

Forest Plan Revision - Draft Alternative Descriptions Based on Identified Issues Technical Partner Meeting - April 2018

The purpose of this spreadsheet is to outline the differences by alternative for each of the resources on the Tonto National Forest. This spreadsheet was developed by resource specialists on the Tonto NF, who utilized their expertise, along with public comments and public meeting notes, to determine how management might differ in each of the developed alternatives.

The following boxes identify what resources below will be discussed in each of the breakout discussions. Please reference these numbers to answer the following questions: Do the range of options across the alternatives for this topic/resource make sense given the issues? Are your specific concerns with this topic/resource addressed? If not, what else would you like to see?

Round 1 Topics: Managing for healthy rangelands - 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12, 15. Utilizing timber and fire management for restoration - 1, 2, 13. Restoring Water Resource - 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14, 21. Managing vegetation and invasive species - 1, 2, 3.

Round 2 Topics: Mitigating impacts of recreation on natural resources - 1, 3, 4, 5, 10. Managing for multiple recreation opportunities - 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 21. Interaction of recreation and local economies - 8, 10, 11, 14, 17.

1. Vegetation Ecological Response Units (ERU)		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals with a balance of mechanical thinning and fire (wildfire and prescribed). Non-forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals with a balance of mechanical thinning, fire (wildfire and prescribed), re-seeding, and invasive species treatments appropriate for the ERU.	Forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals primarily using fire (wildfire and prescribed). Mechanical thinning is used in select situations (primarily within WUI areas). Non-forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals primarily using fire (wildfire and prescribed), re-seeding, and invasive species treatments appropriate for the ERU.	Forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals through intensive vegetation treatments using both mechanical and fire (wildfire and prescribed). Non-forested ERUs: aims to accomplish restoration goals with a balance of mechanical thinning, fire (wildfire and prescribed), re-seeding, and invasive species treatments appropriate for the ERU.
2. Fire and Fuels		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Aims to accomplish restoration goals emphasizing fire (wildfire and prescribed). Plan components specify fire suppression only to achieve desired conditions or for safety.	Aims to accomplish restoration goals primarily through fire (wildfire and prescribed). Plan components specify fire suppression only to achieve desired conditions (mainly for vegetation) or for safety.	Aims to accomplish restoration goals emphasizing fire (wildfire and prescribed). Plan components specify fire suppression to achieve desired conditions (multiple resources) or for safety.
3. Invasive & Undesirable Species		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Aims to treat invasive species and accomplish restoration goals through integrated, invasive species management using multiple treatment techniques throughout the forest. This alternative balances treatment for invasive species with other multiple uses and restoration efforts.	Aims to treat invasive species and accomplish restoration goals through integrated, invasive species management. The emphasis of restoring natural processes in this alternative would result in more acres treated.	Aims to treat invasive species and accomplish restoration goals through integrated, invasive species management techniques throughout the forest. This alternative balances treatment for invasive species with other multiple uses and restoration efforts.
4. Watershed & Water Resources		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Watershed management focuses on maintaining or improving watershed condition, primarily by preventing or reducing disturbances that would tend to degrade the watershed conditions. Both active (e.g., stream channel re-contouring, active planting) and passive (e.g., restoring conditions to encourage natural regeneration) restoration methods will be utilized to restore ecological integrity of watersheds.	Watershed management relies heavily on standards and guidelines to minimize anthropogenic disturbances that degrade watershed condition. Management relies primarily on passive restoration to restore natural processes to improve the condition of degraded watersheds over time. Active restoration may be necessary on sites where recovery is unlikely to occur without human assistance. The greater emphasis on standards and guidelines that would restrict uses that impact these resources would provide for more rapid recovery of these ecosystems.	Watershed management would strive to accommodate an emphasis on multiple uses while actively mitigating disturbances. Both active (e.g., stream channel re-contouring, active planting) and passive (e.g., restoring conditions to encourage natural regeneration) restoration methods will be utilized to restore ecological integrity of watersheds. Reduced emphasis on restrictive standards and guidelines would still permit maintenance or recovery of these resources but at a slower rate than other alternatives.
5. Riparian Areas		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Desired conditions for these resources will be achieved by minimizing disturbances that would disrupt the natural hydrologic cycle (timing, magnitude, and duration of stream flows and the erosion, transport, and deposition of sediment). The intent is to restore proper functioning of these resources while allowing for multiple use activities.	Desired conditions for these resources would be achieved primarily by restricting anthropogenic disturbances that would tend to disrupt the hydrologic cycle or destabilize stream channels. Greater emphasis on standards and guidelines that would restrict uses that impact these resources would provide for more rapid recovery of these ecosystems	This alternative would achieve desired conditions by implementing mitigation measures to prevent or minimize the impacts of authorized multiple use activities on these resources. Reduced emphasis on restrictive standards and guidelines would still permit maintenance or recovery of these resources but at a slower rate than other alternatives.

6. Wildlife, Fish and Plants

The alternative descriptions for other resources have the potential to impact (positively & negatively) management for wildlife, fish, and plants.

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Plan direction is general in nature, but also includes some species-specific components. Habitat improvement allows for both natural and more manipulative methods, but provides guidance for when each may be appropriate. Both at-risk and commonly enjoyed species are included, though these are balanced as needed to meet the requirements of law, regulation, and policy.	Guidance is generally more prohibitive to activities that might disturb species or species habitat. There is more species-specific guidance for at-risk species. Habitat improvement projects lean more on natural processes and are directed to use the least invasive techniques available.	Plan direction is as broad as possible to allow flexibility for multiple uses. There is a greater emphasis in managing for commonly enjoyed species while meeting the needs of at-risk species.

7. Soils

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Plan components for soils include best management practices and soil quality monitoring to ensure ground disturbing activities do not degrade long-term soil productivity. This alternative uses a balance of restrictions and mitigation measures to allow for multiple uses that do not degrade long-term soil productivity.	Plan components for soils include best management practices and soil quality monitoring to ensure ground disturbing activities do not degrade long-term soil productivity. Plan direction is more restrictive to activities and uses that cause soil disturbance.	Plan components for soils include best management practices and soil quality monitoring to ensure ground disturbing activities do not degrade long-term soil productivity. The emphasis of increased utilization (e.g., recreation, mechanical thinning operations, road construction) on the forest in the alternative would require more mitigation measures to ensure sustainable soil conditions.

8. Cultural and Historical Resources

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Equal emphasis is placed on addressing both resource needs and modern day impacts to historic properties. Best management practices for cultural and historical resources would be identified that take both natural environmental factors and human-archeological site interaction into equal consideration. Management would explore both place-based and digital heritage tourism opportunities and educational experiences.	Program would be proactive to resource needs rather than reactive to project workload. More emphasis would be placed on addressing natural processes that affect historic properties (e.g., wildfire or erosion) through preservation or stabilization practices. Access to historic properties by the public would be limited; interpretation of archaeological sites and educational opportunities would be delivered through digital media (VR tours, mobile apps, etc.).	Emphasis would be placed on heritage tourism, educational opportunities, and interpretive sites. Program emphasis would be primarily focused on addressing modern human impacts to historic properties (i.e. range improvements, developed recreation, roads and trails, etc.). Public access to historic properties would be encouraged.

9. Tribal Relations and Areas of Tribal Importance

The alternative descriptions for other resources have the potential to impact (positively & negatively) Tribal Relations and Areas of Tribal Importance; some impacts are described below.

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Restoration activities are performed in partnership with tribes to include culturally used resources and provide economic benefits to disadvantaged communities. Desired conditions for vegetation and wildlife account for tribal values. Multiple uses are managed to reduce conflict with tribal priorities.	Restoration activities are performed in partnership with tribes to include culturally used resources and provide economic benefits to disadvantaged communities. Desired conditions for vegetation and wildlife account for tribal values. Traditional and Cultural Use Areas are managed for preservation. Multiple uses are managed to reduce conflict with tribal priorities. The emphasis of restoring natural processes may increase the availability of culturally used resources but the decommissioning of roads and trails may restrict the access to these resources at some areas.	Restoration activities are performed in partnership with tribes to include culturally used resources and provide economic benefits to disadvantaged communities. Desired conditions for vegetation and wildlife account for tribal values. Multiple uses are managed to reduce conflict with tribal priorities. The emphasis of encouraging more recreational opportunities may lead to increased traffic on the forest that could impact tribal resources and opportunities for tribal members to participate in traditional activities.

10. Recreation

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Opportunities will be balanced between primitive and accessible recreation, striving to achieve desired conditions for other resources as well as for recreation. Protection and restoration of riparian areas will be prioritized over recreational opportunities.	Primitive recreation (e.g dispersed camping, hiking) is emphasized in order to reduce human influences. There will be increased restrictions around water resources for dispersed camping. The Lakes & Rivers Management Area will not be addressed in this alternative so additional plan components will address shoreline camping and water based recreation. Developed recreational opportunities will not be prioritized. Access in some areas may be limited affecting some recreational opportunities.	Accessible recreation (e.g. recreation sites) is emphasized in order to promote recreational opportunities. There will be fewer restrictions around water resources. New recreation sites will developed based on trends public use. More areas will be accessible for a variety of recreational uses.

11. Special Uses

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Special use authorizations (commercial and recreation opportunities) are balanced with public demand and resource protection.	Special use authorizations would be limited to improve the naturalistic setting for other recreation users. Less recreation events, large group uses and commercial services would reduce resource impacts and improve site conditions, enhance the solitude and wilderness experience of Forest visitors.	Special uses authorizations would increase to expand the variety of recreation and commercial opportunities across the Forest while providing competition for local businesses. More outdoor recreation and utilization would be emphasized by allowing additional commercial services, recreation events, and large group uses.

12. Rangelands, Forage, and Grazing

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Management is focused on balancing healthy upland ecosystems to promote better forage for livestock grazing. Limitations in livestock grazing in riparian and other sensitive areas to achieve desired conditions. Vacant allotments will be closed, granted, or utilized for grass banks. Conservative grazing use levels {30%-40%} result in upward trends of range ecological conditions.	Livestock grazing will be reduced or restricted in riparian areas and desert ecosystems. Allotments as they become vacant will be closed. Fences and maintenance/installation of water features will be reduced to improve wildlife connectivity. Conservative grazing use levels (30%-40%) or less resulting in upward trends of range ecological conditions.	Increased fencing and water features will maximize distribution and use of forage across allotments, while protecting riparian areas and other sensitive areas. Vacant allotment will be granted to new permittees. Moderate grazing use levels (40-50%) result in stable trend in rangeland ecological conditions..

13. Forestry and Forest Products

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
A sustainable amount of forest products are available for industry (e.g., saw timber) and personal use products {e.g., Christmas trees and firewood}.	Less products are available for industry (from the reduced mechanical thinning in this alternative), but personal use products are still available,	The maximum, sustainable amount of products are available for industry. Personal use products are still available.

14. Mining, Minerals, and Energy

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Management follows existing regulation and policy which directs Forest Service to respond to Plans of Operations received. Determine priority preferences for mineral material sites to deliver benefits to the public. Recognize existing regulation and policy regarding reclamation standards for both locatable and salable minerals. Work with industry to identify design features, best management practices, or mitigation measure to minimize adverse impacts on natural resources..	The number of Plans of Operations or mineral material proposals processed per year would be limited. Locatable and mineral materials sites would include sustainable post-mining land use concepts. The concept of restoration would be emphasized. Mineral materials would not be removed within water resource features.	This alternative includes the Superior/Globe-Miami Mining Management area that includes specific plan components aimed to expedite review and approval of Plans of Operations. Requests for personal and commercial mineral material sales are given high priority. Concurrent reclamation as a guideline, rather than standard.

15. Roads

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Forest System roads are implemented and/or maintained to provide access for multiple use and restoration activities. Plan components limit road construction in riparian areas, or where roads impair water quality, have excessive erosion, or safety hazards.	Plan components would further emphasize Forest System road decommissioning to improve ecological conditions including wildlife habitat connectivity, riparian areas, water quality, and soil erosion. Objectives for road maintenance would be reduced. No new permanent system roads would be constructed, although temporary routes would be allowed.	Plan components would emphasize road maintenance and improvements to increase access for traditional and cultural uses, removal of forest products including fuelwood and for recreation uses and access. Objectives for Forest System road decommissioning are diminished and new permanent and temporary Forest System roads may be built, especially for and access to multiple use opportunities.

16. Facilities

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Management follows existing regulation and policy for maintenance and operation of existing facilities while focusing on decommissioning of underutilized and excess facilities, and develop and maintain new facilities as needed to meet increased populations and public demands where appropriate.	Plan components would emphasize decommissioning of facilities to aid in restoring natural processes. Fewer new facilities would be developed.	To address the desire for increased recreational opportunities, access for multiple uses, and administrative purposes, this alternative includes plan components that would allow for increased development, maintenance and improvements of facilities.

17. Lands and Access

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
This alternative would balance access needs within regulation, utilizing current authorizations to acquire desirable lands when available and disposing of isolated, unmanageable lands.	There would be fewer road acquisitions and an increased emphasis on land acquisition (e.g., Land and Water Conservation Fund purchases, Land Exchange, Land Donation). Less public use would result in declining access needs.	More emphasis would be directed towards land disposition (e.g., Mining Patents, Townsite Act Sales, Land Exchange) allowing more use of resources. Increased use would result in an increased need for access roads and a heavier footprint on the land in general.

18. Salt River Horses Management Area

The State of Arizona's management of horses on the Tonto NF follows a collaboratively developed management plan that balances the needs of the horses with other resources. This management area will be represented in each alternative.

19. Recommended Wilderness Management Areas

Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
The selection of areas recommended for wilderness under Alternative B will be carefully considered in the context of the other multiple-use considerations that the Forest is balancing in developing management area recommendations for National Forest System lands. This alternative will have a moderate amount of recommended wilderness that fit with the balance of natural forces and human influences.	The selection of areas recommended for wilderness in this alternative will be based upon consideration of information within the wilderness evaluation and the emphasis in Alternative C for protection of our natural resources, less impactful treatments, and less motorized use. Alternative C will have the highest amount of recommended wilderness areas.	There will be no recommended wilderness in Alternative D. This alternative emphasizes restoration, access, and management that would utilize mechanical treatments and motorized access which are not compatible with management of wilderness characteristics.

20. Superior/Globe-Miami Mining Management Area		
Alternative B - Balance Natural Forces & Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Not represented in this alternative	Not represented in this alternative.	In this management area, expedited reviews and approvals of Plans of Operations would occur and relevant reclamation standards would be identified. An increase in locatable mineral exploration and mining might occur and have the potential to affect other resources. Areas with high mineral material potential would be delineated and managed to facilitate use and streamline approval process of source areas.
21. Lakes & Rivers Management Area		
This management area will have mostly the same plan components for Alt C & Alt D but the alternative descriptions for other resources might have the potential to impact the area and require additional direction.		
Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Plan components are designed to balance the high levels of recreation along the lakes and major rivers on the forest while mitigating impacts to natural resources. Recreation restrictions and in riparian areas and water based recreation opportunities in this area deviate from the rest of the forest in order to promote safe and high quality recreational opportunities	Not represented in this alternative.	Plan components are designed to balance the high levels of recreation along the lakes and major rivers on the forest while mitigating impacts to natural resources. Recreation restrictions and in riparian areas and water based recreation opportunities in this area deviate from the rest of the forest in order to promote safe and high quality recreational opportunities.
22. Other Management Areas-Will Not Change By Alternative		
These management areas and their plan componets will likely not change by alternative but have the potential to be affected by alternative descriptions for other resources.		
Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers and Apache Leap Special Management Area	Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers and Apache Leap Special Management Area.	Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers and Apache Leap Special Management Area
23. Designated Areas		
These designated areas will be incorporated into each alternative but might have different plan components depending on the alternative descriptions for other resources		
Human Influence	Alternative C - Natural Forces Prominent	Alternative D - Human Influences Prominent
8 Wilderness Areas 2 Wild & Scenic Rivers 3 National Trails 3 Research Natural Areas 9 Significant Caves 1 Experimental Forest XX Inventoried Roadless Areas (will vary based on recommended wilderness) 5 Proposed Special Areas	8 Wilderness Areas 2 Wild & Scenic Rivers 3 National Trails 3 Research Natural Areas 9 Significant Caves 1 Experimental Forest XX Inventoried Roadless Areas (will vary based on recommended wilderness) 5 Proposed Special Areas	8 Wilderness Areas 2 Wild & Scenic Rivers 3 National Trails 3 Research Natural Areas 9 Significant Caves 1 Experimental Forest 13 Inventoried Roadless Areas 5 Proposed Special Areas