

# Prescott National Forest Plan

## Amendment 13

To the 2004 republished version (V1.1) of the 1986 Forest Plan, as amended

### Verde Wild and Scenic River

### Comprehensive Management Plan

June 14, 2004

(New text is in **boldface**. Deleted text is in ~~striketrough~~.)

**Management Area 6, Wilderness — Gross Acres: 90,589**

**Description**

There are 90,488 acres of national forest land and 101 acres of private land included in this management area. Of those 18,039 acres (20 percent ) are in the Chino Valley Ranger District, 35,316 acres (39 percent) are in the Bradshaw district and 25,832 acres (29 percent) are in the Verde district. A total of 11,301 acres (12 percent) are in the Tonto National Forest, in the Pine Creek Wilderness (this area is attached to the Prescott National Forest for purposes of planning). Similarly, Sycamore Wilderness is attached to the Coconino National Forest for planning purposes and, therefore, is not included in this management area. However, the Prescott National Forest manages the Prescott National Forest portions of these two wildernesses. There are 6,690 acres of the Sycamore Wilderness on the Chino Valley district. There are 128.8 miles of trails. The individual wilderness areas and acreages by district are listed below. The acreage for Cedar Bench Wilderness Area includes an overlap of 630 acres with the Verde Wild and Scenic River area. **See Management Area 9 for guidelines for the Scenic River area. For the overlapping area, whichever guidelines are more restrictive will apply.**

<u>Ranger District</u>	<u>Wilderness Area</u>	<u>Acres*</u>
Chino Valley	Juniper Mountain	7,554
	Apache Creek	5,628
	Woodchute (Chino portion)	4,857
Verde	Woodchute (Verde portion)	1,066
	Cedar Bench	16,005
	Pine Mountain (Prescott NF portion)	8,761
Cave Creek (Tonto NF)	Pine Mountain (Tonto NF portion)	11,301
Bradshaw	Granite Mountain	9,799
	Castle Creek	25,517

\*Acres used for forest planning analysis. In some cases the acres differ from the approximate acres listed in the establishing legislation and on page 19 in the DEIS.

**Management Emphasis**

Improve all riparian areas and maintain in satisfactory condition.

Manage the wilderness resource to ensure its character and values are dominant and enduring. Refer to Appendix E for direction specific to an individual wilderness (at present, only Granite Mountain Wilderness is included in this appendix).

The following Visual Quality Objectives have been established for this management area:

Preservation	90,589 Acres
Retention	0 Acres
Partial Retention	0 Acres
Modification	0 Acres
<u>Max. Modification</u>	<u>0 Acres</u>
 TOTAL	 90,589 Acres

Program Element	Applicable Analysis Area(s)	Standards and Guidelines (Exceptions and additions to forestwide standards and guidelines)
<b>Special Emphasis Areas</b>		The Gap Creek drainage, because of its exemplary riparian character, will be evaluated for potential as a Research Natural Area. This evaluation will work within the constraints of wilderness regulations and legal requirements imposed by the presence of Gila trout habitat.
<b>Recreation</b>		Where the wilderness resource or its values are jeopardized in spite of management strategies, restrict or exclude recreation use.
<b>Wilderness</b>	All	<p>Prepare and publish brochures for each wilderness in the first decade to be reviewed annually and updated as needed.</p> <p>Manage all wildernesses at the standard service level.</p> <p>Visitor use impacts will be monitored and managed. Identify impact parameters, measurement procedures, evaluation and rating criteria by the end of the first decade (1986-1995) for each wilderness.</p> <p>The forest will continue to provide interpretation regarding wilderness ethics, values and opportunities to the public in the form of written, verbal and personal contact.</p> <p>Provide no-trace, low impact camping, trip planning and visitor use information on the written portion of wilderness maps.</p> <p>Where agency or applicant objectives can be met outside of designated wilderness, permits will not be issued in wilderness.</p>
	All, except Granite Mountain (See Appendix E)	Maximum group size will be limited to 25 persons.
	All	<p>Maintain wilderness boundaries posting in those areas where intrusion is likely to occur.</p> <p>Areas degraded as a result of man's activities that cannot be rehabilitated naturally will be seeded with native plant species to establish satisfactory ground cover to protect wilderness resource values.</p> <p>Through printed material, advise wilderness users that all water must be treated if intended for human consumption, and that water sources are not reliable.</p>

Program Element	Applicable Analysis Area(s)	Standards and Guidelines (Exceptions and additions to forestwide standards and guidelines)
		Require the use of certified weed-free feeds for livestock in wilderness.
<b>Wildlife</b>	All	Habitat components and capabilities will be updated every 10 years.
<b>Facilities</b>	All	<p>No potable water systems will be developed</p> <p>Update the transportation system inventory and implementation plans at 5-year intervals.</p> <p>Provide facilities at trailheads consistent with the level of use associated with the wilderness to which that trailhead provides access, and that protects resources at the trailhead site.</p> <p>The trail system will only be expanded into areas currently without trails after determination that it is necessary to meet wilderness management needs.</p>
<b>Protection</b>	All	<p>Helispots approved as part of the transportation plan will be maintained to provide for safe emergency helicopter use.</p> <p>Prescribed natural fires and management-ignited prescribed fires will be implemented to meet specific wilderness objectives.</p> <p>Prepare fire management plans for each wilderness by the end of the first decade.</p>
<b>Fire Management</b>		<p>Minimum suppression tactics should be used to suppress wildland fires within wilderness.</p> <p>The use of helicopters, power saws, small motorized pumps and the aerial delivery of personnel, retardants and supplies should be authorized by the incident commander(s) or as otherwise stipulated within a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis or “Delegation of Authority” signed by the line officer with jurisdiction.</p>
<b>Lands</b>		<p>New water diversions from the Verde River between Section 5, Township 17 North, Range 1 West, and Section 32, Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian, will only be allowed when authorized by Federal law</p> <p>Right-of-way and special use permits for new utilities within the viewshed of the Verde River mainstem from Section 5, Township 17 North, Range 1 West to Section 32, Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Gila and Salt River Base Meridian will be discouraged. Where no reasonable alternative exists, additional or new facilities will be restricted to existing right-of-ways. Where new right-of-ways are indicated, scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife values must be evaluated in the selection process</p>

## Management Area 7, Recreation — Gross Acres: ~~2,544~~ 1,276

### Description

There are ~~2,503~~ 1,235 acres of national forest land and 41 acres of private land. ~~Of those,~~ 1,276 acres (~~50 percent~~) are in the Bradshaw Ranger District and make up an intensely used recreation area close to the town of Prescott. There is one developed recreation site (Granite Basin) and a summer home area that occupy 150 acres. ~~The remaining acres of this management area (1,268 acres, 50 percent) consist of the Verde Wild and Scenic Area on the Verde district.~~ There are 537 acres of ponderosa pine that are managed for commercial timber production in this area. There are 9.7 miles of roads, for a road density of 2.4 miles per square mile. There are 1.1 miles of trails.

### Management Emphasis

The primary emphasis will be on dispersed and developed recreation.

Other resource use is generally at a low level, except that wildlife management is emphasized in the pine and riparian habitat types. ~~The Verde Wild and Scenic River Area will be managed as essential habitat for the bald eagle until status determination by the Secretary of the Interior is completed.~~ Timber in the Granite Basin area (537 acres) will be managed to enhance wildlife and recreation use. There will be some personal use firewood available from pine slash, as well as some green and dead firewood from the juniper lands. Fire protection will be emphasized in the Granite Basin area. Improve all riparian areas and maintain in satisfactory condition.

The following Visual Quality Objectives have been established for this management area:

Preservation	0 Acres
Retention	<del>643</del> 1,911 Acres
Partial Retention	496 Acres
Modification	96 Acres
<u>Max. Modification</u>	<u>0 Acres</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,235</b> <del>2,503</del> Acres

Program Element	Applicable Analysis Area(s)	Standards and Guidelines (Exceptions and additions to forestwide standards and guidelines)
<del>Wildlife</del>		<del>The wild and scenic portion of the Verde River will be managed for maintenance and enhancement of bald eagle habitat. This will be accomplished by implementing the recommendations identified in the Action Program for Resolution of Livestock and Riparian Conflicts in Salt and Verde Rivers and in the Bald Eagle Recovery Plan.</del>
<b>Range</b>	All	No capacity will be assigned to this area.

<b>Program Element</b>	<b>Applicable Analysis Area(s)</b>	<b>Standards and Guidelines (Exceptions and additions to forestwide standards and guidelines)</b>
<b>Timber</b>		Timber will be harvested only on slopes less than 40 percent.
<b>Protection</b>		<p>The suppression emphasis is to protect life and property and minimize acreage burned.</p> <p>Do not allow fires to spread to lands of other ownership.</p> <p>The maximum fire size objective is 1 acre</p> <p>The average annual burned area is 0.1 percent of the prescribed area.</p> <p>The initial response objective is to economically confine all fires.</p> <p>Fires which exceed or are expected to exceed the size objective are considered escaped and appropriate response is determined by an Escaped Fire Situation Analysis (EFSA). The EFSA will consider at least the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resource management emphasis of threatened analysis areas.</li> <li>2. Suppression costs will be commensurate with resources protected.</li> <li>3. Effects on air quality, aesthetics, soil and watersheds.</li> <li>4. Social acceptance of acreage burned.</li> <li>5. Current availability of suppression resources.</li> <li>6. Impacts on cultural resource.</li> </ol> <p>Dispose of all activity-created slash.</p>

**Management Area 9, Verde River, Scenic – Gross Acres: 2,166**

**Description**

The portion of the Verde Wild and Scenic River contained within the Prescott National Forest Boundary. This Management Area was established as a result of the Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984 that designated this segment of the Verde River as a Scenic River under the Wild and Scenic River Act (Public Law 90-542). The boundaries of the Wild & Scenic River Area encompass an area generally ½ mile wide, ¼ mile each side of and parallel to the river, as approved by the Southwestern Regional Forester on January 15, 1997. The Verde Scenic River on the Prescott National Forest begins near Beasley Flat, and continues downstream approximately 13 miles to the Forest Boundary with the Tonto National Forest and contains approximately 2,138 acres.

**Management Emphasis**

Maintain the Scenic River outstandingly remarkable values (ORV's) for scenic, fish, wildlife, and historic and cultural values, while also protecting the river's free flowing character and water quality. The Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) for the Verde Wild and Scenic River (USFS, 2004) describes the ORV's in further detail.

Program Element	Applicable Analysis Area(s)	Standards and Guidelines (Exceptions and Additions to Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines)
ALL	ALL	The Verde Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) provides detailed direction for the entire Verde Wild and Scenic River. Standards and Guidelines from the CRMP applicable to the Scenic portion of the Verde River are hereby incorporated into this Forest Plan.