

The following table is a summary of the *Proposed Action to Amend the Coconino Forest Plan for the Flagstaff/Lake Mary Ecosystem Analysis (FLEA) area (Proposed Action)*. The first column in the table is a topic area, the second column is a brief summary of the proposal for that topic, and the third column is a brief description of why the proposal is made. Maps are attached.

The *Proposed Action* contains much more detail than shown here. Reference the *Ideas for Change* document (previously published May 1999) for background information. The *Proposed Action* and *Ideas for Change* may be obtained by contacting Debbie Kill or Alvin Brown at the Peaks District Office, 5075 N Hwy 89, Flagstaff, AZ 86004 – phone (928) 526-0866. The *Proposed Action* and the *Ideas for Change* are also located on the Coconino web site at www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino

Comments are most helpful if received by November 5, 2001. Comments should be in writing and be as specific as possible to a particular proposal. Although you may provide comment based solely on reading this summary, we recommend that you look at the *Proposed Action* itself for any topic areas that interest you as a result of reading this summary. Comments received will be used to develop significant issues that are the basis for alternatives. An issue is defined as a point of disagreement or debate with the *Proposed Action*, based on some anticipated effect.

Topic	Summary of Proposal	Summary of Purpose and Need (why)
Urban/ Rural Influence Zone	A zone is created within approximately ½ mile of private lands. Some proposed management direction applies only to this zone. See the <i>Urban/Rural Influence Zone</i> map.	The majority of urban influences occur within approximately ½ mile of private land. Influences include social trails, utility corridors, private land access roads, dogs, cats, and other pets, and some trash dumping. There is a high risk of fire ignition. Most catastrophic fires can be prevented (suppressed before they become crown fires) or “caught” within this zone if climatic conditions are not extreme and forest conditions are conducive to ground fire. Because a wildfire in this zone could travel onto private property, and because a fire originating in this area could impact important forest resources, this zone has the highest priority for fire risk reduction.
Forest Settings - Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)	There is an increase in Semi-primitive Motorized and Semi-primitive Nonmotorized ROS settings. These objectives guide management. See the <i>Objectives for Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Map</i>	Semi-primitive Motorized and Semi-primitive Nonmotorized settings best fit the desired forest experience as described by many people. There is a high degree of naturalness, a sense of exploration and “getting away” from the sights and sounds of the urban environment. In addition, some wildlife species need large tracts of unfragmented habitat and infrequent contacts with people, especially when they rear their young.

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Camping	There is an expansion of the area where overnight camping is not allowed. There are new areas where camping may occur in designated sites only (the Highway 89A corridor, Lake Mary and Marshall Lake, Mt Elden, and the Dry Lake Hills). General dispersed camping continues in much of the FLEA area. See the <i>Objectives for Camping</i> map. Although the 89A corridor was evaluated for a possible campground, a suitable site was not found.	Near developed private lands, overnight camping increases the risk of fire ignition. In some areas, daytime use is already so high that overnight use is no longer compatible. Dispersed camping is causing unacceptable resource impacts in popular locations. Some nocturnal wildlife species, such as Mexican spotted owls, are negatively impacted by nighttime activities. Partnerships with other agencies, or individuals should be supported to reach solutions for campground needs for people traveling on Highway 89A.
Outfitter/ Guides and Group Use	There is an added emphasis on services and uses that meet desired conditions, and a change from a policy of receiving proposals to a policy of requesting proposals.	Some areas already receive so much use by individuals that adding outfitter/guides and groups could detract from recreation experience and ecological well-being. Soliciting outfitter/guide proposals is more efficient than responding to requests.
Rock Climbing	New direction for climbing emphasizes climbing opportunities, protecting sensitive species, and managing concurrent uses such as camping, roads, and trails. There is a focus on gaining input from climbers.	Direction related to climbing is lacking in the <i>Forest Plan</i> . Although many of the impacts related to popular climbing sites can be improved by changing roads, trails, camping, and other uses, there is a need for guidelines specifically related to climbing. Climbing tends to occur in ecologically sensitive areas.
Scenery	Additional language builds on the current <i>Forest Plan</i> with a focus on scenic quality associated with fuel treatments, major highways, and the National Monuments.	Concurrent with an increase in treatment of fire fuels reduction and highway projects there is a need to continue coordination to maintain aesthetics. Recreation sites and the National Monuments rely on natural appearing backdrops for visitor experience.
Noxious Weeds	An emphasis on noxious weeds management is added.	The Forest is already taking steps to curb noxious weeds. This addition brings the <i>Forest Plan</i> more up to date on this topic.
Land Exchange	Land Acquisition and Disposition guidance remains virtually the same with additional recognition of ongoing local planning efforts.	Current criteria work well for the FLEA area. Ongoing local planning efforts are recognized. Public comments received in response to the <i>Ideas for Change</i> and related to the <i>Flagstaff Area Open Spaces and Greenways Plan</i> have been forwarded to the city of Flagstaff.

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Trails	Trail planning focuses more active management of user created trails in the Urban/Rural Influence Zone. Criteria for trails management are established. This proposal sets the stage for future site-specific trail planning with community input. The proposal builds on the current <i>Forest Plan</i> for motorized trails including “pass through” corridors that connect to long distance trails and secondary roads. Motocross sites are not established.	Current management direction in the <i>Forest Plan</i> is lacking for social trails. Social trails are numerous, and sometimes located in places that cause erosion, wildlife disturbance, or add to overall soil compaction. More active management of social trail use is needed to maintain aesthetics, recreation opportunity, and forest health near urban areas. There is a need to find a feasible middle ground between very little management and detailed planning on every acre. People have expressed a need for motorized trail opportunities, including connections to the secondary road system. Motocross is a concentrated use that does not maintain a site in a natural forest conditions.
Roads and Off Road Driving	The current list of reasons for closing or obliterating roads has been retained and additional criteria have been added related to affordability, redundant roads, noxious weeds, fire risk, the ROS objectives, and the Urban/Rural Influence Zone. A second list of reasons to keep roads open is added related to recreation, utilities, administration, research, community values, and economics. The question of access policy, i.e. open unless designated closed roads, versus closed unless designated open roads, is not addressed here, rather we have deferred to the <i>Arizona OHV Forest Plan Amendment</i> .	Roads cause physical effects to the landscape and roads concentrate the impacts of human use. Roads help achieve or detract from a forest setting depending on how they are designed. Roads provide access to recreation opportunities and forest products. The <i>Forest Plan</i> did not have a list of reasons for maintaining roads open, and such a list is helpful for future road decisions. Although the benefits of a different road policy have been discussed in this analysis, we chose to defer this question of off road driving policy to the <i>Arizona OHV Forest Plan Amendment</i> process ¹ .
Firewood	Firewood gathering is limited to selected areas only within the Urban/Rural Influence Zone.	Firewood gathering is best conducted under a more managed setting in designated areas in the Urban/Rural Influence zone.

¹ For more information about the Arizona OHV Forest Plan Amendment contact Jim Anderson at (928) 333-6370 or e-mail janderson08@fs.fed.us

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Wildlife Habitat – Goshawks	Goshawk guidelines remain virtually the same with some clarification related to human uses in goshawk habitat.	The bulk of the FLEA area falls under definitions for goshawk habitat and consists of a majority of pole size ponderosa pine trees. Goshawk habitat thinning guidelines for pole size trees are compatible with fire management needs, even in the Urban/Rural Influence Zone. Guidelines related to recreation and other human uses fail to consider social trails and other activities common adjacent to urban areas so additional clarification was needed.
Wildlife Habitat – Mexican spotted owls	This proposal endorses the future forest described in the <i>Forest Plan</i> , including guidelines for Mexican spotted owls except to de-emphasize Mexican spotted owl habitat in the Urban/Rural Influence Zone.	Future Mexican spotted owl habitat is not desirable in the Urban/Rural Influence zone for two reasons: 1) their habitat requires dense canopies and multi-layered structure which is not compatible with fire risk reduction and 2) high levels of human use can disturb nesting birds and cause them to abandon areas. The two current areas where owls live, that lie partially within the Urban/Rural Influence Zone (Dry Lake Hills), will be maintained.
Forestry – fire risk reduction	Additional emphasis is added for reducing fire risk in the Urban/Rural Influence Zone.	Most catastrophic wildfires can be prevented (suppressed before they become crown fires), or “caught” within the ½ mile of private land if forest conditions are right. A focus on fuels management (thinning and prescribed fire) within this zone can reduce the risk of catastrophic fire. Wildfire can cause loss of personal property and valued forest resources.
Forestry – big game hiding and thermal cover	Big-game hiding and thermal cover guidelines are relaxed for the Urban/Rural Influence Zone and land south and west of that zone.	Cover requirements listed in the <i>Forest Plan</i> are too inflexible for meeting a combination of wildlife and fire management needs in the Urban/Rural Influence Zone and lands to the southwest in the Urban Interface as depicted on the Fire Management Analysis Zones map.
Watershed, Mountain Meadows, And Riparian	Additional language adds emphasis for water quality to management activities in the Lake Mary and Oak Creek watersheds. Paragraphs provide more up-to-date terminology and a more clear description of desired conditions for meadows and riparian areas, emphasizing the importance of these areas to the ecosystem and the need to continue efforts to rehabilitate and limit impacts.	Awareness of water quality in the Lake Mary and Oak Creek Watersheds has increased. Community and recreation demands and values are higher and more varied than when the Forest Plan was written. There is a strong tie between mountain meadows, springs, and stream channels and water quality. Although the Forest Plan permits most management activities needed, a better description and emphasis is needed for these components of the landscape.

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National Park Service	Coordination items related to the National Park Service are described.	The National Park Service has indicated coordination needs.
Coordination with Researchers and Data Management	Coordination with researchers and an emphasis on electronic data are added.	In the past, project design has failed to take into account research plots, including some long-term study areas. Better coordination will reduce the change of losing research data and better sharing of research results. The <i>Forest Plan</i> does not have language for data management, especially newer options such as databases and electronic mapping.

The following table summarizes the management area proposals. See the *Proposed Management Areas* map. All Management Area direction builds on the current *Forest Plan* and the area-wide direction described above.

Management Area (MA)	Summary of Proposal	Summary of Purpose and Need (why)
Cinder Hills Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area	The Cinder Hills OHV area will provide quality OHV riding experiences while maintaining the landscape. Sanitation and camping facilities are increased to provide for use. Some slopes would be closed for viewsheds, and to protect some geologic features related to Sunset Crater NM, while improved roads help distribute use in the interior. More active management includes better signing, maintenance, and patrol.	There is a need to provide quality OHV riding experiences on the Forest. There is a need to increase the quality of facilities. Current use is concentrated where improved roads exist, with less distribution of riders than is desirable. Some areas are important to protect for their geologic importance related to Sunset Crater. Some slopes impact viewsheds as seen from Sunset Crater Volcano NM and local communities.
Craters	Focus on protection of large Cinder cones.	Large Cinder cones that lie outside of the OHV area occur in this MA and the Deadman MA. They provide unique landscape features, scenery and traditional cultural values.

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Deadman	Continue grassland restoration and cultural site protection efforts. Maintain sensitive resources on O’Leary Peak.	Large Cinder cones, especially O’Leary Peak have sensitive species habitat and traditional cultural values that need to be maintained. Recreation use of O’Leary could increase over time and proactive management is needed. Grasslands south of Wupatki provide important habitat for antelope and other grassland adapted species. Cultural sites in the area are tied to cultural sites within the Monuments.
Doney	Focus on road and trail planning, access points from communities, fire risk reduction.	This area is a high priority for road and trail planning with community involvement.
Flagstaff	This MA contains about 1,000 acres of National Forest land near developed areas of Flagstaff. New direction for these lands adds emphasis on community needs and eventual disposal from of National Forest Ownership.	Lands here are desirable for community purposes such as regional parks, airport expansion and community development as described in the Regional Land Use Transportation Plan.
Lake Mary Watershed	Stream channels and meadows are earmarked for restoration related to water quality. High levels of recreation activity continue on the FH3 side of the Lakes Mary, and less human activity on the opposite side to provide for wildlife. Marshall Lake is improved with an emphasis on waterfowl nesting habitat. Semi-primitive areas provide large tracts of unfragmented habitat for disturbance sensitive wildlife such as turkey and bear. More sanitation facilities and parking management are proposed. Wildlife viewing is provided.	Current sanitation facilities are inadequate. When people park outside of established parking areas there is soil impacts, safety concerns and an unplanned addition to use. Some stream channels and meadows are in degraded conditions adding to erosion into the Lakes. People enjoy the Lakes for recreation. This area is a high priority for road maintenance for water quality reasons.
Schultz	The Mt Elden/Dry Hills area changes to camping in designated sites only. Trailhead parking is adjusted slightly. The current trail system is maintained and continues to balance recreation demands with resource values. Motorized trails are not emphasized here.	Current daytime recreation levels are high. There is habitat here for the threatened Mexican Spotted Owl, and other wildlife like turkey and bear. Some camping sites are impacting soils, and threatened species. Trailhead parking areas are eroding. People expressed a desire to maintain the popular nonmotorized Dry Lake Hills Trail system. Motorized access occurs on forest roads. The current trail system is at capacity for what the area can support in terms of visitor experience and wildlife habitat.

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Special Areas for Environmental Study	One current Environmental Study Area is endorsed and slightly expanded. Two more are added to become part of MA 17 (special areas). These sites provide daytime recreation opportunity and outdoor classrooms. These are Mt Elden ESA, Old Caves Crater ESA, and Griffith Springs ESA.	The current ESA at Mt Elden is working well, but does not extend to lands behind Christiansen School. Two new areas have been used by teachers as outdoor classrooms and have unique environmental and prehistoric features that make them valuable for that purpose.
Walnut	Expand the primitive and semi-primitive settings in and around Walnut Canyon. Balance recreation demands with sensitive resources associated with the canyon. Focus on road and trail planning and fire risk reduction near communities.	Walnut Canyon supports a variety of vegetation and wildlife including riparian communities at the canyon bottom. Recreation demands increase as Flagstaff grows.
West	Focus on road and trail planning, access points from communities, fire risk reduction. Increase semi-primitive nonmotorized settings on Woody Ridge and A-1 mountain. Take steps to limit impacts in Pumphouse wash.	Prevailing winds are usually from the southwest so it is important to reduce risk of wildfire in this MA. Important wildlife travelways and habitat for bear and turkey occur on Woody Ridge and A-1 mountain. Some people have expressed interest in more walk-in hunting opportunities. Because of the interspersed land ownership, road and trail planning in a high priority.

