere/somewhat.
- Dispersed vs. clustered recreation is inter-related with transportation planning – zoning/levels of intensity.
- Arizona wilderness coalition proposal is dependent on transportation system.

Objective 1: *Incorporate multiple uses and managerial needs (including land use authorizations and law enforcement) in the development and implementation of the Travel and Transportation System Management Plan for the monument.*

- Capture authorized land uses – some legal rights-of-way should be considered as part of transportation route – inter-related.
- Delete? This has already been covered now in “new” Goals 1, 2, and 3 and associated objectives.

Objective 2: *Prepare and implement a Travel and Transportation System Management Plan for the long-term monitoring, maintenance, and regulation of the designated route system.*

- The prior comment was to move the concept of this objective to Goal 1.
- A separate objective may still be needed to address maintenance standards.
 - The language at the end of the objective alludes to the development of a maintenance plan.
 - A maintenance plan is part of a Travel and Transportation System Management Plan, so is a separate objective needed?
- There may be a need for an objective to identify specific use restrictions and regulations.

Objective 3: *Based on the existing route inventory and database, maintain an ongoing monitoring system and database to track and measure motorized and non-motorized use of all designated (open, closed, and limited) and unauthorized routes and access points within IFNM.*

- End at “non-motorized use.”

Objective 4: *Improve signing, mapping, and travel information and education for visitors by publishing and distributing a map of the approved monument Travel and Transportation System and policies and procedures for use of the system.*

- End at “for visitors.”
- Change “improve” to “provide.”
- Eliminate reference to education – in this context, what BLM provides is information.
- Need to say that decisions will be based on the best possible scientific information.
 - Mission, vision, and values include this concept.
- Incorporate information into the roads and trails management tool to direct visitors away from sensitive resources, consider those that access for purpose of “sensitive” resources (e.g., bighorn sheep).

Objective 5: *Improve on-the-ground travel management operations and maintenance programs to sustain and enhance recreation opportunities and experiences, visitor access and safety, and resource conservation.*

- Put resource protection first. (i.e., “...to sustain and enhance resource conservation, recreation opportunities and experiences, and visitor access and safety.”)

Objective 6: *Give priority to establishing, improving, or maintaining designated routes or access points within the monument where such projects are necessary to protect monument resources, improve access to areas that are suitable for higher levels of visitor use, and maintain or enhance public access to the monument. Develop a mechanism to formally review and consider access demands.*

- Change last word “demands” to “needs.”
- Last sentence should be broken into another objective.
- Address road standards.
- Incorporate (or utilize) environmentally sensitive road design guidelines (developed by Pima County).
- There should be appropriate and minimum application of such road decisions.
- There is redundancy in the reference to improving access plus enhancing public access.
 - Question and comment: Is there an assumption that there is a need to improve access for higher level of use? That is not necessarily the case.
- Change to “...improve access to areas that found appropriate for higher levels of visitor use...”
- Move the phrase, “...where such projects are necessary to protect monument resources...” at to the end of sentence.
 - but this implies that this is the only reason that establishment, improvement or maintenance of routes or access points will be considered
- Delete phrase “...improve access to areas that are suitable for higher levels of visitor use...”

Objective 7: *Coordinate management of the monument Travel and Transportation System with State, tribal, and local transportation agencies, land management agencies, homeland security initiatives, and landowners to support regional transportation needs, monitor use, and ensure continued legal and safe physical access to the monument.*

- Nothing addresses camping – need to address legitimate campsites.
 - This is somewhat covered in objective 5 and is covered more so in recreation.
- Add “and occupants” after “landowners.”
- Also add “lease holders”, “permittees”, etc.

Objective 8: *Expand and pursue partnerships, sources of funding and guidance for transportation and travel management.*

- Question: Partnership with whom? Answer: To leverage funding sources.

Terms that need to be defined more clearly: administrative access; public land; primitive roads; emergency and law enforcement uses; wash running.