U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management

GRAND CANYON-PARASHANT NATIONAL MONUMENT

RECORD OF DECISION
APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

COOPERATING AGENCIES:
Arizona Department of Transportation
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Coconino County, Arizona
Federal Highways Administration
Kaibab Paiute Tribe
Kane County, Utah
Mohave County, Arizona
Town of Colorado City, Arizona
Town of Fredonia, Arizona
Washington County, Utah

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GRAND CANYON-PARASHANT NATIONAL MONUMENT RECORD OF DECISION

INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Strip District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) on the Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed Plan/FEIS) for Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, which was published in January 2007. While the Proposed Plan/FEIS also addressed management of Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and non-Monument public lands administered by the Arizona Strip Field Office, this ROD applies only to those decisions presented in the attached Approved Management Plan (Approved Plan) made by the BLM for management of Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, which will be referred to as the "Monument" throughout this document.

The Monument is administered jointly by the BLM and National Park Service (NPS); therefore, the NPS has prepared a separate ROD for the NPS decisions in the Monument, which is attached to the Approved Plan.

On January 11, 2000, Presidential Proclamation 7265 created the Monument to ensure protection of a wide variety of biological objects at the junction of the Mojave Desert and Colorado Plateau and a long and rich human history, which have been preserved by remoteness and limited travel corridors. The Monument also encompasses geological treasures, is full of natural splendor, and offers visitors a sense of solitude.

The Monument is located in Mohave County, Arizona, immediately north of Grand Canyon National Park and east of the state of Nevada, and contains 808,744 acres of BLM-administered land, 208,447 acres of NPS-administered land, 23,205 acres of Arizona State Trust lands, and 7,920 acres of private land. While the Approved Plan includes decisions for managing both BLM and NPS-administered lands, this ROD only addresses the 808,744 acres of BLM-administered lands in the Monument except where the BLM administers programs on NPS-administered lands in the Monument (e.g., livestock grazing).

The Approved Plan was described as Alternative E in the Proposed Plan/FEIS. This ROD provides a summary of protests received and clarifications made in response to protests, a brief summary of the decisions made and other alternatives considered (including a description of the environmentally preferable alternative), management considerations and rationale for the decisions, and an overview of public involvement in the planning process.

PROTEST REVIEW RESULTS

The BLM received seven protest letters during the 30-day protest period provided for the proposed land use plan decisions in the Proposed Plan/FEIS in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1610.5-2. The seven protesting parties are listed below:

1. Kade B. Ballard
2. Jarolyn and Collin Stout
3. The National Trust for Historic Preservation
4. Carolyn B. Shelley
5. Dr. William I. Boarman
6. Peter Bungart, Circa Cultural Consulting
7. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition; Center for Biological Diversity, Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, Sierra Club-Grand Canyon Chapter, and Wilderness Society

Some protesting parties voiced their concern over the protection of resources in the Monument. Some concerns were very general (i.e., the protection of Monument objects), while other concerns were over specific resources and their protection, including areas with wilderness characteristics and cultural resources. Some protesting parties voiced their concern about the impacts of a particular resource use on specific resources, such as the impacts of backcountry airstrips on soundscapes/natural quiet or the impacts of livestock grazing on biological resources (i.e., desert tortoise, riparian areas, forest areas, bighorn sheep, relict leopard frog). Other protesting parties were concerned about the impacts on resource uses and wanted to see the lands in the Monument managed without impairment of the area's productivity. Finally, a number of protesting parties voiced their concern over the data and/or the analysis techniques used in the FEIS, making the following observations or suggestions:

- There is the need to take a hard look at direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts for wilderness characteristics and cultural resources.
- Baseline measurements of natural quiet/soundscapes are necessary for the impact analysis.
- The information used to analyze the impacts of backcountry airstrips on natural resources is inadequate.
- Baseline information used to analyze the impacts on cultural resources is inadequate.
- The range of alternatives is inadequate to provide protection to Monument objects.
- Comments from experts on the Draft EIS were not adequately responded to in the FEIS.

The BLM Director addressed all protests without making significant changes to the Proposed Plan though minor adjustments, corrections, and clarifications, as identified in the Modifications and Clarifications section below.

THE DECISION

The decision of the BLM is to approve the attached document as the Approved Plan for management of BLM-administered lands in the Monument (see Approved Plan). The Approved Plan replaces relevant decisions in the Arizona Strip Resource Management Plan (RMP; BLM 1992), as amended (BLM 1998).

The Approved Plan was prepared under the authorities of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 in accordance with BLM planning regulations at 43 CFR Part 1600 and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The Approved Plan is nearly identical to the Proposed Plan (Alternative E) presented in the Proposed Plan/FEIS. Management decisions and guidance for public lands within the Monument are presented in the Approved Plan attached to this ROD. All decisions covered by the ROD are either land use planning decisions that were protestable under the land use planning regulations (43 CFR Part 1610), or implementation decisions that are now appealable under the regulations listed below.

The NPS Regional Director signed a ROD for NPS decisions on NPS-administered lands in the Monument, which is attached to the Approved Plan.

The Approved Plan emphasizes protection and restoration of the natural and cultural resources while still providing for resource use and enjoyment. Where appropriate, it proposes a combination of management actions including allowing natural processes to continue, applying more hands-on treatment methods, and protecting the remote settings that currently exist in the Monument. All decisions in the Approved Plan must meet the purpose and significance of the Monument and comply with Proclamation 7265. The key components of the Approved Plan (Alternative E) are as follows:

- The Approved Plan responds to public comments to protect resources while still allowing use, especially near the communities.
- The Approved Plan provides the best means to accommodate the widest range of public and agency concerns over resources and resource uses.

OVERVIEW OF THE ALTERNATIVES

Five alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, were analyzed in detail in the Arizona Strip Draft Plan/EIS (2005). The alternatives were developed to address major planning issues identified through public scoping and to provide management direction for resource programs. Each alternative is comprised of a set of decisions representing a distinct concept for land management using a variety of land use planning decision types including desired future conditions, special designations, land use allocations, and management actions. These land use plan decisions provide management direction at a broad scale and guide future actions to govern the protection and use of the resources on BLM-administered lands on the Monument.

ALTERNATIVE A: NO ACTION

Alternative A is the No Action Alternative required by NEPA that represented continued management provided by the Arizona Strip RMP (BLM 1992, as amended). Alternative A also included the directives of Proclamation 7265 and the interim management policy issued pursuant to the proclamation (BLM Instruction Memorandum 2000-062), which provided temporary direction for management of the Monument until the Approved Plan could be completed. As such, Alternative A served as a baseline for comparison with the other alternatives.

Under the Arizona Strip RMP (BLM 1992, as amended), public lands were partitioned into Guidance Areas to protect resources and provide guidance for managing them. Guidance Areas were differentiated by special resource concerns, sensitivities, or characteristics, as identified below:

- **Guidance Area A -**These lands contained a wide variety of resources and values that required continued multiple-use management. Most of these lands did not contain unusual characteristics and were not subject to unusual demands requiring special management attention.

- **Guidance Area B -** These lands were identified by the public and the BLM as having unique resource values and special management needs including important scenic values, exceptional natural features, and fragile physical features. Reclamation would be very difficult after disturbances, which may lead to permanent scars on the landscape. With few exceptions, Area B lands were more remote than those in Area A.

ALTERNATIVE B

Alternative B placed an emphasis on minimal human use/influence, and proposed the fewest miles of open roads and trails. It focused on natural processes and other unobtrusive methods for ecosystem restoration, resource management, and scientific research; more protection and enhancement of remoteness and dispersed recreation; unstructured recreation opportunities; and the least amount of motorized recreation opportunities.

ALTERNATIVE C

Alternative C represented an attempt to balance resource protection and human use/influence. It proposed a moderate amount of open roads and trails; a mix of natural processes and “hands-on” techniques for ecosystem restoration, resource management, and scientific research; and a mix of motorized, non-motorized, dispersed, and structured recreation opportunities.

ALTERNATIVE D

Alternative D placed an emphasis on maximum appropriate human use/influence and the widest array of visitor experiences and opportunities. It included the most miles of open roads and trails (with the exception of Alternative A), and focused on "hands-on" techniques for ecosystem restoration, resource management, and scientific research. As such, it offered fewer remote settings and the most motorized and structured recreation opportunities compared to the other alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE E: PROPOSED PLAN

The BLM revised Alternative E (the Preferred Alternative) in the Arizona Strip Draft Plan/EIS by incorporating comments received during the 90-day public comment period, thus creating the Proposed Plan in the Proposed Plan/FEIS. Through modifications and clarifications in response to the protests received, the Proposed Plan is now the Approved Plan, which is attached to this ROD. In the most comprehensive manner, the Approved Plan is designed to respond to each of the issues and management concerns recognized during the planning process. The BLM determined that the decisions presented under Alternative E (the Proposed Plan) provide an optimal balance between authorized resource use and the protection and long-term sustainability of sensitive resources and/or Monument objects within the Monument.

Alternative E, now the Approved Plan with the clarifications and modifications as described below, emphasizes minimal human influence and use in the more remote sections of the Monument and more human use/influence in the areas adjacent to local communities or in areas presently receiving such use/influence. It attempts to balance human use/influence with resource protection. Where appropriate, it will use a combination of management actions including allowing natural processes to continue, applying more hands-on treatment methods, and protecting the remote settings that currently exist in the Monument.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative

Alternative E, the Approved Plan, is considered by the BLM to be the environmentally preferable alternative when taking into consideration the human (social and economic) environment as well as the natural environment. The U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has defined the environmentally preferable alternative as the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in Section 101 of NEPA. The six broad policy goals for all Federal plans, programs, and policies are listed below:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.
2. Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.

3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences.
4. Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice.
5. Achieve a balance between population and resource use, which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities.
6. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

In comparison with the other alternatives analyzed, Alternative E best meets the above NEPA goals for the future management of the Monument. It provides a high level of protection of natural and cultural resources, while providing for a wide range of beneficial uses of the environment. The No Action Alternative, Alternative A, would have allowed visitor use to increase unchecked, thereby causing potential adverse impacts on the visitor experience and resource conditions. Alternative A also did not identify additional lands to be managed to maintain wilderness characteristics. For these reasons, the No Action Alternative is not preferable from an environmental perspective.

Alternative B represented the alternative with the most "hands off" management. It has the fewest miles of access and designated routes, most acres of lands managed to maintain wilderness characteristics, and the least aggressive forms of treatment for noxious and invasive species. Although this alternative is the most "natural" management alternative, it does not provide for proactive visitor or resource management. Consequently, Alternative B was not selected as the environmentally preferable alternative because it does not achieve a balance between visitor use/access and protection of resources, nor does it involve restoration of natural processes and conditions.

Alternative C represented a better balance of visitor use and resource conditions, but did not recognize the unique nature of the Monument in terms of its accessibility and opportunities to provide a range of appropriate recreational experiences to Monument visitors. This alternative does not attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation.

Alternative D represented the alternative with the most "hands-on" management, maximum human use/influence, the most recreation opportunities, and the fewest acres managed to maintain wilderness characteristics. This alternative proposed extensive proactive restoration of species, which meant fewer acres restored via natural means, which would lead to more significant alterations to the primitive landscape. Alternative D provided a high range of visitor access and recreation opportunities, but fewer opportunities for primitive and remote experiences. For these reasons, this alternative did not achieve the balance between resource protection and resource use that permitted enhancement of resource conditions and visitor experience.

Alternative E (the Proposed Plan and now the Approved Plan) takes the best components of each of the four alternatives described above to ensure protection of Monument resources and values while providing a wide range of beneficial uses. This alternative acknowledges that the more isolated areas of the Monument would be managed to preserve their remoteness and maintain wilderness characteristics. At the same time, it provides appropriate access to areas of high use and along major travel corridors to ensure that a range of appropriate outdoor recreation is available. Overall, Alternative E best meets the requirements of Section 101 of NEPA and was thus selected as the environmentally preferable alternative by the BLM.

LAND USE PLAN DECISIONS, IMPLEMENTATION DECISIONS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

The Approved Plan provides overall direction for management of all resources on BLM-administered land in the Monument. Many land use plan decisions are implemented or become effective upon publication of the ROD for the Approved Plan and may include desired future conditions, land use allocations (allowable uses) or designations, and special designations.

Land use plan decisions represent the desired outcomes and the actions needed to achieve them. Such decisions were attained using the planning process found in 43 CFR 1600 and guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. When presented to the public as proposed decisions, land use plan decisions can be protested to the BLM Director; however, they are not appealable to Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA).

Implementation decisions and management actions that require additional site-specific project planning, as funding becomes available, will require further environmental analysis. Some implementation decisions (e.g., route designations) are finalized with this ROD and thus require no further environmental analysis. Administrative actions are not land use planning or implementation decisions, but are a key component of the overall Plan because they describe the BLM's day-to-day actions to help meet desired future conditions. The BLM will continue to involve and collaborate with the public during implementation of the Approved Plan. Brief descriptions of the types of decisions are presented below.

LAND USE PLAN DECISIONS

Desired Future Conditions

Land use plans express desired future conditions or desired outcomes in terms of specific goals, standards, and objectives for resources and/or uses. Desired future conditions include legal mandates, numerous regulatory responsibilities, national policy, BLM state director guidance, and other resource or social needs. Land use plans are designed to most effectively meet these desired future conditions through land use allocations, special designations, or management actions.

Special Designations

Special designations include those that are designated by Congress for special protection, such as wilderness areas (see the Approved Plan). Such designations are not land use plan decisions; however, recommendations for designation can be made to Congress at the land use plan level. Congress may then act on these recommendations at a later time.

Administrative designations made by the BLM, such as watchable wildlife viewing sites, are also considered special designations and can be made in the land use plan (see the Approved Plan).

Land Use Allocations (Allowable Uses)

Allowable, restricted, or prohibited use on public lands identify lands where uses are allowed (land use allocations), including any restrictions needed to meet goals and objectives. Areas may be identified to exclude specific uses in order to protect resource values. Land use allocations have geographic boundaries and are represented by polygons on the maps in Chapter 2 of the Approved Plan. It is common for specific resource or use allocations to overlap with other resource or use allocations.

Management Actions

Management actions include stipulations, guidelines, best management practices, and design features that help guide day-to-day activities on public lands to meet desired future conditions. Management actions are categorized as actions to achieve desired outcomes, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health.

IMPLEMENTATION DECISIONS

Implementation decisions (or activity level decisions) are management actions tied to a specific location that take action to implement land use plan decisions. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed and require appropriate site-specific planning and NEPA analysis. Such decisions may be incorporated into implementation plans (activity or project plans) or may exist as stand-alone decisions.

Unlike land use plan decisions, implementation decisions are not subject to protest under the planning regulations. Instead, implementation decisions are subject to various administrative remedies, particularly appeals to the IBLA (under 43 CFR 4.410). Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by the specific resource program regulations after the BLM resolves the protests to land use plan decisions and makes a decision to adopt the management plan. For example, the designation of a specific route is an implementation level

decision, rather than a land use plan decision. Consequently, individual route designations are subject to a separate appeals process that is described below.

All route designations (i.e., routes designated as open, see attached Approved Plan) are finalized with this ROD, with the exception of the ten high potential route areas identified below, and may be appealed at this time.

Except for the route designations, the other implementation decisions identified in Chapter 2 of the Approved Plan will all require site-specific planning and further NEPA analysis before they are implemented. These implementation decisions are not appealable at this time, but will be appealable at the time they are finalized.

In making the route designation decisions, the BLM adhered to IM 2007-030 regarding compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), which requires the BLM to consider the potential for area, road, and trail designations to affect historic properties (sites eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places). These potential adverse effects could result from designating new routes or opening new areas to OHV use; OHV use shifting, concentrating or expanding travel onto other existing routes or into areas likely to have historic properties; and the potential for cumulative effects. Under the Approved Plan, no new routes are designated open and no open OHV areas are designated in the Monument. The remaining potential impacts to historic properties in the Monument are direct impacts, indirect impacts, and cumulative effects from the use of the designated road system, including impacts resulting from the concentration of use created by the designated route system or continued impacts to specific historic sites by designating specific routes.

In order to determine the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to historic properties on the Monument, Arizona Strip District and Monument archaeologists and managers used all Class I (existing information) and Class III (intensive inventory) cultural resource information available, including the Geographic Information System (GIS) cultural resource site database which was overlain onto the designated route GIS layer. A 40-meter buffer (20 meters either side of the route centerline) was used to capture any intersections of possible cultural resource sites with routes. The archaeologists examined U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps and GIS data for the Monument to determine if any historic properties in the Monument would be impacted by the use of designated routes. One route area was found in the Monument that would continue to experience cultural resource impacts from use of existing routes. A field trip to the area by management and staff confirmed that use of potentially designated open routes would continue to impact this area. The following recommendations were made and implemented as a result of this field visit:

1. Designation of Route P3018 was changed from open to mitigate open to protect cultural resources.

2. Within two years of the signing of this ROD, 61 recorded cultural resource sites that may potentially be impacted by designated roads in the Monument will be verified in the field and any impacts mitigated, as necessary. The precise location and potential impacts to these cultural resource sites are unknown at this time because they were recorded in the 1970s or 1980s when only 15-minute USGS topographic maps were available for the area. In addition, site-recording techniques were not as precise as current methods. Ongoing inventories to comply with Sections 106 and 110 of the NHPA will also continue in the Monument.

3. Ten high-potential route areas on the Monument are recommended for Class III (intensive) cultural resource inventory before route designation occurs in order to determine and mitigate potential route impacts in compliance with IM 2007-030. These routes are not designated with the Approved Plan but would be designated within five years from the signing of this ROD and once Class III inventory and Section 106 compliance is complete, at which time a separate decision will be issued. These high-potential route areas are as follows:

    - Northern portion of the Monument: P1005, P1053, P1072, P2001
    - Poverty Mountain area: P4001
    - Mt. Trumbull area: P6004, P6005, P6007, P6012, P6032

Appeal Procedures for Implementation Decisions

Any party adversely affected by an implementation decision may appeal within 30 days of receipt of this decision in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR Part 4.4. The appeal must include a statement of reasons or file a separate statement of reasons within 30 days of filing the appeal. The appeal must state if a stay of the decision is being requested in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21 and must be filed with the Monument Manager at the following address:

Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, UT 84790

A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents shall be sent to the Regional Solicitor at the following address:

Lawrence J. Jensen, Regional Solicitor
U.S. Department of the Interior
6201 Federal Building
125 South State Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1180

If the statement of reasons is filed separately, it must be sent to the following address:

Interior Board of Land Appeals
Office of Hearings and Appeals
4015 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22203

It is suggested that any appeal be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

Request for Stay

Any party wishing to file a request for stay pending the outcome of an appeal of one or more implementation decisions must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

- The relative harm to the party if the stay is granted or denied
- The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits of the stay
- The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted
- Whether the public interest favors granting the stay

As noted above, the request for stay must be filed with the Monument Manager at the address listed above.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Although the BLM's intent and commitment to accomplish administrative actions is generally addressed in EIS- or Environmental Assessment (EA)-level documents, such activities are not management decisions at either the land use plan or implementation level. Administrative actions are day-to-day activities conducted by the BLM, often required by FLPMA, but do not require NEPA analysis or a written decision by a responsible official to be accomplished. Examples of administrative actions include mapping, surveying, inventorying, monitoring, and scientific research and studies.

MODIFICATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Modifications and clarifications were made to the Approved Plan based on the review and resolution of the protest letters, as well as from internal review by the BLM and NPS. The agreed upon clarifications or modifications to the decisions are provided below.

MODIFICATIONS

The reference to mountain bikes on "existing routes" (FEIS, p. 2-172) has been changed in the Approved Plan to assure that the Recreation and Visitor Services desired future conditions properly aligns with the Travel Management direction. The desired future condition now reads (changes shown in strikeout; see the desired future conditions under Recreation Management of the Recreation and Visitors Services section of the Approved Plan):

> In Backways and Specialized TMAs, recreation opportunities associated with somewhat remote settings, such as exploring backcountry roads and trails, vehicle camping, hunting, sightseeing, mountain biking, recreation aviation, and picnicking will be maintained/enhanced ~~as well as mountain biking opportunities on existing routes~~, provided they will be compatible with the protection and enhancement of sensitive resource values and Monument objects, where appropriate.

In order to comply with the Monument proclamation prohibiting motorized and mechanized vehicle use off road, the following revisions are made in Chapter 2 decisions regarding Travel Management:

- "Motorized and mechanized vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails on 762,688 acres on BLM and NPS land." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-216)
- "All vehicular travel in the Monuments would be allowed only on roads routes designated as part of the transportation system. To protect Monument objects, no areas would be authorized for driving off these designated roads routes (e.g., cross-country) except for authorized administrative and emergency purposes." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-218)
- "In areas designated as 'limited' in National Monuments and along national trails, motorized and mechanized use would keep within the designated road route with reasonable use of the shoulder and immediate roadside, allowing for vehicle passage, emergency stopping, or parking, unless otherwise posted." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-218)
- "Trail construction (non-motorized and non-mechanized only [bolded text added]) would occur to support protection and/or enhancement of Monument objects, RMZ objectives or to resolve issues of public safety, user conflicts, or resource protection." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-224)
- "New permanent roads routes would not be constructed adjacent to or within designated wilderness or NPS proposed wilderness." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-225)
- "New permanent road motorized route construction on BLM lands would be the minimum necessary to achieve Plan provisions and to produce targeted recreation

opportunities and benefits in RMZs if protection and/or enhancement of Monument objects would be ensured." (FEIS, Table 2.15, Travel Management, Parashant, p. 2-225)

Route Designations

The following modifications were made to designated routes in the Monument:

- Route P3018 is designated mitigate open instead of open in order to protect cultural resources in this area.

See the Monitoring Table in Chapter 3 of the Approved Plan for specific information on monitoring the levels of impact from motorized vehicles on designated roads through desert tortoise habitat in the Monument.

Livestock Grazing

On Map 2.8 in the FEIS (Grazing Allotments), hachuring that represented forage reserves was removed from the southern portion of the Pakoon Springs Grazing Allotment because this area is unavailable for grazing under the Approved Plan.

CLARIFICATIONS

As the result of protests and continued internal review, the BLM made clarifications in the Approved Plan and one clarification on the Summary of Impacts Table from the Proposed Plan/FEIS, which is noted in the following paragraph.

In the Recreation Section of the Proposed Plan/FEIS, the Summary of Impacts Table did not accurately convey the content of the Chapter 4 impact analysis. That analysis for Alternatives C and E stated, "The impacts to settings and opportunities would be the same as those described under Alternative B, but the degree of impact to both motorized and non-motorized recreation would be significantly less" (FEIS page 4-299). The summary table failed to "downsize" the potential impacts for Alternatives C and D from "major" to "minor to moderate."

The ROD/Approved Plan contains appropriate mitigation measures designed to eliminate existing and/or avoid future adverse effects to Monument objects (see Chapter 3). Monitoring strategies (including indicators, protocols, and frequency) to address impacts to natural and cultural resources can be found in Chapter 3 of the attached Approved Plan.

The ROD/Approved Plan also contains more information on how the agency complied with IM 2007-030 (including schedules for inventory and Section 106 compliance) in making route designation decisions regarding cultural resources (see previous discussion on pages 9 and 10 of this ROD).

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR SELECTING THE APPROVED PLAN

The alternatives described in the Draft Plan/EIS, in addition to the public comments and input provided throughout this planning process, were considered in preparing the Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan depicted a combination of decisions from the five alternatives considered in the Draft Plan/EIS, with emphasis on the Preferred Alternative (Alternative E).

This same approach for managing the Monument was chosen as the Approved Plan because:

a. It most effectively accomplishes the overall objectives of protecting Monument resources and values and facilitates appropriate research.
b. It best addresses the diverse community and stakeholder concerns in a fair and equitable manner.
c. It provides the most workable framework for future management of the Monument.

Among the attributes that led to this determination are provisions for protecting Monument resources (archaeological, historic, paleontological, geological, and biological), including special features such as special status species and riparian areas, while providing for visitor use in a manner consistent with protecting Monument resources and values.

The Approved Plan responds to increasing demands for recreation on BLM-administered lands while adhering to FLPMA's mandate for multiple use management and sustained yield of renewable resources. The Approved Plan is very similar to the Proposed Plan, containing only minor revisions and clarifications stemming from protests and internal review.

The Approved Plan responds to travel management and access issues by designating routes and identifying routes to be open, closed, or available for administrative use only. A travel management plan for the Monument will be completed within five years from the date of this ROD.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Measures to avoid or minimize environmental harm were built into the Approved Plan where practicable and appropriate. Many of the standard management provisions will minimize impacts when applied to activities proposed in the Monument. The Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (BLM 1996) will be used as the base standards to assess the health of BLM-administered lands in the Monument. Best management practices will be used where applicable for a number of uses including livestock grazing, recreation management, and realty actions. Additional measures to mitigate environmental impacts may also be developed during subsequent NEPA analysis at the activity-

level planning and project stages, or through legally-mandated consultations covering those same proposed actions.

PLAN MONITORING

As the Approved Plan is implemented, the BLM expects that new information gathered from field inventories and assessments, research, other agency studies, and other sources will update baseline data or support new management techniques and scientific principles. To the extent that such new information or actions address issues covered in the Approved Plan, the BLM will integrate the data through a process called plan maintenance or updating. This process includes the use of monitoring, which is the repeated measurement of activities and conditions over time with the implied purpose to use this information to adjust management, if necessary, to achieve or maintain resource objectives. Bureau of Land Management planning regulations (43 CFR Part 1610.4-9) call for monitoring RMPs on a continual basis and establishing intervals and standards based on the sensitivity of the resource to the decisions involved. CEQ regulations implementing NEPA state that agencies may provide for monitoring to assure that their decisions are carried out and should do so in important cases (40 CFR Part 1505.2(c)).

Plan implementation also includes the use of an adaptive management strategy. As part of this process, the BLM will review management actions and the Approved Plan periodically to determine whether the objectives set forth in this and other applicable planning documents are being met. Where they are not being met, the BLM will consider appropriate adjustments. Where the BLM considers taking or approving actions that would alter or not conform to overall direction of the Approved Plan, the BLM will prepare a plan amendment and environmental analysis in making its determinations and in seeking public comment.

There are two types of monitoring (implementation and effectiveness), which are described below.

Implementation Monitoring

Implementation monitoring, known by some agencies as compliance monitoring, is the most basic type of monitoring and simply determines whether planned activities have been implemented in the manner prescribed by the Approved Plan. As such, implementation monitoring documents the BLM's progress toward full implementation of the land use plan decision. There are no specific thresholds or indicators required for this type of monitoring, but progress towards plan implementation will be evaluated and reported at a 5-year interval from the date of approval of the Approved Plan. Aspects of effectiveness monitoring would also be addressed in the evaluation.

Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring determines if the implementation of activities has achieved the desired future conditions (i.e., goals and objectives) set forth in the Approved Plan. Effectiveness monitoring asks the following question: "Was the specified activity successful in achieving the objective?" Answering this question requires knowledge of the objectives established in the Approved Plan as well as indicators that can be measured. Indicators are established by technical specialists to address specific questions and avoid collection of unnecessary data. Success is measured against the benchmark of achieving the goals and objectives (i.e., desired future conditions) established by the Approved Plan, which may include regulated standards for resources such as endangered species, air, and water. The interval between these efforts will vary by resource and the expected rate of change, but effectiveness monitoring progress will generally be reported to the Monument manager on an annual basis. These reports will include trends and conclusions, when appropriate, and be incorporated into the 5-year evaluation reports.

The BLM will monitor the Approved Plan to determine whether the objectives set forth in this document are being met and whether applying the land use plan direction is effective (see the Approved Plan). If monitoring shows land use plan actions or best management practices are not effective, the BLM may modify or adjust management without amending or revising the Approved Plan as long as assumptions and impacts disclosed in the analysis remain valid and broad-scale goals and objectives are not changed (see the Approved Plan). Where the BLM considers taking or approving actions that will alter or not conform to overall direction of the Approved Plan, the BLM will prepare a plan amendment or revision and environmental analysis of appropriate scope.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Implementation of the Approved Plan will begin upon publication of its Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register*. Some decisions in the Approved Plan require immediate action and will be implemented upon publication of the ROD and Approved Plan. Other decisions will be implemented over a period of years. The rate of implementation is tied, in part, to BLM's budgeting process. Implementation of the Approved Plan will occur in accordance with the implementation and adaptive management framework described in Chapter 3 of the attached Approved Plan.

CONSISTENCY REVIEW

The Arizona Governor's Office did not identify any inconsistencies between the Proposed Plan/FEIS and state or local plans, policies, and programs following the 60-day Governor's Consistency Review of the Proposed Plan/Final EIS, which was initiated in January 2007 in accordance with planning regulations at 43 CFR Part 1610.3- 2(e).

Consistency of the Proposed Plan with other local, state, tribal, and federal plans and policies was also considered during the planning process. The Approved Plan is consistent with plans and policies of the BLM, other federal agencies, and state and local governments to the extent that the guidance and local plans are also consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal law and regulation applicable to public lands.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The planning process was initiated when the BLM published the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS on the management plan for the Monument in the *Federal Register* on April 24, 2002. The BLM hosted a series of public open houses in 2002 and 2003 to solicit public comment on the scoping issues and preliminary alternatives for the Draft Plan/EIS. The NOA of the Draft Plan/EIS was published on November 16, 2005. Another series of open house meetings were held to solicit public comment on the Draft Plan/EIS in January of 2006. The NOA for the Proposed Plan/FEIS was published on March 2, 2007, which opened the 30-day public protest period.

Before the NOI was published in 2002, a series of Community Based Partnership and Stewardship courses were held in northern Arizona and southern Utah in which the public provided early information and communication regarding the Monument.

The BLM is committed to providing opportunities for meaningful public participation in the planning process. Throughout the preparation of the Approved Plan, the BLM maintained an extensive public participation process aimed at providing frequent opportunities for interaction with the public through a variety of media. The general public, representatives of Indian Tribes, organizations, public interest groups, and federal, state, and local government agencies were invited to participate throughout the planning process. This participation included review of proposed planning criteria, issues, preliminary alternatives, the Draft Plan/EIS, and the Proposed Plan/FEIS. These groups and individuals were kept informed through public meetings; planning bulletins; web information; *Federal Register* notices; and distribution of preliminary alternatives, the Draft Plan/EIS, and the Proposed Plan/FEIS. The BLM responded to comment letters on the Draft Plan/EIS and considered public comment when preparing the Proposed Plan/FEIS. The BLM also considered protests on the Proposed Plan when developing the Approved Plan and this ROD.

Ten agencies, tribes, and communities requested Cooperating Agency status and assisted with the Arizona Strip planning effort, and included Coconino and Mohave counties, Arizona; Kane and Washington counties, Utah; the towns of Fredonia and Colorado City, Arizona; the Kaibab Paiute Tribe; Arizona Department of Transportation; Arizona Game and Fish Department; and the Federal Highway Administration.

The Arizona Strip District Office also maintained a national mailing list of approximately 10,500 individuals, agencies, interest groups, and tribes who expressed interest in the planning process. The BLM mailed planning bulletins to those on the mailing list or notified those on the email list that the information was available on the Arizona BLM website in order to keep the public informed of project status and to solicit reviews and information. Public meetings were announced at least 15 days prior to the event in local news media and on the website. The BLM participated in numerous meetings with cooperating agencies, other federal agencies, Indian tribes, state and local governments, and interested individuals and groups.

TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Copies of the BLM and NPS RODs and the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument Resource Management Plan are available on the Arizona Strip District website at **www.blm.gov/az**, or can be obtained by requesting a copy by telephone at (435) 688-3200 or by email at Arizona_Strip@blm.gov. A copy can also be obtained in person at the following address:

BLM Arizona Strip District Office
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, Utah 84790

Monument Manager Recommendation

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated effects, and public input, I recommend adoption and implementation of the Bureau of Land Management decisions in the attached Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument Resource Management Plan.

Dennis Curtis — January 2, 2008

Dennis Curtis
Monument Manager
Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument

Date

District Manager Concurrence

I concur with the adoption and implementation of the Bureau of Land Management decisions in the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument Resource Management Plan.

Scott R. Florence — January 29, 2008

Scott R. Florence
District Manager
Arizona Strip District

Date

State Director Approval

In consideration of the foregoing, I approve the Bureau of Land Management decisions in the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument Resource Management Plan.

Elaine Y. Zielinski — January 29, 2008

Elaine Y. Zielinski
Arizona State Director

Date