Appendix B. Proposed and Probable Management Practices

Introduction

This appendix describes proposed and probable management practices that may take place on the Prescott NF at the project or activity level during the planning period to help maintain existing conditions or achieve the desired conditions described in the plan. These practices are not intended to be all-inclusive, nor are they intended to be decisions. They are simply projections of what actions may take place in the future. A plan amendment is not required to change or modify any of these proposed practices; instead, they can be updated at any time through an administrative correction of the plan.

Management Approaches

Management approaches are not part of the plan components or decisions but are expressions of intent for how the Prescott NF will likely apply aspects of future management. Management approaches are also based on public feedback the Prescott NF received on the draft plan regarding suggested methods for carrying out activities. Therefore, this section has been added to reflect our intent and those suggestions.

Collaboration/Volunteers

There are many who have suggested that they would like to assist with aspects of national forest management. The Prescott NF intends to create increasing opportunities for volunteers and partners to be more active as part of national forest management. One area where this approach could work well is in natural resource and heritage education and interpretation. Citizen involvement would also benefit the Prescott NF by increasing contact with recreation visitors to encourage appropriate behavior. Assistance with plan monitoring is also a possibility. Finally, collaborative methods with interest groups and volunteers are ideally suited to addressing the problem of dumping trash, appliances, etc., on the Prescott NF, including the collecting and disposing of dumped material.

Recreation Strategy

The Prescott National Forest initiated a sustainable recreation planning process in September of 2009 with the goal of establishing a landscape scale “all hands all lands” approach to recreation management. This process would address common recreation challenges and enhance the ability of land managers, communities, and forest visitors to jointly implement shared recreation goals.

Existing collaborative groups interested in recreation agreed to lead this effort. The Prescott NF was divided into three geographic zones that were based on social network mapping. The Upper Agua Fria Watershed Partnership (UAFWP) took the lead in the southern—or gateway—zone; the Prescott NF Stewardship Forum represents the northern and western sections of the forest, including the area around Prescott known as the Prescott Basin; and the Verde Valley, on the east side of the Prescott NF, is represented by the Verde Front Group. An areawide multistakeholder coordination team has been leading the process.

Community meetings were held in each zone to learn more about local recreation interests and from the results of these meetings the zone leadership teams developed a vision, goals, and

strategies for the area and the communities in and around the Prescott NF. This input was incorporated into the revision of the "Prescott National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan."

The vision that was developed states, in part, that "…through ongoing dialogue among land managers, recreation providers, and communities, a thoughtful and sustainable balance of social, economic, and environmental benefits will be achieved."

The results of this collaborative effort include a prioritizing of the strategies, establishing a recreation coalition plan, and sharing of the results and initial strategy implementation proposals with local communities. The meetings are open to all who wish to improve recreation in the area, and the group would like to expand participation to include more members of the public, other key State and Federal agencies, and more representatives from local jurisdictions.

Southwestern Region Strategic Action Plan

The Prescott NF strategic action plan (SAP) is a process for identifying, characterizing, and prioritizing the landscapes on the Prescott in preparation for restoration efforts. This process would adapt the methodology and format of the watershed condition framework assessment to determine which watersheds on the Prescott NF are in need of restoration. The SAP will involve collaboration efforts with partners, resource specialists, scientists, and the public throughout the process to help identify important aspects of the landscapes and determine restoration priorities.

Cooperation with Tribal Groups and Agencies

Heritage

Most heritage resource management is guided by laws, existing regulations, and Forest Service policy. For that reason, few plan components are found in the revised plan that relate to such management. However, heritage resources management will be consistent with the State cultural resource plan and planning activities of the State Historic Preservation Officer, as well as coordination with other tribal, State, and Federal agencies. This could include periodic meetings, data sharing, coordination on National Register nominations, interpretation, site protection, and participation in the State heritage resources planning process. In addition, American Indian tribes, communities, and nations will be consulted when heritage resources having religious or traditional cultural values for living communities of American Indian tribes may be present. These communities or tribes will be consulted concerning location and importance of those resources and alternatives for protecting them.

Bureau of Land Management

Arizona is 1 of 19 states where one may locate mining claims or sites. The Forest Service manages minerals found on the surface of National Forest System (NFS) lands and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for subsurface minerals on NFS and BLM lands. Therefore, if the Forest Service desires to have an area withdrawn from mineral entry, it requests such a closure from the BLM. Examples of areas which are withdrawn from mineral entry include: a designated wilderness, a portion of a designated wild and scenic river, or a designated recreation area. For areas not withdrawn, the Forest Service may apply mitigations for mining, but it may not prohibit mining.

Arizona Game and Fish Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) directly manages wildlife populations; while the Forest Service manages wildlife habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the agency that oversees direct management of animals and fish across the Nation, including administration of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205). The Prescott NF will cooperate with one or both of these agencies in order to carry out management activities. For example, management of native fish could involve removal of nonnative species, as well as adjustments in habitat, which could require working with AZGFD or USFWS. The Prescott NF also expects to coordinate with AZGFD in development of wildlife linkages (movement corridors) within the Prescott NF so that local populations of species, such as pronghorn antelope, remain viable where habitat is being fragmented. Finally, the Prescott NF intends to facilitate partnerships that lead to maintenance of year-round water structures for wildlife.

Watershed Management

In several plan components, high priority watersheds or high risk riparian areas are referenced (see objective Obj-18 in chapter 3). The intent of the plan is to address the needs of these priority watersheds by: (1) classifying watershed condition across the Prescott NF including the determination of potentially high risk riparian areas and (2) implementing integrated enhancement activities with emphasis on priority watersheds. In addition, partnership opportunities to cooperate with others to accomplish monitoring are expected to be explored.

Open Space

The Forest Service intends to participate in meetings hosted by the Verde Valley Land Preservation Institute regarding the East Mingus Land Exchange Task Force. The Verde Valley Land Preservation Institute was formed after the Verde Valley Forum on Open Space took place. The purpose of the group is to acquire, manage, and enhance the natural open space in the Verde Valley. East Mingus lands occur on steep slopes approximately between Jerome and Clarkdale and south of Jerome.

Probable Projects

Plan Objectives

The objectives in chapter 3 represent proposed projects or activities intended to be accomplished over the life of the plan. These are outlined in the table below.

Table 1. List of plan objectives

Project/Activity	Timeframe to Complete
Vegetation	
Allow or introduce wildland fire on 25,000 to 65,000 acres of the Semi-Desert Grassland PNVT	10-year period following plan approval
Allow or introduce wildland fire on 1,000 to 5,000 acres of the Great Basin Grassland PNVT	10-year period following plan approval

Project/Activity	Timeframe to Complete
Use mechanical treatments, wildland fire, or browsing by domestic goats on 20,000 to 90,000 acres of the Juniper Grassland, Piñon-Juniper Evergreen Shrub, and Piñon-Juniper Woodland PNVTs	10-year period following plan approval
Use wildland fire, mechanical treatments, or domestic goats on 40,000 to 100,000 acres of the Interior Chaparral PNVT	10-year period following plan approval
Thin or harvest 2,500 to 8,000 acres and introduce or allow wildland fire in 25,000 to 50,000 acres in the Ponderosa Pine-Gambel Oak and Ponderosa Pine-Evergreen Oak PNVTs	10-year period following plan approval
Treat at least 50 percent of nonnative invasive nonnative plant species populations within 1 to 2 years of detection	10-year period following plan approval
Recreation	
Add 1 to 2 developed recreation areas	10-year period following plan approval
Create up to 4 designated dispersed camping areas	10-year period following plan approval
Reduce the backlog of needed maintenance (i.e., deferred maintenance) at developed recreation areas by 50 to 60 percent from baseline levels	10-year period following plan approval
Develop and implement at least 3 additional strategies to raise awareness of responsible target shooting practices within the Prescott NF to promote visitor safety	10-year period following plan approval
Construct or improve the facilities at 5 to 20 trailheads	10-year period following plan approval
Maintain 10 to 20 percent of signage	Annually
Work with partners to maintain and enhance recreational fishing opportunities in 2 lake/pond sites	10-year period following plan approval
Develop 2 to 5 additional methods for providing visitor information and education	10-year period following plan approval
Mark boundaries of portions of 2 to 5 wilderness areas where risk of motorized or mechanized access is high	10-year period following plan approval
Protect, relocate, or rehabilitate 2 to 5 recreation areas or locations (including trails) that show evidence of resource damage	10-year period following plan approval
Implement 5 to 10 management actions on trails to meet desired conditions	10-year period following plan approval
Watershed Integrity	
Within each high priority watershed, implement 5 to 50 essential projects that improve or maintain watershed conditions	10-year period following plan approval
Within 2 to 3 years of detection, implement projects to counter 1 to 3 critical threats to riparian system functionality	10-year period following plan approval and within 2-3 years after detection

Project/Activity	Timeframe to Complete
Repair or relocate 20 to 100 miles of National Forest System roads or trails that impact watershed integrity	10-year period following plan approval
Obliterate, recontour, or revegetate a minimum of 10 miles of unauthorized routes that are impacting watershed integrity	10-year period following plan approval
Improve 15 to 25 stream or drainage crossings associated with roads or trails to facilitate flow and sediment transport	10-year period following plan approval
Maintain or enhance 25 to 55 discrete sites that are groundwater dependent ecosystems containing seeps and springs	10-year period following plan approval
Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat	
Restore native fish species to 2 to 3 stream reaches	10-year period following plan approval
Modify or remove at least 3 to 5 miles of fence to facilitate pronghorn antelope movement	10-year period following plan approval
Treat 15,000 to 90,000 acres to improve pronghorn antelope habitat quantity and quality	10-year period following plan approval
Treat 2 to 3 areas to facilitate pronghorn migration	10-year period following plan approval
Improve up to 25 existing and 5 new water developments for wildlife	10-year period following plan approval
Open Space, Land Adjustment, and Scenic Values	
Act on up to 10 opportunities, as presented and feasible, to acquire lands within and around the Prescott NF to retain open space values	10-year period following plan approval
Identify and act on up to 10 opportunities to secure legal access to areas where historic access to the national forest has been lost	10-year period following plan approval
Apply for 8 to 10 in-stream flow water rights to enable the Prescott NF to provide for channel and floodplain maintenance and recharge of riparian aquifers	10-year period following plan approval

Timber Sale Schedule and Allowable Sale Quantity

The timber sale schedule for the Prescott NF is formulated to provide a nondeclining flow of timber as specified in the 1982 Planning Rule provisions (Section 219.16). The quantity of timber planned for sale and harvest for any future decade is equal to or greater than the planned sale and harvest for the preceding decade. For any given decade, the planned sale and harvest is not greater than the long-term sustained yield capacity of the suitable timber land.

Table 2 below outlines the expected maximum harvest volumes for the Prescott NF for the 10 years following plan approval. The total of these volumes is the allowable sale quantity (ASQ). For the first decade, the ASQ is 40,447 ccf (hundred cubic feet).

Table 2. Expected maximum harvest levels

Vegetation Type	Acres	Pulp (ccf)	Saw (ccf)	Total (ccf)
Ponderosa Pine-Evergreen Oak PNVT	5,000	4,987	13,569	18,556
Ponderosa Pine-Gambel Oak PNVT	3,000	5,613	16,278	21,891
Totals	**8,000**	**10,600**	**29,847**	**40,447**

Yavapai County Resource Advisory Committee

The Yavapai County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was formed in 2010 as a part of the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRSA) of 2000 and as amended in 2008 (P.L. 110-343). The RAC recommends projects for Federal funds which benefit resources on public lands (e.g., watersheds, habitats, roads, trails). Per the requirements of the SRSA, a project can be funded if it is compliant with laws and regulations, consistent with the forest plan, and properly submitted and recommended by the RAC.

The following table is a sampling of the projects that were approved and funded by the RAC. These projects are examples of the type of activities which may take place on the Prescott NF in the future. They represent ways in which the Prescott NF can address the needs for change, achieve objectives, and move towards the desired conditions outlined in the plan.

Table 3. Examples of projects approved by the Resource Advisory Committee

Type of Project	Description	Needs for Change Addressed[1]
Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) for Yavapai County and the Prescott NF	YCC crews will carry out various projects to improve forest infrastructure and enhance ecosystems such as trail maintenance, trash removal, habitat restoration, noxious weed removal, and reestablishment of native species.	1, 2, 3, 4
Forest health treatments	Forest Service will prepare and implement a contract to thin approximately 500 acres of ponderosa pine forest in an area adjacent to subdivisions in the Prescott Basin.	1, 2
Community Restitution Program	Court ordered probationers will carry out various projects to improve lands within Yavapai County (including the Prescott NF) such as trail maintenance and trash removal.	1, 2, 3
Volunteer Stewardship of Natural and Recreational Resources of the Prescott NF	A volunteer coordinator will work to engage volunteers for a range of natural resource and recreation projects on the Prescott NF such as trash removal, invasive species monitoring and removal, and development of an OHV ambassador program.	1, 2, 3, 4
Riparian Habitat Improvement in the Upper Verde River Wildlife Area/Headwaters	The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Arizona Game and Fish Department will remove riparian invasive plants and nonessential fencing from the Upper Verde River Wildlife Area and TNC's Verde Springs Preserve.	1, 4

Type of Project	Description	Needs for Change Addressed[1]
Verde Valley Youth Restore Native Habitat on Federal, State, and Tribal Lands	A YCC crew will carry out various projects to restore riparian ecosystems along the Verde River and its tributaries such as removing invasive plants and reestablishing native plants.	1, 4
Stewards of the Wild	A volunteer coordinator will work to engage volunteers of the Wilderness Stewards Program for projects that will improve ecosystem and watershed health within the Prescott NF's eight wilderness areas such as trail work, habitat restoration, and control of noxious weeds.	1, 2, 3, 4
Verde River Greenway Habitat Improvement Phase I	Contract crews and volunteers will remove invasive plants along the Verde River near its confluence with Oak Creek and near its confluence with Clear Creek.	1, 2, 3, 4
Williamson Valley Road Improvement	Yavapai County Public Works and contract crews will improve the quality and drainage of the Williamson Valley Road by laying down material, grading, and installing two culverts.	2
Verde River Boater and Floater Recreation Guide	Volunteers and a GIS contracted consultant will document, design, and publish a Verde River Recreation Guide (from Bridgeport to Beasley Flats) in print and electronic formats.	3
Horse Camp Corrals	Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona and the Forest Service will purchase and install a total of 6 corrals for the Groom Creek Horse Camp.	3
Hike/Equestrian Access Gates Excluding Motorized Vehicles	Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona will purchase 10 gates specifically designed to exclude motorized vehicles but allow hiking and equestrian users access and make these gates available for installation on public or private lands.	1, 3

[1] Needs for change: (1) restore ecosystems, (2) provide or sustain watershed integrity, (3) provide sustainable and diverse recreation opportunities, (4) provide native fish habitat, and (5) retain open space values.