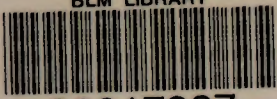


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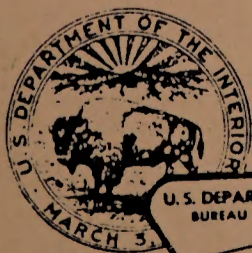


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ORGAN MOUNTAINS COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN



and DECISION RECORD



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
LAS CRUCES DISTRICT OFFICE
MIMBRES RESOURCE AREA
NEW MEXICO

MAY 1989

BLM-NM-PT-89-010-4333



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAS CRUCES DISTRICT OFFICE

1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

May 1989

Dear Reviewer:

Enclosed for your information and use is the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and Decision Record. The Plan is now in effect and will guide future management activities on over 50,000 acres of public land in the Organ and Franklin Mountains of south-central New Mexico.

This Plan is the culmination of over a year of intensive effort by the Las Cruces District and Mimbres Resource Area, as well as many concerned members of the public. The planned actions in this document represent specific recommendations that were provided by two Technical Review Teams (TRTs) that met in March and April of 1988. The TRTs were comprised of private individuals, representatives of special interest groups, other agency personnel, and BLM personnel.

A total of 65 comments were received on the Draft Plan and Environmental Assessment. Changes in the Final document reflect responses to public comments as well as the acquisition of the Cox Ranch and additional State trust land since release of the Draft.

Although the CRMP may not totally please everyone, we feel it represents a balanced, proactive management direction for the area. A basic assumption of the Plan is that urban growth will continue resulting in increased demands on public land resources in the area. Management goals and planned actions have been developed to prevent resource management conflicts from occurring, rather than reacting to conflicts after they develop. The CRMP will also constitute the initial management plan for the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area, should this legislation become a reality.

My staff and I thank you all for your interest, involvement, and comments. Your participation has made this a better plan. The acquisition of the Cox Ranch and the completion of the CRMP are truly significant events and something of which all involved should be proud of. The challenge ahead lies in implementing the CRMP. This will require your continued support and involvement. I am looking forward to the formation of a "Friends of the Organ Mountains" group to help carry this out.

Sincerely,

Tim Salt
Area Manager

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ORGAN MOUNTAINS COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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DECISION

RECORD

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DECISION RECORD
EA NO. NM-036-88-33

DECISION

The following sections constitute the Decision Record for the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and Environmental Assessment (EA). In order to implement specific management goals and objectives as outlined on pages 2 and 3 of the Plan, the planned actions described on pages 4-11 will be applied and implemented. This decision adopts Alternative 1 (Proposed Action), as modified, from the Draft Organ Mountains CRMP and EA of September 1988.

Planned actions to manage threatened and endangered (T&E) or State-listed species include: inventories to determine distribution and occurrence of plant and animal species, designation of approximately 5,300 acres in 6 separate areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) for T&E plants, and mineral withdrawals on approximately 350 acres for Sneed's pincushion cactus.

Planned actions to manage wildlife habitat include: fencing and development of 12 springs to protect key riparian areas, evaluation of habitat for potential reestablishment of desert bighorn sheep, installation of 10 wildlife water catchments, and use of fire as a natural force to maintain habitat diversity.

Planned actions to manage rangeland resources include: construction of 21 miles of pasture fence and installation of several new livestock waters, implementation of grazing systems to allow periodic rest or deferment of grazing within riparian and arroyo areas, and the treatment of up to 24,000 acres of poor condition rangeland to increase vegetation diversity, improve wildlife habitat, and improve soil and water conditions.

Planned actions to manage cultural resources include: archeological inventories of previously unsurveyed areas, test excavation of La Cueva rockshelter, partial restoration, stabilization and interpretation of the historic ruins at Dripping Springs, and nomination of the Dripping Springs, and Minehouse Spring historic

structures to the State and National Register of Historic Places.

Planned actions to manage recreation activities include: development of a Cooperative Management Agreement with the U.S. Army at Ft. Bliss, acquisition of approximately 9,000 acres of private and New Mexico State University (NMSU) inholdings, installation of a water system at the Aguirre Spring Campground, development of the A. B. Cox Visitor Center and associated interpretive facilities, construction of a picnic area near La Cueva, restriction of vehicle access to the Dripping Springs area, development and management of the area known as the Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site for educational and interpretive purposes, construction of approximately 40 miles of new hiking and horseback riding trails (including a trail between the Organ Mountains and Franklin Mountains State Park), development of a cooperative management agreement with local governments and private institutions to provide joint funding and personnel for operation and maintenance of facilities, development of a cooperative management agreement with Franklin Mountains State Park, and provision of additional law enforcement, maintenance, and interpretive personnel.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternative 1 (Proposed Action). This alternative addresses specific management actions at an activity plan level to deal with the five central issues listed on page 1 of the Plan. This alternative includes actions not addressed by the present management alternative in order to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the plan.

Alternative 2 (Least Intensive). This alternative addresses most actions outlined in Alternative 1, but would constitute less intensive and more restrictive management of recreation and rangeland related activities.

Alternative 3 (Most Intensive). This alternative addresses most actions outlined in Alternative 1, but would constitute more

intensive and less restrictive management of recreation related activities.

Alternative 4 (Present Management). This alternative addresses only some or portions of some of the issues listed on page 1 of the Plan, as defined by pre-existing activity plans. It would not fully implement the goals and objectives outlined on pages 2 and 3 of the Plan.

DECISION RATIONALE

This decision is based on the need to plan for the future, to be proactive versus reactive. This decision takes into consideration the impacts described and mitigation recommended in the Draft CRMP/EA, as well as past planning and environmental documents still pertinent to the area.

A prime consideration in this decision is the input and recommendations provided by two Technical Review Teams (TRTs) which studied the area between March and April of 1988. Although not every specific recommendation was incorporated by BLM into the Plan, their input provided the framework for the Plan and the basis for this decision.

Also considered in this decision were 65 comment letters received during the comment period ending November 30, 1988 in response to the Draft CRMP/EA. The majority of comments favored Alternative 2 (Least Intensive). Of the 65 comments received, approximately two-thirds were from the local environmental community. Significant modifications as a result of public comments include: management of the Cox Ranch complex as a day-use facility (including the La Cueva area for which the Draft CRMP had proposed development of a campground to accommodate overnight use), and modification of brush control proposals to mitigate short-term visual impacts and other resource concerns. See Appendix 11 for comments and responses.

The Draft CRMP/EA lists eight proposed mitigating measures (Draft page 4-16) designed to further reduce potential adverse impacts of the proposed actions. The management plan contains a number of mitigating measures which were built into individual planned actions at the outset. The following eight specific mitigating measures listed will be applied as the CRMP is implemented:

1. When appropriate, a Class III inventory of cultural resources will be conducted prior to prescribed burning. Any wooden cultural features will be identified and protected by construction of a fireline around the structure. Where feasible, an engine or hand crew will be stationed for protection during the burn.
2. A qualified resource advisor (Environmental Specialist) will be assigned to all wildfires in the area to ensure that resource concerns are considered in the development and implementation of suppression actions.
3. Areas with significant amounts of yucca, sotol, and cactus will be avoided when planning and conducting prescribed burns.
4. Cave management plan amendments will contain provisions to protect cultural features, cave features, and biological resources from theft or damage.
5. Catchments and other developments will be located to use natural topographic and vegetation screening. All tanks and troughs will be painted (except for the collecting surface of umbrella catchments which peel and clog the drain hole) to match the surrounding rock, soil, or vegetation to minimize visual impacts.
6. The use of vehicles to construct and maintain fences will be kept to the minimum necessary. Clearing of vegetation along fence lines will not be allowed except where absolutely necessary.
7. All areas of surface disturbance, as a result of project development, will be reseeded with a mixture of native shrubs and grasses to speed up the revegetation process.
8. In addition to avoiding large arroyos, vegetation treatments will contain buffer zones to provide for wildlife, T&E, and other concerns. Treatments will be spaced far enough apart to avoid continuous large blocks at any one time. Treatments will follow contours and edges will be scalloped to avoid sharp line contrasts with non-treated areas. As a result of public comment, several criteria have been added to further clarify and strengthen the above provisions. They are:

(a) the maximum size of any single treatment block will not exceed 1,000 acres,

(b) treatments between adjoining pastures will be scheduled at least 3 years apart and treatments within the same pasture will be scheduled 5 to 6 years apart (to minimize visual impacts), and

(c) the area north of the Soledad Canyon road will not be treated until all other areas have been treated and evaluated to determine the effectiveness and desirability of further

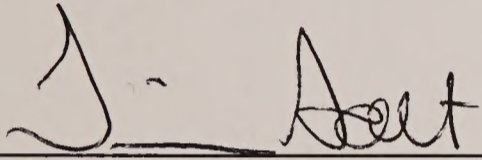
treatment.

(d) brush control treatment areas will generally not be reseeded. If they are reseeded, they will be reseeded with native species.

CONCLUSION

Based on the environmental analysis cited above, I conclude that this action will result in no significant impact to the human environment, therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

Recommended By:

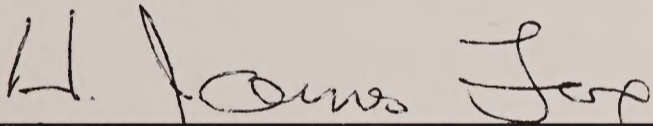


Area Manager, Mimbres Resource Area

4-19-89

Date

Approved By:



District Manager, Las Cruces

4-19-89

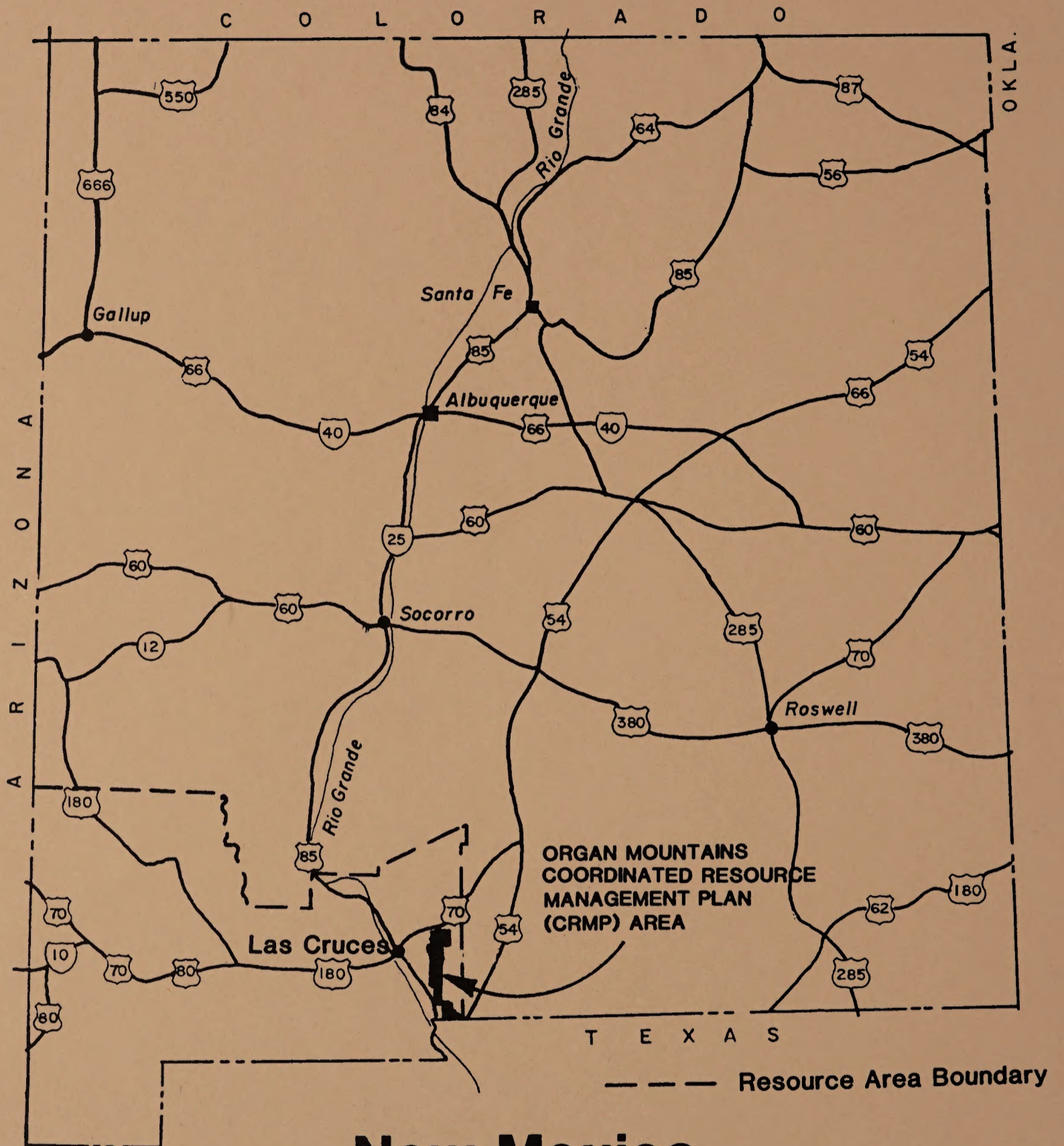
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New Mexico

LOCATION MAP

MAP 1

ORGAN MOUNTAINS COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Need

The Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) is a comprehensive, multiple-use activity plan prepared utilizing the coordinated resource management planning concept. This Plan is expected to guide all land use activities on over 50,000 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as any lands that might be acquired in the Organ and Franklin Mountains of south-central New Mexico (see Map 1). It will address specific, on-the-ground management needs and actions for the following issues (in the context of other uses and activities in the area):

1. Threatened and Endangered (T&E) or State-listed species
2. Wildlife Habitat
3. Rangeland Resources
4. Cultural Resources
5. Recreation

Most planned actions outlined in the following sections will be implemented within a 5 to 10 year timeframe. The Plan itself is expected to remain in effect for 15 to 20 years before major revisions are needed.

The population of the Las Cruces/El Paso metropolitan area is currently estimated to be nearly 800,000 people. Future growth of the area is expected to continue at the rate of about 3.5 percent per year. The Organ and Franklin Mountains attract a number of recreationists who seek a wide variety of recreational pursuits in a mountain setting. The majority of visitors to the area come from the adjacent urban areas. A number of visitors also come from out-of-state. As population growth continues, recreational use of the area is expected to increase. The expected population growth and increasing recreation pressures must be planned for and

accommodated within the constraints of other resources and uses in the area.

The Organ Mountains provide a very spectacular scenic backdrop to the City of Las Cruces and the surrounding area. As such, they are an essential part of the quality of life in this area and their scenic beauty must be protected.

Technical Review Teams (TRTs) comprised of private individuals, representatives of special interest groups, other agency personnel, and BLM personnel were utilized to maximize early public involvement in the development of this Plan. Consensus recommendations provided by the TRTs have formed the basic framework of the planned actions contained in this management plan.

Relationship to Other Plans

Congress directed the BLM to prepare land use plans for public land in Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. These "land use plans" make general resource allocations over large areas such as a county or a Resource Area covering several counties. Prior to FLPMA, BLM's land use plans were called Management Framework Plans (MFPs). The BLM's land use plans are now called Resource Management Plans (RMPs). The term CRMP should not be confused with the term RMP. The term CRMP is not unique to the BLM. It is a planning process that has been developed and adopted by many Federal, State, and local agencies and groups. A CRMP is an "activity plan," that covers a smaller, more specific area than a land use plan. An activity plan is project-specific and is written primarily to implement decisions that are contained in a land use plan.

The following summary of land use plans and activity plans indicates the confusing state of existing plans which covered the area and the need to prepare a single, comprehensive activity plan.

The Southern Rio Grande (SRG) MFP, the overall land use plan for the area, was prepared in 1982. In 1982, a Grazing Environmental Impact

Statement (EIS) was also completed for the SRG planning area. The Las Cruces/Lordsburg MFP Amendment/EIS of 1984 addressed energy minerals (oil, gas, and geothermal) exploration and development, as well as chemical vegetation treatments within the area. The SRG MFP Amendment of 1986 addressed specific land tenure adjustments within Dona Ana County. Acquisition of State and private inholdings within the Organ Mountains Recreation Lands (OMRLs) and Franklin Mountains has progressed according to the SRG MFP amendment. The SRG MFP and its various amendments are still in effect as the overall land use plan for this area. The MFP and its amendments will remain in effect until the Mimbres RMP is completed in 1992. A summary of MFP decisions pertaining to the CRMP area is contained in Appendix 1. The proposed action is consistent with the SRG MFP and will implement decisions contained in that plan that have not yet been implemented.

The Final EIS for the New Mexico Statewide Wilderness Study was completed in 1988. The Final EIS recommends the designation of a 7,144-acre wilderness area in the Organ Mountains. The 7,144-acre Organ Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is presently managed according to the Organ Mountains WSA Interim Management Plan.

The 27,167-acre OMRLs were designated in 1971. The OMRLs Management Plan was also prepared the same year. The plan was revised in 1975 and again in 1985. Unlike the CRMP, the OMRLs Plan was strictly a recreation activity plan and did not specifically plan for other uses, although it did restrict certain activities. Appendix 2 contains a specific accounting of projects and actions that have been dropped or carried forward in the CRMP from the existing recreation activity plans.

An Interpretive Plan was developed for the OMRLs in 1976. Valid aspects of that plan have been carried forward and incorporated into the CRMP.

The 8,947-acre Organ Mountains Scenic Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) was designated in 1984 to protect outstanding visual resources. The existing ACEC management plan has been incorporated into the CRMP.

In 1987, a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) was prepared for the Sneed's pincushion cactus. The

HMP basically included the Bishop's Cap and Franklin Mountains area. That plan has also been incorporated into the CRMP.

OBJECTIVES

All objectives and planned actions in this CRMP will collectively maintain the ecological integrity, as well as the quality scenic, wilderness, recreation, and natural values of this unique area.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) or State-listed Species

1. Protect or enhance the habitat or populations of State-listed or candidate plants and animals so that these species do not become listed or further diminished.
2. Protect or enhance the habitat or populations of Federally-listed plants and animals to recover (de-list) these species. Specifically, the 1987 HMP for Sneed's pincushion cactus set a target of three secure populations totalling 10,000 individuals.
3. Protect sensitive or relict plant communities such as the high-elevation conifer forests.

Wildlife Habitat

1. Manage habitat to maintain or improve conditions for wildlife in a manner compatible with other uses. Specifically, maintain or improve the quality of spring and cliff special habitat features.
2. Maintain habitat for potential reintroduction of historic wildlife species (desert bighorn sheep and turkeys).
3. Develop sources of food, cover, or water where these are limiting factors. Specifically, provide forage for up to eight deer per section.

Rangeland Resources

1. Improve soil, water, and vegetation conditions and increase vegetation diversity in areas where it is economically feasible and in a manner compatible with other uses.

Specifically, change areas dominated by creosotebush and mesquite (60-100 percent composition) to areas with a more desirable plant community composed of 20-40 percent shrubs, 30-40 percent grasses, and 30-40 percent forbs.

2. Improve livestock distribution where needed in a manner compatible with other uses.

Cultural Resources

1. Determine appropriate measures for protection, stabilization, data retrieval, and interpretation of pre-historic and historic sites in a manner compatible with other uses.
2. Provide opportunities for research to expand knowledge and understanding of past cultures.

Recreation

1. Minimize conflicts with adjacent private landowners and Fort Bliss.
2. Minimize conflicts between recreation user groups.
3. Minimize conflicts with other resources and uses.
4. Provide for visitor safety and interpretive needs.
5. Provide for quality developed recreation needs and demands in a manner compatible with other uses.
6. Provide for quality primitive and semi-primitive recreation needs and demands in a manner compatible with other uses.

CONSTRAINTS

This section contains constraints upon planned actions listed in the following section.

1. Livestock grazing will continue in the area under the provisions of this plan.
2. Rights-of-way (ROWs) within the area are recognized as valid and existing authorizations. New facilities will be

confined to existing corridors and ROWs (see Appendix 1).

3. Valid mining claims have prior and existing rights as provided by the mining laws. Surface disturbance on mining claims is regulated by surface management regulations (43 CFR 3802 and 3809).
4. Portions of the CRMP area are closed to all forms of mineral entry under the Classification and Multiple Use (C&MU) Act (see Map 3). The remainder of the area is open to locatable mineral entry, mineral leasing, and saleable mineral disposal subject to special stipulations, appropriate mitigating measures, and wilderness Interim Management Policy (IMP) where appropriate (see Appendix 1).
5. Public land will be managed for the protection and enhancement of State-listed and T&E species. All known or potential habitat will be evaluated (by field examination when necessary) prior to implementing actions which may affect them. Consultations in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) will be conducted if appropriate.
6. Before implementation of surface-disturbing projects, including rangeland developments and vegetation treatments, cultural resources will be inventoried and evaluated and attempts will be made to avoid adverse impacts to National Register eligible sites. Consultation will be made with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to develop acceptable mitigation strategies, in accordance with Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement NMSO 168, dated October 19, 1982, between the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the SHPO.
7. All surface-disturbing actions must meet the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) criteria:
 - a. Class I in the Organ Mountains Scenic ACEC (if Congress designates wilderness in the area, the wilderness area will be managed to VRM Class I criteria).

- b. Class II in the remainder of the mountainous areas.
 - c. Class III and IV in the Organ/Franklin corridor and lower elevation portions of the area.
8. Construction of new fences will meet BLM specifications to permit the movement of identified wildlife, in this case deer and bighorn sheep. Specifications for deer fence would be 4-strand barbed wire with a maximum height of 42 inches, bottom wire smooth and wire spacing from ground up (in inches) - 16, 6, 8, and 12. Specifications for bighorn sheep fence would be 3-strand barbed wire with the bottom strand smooth, maximum height of 39 inches and wire spacing from ground up (in inches) - 20, 15, and 4.
 9. All surface-disturbing activities will be controlled, planned, and designed to minimize erosion.
 10. Protection or enhancement of riparian areas will be given priority in plan implementation.
 11. Check dams or other erosion control structures will be used, where practical, to decrease erosion resulting from management activities.
 12. No new permanent roads will be constructed within the CRMP area.
 13. The area is closed to plant collection and sale. Permits may be issued for plant collection for research purposes.
 14. Management actions within the Organ Mountains WSA will continue subject to the BLM's Interim Management Policy and the Organ Mountains WSA Interim Management Plan until such time as the WSA or other portions of the area are designated as wilderness by Congress or released to multiple uses. Following designation as wilderness, a Wilderness Management Plan amendment would be prepared for the CRMP.
 15. The boundary of the CRMP area is the boundary of the retention area as described by the map in the Southern Rio Grande Plan

Amendment of 1986. Any changes in that boundary will be determined in the Mimbres RMP to be completed in 1992 or by legislation establishing the National Conservation Area (NCA). A copy of the draft legislation for the NCA is contained in Appendix 12. Until such time, there is a moratorium on sale or exchange of public land within T. 22 S., R. 3 E., Section 16, 21 (except NW1/4 SW1/4), 28 and 33; T. 23 S., R. 3 E., Section 4; and T. 25 S., R. 3 E., Section 35 (see Map 4). These areas will be managed in accordance with the CRMP for adjoining lands.

PLANNED ACTIONS

The planned actions listed below constitute Alternative 1 as modified from the Draft CRMP/EA. The planned actions also incorporate all valid portions of existing activity plans. Some planned actions are contingent upon acquisition of private property or subject to authorization by the U.S. Army at Fort Bliss before implementation, as noted.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) or State-listed Species

1. Recognize six major areas of importance within the CRMP area (see Map 3).
 - a. Dripping Springs/Ice Canyon
 - b. Fillmore Canyon
 - c. Indian Hollow
 - d. Bishop's Cap
 - e. Franklin Mountains
 - f. Achenbach Canyon

All six areas will be considered for designation as ACECs through the Mimbres RMP, which is scheduled for completion in 1992. The Fillmore Canyon and Dripping Springs areas are partially on Fort Bliss. Designation of these two areas is contingent upon military approval. The other areas are entirely or mostly on public land.

2. Conduct additional inventory as needed to determine occurrence and distribution of both plants and animals (see Appendix 3).
3. Establish designated trails to minimize human impacts within State-listed or T&E plant areas (route trails to the side or outside of riparian areas). See Map 2.

4. Prohibit overnight camping in back-country areas within riparian zones.
5. Reestablish or construct new fences below Dripping Springs to exclude livestock from Ice Canyon (see Appendix 3 and Map 5).
6. On a case-by-case basis, control/eliminate exotic plant species (evaluate historic significance first in vicinity of mines and other historic locales).
7. Prior to the time exploration and development work begins, on-site inspections should be conducted with the claimant to determine the presence or absence of State-listed, candidate, and threatened or endangered species. When mining exploration notices are received, inform the miners of their liability under the ESA and attempt to help them locate exploration areas where they would not disturb T&E plant species or their habitat. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be notified immediately of all notices near T&E plant populations and of the results of consultations with miners.

In any cases where mining requires Plans of Operation or where construction activities may affect T&E plant populations, USFWS will be consulted immediately as required by Section 7 of the ESA.

8. Protect all formations of Fusselman Dolomite as potential habitat for Sneed's pincushion cactus with the following measures. Removal of salable minerals will not be allowed in this formation. Other surface disturbing activities will not be permitted or will be mitigated to protect the habitat as appropriate (see Map 3).

Complete mineral withdrawals for Sneed's pincushion cactus on approximately 280 acres. After acquisition of private land, complete mineral withdrawals on approximately 75 acres (see Map 3). These recommended decisions will be addressed in the RMP.

9. Monitor for unauthorized removal or damage of plants and their habitat through routine patrols by law enforcement personnel and Resource Area Staff.

Wildlife Habitat

1. Fence or develop 12 springs and associated riparian areas and maintain water for livestock outside each enclosure by providing a trough. The fences will be constructed to allow for passage of deer. If bighorn sheep are reintroduced to the area, the enclosures will be modified to allow for passage of bighorns, (See Appendix 4 and Map 2.)
2. Evaluate habitat for the potential reestablishment of desert bighorn sheep and turkeys. Future establishment will be dependent upon the cooperation of the U.S. Army at Fort Bliss and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF). Reintroductions will be made by direct release into suitable habitats to avoid impacts associated with paddock construction. Potential release areas include the Minehouse Spring and Pena Blanca areas. There will be no restriction on other uses because of desert bighorn sheep reintroductions in the Organ Mountains.
3. Install 10 umbrella-type wildlife water catchments for use by deer, small game, non-game and other wildlife species. The drinkers will be grated to prevent use by livestock. (See Appendix 4 and Map 2.)
4. Determine the role of fire in the maintenance of conifer forest communities. Also determine the role of fire as a natural force within other plant communities in the area. Following these determinations, evaluate and identify areas within all habitat types where the use of prescribed fire would maintain natural habitat diversity and forage production. These determinations will be made through the RMP and associated Environmental Impact Statement. This plan would be amended to include appropriate proposals after the RMP is completed. In the interim, actively suppress all fires within the high elevation conifer forest areas and elsewhere within the CRMP area. Fire suppression tactics will be based on least cost methods.

Work with Fort Bliss to identify and protect the conifer forest areas within the military withdrawal.

5. On a case-by-case basis, control/eliminate exotic or feral species according to the existing cooperative agreement between BLM and the NMDGF.

Rangeland Resources

1. Implement grazing systems utilizing 21 miles of new pasture fence to defer or rest areas containing riparian areas or large arroyo systems during the growing season (rather than fence all riparian or arroyo areas). BLM will also support the construction of livestock fences by the Army along the Fort Bliss boundary, where practical. All fences will be constructed to allow for passage of deer and bighorn sheep where necessary. A brief description, by allotment, including the proposed number of pastures, seasons of use, livestock numbers and grazing system to be used is shown in Appendix 5A. Following approval of the CRMP, individual grazing activity plans will be developed for each allotment that will detail site-specific objectives and grazing systems based upon the overall goals of the CRMP. See Appendix 5B and Map 2 for project locations.
2. Install 3 wells, 4 miles of pipeline, and 9 troughs to provide water in the new pastures created by construction of fences in No. 1 above (see Appendix 5B and Map 2).
3. Initiate brush control on up to 24,000 acres. Initially, most areas will require chemical treatment (Spike 20p for creosotebush and Reclaim for mesquite). Erosion control structures (small check dams or gabion structures) will be placed in gullies and small arroyos within the area prior to treatment. These structures will collect enough soil and water to promote the establishment of perennial grasses and other vegetation which will serve as a seed source after the initial treatment. T&E areas and large arroyos will be avoided in all treatments to protect and maintain the vegetation in these important areas. After the initial treatment, brush control areas will be maintained in the desired vegetation condition by grazing management and prescribed burning (if deemed necessary and desirable). Livestock grazing will be

deferred in all brush control treatment areas for a period of at least 2-3 years following treatment.

Livestock grazing capacity will not be increased as a result of treatment. The main purpose of these treatments, from a livestock management standpoint, will be to create sufficient available forage in the lowland pastures to allow deferred grazing in the mountain areas. (See Appendix 5B and Map 2.)

4. Change the allotment category from "M" (or Maintain) to "I" (or Improve) on the San Augustine Ranch allotment (No. 5003). All other allotments are currently in the "I" category.

Cultural Resources

1. Conduct a Class III archeological survey of the A. B. Cox acquisition, with first priority emphasis on intensive use areas, followed by a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) to the National Register.
2. Conduct a Class II archeological survey of the remainder of area.
3. Test excavate the cave site at La Cueva through a field school. (See Appendix 6 and Maps 2 and 5.)
4. In consultation with the SHPO, implement site restoration and stabilization of the ruins at Dripping Springs (Van Patten's Mountain Camp). Only the territorial-style building against the cliff and the gazebo will be restored. Bands played within the original gazebo and this environment could be recreated by inviting NMSU sponsored string quartets to play on special occasions. In the interim, efforts will be focused on installing a new (tin) roof on the hotel to prevent further damage to the fabric roof inside. Other stabilization efforts will focus on the rock/adobe walls of the other structures to prevent further deterioration. The more recent wooden structures (at Boyd's Sanatorium) need to be stabilized and protected from further vandalism. Until the restoration/

stabilization work is completed, visitors will be allowed only when accompanied by BLM personnel. In conjunction with the restoration/ stabilization, a self-guided interpretive walk-through will be developed along with guided tours. (See Appendix 6 and Maps 2 and 8.)

5. Nominate Dripping Springs and (with the permission of the owner) the Minehouse Spring bunkhouse to the State and National Register of Historic Places (see Maps 2 and 8).
6. Following acquisition of the Price property, protect any remaining intact archeological deposits at the Pena Blanca rockshelter pending submission of appropriate research proposals that will generate new information (no further excavations are needed in the near future). Plastic sheeting will be placed over the shelter deposits and sterile fill (sand) will be placed in the rockshelter to a depth of 8 inches to discourage further digging.
7. At the time mining claims are recorded or prior to the time exploration and development work begins, on-site inspections should be conducted with the claimant to determine the presence or absence of cultural resources. If present, sites will be avoided or mitigated, whichever is appropriate.

Recreation

1. Develop a Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) with the U.S. Army at Fort Bliss to establish a management boundary (there would be no relinquishment or change in the withdrawal). BLM would manage recreation uses and other activities on that portion of Fort Bliss up to the topographic crest south of Aguirre Spring and west of the crest above Dripping Springs and Fillmore Canyon (total of 3,680 acres). Recreation access would not be allowed on that portion of BLM-administered public land east of the topographic crest in the vicinity of Pena Blanca and Bishop's Cap. BLM would post and patrol the boundary within these areas as well as publish closure orders for the areas east of the topographic crest in the

vicinity of Bishop's Cap and Pena Blanca (total of 960 acres). Before public use is allowed within the withdrawal area, an historical record search of unexploded ordnance should be conducted and, if necessary, a mine sweep completed. The CMA would also contain provisions for the BLM and Army to work together to protect scenic and natural values elsewhere in the Organ Mountains and in the north end of the Franklin Mountains (see Map 3).

2. Acquire all remaining private inholdings (approximately 6,400 acres) by purchase or exchange, provided the landowner is in concurrence with such acquisition. High priority parcels for acquisition are: patented mining claims, remaining Cox family land, Paul Price parcels, and Andereed/Cooper Inc. parcels. If the Andereed/Cooper, Inc. and Price parcels cannot be acquired, work with the landowners and County to preserve easements and to provide parking areas to ensure continued access to public land.

Acquire all NMSU land (approximately 2,100 acres) according to S. 2545, Title V ("A" Mountain Land Exchange).

See Map 4 and Appendix 10.

3. Continue to manage the Aguirre Spring Campground as an overnight facility. Quiet hours will be in effect between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The campground will be closed to entry by means of a locked gate after 8:00 p.m. in the winter and 10:00 p.m. in the summer. When camping use is consistently 80 percent of capacity during peak use periods, another campground may be constructed elsewhere in the area (but not at La Cueva). Nearby areas such as the Dona Ana Mountains will also be evaluated in the site selection process. A water system will be installed to provide a year-long potable source of water at the Aguirre Spring Campground. The water distribution system will consist of a central storage tank located near the upper loop and seven spigots (three in the upper loop, three in the lower loop and one in the group area). Drinking water will be hauled to the storage tank in a specially approved 1,500 gallon

tank truck from the District Office. There will be no flush toilets, showers or RV hookups provided. Installation of the water system will enable the BLM to charge use fees at the campground (approximately \$5.00 per car). These use fees will be used in the operation and maintenance of the facility. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 6.)

4. Install donation boxes at the District Office, Aguirre Springs Campground, and at Cox/La Cueva. Donations will be used in the development, operation, and maintenance of these areas.
5. Construct a permanent residence (administrative site) for the Aguirre Spring Campground host(s). The installation will consist of a mobile home or an adobe style structure and storage building designed to conform with Visual Resource Management standards for the area. It will be located near but not in the campground (see Appendix 7A and Map 2).
6. Fence the Aguirre Spring Campground to correspond with the existing 1/4-mile safety/no-shooting restriction (to exclude livestock and delineate the campground boundary). Two cattleguards and gates will also be installed where the fence crosses the access road. Two people passes will also be installed on the Pine Tree and Baylor Pass Trails. See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 6.
7. Manage the entire Cox Ranch area (including the La Cueva picnic area, A. B. Cox Visitor Center, and Dripping Springs ruins) as a day-use area. The entrance gate, immediately below the La Cueva picnic area, will be locked at 8:00 p.m. in the winter and 10:00 p.m. in the summer. Initially, there will be no fee for use of the area. As facilities are developed, a day use fee will be charged (\$2.00 - \$3.00 per car).
8. Develop a visitor center complex utilizing the existing ranch house and outbuildings of the former Cox Ranch headquarters. This will be named the A. B. Cox Visitor Center. Vehicle parking will be located a short distance to the west of the visitor center

to permit unobstructed views down the canyon towards La Cueva and the Mesilla Valley. The visitor center will be fully handicapped accessible. A picnic area/day camp facility will be located between the parking area and visitor center. A 1 1/2-mile unpaved, one-lane service road/hiking trail will be maintained between the visitor center and a small parking area located below the Dripping Springs ruins (near the tack building below the stone fence). The service road/hiking trail will be closed by means of a locked gate to preclude vehicle use except for administrative purposes, guided tours, and for handicap/elderly person access to the upper parking area. Guided tours could also be conducted using horse drawn wagons. Access will be by foot only to the ruins (a 1/4-mile surfaced handicap accessible hiking trail will be constructed). In addition to the main service road/hiking trail from the visitor center to Dripping Springs, the powerline service road (which runs down the canyon due west of Dripping Springs) will be closed by means of a locked gate to preclude vehicle use except for administrative use (including powerline maintenance). See Appendix 7A and Maps 2, 5, 8, and 9.

9. Interpretative themes at the visitor center and in the vicinity of La Cueva and Dripping Springs will include:
 - Wildlife, recreation, plants, wilderness, grazing, mining, geology, cultural resources, history, paleontology, Fort Bliss/private lands, safety, and general outdoor ethics.
 - Selected artifacts removed from the La Cueva site and Pena Blanca rockshelter would be interpreted and displayed at the visitor center.
 - The visitor center themes would cover the entire area (Organ and Franklin Mountains).
10. Construct a 55-unit picnic area near the existing facility at La Cueva. The number of units located in the arroyos will be limited to a maximum of 30 to minimize wildlife and vegetation impacts as well as potential safety hazards due to flooding.

Facility development will also include installation of vault toilets and provision of drinking water. There will be no flush toilets or showers provided (see Appendix 7A and Maps 2, 5, and 7).

11. Install vault toilet(s) at the upper parking area below Dripping Springs. Construct in a style compatible with historic resources.

12. Construct a shelter for shade at a point midway between Dripping Springs and the visitor center. Construct in a style similar to historic rock buildings in the area.

13. Develop a Cooperative Agreement among BLM, Dona Ana County, the City of Las Cruces, The Nature Conservancy, and NMSU for the purpose of jointly administering the visitor center complex. The agreement would provide:

- Resident caretaker(s)
- Volunteers to provide visitor contact and interpretive services
- Paid personnel from other agencies involved
- Funding for facility development and maintenance

14. Fence the entire La Cueva/Cox Ranch picnic/day-camp area, parking area, and visitor center complex to exclude livestock and delineate the boundaries of the area for safety/no-shooting and other restrictions (1/4-mile zone). The existing trough and corral located just west of the present ranchhouse will be relocated. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 5.)

15. Expand the parking area at the Baylor Pass westside trailhead to accommodate additional horse trailer parking (see Appendix 7A and Map 2).

16. Construct a 4-mile hiking/equestrian/bicycle trail from the lower portion of the Baylor Pass Trail to connect with the La Cueva area. This will be known as the Minehouse Trail. Bicycle use of this trail would be prohibited at such time as the area becomes designated wilderness (in accordance with

BLM's wilderness policy). Horse trailer parking facilities will be provided near La Cueva. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 5.)

17. Construct a surfaced hiking trail to allow visitors to view the rockshelter at La Cueva, including appropriate interpretation. The trail will loop around the rocks past the bedrock mortars. The trail will also link the visitor center and picnic area. Also interpret the Modoc Millsite ruins via a hiking trail originating at La Cueva. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 5.)

18. Following acquisition of the Price property, construct a surfaced hiking trail (surfacing will prevent erosion) around Pena Blanca to take visitors past the rockshelters and mortars. The trail will originate and end at a designated parking area. Coordinate with Drs. Upham and Blake at NMSU. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 10.)

19. Manage the area known as Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site for scientific, educational, and interpretive purposes (tied in with the developments and cooperative agreement between BLM, city, county, etc. proposed for the Cox property). Because of the proximity to a developing residential area, the protection and management of this area will be a high priority. Facilities will include a designated parking area, hiking trail system, and signing. Climbing activities will be specifically prohibited. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 10.)

20. Following military approval (via the CMA with the Army), develop a 5-mile cross-mountain hiking trail to connect the Pine Tree Trail with the La Cueva area through Fillmore Canyon. The trail would be routed to avoid the Fillmore Canyon riparian area. (See Appendix 7A and Map 2.)

21. Construct a 28-mile hiking/equestrian/bicycle trail from the Franklin Mountains (tie in with Franklin Mountain State Park) to La Cueva. This will be known as the Dusty Trail. The portion of the trail within the Organ/Franklin corridor will be located west of the slope breaks on the upper part of the mesa to avoid soils of

- high erosion susceptibility. Existing roads and trails will be used to the extent possible. (See Appendix 7A and Map 2.)
22. Develop a CMA between BLM and Franklin Mountains State Park. The CMA should address joint signing, patrols, trail development, visitor management and reporting procedures.
 23. Pave the Dripping Springs Road to the visitor center (approximately 4 miles, including the parking areas and picnic area loops) to reduce dust levels and need for maintenance. The Baylor Canyon road will remain unpaved. (See Appendix 7A and Maps 2 and 5.)
 24. Keep the Westside Road from Soledad Canyon Road south to Pena Blanca (and vehicle routes that branch off this road to specific locations or to rangeland improvements) open to vehicle use. Other vehicle routes in the vicinity of Achenbach Canyon and Pena Blanca will be closed to vehicle use. Specifically, these are the jeep trail on the ridge north of Achenbach Canyon and jeep trails on the north and south sides of Pena Blanca. (See Map 2.)
 25. Keep the Westside Road between the Dripping Springs Road and the Soledad Canyon Road open to vehicle use. Other vehicle routes in that area will be closed. (See Map 5.)
 26. Limit vehicle use to designated roads and trails within the CRMP area. This will be accomplished by the following actions. Delete the west half of Sections 22 and 27 (640 acres) from the Mossman Arroyo ORV "open" area (these portions of the open area are presently within the proposed NCA boundary). In the Organ/Franklin corridor (which is presently undesignated), ORV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. On recently acquired State trust land (which is presently undesignated) ORV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. In the Organ Mountains WSA (which is presently limited to existing roads and trails), ORV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. (See Map 2.)
 27. Confine mining access roads, powerlines, and other development in the vicinity of Bishop's Cap to the southern exposure.
 28. Conduct or update a mine hazard inventory. On a case-by-case basis, determine appropriate measures for hazard abatement. Measures could include fencing, signing, grating, or filling in. Actions will be coordinated with the SHPO and New Mexico Department of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources and the New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources. Old ore dumps will be preserved and not used for backfill materials.
 29. There are presently no known caves in the CRMP area that contain significant resource values and that require special management attention except for the rockshelters at La Cueva and Pena Blanca. Any significant newly discovered caves will be managed by developing cave inventories and cave management plan amendments (appendices) to the CRMP. These inventories and plan amendments will be prepared in cooperation with the National Speleological Society and the Mesilla Valley Grotto.

Maintain the availability of the La Cueva rocks for continued cave rescue practice. The installation of additional permanent climbing devices such as pitons will be allowed in consultation with the Southwest Mountaineers or other members of the climbing community. Climbing above the entrance to the La Cueva rockshelter will be prohibited.
 30. Confine all pets to leashes within designated campgrounds and on designated trails. Pets will be under the control of the owner at all times.
 31. Limit the maximum camping stay limit will be 7 days within any period of 28 consecutive days anywhere within the area. Cutting or gathering of firewood will be prohibited anywhere within the area. Within designated recreation sites (Aguirre Spring and La Cueva), open fires will be confined to existing fire rings provided. There will

also be a ban on all open fires in backcountry areas (over 1/4-mile from any road or vehicle route).

32. Develop a colored recreation map clearly depicting legal access and land status using numbered roads and trails that correspond to the map.
33. Use Carsonite markers to post critical public/private and public/military boundaries.
34. Concentrate new signing on the Cox Ranch area. Place climbing safety signs at all trailheads. Minimize the number of all signs, where possible (see Appendix 7B).
35. Keep the existing Pine Tree Trail open to hiking use only. Keep the existing Baylor Pass Trail open to hiking, equestrian, and bicycle use. Bicycle use of the Baylor Pass Trail would be prohibited at such time as the area becomes designated wilderness (in accordance with BLM's wilderness policy).

PERSONNEL AND FUNDING NEEDS

Existing staffs and funding levels are, for the most part, adequate to implement all planned actions, except for recreation development, operation, and maintenance (including visitor services, resource protection, and interpretation). Appendix 7C compares existing funding and personnel needs to what will be required to fully implement the recreation-related planned actions called for in the CRMP.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

Habitat management actions outlined in this plan will be implemented under Sikes Act Authority with the NMDGF. Appendices 3 through 8 contain descriptions of projects, priorities for

implementation, units, and cost estimates as they relate to the planned actions. Costs shown are 1989 costs. All proposals are subject to funding availability and to further analysis on a project specific basis to determine feasibility and design criteria.

Funding for project proposals will come from a variety of sources. In some cases, funding will be provided through direct appropriation as a part of BLM's normal budget process. Funding from other sources such as contributions through the BLM's Gift Catalog, Challenge Cost Share, and funding through other agencies or charitable organizations will be actively solicited and utilized for implementation and maintenance. The formation of a non-profit "Friends of the Organ Mountains" group, devoted to assisting BLM in the implementation of the recreation, cultural, and interpretive aspects of this CRMP will be greatly encouraged and supported by the BLM.

The NMDGF, sportsmen's groups, and other volunteers will also be relied on to provide assistance for implementation and maintenance.

MONITORING (EVALUATION AND REVISION)

This Plan may be modified if data from monitoring or information from other sources indicates a need for change. Where applicable, the concept of Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) will be used in monitoring to determine whether or not management actions are meeting the stated objectives. LAC standards or indicators, once established, signal unwanted changes in the environment or visitor's perceptions that will dictate the need for a change in management direction.

Modification or revision of the habitat management portion of this Plan will be agreed upon by the BLM and the NMDGF. Appendix 9 contains monitoring strategies for the CRMP.

APPROVALS

Recommended By:

Scott R. Florence

Multi-Resource Staff Chief, Mimbres Resource Area

4-19-89

Date

Approved By:

J. Holt

Area Manager, Mimbres Resource Area

4-19-89

Date

H. James Inf

District Manager, Las Cruces District

4-19-89

Date

Sam J. Woodard

State Director, New Mexico

4-19-89

Date


















ILLUSTRATIONS

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COX RANCH AREA MAP 5

LEGEND

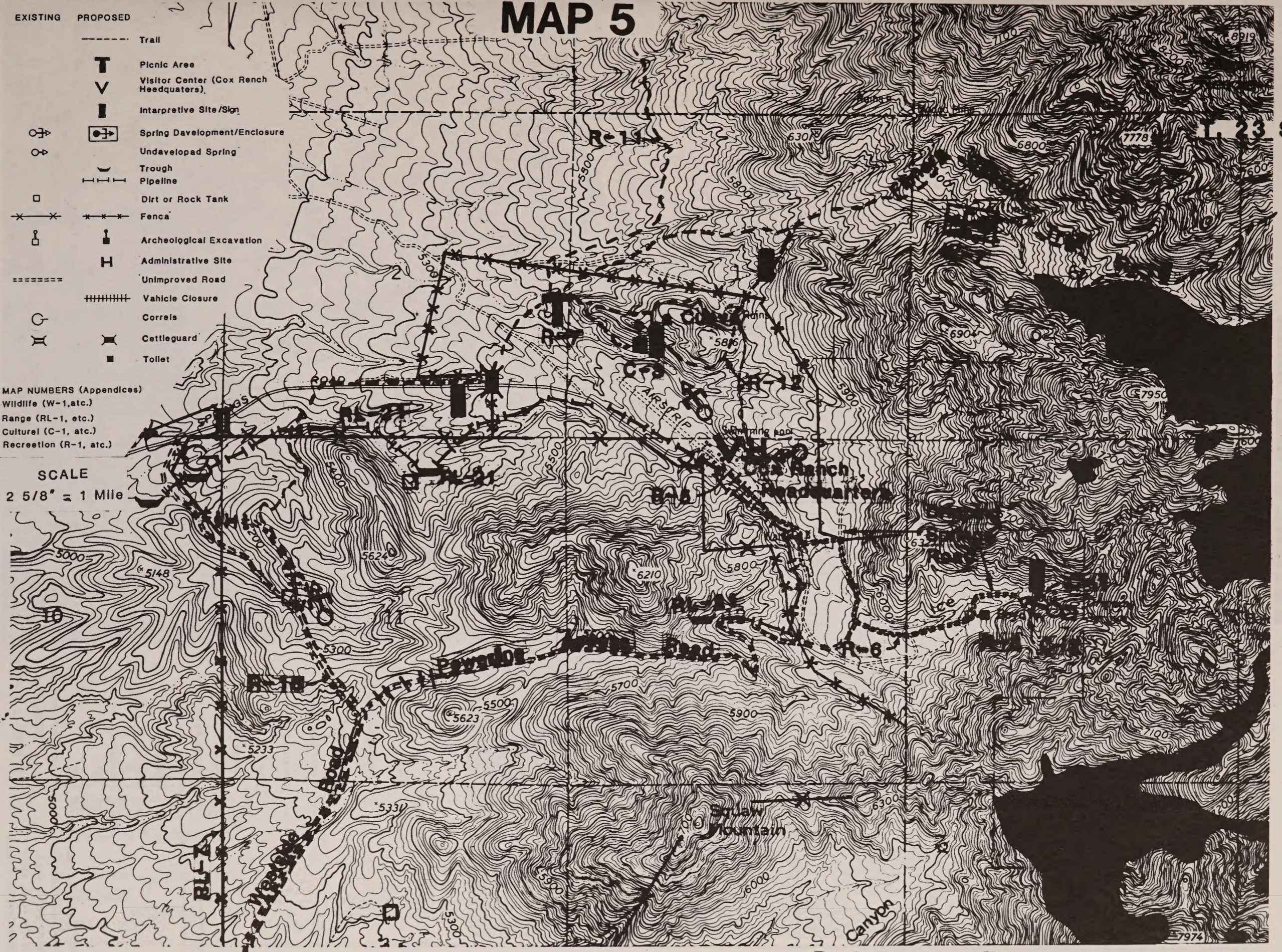
EXISTING PROPOSED

-  Trail
-  Picnic Area
-  Visitor Center (Cox Ranch Headquarters)
-  Interpretive Site/Sign
-  Spring Development/Enclosure
-  Undeveloped Spring
-  Trough
-  Pipeline
-  Dirt or Rock Tank
-  Fence
-  Archeological Excavation
-  Administrative Site
-  Unimproved Road
-  Vehicle Closure
-  Correl
-  Cattleguard
-  Toilet

MAP NUMBERS (Appendices)
 Wildlife (W-1, etc.)
 Range (RL-1, etc.)
 Cultural (C-1, etc.)
 Recreation (R-1, etc.)

SCALE

2 5/8" = 1 Mile



R. 3 E. R. 4 E.

S.

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AGUIRRE SPRING AREA

MAP 6



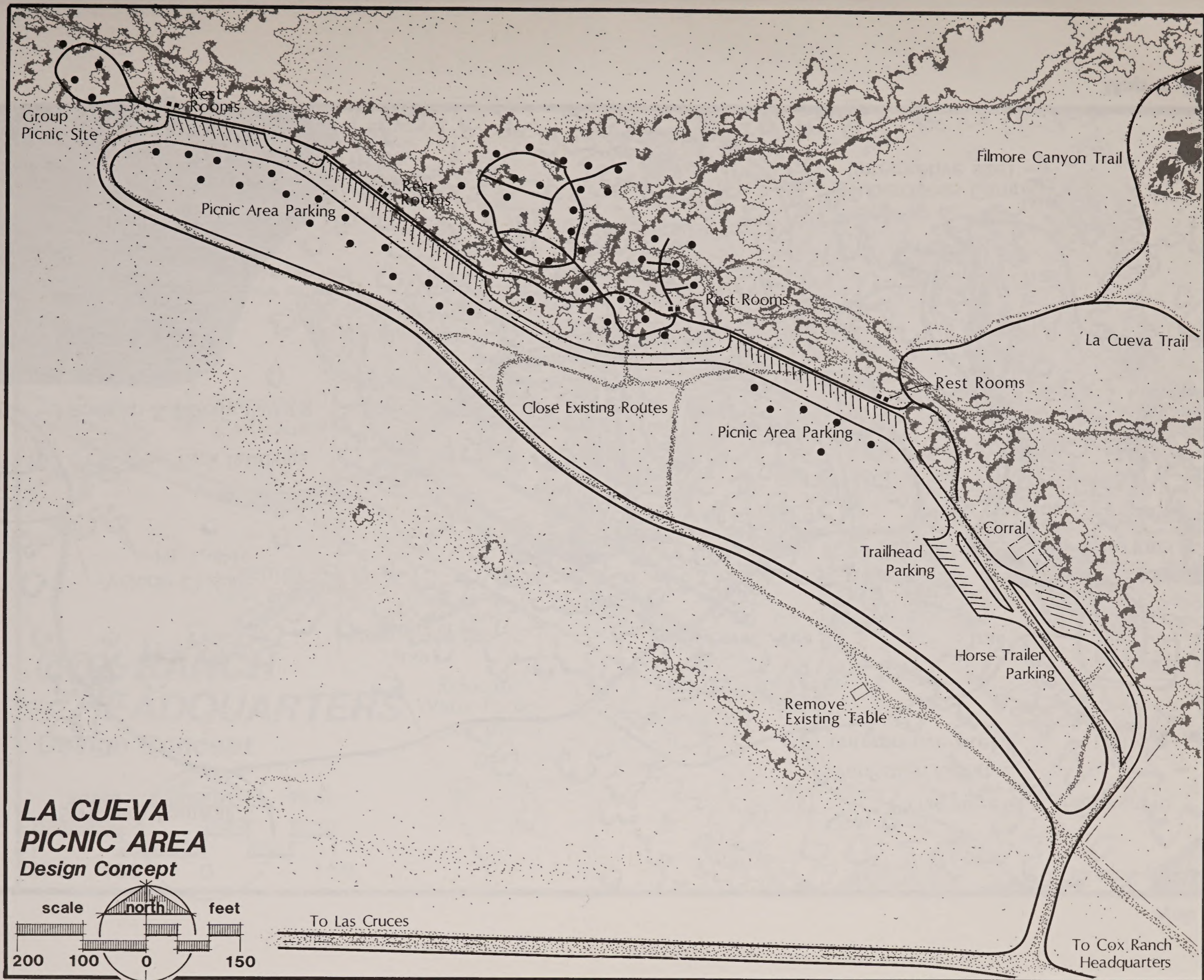
LEGEND

EXISTING	PROPOSED	
-----	o-o-o-o-o	Trail
□		Interpretive Site
△		Campground
⊕	⊕	Spring Development
⊙		Undeveloped Spring
⊗		Well
	■	Storage Tank
	—	Pipeline
==		Improved Road
—x—x—	—x—x—	Fence
	⊘	Cattleguard
	▼	Wildlife Water Catchment
	●	Fee/Contact Station

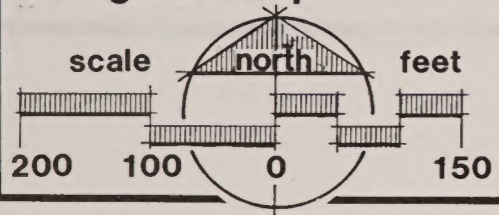
MAP NUMBERS (Appendices)
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 Range (RL-1, etc.)
 Cultural (C-1, etc.)
 Recreation (R-1, etc.)

SCALE
 2 5/8" = 1 Mile

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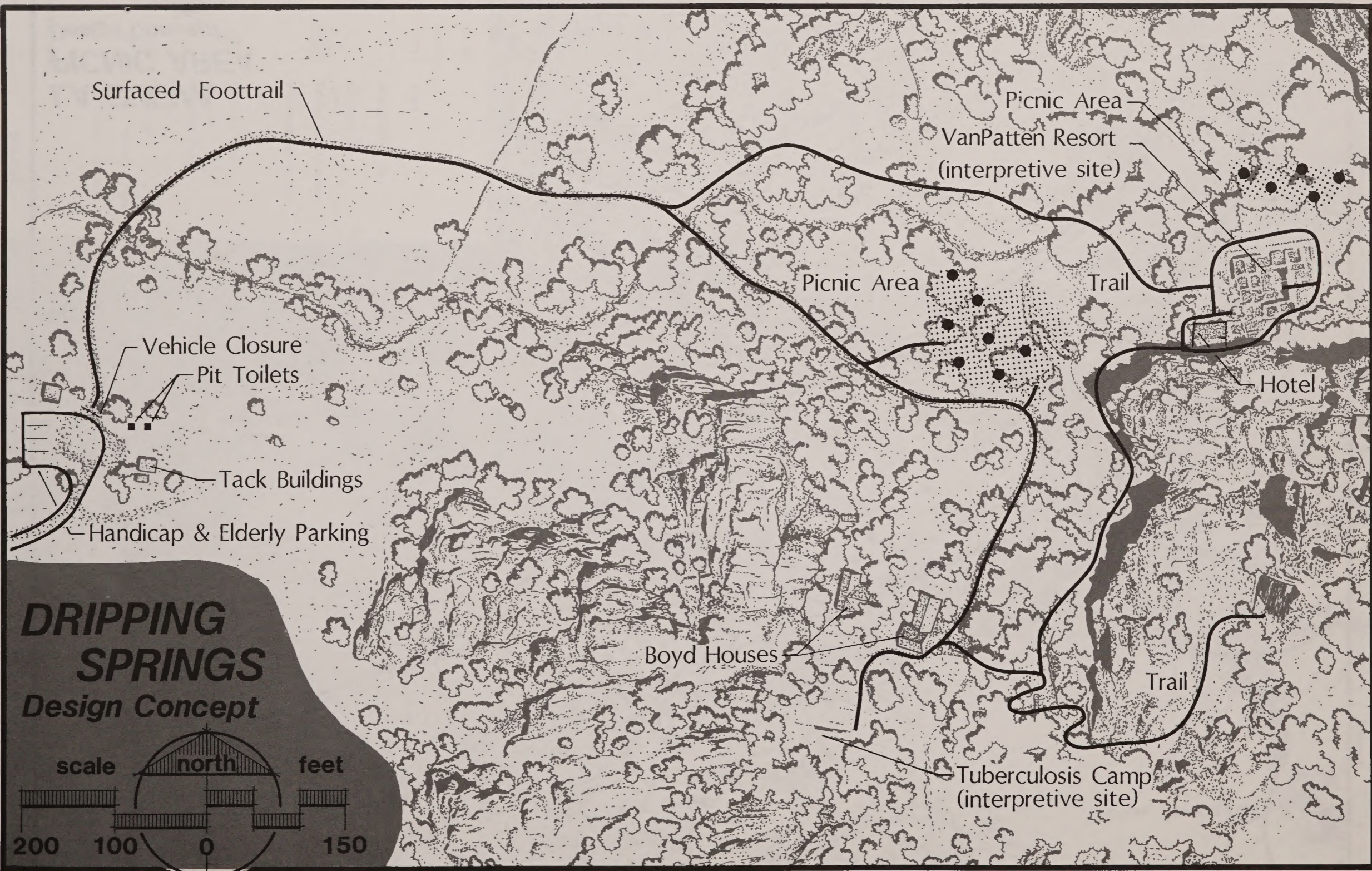


**LA CUEVA
PICNIC AREA**
Design Concept

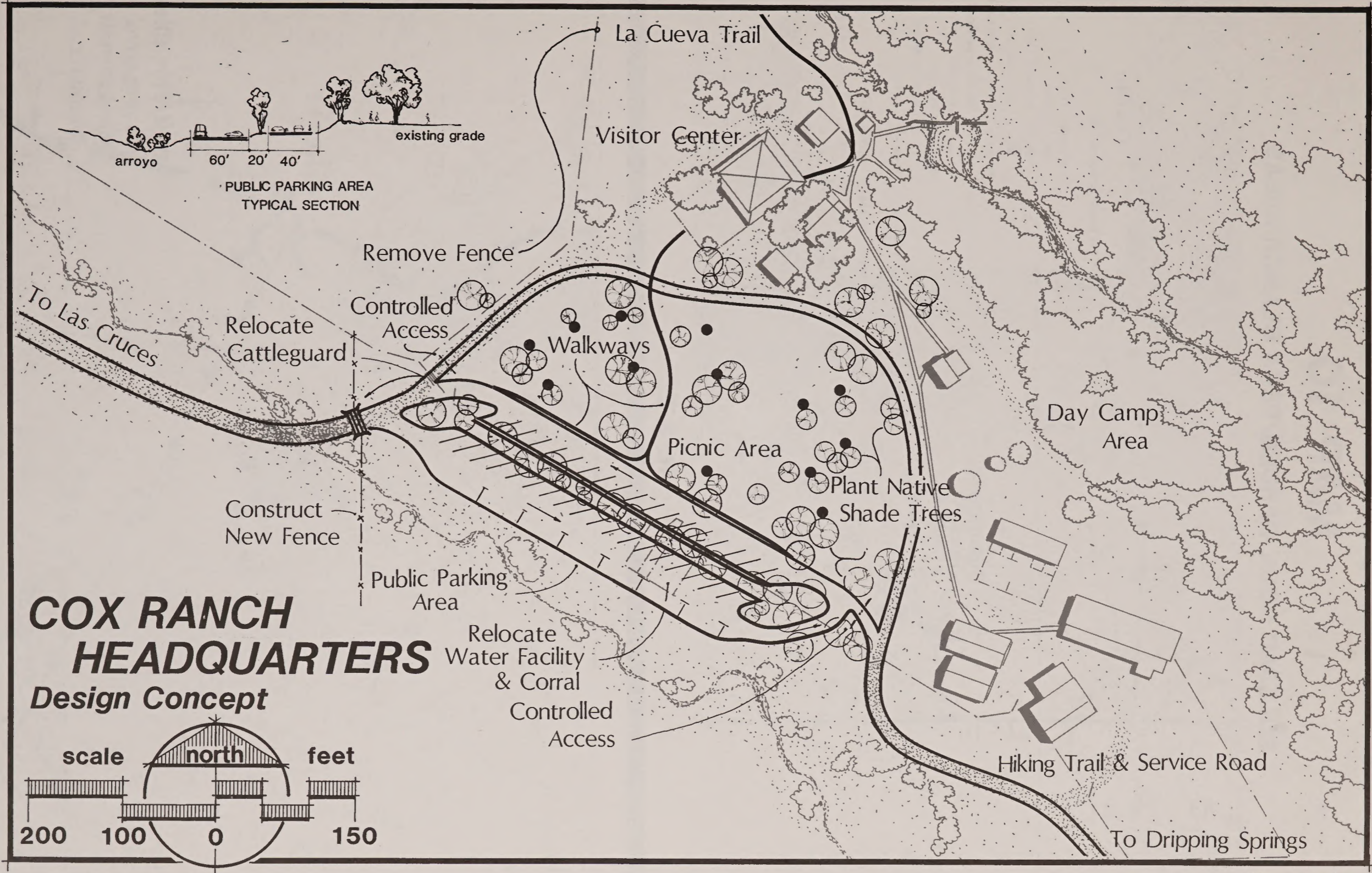


To Las Cruces

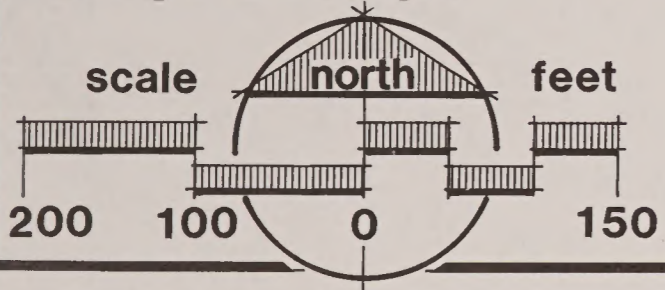
To Cox Ranch Headquarters



Map # 8

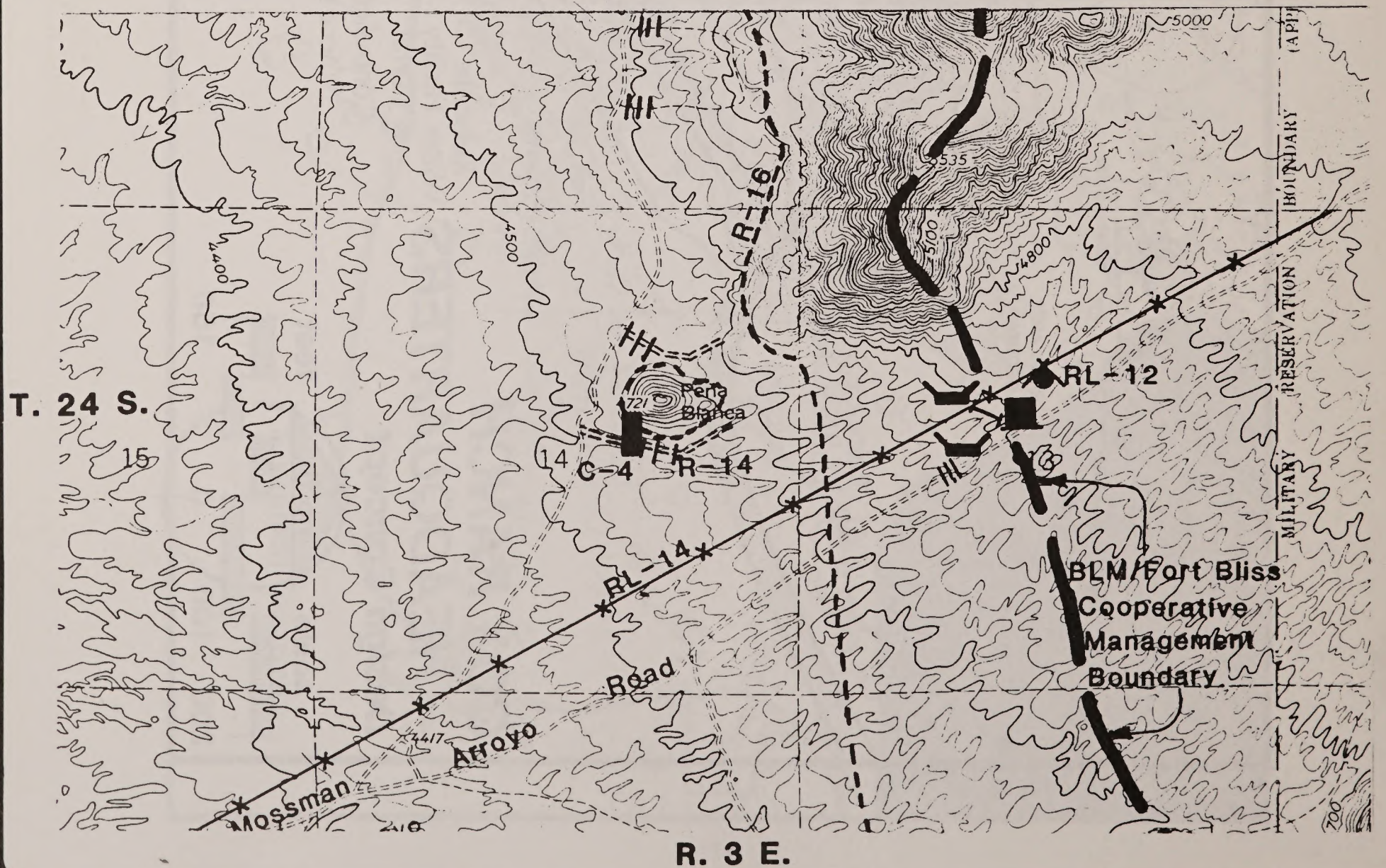
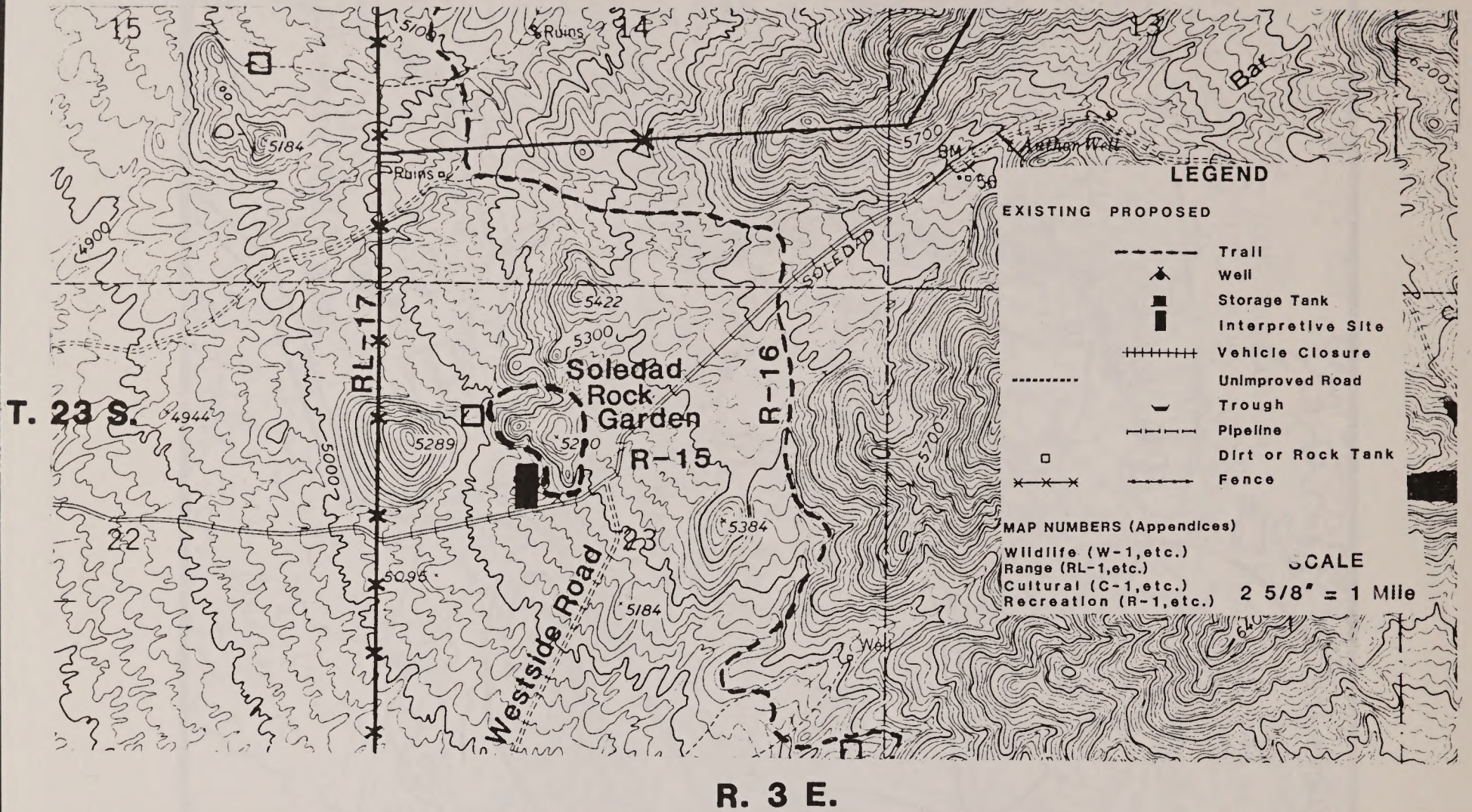


**COX RANCH
HEADQUARTERS**
Design Concept



MAP 10

SOLEDAD ROCK GARDEN/PEÑA BLANCA AREAS



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APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP) DECISIONS

This section lists valid existing MFP decisions which apply to the Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP)/National Conservation Area (NCA).

A. Lands.

The Southern Rio Grande (SRG) Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1982) designated two utility corridors across the proposed CRMP/NCA, one north/south corridor that cuts across the proposed area near the southwest corner of Fort Bliss and continues down the westside of the Franklin Mountains. The other is an east/west corridor that cuts across the Franklin Mountains at Anthony Gap. The north/south corridor was designated for El Paso Electric and Chevron Products while the east/west corridor was designated for Southern Pacific Products and El Paso Electric.

B. Minerals.

Leasables - The Las Cruces/Lordsburg (LCL) MFP Amendment (1984) designated the following areas Not Open to Leasing (NOL):

Baylor Recreation Area
Classification and Multiple Use (C&MU)
Lands within Organ Mountains
Scenic Area of Critical
Environmental Concern (ACEC)
Organ Mountains Recreation Area
(Aguirre Spring area)

The following areas were designated open to leasing subject to special stipulations:

Organ Mountains Wildlife (Raptor
Nesting Area)
Organ Mountains Wilderness Study Area
(WSA)
Organ Mountains Recreation Lands
(OMRLs)
Lord's Ranch (Our Lady's Youth Center)
Franklin Mountains South

The following areas were designated open to leasing with No Surface Occupancy (NSO):

Needle's Eye Picnic Area
Organ Mountains Scenic ACEC

The remainder of the proposed CRMP/NCA, including the northern Franklin Mountains and the area between the Organs and Franklins is open to leasing with no special stipulations.

Locatables - The SRG MFP basically stated that all areas were open to exploration and development with the following exceptions:

1. Organ Mountains - exclude those areas inside mineral withdrawal (C&MU) pending withdrawal review. In the area overlapping the Organ Mountains Scenic ACEC, the Notice of Intent (NOI) or Plan of Operations (POO) will include mitigation measures to protect visual resources. In the area overlapping the Organ Mountains WSA, exploration and development will be conducted within the Interim Management Policy (IMP) Guidelines.

2. Mitigating measures should be used to protect Class II visual resources and threatened and endangered (T&E) plant species in the Bishop's Cap area.

3. In the Franklin Mountains, the NOI or POO will include measures to protect T&E plants.

4. Special permits for off-road vehicle (ORV) use related to mineral activities are required in the OMRLs, Organ Mountains WSA and Franklin Mountains.

Salables - Approximately one section in the vicinity of Bishop's Cap was identified for building stone sale and extraction. One to two sections in the Franklins were identified for sale and extraction of clay. Special stipulations are required in all Environmental Assessments (EAs) to protect T&E plants, visual resources (Class II and Class III areas), arroyo riparian, and other wildlife habitat areas.

Areas within the Organ Mountains WSA are excluded pending the outcome of the designation

process. Special permits for ORV use related to mineral activities are required in the OMRLs and Franklin Mountains.

C. Rangeland Management.

The SRG MFP initially placed three allotments (A. B. Cox Estate - 5002, San Augustine Ranch - 5003, and S. A. Walter - 5012) in the "M" or Maintain category. The other five allotments within the proposed CRMP/NCA boundary (W. F. Blythe - 5001 and 5004, Paul Price - 5009, Baylor Canyon - 5013, and Dale Hopkins - 5006) were placed in the "I" or Improve category. The A. B. Cox Estate Allotment was later changed to an "I" allotment. The Dale Hopkins and Baylor Canyon allotments were later combined into the Baylor Canyon allotment.

D. Wildlife.

The Organ Mountains were designated as the highest priority of three areas in the SRG Planning Area for deer habitat management plan (HMP) development. The MFP also specifically allocated forage for deer on an allotment basis. A total of 747 animal unit months (AUMs) were allocated to big game within the proposed CRMP/NCA. The HMP has not been prepared.

E. Vegetation.

The entire area is closed to plant collection and sale.

F. Recreation.

ORV use in the OMRLs and Franklin Mountains is limited to designated roads and trails.

ORV use in the Organ Mountains WSA is limited to existing roads and trails.

The area between Bishop's Cap (south end of OMRLs) and Franklin Mountains is undesignated.

The area around Bishop's Cap and Anthony Gap was designated as a rock and mineral collection area (seems to conflict with decision under minerals for sale of building stone at Bishop's Cap).

The Organ Mountains Scenic ACEC was designated in 1984 through the LC/L MFP Amendment (8,947 acres).

SRG MFP decision to provide bus and other vehicle parking and interpretive facilities at Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site north of Bishop's Cap (not done).

MFP decision to reintroduce desert bighorn sheep to Organ Mountains by 1986 (not done).

MFP decision to acquire State trust and private lands within OMRLs, later reaffirmed by SRG Plan Amendment (1986).

SRG Plan Amendment extended acquisition into Franklin Mountains, retaining a corridor between the two ranges.

State trust land in the Organ and Franklin Mountains has been acquired, and the Cox Exchange (private) in the OMRLs has been completed.

The SRG Plan Amendment also tentatively recommended ACEC status for the Organ/Franklin corridor and Franklin Mountains pending a final RMP decision.

The MFP stated that visual resources would be maintained in Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II, III, or IV (bulk of OMRLs and Franklin Mountains are in Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II).

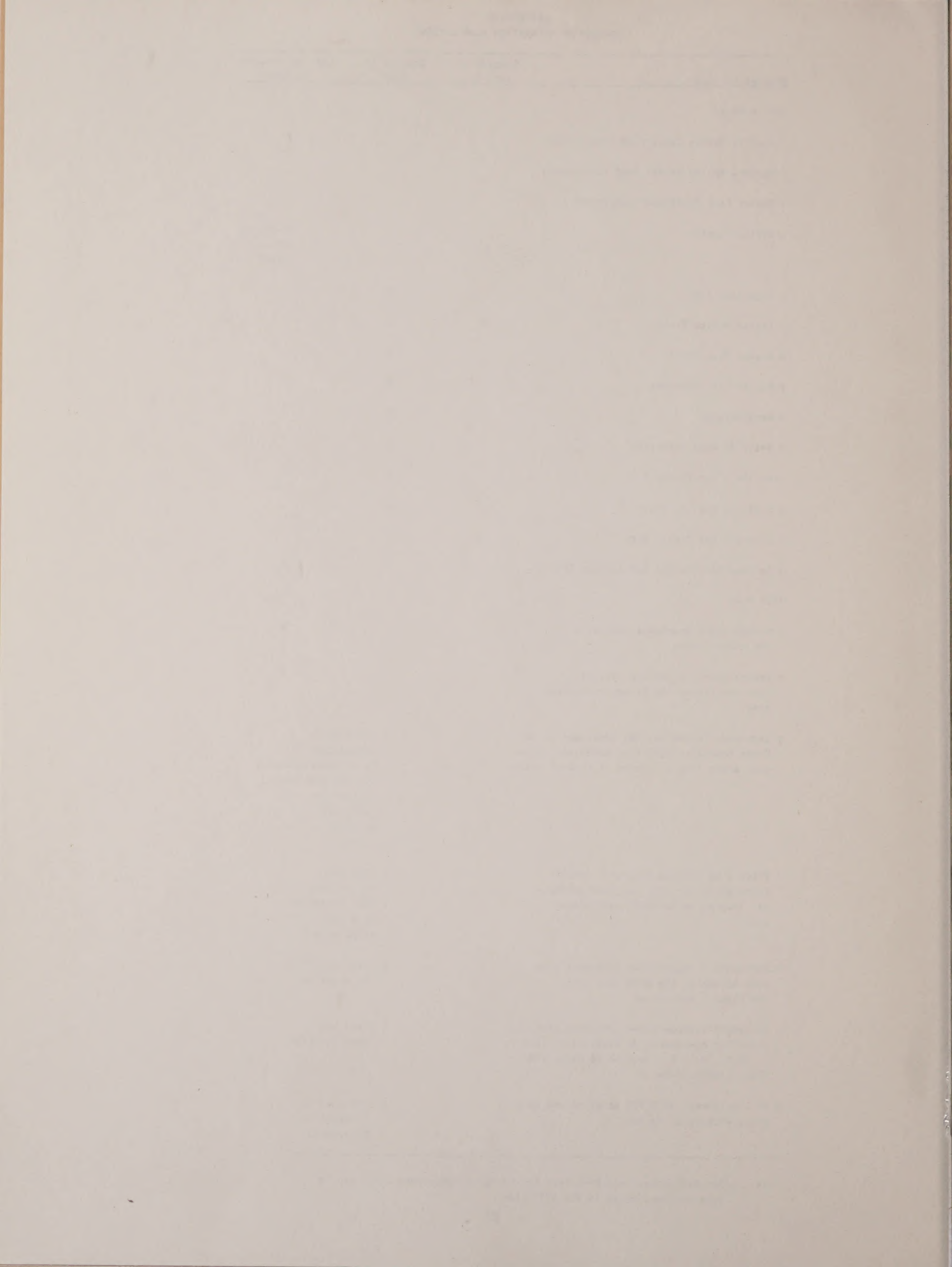
The Organ Mountains WSA was designated as a VRM Class II area.

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2
SUMMARY OF RECREATION PLAN ACTIONS

Planned Actions	Dropped in 1975 Plan	Dropped in CRMP	Carried Forward in CRMP
1971 PLAN <u>a/</u>			
o Aguirre Spring Campground (Completed)			
o Aguirre Spring Access Road (Completed)			
o Baylor Pass Trailhead (Completed)			
o Visitor Center			X (Moved to west-side)
o Sugarloaf Trail		X	
o Indian Hollow Trail	X	X	
o Baylor Peak Trail		X	
o Baylor Pass Monument		X	
o Amphitheater	X	X	
o Westside Road Extension		X	
o Needle's Eye Picnic Site		X	
o Ocotillo Knoll's Trail	X	X	
o Bishop's Cap Picnic Site	X	X	
o Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site			X
1985 PLAN			
o Manage Organ Mountains ACEC as a VRM Class I area.			X
o Remove spoils piles and revegetate the area around the Stevenson-Bennett mine.			X
o Segregate (withdraw) the remainder of the Organ Mountains ACEC plus additional adjacent areas from all forms of mineral entry.		X (will be segregated by wilderness and/or NCA designation, subject to valid and existing rights)	
o Place a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) stipulation for oil, gas, and geothermal leasing on the ACEC and adjacent areas.		X (the ACEC has already been protected by a NSO stipulation)	
o Implement a cooperative agreement with NMSU to manage the NMSU land under VRM Class I objectives.		X (land will be acquired)	
o Implement a cooperative agreement with the State for management of State trust land in T. 22 S., R. 3 E., Section 36 under VRM Class I objectives.		X (land has been acquired)	
o Relinquishment of 9,700 acres of the Fort Bliss withdrawal to BLM.		X (replaced by Cooperative Agreement)	

Note: a/The Baylor Pass and Pine Tree Trails had already been built and so were not considered in the 1971 plan.



**APPENDIX
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**APPENDIX
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APPENDIX 3
 PLANNED THREATENED AND ENDANGERED (T&E) SPECIES MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Name	Priority	Project Type	Units	Cost
T&E Plants	1990+	Inventory	5,000 acres	\$25,000
T&E Animals	1990+	Inventory	5,000 acres	\$25,000
Dripping Springs Fence	1991	4-Strand Wire Fence	3/4 mile	<u>\$ 4,500</u>
		TOTAL	\$54,500	

Note: Area of Critical Environmental Concern designation, mineral withdrawals, salable mineral restrictions, and prescribed burning will be addressed in the Mimbres RMP scheduled for completion in 1992.

APPENDIX 4
 PLANNED WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Map No.	Name	Priority	Project Type	Units	Cost
W-1		1992	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	\$ 1,000
W-2	Tellez Spring	1990	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-3	Mine House Spring	1990	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-4	Middle Spring	1991	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-5	LaPointe Spring	1992	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-6		1993	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-7	Fillmore Canyon	1991	Spring Enclosure	5 acres	5,000
W-8	Achenback Tank	1992	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-9		1993	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-10	Umbrella Catchment	1990	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-11	Umbrella Catchment	1990	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-12	Umbrella Catchment	1991	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-13	Umbrella Catchment	1991	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-14	Umbrella Catchment	1992	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-15	Umbrella Catchment	1992	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-16	Umbrella Catchment	1993	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-17	Umbrella Catchment	1993	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-18	Umbrella Catchment	1994	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-19	Umbrella Catchment	1994	Wildlife Water Catchment	2,000 gallons	3,000
W-20		1994	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-21		1995	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
W-22		1995	Spring Enclosure	1 acre	1,000
-	Bighorn Sheep/Turkey Habitat Evaluation	1990	Field Survey	2 reports	<u>20,000</u>
			TOTAL		\$66,000

Note: Prescribed burning will be addressed in the Mimbres RMP scheduled for completion in 1992.

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Allotment Name and Number	Animal Units (AUs)	Number of		Implementation Year b/
		Pastures	Traps	

A. B. Cox Trust 5002	126	3	2	2000
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Proposed Grazing System:

Rangeland improvement projects are scheduled for completion in 1994. The brush controls are scheduled from 1997-2017 with 2 years of deferment after the year of application. A grazing system could be implemented in 2000 with provisions made in the system for the success of the brush controls. Of the three pastures, two are in the mountains and one in the lowlands. Both traps are in the mountains and could be combined to make one pasture. The military boundary also needs to be fenced.

One of the major problems is the lack of permanent water in the mountain areas. All permanent water is located in the lowland areas. But there are several earthen reservoirs in the mountain region which could hold water during the growing season. The only way to have livestock make use of the mountain areas would be to graze them during the dormant season (fall, winter) when cattle don't need to drink as often and could cover more area between waterings. The vegetation in the mountains would also be better suited to winter grazing as grama grasses retain their protein in the winter.

San Augustine Ranch 5003	100	2	1	1997
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Proposed Grazing System:

Since the San Augustine Ranch has existing workable rangeland improvements and there are no new projects proposed, a rest-rotation grazing system could be put into effect in 1997. Both pastures are mostly mountain areas with some lowlands included. The trap is all in the lowland area. A fence may be needed to provide more flexibility in the rest-rotation system.

There are a few perennial springs in the mountain region but these have minimal flow during most of the year. Most of the permanent water is again in the lowland areas. Livestock would make better use of the mountain region during the dormant season. Because most of this ranch is in the mountain area, some grazing would take place in the mountains during the growing season. An additional fence may be needed in the larger south pasture to provide more flexibility in the grazing system.

W. F. Blythe 5001 & 5004	41	3	0	2005
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Proposed Grazing System:

Rangeland improvement projects other than the brush controls will be proposed when the response to the brush controls have been evaluated. Brush controls are proposed for completion in 1999 and 2002, with 2 years of deferment needed after the chemical has been applied. A grazing system could be implemented in 2005 after rangeland improvement projects have been proposed and built. At present, both of these allotments are managed by the same permittee but one is leased. The proposed grazing system would treat these two ranches as one to provide for a rest-rotation system. All three pastures are mostly mountain areas with some lowlands included. At the present time, there is no permanent water or workable interior fences on these allotments. Permanent water (wells) would be needed on both sides of the Franklins and a pipeline or well south of the Highway.

Paul Price Estate 5009	135	3	0	2002
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Proposed Grazing System:

Rangeland improvement projects are scheduled for completion in 1996. The brush controls are scheduled for 1994 through 2012, with a 2 year deferment after the chemical is applied. A grazing system could be implemented in 2002 with provisions made in the system for the success of the brush controls.

At the present time, the Price allotment has no interior allotment fences. The allotment will be fenced into three pastures with the mountains and lowlands in two pastures and an annual forb/mesquite dune as the third pasture. The first two pastures can be rotated so each gets a growing season of rest. The third pasture would be used in the spring and summer of each year when the annual forbs are present. If it becomes economically feasible, the mesquite area would be chemically treated at a later date. With the three new wells proposed, this allotment would be well watered.

Baylor Canyon 5013	105	4	4	1994
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Proposed Grazing System:

Rangeland improvement projects are scheduled for completion in 1993. The brush control is scheduled for 2012 and 2 years deferment added to the year of application. A grazing system could be implemented in 1994 with provisions made in the system for the success of the brush control. Of the four pastures, two are in the lowlands and two are in the mountains. The four traps could be combined to make two more pastures (two in the mountains and two in the lowlands).

Lack of permanent water in the mountain area is also a problem on this allotment. All permanent water is located in the lowlands. Livestock would still use the mountain region during the fall and winter season for the reasons listed under the A. B. Cox allotment.

The S. A. Walter No. 5012, does not have enough acreage in the CRMP area to develop a grazing system.

Note: a/ Section 8 consultation, coordination, and cooperation will be conducted with permittees and other interested parties before a grazing system is implemented.

b/ Implementation year is dependent upon completion of rangeland improvement projects and the final analysis of 5 consecutive years of monitoring studies. The A. B. Cox Trust and Paul Price Estate allotments need to be fenced from the military land before an analysis of the monitoring studies could be completed.

APPENDIX 5B
PLANNED RANGELAND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Map No.	Name	Priority a/	Project Type	Units b/	Cost
BAYLOR CANYON					
RL-1	West Side Road Fence	1993	4-Strand Wire Fence	2 gates, 2 miles fence	\$ 6,200 (BLM)
RL-2	North Brush Control	2012	Spike 20P	1 treatment/960 acres @ \$14,400 ea.	14,400 (BLM)
RL-3	North Trough	1991	Pipeline & Trough	1 trough, 1/4 mile pipeline	1,350 (Sec 4)
RL-4	WSA Pipeline	1990/1991	Pipeline & Trough	2 troughs, 1/4 mile pipeline	5,550 (BLM)
A. B. COX					
RL-5	Westside Fence	1993	4-Strand Wire Fence	3 gates, 1 3/4 miles fence	5,550 (BLM)
RL-6	North Well Extension	1992	Pipeline	1 trough, 1/4 mile pipeline	1,350 (BLM)
RL-7	Interior Fence	1994	4-Strand Wire Fence	5 gates, 2 cattle-guards, 5 mile fence	21,600 (BLM)
RL-8	South Well Extension	1992	Pipeline & Trough	1 trough, 1/2 mile pipeline	2,550 (BLM)
RL-9	North Brush Control	2012/2017	Spike 20P	2 treatments/960 acres @ \$14,400 ea.	28,800 (BLM)
RL-10	South Brush Control	1997/2002	Spike 20P	2 treatments/1,280 acres @ \$10,200 ea.	38,400 (BLM)
RL-21	Headquarters Pipeline	1991	Pipeline & Trough	1 3/4 miles pipeline, 3 troughs	6,450 (BLM)
PAUL PRICE ESTATE					
RL-11	North Well	1991 1991/1992	Drill & Case Equip Well	1 well, tower and rod	10,000 (RB) 7,000 (BLM)
RL-12	Middle Well	1992 1992/1993 1993	Drill & Case Equip well Pipeline & Trough	1 well, tower and rod 1/4 mile pipeline 1 trough	10,000 (RB) 7,000 (BLM) 1,350 (RB)
RL-13	South Well	1993 1993/1994	Drill & Case Equip well	1 well, tower and rod	10,000 (RB) 7,000 (BLM)
RL-14	North Fence	1992	4-Strand Wire Fence	1 cattleguard, 5 gates, 6 1/2 miles fence	20,250 (RB)
RL-15	South Fence	1994	4-Strand Wire Fence	5 gates, 5 1/2 miles fence	15,750 (RB)
RL-16	North Brush Control	1999/2004	Spike 20P	3 treatments/1,066 acres @ \$16,000 ea.	48,000 (BLM)
RL-17	Middle Brush Control	1997/2002	Spike 20P Treatments	4 treatments/1,040 acres @ \$13,000 ea.	52,000 (BLM)
RL-18	South Brush Control	2007/2012	Reclaim <u>c/</u>	6,080 acres <u>d/</u>	(BLM)
W. F. BLYTHE					
RL-19	West Brush Control	1994/1999	Spike 20P	2 treatments/960 acres @ \$14,400 ea.	28,800 (BLM)
RL-20	East Brush Control	1997/2002	Spike 20P	2 treatments/960 acres @ \$10,200 ea.	38,400 (BLM)
	Erosion Control Structures <u>e/</u>	Ongoing	3 Gabions/Drainage & Installation	\$650/structure	1,950
TOTAL					\$387,750

Notes: RB - Rancher built (BLM supplied materials cooperative agreement).
Sec. 4 - All materials and labor provided by the permittee.
BLM - BLM construction, installation, or treatment (usually under contract).

a/ A Benefit/Cost (B/C) analysis will be done on all projects proposed on each allotment. The B/C rating may change project priority. Priorities are also based on available funding, feasibility, contributed costs, etc.

b/ Acreages for brush control areas reflect the total size of the treatment area. Within this, exclusion areas (for arroyos, etc.) will reduce the actual treatment application area to less than 1,000 acres each.

c/ The use of the chemical Reclaim is not cost-effective at the present time (approximately \$45/acre compared to \$15/acre for Spike 20P). It will not be used until such time as it is cost-effective to do so.

d/ There would be 6 treatments 1,015 acres in size with 5 years in between treatments.

e/ Erosion control structures are being programmed in most of the small drainages in all the brush control areas.

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APPENDIX 6
PLANNED CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Map No.	Name	Priority	Project Type	Units	Cost
C-1	Van Patten's Mountain Camp	1992	Restore Resort Building	750 sq. ft.	\$ 37,000
		1993	Restore Gazebo	350 sq. ft.	22,500
		1994	Stabilize Outbuildings	3	21,000
		1991	Stabilize Ruins		18,500
		1991	Install Drainage/ Piping System		16,500
		1990	National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination		1,500
		1992	Site Interpretation		5,000
C-2	Sanitorium	1993	Stabilize Dining Hall		10,000
		1992	Stabilize 2nd Living House For Storage Structure		10,000
		1990	NRHP Nomination		1,500
		1992	Site Interpretation		5,000
C-3	La Cueva Rockshelter	1991	Archeological Test Excavations, Artifact Analysis, Report Publication		30,000
		1992	Site Stabilization		10,000
		1994	Site Interpretation		5,000
C-4	Pena Blanca Rockshelters Class II Inventory Class III Inventory	1990	Site Stabilization		20,000
		1995	Site Interpretation		5,000
		1990+		5,000 acres	125,000
		1990+		500 acres	<u>12,500</u>
				TOTAL	\$ 356,000

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APPENDIX 7A
PLANNED RECREATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Map No.	Name	Priority	Project Type	Units	Cost
R-1	Aguirre Spring Campground Water	1990	Water System	storage tank, distribution system (7 faucets)	\$ 61,000
R-2	Fee Station	1991			1,000
R-3	Aguirre Spring Campground Host Residence	1990-1991	Mobile Home or Adobe style structure and Storage Building		30,000
R-4	Aguirre Spring Campground Fence	1991	4-Strand Barbed Wire Fence and two cattle-guards	1 mile	15,000
R-5	A.B. Cox Visitor Center	1990-1992	Interpretive Center/Museum with parking and picnic areas	10 sites 30 parking spaces	120,000
R-6	Dripping Spring Trail	1990	Maintain Service Road/Hiking Trail (also includes Rock-shelter at midway point on service road/hiking trail)	1 mile	1,000
R-6A	Van Patten Mountain Camp Trail	1993	Surfaced Interpretive Hiking/Handicapped Trail	1/2 mile	6,500
R-7	La Cueva Picnic Area	1990-1994	Picnic ground with parking, water system, tables, vault toilets	55 sites 8 toilets	372,100
R-8	Dripping Springs Picnic Area	1993	Picnic Area, Vault Toilets	10 sites 2 toilets	100,000
R-9	La Cueva/Visitor Center Complex Fence	1992	4-Strand Barbed Wire Fence, one cattle-guard	1 1/2 miles	6,000
R-10	Baylor Pass Trailhead	1992	Expanded Parking Area for Horse Trailers	2 acres	1,000
R-11	Minehouse Trail	1995	Hiking/Equestrian/Bicycle Trail	5 miles	65,000
R-12	La Cueva Trail	1994	Surfaced Interpretive Hiking/Handicapped Trail	1 mile	13,000
R-13	Fillmore Canyon Trail	1995-1996	Hiking Trail	5 miles	65,000
R-14	Pena Blanca Site	1995	Surfaced Interpretive (Hiking) Trail and Parking Area	1/2 mile	6,500
R-15	Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site	1990-1991	Surfaced Interpretive (Hiking) Trail and Parking Area	1 mile	13,000
R-16	Dusty Trail	1996-1998	Hiking/Equestrian/Bicycle Trail	28 miles	303,000
R-17	Dripping Springs Road	1992	Road Paving	4 miles	320,000
R-18	Road Closures	1989	Road Closures	3 miles	500
-	Signs	1989-1996	Directional/Interpretive		<u>2,000</u>
TOTAL					\$1,501,600

NOTE: Revised costs from Draft CRMP are based on National Park Service Schedule C. These are implementation costs only. Operation and maintenance costs are reflected in Appendix 7C.

APPENDIX 7B
SIGN PLAN FOR THE ORGAN MOUNTAINS CRMP AREA

SIGN	SIGN NAME	SIGN			LOCATION	
		TYPE	EXISTING	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION
1.	San Augustine Wayside Pavilion Directional Sign	Wood	Yes	22S.	4E	6
2.	San Augustine Wayside Dedication Plaque	Cast Metal	Yes	22S.	4E.	6
3.	Aguirre Spring Recreation Site Directional Sign (2)	Wood	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
4.	Aguirre Spring Recreation Area (2)	Wood	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
5.	Aguirre Spring Road Keep Right	Steel	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
6.	Organ Mountains Interpretive Sign	Wood	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
7.	Narrow Mountain Road-Warning	Wood	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
8.	Campground Hours	Metal	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
9.	Fire Danger	Wood	Yes	21S.	4E.	32
10.	Campground Hours (2)	Metal	Yes	21S.	4E.	20
11.	Baylor Pass Trail	Wood	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
12.	Pine Tree Trail	Wood	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
13.	No Garbage Collection (2)	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
14.	No Bikes (2)	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
15.	No Cutting or Gathering Wood	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
16.	Warning (Mountain hazards) (2)	Wood	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
17.	Handicapped Parking Only	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
18.	Keep Right	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
19.	One Way, Do Not Enter	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	20
20.	Keep Right	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	20
21.	Removal of Firewood, Mineral Material, and Native Vegetation Prohibited (2)	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
22.	Reserved Parking (handicapped)	Steel	Yes	22S.	4E.	29
23.	Organ Mountain Westside Access Road	Wood	Yes	22S.	3E.	10
24.	Open Range Next 5 Miles	Steel	Yes	22S.	3E.	10
25.	Baylor Pass Westside Trailhead	Wood	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
26.	No Bikes	Steel	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
27.	No Campfires	Steel	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
28.	No Motorcycles	Steel	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
29.	No Garbage Collection	Steel	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
30.	Warning (Mountain Hazards)	Wood	Yes	22S.	3E.	14
31.	Organ Mountain Westside Access Road	Wood	Yes	23S.	3E.	10
32.	Removal of Firewood, Mineral Material, and Native Vegetation Prohibited	Wood	Yes	23S.	3E.	10
33.	Removal of Firewood, Mineral Material, and Native Vegetation Prohibited	Wood	Yes	24S.	3E.	35
34.	Aguirre Spring Campground Host Residence - Employees Only	Wood	No	22S.	4E.	20
35.	La Cueva Picnic Area	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	2
36.	La Cueva Trail	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	2
37.	A. B. Cox Visitor Center	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	1
38.	Dripping Spring Trail	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	1
39.	La Cueva Interpretive Signs (12)	Steel	No	23S.	3E.	1
40.	Dripping Spring/Van Patten Camp Interpretive Signs (12)	Steel	No	23S.	4E.	7
41.	Closed Road	Steel	No	23S.	3E.	11
42.	Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	23
43.	Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site Interpretive Signs (12)	Steel	No	23S.	3E.	23
44.	Pena Blanca Rock Shelters	Wood	No	24S.	3E.	14
45.	Minehouse Trail	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	1
46.	Fillmore Canyon Trail	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	1
47.	Road Closed (2)	Steel	No	23S.	3E.	26
48.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	22S.	4E.	8
49.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	22S.	3E.	10
50.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	9
51.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	23
52.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	24S.	3E.	22
53.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	26S.	4E.	29
54.	Entering Organ Mountains National Conservation Area	Wood	No	26S.	4E.	26
55.	A. B. Cox Visitor Center/La Cueva Picnic Area/Baylor Pass Trailhead Directional Sign	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	10
56.	A. B. Cox Visitor Center/La Cueva Picnic Area/Baylor Pass Trailhead Directional Sign	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	18
57.	La Cueva/Cox Area Hours	Steel	No	23E	3E.	2
58.	Minehouse Trail	Wood	No	22S.	3E.	14
59.	Fillmore Canyon Trail	Wood	No	22S.	4E.	32
60.	Dusty Trail (2)	Wood	No	22S.	3E.	2
61.	Dusty Trail	Wood	No	23S.	3E.	23
62.	Dusty Trail	Wood	No	24S.	3E.	23
63.	Dusty Trail	Wood	No	25S.	3E.	11
64.	Dusty Trail	Wood	No	26S.	4E.	28

APPENDIX 7C

ORGAN MOUNTAINS RECREATION OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COST

The existing facilities maintenance budget (Fiscal Year (FY) 89) for the Aguirre Spring Campground is distributed as follows:

Labor Costs	-	\$53,220
Contracts	-	27,300
Equipment	-	4,200
Supplies	-	8,300
Travel	-	3,500 (mostly for volunteer expenses)
Vehicles	-	<u>9,100</u>
TOTAL		\$105,520

Existing personnel for operation and maintenance of the campground consists of the following:

- 1 Permanent Full-Time (PFT) WG-7 Maintenance Worker
- 1 Temporary WG-5 Maintenance Worker
- 3 "Full-time" (3-4 days/week) Volunteers
(2 at Aguirre Spring and 1 at Cox)

By late FY 89, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will have one full-time, paid naturalist who will be stationed at the A. B. Cox Visitor Center. This person will also be a BLM volunteer.

The existing facilities maintenance budget and volunteer compliment are adequate to maintain the campground and associated facilities (roads and trails) in a safe, attractive and desirable condition. If it were not for volunteer assistance however, some aspects of operations and maintenance would be curtailed.

The existing recreation management budget provides no direct funding for visitor services or interpretation, except for a few signs. The Area Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) handles both the wilderness and recreation programs in the Resource Area and provides guidance for activity planning, visitor services, and resource protection programs in the Organ Mountains.

In order to implement the planned recreation actions, the following estimated funding levels and personnel will be needed for operations and maintenance. Cyclic reconstruction costs are not reflected in these figures. New construction (development) costs are outlined in Appendix 7A.

FY 90	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER a/
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$24,000	\$54,455
Capital b/	34,300	70,950	0
Contract	12,400	0	0
Site Planning	<u>0</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Sub-totals	99,920	119,950	54,455
TOTAL	\$274,325		

NOTES: a/ "Other" includes personnel not associated with specific facilities (such as an Outdoor Recreation Planner and Ranger), as well as other facilities such as trails and parking areas.
 b/ Includes equipment, supplies, travel, and vehicles.

APPENDIX 7C (continued)

In FY 90, one PFT GS-11 Supervisory Outdoor Recreation Planner (ORP) is needed to coordinate overall site planning, implementation, operations, and maintenance activities. The present staffing (one Natural Resource Specialist) is inadequate to coordinate both the wilderness and recreation programs (both of which will accelerate in the future). Also in FY 90, one PFT GS-9 Ranger is needed to patrol and provide constant resource protection/visitor services within the area. This position could be most effectively used to provide concentrated patrols of public land areas adjacent to Las Cruces and the CRMP area (with emphasis on the CRMP area on weekends and holidays). There would be a nonrecurring (one-time) cost of approximately \$12,000 to train and equip the Ranger. There may also be up to \$100,000 in moving (transfer) costs for relocation of PFT personnel.

Also in FY 90, one additional temporary WG-5 Maintenance Worker should be added to meet the increased maintenance responsibilities associated with acquisition of the Cox property and related facilities (especially building maintenance).

FY 91	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$24,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	20,950	0
Contract	12,400	0	0
Site Planning	0	25,000	0
Sub-totals	99,920	69,950	54,455
TOTAL	\$224,325		

Decreased site planning costs of Aguirre Spring reflect completion of new facility development there. Decrease in capital costs of Cox/La Cueva due to one-time purchase of backhoe tractor with attachments in FY 90.

FY 92	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$49,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	20,950	0
Contract	12,400	0	0
Site Planning	0	25,000	0
Sub-totals	99,920	94,950	54,455
TOTAL	\$249,325		

Increased labor costs for the Cox/La Cueva area reflect the addition of one Temporary GS-7 Interpretive Specialist to manage the A. B. Cox Visitor Center and associated volunteer staff.

APPENDIX 7C (continued)

FY 93	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$49,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	40,950	0
Contract	12,400	3,500	0
Site Planning	<u>0</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Sub-totals	99,920	108,450	54,455
TOTAL	\$262,825		

Increased capital and contract costs reflect completion of the visitor center and associated facilities.

FY 94	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$49,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	40,950	0
Contract	12,400	3,500	0
Site Planning	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,000</u>
Sub-totals	99,920	93,450	69,455
TOTAL	\$262,825		

Increased costs under "other" reflect site planning needs for trails.

FY 95	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$73,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	57,950	0
Contract	12,400	7,400	0
Site Planning	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,000</u>
Sub-totals	99,920	138,350	69,455
TOTAL	\$307,725		

Increased labor, capital, and contract costs reflect completion of the La Cueva picnic area, including the addition of one more temporary WG-5 Maintenance Worker.

APPENDIX 7C (concluded)

FY 96	AGUIRRE SPRING	COX/LA CUEVA	OTHER
Labor	\$ 53,220	\$73,000	\$54,455
Capital	34,300	57,950	5,000
Contract	12,400	7,400	10,000
Site Planning	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7,500</u>
Sub-totals	99,920	138,350	76,955
 TOTAL	 \$315,225		

Increased capital and contract costs reflect completion of trails and other facilities elsewhere in the CRMP area.

By FY 96, personnel organization should be as follows:

- 1 PFT GS-11 Outdoor Recreation Planner (Project Leader)
- 1 PFT GS-9 Ranger
- 1 PFT WG-7 Maintenance Worker
- 3 Temp WG-5 Maintenance Workers
- 1 Temp GS-7 Interpretive Specialist
- 4 "Full-time" Volunteers (including TNC employee)
- Other miscellaneous volunteers (interpreters to staff visitor center, etc.)

By program, funding needs would be distributed as follows:

PROGRAM	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
Recreation Management	\$ 79,455	\$ 79,455	\$104,455	\$ 94,455	\$ 94,455	\$ 94,455	\$ 86,955
Facility Maintenance	<u>\$194,870</u>	<u>\$144,870</u>	<u>\$144,870</u>	<u>\$168,370</u>	<u>\$168,370</u>	<u>\$213,270</u>	<u>\$228,270</u>
TOTAL	\$274,325	\$224,325	\$249,325	\$262,825	\$262,825	\$307,725	\$315,225

**APPENDIX
8**

APPENDIX 8
IMPLEMENTATION COST SUMMARY (\$1000's)

	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
T&E Species	\$ 20	\$ 25	\$ 10	-	-	-	-
Wildlife Habitat	28	12	9	9	7	2	-
Rangeland Resources	6	25	32	23	43	6	6
Cultural Resources	60	90	92	57	51	6	-
Recreation	84	97	381	292	209	104	133
Land Acquisition	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>
TOTAL	\$1,198	\$1,749	\$1,524	\$1,381	\$1,310	\$1,116	\$1,139

NOTE: Land acquisition costs reflect the approximate average value of all inholdings if directly purchased. The value of specific parcels will vary greatly, depending on location, etc. A separate appraisal will be performed to determine the fair market value of individual parcels for each exchange or acquisition. If all lands were acquired by exchange, direct costs would be approximately \$350,000 (appraisals, environmental assessments, land reports, cultural clearances, etc.)

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APPENDIX 9



APPENDIX 9
MONITORING STRATEGIES

Element	Component	Technique(s)	Units	Frequencies	BLM Workmonths
Livestock	Vegetation production, composition	Utilization studies trend photos, condition transects	Allotments Capacity	Biannually	.25 per Allotment
T&E Plants	Listed plant species, identify potential habitats	Soil surveys, plant frequency, vegetation surveys	Plant species and acres	Annually	.25 per species
	Sneed's pincushion	x & y coordinates along permanent transects marked by rebar stakes at 50 foot intervals	Individual plants, number heads per cluster	Annually (one population each year)	.25
Vegetation (Brush Control) Areas	Vegetation production, composition	Production transects	Acres	Biannually	.25 per treatment area
Riparian/Arroyo Habitat Management	Vegetal structure and composition	Photo plots, plant frequency	Stability, condition, trend	Annually	.5
Big Game Habitat	Mule deer population trends	Check stations, pellet group transects	Numbers, sex & age ratios	Annually by NMDGF and BLM	
	Desert Bighorn population trends (after reintroduction)	Aerial or ground census, radio telemetry	Animal numbers, sex and age ratios	Annually by NMDGF after release	
	Browse condition and trend	Utilization transects according to the NM Interagency Browse Handbook	Percent use of production	Annually	1.0
Recreation Use	Campground Use	Fee station data, campsite contacts, visual monitoring of facility condition	Recreation visits, repair needs	Daily	1.0
	Road Use	Vehicle counts	Vehicle numbers	Monthly	.5
	Trail Use	Visual monitoring of trail condition and repair needs, plus safety hazards	Numbers of needed repairs and hazards	Monthly	1.5
Cultural Resources	Site damage due to weathering and erosion	Photo plots, direct observation	Site conditions, impacts	Annually	0.5
	Site damage due to human-caused impacts	Photo plots, direct observation	Site conditions, impacts	Annually	0.5

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It is essential to ensure that every entry is properly documented and verified. This process helps in identifying any discrepancies or errors early on, preventing them from escalating into larger issues.

Furthermore, the document emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability. All stakeholders should have access to the relevant information, and any changes or updates should be communicated promptly. This approach fosters trust and ensures that everyone is working towards the same goals.

In addition, the document highlights the significance of regular communication and collaboration. By holding frequent meetings and encouraging open dialogue, the team can stay aligned and address any challenges as they arise. This collaborative environment is crucial for the success of any project or organization.

Finally, the document concludes by reiterating the importance of continuous improvement. It is not enough to simply follow a set process; one must be willing to learn from mistakes and adapt to changing circumstances. This mindset is what sets successful organizations apart from the rest.

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APPENDIX 10
LANDS WITHIN THE CRMP AREA TO BE ACQUIRED

LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS	OWNERSHIP	APPROXIMATE ACREAGE
T. 22 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 1: Portion of S1/2NW1/4; W1/2SW1/4; Sec. 12: Portion of NW1/4NW1/4.	Torpedo and Franklin Mining Group Companies	70
T. 22 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 1: Portion of Lots 6,7 Lots 8-10; Sec. 12: Lots 6,7,11-14	Owners Unknown	480
T. 22 S., R. 4 E. Sec. 6: Portion of Lots 12, 13; Lots 18,19		
T. 22 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 11: Portion of Lots 13,14; Sec. 12: Portion of Lot 17; Sec. 13: Portion of Lots 3,4; Sec. 14: Portion of Lots 9,10,12.	Stephenson-Bennett Mine (John Stowe)	69
T. 22 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 25: Portion of S1/2NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4; Sec. 26: Portion of SE1/4.	Ruby Mine (owned by Audria Hayner Palmer and leased to to Ben F. Schaberg Company)	40
T. 22 S., R. 4 E., NMPM Sec. 19: Lots 5-20; Sec. 29: Lots 1-7, SW1/4NE1/4, S1/2NW1/4SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4; Sec. 30: Lots 5-11, S1/2NE1/4SE1/4NW1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SE1/4; Sec. 31: Lot 11, NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4.	NMSU Land	2,090
T. 22 S., R. 4 E., NMPM Sec. 21: A11; Sec. 22: A11; Sec. 27: A11; Sec. 28: A11; Sec. 34: NW1/4.	San Augustine Ranch, Inc.	2,492
T. 22 S., R. 4 E., NMPM Sec. 20: S1/2N1/2NE1/4SE1/4, S1/2N1/2S1/2SE1/4, S1/2S1/2SE1/4.	Owners Unknown	70
T. 23 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 13: NE1/4, N1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4; Sec. 14: Lots 4,10,11, SE1/4; Sec. 23: Portion of Lots 6,7, Portion of N1/2NE1/4; Sec. 24: NW1/4NW1/4.	Cox Family	786

APPENDIX 10 (concluded)
LANDS WITHIN THE CRMP AREA TO BE ACQUIRED

LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS	OWNERSHIP	APPROXIMATE ACREAGE
T. 23 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 35: Lots 1-6.	Cox Family	281
T. 24 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 11: E1/2E1/2; Sec. 14: SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2SE1/4; Sec. 23: E1/2NE1/4; Sec. 24: SW1/4NW1/4.	Paul Price Estate	400
T. 25 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 1: W1/2W1/2; Sec. 11: NE1/4NE1/4; Sec. 12: NW1/4NW1/4.	Paul Price Estate	240
T. 24 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 35: SW1/4	Owners Unknown	160
T. 26 S., R. 4 E., NMPM Sec. 32: Lots 1-4, NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4; Sec. 36: Lots 1-4, N1/2.	Owners Unknown	652
T. 23 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 23: Lots 3,5,8,10, Portion of Lot 7, Portion of N1/2NE1/4,SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4SW1/4NE1/4SE1/4; Sec. 24: W1/2SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4; Sec. 26: Portion of Lots 1-3, E1/2NW1/4NE1/4SW1/4.	Andereed/Cooper Inc. and Others	637
T. 25 S., R. 3 E., NMPM Sec. 1: E1/2, E1/2NW1/4, E1/2SW1/4; Sec. 12: E1/2, NE1/4NW1/4, S1/2NW1/4, SW1/4; Sec. 13: N1/2.	Other Private Land (Not for Acquisition)	1,400
	TOTAL	9,867

**APPENDIX
11**

COMMENT NUMBER	NAME OF COMMENTER
1	James V. Lewis
2	Helen M. Barber
3.	William Cochran, U.S. Bureau of Mines
4.	Patrick N. Smith
5.	Zeno W. Wicks, Jr.
6.	Kelly Cranston
7.	Bill Montoya, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
8.	David Pengelley
9.	Barbara Sallach
10.	Norm Thomas, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
11.	Stanley A. Sprecher
12.	Billie M. Dreyfuss, et al
13.	Marianne H. Thaeler
14.	William J. Miller, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
15.	Ronald Jela, National Park Service
16.	Ben and Jane Zerbey
17.	W.R. Humphries, New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands
18.	Malcolm and Dorothy Fell
19.	Bob Tafanelli, Southern New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Organizations
20.	Thomas H. Wootten
21.	Jack Diehl
22.	Amy Parsons
23.	Brad Parsons
24.	Ronald and Susan Polka
25.	Storm M. Sermay
26.	Professor Arthur Knoebel and Patricia Knoebel
27.	Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Melancon
28.	Karl R. Kiser
29.	Sara Irving
30.	Paxton Price, Dona Ana County Historical Society
31.	Herbie Marsden
32.	William H. Julian
33.	John Sproul, Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition
34.	Raymond T. and Charlotte L. Kiser
35.	Alexander Pupulidy
36.	Julia Koontz
37.	William T. and Susanne M. Kornke
38.	Aletta Wilson
39.	Greg Magee
40.	Perry Plummer, New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition
41.	Carol V. Anderson
42.	Roxanne Gunter
43.	Mario Martinez and Pat Bellestri-Martinez
44.	Timothy F. Lawton
45.	June Price
46.	Jeff Natharing
47.	Darren Knight
48.	Julie A. Jacobs
49.	Melissa Shelton
50.	Rebecca Simpson
51.	Connie Speer
52.	Kent Mikkelsen, Plains Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative, Inc.
53.	Vicki L. Perez
54.	Bill Dunmire, The Nature Conservancy of New Mexico
55.	Julia Koontz and Ellen Gant
56.	Jim Graham, Southern New Mexico Sierra Club
57.	Marcus S. Cohen
58.	Elaine W. Cohen
59.	Kathleen Marlowe
60.	Major General Donald R. Infante, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Ft. Bliss
61.	Major General Donald R. Infante, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Ft. Bliss
62.	William L. Chapel, New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
63.	James Yelich, The Jim Halsey Company, Inc.
64.	Charles M. Redman
65.	Ed Meagher

10/15/08

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CRUCES DISTRICT

Tim Salt
Area Manager

Comments on draft Organ Mountains Plan

These are beautiful mountains. I strongly support the largest possible wilderness designated area.

The proposed brush control area is excessive. This disturbs the soil, encourages noxious weeds & erosion. Pinon & juniper is natural in the area, is beautiful and should be retained.

James V. Lewis

Mr James V Lewis
3401 Mars Rd NE
Albuquerque NM
87107



1-1

The proposed brush control areas encompass the general areas where brush control is considered to be an appropriate treatment method. Within these general areas, major arroyos and special habitats (such as threatened or endangered plant or animal habitat) will be excluded during treatment. As a result of public comment, several criteria have been added to strengthen the provisions outlined in the Proposed Action and mitigating measures contained in the Draft Coordinated Resource Management Plan/Environmental Assessment concerning brush control. These are: (1) the maximum size of any single treatment block will not exceed 1,000 acres; (2) treatments between adjoining pastures will be scheduled at least 3 years apart and treatments within the same pasture will be scheduled 5 to 6 years apart (to minimize visual impacts); (3) the area north of the Soledad Canyon road will not be treated until all other areas have been treated and evaluated to determine the effectiveness and desirability of further treatment; and (4) brush control treatment areas will generally not be reseeded. If they are reseeded, they will be reseeded with native species.

42

1-1 (concluded) There are many multiple-use benefits to be realized from the proposed brush control. These include increased habitat diversity for wildlife, increased ground cover, reduced downstream run-off and soil erosion, reduced downstream damage to roads and property, and reduced on-site soil loss from both wind and water. There will be an acknowledged short-term (2-3 years) visual impact as the shrubs die and turn brown. In the long-term, the resulting mosaic of vegetation will be more visually appealing. The proposed method of treatment is the aerial application of pelleted tebuthiuron (Spike 20p) or Reclaim. This results in little or no surface disturbance (compared to mechanical treatment methods such as chaining or crushing). While the use of herbicides may be considered undesirable to many, it is the only feasible means of initial treatment available at this time. After the initial treatment, these areas can be maintained in the desired vegetation condition by careful use of natural (prescribed) fire and proper management of grazing. The objective of the brush control is to improve soil, water, and vegetation conditions and increase vegetation diversity in areas that are dominated by brush species. The goal is not to totally eradicate the brush, but to increase the amount of grasses and other herbaceous vegetation in relation to the shrubs within the treatment areas. The net effect will be to return these areas to a more natural condition (see Rangeland Resources, Objective No. 1, Draft pages 2-3).

Brush control treatment areas are not proposed within the pinyon-juniper vegetation type. All brush control areas are in the lower elevation portions dominated by creosotebush and mesquite.

P.O. Box 3503
Las Cruces, NM 88003-3503
5 November 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

In response to Draft: Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, I believe Alternative 2 Least Intensive represents the most desirable course of action. If this program cannot be implemented completely, please implement the following:

- 2-1 | 1) The road down the west side south of Dripping Springs Road not paved should be closed to vehicles.
- 2-2 | 2) No vehicles into Ice Canyon.
- 2-3 | 3) No herbicides for range improvement.
- 2-4 | 4) At Aguirre Springs: keep the water near the combination visitor center/campground near the current utility storage area. Furthermore, please close Aguirre Springs to vehicles after 10:00 p.m. to reduce rowdy behavior and vandalism.

Sincerely,

Helen M. Barber

2-1 The road down the westside, south of the Dripping Springs road will not be paved but will be left open as a primitive (four-wheel drive) vehicle route.

2-2 There will be no vehicles allowed in Ice Canyon above the visitor center except for handicap (or physically disabled) and administrative use.

2-3 Please see the response to Comment 1-1.

2-4 The visitor center near the utility storage area was proposed in the 1971 recreation plan and also in the 1975 revision. The visitor center will be located at the Cox Ranch Headquarters instead of the location recommended in previous plans. The former site is also within the Organ Mountains Wilderness Study Area (WSA).

Only potable water will be provided at the campground (no showers, no flush toilets, no RV hook-ups, etc.). Water will not be provided at each individual camp unit but will be distributed through six or seven central spigots. The campground is presently closed by means of a locked gate after 10:00 p.m. in the summer and 8:00 p.m. in the winter. The enforcement of this closure and quiet hours (between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.) are the responsibility of District Law Enforcement personnel (Rangers).



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF MINES

P. O. BOX 25086
BUILDING 20, DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
DENVER, COLORADO 80225

Intermountain Field Operations Center



November 8, 1988

Memorandum

To: Tim Salt, Area Manager, Mimbres Resources Area, Bureau of Land Management, 1800 Marquess, Las Cruces, NM 88005

From: Chief, Intermountain Field Operations Center

Subject: Review of draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, NM-036-88-33, Mimbres Resource Area, New Mexico

As you requested, Bureau of Mines personnel reviewed the geology and minerals section of the subject report to determine whether mineral resources are adequately considered. We have the following comments.

45
3-1 In response to the first and second paragraph of the geology and minerals section (p. 3-1), the mining activity peaked in the late 1800's and early 1900's, then gradually dwindled from 1909 to about 1935 when mining virtually ceased. There is potential for fluorspar along with base and precious metals along the western flank of the Organs. Low-grade precious metal deposits may occur at the surface. (See Mineral Resources of the Organ Mountains Wilderness Study Area, Dona Ana County, New Mexico, U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1735-D, 1988.) Otherwise, the document is adequate with regard to minerals.

We hope this information will be of value to you. If you have further questions regarding this matter, please contact us.

Bradford B Williams
For William Cochran

3-1 Thank you for your comments.

Patrick N. Smith
7600 Holman Road
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

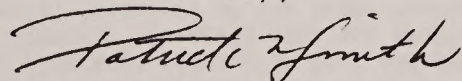
Tim,

Enclosed are my comments on your "Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan" of September, 1988 (BLM-NM-PT-88-020-4333). My comments aren't very long, because there are only so many ways you can say "good job". I do have a few specific suggestions, all offered in the spirit of constructive criticism.

I hope most folks appreciate the fine job you guys have done on this one. Not only have you constructed a very positive, well balanced proposal; but you really listened to the public's opinions: and it shows.

Good job!

Sincerely,



Patrick N. Smith

Main Points of Plan

- * Designations of ACECs for protection of T&E plant communities are highly commendable and will help to protect these resources provided that ACEC management is effective.
- * Design of grazing systems to improve riparian, arroyo and high altitude 'pastures' is a positive step in the right direction providing these are implemented effectively.
- * Restrictions of vehicular access to Dripping Springs area will help to protect resources in that area provided these are effectively enforced.
- * Additions to foot and horseback trail system will provide increased recreational assets. This will directly benefit Doña Ana County, and attract tourists/visitors who will contribute to local economy. Provision has apparently been made to route trails away from sensitive resources, esp. T&E communities. This will provide benefits without compromising these resources. All trails, as much as possible, should stay out of riparian areas, and definitely away from surface water sources (other than those intended for human use) both natural and man made.
- * Recreational facilities will provide enhanced recreational opportunities for many who heretofore have not utilized the area due to lack of facilities. This will provide both direct benefits and indirect economic benefits to Doña Ana County. By concentrating usage in intensively managed 'facility' areas these will also contribute to successful management of the area's sensitive archaeological and biological assets, if properly managed. If handled well they may also contribute to a sense of 'ownership' on the part of the users of them, simplifying BLM's management effort.
- * Proposal will enhance preservation of a ' genetic corridor ' between the Organ and Franklin biological isotones, a valuable contribution to successful long-term management of the area's biological assets.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS and comments:

OBJECTIVES

Wildlife Habitat (p.2):

"...maintain the quality of spring and cliff special habitat features" should be "...maintain or improve...".

Rangeland Resources (p.2):

The emphasis on improvement of resources is very positive.

CONSTRAINTS:

(p.4) item 12. "No new permanent roads...". Very positive.

4-1

We have modified the objective to incorporate your suggested wording.

PLANNED ACTIONS:

(p.4) item 1. These areas should definitely become ACECs. This proposal is very positive. Some of the smaller areas should be exclosed to livestock and piping & tanks installed if needed to meet livestock needs.

(ibid.) items 3 & 4. Very important. Good planning.

(p.5) item 8. Area should be the focus of higher level patrols by volunteers, LEDs and area staff. Your provision for these areas is very positive.

4-2 Wildlife Habitat: (p.5): Very good. However two springs in the Wilderness Study Area on your map are not marked for exclosure. I feel that these springs should be exclosed as they are being seriously degraded due to intensive 'in-site' livestock use, that exclosure and pipage to tanks could be implemented without reducing usefulness to livestock. These areas are clearly riparian areas of great utility to area wildlife populations, and seem to conform to the definitions in EO 11990. This could be accomplished without degrading the areas wilderness values. In fact these would probably be enhanced. Exclosure and tankage would also not reduce the usefulness of the areas to livestock as they are used only as a water source and have no significant forage value. Trampling is the main damage occurring here. Exclosure and management of these springs for riparian values would likely enhance the reliability of their flow, increasing their usefulness to the permittee in the area. Area sportsmen's and wildlife groups could be approached for assistance. In addition to a growing mule deer herd that may soon reach harvestable levels, this area is popular for quail, dove and rabbit hunting. These values would be enhanced by exclosure of these springs.

Rangeland Resources (p.6)

4-3 Where appropriate signing of improvements to discourage vandalism should be done. Hiking trails should avoid livestock improvements.

4-4 item 3. Areas to be treated with Spike 20p and Reclaim should be carefully surveyed before treatment for possible T&E communities and these avoided, if found, during treatment (I'm sure you already plan this.). Areas should be monitored during treatment for unanticipated impacts and progress. (again ISYAPT).

Recreation:

4-5 (p.9) item 19: It is important that use of Fillmore's riparian area be limited. Trail avoidance should be such that it effectively achieves this goal.

4-6 (p.10) item 29. "Cutting or gathering of firewood" should be prohibited in the entire OMCRMP area! I agree with specific, clear prohibition of this in "designated camping areas" but this should equally clearly apply to the entire area.

IFM, (p.10-11):

Your support of the Sikes Act in this area is greatly appreciated.

Page 4-4, item 5. I concur and support BLMs recognition of the desirability of limiting the introduction of exotic species.

4-2 We have added these two springs to the planned actions for exclosures.

4-3 Signing of improvements will be a part of project development. Rangeland improvements will be avoided to the extent possible in the survey and design of hiking trails.

4-4 Please refer to the constraints and adopted mitigating measures for provisions to protect threatened and endangered (T&E) habitat during brush control treatments.

4-5 Riparian areas will be avoided to the extent possible in the survey and design of all trails.

4-6 The final plan has been revised to reflect this. Cutting or gathering of firewood will be prohibited within the entire CRMP area. In addition, there will be a ban on all open fires in back country areas (over 1/4-mile from any road or vehicle route).

SUMMARY:

4-7 You've done a fine job with this plan. I support the plan enthusiastically. I would suggest, however, that item 4. from the Least Intensive alternative (p.4-13) be implemented as described, for the reasons described. Given the nature of the biological resources of the area I feel this is required in order to implement BLM's objectives in regard to T&E species (special status species) management.

Congrats on a good job,

Patrick N. Smith

4-7

The westside road, south of Soledad Canyon, will remain open to vehicle use. It will not be improved or upgraded but will remain as a primitive, four-wheel drive vehicle route. The road, in its present condition, provides a unique and varied form of recreation within the area. It provides opportunities for many people to park and hike up the many canyons on the westside of the range. As such this is considered to be an essential ingredient in providing for our goal of a balanced plan offering a wide variety of recreation opportunities. There are presently no identified conflicts with T&E species or other resource values. Certain spur roads or vehicle ways off the westside road will be closed to vehicle use; however, this route will remain open until such time as monitoring indicates a need to change this decision.

Zeno W. Wicks Jr.
1345 Branson Avenue 4C
Las Cruces, NM 88001
(505) 522 3951

November 13, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
BLM
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 89005

Dear Mr. Salt,

I have read with much interest the draft of the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

Of the four alternatives considered, I would urge approval not of the one proposed but of alternate 2, the least intensive. It seems to me the height of folly to use herbicide control of "brush" to permit grazing of more animals. I will return to grazing later. In the interest of preservation, there should be no camping allowed. Most especially, the campground proposed for the La Cueva area is inappropriate. Perhaps part of the planned \$1,500,000 for the campground is needed for a picnic area but I presume most of this money could be saved or diverted to other projects. Let the behemoth land cruisers go to KOA's. The area should be reserved for day use. It would be best to eliminate camping at Aguirre Springs but certainly not \$61,000 to bring in water. I certainly agree that the jeep trail between Soledad Canyon Road and Mossman Arroyo road should be closed.

5-1
5-2
5-3

Actually, I think there should be several additional changes to preserve the Organs. I see no excuse whatsoever for permitting off-the-road vehicles anyplace within the whole area. They should be excluded. Further, I think all grazing should be excluded. This is degradation of the potential of the area for a small handful of ranchers. There is excess beef available. There is need for less total production not more. If for some reason, which I can not fathom, there is a legal requirement to permit some grazing, at least it should be completely excluded in the mountainous and riparian sections and phased out in the balance of the area in as short a time as possible. Certainly no public money should be spent to subsidize the grazing operations. If grazing permission is required, let the ranchers put in their own fencing at their expense, their own water systems, at their expense. Why should the public pay, \$122,500 much less \$191,700 to subsidize these 7 ranches? It is of interest to note that, in footnote g of Appendix 5A, it is said that W.P. Slythe lands "do not have enough AUs in the CRMP area to manage or would not have enough flexibility with livestock management due to the lack of proposed improvements, especially fences" but that in Appendix 5B

5-4
5-5

50

5-1

In response to public comment, BLM has reconsidered the issue of overnight camping throughout the entire area. Overnight camping will continue at the Aguirre Spring campground. Overnight camping (such as in backcountry areas) will be allowed throughout the area, consistent with the CRMP. La Cueva will be managed as a day-use (picnic) area only. About half of the proposed picnic sites in the arroyo bottom at La Cueva have been re-located to upland areas. This will reduce impacts within the arroyo and reduce the potential for flood damage. Clustering of picnic sites in or near the arroyo will also reduce the overall visual impact from surrounding areas. The campground (middle loop) and the road section including the overlook have also been eliminated from further consideration.

At some point in the future, if demand exceeds the availability of camping at Aguirre Spring the development of a new campground will be considered (somewhere in the CRMP area or in a nearby area such as the Dona Ana Mountains). In any event, such a campground would be similar in design and layout to the Aguirre Spring campground. It was never the BLM's intention to construct an RV/KOA-type campground (with flush toilets, showers, full hook-ups, etc.) at La Cueva or elsewhere within the CRMP area.

5-2

Please see the response to Comment 2-4.

5-3

Please see the response to Comment 4-7.

5-4

Vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails. There is no "off-road" use allowed anywhere within the area.

Livestock grazing is recognized as a legitimate and authorized use of public land in the CRMP area except in those areas where it will be excluded (such as spring or riparian areas and high use areas around the Aguirre Spring Campground and the Cox Ranch complex). These areas total approximately 600 acres. Simply removing all livestock from public land will not return the rangelands to pre-European man conditions. A combination of past overgrazing, drought, and fire exclusion have caused the undesirable condition of many rangeland areas today. Areas that are dominated by creosotebush or mesquite will not respond to simple removal of livestock. This is because these shrubs tie up most of the available soil nutrients and water, making them unavailable to the more desirable herbaceous vegetation such as grasses and forbs.

Proposed rangeland improvements are designed to accommodate and manage livestock grazing, to provide multiple-use benefits and to protect sensitive resource values. Most rangeland improvements are paid for using rangeland improvement (RI) funds. These RI funds are collected from grazing fees paid by permittees. They are not appropriated funds from tax dollars. The proposed rangeland improvements will allow the development of grazing systems, in consultation with each permittee, that will provide protection to significant arroyo and riparian systems while meeting the livestock management goals of each permittee. Proper livestock grazing can also be an effective tool for maintaining rangeland in good condition.

5-5 There will be no permanent increase in
(continued) livestock grazing capacities as a result of
brush control treatments. The primary purpose
of the proposed brush control and other
rangeland improvements is to improve soil,
water, and vegetation conditions (multiple-use
benefits) not simply to provide increased
livestock forage.

Also see the response to Comment 1-1.

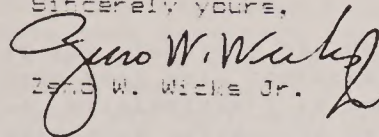
it is planned to spend about \$60,000 on "W.F. Flythe". We aren't given a total of animal units but apparently it is about 600. The proposed \$391,700 of planned rangeland projects works out to about \$350 per animal unit year. Pretty nice gift to 7 ranches. Over time, it may well be desirable to reduce the amount of creosote bush, etc., to try to return the land more nearly to what it was before the last hundred and twenty or so years of overgrazing but not to permit it to be overgrazed again.

- 5-6 A highway 70 by-pass should not be permitted on the land. The westside road north from Dripping Springs Road to Highway 70 should remain unpaved. Paving this road would create a Highway 70 by-pass without calling it one. I am opposed to any more paving of Dripping Springs Road. Certainly if it is to be paved, let the developers pay for it, not the taxpayers. That \$648,000 can be used for many other things, such as paying ranchers not to use public land if that is what is necessary. Or it could be used to eliminate the apparent need the BLM sees for charging for use of the camp grounds. It may be desirable to charge to reduce camping, but don't at the same time bring in water to increase camping.
- 5-7

- 5-8 Certainly, it is desirable to provide facilities to permit enjoyment of the area and to learn about nature while protecting the rare native plants. On the other hand, I can't get very excited about restoring the sanatorium or Van Patten's Mountain Camp. This is around \$150,000. I would like to emphasize that I am not against spending money on nature. I'm all for it but there are far better ways to spend money than some of these plans.

You have an unusual opportunity to make wise decisions to protect this area for the future while permitting reasonable access for present enjoyment.

Sincerely yours,


Zeno W. Wickes Jr.

- 5-6 There will be no Highway 70 bypass authorized within the CRMP area. The BLM, in recent public hearings, went on record opposing this. As a result, any alternative crossing any portion of the CRMP area was dropped from further consideration. The BLM is also opposed to any improvement of the Baylor Canyon Road between Highway 70 and the Dripping Springs road.

- 5-7 Paving of the Dripping Springs road is necessary to handle the inevitable traffic increase that will occur from visitors travelling between Las Cruces and the Cox Ranch via University Avenue. Paving the road will reduce dust production, rutting, erosion, and maintenance. The dust created from vehicle traffic on this road, if left unpaved, would significantly affect views of the mountains from Las Cruces and the Mesilla Valley. The BLM will attempt to work with the County and potential developers to share the cost of paving the first 2 miles from the junction with the Soledad Canyon road to the CRMP/NCA boundary.

- 5-8 The only building that will be fully restored at Dripping Springs is the small territorial-style structure against the base of the rock wall. The small gazebo will also be reconstructed. All other structures, including the sanitorium will only be stabilized to prevent further deterioration and to provide for visitor safety. The other costs include development of interpretive trails, barriers, and interpretive features such as brochures, historical photos, etc.

11-14-88
Organ Mountain CRMP

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area BLM
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, N.M. 88005

Dear Tim:

I have reviewed the draft Organ Mountains CRMP and the following comments are the result of my analysis of the document.

6-1 In lieu of the proposed plan, I am still highly in favor of the Organ Mountain Wilderness designation as proposed by the BLM Wilderness Coalition. This proposal consists of 44,423 acres as compared to the 11,794 acre area as proposed by the BLM. Wilderness designation will provide the best and longest lasting designated protection for the unique Organ Mountain area. Lands adjacent to the proposed wilderness could be managed as proposed in the CRMP with a few suggested changes.

Though I do not endorse this document due to the lack of consideration of a more effective wilderness designation, I strongly prefer the least intensive" alternative 2 to the "proposed action" alternative 1. I would also feel more comfortable with alternative 4 than with alternative 1, if the "needle's eye development was excluded from the alternative 4.

I would favor National Park designation for the area as an alternative to the proposed alternative 2. The Park Service is far more educated and adept in preserving complex and fragile ecologic systems than is the BLM.

Concerning the plan in general, I have the following comments to make.

RECREATION

6-2 All roads in the Pena Blanca area should be closed to vehicular traffic. A parking area should be designated approximately 0.5 to 1 mile from Pena Blanca with a hiking/equestrian/bicycle trail accessing the Pena Blanca area. The west side road should be closed to vehicular traffic. Residential development on the west side will undoubtedly produce a large array of ORV maniacal kids utilizing the westside road which will continually degrade the area. Enforcement of ORV's in the area will be almost impossible once development takes place. Similar areas around Tucson, Arizona in and around the western unit of Saguaro National Monument have extensive ORV damage due to nearby residential developments. Access for the ORV's has been provided by unclosed roads. The closed west side road will also make

6-3

6-1 The CRMP is not the proper vehicle to address wilderness considerations. As an "activity plan", it must deal with the constraints imposed by existing land use plans, laws, regulations and policies. BLM's official wilderness recommendations were analyzed in the New Mexico Statewide Wilderness Study: Final Environmental Impact Statement (January 1988). With the acquisition of State trust land, NMSU land, and other lands, the WSAs could be expanded to nearly 20,000 acres. This issue will be considered in the Mimbres RMP or in legislation establishing the NCA. The BLM also has no authority to consider wilderness designation on military land (almost half of the Coalition's proposed 44,423-acre wilderness lies within Ft. Bliss).

6-2 Archeologists on the Technical Review Teams (TRTs) suggested keeping this site more visible by interpreting it to the general public. A parking area located 1/2 to 1 mile away would not afford this visibility. All roads near Pena Blanca will be closed except the westside road.

6-3 Please see the response to Comment 4-7. Your idea of using portions of the westside road for the connecting trail with the Franklin Mountains has merit and will be considered in the survey and design of the trail. BLM does not feel that hiking, equestrian, and mountain bike use of the trail would be incompatible with incidental four-wheel drive use.

up a large portion of the proposed "north-south" trail, eliminating substantial construction costs. If the area east of Pena Blanca is turned over to the military, all roads in the area should be closed and rehabilitated. There should also be an agreement with the military that the entire valley will not be developed, thus it's use will be that of a buffer zone only.

6-4 The Paul Price property is of utmost importance for acquisition due to the high scenic value of the southern end of the Organ mountains. This land is probably the lowest priced property in the area, thus a relatively small expenditure will go a long way in preserving an important area. If this property is purchased, the allotment should be permanently retired. No cows in this area!

The decision to exclude ORV's from sections 22 and 27 was very timely and will further the goal of the proposed NCA in preserving the ecological integrity of the area.

6-5 I am also opposed to any camping development on the west side of the Organs, especially La Cueva and Needle's eye. A campground in either area will concentrate people in two ecologically sensitive areas, undoubtedly degrading them severely. The campgrounds will also compete with possible private campgrounds which could afford the same service. Additionally, a campground this close to town may become popular with teenage alcohol parties, or drug selling operations, especially if adequate funding or personnel is not available to operate the campground. Most of the proposed goals of the La Cueva area can be met with a day use area. The service road to ice canyon

6-6 should not be paved and should be maintained as a 1 lane road. Pit toilets may pose a contamination problem to any water withdrawal downstream of the ice box parking lot. This should be investigated before the toilets are installed, depending on the source of water proposed for the visitor center and day use area. Proposed trails

6-7 around cuevas rock should not interfere with ecological or rock climbing activities. Visitors should be required to stay on trails except in designated climbing areas. Some use of permanent climbing devices may be desirable if properly installed. Absolutely no beverage containers or food should be allowed outside of the immediate picnic area. The firewood collecting ban should include the entire CRMP area, backcountry also, i.e. Grand Canyon.

6-9 Trail construction in the high mountains should not be considered unless plans have been developed for mitigating accidents and environmental damage. If trails are constructed in Fillmore canyon and across to sugarloaf, they should not be open to equestrian or bicycle use due to accident and environmental hazards.

6-10 Map #2E of the proposed La Cueva camping and picnic ground may show a potential problem.. The map is hard to see, however it appears as though the proposed picnic sites are in the vegetated bottom of the arroyo. If so, this will cause ecological problems due to compaction of the soil, and disturbance of vegetation and wildlife. A hazard due to flooding of the area may also be created, not to mention the cost of repairing the picnic sites every time a flash flood comes down the canyon. If you want picnic sites in the trees, plant some more native trees out of the arroyo bottom.

6-4 BLM is actively pursuing an exchange for the Paul Price property at the present time.

6-5 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

6-6 The hiking trail/service road to Dripping Springs will not be paved and will be maintained as a one-lane road. Pit toilets will consist of sealed vaults (like the ones at Aguirre Spring) that will be periodically pumped and the waste removed for proper disposal.

6-7 The trails around the La Cueva rocks will be routed in cooperation with the Southwest Mountaineers. The installation of additional permanent climbing devices can be authorized after appropriate consultation with BLM. We have no objection to carefully planned and placed permanent devices (that do not impair visual quality or other natural values in the area).

6-8 Please see the response to Comment 4-6

6-9 Trails are considered a management tool designed to prevent adverse impacts from indiscriminate use by a large number of hikers. Environmental damage can be prevented by routing hikers away from environmentally sensitive areas (such as riparian zones). There is no trail planned to provide access to Sugarloaf Peak. The Sugarloaf Peak Trail was proposed in the 1971 recreation plan and also in the 1975 revision. It has been dropped from further consideration. The Fillmore Canyon Trail will be open only for hiking use.

6-10 After further consideration, about half the picnic sites will be relocated out of the arroyo bottom to adjacent upland areas. Remaining sites in the arroyo bottom will be sited to minimize potential flood damage.

6-11

I would also suggest that the proposed "Soledad Ecology Garden" boundary be enlarged to encompass all public lands north of the paved Soledad canyon road, and between parcels of private property. No vehicles or horses, pets, etc. should be allowed in the area. I would also propose the purchase of the small peaks on the eastern boundary in order to prevent trashy private developments from appearing on the tops.

6-12

The Aguirre Springs campground should be converted to a day use area only, and the campground relocated at the once proposed visitor site. Native vegetation could be planted at the new campsite to provide shade. This option would reduce the impact of overcrowding and ecologic destruction at the present campground, it would also solve the problem of water since it is much closer to an existing water source, and it would solve the problem of late-night parties at the campground by allowing closure of the road at night. The caretakers residence should not be a tacky trailer house, but should be a small passive solar rock structure similar to those at Carlsbad Caverns National Park that were built by the CCC in the 1930's. This project could be conducted by volunteer high school children as part of a construction/shop class.

GRAZING

6-13

Due to the high cost of administering an effective grazing program on the allotments in question, I would suggest retiring all of the allotments at the time of sale by the existing owners and deferring all range improvements till that time unless they are critical for ecological protection and in that instance should be paid for by the allottees.

6-14

I am opposed to the use of herbicides as brush control agents. The high cost of brush control makes it economically unattractive to conduct the proposed actions when the entire annual allotment payments are only about \$10,600 for the CRMP area.

The use of prescribed fire in the lower elevations to control fuel buildup and progression of invasive woody plants is highly desirable provided no abrupt fire lines are used.

If constructed, fences should not be paralleled with roads.

MINING

The Stevenson-Bennett gravel pile should be moved by the private interests of the mine. The lands exchanged with NMSU should have an IMMEDIATE NSO established on them before mining claims are staked. If BLM acquires the patented mining claims in the Organs, these lands should not be re-opened for mining. Before unused mines in the Organs are closed to the public, a survey of each mine should be conducted by a speleologist or geologist to determine the structural integrity of the mine. Any mine without substantial hazard should be left open for recreational/rock hounding pursuits.

6-11

The Soledad Rock Garden and Ecology Site Trail will be open to hiking use only. Pets will be allowed but only on leashes. The goal is to acquire all remaining private land in this area.

6-12

The Aguirre Spring Campground will remain an overnight facility as well as a day-use area. Present camping use is estimated to be only about 20 percent of the total use. Day-use of the area is by far the predominant use. The formerly proposed visitor center site is within the Organ Mountains WSA. The caretaker's residence will be designed to tastefully blend in with the environment.

6-13

Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

6-14

The gravel pile at the Stephenson-Bennett Mine is gradually disappearing. The operator is responsible for it's removal and rehabilitation on BLM administered land. The material will be removed and the area rehabilitated by April 1990.

A no-surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation cannot be used with locatable (hard rock) minerals. NSO only applies to oil and gas or geothermal leasing. Wilderness legislation will effectively withdraw public land from new mineral entry. Acquired land will not be open for mineral entry until an opening order is published in the Federal Register. The issues of wilderness and mineral withdrawals will again be considered in the RMP or in NCA/wilderness legislation.

The mine hazard inventory will deal with which mines need to be closed to public entry on a case-by-case basis.

WILDLIFE

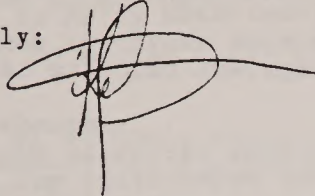
6-15

The proposed improvements for wildlife appear to be acceptable, however I would like to see the cooperative agreement with New Mexico Game and Fish extended to the military as well. The discussion of fire was well prepared, and I recommend that the advice given should be followed.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to work on the Organ Mountains CRMP technical review team. If I can be of assistance to you on this plan, or any other in the Mimbres Resource Area please contact me at:

Kelly Cranston
1425 Walden
Las Cruces, NM, 88001

Sincerely:



6-15

The control of exotic wildlife on the military reservation could be addressed through the proposed CMA with Ft. Bliss.

GOVERNOR
GARREY CARRUTHERS

State of New Mexico

STATE GAME COMMISSION

DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
BILL MONTOYA



GERALD MAESTAS, CHAIRMAN
ESPANOLA

RICHARD A. ALLGOOD
SILVER CITY

CHRISTINE DIGREGORIO
GALLUP

THOMAS P. ARVAS, O.D.
ALBUQUERQUE

BOB JONES
DELL CITY, TX

DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH

VILLAGRA BUILDING
SANTA FE
87503

November 17, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

The Department of Game and Fish has reviewed the draft environmental assessment (DEA) for the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP). The department believes that the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) places undue emphasis on recreational activities at the expense of wildlife concerns. For example, under the Preferred Alternative, visitor-days are anticipated to increase from 180,000 to 530,000. This drastic increase in human activity in the Organ Mountains is not compatible with the objective of maintaining viable populations of wildlife in the area.

The Organ Mountains have been identified as a potential transplant site for desert bighorn sheep (State-endangered Group 1). However, the anticipated fourfold increase in human activity has the potential to render the area unsuitable for the species.

Disturbances, whether directed towards bighorn or not, have been observed to cause reactions adverse to population welfare. The point at which harm results is not clear, but bighorn have been found to abandon the use of historic range where human activity increased over a few years time. For example, a study of bighorn sheep behavioral responses to man

7-1

It is estimated that recreation visits in the area will double (from 180,000 to 360,000 recreation visits per year) without any action (under present management). The planned actions are designed to anticipate and manage the increased public use by creating "hardened" sites and facilities which will concentrate visitors in a few small areas. At the same time, visitors will be directed away from many environmentally sensitive areas.

58

7-1

in numerous environmental situations in California found that an increase in human visitation created a spatial displacement effect on bighorn habitat. Bighorn and their sign were absent in a line-of-sight pattern from the center of human influence. Indirect as well as direct disturbances toward bighorn sheep were documented to exhibit reactions adverse to population welfare. This species exhibits great difficulty adjusting to human encroachment due to the animals' rigid and ritualized behavior patterns. The conclusions from this study indicated that:

1. Bighorn maintain their area of distribution as a living tradition and rarely depart from it.
2. Bighorn fail to extend their range despite ample opportunity.
3. Bighorn use of historic range begins to diminish where human use exceeds 500 visitor-days per year (recreational use).
4. Between 500 and 900 visitor-days per year caused bighorn to avoid their historic range.
5. Final results may be a reduction in numbers by crowding of the bighorn sheep population, resulting in insufficient forage, increased predation, increased disease, and external harassment.
6. Any curtailment of bighorn movements will result in reduced gene flow and thus gene pool size which may ultimately effect the future existence of the bighorn population.

In New Mexico, the decline of bighorn sheep in the Sandia Mountains roughly coincided with the period of tramway construction activities and accelerated people use, suggesting a cause and effect relationship. Furthermore, the bighorn population in the Big Hatchet Mountains declined by 50% during a two-year study conducted by New Mexico State University possibly due to the increase in human activity in the area.

The risk associated with intensified human disturbance that could seriously jeopardize the success of establishing a viable bighorn sheep population in the Organ Mountains, is of major concern. Given this, we recommend reconsideration of proposed actions in the CRMP that would increase human activity into potential bighorn sheep habitat. This would include abandoning plans to construct the Fillmore Trail; relocating the North/South Trail away from topographic features that may be used by bighorn sheep as bedding sites,

7-2

All actions outlined in the CRMP are subject to further review and analysis on a project specific basis. After completion of the bighorn sheep habitat evaluation, some projects may be modified or relocated to avoid conflict with potential habitat or special topographic features. BLM encourages the support of the Department in conducting the habitat evaluation. BLM will also consult with the Department on the specific location of all wildlife projects and any other project that may affect potential bighorn sheep habitat.

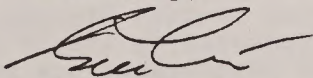
Mr. Tim Salt

3

November 17, 1988

foraging areas, lambing grounds, movement corridors, and escape terrain; closure of the west side road between La Cueva and Mossman Arroyo; and prohibiting overnight camping. Our concerns are further compounded when one considers the housing subdivision being developed in the area east of "A" Mountain. The adoption of these recommendations would also benefit other wildlife species currently inhabiting the Organ Mountains.

Your proposal to enhance riparian areas, construct wildlife water structures and improve vegetation diversity, is commended and supported. We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on DEA for the Organ Mountains CRMP. Please contact Mike Robertson (524-6090) or Byron Donaldson (827-9908) of this department for further coordination.

Sincerely,

Bill Montoya
Director

BM/bd/avs

- cc: Craig Nordyke (SW Area Supervisor, NMGF)
- Mike Robertson (SW Area Game Manager, NMGF)
- Lee Duff (Las Cruces District Supervisor, NMGF)
- Dan Sutcliffe (Game Management Division Chief, NMGF)
- Jim Vaught (Field Operations Division Chief, NMGF)
- Andrew Sandoval (Environmental Section Chief, NMGF)

60

David Pengelley
3307 West Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005
October 19, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt,

I am writing to comment on the draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.

8-1 I am particularly disturbed about your Proposed ELM/Fort Bliss Cooperative Management Agreement Boundary. You say that ELM will manage the area west of the topographic crest, but you have excluded Long Canyon from the ELM managed area, and plan to exclude the public not only from Long Canyon, but also from lands presently under ELM jurisdiction near Pena Blanca and Bishop's Cap. The fact is that the military has no valid need for, nor does it make any valid use of, these lands, and has recently shown it is irresponsible in caring for these public trust lands. The Long Canyon area is a spectacular, biologically rich, diverse and important habitat. The military, however, as we all know, recently started a major fire in this area from their activities to the east. Not only did they ignore this fire, allowing it to burn into Long Canyon and even onto ELM administered lands. They even denied its existence after residents of Las Cruces began inquiring about it, due to the large amount of smoke it created. They then even went so far as to outrageously say they had examined the area and found no fire (shortly before they had to mount major firefighting efforts because it had become so large). This mendacious and reckless attitude shows they should not be given the responsibility for managing these precious lands. Furthermore, we all know that the military's true reason for wishing to control areas such as Long Canyon, and now further ELM areas you propose giving them control over, is pure graft, namely private hunting parties for military brass.

I urge you to say no to further military control of Long Canyon, and new military control of areas southwest of it. They have no need, their reasons are pure selfish graft (private military hunting parties), they have no sensitivity to the responsibility of caring for these public lands, as demonstrated recently by their outrageous handling of the fire they created, and moreover the public has the right and desire to visit these lands, particularly Long Canyon, for recreation, study, and solitude. The public will support you. Please have the courage to stand up for what is right!

Sincerely,

David Pengelley

David Pengelley

8-1

There is presently no legal public access into Long Canyon. All public use of this area is in trespass. The proposed Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) with the Army represents what BLM considers to be the best solution to jointly managing public land in the Organ Mountains. The CMA boundary has been proposed considering resource values involved as well as the Army's mission. Fillmore Canyon and the areas above the Cox Ranch and Aguirre Spring are where visitor use will be the highest and where the potential for trespass and recreational conflicts with Ft. Bliss are likely to be the greatest. These areas also possess outstanding scenic quality. Long Canyon is very close to the Army's Multi-Purpose Range Complex. The potential for conflict and safety hazards is the greatest in this area. Therefore BLM feels it is justifiable to close this portion of the area to public use and provide an additional buffer for military operations in that area.

Tim Salt
BLM
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Re: Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan

There are, fortunately, some good things to mention in the plan. Some ideas that I like are 1) locating and protecting threatened and endangered species, 2) improving wildlife habitat, and 3) protection of cultural resources. However, there are many more parts of the plan that I disagree with. While the concept of improving rangeland is certainly to be commended, the use of herbicides to do so is not. It is one of the most

- 9-1 expensive ways and one of the least effective, especially in our desert environment. A far more effective way would be to reduce livestock grazing. In fact, I strongly recommend gradually phasing out livestock grazing throughout the entire area. I gather this has not been seriously considered, but BLM should give serious thought to quitting the practice of subsidizing ranchers. Another area of disagreement is mining. Though I realize current laws may make this difficult to change, it seems it might be possible to phase out mining in the area also. Certainly no new mines should be allowed, and after a certain period of inactivity-- five to ten years--old mines should be considered closed and not be allowed to resume mining activities. The largest area of disagreement though, is within the area of recreational use of the Organ Mountains. According to your own report, the area is already overused and needs to be protected. So I strongly disagree with the plan in the following areas: 1) installing a water system at Aguirre Springs. This is totally unnecessary. Other sources of revenue should be explored first.
- 9-2 2) establishing a permanent residence at Aguirre Springs. There is no need for this drastic step. If necessary, a campground host system could be tried first at much less cost and disruption of the site.
- 9-3 3) establishing the visitor/information center at the Cox ranch. There is little demand for this in the area and would only disrupt an already fragile system.
- 9-4 4) improving trails and roads by paving and establishing new ones is again overdevelopment. The BLM barely maintains the trails now on volunteer effort. Where will the funds come from to expand and maintain the system? Is there enough demand for new trails or is this just another example of BLM's mindset on development?
- 9-5 5) establishing an overnight campground at the Cox ranch area. Campgrounds located next to urban areas have always led to overuse of an area and have then been converted to day-use only areas. Let's learn the lesson from Albuquerque and other towns and not make the same mistake. Over-use and development are already problems on the west side of the Organ Mountains. Let's not aggravate it further. An alternative would be to spread out the impact by locating a campground at Blue Mesa, Las Uvas, or even Aden.

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9-1 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

9-2 Please see the response to Comment 6-14.

9-3 Please see the response to Comment 2-4.

9-4 BLM has been utilizing a campground host program at the campground for almost 2 years. It has been successful in curbing many problems with vandalism, etc. BLM believes that a permanent residence is needed to provide a desirable place for a long-term volunteer to live. A long-term volunteer is much more effective than a series of hosts who are self-contained but leave every 6 months.

9-5 The concept of a visitor center was unanimously supported by all Technical Review Team (TRT) members. The purpose of the visitor center is to educate visitors. Interpretive themes will provide visitors with a better understanding of the area, the resources, and sensitive environmental concerns. The visitor center and parking area will utilize an existing building (the ranch house) and disturbed area, therefore environmental impacts will be minimal.

9-6 Trails are considered a management tool designed to prevent adverse impacts from indiscriminate use by a large number of hikers. Environmental damage can be prevented by routing hikers away from environmentally sensitive areas. The two existing trails in the area (the Baylor Pass and Pine Tree Trails) are already suffering from over use. BLM believes that a demand and need already exists for additional trails and this will intensify as recreation visits to the area increase.

9-6 (continued) BLM agrees that the development and maintenance of trails and other facilities will require funding. The TRTs were unanimous in that the Organ and Franklin Mountains are a Las Cruces and Mesilla Valley resource and as such should be supported by the local community. We are optimistic that a "Friends of the Organ Mountains" group can be formed to coordinate volunteer projects and to assist in soliciting and obtaining sources of contributed funds to match any appropriated funds received through the normal BLM budget process. Also see the response to Comment 5-7.

9-7 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

9-8 So, in summary, it is safe to say I would support you in your efforts to preserve the Organ Mountains and oppose you in your urge to develop. There is no need for the overdevelopment of the area as you have proposed. The cost is outlandish and the results destructive. Please reconsider your plan and come up with new alternatives. Going back and reviewing the wilderness proposal and input given to you earlier by members of the Southwest Mountaineers, the Sierra Club, etc. that you invited to be on your committee would be the most helpful first step. There is no need to ignore their advice and concern. We all want what is best for the Organ Mountains and few would agree that overdevelopment and damage to the environment are the ways that BLM should meet the management challenge.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sallach

Barbara Sallach
1108 Gardner
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Copies sent to all state and federal legislators.

9-8

The CRMP is not a plan for development, rather it is a management plan. Management includes development of appropriate facilities as well as conservation (wise use) and preservation of resources in specific areas. Trails and other facilities are management tools used to meet the stated resource management objectives of the Plan. As land managers responsible for the care and protection of the public land, BLM cannot afford to wait until problems occur and then react to them. Recreation visits are expected to at least double in this area without any action on BLM's part (under present management). Trails and other facilities will concentrate most visitors in a relatively small portion of the area while preserving the vast majority of the area in its natural state. The cumulative total of all surface disturbing actions outlined in the Plan (including all trails, fences, picnic areas and other developed facilities) comes to 85 acres. Of the 60,000 acres addressed in the CRMP, this amounts to 0.0014 percent of the total area.

BLM has not intentionally ignored the advice or input of any member of the TRTs. The intent of the CRMP process was to achieve consensus and compromise. Every consensus recommendation that was made by the TRTs has been incorporated into the Plan. In those areas where the TRTs could not reach a consensus agreement, it was agreed to at the outset that the BLM would make the final decision based upon public review of the Draft CRMP.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VI
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TEXAS 75202

NOV 16 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

In complying with Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, we have completed our review of your agency's Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) which outline alternative management actions for the use and protection of public land in the Organ and Franklin Mountains of south-central New Mexico.

10-1 Based upon our evaluation of the environmental assessment information provided, we offer no further comment at this time. However, we ask that all reasonable precautions be taken to minimize associated environmental impacts.

Thank you for your coordination and consideration for the environment.

Sincerely yours,

Norm Thomas
Norm Thomas
Chief

Federal Activities Branch (6E-F)

10-1 All reasonable precautions to minimize environmental impacts are listed in the decision record (adopted mitigating measures) and in the constraints to planned actions.



STANLEY A SPRECHER
1935 Chilton Drive
Las Cruces, N. M. 88001

11/20/88

Bureau of Land Mgt
Las Cruces NM

Dear Sirs---

The work you and your staff
have been doing with preserving the local
wilderness (such as it is in some parts) is
appreciated BUT

11-1 | Let us keep traffic of large vans and
trailers off the roads to Aquirre Spgs
and espc to La Cueva. The beauty of
such spots is few large vehicles...espc
the noisy motor cycles.

11-2 | Also in these two areas keep it on the
rustic side...no large projects which
should be delayed as long as possible.
When Las Cruces gets to be like Tucson
(time to move on) then maybe but even
big Tucson has some good areas with re-
gulated areas as the National Monuments.

11-3 | What can you do to get the Grey Ranch
area in SW counties to be another Wild-
life Refuge? Please help any way you
can. Would like to see LOBO wolf re-
stored there---

Sincerely.

Stan Sprecher

11-1 | Large vans and trailers will not be encouraged
to use the area but they will not be denied
access. No special facilities are provided
for such vehicles.

11-2 | Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 5-1,
6-12, 9-5, and 9-8.

11-3 | The Gray Ranch is not a BLM priority for
acquisition. It is, however, being actively
pursued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
and The Nature Conservancy.

99

2610 S. Solano
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Nov. 19, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

We would like to make the following comments on the Draft Organ Mountains Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. In general we found the plan to be a good one and generally agreed with the proposed action. There were only two areas of concern.

- 12-1 | 1. We do not understand the need for herbiciding part of the area at a cost of nearly \$400,000. Is this justified based on the total animal units involved and will it really improve the area? Will it cause any damage to native vegetation?
- 12-2 | 2. Why should water be provided at Aguirre Springs? Would it be more efficient to place the camping area lower?

We are gratified that we find so much good in the current BLM plan and we congratulate you on a job well done and look forward to a future Organ Mountains Park that will allow the citizens of our area access to an enlarged area of great beauty and respite from the bustle of civilization.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Billie M. Dreyfuss

Devon Brown

Blair Cooper

Lynnda Goin

Marcia Anderson

Vickie Aldrich

Elizabeth L. Kuefner

12-1 | Please see the response to Comment 1-1.

12-2 | Please see the response to Comment 2-4.

MARIANNE H. THAELER

2015 Huntington Drive
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

November 19, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the "Draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan" and accompanying maps.

First some general comments:

13-1 The concept of national preservation areas (NPA), i.e. do nothing areas (DNA), with appropriate enforcement from intrusions, does not seem to be considered as a management strategy in the plan for any portion of the Organ Mountain area.

Wilderness as a management strategy is only mentioned by reference, although much has been said in local newspapers and magazines, i.e. Wilderness defined allows grazing, mining, drilling, etc. More detail might be included.

13-2 I am concerned for the preservation and protection of the Organ Mountains, and believe The Plan should assuage fears of total-use too often associated with the BLM's original charter, and fears this is conjured by this Plan.

Next some specific comments:

13-3 The east side of the Organ Mountains in the Aguirre Springs area has natural acoustical features. Sound travels for miles! Last time I hiked the Pine Tree Trail, I could not escape the sound of a ghetto blaster, and motor cycle (bikes perhaps). Might I suggest that the Aguirre Spring area should be designated a "Quiet Zone". (A hospital area for the soul, where "quiet" interrupted only by the sound of a bird or the wind, is the prescription.) Adjacent areas should be planned to insure the protection of this "Quiet Zone". Alternative areas for un-muffled wheeled vehicles should be found on the west side of the mountain - in the Dona Ana Mountains perhaps.

13-4 When I first came to Las Cruces the old-timers told me of acres and acres of black grama grass. It is gone now, but I understand some does still exist in the southern reaches of the Organ Mountains. If it does, I for one, believe it should be protected from grazing, trampling, and further extinction. Although black grama in itself may not be endangered, any large fields may be.

13-5 "Prescribed burning", is it really needed? Speaking recently

13-1

With the expected increase in recreation visits, as the responsible land management agency for management and protection of the unique resources in the area, BLM cannot just leave the area alone and "do nothing". Given the current level of use and anticipated increased levels of use, it would certainly not be prudent management on our part to wait until there is a conflict or problem before doing something about it. This would most likely lead to increased vandalism (including vandalism to facilities and structures such as the Dripping Springs ruins), increased litter, and increased uncontrolled ORV use that would destroy vegetation and damage soils. It is our intent through this Plan to anticipate future demands and to develop a balanced plan to best meet these demands, while providing maximum protection to environmentally sensitive or unique resources.

Wilderness designation is not an issue to be considered in this Plan (see the response to Comment 6-1). If a portion of the area is designated wilderness, wilderness management will be addressed by a wilderness management plan amendment to the CRMP.

13-2

Please see the response to Comment 9-8.

13-3

Quiet hours are in effect from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Any unmuffled vehicle is illegal anywhere on public land.

13-4

BLM is not aware of any large expanses of black grama within the CRMP area. However, the planned brush control and grazing management strategies should increase the amount of black grama in the area.

13-5
(Cont'd)

with people who live with an uninterrupted view of the Organs, I learned that many small fires occur each night when we have clouds and thunder storms over the mountains. In the years I have lived in Las Cruces there have also been numerous large fires in the Organs - some taking days or weeks to control, let alone extinguish. Before "prescribing burning", I believe systematic observations of what is occurring in the Organs naturally now, should be undertaken. Past experience shows that any burning in the Organs is hard to control. Until the public has confidence in our ability to fight fires swept along by our ever present wind, "prescribed burning" should be postponed.

13-6

Defoliation and fencing for grazing is not cost effective. The electorate has spoken, it wants federal government costs kept down and at the same time our environment protected, especially in rapidly growing urban areas. If grazing fees generate approx. \$10,000 per year, and the cost for fencing and defoliation costs approx. \$400,000 - \$500,000, it would take 40 years to recover the costs. This does not make good business sense. Although I understand those who would like to continue the ranching tradition along the base of the Organ Mountains, it must make good business sense.

13-7

Where water goes, sewers are soon to follow. The cost of bringing water to Aguirre Spring will create a cost and need for sewer. Water and sewer is the ideal environment for large mobile travel vehicles, which will need improved roads (no sharp turns) which means cut and fill and drainage culverts, which means..... And so the cost of bringing water to Aguirre Spring has fueled a spending spiral. Water near the highway and solar pit toilets might be considered as an alternative.

13-8

In closing, without the infusion of a lot of money to accomplish everything outlined by this plan, it seems the activities suggested are overly optimistic. For this reason might I make a suggestion, (a) capital investment - acquire mining rights, private inholdings and adjacent lands (perhaps in cooperation with the private non-profit Trust for Public Lands), and secure open mine shafts, and (b) maintenance - increase security, stabilize old structures, close road south on west side of Organs from Dripping Springs, since it hardly exists anyway, and develop and preservation and protection strategy.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft and to all those involved in the generation of this plan, a special thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,

Marianne H. Thaeler
Marianne H. Thaeler

13-5

A prescribed burn is conducted under carefully monitored and controlled conditions of temperature, wind speed, relative humidity, and fuel moisture. Based on existing literature and professional opinion, prescribed burning appears to be the most economically and ecologically desirable method of maintaining most plant communities in the area. The use of fire as a management tool will, however, be largely deferred until completion of the Mimbres RMP in 1992. Until that time, most fires in the area will continue to be actively suppressed. This will allow us to collect additional information, as well as public input on the subject.

13-6

Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

13-7

There will be no sewers, showers, flush toilets, or hook-ups provided at Aguirre Spring.

13-8

Please see the response to 9-6.

- 13-9 | P.S. - I don't appreciate dog, cow, and horse manure on the hiking trails.
- 13-10 | - Night time bear busts around Dripping Springs leaves lots of litter and cans.
- 13-11 | - Open mine shafts in the ground around Cox Ranch - north and east of Adqto. are a danger.
- 13-12 | - Until 24 hour security can be provided at La Cueva and Aguirre Springs over night camping should be discouraged. People go up the down road at Aguirre all the time after hours.

13-9 The Pine Tree Trail is presently closed to equestrian (horse) use. The Fillmore Canyon, La Cueva, Dripping Springs, Soledad Rock Garden, and Pena Blanca Trails would also be closed to equestrian use. Again, there has been a conscious attempt to develop a balanced plan that will allow equestrian use on some trails while restricting such use on others. In that way, recreationists can plan their trip accordingly to ensure the type of experience they are seeking.

13-10 The Dripping Springs area is closed to vehicle use. The area will also be closed to the public at night (after sunset).

13-11 The open mine shafts in the vicinity of the Cox Ranch and elsewhere will be addressed in the mine hazard inventory.

13-12 The Cox Ranch area will be managed as a day-use area and will be closed to the public at night.

NEW MEXICO INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION



COMMISSION MEMBERS

ALBERT E. UTTON, Chairman, Albuquerque
S. E. REYNOLDS, Secretary, Santa Fe
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RICHARD C. JOHNSON, Silver City
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PETER A. CASADOS, El Guique
JACK D. COOK, Farmington

BATAAN MEMORIAL BUILDING
STATE CAPITOL
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87503

November 22, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

By letter dated October 10, 1988, you transmitted for our review and comment the Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Page 5, paragraph 1., and 6, second paragraph, of the Coordinated Resource Management Plan discusses the proposed development of surface and underground water supplies for stock and wildlife watering purposes. New appropriations of surface water or a change in the point of diversion or in the place or purpose of use of water, as well as for drilling a well within an underground water basin declared by the State Engineer require a permit from the State Engineer.

This office supports the Draft Coordinated Resource Management Plan as proposed. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft plan.

Sincerely,

William J. Miller
Staff Engineer

WJM:ir

14-1

Thank you for your comments.

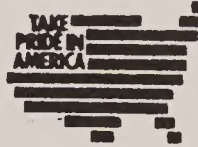
14-1

17



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHWEST REGION
P.O. BOX 728
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87504-0728



IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7619(SWR-PPE)

NOV 21 1988

Memorandum

To: Area Manager, Mimbres Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management,
Las Cruces, New Mexico

From: Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resources Management,
Southwest Region

Subject: Review of Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management
Plan and Environmental Assessment, New Mexico

We have reviewed the subject assessment and find that it adequately addresses
National Park Service concerns.

Ronald J. Clark

Thank you for your comments.

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PO Box 687
Mesilla, N.M. 88046

Nov. 22, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, N.M. 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

In response to the BLM request the following comments are submitted regarding the Draft Organ Mountains Plan & Environmental Assessment.

We support Alternative 2 - Least Intensive Development. Reasons are as follows:

73
16-1 A 55 unit campground at La Cueva on the west side of the Organs a mere 6 miles from the Las Cruces city limits would require intensive management to handle fees, violations and enforcement actions. BLM is not equipped to handle this type of operation and lack of management personnel would lead to vandalism and all sorts of illegal activities. Las Cruces is the second largest metropolitan area in the state and ample private camp areas are available within the nearby city limits. Public campgrounds in the National Forests near Albuquerque & Santa Fe have been closed for the very reasons cited above. BLM should not plan facilities that have been proven not to work in other areas.

16-2 The Brush Control proposal does not seem to make sense. In item #5 on page 5, the plan recommends control or elimination of exotic or feral species, yet the BLM wants to spend money on brush control to eliminate native species so that the most objectionable exotic species (cattle) can prosper. Here again, ranching in an area this close to a large city will be eliminated in the near future, by voluntary action if no other reason.

16-3 The New Mexico Wilderness Coalition proposal for the Organ Mtns. includes much of the lands proposed for other categories by BLM. We support wilderness designation for the entire 44,000 acres as proposed by the Coalition pending final passage of a New Mexico Wilderness Bill.

We request that BLM schedule meetings for public comment on the Organ Mtns. CRMP. This plan should be brought to the attention of all residents in the Las Cruces-El Paso area.

Sincerely,

Ben Zerbey
Jane Zerbey

Ben & Jane Zerbey

16-1 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

16-2 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

16-3 Please see the response to Comment 6-1.



State of New Mexico
OFFICE OF THE
Commissioner of Public Lands
Santa Fe

WILLIAM R. HUMPHRIES
COMMISSIONER

P.O. BOX 1148
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87504-1148

November 23, 1988

Tim Salt
B.L.M. Area Manager
1800 Marquez
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

I would take this opportunity to comment on the proposed CRMP for the Organ Mountains. There are only two items that need to be addressed from the perspective of the State Land Office and they are as follows;

- 17-1 1) The State Land Office is considering selling the last remaining inholding of trust land affecting the Organ Mountain CRMP. This inholding is described as the NE/4 of the SW/4 of Sec.23 T.22S.-R.3E containing 40 acres more or less. Sale of this parcel will eliminate all the surface estate of trust lands that lie within the Organ Mountain CRMA.
- 17-2 2) It is the understanding of the State Land Office that the retention boundary will be extended west so as to include Sections 16, 21, 28, 33 Township 22 South-Range 3 East and Section 4 Township 23 South-Range 3 East.

The State Land Office appreciates this opportunity to comment and would offer to provide the Bureau of Land Management with additional information upon request.

Sincerely,

W. R. HUMPHRIES
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

WRH:WT

- 17-1 The BLM is still interested in acquiring of the undeveloped portion of the 40-acre parcel (approximately 35 acres).
- 17-2 The boundary of the CRMP area is the boundary of the retention area as described by the map in the Southern Rio Grande Plan Amendment of 1986. Any changes in that boundary will be determined in the Mimbres RMP to be completed in 1992 or by legislation establishing the National Conservation Area. Until such time, there is a moratorium on further sale or exchange of these five sections of public land. During this time, they are being managed under the provisions of the Plan for the adjoining lands.

74

Dorothy, Malcolm Fell
905 Conway St. #11
Las Cruces, NM 88005

RECEIVED
MAIL ROOM

1988 NOV 28 PM 1:17

LAS CRUCES DISTRICT
LAS CRUCES, N. MEX.

Nov. 26, 1988

Mimbres Resource Area

Las Cruces, NM

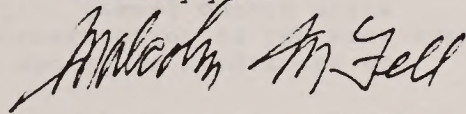
Gentlemen:

18-1

I want to go on record as being completely in favor of your plans for developing the Cox Ranch area. Although I do not have all the details, I particularly favor improved hiking trails, a parking area, and a paved road for access to the area.

We are new to the area, but are now property owners and taxpayers here, and are anxious to begin hiking and learning about the geology and natural features of the area.

Sincerely yours



Malcolm and Dorothy Fell

18-1

Thank you for your comments.

November 24, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

19-1 On behalf of the Southern New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Organizations (COCO) we submit the following comments on the Organ Mountain CRMP. COCO still fully supports the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition's plan for a 50,000 acre Organ Mountain Wilderness and these comments should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the Organ Mountain NCA over the Organ Mountain Wilderness.

19-2 The Organ Mountain NCA theme should be wilderness and preservation. Any proposed construction in the area should only occur when pressure demands it. Demand should drive development, not development create demand. BLM should not encourage use in these fragile areas by developing facilities and recreational development should not focus solely on the Organ Mountains. With the military boundary on about one half of the NCA and heavy urbanization on the other half, the potential exists on the one hand for widespread destruction of the area by too much development, or on the other hand protection and preservation by restricting development to the boundaries of the area.

19-3 In general we support Alternative 2 with a few suggestions. In particular, we support no campground in the Cuevas area. This should be a day use only area. In other parts of the state and nation, publicly supported campgrounds in close proximity of cities have been unsuccessful. Cost of operation is high and vandalism is high. Where campgrounds have been established most have been abandoned in favor of day use only.

19-4 We also support day use only at Aguirre Springs for the same reasons. This type of urban campground competes directly with private commercial campgrounds and urban camping should be left to them. If a campground must be established, it should be placed near highway 70 at the site of the previously planned visitors' center where water could be easily provided. BLM campgrounds could be provided, if needed, adjacent to the Robledos, Blue Mesa, Dona Anas and Potrillo areas thereby dispersing camping and people impacts.

19-5 We further support closing the westside road between Soledad Canyon Road (CO 78) and Mossman Arroyo Road (BO 59). Sufficient public foot access is provided by CO 78 and BO 59 and it would

19-1 Please see the response to Comment 6-1.

19-2 Please see the response to Comment 9-8.

19-3 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

19-4 Please see the response to Comment 6-12.

19-5 Please see the response to Comment 4-7.

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19-5 (Cont'd) help protect the area once the adjacent private land is developed. This portion of the westside road could be used as a foot and equestrian trail.

19-6 The Mossman Arroyo Road should be terminated at the fork about one mile southwest of Pena Blanca and the parking area placed here. The one mile interpretive walk to Pena Blanca would help reduce vandalism.

19-7 All roads in the NCA should be closed except to Ruby Mine and Modoc Mine (neither should be improved or maintained), Cuevas Road, Mossman Arroyo Road, Aguirre Springs Road and Westside Road north of Cuevas.

19-8 We feel that trail building should be limited and done only to meet demand. In particular, the Filmore Canyon trail should not be built unless heavy use and environmental degradation will occur. The demand for this trail does not currently exist in this very fragile area.

19-9 We also believe that water catchments are unnecessary. This area historically supported wildlife populations based on its semi-desert nature and to add artificial water sources would unnaturally increase existing populations as well as bring in species not normally found there. The impacts of the changes on this delicate system are unknown and potentially significant. More is not necessarily better, ecologically.

19-10 It appears that the brush control and new fence construction should not be done as it would not be cost effective. It would be much better to phase out grazing in the NCA over a ten year period during which time the adjacent private land will become urbanized.

19-11 Other brief suggestions are: The entire NCA should be closed to wood gathering. 'No Surface Occupancy' designation should be required on all existing mining claims within the NCA and any patented claims acquired by BLM should be closed to mining. Alternative energy sources should be used everywhere possible, for example, solar powered pit toilets.

We feel the Organ Mountains are a unique treasure that should be shared by all, including future generations. Therefore it is essential that we carefully protect them now.

Sincerely,

Bob Tafaelli

Bob Tafaelli
3957 Westview
Las Cruces, NM 88005

19-6 Please see the response to Comment 6-2.

19-7 The existing roads and trails that will remain open are those that provide legitimate access to meet the needs of permittees and other authorized users of the public land as well as the recreating public.

19-8 Please see the responses to Comments 6-9 and 9-6.

19-9 Installation of wildlife water catchments is an acceptable and proven practice in the desert southwest. Historically, water sources and habitat were also more abundant. These sources of water serve to enhance the remaining limited habitat.

19-10 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

19-11 Please see the responses to Comments 4-6 and 6-14. Toilets proposed in the Plan (at Dripping Springs and the La Cueva picnic area) utilize sealed vaults that do not require electricity or another energy source to operate.



Thomas H. Wooten
5840 N. Main St.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
505-522-4434

November 23, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Re: Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Plan

Dear Mr. Salt:

As a member of both of your Technical Review Teams that considered Organ Mountain activities, I have already had a chance to comment on proposed plans for the Organ Mountains. Please know I considered it a privilege to assist you in this way and feel that the work done by the teams gave all potential users an opportunity to give input. I applaud your use of this mechanism and hope you will continue its use.

Frankly, I am disappointed that your draft did not consider one plan suggested at a TRT #1 meeting. The plan was not endorsed by all members of the team, but there was substantial support. This plan was a suggestion affecting the campground at Aguirre Springs. We understood there were three primary considerations to make about this area: Water in the campground so fees could be charged; vandalism and disturbance to campers, particularly at night; prevention of further degradation of the area in face of an anticipated huge increase in demand. The cost of pumping or taking water from the low ground up to the campground will be very expensive, probably not cost effective to taxpayers; your gate at the beginning of the one way road has been ineffective in stopping the undesirable nighttime activities because vehicles are driven up the exit road; the expansion of camping facilities and availability of water will continue to add pressure to the environment instead of helping. A plan suggested called for locating camping facilities for overnight camping at a lower elevation, closer to the source for campground water; in an area less ecologically sensitive; and erecting a gate on the two way road at a spot where boulders or an arroyo made circumventing the gate impossible.

20-1

The use of Aguirre Spring campground is not expected to drastically increase with or without a water system. The facility is already used to capacity during peak periods (and often exceeded on Easter weekend). The majority of this use is day-use. Camping accounts for about 20 percent of the total recreation visits. Some campers may be inclined to stay longer with potable water provided. With the development of La Cueva and the Cox Ranch as a day-use area, the total use of the Aguirre Spring facility (especially day-use) may actually decline somewhat, at least initially.

Water will be hauled to the campground in a water truck that will be used to fill a storage tank for distribution. The cost of this alternative (\$60,000) is substantially less than pumping water up hill (and also far less damaging to the environment). It is also far less expensive to provide water at Aguirre Spring than to develop a new facility. A new facility would cost up to \$1 million.

The campground closure is basically a law enforcement problem. BLM also plans to install a traffic controller (of the non-puncturing type) on the other section of the one-way road near the gate. The presence of the campground hosts and periodic patrols by Rangers will eventually control the problem of the night closure and quiet hours.

There are also no plans to expand the facilities other than to provide water. There will be no flush toilets, showers, sewers, hook-ups, or new units provided.

The suggestion for relocation of the campground was considered but is not feasible because the lower elevation location is within the Organ Mountains WSA.

Also see the responses to Comments 2-4, 6-12, and 13-7.



Thomas H. Wootten
5840 N. Main St.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
505-522-4434

Following this plan the current facilities could continue to be used for day use only. I feel this plan is preferable to your preferred alternative. The only reason I remember being given against this plan was that a precedent had been set that allowed overnight camping at Aguirre Springs and this would be hard to change. This plan does have merit.

20-2

Particularly since setting precedences such as above are of such importance, and I do agree that changing peoples habits are difficult, I strongly urge that the maximum area possible receive the strongest protection by "Wilderness" designation such as proposed by the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition. Any areas not designated as "Wilderness" should be managed according to Alternative #2, the least intensive. It is certainly easier to relax restrictions if changes indicate they must be, than it is to tighten after damage is observed.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Wootten

20-2

Please see the response to 6-1.

Mr. Tim SALT,

I HAVE JUST REVIEWED THE DRAFT PROPOSED FOR THE ORGAN MOUNTAINS. I HAVE BEEN IN LAS CAUCES SINCE 1953. AS A BOY, THE ORGANS WERE THE "WILDERNESS" WE SCOUTS LEARNED OUR "TRICKS OF THE TRADE." THOSE NIGHTS OF SOLITUDE IN THOSE MOUNTAINS REMAINS FRESH IN MY MIND.

I HAVE HIKEED, BARBARKED, CLIMBED & EVEN HUNTED IN THOSE MOUNTAINS.

THEY HAVE BECOME A SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH AND CALMNESS IN A CITY THAT SOMETIMES IS TOTALLY OUT OF CONTROL. IT IS MY OPINION THAT IF YOU WANT TO "PRESERVE" THE ORGANS, THEN LEAVE THEM ALONE. QUIT GIVING THE LAND TO THE ALMIGHTY CATTLE MEN WHO DO NOTHING BUT TAKE FROM THE LAND NOT GIVING BACK; THE SAME WITH THE MINERS. WE ALL KNOW ABOUT THE ARMY; THEIR RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. LET PEOPLE ~~MAKE~~ BLAZE THEIR OWN TRAILS IN THE ORGANS. IT'S TIME FOR THE BLIM AND ALL INVOLVED TO "THINK LIKE A MOUNTAIN"

SACK DIEHL
314 HOWLAND, LAS CAUCES

21-1

Please see the responses to Comments 1-1, 5-5, 6-14, 9-6, 9-8, and 13-1.

21-1

80

Nov. 20 1988
Amy Parsons
4860 Vista Cuesta
Las Cruces NM 88001

Dear Tim Salt:

I would like to make a few comments on the BLM Organ Mountain RMP. I think the RMP's place too much emphasis on the development of the Organ Mountains. I would rather see more effort in the RMP's for the conservation of the Organ Mountain area. Listed below are my comments on the currently proposed RMP's.

- 22-1 | 1) I would like to see no further development in and around Aguirre Springs Campground. A trailor put in the campground would be an eye sore. A water system does not appear to be needed and would be costly to maintain.
- 22-2 | 2) The establishment of more trails would do more harm to the surrounding habitat, and wildlife, then the trails would serve by protecting sensitive areas. The current trails are not properly maintained so it is doubtful if the additional trails could be kept in good condition. New roads should not be put in the CRMP area.
- 22-3 | 3) Having observed the country in and around the Organ Mountains, a reduction in livestock and livestock facilities would help tremendously in the establishment of better habitat for wildlife.

Thank you for your time,
Amy Parsons

- 22-1 | Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 6-12, 9-4, and 20-1.
- 22-2 | Please see the responses to Comments 7-1, 9-6, and 9-8. Also, there will be no new roads allowed within the CRMP area.
- 22-3 | Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

DEAR TIM SALT

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE ORGAN MOUNTAIN MANAGEMENT PLANS. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE LESS EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPEMENT AND MORE ON CONSERVATION. IN PARTICULAR I WOULD LIKE TO SEE

- 23-1 | 1) A REDUCTION IN USE BY LIVESTOCK.
- 23-2 | 2) NO NEW ROADS IN THE CRMP AREA.
- 23-3 | 3) PLANS FOR THE FILLMORE CANYON OR SUGARLOAF TRAILS DROPPED.

SINCERELY
Brad Parsons

- 23-1 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.
- 23-2 Please see the response to Comment 22-2.
- 23-3 Please see the response to Comment 6-9.

24
242 W. Willoughby
Las Cruces, NM 88005
Nov. 28, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

We have just read the draft report of the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Plan and Environmental Assessment and would like to express our opinions on the matter. We applaud the efforts of the BLM to improve the federal and state held land in the Organ Mountains. The desert southwest has seen too much uncontrolled growth and unsupervised land use resulting in the degradation of the landscape and the biological community.

Protection of threatened and endangered species on the federal list as well as the state listed species is of paramount importance. We fully support the proposed actions for all these species.

We thoroughly support the proposed actions regarding the management of wildlife habitat within the Organ Mountains. The reintroduction desert bighorn sheep and turkeys into the mountains would provide a valuable asset to the area. The construction of catchment basins and the fencing of springs is imperative for the reestablishment of damaged riparian habitat, which is so precious to the basin and range province.

Rangeland degradation is ubiquitous throughout the desert southwest. Rehabilitation of the range is a sticky issue with both the ranching and environmental communities. Biological diversity is critical to a healthy ecosystem. We believe that the eradication of creosote bush in particular is necessary for brush control and the eventual reestablishment of a healthy diversified plant community. Therefore, we agree with the proposed actions for long term improvement of the rangeland and support the allocation of funds for such action as is deemed necessary.

We support all appropriate measures required for the protection of both pre-historic and historic cultural resources throughout the area encompassed by the Cultural Resource Management Plan.

24-1 Recreation is a potentially controversial issue in this management plan. Additionally, it accounts for the greatest expenditure of funds. Currently the Organ Mountains is a place of primitive, serene beauty. Difficulty of access to the foothills and the topography are the primary reasons for the solitude within the mountains. Ease of access for maximizing visitor days is not necessarily desirable within a Wilderness Study Area and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Development adjacent to a potential Wilderness Area must proceed slowly and cautiously so as not to destroy the quality of the landscape.

We support additional trail construction throughout the Recreational Area. We also agree with the proposed actions for rerouting trails in order to protect riparian habitat. Regular trail maintenance will open currently difficult routes and moderately increase the number of hikers.

24-2 We oppose the proposed action to supply water to the Aguirre Spring Campground. This would detract from the desert experience. More importantly, easy access to water would encourage overuse of the facility, particularly by groups who come to the mountains to party. A visit to Aguirre Spring on any weekend when the weather is pleasant is far from a quiet visit to the mountains. Blaring music and loud voices abound and shatter the peace and quiet.

24-1 Ease of access is not a goal or objective in this Plan. Also see the responses to Comments 9-6 and 9-8.

24-2 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 20-1.

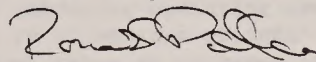
We have mixed feelings regarding the proposal to pave the Dripping Springs Road. Traffic to the west side of the mountains will increase regardless of the paving issue and dust is a source of visual pollution. A paved road will encourage visitation to the west side, but the reduction of the dust problem would be worth the extra traffic.

24-3

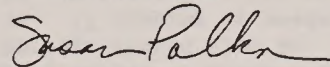
We vehemently oppose the construction of a Recreational Vehicle campground at La Cueva. An RV campground at that site would severely impair the quality of visits to the area. RV campgrounds are rife with TV's, loud radios, and worse yet, generators to recharge batteries. Noise pollution at La Cueva would undoubtedly become a serious detriment to the cultural resource. A developed campground at that site is unnecessary. The Organ Mountains Recreational Lands already has Aguirre Spring and the Las Cruces area has 4 commercial RV campgrounds with 170 spaces within easy driving distance. Please don't trash La Cueva with the obscenity of an RV campground in that peaceful setting. We do not object to a day use picnic area and visitors center at La Cueva.

Overall we approve of the proposed management plan with the exception of a water supply system at Aguirre Spring and an RV campground at La Cueva. We feel these developments would be detrimental to the preservation of the area and not conducive to the wilderness experience. We have enjoyed our visits to the Organ Mountains for years and hope to continue to do so.

Sincerely



Ronald Polka



Susan Polka

24-3

Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

November 26, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

- 25-1 The following are my comments on the Organ Mountains CRMP. Before I begin however, I would like to say that I do not support the concept of an NCA in the Organ Mountains. I prefer to see the entire area have wilderness designation. In my opinion, an NCA does not offer sufficient protection for the mountains.

CAMPING

- 25-2 There should no camping permitted at La Cueva. This area should be open to day use only. Day use only would require less intensive management, help prevent vandalism and be less expensive to operate. Camping should be moved away from the mountains, to the edge of the NCA. Aguirre Springs should also be converted to day use only with no water brought in. If camping is needed on the east side, an overnight camping area should be constructed in the area where the visitors' center had been planned. Water could be obtained for that spot more easily and cheaper than bringing water in to Aguirre Springs. Both Aguirre Springs and La Cueva are fragile and the impact of overnight camping should be eliminated.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

- 25-3 The suggested plan seems to be overly supportive of livestock grazing. The improvements for water, use of herbicides, and the building of extensive fences to keep cattle out of sensitive areas are expensive and require additional funding for maintenance. Cattle do not appear to be compatible with recreational use and should be phased out. Although the herbicides that will be used have been judged 'safe', other toxins have also been determined to be safe initially and found to be harmful to humans and animals at a much later date. I therefore have a concern over use of these poisons and how they will effect people and wildlife in a high use recreation area.

ROADS AND TRAILS

- 25-4 Baylor Canyon Road should not be paved. All roads should be closed except to Ruby Mine and Modoc Mine, Cuevas Road, Mossman Arroyo Road, and Aguirre Springs Road. The Westside Road should be closed between Soledad Canyon and Mossman Arroyo. This road is an ideal place to reserve for horses, mountain bikes, and hikers. Closing the road would also help prevent further destruction of archaeological sites. The Mossman Arroyo Road should be closed at the fork with the Westside Road to prevent vehicle traffic too close to Pena Blanca. An interpretive trail for people on foot from here to Pena Blanca would help prevent vandalism of archaeological sites. No other trails should allow the

- 25-1 Please see the response to Comment 6-1.

- 25-2 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 5-1, and 6-12.

- 25-3 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

- 25-4 Please see the responses to Comments 4-7, 5-6, 6-2, and 19-7.

25-5 use of mountain bikes. These can be used instead in the Dona Anas. Mountain bikes can be dangerous to foot traffic and may encourage the illegal use of motor bikes.

MINING

25-6 Mining should be eliminated from the recreation area. Existing valid claims should be subject to 'No Surface Occupancy' designation.

MISCELLANEOUS

25-7 The CRMP indicates that there would be no wood gathering or cutting within designated camping areas. This prohibition should apply to the entire NCA.

25-8 Although I am not a climber, the prohibition of additional permanent climbing devices such as pitons seems a little incongruous in light of the extensive development that is going to be done by BLM.

25-9 Solar operated pit toilets, as used in the Grand Canyon, should be considered for sanitary facilities as should other alternative energy sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Storm M. Sermay
Storm M. Sermay
3382 Solarridge St.
Las Cruces, NM 88001

25-5 Mountain bikes are considered a legitimate use of certain trails (those in the lower elevations). There will be potential problems with illegal motorcycle use regardless of the use of these trails by mountain bikes.

25-6 Please see the response to Comment 6-14.

25-7 Please see the response to Comment 4-6.

25-8 Please see the response to Comment 6-7.

25-9 Please see the response to Comment 19-11.

4815 Tabara
Las Cruces, NM
November 28, 1988

To: Jim Salt, Area Manager, B.L.M., et al

We have been walking and backpacking on the trails of the Organ Mts. and the Gila Wilderness for 20 years and feel inclined to make these remarks:

Concerning new plans for the Organ Mt. Range:

- 26-1 | 1.) Development should be kept to a minimum.
- 26-2 | 2.) In particular no overnight camping, no backpacking (packing in for 1 or more nights). This is because any spot can be reached in 1/2 day, so extended trips are unnecessary. Already, the new trails at Aguirre Springs has led to people making fires right beside streams off the Pine Tree Trail. Also there is too much abuse such as litter in the Aguirre Area.
If people want to camp there's plenty of opportunity for it in the Black Range.
- 26-3 | 3.) Please do not put wells or any water supply into the Aguirre Springs area. This area is so fragile and large crowds will ruin it in no time.
- 4.) A small residence for a forest ranger at or near Aguirre might be a good idea if it means better policing of abusers.

26-1 Please see the response to Comment 9-8.

26-2 Please see the responses to Comments 5-1, 6-12, 13-7, and 20-1. Also, there will be a ban on all open fires in backcountry areas (over 1/4-mile from any road or vehicle route).

26-3 Please see the response to Comment 2-4.

26-4

5.) Deer came down and bed down quite ~~near~~ near the Aguirre Springs picnic grounds. Please don't encourage overnight people as we would have to say goodbye to the deer.

26-5

6.) At La Cueva also, please do not construct an overnight campground. Perhaps one nearer Tortugas mountain might be considered.

26-6

7.) Leave the 1 1/3-mile, 4-wheel drive road between the Cox Ranch and Dripping Springs pretty much as it is, no surfaced trails. Let this be one place where we can get away from cars. Accessibility by horseback or horse-drawn wagons would be good and a delightful change from the rat-race.

26-7

8.) We've read the Sierra Club's points and agree with most of them except that we feel the Fillmore Canyon trail might be improved to encourage hikers to stick more to it and not wander all over too much, encouraging erosion.

26-8

Please consider our points above. Also we feel that there is too much hunting both in the Gila and Organs. Thank you.

Yours truly,
Prof. Arthur Fuerschel
and Patricia Fuerschel

26-4

Please see the response to Comment 6-12.

26-5

Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

26-6

Please see the responses to Comments 2-2 and 6-6.

26-7

BLM agrees with your observation that hikers tend to wander indiscriminately. In large numbers, this leads to erosion and damage to vegetation. This is why trails are considered important management tools. For example, a trail constructed in Fillmore Canyon would be routed above the riparian area in the bottom of the canyon. This would tend to keep most people out of the riparian area, which has suffered from trampling by both people and livestock.

26-8

The Organ Mountains have been closed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) to deer hunting for the last several years. They will remain closed to deer hunting until such time as the NMDGF determines that the deer herd is healthy enough to support a hunt. In addition, there are shooting restrictions within 1/4-mile of the Aguirre Spring Campground and the Cox Ranch complex.

Area Manager
Members Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

TIM SALT

27-1 Dear Sir: We respectfully request that you do not surface or pave in the Soledad canyon-Mossman Arroyo area as there are people who like to hike and explore these areas either looking for Indian artifacts, rocks or other treasures and who feel that paving would detract from the enjoyment of the natural environment.

Your goal of the preservation of the "Pin cushion" or as some people like to call them "sleepy eye" cactus is a good one.

27-2 Is the use of fire really wise? Have controlled burns not gotten out of control in the past? Is there not a better way to maintain habitat diversity? Doesn't it take a forest devastated by fire an awful long time to become reestablished?

If these ranchers wouldn't over graze their range land it would last them a lot longer there by eliminating the need to spill over into undesignated or disallowed areas.

Good luck with Fort Bliss they've been known to do what they want when they want to spite the general public or any official organization.

27-3 Instead of a collective 55-unit picnic area which may entail a rather concentrated effort in one large area possibly damaging the natural habitat or upsetting the ecological balance in some way can trash barrels, tables & benches be placed in strategically in smaller groups disturbing the natural lay of the land & therefore the natural charm of the area as little as possible?

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. R. J. Melancon
P.O. Box 394
La Mesa, NM 88044

06

27-1 Please note that collection of artifacts is illegal on public land and is subject to criminal penalties. Also, see the response to Comment 2-1.

27-2 Please see the response to Comment 13-5.

27-3 Please see the responses to Comments 5-1 and 6-10.

November 28, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1600 Marquess
Las Cruces, N.M. 88003

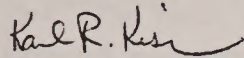
Dear Mr. Salt:

This letter contains comments on the draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan 9/88. I appreciate the opportunity to offer suggestions on a plan which will direct future BLM management of Organ Mountain lands. My comments and those of others which I acquired address themselves specifically to the CRMP. These comments are organized in outline form to allow ease of reading.

28-1 Much of the Organ Mountains reside in military withdrawal lands. Your CRMP does not manage these lands. I would prefer that some of these lands north of Soledad Canyon be integrated into wilderness but this would not be a BLM alternative. Should Congress designate these lands as wilderness then parts of the CRMP would be superseded by federal law.

Again, thank you for your effort in the management of these public lands.

Sincerely,



Karl R. Kiser

28-1

You are correct in your observation that the BLM has no authority to designate or even consider designating military withdrawal land as wilderness. Congress, acting through legislation, could designate wilderness out of military withdrawal land, although this would require amending the Wilderness Act of 1964.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE ORGAN MOUNTAINS
COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 9/88

- Aguirre Springs Campgrounds -

28-2 Fence around campground should use posts which blend into surrounding landscape. Mobile home for campground host should have rock or rough cutwood facing to blend in with campground surroundings. Water should not be provided until other revenue generators are attempted. Donation boxes and volunteer projects should be used to mitigate visitor impacts to the area. If water is provided to campground and fees charged, those fees should be designated for Aguirre Springs and Organ Mt. mitigation use only. Wood cutting and gathering should be prohibited within the entire CRMP area not just with the campground.

- Mining -

28-3 Stevenson -Bennett gravel pile movement should be paid by private interests and not public funds. The gravel was stacked on BLM not patented land. Valid existing mining claims should require NSO (no surface occupancy) in their plan of operations to preserve visual characteristics of mountains. If BLM exchanges land for the patented claims in the Organs (Modoc, Ruby, Stevenson-Bennett), these lands should not be opened for mining again. The validity of the initial exchange would be questioned if mining is allowed in the future. Land not in the proposed wilderness should be withdrawn from public appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws subject to valid existing rights.

- Trails -

28-4 The annual Baylor Pass race should be allowed (written into legislation) when the NM-BLM wilderness bill is drafted. This use is as valid as other existing

28-2 BLM would most likely construct the fence out of wood or log poles, similar to the log pole barrier constructed by the Boy Scouts at the Pine Tree trailhead. At a minimum, BLM would construct all portions of the fence visible from the road, trails, or campground out of these materials. BLM is presently in the process of installing a donation box at Aguirre Spring which will eventually augment any use fees collected. Also see the responses to Comments 2-4, 4-6, and 6-12.

28-3 Please see the response to Comment 6-14.

28-4 The need to authorize the annual Baylor Pass Run has been recognized by BLM and would be supported in any wilderness legislation.

Pets must be confined to leashes while on trails or in backcountry areas.

The Fillmore Canyon Trail will be one of the last trails developed, mainly because it cannot be constructed without prior military approval. It would be open to hikers only. While it may not provide access to some of the best climbing areas, it would provide access to an area that is currently popular with hikers, albeit in trespass. BLM knows of at least one recent search and rescue in Fillmore Canyon involving lost hikers. Also see the responses to Comments 6-9 and 9-6.

uses grandfathered into wilderness areas (grazing and mining). Pets should be prohibited from trails excluding horses on equestrian designated trails. Poop scoops should be used if pets are brought to campgrounds or trailhead parking areas.

The proposed Mine House and Fillmore Canyon Trails are both estimated to cost \$13K/mile. The Fillmore Trail would probably cost more since it would be routed away from the riparian area of the canyon, and has greater elevation changes.

The proposed Fillmore Canyon Trail should be the last trail to be constructed and only if demand warrants it. This demand should come from the public after other facilities are in full use. This demand should not be induced by development which draw people simply because the trail has been constructed.

The trail would focus people into one of the more sensitive areas of the mountains. If constructed this trail should be prohibited for equestrian/bicycle use. The trail does not provide access to some of the best climbing areas in the Organs. Rescue activities in the past have not taken place in this area of the mountains. The trail would only help rescue efforts caused by increased use focused by trail construction.

The high trail option is not between Fillmore Canyon and Sugarloaf but rather between a trail or no construction. An old recreation plan and the current plan do not mention the non development option. A short 1 + mile trail could be constructed from Cuevas to the Modoc mine area to provide additional hiking in the area.

28-4
(Cont'd)

66

- Roads -

No new roads should be constructed in the CRMP area. This specifically includes the proposed Highway 70 bypass. ORV use should be limited to Ruby mine road, Modoc mine road, and the westside road. These roads should remain in their current state and not be improved.

28-5

The westside road north from Cuevas to Highway 70 should remain unpaved. If this section is paved to the intersection of Dripping Springs road, a de facto Highway 70 bypass would be created. Any new roads should be integrated within existing ones in the CRMP area or routed apart from the CRMP area.

- Cuevas Area -

There should be no horse traffic in Ice canyon. Walking, service, and handicap access described in the plan is adequate behind the visitor center. No night use campground should be constructed at Cuevas. The area should be designated day use only. All Forest Service campgrounds near Albuquerque in the Sandias have been converted to day use because of impact. This campground is planned for 1992-93 and would require 53% of the proposed recreation improvement funds. These funds could be directed toward mitigation of additional visitor days rather than concentrating visitor use in a small area. Aguirre Springs campground is used by 87% of the user days currently (130,000/150,000 recreation visits). Overnight campgrounds have more management concerns than day use facilities. BLM doesn't need to compete with the possibility of KOA type camping on the East Mesa within a few miles of the mountains and city. The education of children concerning natural areas can be accomplished by trails and the visitor's center without overnight camping.

28-6

28-5

Please see the responses to Comments 2-1, 5-6, and 19-7.

28-6

There will be no equestrian use of the Dripping Springs trail (other than horse drawn wagons for special events). Also the response to Comment 5-1.

28-7

The proposal that no permanent climbing devices be left at Cuevas is too restrictive. The paving of Dripping Springs road would increase the popularity of the area to climbers wishing to boulder, top rope and lead. The area is currently open to such activities and the status quo should remain. There is no problem with restricting climbing above Cuevas Cave and certain sections of the proposal trail. Coordination with the BLM on trail location (not at base of rock for entire length) and standards to mitigate bolt/piton use (spray brown, locate out of sight) is the appropriate course of action.

- Rangeland -

28-8

Brush control is proposed for most of the flat land on the western boundary of the CRMP area. The brush control specialist at NMSU should be consulted to assure optimal timing of treatment, length of deferment, and appropriate chemicals to assure the highest probability of success. 66% of proposed rangeland improvement funds are delegated for this option. If this option is exercised, cattle need to be kept out of sensitive areas (Fillmore Canyon, Indian Hollow, Rabbit Ears Canyon). The rationale of this proposal is to limit cattle use in the mountains and maintain the forage value of the allotments. Once additional fences are constructed for pasture management there should not be regular vehicle use (roads) on the fence line.

- General -

28-9

The CRMP is designed to be a long range plan but all of the recreational development is proposed in the next five years (1989-1994). Some of the development should be deferred pending actual population growth in the area. The Organ Mountains should not become some type of urban park. Preservation and wilderness values are important. Developed recreation in Dona Ana county should be dispersed to other areas in addition to the Organs (Dona Ana Mts, Robledo's

28-7

Please see the response to Comment 6-7.

28-8

NMSU specialists, permittees, and other concerned groups and individuals will be consulted as brush control treatments are planned and initiated. The proposed ACEC designations for Indian Hollow and Fillmore Canyon would place additional management emphasis on these areas. As rangeland improvements and grazing systems are implemented, these areas will receive increased scrutiny through monitoring. If monitoring shows that a problem exists in these areas relative to grazing, additional measures (such as constructing additional fencing) will be undertaken. There will be no regular use of vehicles along fencelines.

28-9

Although actual implementation is targeted for a 5 year period, in reality it will probably take at least 10 years due to funding and other constraints. Since all projects are subject to further analysis on a project planning level, they can be modified or rejected at a later date. The plan is not static and can be revised based on new information or trends as the need arises. Also see the response to Comment 9-8.

28-10

etc). Maps on signs should not only be land status maps. These maps should identify topographic features as previous rescues have been complicated due to non standard naming of canyons and peaks.

28-11

The BLM should not encourage activities which focus people to small areas unless they can fund "the increased presence needed to prevent vandalism, theft, and general deterioration from normal recreation use" (p. 4-12 section 31).

28-12

The BLM should include in the CRMP a formal request to the US Army to manage land south of Sugarloaf, east of Dripping Springs, north of Soledad Canyon, and west of Globe Spring Ranch as wilderness. This land is de facto wilderness and provides a buffer for range activities. The Organ Mts. are a small range and the proposal of wilderness and NCA doesn't address land in the heart of the mountain range. The major ranges of Ft. Bliss are in Boulder Canyon and on the flat in front of the east mouth of Soledad Canyon. This potential agreement would simply request the US Army not to build new facilities in this land area of approximately eight sections. Lastly, Ft. Bliss is likely to have responsibilities for T&E species. An artificial boundary determined in the 1940s does not have ecological meaning. It is only as administrative boundary.

96

28-10

You have a good point. BLM plans to implement this idea initially with a diorama at the San Augustine overlook that will show the major peaks and their names.

28-11

Additional personnel to provide an increased presence will be an integral part of implementing the CRMP.

28-12

The Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA), as proposed, would provide a means for the Army and the BLM to cooperate in order to protect the significant scenic and natural values of the area south and east of the main topographic crest. BLM agrees that, even though the CMA does not propose to provide public access south or east of the main topographic crest, it is important to protect the visual quality of the viewshed area that would be available to hikers once the summit is reached. BLM would propose that the CMA also contain provisions for cooperating in the areas of Threatened and Endangered (T&E) and wildlife management (particularly bighorn sheep) within this area.

Nov.,27,1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager - BLM
1800 Marguessa
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Mr. Salt:

97

I am writing in response to the Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment recently published by the Las Cruces district of the Bureau of Land Management. There are four alternatives - none of which I agree with on all aspects and I certainly find much to disagree with about the proposed action - alternative 1. I think the idea of chemically controlling up to 24,000 acres of brush, for grazing "improvement" is absurd and environmentally damaging. If the cattle can't survive on what's there then they need to be moved or lessened in number - we should not alter the land to suit the cattle. Using chemicals is environmentally damaging - it's that simple. - it would also be a visual eyesore. The plans for \$2,831,000 worth of recreational development are unnecessary - not to mention expensive. One of the things that has so far preserved the wildness of the Organs - which, by the way, the BLM says it wants to preserve - is the fact that there are very few trails - very rough terrain and only one primitive campground at Aguirre Springs. The way to protect land is to leave it alone - pure and simple. A water system, visitor center and more camping spaces at Aguirre Springs are not necessary - for years the place has been fine as it is. It provides a primitive and peaceful camping spot and two simple trails. This is desert - people can bring their own water. Also - I am opposed to the idea of charging a fee, which the BLM will be justified to do if ^{they} spend alot of money to "upgrade" the campground. I resent having to pay to visit or camp on public land. I was originally happy to hear of the BLM'S purchase of the Cox ranch - now that I see the plans for it I wish it had remained in private hands. The proposed development of the Cox ranch, La Cueva and Dripping Springs area is totally unnecessary and very costly to the taxpayers. It's only purpose will be to overcrowd a once uncrowded

29-1 Please see the response to Comment 1-1

29-2 Please see the responses to Comments 9-8 and 13-1.

29-3 There will be no visitor center at the Aguirre Spring Campground. Also see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 20-1.

29-4 Please see the responses to Comments 5-1 and 5-8.

is even worse. Alternative 3 (least intensive) is only slightly better than Alternative 1, in that the developed areas would be closed to overnight use - which would be a protective device of sorts, but only a semi-productive one. It would be better not to develop areas at all. Alternative 4 (present management) seems the best. There are, however, several aspects of that plan I don't like. One is the paving and extension of the westside road from Dripping Springs road to Mossman arroyo. This is totally unnecessary and would contribute to increased visitor use and abuse. Also the development of a 50 unit campground below Needles Eye between Achenbach Canyon and Pena Blanca is, again, unnecessary and potentially environmentally damaging. There would still be development at Aguirre Springs under this management plan, which I am opposed to. Also, there would be no change in controlling ORV use which concerns me as there need to be controls on this. What I do like about this alternative is that it is the most cost effective one - it's 1,589,350 dollars cheaper than the proposed alternative. (it would be even cheaper if Aguirre Springs wasn't developed and the westside road was left unpaved) My question is - why should we spend so much money to ruin a wild area? Also - Alternative 4 deals with many aspects of the wilderness (range, cultural, wildlife, sensitive plant species, etc.) on a case by case basis - which seems both cost effective and workable. Therefore, while I cannot whole heartedly support any of the plans - I would say that Alternative 4 comes the closest to what I want, simply because it does the least. I would like to see the Organ Mountains truly protected. I believe the way to do that is to have a plan of minimal interference. If problems arise, such as overuse in certain areas, erosion, cultural resource concerns, increased ORV abuse, etc. - then surely the BLM can deal with the problems as they occur rather than creating problems by overdevelopment. The Organ Mountains are very unique - very few urban areas have such wildness so close by and if they do, then they eventually mess it up, as it seems the BLM is trying to do now. Some concrete suggestions I have to help prevent this urbanization of the mountains are to strictly limit ORV and mineral use and to

exclude it totally from the area of critical environmental concern. I would encourage the BLM to negotiate with the Army about opening more areas to public use - not removing areas and particularly to continue to allow access to the Long/ Finley/ Boulder canyons area east of Peña Blanca. I would leave Aguirre Springs as it is. A visitors center would be acceptable there if it's really deemed necessary for educational purposes but I personally don't feel it's necessary and certainly anything beyond that is an extravagance. As far as the Cox ranch/ La Cueva/ Dripping Springs area - I would suggest leaving it largely as it is. It could be kept as a day use and picnic area with some minor and primitive improvements, if necessary. (outhouses, simple and short nature trails, historical information plaques, etc) The Soledad Ecology site seems fine to me. Any development south of there is unnecessary and potentially damaging - any road paving is unnecessary also. I would like to see all the unpaved roads remain that way - perhaps with some minor improvements. (pull offs, information plaques, etc.) I would like to see the lesser roads, especially those closer to the mountains (east of the Baylor Pass road for example) closed to vehicle use. The Organ Mountains are a real gift to the people of Las Cruces and it truly breaks my heart to think of them being developed. I love them as they are now - which is wild! I believe that many local people agree with me. People I talk to simply say, "why don't they just leave them alone?" Articles in the Las Cruces "Bulletin" I've read support this sentiment. The BLM states that a public scoping letter was sent out in Feb., 1988 and sums up the public response on page 3-11 of the draft environmental assessment. (By the way, I live in the area and I never saw such a letter!) While there is public support for "increased trails and picnic sites" - there does not seem to be people out there demanding full blown development like that which the BLM proposes. To quote - "Many letters expressed concern to limit land development in or near the Organ Mountain Recreation Lands." "Many letters were in support of a wilderness designation in the Organ Mountain Recreation Lands." "Other comments mentioned keeping new recreation sites to a minimum and not

29-5

area and to make money for the BLM. It will just bring the hustle and bustle of the city to the mountains. I am also upset about the addition of new trails - which will only increase use. The BLM says it will protect the land from erosion - how will more people on the land protect it? Yes - there is some erosion caused by cross-country use in canyons where there are no trails and this may increase with the inevitable population increase in the Las Cruces area - but to build trails - especially in sensitive areas - will, I guarantee you, only bring more people and a whole new set of overuse and abuse related problems. For those who need trails - there are a few available - if they become too crowded in the future, then it would be possible to extend them or add another trail or two to accomodate use patterns - but let's wait and see what happens and build sparingly, as needed. There are few people who will explore very far without a trail, and for those who do, it is a rare thing to be able to do so close to an urban area. No trails protect - trails lead to overuse - it's that simple. The BLM itself admits that

29-6

"recreation use of the area is expected to nearly triple as a result of the implementation of the proposed action." Is this any way to protect a wilderness? Another real problem with the proposed action alternative is the Army denying public recreational use on the east side of Peña Blanca. The BLM says "No unique or significant recreation opportunities would be lost to the public." This is simply not true. Long Canyon, Boulder Canyon and Finley Canyon are all incredibly beautiful. Long Canyon is my favorite place to go in the Organs and I am deeply opposed to having it excluded from public use. I believe the BLM'S plan of action with the Army should be to get as much public use as possible - not to limit it further. The military has control of millions of acres in southern NM - the Jornada, the Tulerosa Basin and the San Andres Mountains - enough is enough!

29-7

There are many more small details that I am opposed to in the proposed action plan and a few ideas that I find positive (limiting ORV use, for one) but to write endlessly about details does not seem productive. I am vehemently opposed to the proposed action - Alternative 1 - as well as to Alternative 3(most intensive), which

29-5

Please see the response to Comment 9-6.

29-6

Please see the response to Comment 7-1.

29-7

Please see the response to Comment 8-1.

29-8

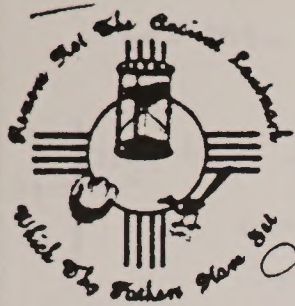
improving existing roads." So - this is the public speaking. I have yet to hear anyone speak of developing the Organs, other than the BLM! Where did they get these ideas? Certainly not from the public, whose land it is, need I remind you. If the BLM really cares what the public thinks then they should hold a public meeting - one that is well publisized, well in advance. The BLM owes this to the public and as a local citizen I demand it! The people of the Mesilla Valley need to have more say in this process and I believe if they do, you will find a public that does not want the kind of development proposed by the BLM. Please help save the Organ Mountains - they are the spirit of Las Cruces!

Sincerely,

Sara Irving
 PO Box 406
 Mesilla, NM 88046

29-8

Public involvement has been an important part of the process of developing the CRMP. Technical Review Teams (TRTs) consisting of representatives from special interest groups, other agencies, private landowners, and BLM personnel were utilized to provide specific recommendations to be used in developing the Plan. Several public meetings were held prior to forming the TRTs in order to obtain early public input on the major issues and the process to be used in developing the Plan. In the development of the Plan, every effort has been made to obtain early public involvement. BLM believes the planning process has been responsive to the public and represents a balanced approach to managing the area that will benefit the greatest number of public land users while protecting the significant scenic and natural values of the area.



November 28, 1988

DOÑA ANA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dear Mr. Sact:

Please accept the following evaluation remarks to your OMERMP for the Organ Mountains area. This area has been historically prominent and important since the time when Europeans first saw it which conditions should be maintained into the future. This area should be least disturbed and maintained for appreciation by present generations for its wilderness and primitive qualities. Its proximity to the Mesilla Valley population renders it to convenient one-day-away-from-home visitation and use as a recreation area; longer time use and occupation would have an adverse effect on its present attractiveness. People who want to camp in such areas, can find other similar ones in this vicinity.

Specifically, the plan to be adopted should:

1. de-emphasize or eliminate development
2. concentrate on conservation

30-1

101

30-1

Please see the response to Comment 9-8.

30-2 3. Leave Aguirre Springs as is
— no campground needed
here — still more primitiveness

30-3 4. Develop Whipping Springs as
a camping site only if con-
trollable and if Aguirre Spgs
is not camp sited.

30-4 5. Keep trails confined to lower
elevations — avoid higher
elevations and Filmore Canyon.

30-5 6. The acquisition of adjacent
private properties to forestall
development would be help-
ful.

Of your alternative plans
for this area No. 2 is preferable.

Thanks,

R.P.P.
Alan Price
1101 Third St
Las Cruces 88005

30-2 The Aguirre Spring facility has been a
campground since its initial construction.
Also see the response to Comment 20-1.

30-3 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

30-4 Please see the response to Comment 6-9.

30-5 The acquisition of adjacent private land and
private inholdings is a key provision of the
Plan.

102

Please accept these few comments on your recent plan
Organ Mtn C.R.M.P.

31-1 Page 4-7 The study by Manning and Baker reaches a possibly flawed conclusion by the type and framing questions relating to fees and improvements.

31-2 Naming the West recreation site after the Coxes - do they deserve the honor? After all the public paid the ransom for their land why not name the site after an environmentalist or for the nature conservancy - the ones who sprang for the loc.

31-3 page 4-10 signing is a big waste of time, both vandals and sign haters (not the same types of people) will undo most signs, especially those away from highly developed facilities. - Best to restrict signs to those areas only.

31-4 pg. 4-11 #22 in view of expectation of heavy visitor use, co-ordinate with county/others and pave first University and/or Baylor pass rd? before paving roads within BLM areas.

I guess I'm one who opposes paving altogether, but if a visitor facility has to be built then the roads leading to it should be paved and maintained to limit dust, erosion and off road access.

#23 agree strongly

31-5 #26 leave these areas alone - don't backfill - don't protect - don't sign. The slow decay of old mines and associated ruins is itself an important exhibit of man's interaction with the natural world. As such it can be viewed without interpretation, historical comment or protection.

31-6 #29. page 4-12 I would favor having Aguirre Sp remain "as is" with no water, no on site resident, and having another "fee area" in a different locale - ~~as in La Cueva - Cox~~ as in La Cueva - Cox (over)

31-1 BLM did not interpret the conclusion of the study by Manning and Baker related to fee collection. It was cited as an example of public reaction to fee collection.

31-2 Naming of the visitor center at the Cox Ranch was part of an agreement with the Cox family on the terms of the acquisition by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). TNC purchased the ranch and was subsequently reimbursed through the sale of land acquired in exchanging the Cox Ranch with the BLM.

31-3 Signing will be very limited in areas outside of developed facilities.

31-4 The only road that will be paved is the Dripping Springs Road from the junction with the paved Soledad Canyon Road to the A. B. Cox Visitor Center. BLM will cooperate with the County and potential developers to share costs to the extent possible.

31-5 Only those mines that are considered a hazard will be mitigated.

31-6 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 9-4.

31-7 I am opposed to vegetative management to optimise grazing resources - creosote and mesquite are OK plants, and if there are more of them now it is probably a natural response to some pressure being exerted on the local environment.

Herbie Marsden
P.O. Box 1265
Mesilla Park, NM 88047

31-7

Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

1805 Pomona
Las Cruces, NM 88001

November 28, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt,

I have discussed your Draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan with your Mr. Scott Florence.

In general the alternative 1 - the proposed action - seems to be a reasonable compromise between the various points of view. I favor the plan insofar as it maintains and improves the recent past access of the area to hikers/climbers. In particular, I urge consideration of the following:

- 32-1 1. Maintain ORV access to the Dripping Springs access road and powerline access road above the visitors center (Alternative 3).
2. Maintain ORV access to the West Side Road and all existing ORV roads.
- 32-2 3. Leave the Cox Ranch/Dripping Springs area as it is - do not add water/camping. Maintain a Visitors Center on a volunteer basis only. Provide wilderness parking.
- 32-3 4. Maintain free climbing/hiking jumpoff points at Cox Ranch/Dripping Springs and at Rabbit Ear Canyon. Maintain access to Achenbach/Long Canyon.
- 32-4 5. Reopen Cox Ranch/Dripping Springs this year.
- 32-5 6. Negotiate access to the Finley/Long Canyon area.
- 32-6 7. Maintain wilderness ORV access along existing mine roads.
- 32-7 8. Acquire private land/easements for wilderness access.

In summary, I urge actions that maintain and improve wilderness access of the area to hiking/climbing and non-wilderness ORV use.

Sincerely yours,

William H. Julian
William H. Julian

- 32-1 Maintenance of vehicle access to Dripping Springs (for the general public) was considered in Alternative 3 of the Draft CRMP/EA. The impacts of this alternative are too great to allow this to continue. Also see the response to Comment 4-7.
- 32-2 Please see the response to Comment 5-1. Also, staffing of the visitor center will rely heavily on volunteers.
- 32-3 Following construction of the visitor center and day-use facilities, a small use fee will be charged at the Cox Ranch. Rabbit Ear Canyon is not part of the Cox Ranch complex and will not be subject to a use fee. BLM is attempting to acquire private land in the vicinity of Achenbach Canyon to maintain access. There is no legal access to Long Canyon as it is entirely on the Ft. Bliss military reservation.
- 32-4 The Cox Ranch area will be open to the general public by the late spring or early summer of 1989.
- 32-5 Please see the response to Comment 8-1.
- 32-6 Existing mine roads will remain open.
- 32-7 If private land cannot be acquired, easements will be sought to maintain access to adjacent public land.

29 November 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

FRANKLIN
MOUNTAINS



WILDERNESS
COALITION

Re: Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource
Management Plan and Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Salt:

The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition offers the following comments on the draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. Our comments are confined to those aspects of the draft plan dealing with the Franklin Mountains and the Organ/Franklin Corridor.

In general we are pleased with the treatment given the Franklins and the Corridor in the draft plan. Specific plan elements we support and which we hope will remain in the final plan are:

- establishment of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern for threatened and endangered plants in the Franklins,
- protective mineral withdrawals for Sneed's pincushion cactus,
- development of a cooperative management agreement with the U.S. Army that would include provisions for BLM and the Army to work together to protect scenic and natural values in the north end of the Franklins,
- acquisition of the privately owned lands in the Franklins along the New Mexico-Texas state line,

Mr. Tim Salt
29 November 1988
page 2

- construction of a hiking and horseback riding trail between the Organs and the Franklins,
- development of a cooperative management agreement with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) addressing joint management concerns of BLM and TPWD in the Franklins,
- restriction of off-road vehicles in the Organ/Franklin Corridor to designated roads and trails, and
- the confinement of new linear facilities to existing utility corridors and rights-of-way.

There are two aspects of the draft plan that concern us and which we urge you to change in the final plan. One is the proposed designation of the North/South Trail between the Organs and the Franklins as a hiking/equestrian/bicycle trail; the other is the proposal for chemical brush control on much of the lower-elevation land bordering the Franklins.

North/South Trail

33-1 When we proposed a trail linking the Organs and the Franklins, we envisioned a hiking and equestrian trail. When Technical Review Team No. 2 discussed the trail, it was discussed only in terms of those uses. The draft plan, in several places (e.g., p. s-1 and p. A-9), discusses only hiking and horseback riding. Yet in other places, the draft plan refers to the trail as a hiking/equestrian/bicycle trail and discusses its use for mountain bike riding.

We don't believe use of mountain bikes on this trail would be appropriate. Mountain-bike traffic would not be compatible with foot and horse traffic, and there are existing roads that can meet mountain-bike users' needs. In the final plan, we urge you to limit the North/South Trail to foot and horse traffic only.

33-1

BLM does not feel that mountain bike use is an inappropriate use of this and other trails where hiking and equestrian use is expected to be dispersed. Mountain bikes will be prohibited on the higher elevation trails and in high use areas such as the Cox Ranch (Dripping Springs and La Cueva areas). The final plan has been clarified with respect to trail uses.

Mr. Tim Salt
29 November 1988
page 3

Brush Control

33-2

The draft plan contemplates brush control on up to 10,560 acres on lands in the Organ/Franklin Corridor and bordering the Franklin Mountains. Particularly with respect to the two W. F. Blythe grazing allotments (5001 and 5004), we question the need for such treatment. The lands in question are so marginal for grazing that we suspect the treatment would not be cost effective.

Moreover, the draft plan states that "[t]he main purpose of these treatments, from a livestock management standpoint, would be to create sufficient available forage in the lowland pastures to allow deferred grazing in the mountain areas." Yet, as Appendix 5A indicates, this deferred-grazing approach is not practical on allotments 5001 and 5004.

Since the benefits are questionable and the expenses considerable, we recommend that brush control on allotments 5001 and 5004 be dropped from the final plan.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft plan and environmental assessment.

Sincerely,

John Sproul

John Sproul
601 W. Yandell #25
El Paso, TX 79902

33-2

The primary objective of the brush control proposals is to achieve multiple-use benefits. Even though the benefits to livestock may be marginal, wildlife habitat and watershed conditions would be improved. Also see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

108

November 28, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

The BLM management plan for the Organ Mtns. seems to be too extensive to be able to retain the wilderness status of the area. One of the reasons for the transfer of the Cox Ranch property to the BLM was to save the uniqueness of the area and preserve threatened and endangered species of certain plants and keep a satisfactory habitat for animals.

34-1 Too much development will encourage too many users and have a negative impact on the environment. In particular, it is not a good idea to have an RV campground at La Cueva. Day visitation should be adequate.

The development of all the areas should not be too fast so that the area will not be overwhelmed by people.

Thank you for giving our suggestions your attention.

Sincerely,

Raymond T. Kiser Charlotte L. Kiser
Raymond T. Kiser and Charlotte L. Kiser
2975 Terrace Drive, Apt. 210-A (210 A)
Las Cruces, NM 88001

34-1

Please see the responses to Comments 5-1 and 9-8.

ALEXANDER PUPULIDY

2220 Baylor Canyon Drive
P.O. Box 442
Organ, N.M. 88052
505/382/5625

November 29, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Re: Organ Mountains Coordinated
Resource Management Plan &
Environmental Assessment, 9/88

Dear Mr. Salt:

The subject fails to address the impact on the major road
arteries serving the area---VERY specifically--BAYLOR Canyon
Drive -- the One(1) mile south of route 70 designated as D-71.

Should BLM & the County fail in this regard the citizens will
have to tolerate & support a traffic increase from some 500
crossings per day at this writing to probably more than 1,000
when the area achieves its full use.

Please ,please donot tell me this is a COUNTY problem it is a
BLM PROBLEM.

Adittonally:

I object to the \$391,700 subsidy to 7 ranches.

Also, \$1,500,000 campground at La Cueva.

With \$61,000 for water at Aquirre Spring campground will only
over crowd the area

DONOT fail to monitor the Route 70 by-pass, the road could come
to within less than ONE(1) mile of the main service road(Dripping
Springs)if the southern route is chosen.....

Has any one given thought to a VOLUNTEER group to monitor &
guide visitors---ORGAN MOUNTAIN SCOUTS--?????????

I am prepared to work with BLM and anyone else to keep the
FRISTINE condition of this important natural resource..

Turly yours,

- 35-1 BLM does not expect the use of the Baylor Canyon Road to drastically increase. Most of the increase in visitor use will occur on the Dripping Springs Road, from University Avenue to the Cox Ranch.
- 35-2 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.
- 35-3 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.
- 35-4 Please see the response to Comment 2-4.
- 35-5 Please see the response to Comment 5-6.
- 35-6 Indeed, BLM has given much thought to the formation of a "Friends of the Organ Mountains" group. Also see response to comment 9-6.

110

November 30, 1988

To: Tim Salt

I typed you a nice letter but left it in Organ today. However, I do want you to know that I support alternative 2 of the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan, with few exceptions:

I believe all areas should be day-use only, to inhibit vandalism and over use.

I see no reason for water catchments for wildlife or water wells at Aquirre for day-users.

This should save money and also keep the environment as protected as possible for the future.

You have been doing a splendid job and I wish you all success in this venture.

Sincerely,

Julia Koontz
P.O. Box 463
Organ, NM 88052

P.S. - Ill mail the letter anyway.

36-2 36-1

111

- 36-1 Please see the responses to Comments 5-1 and 6-12.
- 36-2 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 19-9.

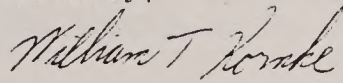
1414 Sweet Ave.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
(505) 521-1065
November 29, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

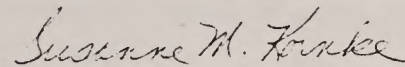
Dear Mr. Salt:

37-1 We have read the O.M.C.R.M.P. We think it is an overly ambitious plan that does not adequately address environmental impact. Alternate Plan 2 seems to be least intrusive but could be improved by eliminating all grazing in the area.

Sincerely,



William T. Kornke



Susanne M. Kornke

37-1

Please see the responses to Comments 5-5 and 9-8.

Nov. 30, 1958

Dear Mr. Salt,

I appreciate the work that has gone into the Draft for management of the the Organ Mountains and I very much appreciate your asking for citizen input at this time.

38-1 My family has thoroughly enjoyed hiking at Aguirre Springs and taking foreign visitors there. I would consider it a shame to civilize this area in any way. I appreciate the limitations it has to large RVs and hope that a sign can be put somewhere to discourage the noise from 4 wheelers and loud radios. The quieter the better to enjoy the view and the sound of the wind. We certainly don't need to bring water into the area.

38-2 On the western side of the Organs we have also enjoyed hiking with the scouts and other groups. With the present probability that there will be a by-pass in this area I urge you to protect as long as you can the wilderness quality of our mountains. They give great pleasure to those of us who seek adventure right in our own Organ Mountains. When in doubt do nothing to spoil what we have.

Yours truly,
Liletta Wilson

- 38-1 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 13-3, 13-7 and 20-1.
- 38-2 Please see the response to Comment 5-6.

NIVEMBER 30, 1988

TO: Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

FROM: Greg Magee
1155 N. Miranda, G-5
Las Cruces, NM 88005

RE: Comments on the Draft Organ Mtns. Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

Overall, I support alternative 2, the least intensive action, which I feel would have the least negative impact on the CRMP area. Furthermore, I would like to make specific comments on the five issues addressed by the management plan.

1. THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES OR STATE-LISTED SPECIES:
I applaud the proposed action for this issue.

39-1 2. WILDLIFE HABITAT: I support the proposed action with one exception: providing 10 wildlife water catchments could increase specific wildlife populations to a point that would have a negative impact on vegetation in the area due to overgrazing. This could also favor specific species, while hurting others. Any native wildlife that presently occurs or previously occurred in the CRMP area can survive on the water that occurs here naturally.

39-2 3. RANGELAND RESOURCES: I oppose chemical brush control to improve rangeland. In fact the expense of all proposed rangeland improvement projects do not seem justified when the annual allotment fees are only about 2.5% of the total cost of the improvements. It would be more cost effective to phase out all grazing in the CRMP area over several years. This would also improve the visual and environmental quality of the area.

4. CULTURAL RESOURCES: I support the proposed action for this issue.

5. RECREATION:

39-3 A) Camping: 1) I oppose the water system at Aguirre Springs. This would encourage prolonged visits which would increase impact in the area. Fees could still be charged, even for day visits (i.e. \$2.00 per car).

39-4 2) I oppose the campground at La Cueva due to the increased impact it would have on the area. This area could still be developed for interpretation as in the proposed action, but for day use only.

39-5 B) Roads: I oppose the paving of Dripping Springs road or any other road in the CRMP area. This would increase impact on the

39-1 Please see the response to Comment 19-9
39-2 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.
39-3 Please see the response to Comment 2-4.
39-4 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.
39-5 Please see the responses to Comments 5-7 and 31-4.

114

39-6 area. Vehicles should not be allowed on the road from La Cueva to Dripping Springs. The road from Soledad Canyon to Peña Blanca should be closed to reduce impact on this area. No new roads should be constructed in the CRMP area.

C) I applaud the hiking trails and interpretation efforts of the proposed action.

39-7 6. OTHER: Land in the CRMP area should be withdrawn from mining and mineral leasing subject to valid existing claims which should require no surface occupancy.

The unique characteristics of the Organ Mountains coupled with their relatively small area calls for extreme caution in their management. One small error could result in the unrecoverable degradation of a precious resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your plan.

Greg Magee

Greg Magee

39-6 Please see the responses to Comments 2-1, 2-2, 4-7, and 6-6.

39-7 Please see the response to Comment 6-14.



NEW MEXICO BLM WILDERNESS COALITION

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

CABEZON COYOTES
GILA WILDERNESS COMMITTEE
NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS
STUDY COMMITTEE

SOUTHERN UTAH WILDERNESS
ALLIANCE

NEVADA OUTDOOR RECREATION
ASSOCIATION INC.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY,
NEW MEXICO OFFICE

AMERICAN WILDERNESS
ALLIANCE

NATIONAL PARKS AND
CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

SIERRA CLUB

WILDERNESS SOCIETY

PROJECT LIGHTHAWK

UTAH WILDERNESS COALITION

November 30, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, N.M. 88005

Subject: Comments regarding the Organ Mountains CRMP

Dear Mr. Salt,

The N.M. Wilderness Coalition is opposed to the Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan. We believe the area deserves preservation as a designated wilderness, as recommended in our citizens' proposal previously submitted to the BLM and the N.M. Congressional Delegation. We believe that the Draft OMCRRMP is misguided and wrong-headed in its entire approach as to the best way to protect this important natural resource. In addition, we believe that great sums of money are planned to be misspent on wasteful and fiscally irresponsible projects which are either doomed to fail or are completely out of proportion to the expected return on the investment.

We believe that the area and its delicate ecosystem are entirely worthy of preservation (not conservation) in their natural state, and they should be protected to safeguard them for us and our posterity. This is contrary to the approach taken in the Draft OMCRRMP which chooses to develop the area with: a visitor center, RV campgrounds, nature walks, picnic areas, 40 miles of hiking/biking/equestrian trails, paved trails and roads, development of other roads, horse trailer parking, and a doubling or tripling of recreation use. And these developments are only the ones aimed at recreation! All of this sounds pretty attractive, including the hypothetical NMSU string quartet playing in the restored gazebo - but wait! Weren't we talking about preserving a delicate wild area? This development doesn't preserve, it degrades at an

INDIVIDUALS DEDICATED TO PRESERVING BLM'S WILD LANDS
WITH THE SUPPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

116

40-1

40-2

40-1

Please see the response to Comment 6-1.

40-2

Please see the response to Comment 9-8.

accelerating rate, encouraging over-use, rather than simply serving the present and future users as demanded. The Draft OMCRMP's mistaken emphasis is to exploit to the maximum the recreational possibilities of the area turning it into a sort of amusement park (all well and good in its place), rather than preserving its irreplaceable existing natural values.

Regarding the financial boondoggle that the plan proposes, let me address only two of the more lavish expenditures.

40-3 1. In appendix 7, "Planned Recreation Development Projects," the total cost of developments is \$2,836,000 of which \$1,500,000 is for the 60 site campground at La Cueva (or \$25,000 per site.) This campground directly competes with the private sector in Las Cruces, would shortly become de facto low income housing during the warm seasons as it has in numerous other government campgrounds near urban areas, and would quickly self-destruct from its own negative impacts (as demonstrated in the Sandias outside Albuquerque.)

40-4 2. In appendix 5B, "Planned Rangeland Improvement Projects," the total cost is \$391,700. At present the total fees paid by those who benefit from this are in the neighborhood of \$5000 per year! I suggest that the \$391,700 be invested in government securities at 9% interest yielding about \$35,000 per year; then give those who would benefit from these proposed rangeland improvements double (or about \$10,000) what they are presently paying the U.S Government, only pay them not to use the range. By this we can save the taxpayer \$25,000 every year the area is not grazed! My point is that this \$391,700 expenditure is out of all proportion for the possible return. It would be far better for the land and the taxpayer to use that sum to the reduce or eliminate such a disproportionately expensive land use.

In counterpoint to these expenditures, the citizens' proposal for wilderness would cost the taxpayer little more than the signs notifying people that they "are now entering the Organ Mountains Wilderness."

As with most plans, there are a number of good things which should be done regardless of any determination: threatened and endangered species inventories and protection, spring enclosures, cultural resource preservation, etc. It remains that the bulk of the Draft OMCRMP, with all of its bells and whistles, is not aimed at preserving and restoring a precious natural habitat for our posterity, whereas the citizens' proposal is.

While we have tried to be as clear as we can be in our opposition to the Draft OMCRMP, we recognize that the political situation may not be kind. We therefore wish to append here and

40-3 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

40-4 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

formally make a part of our comments the criticisms contained in the letter from the S.N.M. Coalition of Conservation Organizations to you, dated November 24, 1988.

Sincerely,

Perry Plummer

Perry Plummer
Coordinator
New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition
3382 Solarridge St.
Las Cruces, NM 88001

November 24, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

On behalf of the Southern New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Organizations (COCO) we submit the following comments on the Organ Mountain CRMP. COCO still fully supports the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition's plan for a 50,000 acre Organ Mountain Wilderness and these comments should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the Organ Mountain NCA over the Organ Mountain Wilderness.

The Organ Mountain NCA theme should be wilderness and preservation. Any proposed construction in the area should only occur when pressure demands it. Demand should drive development, not development create demand. BLM should not encourage use in these fragile areas by developing facilities and recreational development should not focus solely on the Organ Mountains. With the military boundary on about one half of the NCA and heavy urbanization on the other half, the potential exists on the one hand for widespread destruction of the area by too much development, or on the other hand protection and preservation by restricting development to the boundaries of the area.

In general we support Alternative 2 with a few suggestions. In particular, we support no campground in the Cuevas area. This should be a day use only area. In other parts of the state and nation, publicly supported campgrounds in close proximity of cities have been unsuccessful. Cost of operation is high and vandalism is high. Where campgrounds have been established most have been abandoned in favor of day use only.

We also support day use only at Aguirre Springs for the same reasons. This type of urban campground competes directly with private commercial campgrounds and urban camping should be left to them. If a campground must be established, it should be placed near highway 70 at the site of the previously planned visitors' center where water could be easily provided. BLM campgrounds could be provided, if needed, adjacent to the Robledos, Blue Mesa, Dona Anas and Potrillo areas thereby dispersing camping and people impacts.

We further support closing the westside road between Soledad Canyon Road (CO 78) and Mossman Arroyo Road (BO 59). Sufficient public foot access is provided by CO 78 and BO 59 and it would

help protect the area once the adjacent private land is developed. This portion of the westside road could be used as a foot and equestrian trail.

The Mossman Arroyo Road should be terminated at the fork about one mile southwest of Pena Blanca and the parking area placed here. The one mile interpretive walk to Pena Blanca would help reduce vandalism.

All roads in the NCA should be closed except to Ruby Mine and Modoc Mine (neither should be improved or maintained), Cuevas Road, Mossman Arroyo Road, Aguirre Springs Road and Westside Road north of Cuevas.

We feel that trail building should be limited and done only to meet demand. In particular, the Filmore Canyon trail should not be built unless heavy use and environmental degradation will occur. The demand for this trail does not currently exist in this very fragile area.

We also believe that water catchments are unnecessary. This area historically supported wildlife populations based on its semi-desert nature and to add artificial water sources would unnaturally increase existing populations as well as bring in species not normally found there. The impacts of the changes on this delicate system are unknown and potentially significant. More is not necessarily better, ecologically.

It appears that the brush control and new fence construction should not be done as it would not be cost effective. It would be much better to phase out grazing in the NCA over a ten year period during which time the adjacent private land will become urbanized.

Other brief suggestions are: The entire NCA should be closed to wood gathering. 'No Surface Occupancy' designation should be required on all existing mining claims within the NCA and any patented claims acquired by BLM should be closed to mining. Alternative energy sources should be used everywhere possible, for example, solar powered pit toilets.

We feel the Organ Mountains are a unique treasure that should be shared by all, including future generations. Therefore it is essential that we carefully protect them now.

Sincerely,

Bob Tafarielli
3957 Westview
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Nov 30, 1988

Dear Mr Salt

The best way to protect the Organ Mountains is for the 50,000 acre Organ Mountain Wilderness to become a reality. Hopefully that will happen!

The Organ Mountain CRMP Alternative 2 is the best choice overall but it includes things that I do not support. Rather than

putting water in Aguirre Springs, I

support putting in a campground where the abandoned visitor's center is. Water could be provided there and Aguirre Springs could be changed to Day Use Only. This would lower the cost of operation and decrease

41-1

Please see the response to Comment 6-1.

41-2

Please see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 6-12.

vandalisms.

41-3

I see no reason to develop a camp-ground in the La Puena area. Camping for RV's is best provided by private Commercial Campgrounds. BLM Campgrounds should be developed only as needed and then never in the prime areas that need to be protected so they can continue to be enjoyed. The people impact on the Organs can be lessened by putting needed Campgrounds in other BLM Holdings.

41-4

I do not support subsidizing the ranching interests so I am against water catchments, brush control and new fence construction. Rather than

41-3

Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

41-4

Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

encouraging grazing of cattle, I support phasing it out over a specific time period.

41-5 It is my belief that the west side road between CO 78 and BO 59 should be closed to protect that area as the adjacent private lands are developed.

41-6 All wood cutting and gathering should be prohibited in the C.R.M.P. I hope this is done.

I believe my suggestions, if followed, would be in the best interest of all the people wanting to enjoy the Organ Mountains now and yet enabling future generations to enjoy them also. I would hope

41-5 Please see the response to Comment 4-7.

41-6 Please see the response to Comment 4-6.

they will be considered.

Sincerely yours,

Carol V Anderson

4145 Southern

Las Cruces NM 88005

2725 Fairway Drive
Las Cruces, NM 88001
November 30, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt,

I would like to comment on the Organ Mountains CRMP. I support Alternative 2, least intensive impact on the environment. I would like to see the area preserved as wilderness. The Organ should be open to day-use only - no overnight camping. This would lessen vandalism and be less expensive to enforce and operate.

I do not favor water being provided at the Aguirre Spring Campground. A campground could be established near Highway 70 at the site of the abandoned campground.

I do not favor a campground near the Cox Ranch site, as I feel that it is too fragile an environment to stand up to such hard use. Campers may

42-1

42-2

42-3

42-1

Please see the responses to Comments 5-1, 6-1 and 6-12.

42-2

Please see the responses to Comments 2-4 and 20-1.

42-3

Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

use commercial campsites located in and around Las Cruces.

42-4

As to roads, I do not feel new roads should be constructed, especially a Highway 70 by-pass. Do not improve existing roads - this will further limit access to the fragile area. Specifically, I am speaking of the Ruty Mine Road, the Modoc Mine Road, and the Westside Road. I would like to see Westside Road closed between Salcedo Canyon Road (CO 78) and Messman Arroyo Road (B059). This would lessen the impact on the area as adjacent lands are developed.

125

42-5

ORV use should be limited. A short one-plus mile trail to the Modoc Mine from the Cuevas area will increase hiking access.

42-6

Westside Road north to Highway 70 should be unpaved. If this road is paved, it will create a de facto highway.

Some equestrian use of trails would be acceptable.

42-4

Please see the responses to Comments 4-7, 5-6, 19-7 and 22-2.

42-5

Please see the response to Comment 5-4. Also, the proposed Fillmore Canyon Trail would pass close to the Modoc Mine. Existing "jeep" trails would provide hiking access to the mine from the trail.

42-6

Please see the response to Comment 5-6.

- 3 -

42-7 | Grazing should be phased out gradually
over several years.

42-8 | Solar-powered pit toilets should be
installed (these are used in the
National Forests).

42-9 | No woodgathering should be
allowed. Dead wood and tree
snags make wonderful nesting
sites and habitat for many
species of birds as well as
ground-dwelling mammals.

42-10 | There should be no brush
control, specifically, no herbicide
use on creosote bush.

No woodcutting should be allowed.

As Los Cruces grows and the
city spreads ever-closer to the Organ,
those beautiful mountains could be
dreadfully degraded unless steps
are taken now to lessen the
impact of man. Only in that way
will future generations be able
to enjoy the beauty of nature
and escape the stresses of urban life.

Sincerely yours,

Roxanne Hunter

42-7 | Please see the response to Comment 5-5.

42-8 | Please see the response to Comment 19-11.

42-9 | Please see the response to Comment 4-6.

42-10 | Please see the response to Comment 1-1.

Mario & Pat Bellestri
4968 Tierra Blanca Road
Las Cruces, NM 88001
November 28, 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

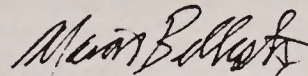
Re: ORGAN MOUNTAINS COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

43-1

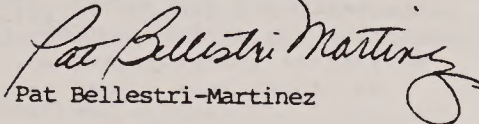
There is one aspect of one of the alternatives that we strongly oppose. That being "the extension and paving of the westside road south from the Dripping Springs Road to Mossman Arroyo (13 miles)." The road would adversely affect the area. Much land would be disturbed and the area would lose its current natural state. The high cost of a paved road could no doubt be put to better use. We do favor the alternative as stated on page 4-13, point 4., "7 miles of vehicle recreation trail (westside road) would be closed preventing vehicular access to approximately 9,000 acres of public land...."

Because of the complexity of this project we strongly feel that public meetings should be scheduled. There are many aspects of the plan that are not clear to us at this point. We want the opportunity to make it clear and understand the implications of any given course of action.

Sincerely,



Mario Bellestri



Pat Bellestri-Martinez

43-1

Please see the response to Comment 2-1.

November 20, 1986

Mr. Tim Salt
Bureau of Land Management
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquis
Las Cruces, Nm 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

I have had a chance to review the draft management plan for the Organ Mountains and would like to say that I very much appreciate the recreational and visual emphasis of the current plan. The plan ensures that the Las Cruces area will retain much of its current scenic and recreational opportunities even after it has experienced much of its future inevitable growth. As such, I feel that your management plan represents a great asset to our community.

I would like to make three position statements regarding the current plan:

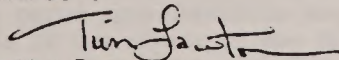
44-1 1) I feel that the La Cueva/Ice Canyon area should be reserved for day use, rather than the higher-impact activities that result from camping. The sensitive nature of the Ice Canyon area, both ecologically and historically, requires a high degree of protection. I favor the establishment of a visitor center as an instrument for education of the public.

44-2 2) With regard to brush control using herbicides, if forage on the alluvial fans is enhanced, I feel strongly that grazing animals should be removed from sensitive riparian areas, specifically Rabbit Ears and Fillmore Canyons and Indian Hollow. Secondly, is there an alternative to herbicide for brush control, such as the use of student conservation volunteers? I would think, given the growing concern for our groundwater resource, that the potential impact of herbicide should be looked at closely.

44-3 3) If possible, please widen the scope of the cooperative management agreement with the Army to include the area north of Soledad Canyon and south of Sugarloaf. This area should continue to be managed as wilderness to protect its present undisturbed character.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft management plan. I appreciate the efforts of your agency in planning for the future of the Las Cruces area; such efforts are necessary to maintain the present high quality of life in southern New Mexico.

Sincerely,


Timothy F. Linton

44-1 Please see the responses to Comments 2-2, 5-1, 6-6, 13-10, and 28-6.

44-2 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 28-8.

44-3 Please see the response to Comment 28-12.

128

November 20, 1988

Tim Salt, BLM Area Manager
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt,

The Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan is indeed a challenge as it must provide for anticipated heavy usage of the La Cueva area while maintaining the intrinsic primitive nature of the mountains. I have been thinking about how best to reconcile these two diverse needs of the CRCRMF and these are my personal recommendations.

- 45-1 1. Aguirre: Opening a campground at La Cueva will relieve the present overuse of Aguirre Springs, for the near future anyway. Do not make any more "improvements" at Aguirre. Concentrate on maintenance and recovery.
- 45-2 2. La Cueva: The convenience of La Cueva to an urban population will necessitate a campground of some sort at La Cueva. However, this should be limited to picnic areas and primitive overnight camping. Utilizing the Cox house for a visitor center and interpretive exhibits to educate the public is a good idea. Please emphasize that our natural areas can be enjoyed while having a low impact on them. Paving the road will make the area much harder to control--don't do it.
- 45-3 3. Grazing: Please do not spend any more tax money to subsidize the cattle industry. Economically and ecologically, cattle do not belong here.
- 45-4 4. Military withdrawal: I personally am not opposed to closing the southern end by the Army. Although I have treasured hikes there, I am willing to sacrifice recreational opportunities if it means greater preservation of the area and less harrassment of the wildlife. Could a wildlife sanctuary like the San Andres be established there?
- 45-5 5. Wilderness: Last but not most important, Please work for Wilderness designation as recommended by the Wilderness Society, including the acquisition of land.

I realize BLM will have to provide recreational opportunities. The goal should be to keep them as primitive as possible in keeping with the rugged beauty of the Organ Mountains.

Sincerely,

June Price

JUNE PRICE

- 45-1 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 5-1, 13-7, and 20-1.
- 45-2 Education and interpretation of sensitive resources would be a top priority. Also see the response to Comment 5-7.
- 45-3 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.
- 45-4 The BLM would close the area near Pena Blanca and Bishop's Cap, not the Army. A defacto wildlife sanctuary presently exists on much of the Ft. Bliss withdrawal that is not subject to impact from military operations. Also see the response to Comment 8-1.
- 45-5 Please see the response to Comment 6-1.

Sir, Salt,

46-1 | I feel that you should look into putting in some mountain bike paths as part of the development of the Dripping Springs area.

Sincerely, Jeff Nettbarius

47-1 | Dear Sir, I heard that you were developing the dripping spring area & I feel that you should leave some trails available for the use of mountain Bicycles.

Thank you

Damon Knight

48-1 | Dear Tim
I saw the article in the Las Cruces Bulletin 2/23/88 about the proposed development of the Dripping Springs area & wanted to give you my input. (I also've asked others to do the same). I am a mountain biker, hiker, geologist, outdoors type, and I want the area stay open to mountain bikes. I have been interested in ecology & preserving the "naturalness" of the land for a long time (as are a lot of other mountain bikers) and we respect the land and trails. The bicycles have no motors, we stay on the trails & do little (if any) damage to the land. I am interested in improving public opinion about bicycles on trails & am willing to work towards this end. If you need help in this area let me know. Sincerely, Julie H. Jacob
446-7736

46-1 Due to the concentration of visitors expected in the Cox Ranch area (including Dripping Springs and La Cueva), BLM does not feel that mountain bike use is an appropriate activity on the trails in these areas. There are many other roads and trails available elsewhere in the area. Mountain bikes will be permitted on all open vehicle routes, including the county road to the A. B. Cox Visitor Center.

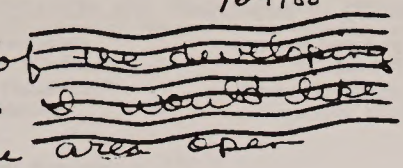
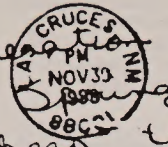
47-1 Please see the response to Comment 46-1.

48-1 All designated vehicle routes will remain open to mountain bike use. Some new trails will be open for mountain bikes while some will be closed to mountain bike use. Also see the response to Comment 46-1.

Dear Sir:

11/29/88

In consideration of ~~the developing~~
of ~~dripping~~ ~~springs~~ ~~I would like~~
you to keep the area open
to maintain bicycles.



49-1

Thank you for your
consideration of this issue.

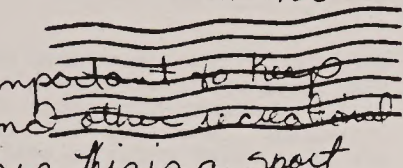
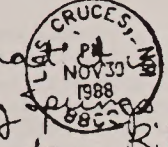
Sincerely,

Melissa Shelton

Dear Sir,

11/29/88

I feel that ~~it is~~ important to keep
open, ~~dripping~~ ~~springs~~ and other recreational
areas, to Mountain Bikers. This is a sport
which many Las Lucens enjoy doing.

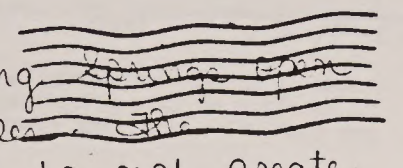
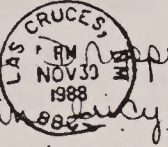


50-1

Rebecca M. Simpson

Dear Sir:

Please keep ~~dripping~~ ~~springs~~ open
to maintain ~~bicycles~~ ~~the~~
mountain bicycles do not create
the everlasting damage that
ATV's do. I would be opposed
to that, but feel the mountain
bicycles are a wonderful way to
see our wilderness. Thank you.



51-1

Connie Speer

49-1

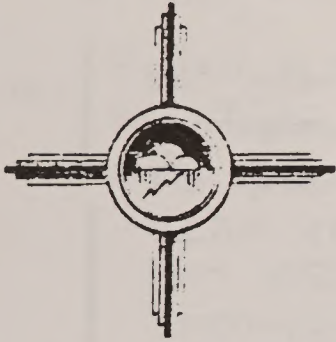
Please see the responses to Comments 46-1 and 48-1.

50-1

Please see the responses to Comments 46-1 and 48-1.

51-1

Please see the responses to Comments 46-1 and 48-1.



PLAINS ELECTRIC GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION COOPERATIVE INC

Albuquerque headquarters
2401 Artec Road NE, P.O. Box 6551
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87197
Phone (505) 864-1861

Escalante Generating Station
P.O. Box 577
Prewitt, New Mexico 87045
Phone (505) 876-2271

TELECOPY TRANSMISSION

Fax No.: AT&T 251KD - (505) 894-2655

Date: 12/2/88

To: Tim Salf

From: Dave Vasey

Bureau of Land Management No. of Pages: 4
(including cover)

Teletype #: 525-8228

Operator: Jelena

Account No.: _____

Time: 9:20

MESSAGE:



PLAINS ELECTRIC GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION COOPERATIVE, INC.

Albuquerque Headquarters
2401 Anzac Road, NE, P.O. Box 6551
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87197
Phone (505) 864-1881

Escalante Generating Station
P.O. Box 577
Prewitt, New Mexico 87045
Phone (505) 876-2271

Albuquerque, New Mexico
December 1, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Subject: Comments on Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Res. Mgmt. Plan

Dear Mr. Salt:

Plains Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative, Inc. (Plains) thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP). The following comments express concerns that Plains feels should be addressed in the final plan and environmental assessment (EA).

Generally, the future management of the Organ and Franklin Mountains has been addressed in some detail by the preparation of the draft CRMP and EA. However, certain considerations of specific concern to Plains have not been adequately examined or, at the least, adequately discussed in the draft CRMP. Two utility corridors which cross the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area were designated in the Southern Rio Grande Management Framework Plan (1962) and are currently occupied by El Paso Electric, Southern Pacific Products, and Chevron Products facilities. Plains' existing Dona Ana/Alamogordo 115kV transmission line easement (BLM ROW Permit No. LC066065) runs along the northern edge of the study area and apparently forms the subject unit's boundary. No mention of this transmission line or its easement was made in the CRMP or EA, and it was not depicted on Map 2A (Management Under the Proposed Action). Plains feels that regardless of the transmission facility's location "outside" of the study area it should be acknowledged in the text of the plan and depicted on the map. We have enclosed an approximation of the line easement's location as it relates to the management unit's north boundary. To facilitate your examination of this location, the depiction was made on Map 3A which has fewer management concerns shown. Plains also requests that BLM states in the final CRMP that the existing 115kV transmission line easement and patrol trail are intended to be excluded from any additional burden resulting from Organ Mountain management plans.

52-2 Concerning rights-of-way (ROWs), it is stated in the CRMP under Constraints (No. 2, page 3) that "New facilities will be confined to existing corridors and ROWs". Plains feels that this is a much too

52-1 Since the Plains transmission line is outside the CRMP area, management actions within the area would not affect or constrain operation or maintenance activities related to the powerline or the patrol road.

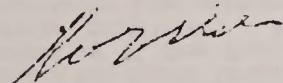
52-2 This is a unique area that cannot be compared to public land areas with fewer constraints. Protection of scenic and natural values are of the utmost importance. This is consistent with the right-of-way (ROW) avoidance area concept in most recent land use plans.

Mr. Tim Salt
Page 2

52-2 restrictive statement as compared to past BLM management practices
(Cont'd) which have examined each ROW request on a case by case basis and have
not limited such requests by de facto statements such as the above.
52-3 Plains also objects to the language found in Appendix 1 under Summary
of Existing Land Use (MFP) Decisions (A. Lands) concerning corridors
that were "designated" for specifically mentioned utility companies.
The term "designated" implies sole use occupancy which could be
considered unfair favoritism. This is particularly true in light of
BLM's earlier statement that "new facilities will be confined to
existing corridors and ROWs".

Plains feels that the Mimbres Resource Area has spent considerable
effort in the preparation of a successful and thoughtful document in
the draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and
Environmental Assessment. Thank you again for the opportunity to
comment. Your consideration of Plains' concerns will be appreciated.
Please inform us if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Kent Mikkelsen
Vice President of Engineering

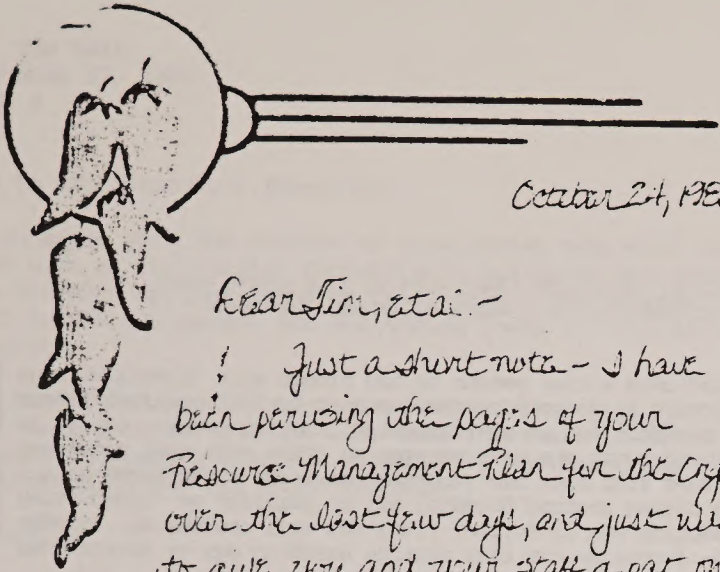
Enclosure

KM:DGJ:dgu/4

pc: J. VanCoevering, w/o encl.
R. Precek, w/o encl.
J. Jackson, w/o encl.
D. Ussery, w/o encl.

File: E-TRANS-Dona Ana/Alamogordo 115kV Line

52-3 The term "designated" as used in this context
does not imply favoritism. It is a common land
use planning term meaning that the corridor
was identified and established through the
planning process for utility purposes. It is
synonymous with the word "established".



October 24, 1988

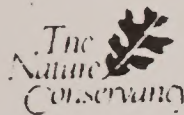
Dear Jim, et al. -

! Just a short note - I have been perusing the pages of your Resource Management Plan for the Coyotes over the last few days, and just wanted to give you and your staff a pat on the back. There has obviously been many hours of work and research put into this plan, and although I will be sad to finally relinquish the ranch, I am terribly excited to see the plans for it, for one day I know I will stand proud and tell my Sonali about this transaction... I take a lot of pride already, in having been a part of it. In short, I think you've done a fantastic job, and the BLM is lucky to have you, likewise the public.

Thank you for your dedication!

Sincerely,
Tucker Paraz

Thank you. Its been a real pleasure working with you.



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF NEW MEXICO

107 Cienega Street

Santa Fe, NM 87501

(505) 986-3867

November 23, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

Thank you for providing The Nature Conservancy with a copy of the Draft Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. We are pleased to offer the following comments.

In our judgment the plan is sensitive to the critical biological environment and will provide a good basis for sound future management of the BLM portion of the Organ Mountains. Having served as a participant on the Technical Review Team, we can appreciate the need to recognize and satisfy a number of legitimate constituent interests in developing this plan. We believe that an appropriate balance has been struck here.

In particular, we commend you for including strong objectives and planned actions for protecting endangered and sensitive plants and animals in the Preferred Alternative for the Plan. The six major areas of importance that have been identified for these species and communities are on target, as is the proposal to have each of these sites considered for ACEC designation in the forthcoming Mimbres Resource Management Plan. The proposed trail and backcountry camping policies to protect riparian areas and the plan to reestablish the drift fence at the head of Ice Canyon are positive measures needed for maintaining plant diversity in these fragile zones. We also appreciate that protection for the Sneed's pincushion cactus as called for in your 1987 Habitat Management Plan for this species has been incorporated in this CRMP. In fact, The Nature Conservancy strongly supports all nine planned actions for T&E species proposed in the Preferred Alternative.

- 54-1 Rare plants in the Dripping Springs area are extremely vulnerable to human impact. We suggest that the trail leading to the springs beyond the historical development, as depicted in the Dripping Springs Design Concept (Map 2F), would invite undesirable heavy recreational use into this sensitive area and recommend that this trail be deleted from the final plan. Also the suggestion of having "living history" presentations at the Dripping Springs ruins (e.g. string quartets playing at the restored gazebo) is highly questionable, since
- 54-2 this particular site should not be turned into a high profile recreation area

Headquarters: 1800 North Kent Street • Arlington, Virginia 22209
Western Regional Office: 785 Market Street • San Francisco, California 94107

54-1 There has been a lot of indiscriminate hiking use caused by people walking from the Boyd cabins and Van Patten's resort areas to the pond. This has created many numerous trails. The need exists to encourage people to stay on one trail. A developed trail would keep hikers on one path, thereby reducing soil erosion and impacts to vegetation.

54-2 These events might occur once or twice a year and attendance would be limited.

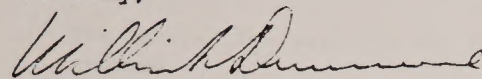
Mr. Tim Salt
November 23, 1988
Page 2

due to its biological fragility.

We do agree with the concept of terminating vehicular traffic at the parking area west of the visitor center/ranch buildings and providing public access to the Dripping Springs ruins by trail only. The proposal to close the entire CRMP to ORV use except for designated roads and trails also has our strong support.

The Nature Conservancy appreciates the effort that has gone into this plan and your desire to involve the many user interests in developing it. We look forward to working toward a Cooperative Agreement for the purpose of jointly administering the Cox Ranch complex.

Sincerely,



William W. Durmire
Public Lands Coordinator

WWD/as

November 30, 1988

Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

We have read the draft of the Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management Plan and support Alternative 2 in general.

55-1 | However, we do not believe there should be overnight camping in any area. This should cut down on vandalism and overuse and cost to build and maintain.

55-2 | Water catchments are not necessary to support wildlife in the area, and well water would not be needed for day use recreation.

55-3 | We hope development of the Cox Ranch area will not be excessive but be as beautifully situated on the site as the Aguirre Springs area is.

We wish you well in this worthwhile enterprise.

Sincerely,

Julia Koontz
P. O. Box 463
Organ, NM 88052

Ellen Gant
Box 4574, University Branch
Las Cruces, NM 88003

55-1 | Please see the response to Comment 1-1.

55-2 | Please see the response to Comment 19-9.

55-3 | All facilities of the Cox Ranch would be similar in design, scope, and layout to those at Aguirre Spring.

December 2, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
BLM Area Manager
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Re: Draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan

Dear Mr. Salt:

This letter is the Southern New Mexico Sierra Club's response to the Draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan. The comments are in the order of the items as presented in the draft, followed by additional points and a summary.

The Sierra Club supports the actions proposed for threatened and endangered species.

56-1 The Sierra Club supports the actions proposed for Wildlife Habitat with the exception of the problems expressed by the Conservation Coalition relating to water catchments.

56-2 The Sierra Club opposes the improvements proposed for Rangeland Resources. There is no economic justification for them. The public is not required to subsidize the cattle producers. The actions are too expensive to be done even if the economic benefits were realized by the public instead of the grantees. Much of the improvements are proposed in allotments associated with private lands that the BLM proposes to purchase. If these private lands are purchased, the allotments should be cancelled and not re-allocated since they produce a negative return.

56-3 The Sierra Club opposes the Cooperative Management Agreement for the South Organ Mountains. The Army does not have any intrinsic holy prerogative to close important recreation areas to public access. Contrary to statements in the draft, the area in consideration represents the best available for the "quality primitive and semi-primitive recreation needs and demands" in the TRT recommendations. Long Canyon is one of the most popular and scenic undeveloped areas in the Organs.

56-4 The Sierra Club supports the acquisition of private and state lands and suggests that this needs to be done very quickly, especially the Anderson holdings and further suggest that Cultural Heritage Trust funds should be used.

56-5 The Sierra Club strongly opposes any further development at Aguirre Springs. Several years ago the BLM paved the entrance road for about 1 million dollars. They paved it despite an Environmental Analysis Record that said paving would increase usage at an already over used area and would cause vehicle accidents on that winding road. It has done both. At the time the

56-1 Please see the response to Comment 19-9.

56-2 Please see the responses to Comments 1-1 and 5-5.

56-3 Please see the response to Comment 8-1.

56-4 BLM is presently negotiating with the Cox family for the 280-acre parcel at the mouth of Achenbach Canyon. BLM agrees that the remainder of the private land between this parcel and the Soledad Canyon road (owned by Ken Anderson et al) are important for acquisition. BLM will actively pursue acquisition of these parcels at the appropriate time.

56-5 Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 13-7, and 20-1.

56-5 (Cont'd) doubled the size of the campground and now wants a water system, a residence, and full-time administration.

Aguirre Springs campground causes a formidable impact on the visual and audible character of the area. There is a problem with maintenance and peace-keeping. The Sierra Club recommends that the BLM close Aguirre Springs to overnight camping and establish facilities close to the highway.

56-6 The Sierra Club opposes any developments at the Cox Ranch that will affect the ambience of the surrounding area. The Sierra Club strenuously opposes the proposed campground.

56-7 The Sierra Club very strenuously opposes the development of a trail from Aguirre Springs to the Cox Ranch. It would eliminate the solitude inherently required for dispersed primitive recreation in almost the last area available if the CMA closures were put into effect.

The Draft states that the Filmore Trail would assist rescues. So far no rescues have been needed because few people go there. In contrast, there have been at least three accidents resulting in two deaths off the Pine Tree Trail. The Filmore Trail would take people closer to more dangerous terrain.

56-8 The Pine Tree and Baylor Pass trails have been severely eroded and deteriorated for several years and have been repaired with volunteer labor. No trails should be constructed without a permanent commitment for maintenance.

56-9 The Draft says Filmore Canyon and Indian Hollow are being negatively impacted by off-trail hiking but human usage seems to be very light. Cattle are probably responsible for more of the damage. It is hard to imagine a developed trail decreasing the human impact on these areas.

56-10 The Sierra Club supports confining development around Eishops Cap to the south side and further suggest prohibiting the use of the top of it, for antennae or other uses.

Additional Suggestion and Comments

56-11 Close the area between Organ and Eishops Cap to new mining or mineral or gravel extraction. Re-contour and re-vegetate existing tailings and gravel pits, require No Surface Occupancy designation on further work at any old claims that are not possible to acquire. Do not improve the roads to the mines if they are acquired.

56-12 Why are interpretative exhibits at the Cox Ranch so important if the existing nature trail at Aguirre Springs has not been maintained?

56-6 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

56-7 Please see the responses to Comments 6-9 and 28-4.

56-8 Volunteer labor will continue to be important. Also see the response to Comment 9-6.

56-9 Please see the response to Comment 26-7.

56-10 The constraint on no new rights-of-way accomplishes this.

56-11 Please see the response to Comments 6-14.

56-12 Interpretive exhibits in a visitor center setting have the potential to reach many more people. The self-guided nature trail is a part of the Pine Tree Trail. It utilizes a brochure which has recently been updated and reprinted. The interpretive markers (which are numbered to correspond with the brochure) were recently renovated as a part of a Boy Scout project.

RLM: Organ Mountain Management Plan
December 2, 1988
Page 3

In summation, The Sierra Club is appalled at the lack of sensitivity shown for the Organs in the Draft. They are treated as a generic recreation resource with little appreciation shown for the uniqueness of either the Organs or the aesthetic values of New Mexico.

56-13 The BLM should place more emphasis on conservation and less on development. Development should occur when demand requires it instead of development creating demand. Resources should first be used for protecting the Organs.

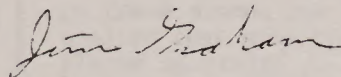
Acquire private and state lands quickly, especially those that would soon be developed.

56-14 The west side buffer zone should be moved to two miles west of the Baylor Pass Road and no further paving or road development should be allowed in the buffer zone including a highway bypass or paving the existing road which would create a de-facto bypass.

56-15 Overnight camping should not be placed at La Cueva. Urban camping should be left to the private sector. Public campgrounds so close to a city eventually have to be closed to overnight camping because of excessive demand. If more public campgrounds need to be developed other sites can be found such as Blue Mesa, Las Uvas, or Aden.

I realize the difficulties the BLM faces resolving conflicting demands of the various user groups and appreciate the effort that has been expended in creating the Draft Management Plan. Please consider carefully the value that the Organs have for the area as a wild place.

Yours truly,



Jim Graham
Conservation Chairman
Southern New Mexico Sierra Club
Box 986
Mesilla Park, NM 88047

/aw

141

56-13 Please see the responses to Comments 9-8.

56-14 Please see the responses to Comments 5-6 and 17-2.

56-15 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

3310 West St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005
December 2, 1988

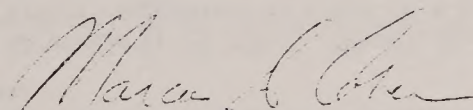
Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

First let me say "congratulations on acquiring and intending to protect the Dripping Springs area. What a gem!" I strongly support alternative 2, "less development" for the Organs in general and for La Cueva/Dripping Springs in particular. My reasons are as follows:

- 57-1 1. The Dripping Springs area is fragile and cannot stand intensively escalated use. The ruins are an historical resource which could be easily damaged by too many people crawling all over them. The canyon itself is full of loose rock and deceptive vertical reliefs which could entice children from the proposed campground and casual climbers into trouble. A system of trails to the higher areas would make matters worse, enticing novices that much closer to real danger. On the other hand, a trail from La Cueva around the ruins and back again would probably be a good idea. There should be no campground at La Cueva - this is asking for trouble. (The noise pollution itself would be intolerable in this now almost pristine area.)
- 57-2
- 57-3
- 57-4 2. It would be a real shame to exclude Long Canyon from the protected area. This is an exquisite place! (Have you been there?) However, if the development that you have in mind for Dripping Springs is what you call "protection", perhaps Long Canyon is best left to the military! (It seems like a satisfactory situation there now - unless they fence it off.)

Sincerely,



Marcus S. Cohen

- 57-1 Please see the response to Comment 5-8.
- 57-2 Please see the responses to Comments 6-9 and 9-6.
- 57-3 Please see the response to Comment 5-1.
- 57-4 Please see the response to Comment 8-1.

3310 West St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005
December 2, 1988

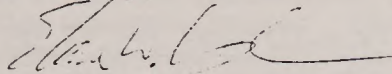
Tim Salt, Area Manager
Mimbres Resource Area
1800 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

I have mixed feelings about BLM's acquisition of the Dripping Springs area. On one hand, I am glad to see that this lovely place will not be "Californicated", on the other hand, I would like to see BLM's emphasis on preservation rather than recreation. I strongly support Alternative 2 in the Resource Management Plan over Alternative 1, mostly because of the plans for a camping area, especially for RV'S! I have camped in too many lovely campsights only to be awakened by someone's generator kicking-in in the middle of the night to run their air conditioner and/or refrigerator. I go camping and hiking to escape from the noise pollution in populated areas and would be distressed to see this noise follow me to the Organ Mountains that I love.

Also, I see some danger in planning a camping area so close to these rugged and beautiful mountains. People die every year on the Aguirre Spring side of the mountains by getting into a tenuous situation they are unable to get out of. I think that putting a campsite on this side of the Organ's will simply up that death toll by a considerable amount. Maybe BLM could generate funds by simply charging an entrance fee, just as the people at the ranch have for years. Hikers going to Dripping Springs are already in the habit of bringing a few dollars with them in order to hike. Why break them of the habit? This would obviate the need of a campsite to generate funds and keep the area free of noise pollution and small children or other inexperienced hikers.

Sincerely,



Elaine W. Cohen

58-1

Please see the response to Comment 5-1.

11-28-88

Tim Galt
Mimbrun Resource Area
1800 Mangrove
San Marcos, CA 92065

I'm writing in response to the Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan (OMCRMP), as I am very concerned with what happens to the Organ Mountains. They are truly unique, and many of the proposed options do not seem to recognize that.

This is a very fragile area, and any effort to develop it must be viewed with that always in mind. With so many alternatives for recreation nearby, (Los Uvas, Blue Mesa), why destroy something that does not lend its self to commercial-style recreation project. Specifically, to have increased overnight camping at Aguirres Springs would further deteriorate the already damaged peace and beauty that existed there. Also, La Cueva and Dripping Springs will not be helped by the McDonald Mentality. These are "quality" areas, not "quantity".

59-1

59-1

Please see the responses to Comments 2-4, 5-1, 13-7, and 20-1.

59-2

Please leave Fillmore Canyon alone. The damage currently done by cattle is bad enough (incidentally, the "cattle grazing" improvements suggested sure do make for expensive cattle!) without adding to it. I think those who truly appreciate the area are willing to let it be.

59-2

Please see the responses to Comments 6-9 and 28-4.

Please, pay attention to what can be lost in the name of development. Destroy this area, and it wont even begin to recover in our children's lifetime.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Malone

4412 N 7th St
Arlington, VA 22203

144



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY CENTER AND FORT BLISS
FORT BLISS, TEXAS



September 27, 1988

1988 SEP 30 PM 1:33

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Directorate of Engineering
and Housing

Mr. H. James Fox
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

LAS CRUCES DISTRICT

OFFICE	A	I	C	INITIAL/DATE
DM -031				LJB 9/20
ASSOC DM				
SECRETARY				
PAO				
ADMS -032				
OPFA -033				
RM				
LCL -036	X			Salt
WS -037		X		West
SRA -038				
FILE				

A=ACTION I=INFORMATION C=COPY

Dear Mr. Fox:

This responds to letter from Mr. Tim Salt, your Area Manager, dated August 16, 1988, concerning the preliminary draft Proposed Action and Alternatives for the Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

The Coordinated Resource Management Plan has been reviewed. As previously stated by Fort Bliss representatives during on the ground field trips, Fort Bliss cannot, under any condition, support your proposal to enter into a Cooperative Management Agreement permitting recreational use of a portion of our Dona Ana Firing Range. Any proposals which relate to Fort Bliss should be deleted from the Coordinated Resource Management Plan before the management plan goes out for public review.

Recreational use is not compatible with military use. This range is a heavily contaminated active impact area containing unexploded ordnance, and the area being considered for recreational use is now being used as a secondary danger zone. The safety and welfare of the general public is of paramount concern because of the apparent danger that is present. Fort Bliss policy is to prohibit entry into firing ranges and historic impact areas except in the line of official military business. Also, our present and future military missions encompass the entire use of the Dona Ana Firing Range.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Bea Martin, Chief, Real Property Management Branch, Engineering Plans and Services Division, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, at (915) 568-3034 or (915) 568-6941.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Infante
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

60-1

While it is regrettable that the Army does not feel it can enter into the CMA, BLM still feels strongly that this is the best instrument for our two agencies to deal constructively with management of the area on a long-term and proactive rather than reactive basis. To that end, BLM will continue to identify such an agreement as a desirable management objective. Please note, as indicated in earlier correspondence, that BLM has no hidden agenda and does not seek the relinquishment of any portion of the withdrawal from the Army. BLM is sincere in our intentions and only seek what is best for the public, the area, and our two agencies. Even though our missions are quite unlike, BLM believes there is enough common ground between us to find areas of mutual cooperation (such as wildlife and threatened and endangered management). To that end, BLM intends to continue with open and honest communication and meaningful discussion on this subject.

145

60-1



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY CENTER AND FORT BLISS
FORT BLISS, TEXAS

December 8, 1988



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Directorate of Engineering
and Housing

Mr. H. James Fox, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Fox:

We have given your latest proposal, as outlined in your October 14, 1988 letter, every consideration because we know how important it is to you. As part of our review effort, I had my Chief of Staff, Engineer, and Range Commander conduct on-the-ground visits to investigate terrain characteristics and verify present and future firing fans.

This comprehensive effort again substantiated our position that the entire range is needed to support defense training missions. Therefore, I must regrettably inform you that Fort Bliss cannot enter into a Cooperative Management Agreement with your agency.

Given this situation, request your assistance in informing the public about safety hazards present in this area, and that military use of this area is necessary to support defense readiness of this nation.

I would like very much to continue the level of cooperation recently achieved by our two agencies as regards McGregor Range Resource Management Plan. In my opinion, it is a blueprint for other agencies to emulate and my Chief of Staff has nothing but praise for the courtesies and cooperative attitude extended at the District and State levels. Your continued support in recognizing the importance of Fort Bliss to the Army's mission and to the security of our nation is greatly appreciated and needed.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Infante
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

61-1 Please see the response to Comment 60-1.

61-2 In discussions with the public, BLM has and will continue to inform them as to the location of the military boundary as well as safety and other concerns. As you are aware by now, members of the public have trespassed and will continue to trespass into areas such as Fillmore Canyon, Ice Canyon, and Long Canyon due to the irregular and largely unmarked boundary. BLM views the proposed provision of the CMA, which would allow public access up to the main ridgeline, as the best solution to providing a clearly identifiable boundary. Short of this, the Army is faced with the prospect of the unenviable task of identifying and enforcing a political boundary in extremely rugged terrain.

1-19

2-19

146



State of New Mexico
ENERGY, MINERALS and NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503

GARREY CARRUTHERS
 GOVERNOR

TOM BAHR
 CABINET SECRETARY
ANITA LOCKWOOD
 DEPUTY SECRETARY

December 7, 1988

Mr. Tim Salt
 Area Manager
 Mimbres Resource Area
 1800 Marquess
 Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005

Dear Mr. Salt:

62-1

This is in response to the Draft Organ Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. The primary technical reviews were conducted by the Mining and Minerals Division's-Bureau of Economic Geology and Abandoned Mining Lands Bureau and the Forestry Division Resource Survey Section (Endangered Plants). Our technical reviews generally support your preferred alternative within the plan. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

William L. Chapel
 State Forester

62-1

Thank you for your comments.

147

VILLAGRA BUILDING - 408 Galisteo

Office of the Secretary
 827-7836

Forestry Division
 P.O. Box 2167 827-5830

Park and Recreation Division
 P.O. Box 1147 827-7465

MARQUEZ BUILDING - 525 Camino de los Marquez

Office of the Deputy Secretary
 827-5950

Administrative Services
 827-5925

Energy Conservation & Management
 827-5900

Mining and Minerals
 827-5970

LAND OFFICE BUILDING - 310 Old Santa Fe Trail

Oil Conservation Division
 P.O. Box 2088 827-5800

CAMPUS STATION - Socorro, New Mexico 87801

State Mine Inspector
 c/o New Mexico Tech. 835-5460



THE JIM HALSEY CO. INC.

24 MUSIC SQUARE WEST • NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203 • (615) 244-7900 • TLX 49-2335 • FAX (615) 256-8028

December 6, 1988

Tim Salt
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marouess Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005

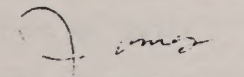
Dear Tim,

It was a pleasure meeting you in Albuquerque with Michael Martin Murphey. I really believe in the concept of a National Conservation Area and look forward to working with you.

Again, just wanted to let you know that it was a pleasure talking with you and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Kindest regards,

THE JIM HALSEY COMPANY, INC


JAMES YELICH
VICE PRESIDENT

JY/sm

RECEIVED
DEC 9 11 12 43
BUREAU OF LAND MGMT
LAS CRUCES, N.M.

63-1

148

63-1

Thank you for your comments.

Mr. Jim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres Resources Area
1300 Marquess
Las Cruces, NM 88005

12 14 88

Dear Mr. Salt

I obtained a copy of the Sept 88
Oregon Mountains Coordinated Resources
Management Plan and have read
it through. I appreciate the
great amount of work that has
gone into the plan.

Over the past 36 years I have
tripped the pine tree trail in
Aquino Springs many times, from
the Aquino Springs area to
University Ave, the highest Ginnack,
Oregon Peak, and many other areas
in the Oregon mtns. Although
almost 70 I still enjoy a hike
up into the peaks. I have found
the dripping Springs area one
of the nicest anywhere. I am
glad to see that it is being
opened up for general use. The

Thank you for your comments.

Last time I was in the Drifting Springs area I brought out a big load of trash. I think that 99% of the people leave an area clean but the other 1% particularly after a few beers leave a mess. However, in spite of the 1% I hope the area will be open to the general public maybe without the fee.

I appreciate that no plan can be acceptable to everyone and that some environmentalists don't want people in any of the area. But, people are important, even those not capable of hiking miles up trails. Even the people who travel the country in big vans are important. I think your plan is very good and hope you won't let the complainers spoil it. The plan is probably as good a compromise as can be beneficial to all the people.

Sincerely
 Charles M. Redman
 4505 Panorama Dr. 8800

Ed Meagher
Drawer A
Mesilla, NM 88046

16 December 1988

Tim Salt
Area Manager
Mimbres' Resource Area
1800 Marqueses
Las Cruces, NM 88005

SUBJECT: Organ Mountain CRMP

Dear Mr. Salt:

I realize that I am late in writing you. I was finishing up as a graduate at New Mexico State University and did not have any time until recently. I ask that you excuse this and consider my letter.

My intent in this area stems from the fact that it is my home. I've lived in Las Cruces from 1983 through to the present. I have been a resident since 1980. I'm in the military and will leave in March 1989, but hope to be stationed at Fort Bliss after my initial Officer's Training. It was through military service that I initially came to be here and that my parents settled here. In summary, this area will always be home.

As a hunter, a four-wheel drive enthusiast, and a conservationist I realize the need to manage the land for all to use. I talked to Mr. Scott Florence to clear up some questions I had over things that concerned me. It was a pleasant experience. He was informative, to the point and very courteous. He was glad that I read The Organ Mountain CRMP and was showing interest in the area. His help has narrowed the focus of my letter tremendously.

After reading the proposed plan I felt that the effort and care put into this was outstanding and sure to guard the area well for continued recreational, conservational, ranching and military use. The introduction of Big Horn sheep, turkeys, the care for and protection of the Sneed's Pincushion cactus and other flora, the increased foot and horse trails, increased patrols by BLM and Forestry Service personnel, the protection and reconstruction of historic sites and the cooperation gained from Fort Bliss all insure a better Organ Mountain habitat.

Within the habitat there are some areas of concern to me that I hope you will consider:

1. In setting up the Cox Ranch Headquarters I am asking if it would be wise to pave the Dripping Springs road and have overnight camping. This would increase the area access to many people who would not ordinarily come to the mountains at all. It has been my past experience that though not all, many of these folks have little concern for the environment. This statement is considering the excellent educational plans you have in mind at the Cox Ranch Headquarters to inform people about the area. Those who are truly interested in viewing the Organ Mountains and camping in them will hike, horse back ride, or four-wheel where permitted to get to the desired areas. Most folks who do this, with some exceptions in the four-wheel class, are concerned enough to pack out their trash, stay on trails or roads and abide by the rules governing the plants and animals in the area. I feel that by not paving the roads off Route 70 and up from the already paved section of Dripping Springs Road, you would save the area from increased illegal wood gathering, vandalism and other area abuses. Those who have a true interest in the area, even if it is just one day's curiosity, will travel on a dirt road, park their cars at the visitor's center, have a picnic and hike around. Those who want to use their R. V. campers can go to the already developed area of Aguirre Springs and spend the night. From those of the R.V. class who are interested in hiking or back-packing, have access to the trail system through Baylor Pass or by driving their vehicles around to the Cox Ranch Headquarters. These people will be denied none of the beauty of the Organ Mountains, yet there will be one area of control to limit the disturbances to the environment.

This idea I feel will decrease the usage of the area by eliminating those with just a passing interest in the wilds. There are already many open places in this state that these people can get to in half-a-day or less (Elephant Butte, Gila Recreational area, Lincoln National Forest). We can keep a relatively undisturbed area more natural and beautiful by doing this.

2. A worry I have as a four-wheel drive enthusiast is the pressure to close the West Side Road and some of the dead end trails off of it. After reading the Organ Mountain CRMP and talking to Mr. Florence I have come to understand that for the most part this is being resisted. There will be some closure of trails but the West Side Road will be left open. What I ask is that as you head north along the Organ's to Route 70 and south past Achenback Canyon you leave some of these dead end trails open. Four-wheel drive enthusiasts such as myself and others enjoy the views gained or access for back-packing allowed by many of these dead end

65-1 Please see the responses to Comments 5-1, 5-6, 5-7 and 31-4.

65-2 Please see the responses to Comments 4-7 and 19-7.

65-2
(Cont'd)

trails. On many spring and summer nights you can see the camp fires dotting the heights as we spend our time in these places. I understand the necessity for some closures to protect the environment. I ask that you consider leaving open the roads pointed out on the attached map (highlighted in red ink). They provide back-packing, hunting, hiking, and four-wheel drive enjoyment. While for the true enthusiast many of these places can still be reached by foot, there is much enjoyment that would be eliminated for the four-wheeler and hunter.

I will not pretend to ignore the damage that four-wheel drives, dirt bikes, and other ORV's can do. What I do ask, in light of this thought, is that we as a group are still allowed access to this land through controlled trails and dirt tracks.

I appreciate the opportunity for input about an area that I spend a good portion of my free time in. I use my jeep, hunt and hike throughout the area. While I cannot speak for any group I am sure that many other four-wheel enthusiasts would miss the ability to use the Organ Mountain area. I ask that you consider this when dealing with the West Side Road question.

Though in point one it may seem that I am trying to be an exclusionist, I firmly believe I am not. What I want to avoid is unnecessary access for those who really have no appreciation for the environment. Those who are truly interested will make their way to the Cox Ranch Headquarters complex without feeling hindered. There they will enjoy the benefits of what you have planned. I strongly believe that the elimination of paved roads and camping will actually enhance what you are trying to do by protecting the area from those who would destroy it either through ignorance or purpose.

Thank you,

Ed Meagher

Ed Meagher

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12

1 AN ACT

2 To establish the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area in
3 the State of New Mexico and for other purposes.

4 TITLE I-ORGAN MOUNTAINS
5 NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

6 Establishment of Area

7 Section 101. (a) In order to protect for the benefit and
8 enjoyment of future generations that area in southern New Mexico
9 containing the Aguirre Springs Recreation Area, Dripping Springs,
10 La Cueva and other unique and nationally important ecological,
11 cultural, scenic, scientific, recreational, and wilderness
12 resources of the public lands in the Organ and Franklin
13 Mountains, there is hereby established the Organ Mountains
14 National Conservation Area. The Organ Mountains National
15 Conservation Area shall consist of approximately fifty-eight
16 thousand five hundred and sixty (58,560) acres, as generally
17 depicted on a map entitled "Organ Mountains National Conservation
18 Area", and dated February 1989.

19 (b) As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of
20 the Act, the Secretary shall file a map and legal description of
21 the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area designated under
22 this section with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
23 of the United States Senate and the Committee on Interior and
24 Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives.
25 Such map and legal description shall have the same force and
26 effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may
27 correct clerical and typographical errors in such legal
28 description. The map and legal description shall be on file and
29 available for public inspection in the office of the Director of
30 the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

31 Management

32 Section 102. (a) The Secretary, acting through the Director of
33 the Bureau of Land Management, shall manage the Organ Mountains
34 National Conservation Area to protect the resources specified in
35 section 101 and in accordance with this Act, the Federal Land
36 Policy and Management Act of 1976, and other applicable
37 provisions of law, including those provisions relating to grazing
38 on public lands.

39 (b) The Secretary shall permit hunting and trapping within
40 the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area in accordance with
41 applicable laws and regulations of the United States and the
42 State of New Mexico; except that the Secretary, after
43 consultation with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, may
44 issue regulations designating zones where, and establishing

1 periods, when no hunting or trapping shall be permitted for
2 reasons of public safety, administration, or public use and
3 enjoyment.

4 (c) Within the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area,
5 the grazing of livestock shall be permitted to continue, pursuant
6 to applicable Federal law, including this Act, and subject to
7 such reasonable regulations, policies, and practices as the
8 Secretary deems necessary.

9 (d) Subject to valid existing rights, the lands within the
10 Organ Mountains National Conservation Area are withdrawn from
11 operation under the general mining laws.

12 Acquisitions

13 Section 103. (a) Within the Organ Mountains National
14 Conservation Area, including the wilderness area designated under
15 section 201 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire
16 lands and interests in lands by donation, purchase with donated
17 or appropriated funds, exchange, or transfer from any other
18 Federal agency, except that such lands or interests therein owned
19 by the State of New Mexico or a political subdivision thereof may
20 be acquired only by exchange; Provided, that the land owner is in
21 concurrence with such acquisition. It is the sense of Congress
22 that the Secretary is to complete the acquisition of all surface
23 and non-Federal subsurface interests underlying the Organ
24 Mountains National Conservation Area, under the provisions of
25 this section, no later than three full fiscal years after the
26 fiscal year of enactment of this Act.

27 (b) All exchanges pursuant to this Act shall be made in a
28 manner consistent with applicable provisions of law, including
29 this Act, and unless otherwise specified in this Act shall be on
30 the basis of equal value; either party to an exchange may pay or
31 accept cash in order to equalize the value of the property
32 exchange, except that if the parties agree to an exchange and the
33 Secretary determines it is in the public interest, such exchange
34 may be made for other than equal value.

35 Management Plan

36 Section 104. The Organ Mountains Coordinated Resource Management
37 Plan, April 1989, shall be adopted as the master plan governing
38 uses within the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area. This
39 plan shall be reviewed with full public participation within five
40 years of enactment of this Act; Provided, that within two full
41 fiscal years following the fiscal year of enactment of this Act,
42 the Secretary shall develop and transmit to the Committee on
43 Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of
44 Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
45 of the United States Senate, a management plan for the Organ

1 Mountains Wilderness Area established under section 201 of this
2 Act.

3 Cooperative Management

4 Section 105. By this Act, the Department of the Army and the
5 Department of the Interior are directed to develop a cooperative
6 management agreement with provisions for the joint protection and
7 management of scenic, cultural, and natural values within the
8 Organ Mountains National Conservation Area. The agreement shall
9 provide for public recreation access to that portion of Fort
10 Bliss lying west of the topographic crest of the Organ Mountains
11 and for military use with no public access to those Bureau of
12 Land Management-administered lands lying east of the topographic
13 crest of the Organ Mountains and west of Fort Bliss. Management
14 of those lands within the Organ Mountains National Conservation
15 Area west of the topographic crest will be the responsibility of
16 the Secretary of the Interior. Management of those lands within
17 the Organ Mountains National Conservation Area lying east of the
18 topographic crest and west of Fort Bliss will be the
19 responsibility of the Secretary of the Army. Prior to
20 implementation of this agreement the Army shall, through record
21 search and on-site investigation, as necessary, identify and
22 remove potentially dangerous unexploded ordinance from within the
23 Organ Mountains National Conservation Area established by this
24 Act. It is the sense of Congress that the Cooperative Management
25 Agreement be completed within the first full fiscal year
26 following enactment of this Act.

27 TITLE II-WILDERNESS

28 Designation of Wilderness

29 Section 201. (a) In furtherance of the purposes of the
30 Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136), the following lands in the
31 State of New Mexico are hereby designated as wilderness and
32 therefore as components of the National Wilderness Preservation
33 System.

34 (1) certain lands in the Las Cruces District of the Bureau of
35 Land Management, New Mexico, which comprise approximately eleven
36 thousand seven hundred and ninety (11,790) acres, as generally
37 depicted on a map entitled "Organ Mountains Wilderness--Proposed,
38 Baylor Peak Unit", dated February 1989, and which shall be known
39 as the Organ Mountains Wilderness: Provided, that within the
40 lands designated as the Organ Mountains Wilderness, the
41 provisions of the Wilderness Act shall not be construed to
42 prevent the continuation of the annual Baylor Pass Trail Foot
43 Race;

44 (2) certain lands in the Las Cruces District of the Bureau of
45 Land Management, New Mexico, which comprise approximately five

1 thousand one hundred and twenty (5,120) acres, as generally
2 depicted on a map entitled "Organ Mountains Wilderness--Proposed,
3 Needles Eye Unit", dated February 1989, and which shall be known
4 as the Organ Mountains Wilderness.

5 (b) As soon as practicable after enactment of this Act, the
6 Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the
7 wilderness area designated under this section with the Committee
8 on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of
9 Representatives and with the Committee on Energy and Natural
10 Resources of the United States Senate. Such map and description
11 shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act,
12 except that correction of clerical and typographical errors in
13 such legal description and map may be made. Such map and legal
14 description shall be on file and available for public inspection
15 in the offices of the Director of the Bureau of Land Management,
16 Department of the Interior.

17 Management

18 Section 102. (a) Subject to valid existing rights, the
19 wilderness area designated under this Act shall be administered
20 by the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the
21 "Secretary") in accordance with the provisions of the Wilderness
22 Act governing areas designated by that Act as wilderness, except
23 that any reference in such provisions of the Wilderness Act (or
24 any similar reference) shall be deemed to be a reference to the
25 date of enactment of this Act.

26 (b) The Congress does not intend that designation of
27 wilderness areas in the State of New Mexico lead to the creation
28 of protective perimeters or buffer zones around each wilderness
29 area. The fact that nonwilderness activities or uses can be seen
30 or heard from areas within a wilderness shall not, of itself,
31 preclude such activities or uses up to the boundary of the
32 wilderness area.

33 (c) The Congress hereby directs the Secretary to secure,
34 through the New Mexico water laws, the minimum amount of water
35 required to carry out the purposes for which the wilderness area
36 under this Act is designated. The priority date for filing for
37 these water rights shall be the date of enactment of this Act.
38 It is the sense of Congress that any water right applications to
39 the State of New Mexico will be filed with the New Mexico State
40 Engineer within 7 years of the date of enactment of this Act.

41 (d) As provided in paragraph (7) of section 4(d) of the
42 Wilderness Act, nothing in this Act or in the Wilderness Act
43 shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or
44 responsibilities of the State of New Mexico with respect to
45 wildlife and fish on the public lands located in the State.

46 (e) Within the wilderness areas designated by this Act, the
47 grazing of livestock, where established prior to the enactment of
48 this Act, shall be permitted to continue subject to such

1 reasonable regulations, policies, and practices as the Secretary
2 deems necessary, as long as such regulations, policies, and
3 practices fully conform with and implement the intent of Congress
4 regarding grazing in such areas as such intent is expressed in
5 the Wilderness Act and section 108 of Public Law 95-560 (16
6 U.S.C. 1133 note).

ORGAN MOUNTAINS COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (CRMP)

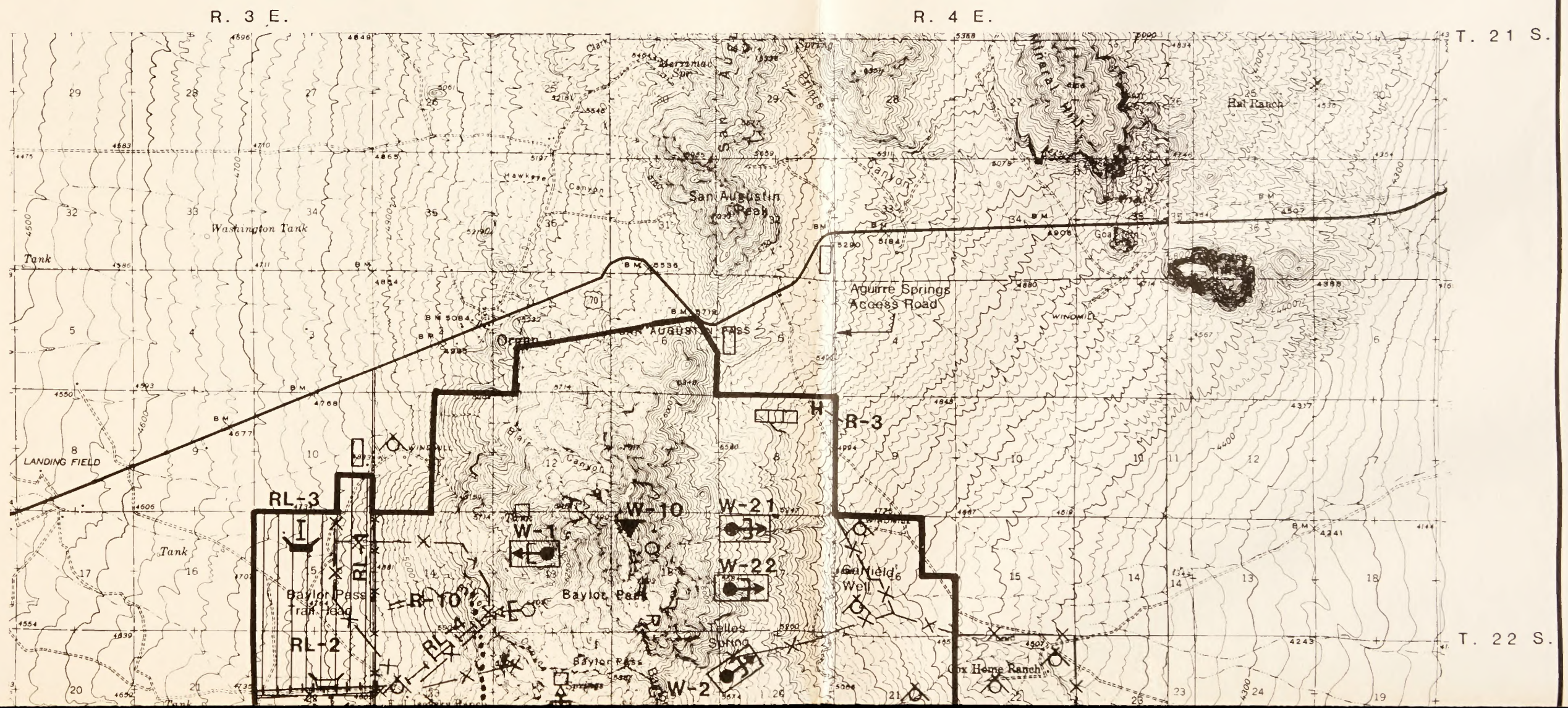
LEGEND

Proposed Organ Mountains National Conservation Area Boundary
 (Coordinated Resource Management Plan Area)

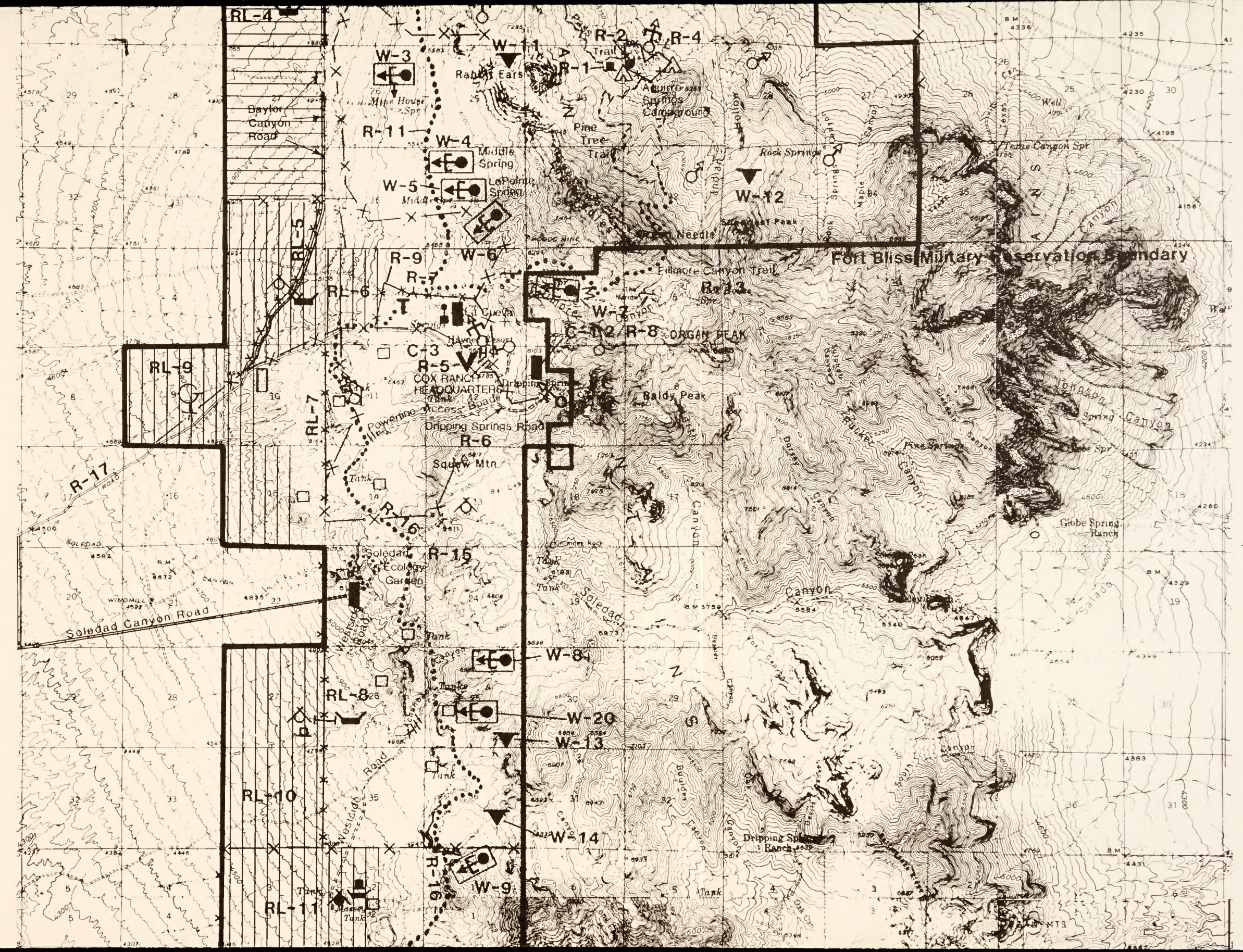
<p>EXISTING</p> <p>-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p>	<p>PROPOSED</p> <p>.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p>
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Trail

Picnic Area



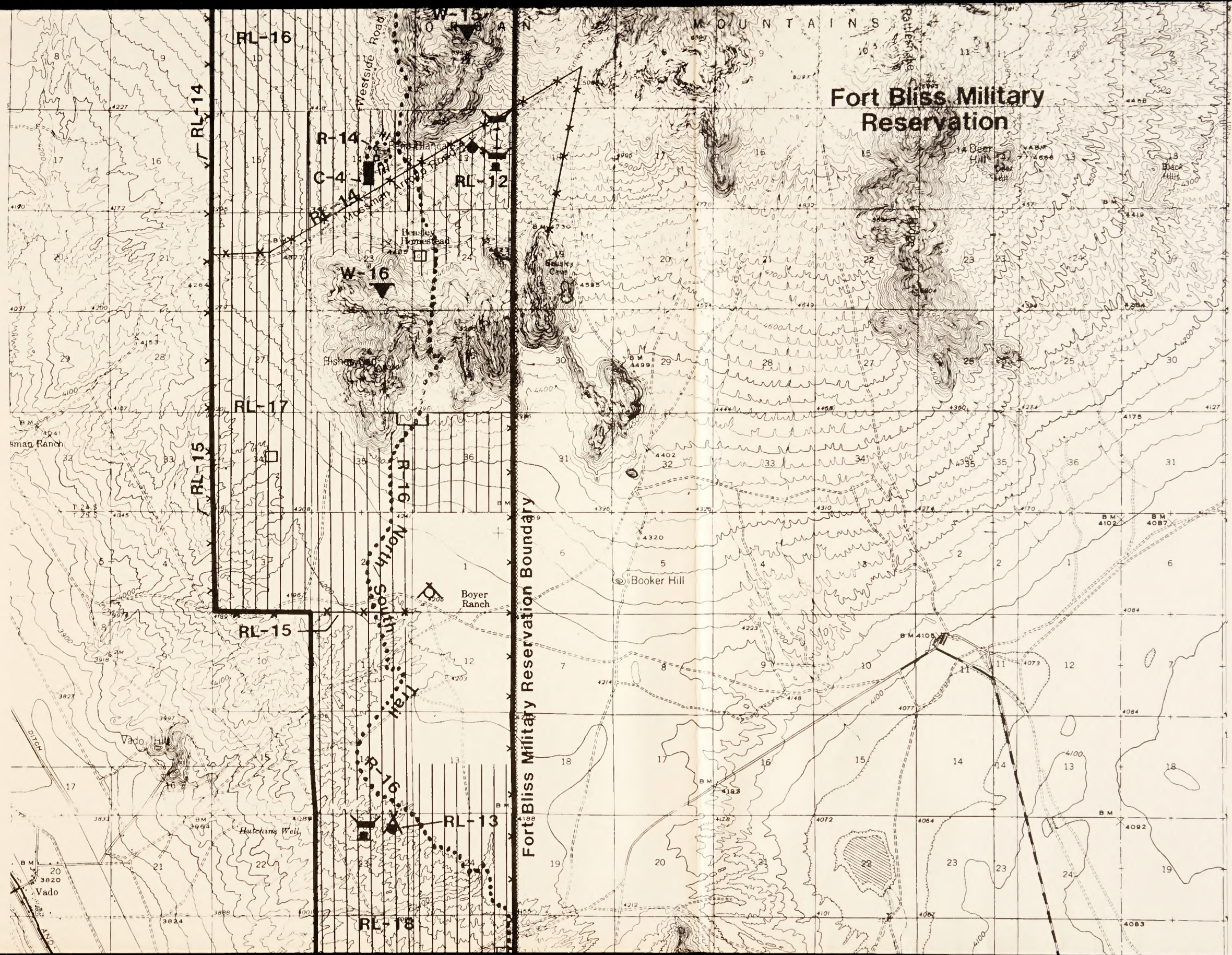
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | Campground |
| | | Visitor Center (Cox Ranch Headquarters) |
| | | Interpretive Site / Sign |
| | | Wildlife Water Catchment |
| | | Spring Development/Exclosure |
| | | Undeveloped Spring |
| | | Well |
| | | Trough |
| | | Pipeline |
| | | Dirt or Rock Tank |
| | | Fence |
| | | Archeological Excavation |
| | | Administrative Site |
| | | Improved Road |
| | | Unimproved Road |
| | | Vehicle Closure |
| | | Corrals |
| | | Brush Control Areas |
| | | Storage Tank |
| | | Fee/Contact Station |



T. 23 S.

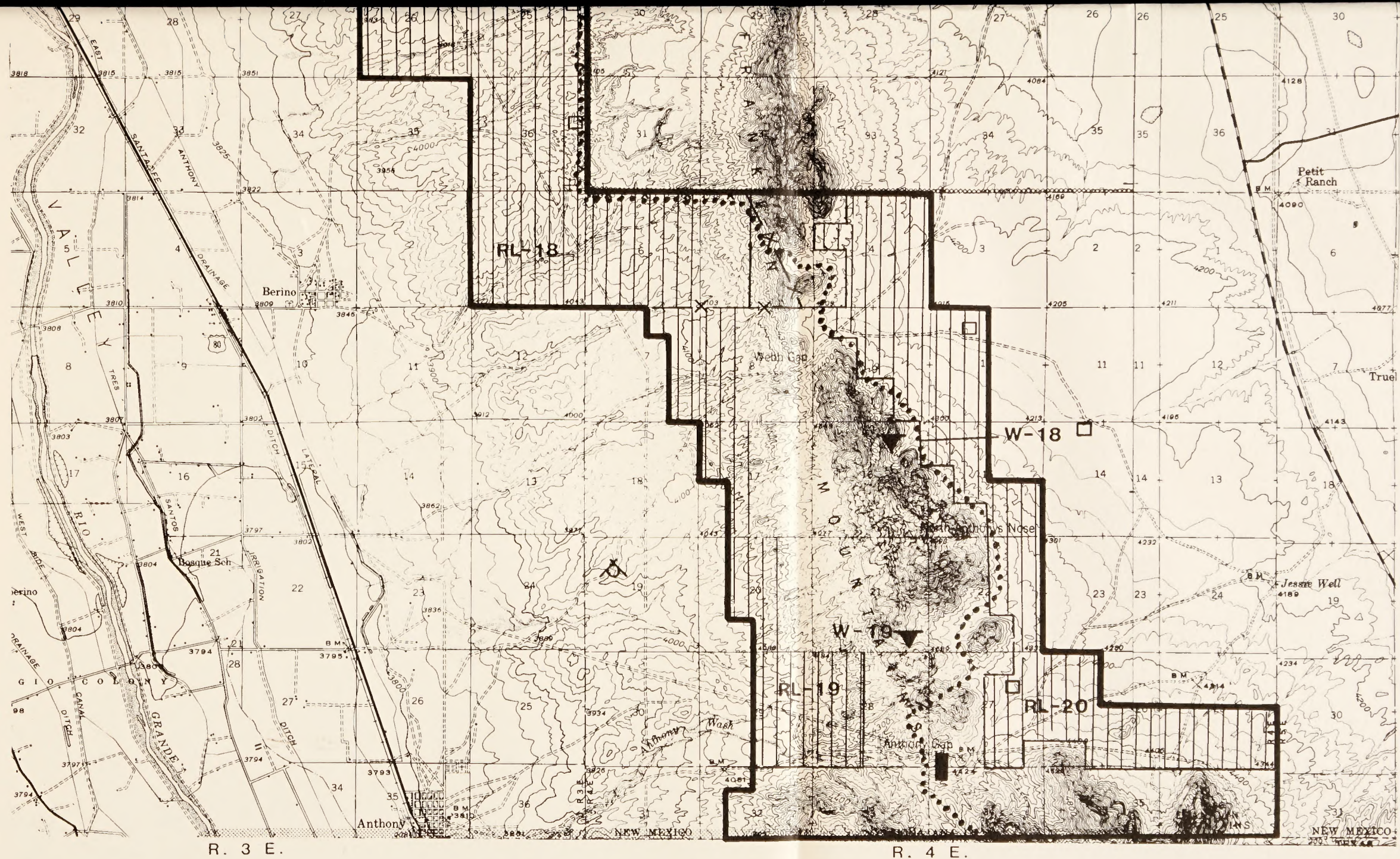
MAP NUMBERS (Appendices)

- Wildlife - W-1, etc.
- Range - RL-1, etc.
- Cultural - C-1, etc.
- Recreation - R-1, etc.



T. 24 S.

T. 25 S.



MAP 2 EXISTING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

#20292080
IO88017937

OH
765
HD
NG
m552
1989
C.2

T E R M O

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