

Carrizo Plain National Monument Draft Resource Management Plan And Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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Chapter 1. Purpose and Need

1.1 Introduction

The Carrizo Plain National Monument was established by Presidential Executive Order on January 17, 2001. The Monument Proclamation followed years of land acquisition, planning, and natural resource restoration efforts led by the area’s managing partners: the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Prior to its establishment as a National Monument, the area was managed under the Carrizo Plain Natural Area Management Plan of 1996. Under National Monument status, the Monument Proclamation calls for development of a separate management plan.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to provide a range of management approaches that could be implemented in the Carrizo Plain National Monument (CPNM), and to analyze the environmental effects resulting from implementing these alternatives. This chapter provides background on the planning area and process, purpose of the effort, management policies, public concerns that were considered in the development of this plan, mission and vision, and other background information.

The Monument Proclamation, in conjunction with BLM’s primary management mandate, the *Federal Land Policy Management Act* (FLPMA), guides future management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions for the CPNM. All recent land use plans for public lands managed by BLM are referred to as resource management plans (RMPs). These RMP decisions establish goals and objectives for resource management as desired outcomes, and the measures needed to achieve these goals and objectives as management actions and allowable uses.

Section 102(7) of FPLMA states that “goals and objectives be established by law as guidelines for public land use planning, and that management be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law.” In this RMP, the direction from the Monument Proclamation establishes many of these goals and objectives (Appendices A and B).

Section 202(c) of FPLMA (43USC 1712) requires that, in developing and revising land use plans, BLM:

- use and observe the principles of multiple use and sustained yield set forth in this and other applicable law;
- use a systematic interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences;
- give priority to the designation and protection of areas of critical environmental concern;
- rely, to the extent it is available, on the inventory of the public lands, their resources, and other values;
- consider present and potential uses of the public lands;
- consider the relative scarcity of the values involved and the availability of alternative means (including recycling) and sites for realization of those values;
- weigh long-term benefits to the public against short-term benefits;
- provide for compliance with applicable pollution control laws, including state and federal air, water, noise, or other pollution standards or implementation plans; and

- to the extent consistent with the laws governing the administration of the public lands, coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management activities of or for such lands with the land use planning and management programs of other agencies and affiliates.

1.2 Purpose and Need for CPNM RMP

The purpose of this planning effort is to complete a separate, stand-alone RMP to provide overall guidance for CPNM management and land uses, which fulfills the Monument Proclamation and is consistent with FPLMA and other laws, rules and regulations as required. The CPNM was established on January 17, 2001, by President William J. Clinton, using authority under Section 2 of the *Antiquities Act* (Appendix A). The Monument Proclamation identifies the exceptional objects of scientific and historic interest that the Monument is intended to protect.

The need for the CPNM RMP is found in the Monument Proclamation, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to "... prepare a management plan that addresses the actions, including road closures or travel restrictions, necessary to protect the objects identified in this proclamation." The Secretary in turn instructed the Director of BLM to "... review relevant management plans for the Monument to ensure consistency with the proclamation." Furthermore, the Secretary acknowledged that the Bakersfield BLM office had already prepared a management plan for the area: "The management plan for the Carrizo Plain has been developed over the last three years and sets in place many important management goals. That plan should be amended to ensure its consistency with the Proclamation."

The Caliente RMP was approved in May 1997 and provides general guidance on a landscape level. The Carrizo Plain also has an interagency activity plan (this is the plan identified in the Monument Proclamation). Following many years of work with TNC and CDFG, this plan was signed by BLM and TNC in November 1996 and by CDFG in November 1999. In addition, in 2003, BLM completed public scoping for an RMP with an environmental assessment (EA) level of analysis, but a draft document was never issued. This current RMP was initiated as a new start to that effort, with an EIS level of analysis.

1.3 Planning Area

The CPNM is located in the Coast Range of central California, approximately 90 miles west of Bakersfield and 60 miles east of San Luis Obispo. Most of the area is in the eastern portion of San Luis Obispo County but it also includes small portions of western Kern County (see Map 1-1, Vicinity Map). The planning area for the RMP includes all lands managed by BLM within the National Monument boundary. The decision area includes only BLM-administered lands and federal subsurface mineral estate; additional lands and interests purchased by BLM would also be managed under the guidance of this plan upon acquisition. The RMP does not apply to privately owned lands or interests within the Monument (see Map 1-2, Physical Features and Planning Area Boundary). While the RMP will direct management of BLM-administered lands and federal subsurface mineral estate only, it has been developed in cooperation with CDFG and TNC as managing partners. BLM and the partners have agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding to manage their respective lands within the Monument boundary in a complementary fashion.

The planning area includes the following acreages of surface ownership:

BLM lands:	206,520 acres
CDFG lands:	8,702 acres
Other state lands:	607 acres
TNC lands:	75 acres

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Private lands:	<u>30,948 acres</u>
Total planning area:	246,852 acres

The following acreages of mineral estate ownership are contained within the planning area:

Federal government minerals:	115,418 acres
Other/private mineral ownership:	131,434 acres

BLM planning guidance promotes making land use plan decisions at different geographic scales to ensure that issues are addressed in their entirety and to encourage public involvement. Similarly, environmental analysis must consider all reasonably foreseeable effects. For example, several communities outside the planning area boundary are directly linked to the area regarding tourism and recreation issues. The RMP includes goals for working with these surrounding communities. The planning effort recognizes that nearby lands, communities, resource values, and uses are all affected by management of the CPNM, and their use/values in turn affect management of the Monument. The plan includes recommendations for BLM to work with entities that manage areas or programs that are not under BLM's jurisdiction but directly affect Monument management (such as county roads, tourism information programs, and hunting). However, final decisions regarding these actions rest with the appropriate agency or community government.

1.4 Planning Themes and Issues

Planning themes or issues are defined as matters of concern or interest regarding resource management activities, the environment, or land uses that together serve to provide a framework for the alternatives considered and topics addressed in the RMP. The themes listed below were identified during scoping at the beginning of this planning process. Additional details about the public and agency involvement process are presented in Chapter 5 of this document. Based on the scoping comments and public outreach process, the themes and priorities described below were identified to be addressed in and to help guide the planning process.

1.4.1 Undeveloped Character

Comments showed a strong consensus opinion that people value the undeveloped, open character of the CPNM landscape and wish to see it maintained. The qualities that contribute to this undeveloped character include perceptions that the area is wild, relatively remote, expansive, and not crowded. Many indicated that protecting this character is central to their concerns about the area.

1.4.2 Resource Conservation and Management

Ecosystem protection and restoration is a top concern of the public. People stressed the importance of maintaining and restoring native habitats on the CPNM, particularly as an exemplar of mostly-lost San Joaquin Valley species and ecosystems. Controlling exotic species and avoiding habitat fragmentation both represent important aspects of the public's ecosystem concerns.

1.4.3 Wilderness Values

A specific approach to landscape protection that was raised as a priority is managing areas with wilderness characteristics to maintain those qualities as it would help to reduce habitat fragmentation, protect a wide range of natural and cultural resources, and allow for greater ecological resilience to habitat degradation across both space and time.

1.4.4 Access and Travel Management

Scoping revealed some disagreement about how best to maintain the access to and the road system within the CPNM. Some desire the existing network to be maintained or improved, to allow year-round all-weather access, and perhaps to improve road safety. Opposing this sentiment were comments calling for stricter controls on access, particularly with concern for off-road vehicle uses. People mentioned closing and restoring redundant or unnecessary roads, and preferred leaving some of the existing roads unpaved to help maintain the CPNM's undeveloped character.

1.4.5 Recreation Development and Facilities

There was also a range of opinions concerning the appropriate degree of development for CPNM recreation facilities and sites. Some people want to see campgrounds and other recreation sites within the CPNM remain few in number and relatively primitive in nature; others preferred improved facilities, either for greater comfort (shade structures were particularly mentioned as being needed) and/or to encourage visitors to stay overnight and experience a more personal connection with the landscape. Increasing visitation levels caused concern with quite a few commenters, urging proactive management or strategies to avoid the area being "loved to death."

1.4.6 Vegetation Management and Grazing Use

The grazing program within the CPNM is an area of management where there is significant public disagreement. Some commenters support continued grazing on the Monument, as a means for controlling invasive species and continuing a historic use of the landscape. Others expressed a desire for grazing to be considered subordinate to natural resources protection, and only used as a management tool if it could be shown to actively benefit native species (rather than harming or simply being neutral for native species), and to use permit authorizations that allow greater responsiveness to changing range conditions from year to year. A third group of people preferred to see livestock grazing eliminated or phased out entirely from the CPNM.

1.4.7 Cultural and Historic Resources

Commenters called attention to the long and rich human history in the CPNM, as evidenced by a wide range of cultural and historic resources. Many commenters want to see archaeological resources preserved, as well as restoration of ranch complexes with historic value. In addition, the public noted the sacredness of the CPNM area to the Chumash tribe and other Native American groups, and suggested that BLM work closely with native peoples to make management decisions. Of particular interest is the Painted Rock site. There is concern about providing a balance between allowing the public to view this important rock art site, while still providing adequate protection to sensitive archaeological resources.

1.4.8 Oil and Gas Development Impacts

There was considerable public concern about the impacts of oil and gas development and its negative impacts on the Monument, such as loss of species habitat and degraded visual quality. Oil company interest was also expressed in pursuing oil and gas development in the CPNM, hoping to utilize technological advances to improve economic viability and keep environmental impacts to a minimum.

1.5 Issues Considered but Not Further Analyzed

Several topics identified during the scoping process or by the planning team that are not addressed in the RMP/EIS are identified below. These issues are either beyond the scope of the planning effort, can be

addressed through existing policy or other non-planning means, or are outside of BLM's jurisdiction. The rationale for not addressing these items is noted.

1.5.1 Hunting / Use of Lead Bullets

Public concern was expressed about the hunting of non-game (varmint) species within the CPNM and the impacts on other native species, especially threatened or endangered wildlife. While most people are supportive of hunting remaining a permitted activity, they want to limit hunting to game species in season. BLM does not regulate hunting, which is under the jurisdiction of the California Fish and Game Commission. However, BLM can request that the California Fish and Game Commission change or otherwise limit seasons on BLM administered lands. Therefore, the RMP (see Section 2.16, Recreation, in Chapter 2) includes an action for the BLM to work with the California Fish and Game Commission to restrict non-game species hunting within the Monument.

A second major concern raised during scoping involved the effects of lead bullet use on condors and other species from lead poisoning after inadvertently eating the lead, and requested that BLM ban the use of lead shot in the monument. The Governor of California signed Assembly Bill 821 on October 13, 2007, which bans lead ammunition use in condor habitat, including the Carrizo Plain. This is specific to big game (pigs, deer, elk) and for coyotes and squirrels within the condor habitat.

1.5.2 Ban Oil and Gas Development/Acquire Private Mineral Rights

Many scoping comments requested that BLM bar any oil and gas leasing or drilling out of concern for possible environmental damage. The Monument Proclamation withdraws the Monument from future leasing. However, existing leases are considered to be valid existing rights and must be managed under the terms and conditions of those leases. Also, much of the Monument is underlain by private mineral estate. BLM can place protective stipulations on use of public lands to access these private mineral rights, but does not have the authority to prohibit access. See Section 2.19, Minerals, in Chapter 2 for a complete description of oil and gas management of existing leases and BLM surface/private minerals.

Commenters also recommended that BLM buy out private mineral estate in the CPNM or trade areas outside of the Monument for these rights. The RMP is written to allow for exchange/acquisition of both surface and subsurface estate to further the purposes of the Monument Proclamation. However, detailed acquisition proposals/strategies are outside of the scope of this plan.

1.5.3 Issues Relating to the Community of California Valley

Several members of the public expressed concern that the boundary between BLM land and private land is an artificial one as far as natural resources and impacts are concerned. They recommended that BLM and other agencies should pursue management actions beyond the CPNM boundary to protect natural resource values within the Monument from pollution, wildlife impacts, and other adverse effects. As stated in Section 1.4, BLM's management authority only encompasses public lands administered by the agency. However, BLM will work with adjoining landowners, agencies, and county and community governments to pursue complementary management and protection strategies. Also, this EIS includes an assessment of reasonably foreseeable off-site uses and their potential impacts on Monument resources. This includes impacts from the growth of California's Central Valley, potential development of a solar plant, and other uses adjoining the Monument.

1.5.4 Grazing Lease Renewals

Concerns have been raised that the grazing lease renewals should not be completed for lands within the Monument until the RMP is completed. Otherwise the new leases may not reflect the management direction of the new plan. BLM has been given a timeframe by Congress of October 2009 to complete grazing lease renewals. The draft CPNM RMP will be released for public comment in the beginning of calendar year 2009. However, the final RMP and Record of Decision will not be completed until approximately 1 year later and BLM does not have the discretion to delay the congressionally imposed deadline for grazing lease renewal. All grazing leases must meet the objectives of the RMP guiding management of an area. Therefore, if necessary, grazing leases within the CPNM would be amended upon completion of the RMP so that they conform to the new plan's goals and objectives.

1.5.5 Adequacy of Budget to Implement RMP

Members of the public have expressed concern that the BLM may not be able to implement the objectives and actions within the RMP due to budget constraints, and have questioned how the plan will take budget issues into account. The RMP alternatives are developed based on an optimal but reasonable assessment of the level of management that needs to be provided to protect the objects of the Monument Proclamation while allowing for compatible uses. However, the RMP is not a budget document, and alternative development is not based on specific funding projections. As stated in Section 1.9, below, a strategy will be developed upon RMP completion that outlines priorities and opportunities for implementing plan actions. The level and speed of implementation will be based on numerous factors including the availability of both BLM and partnership funding, and specific policy and regulatory direction that guides budget priorities (for example, threatened and endangered species protection).

1.5.6 Planning for Lands Adjoining the Monument and Expansion of Monument Boundaries

Enlarging or reducing the Monument boundary can only be accomplished by a congressional act or presidential proclamation and not through the RMP process. Therefore, boundary changes are not within the scope of this planning effort. This RMP only addresses lands within the Monument boundary. The BLM policy to develop stand-alone RMPs for specially designated areas such as the CPNM allows these plans to specifically address the special protective requirements of the designation. BLM lands adjoining the Monument will be addressed in the Bakersfield RMP revision that is currently underway. The Bakersfield RMP will consider opportunities to manage adjoining lands in a manner that complements the goals of the CPNM.

1.5.7 Air to Ground Gunnery Range

Fifteen sections of BLM and private land (approximately 9,600 acres) in the northern part of the Monument were withdrawn during World War II for use as the Soda Lake Air to Ground Gunnery Range from 1943 to 1947. The withdrawn lands were transferred back to BLM by the military. BLM has since acquired the private lands so that the entire range is now on public lands. The range included 3 targets in the 15 sections and, as with all former ranges, there is a potential for unexploded ordnance or chemical contamination.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted two on-site surveys of the range, first in 1996 to look for ordnance, and again in September 2007 to sample for chemical contamination. To date, the Army Corps of Engineers has not identified any unexploded ordnance. The Final Site Inspection Report Former Soda Lake Air-To-Ground Gunnery Range, San Luis, Obispo, California (FUDS project No. J09CA063201) chemical analysis showed soil and percolates contamination. Since these contaminants were found on

federal lands, they are handled under the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act* (CERCLA), and the Department of the Army is the responsible party.

The chemical analysis reported contaminants exceeding screening criteria as detailed by the Department of the Army's report. None of these chemical concentrations are immediately hazardous to the public. If there were hazards or new hazards are identified, appropriate actions would immediately be taken based on BLM and military policy. These could include, but are not limited to, closure of hazard area, public information program dissemination, removal of hazard, or other response.

The next step triggered in the clean-up process is the Army's conducting a remedial investing/feasibility study, since the report shows an absence of any observed munitions and explosives of concern. Because of the relatively low sensitivity of the ammunitions site, a removal action is not warranted at this time. This separate, on-going, and continuous process to make the area safe for the public is governed by CERCLA and is outside the scope of the RMP.

1.6 Planning Criteria

Planning criteria identify the legal, policy, and regulatory constraints that direct or provide parameters for BLM to address planning issues and themes. They also help guide the development of alternatives and the selection of the preferred alternative. Planning criteria are based on standards prescribed by applicable laws and regulations; agency guidance; analysis of information pertinent to the planning area; the result of coordination with the public, government agencies, and Native American tribes; and professional judgment. The initial CPNM RMP planning criteria were presented at the scoping meetings for public input, and were also reviewed and revised based on input at subsequent Monument Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings.

- The plan decisions will recognize the CPNM's primary importance as habitat for threatened and endangered species, rare natural communities, species recovery, and regional conservation.
- The plan will recognize the uniqueness of the CPNM as a significant undeveloped portion of the once vast San Joaquin Valley ecosystem, which is of crucial importance and provides the context for management.
- The plan will identify core geographic areas for endangered species population management and recovery. Within these core areas, endangered species habitat will be a primary management priority relative to other resources and uses.
- The plan will recognize the importance of restoring and maintaining a mosaic of natural communities and successional stages to benefit the biodiversity inherent in the ecosystem. Plan decisions will emphasize an increase of native and indigenous species.
- The planning process will involve Native American tribal governments and federally unrecognized Indian groups, councils, and families representative of the cultural region to provide strategies for protecting known traditional uses, cultural sites, and sacred places.
- Public uses will foster an appreciation of and be consistent with the requirements of the Monument Proclamation to protect the objects of geological, archaeological, historical, and biological value within the Monument.
- BLM will continue to work cooperatively with CPNM managing partners (CDFG and TNC), the MAC, the Native American Advisory Committee, other agencies of the State of California, San Luis Obispo and Kern Counties, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and other interested groups, agencies, and individuals. Public participation will be encouraged throughout the process.

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- The RMP will continue to promote an already strong program of scientific research and resource monitoring on the Monument.
- The RMP will recognize the state's responsibility to manage hunting within the Monument.
- The RMP will recognize valid and existing rights within the Monument. However, these rights will be regulated to protect the objects of the Monument Proclamation.

1.7 Planning Process

BLM uses an ongoing planning process to ensure that land use plans and implementation decisions remain consistent with applicable laws, regulations, orders, and policies. This process involves public participation, assessment, decision-making, implementation, plan monitoring, and evaluation, as well as adjustment through maintenance, amendment, and revision. This process allows for continuous adjustments to respond to new issues and changed circumstances.

BLM makes decisions using the best information available. These decisions may be modified as BLM acquires new information and knowledge of new circumstances relevant to land and resource values, uses, and environmental concerns. Modifying land use plans through maintenance and amendment on a regular basis should reduce the need for major revisions of land use plans.

Development of the CPNM RMP constitutes a major federal action and is therefore subject to the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) of 1969 and FLPMA. NEPA requires federal agencies to consider and disclose environmental consequences of actions, and to consider alternatives, so as to protect and enhance the environment through well-informed federal decisions. The President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500–1508), including provisions on the content and procedural aspects of the required environmental analysis. The most comprehensive level of analysis is the EIS, which is the level being applied to the CPNM RMP. Development of the alternatives considered in this RMP, and assessment of their effects, is required by NEPA. This document is a joint RMP/EIS and fulfills NEPA requirements, CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA, and the requirements of BLM's NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1.

Within the Carrizo Plain, there was a long history of ongoing public involvement and support in the acquisition of lands and management of the area before it was formally designated as a National Monument. As stated above, the Monument Proclamation recognizes this existing planning history. The initial Notice of Intent for the current planning process was published in the Federal Register on April 24, 2002. A revised Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on March 2, 2007, when the planning effort was changed from an EA to an EIS level of analysis. The joint CPNM RMP development and EIS process involves the following steps:

- **Scoping** – The scoping process is intended to identify issues and concerns from the public, other agencies, and organizations to frame the scope of the RMP and environmental analysis. A formal scoping period for the CPNM RMP was held from April 12 to June 12, 2007. The results of this process are contained in the scoping report, which is available on the web at http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield/Programs/planning/cpnm_rmp.html
- **Draft RMP development** – This document is the product of an interdisciplinary team effort to develop and analyze an array of potential alternatives for management of the CPNM that address the issues identified in scoping, the direction in the Monument Proclamation, and other laws and policies. The EIS also includes an analysis and comparison of impacts associated with implementing each of

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the various management alternatives. This process included several opportunities (in addition to the scoping period) for public input through the MAC. After each of these meetings, BLM incorporated recommendations from the MAC into the RMP. Similarly, the Native American Advisory Council was briefed and input was incorporated into the draft. More detail on these two advisory groups is provided in Section 1.19, below.

- **Public comment on the draft RMP** – The 90-day public comment period on the Draft RMP EIS gives the public an opportunity to review the draft RMP and provide input on the alternatives and associated environmental analysis. The comment process is described in more detail in the letter from the Bakersfield Field Manager at the beginning of this document.
- **Development of Proposed RMP / Final EIS** – The interdisciplinary planning team reviews public, agency, and organization comments on the Draft RMP EIS and incorporate changes into the Proposed RMP / Final EIS. This document also includes a response to public comments, identifying how they were addressed in the analysis and whether they resulted in any changes to the document.
- **Publish Proposed RMP / Final EIS** – The Proposed RMP / Final EIS is published with a 30-day public protest period. The protest procedures in 43 CFR 1610.5-2 provide the public an administrative remedy for the State Director’s proposed RMP decisions. The BLM Director determines through this process whether the State Director followed established procedure, considered relevant information in reaching proposed decisions, and whether the proposed decisions are consistent with BLM policy, regulation, and statute. The proposed RMP also goes through a Governor’s consistency determination to help ensure that it is consistent with relevant state plans and policies.
- **Publish approved RMP and Record of Decision** – This is the final step of the RMP process. If changes were made to the plan as a result of any protests, they are incorporated into the Record of Decision that is signed by the California State Director. Plan implementation can then begin.

Land management is, by nature, a dynamic, cyclic, and adaptive process. This is particularly true for habitat management, especially for threatened and endangered species, of which the Monument is host to one of the largest concentrations on public lands in the United States. The managing partners recognize that this plan must be able to adapt to changing circumstances such as new research findings, new laws, changing environmental factors, and increasing public demand. For this reason, many of the proposed management actions in this plan have adaptive management components built into them. The adaptive management process is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

BLM policy requires the preparation of an RMP implementation strategy once the final plan is approved. This strategy establishes timeframes, priorities, and budget needs to successfully implement the plan. The strategy focuses on a 3- to 5-year horizon and is updated as needed. BLM encourages public, agency, and other partner involvement in the development of these strategies.

During implementation of the RMP, additional documentation may be required to comply with NEPA, such as EAs for site-specific actions. All such documents would be prepared with the appropriate level of public input. RMP decision implementation is monitored to ensure successful results and to incorporate adaptive management components. Amendments or revisions to the RMP would be completed as needed to accommodate changes in resource or user needs, policies, or regulations.

1.8 Collaboration

1.8.1 Cooperating Agencies

A cooperating agency assists the lead federal agency in developing an EA or EIS. The CEQ regulations implementing NEPA define a cooperating agency as any agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise for proposals covered by NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6). Any federal, state, or local government jurisdiction or tribal government with such qualifications may become a cooperating agency by agreement with the lead agency. BLM approached the USFWS regarding cooperating agency status. While the USFWS has been involved in the development of the draft RMP, the agency has chosen not to become a formal cooperating agency. The CDFG, a managing partner of the CPNM, has established cooperating agency status.

Kern County and San Luis Obispo County, the two counties within which the CPNM lies, have not established cooperating agency status, but have members representing them on the MAC. Also, the State Historic Preservation Office was notified of the planning process and formal consultation is ongoing.

1.8.2 Managing Partners

BLM's managing partners for the CPNM are CDFG and TNC. The Secretary of the Interior recognized that the managing partnership was key to the successful acquisition and restoration of much of the land that now encompasses the Monument. After the President signed the Monument Proclamation, the Secretary provided direction that BLM continue working with the managing partners in administering the area and update the Memorandum of Understanding guiding this collaborative relationship (see Appendix B, Secretary and BLM Direction for Monument Management). TNC has been instrumental in convening a science review team established to garner independent reviews for scientific proposals and answering scientific questions on the monument.

This project has become a model for other efforts within BLM, and the partners will continue to collaborate on management and planning for the Monument. Final decisions regarding management actions on each of the partner's lands still rest with the respective agency/organization.

1.8.3 Carrizo Plain National Monument Advisory Committee

The Secretary of the Interior directed BLM to establish a formal advisory committee, whose purpose is to advise BLM on management of the Monument. The MAC has been an integral part of the draft RMP process, serving as a conduit for additional public input and advising BLM during preparation of the document. Committee duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- Develop recommendations for BLM regarding the development, revision, and implementation of the management plan for the Monument.
- Advise BLM on data needs, the use of science, management actions, and work priorities needed to protect the objects of the Monument.
- Advise BLM on opportunities to work collaboratively with others; on developing and working with external partners; on the use of volunteers; and on opportunities for environmental education, resource interpretation, and other outreach needs.

Members of the committee are to include the following representatives (see Chapter 5 for a list of committee members):

- The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors

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- The Kern County Board of Supervisors
- The Carrizo Native American Advisory Committee
- The Central California Resource Advisory Council
- Individuals or companies authorized to graze livestock within the Monument
- Four members selected from, but not limited to, the following groups or organizations: dispersed recreational community; mechanized recreational community; academia, to represent educators with experience in a variety of sciences; recognized environmental or resource conservation organizations; minerals and energy resources community; cultural resource representative, either locally or regionally; and/or private landowners adjacent to the Monument.

1.8.4 Collaboration with Native American Groups

A charter agreement with the Carrizo Native American Advisory Committee was previously established to be inclusive of all Native American groups consisting of Chumash, Salinan, and Yokuts affiliations having regional cultural ties to the land in the Monument. Native American groups have a long history of collaboration with BLM in planning and managing cultural resources within the Monument and have played an integral role in development of this RMP. A letter inviting participation in the planning process was sent on June 19, 2007 to the Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians, Santa Rosa Rancheria, and Tule River Reservation. Personal telephone invitations were also extended. Consultation will continue throughout the RMP process.

1.9 Related Plans and Policies Guiding Area Management

BLM planning regulations require that RMPs be consistent with resource-related plans of other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Native American tribes, so long as those plans are also consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands. Other agencies' plans relevant to the CPNM planning area include the San Luis Obispo, Kern, and Santa Barbara County General Plans. Other agency plans/programs include the following:

- **Biological opinions from the USFWS** – Caliente RMP Biological Opinion dated March 31, 1997 (Number 1-1-97-F-64); Carrizo Plain Natural Area Biological Opinion dated February 1, 1996 (Number 1-1-95-F-149); and the Carrizo Plain Natural Area Grazing Biological Opinion dated July 5, 1994 (Number 1-1-93-F-70).
- **USFWS recovery plans for endangered species** – Recovery Plan for the California Condor, 1996; Recovery Plan for Upland Species for the San Joaquin Valley, 1998; and the Recovery Plan for the Kern Primrose Sphinx Moth, 1984.
- **Relationship to BLM programs** – BLM has established the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) to protect some of the nation's most remarkable and rugged landscapes. The system includes national conservation areas, national monuments, wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national scenic and historic trails. The CPNM is included in the NLCS.
- **Additional policy guidance** – Several documents were used as guidance for this RMP. They include but are not limited to the BLM Planning Handbook H-1601-1; BLM Handbook H-8550-1, Interim Management Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review; BLM Handbook H-8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory; and BLM Manual 8100, Cultural Resources Management.

There is a broad range of federal laws and regulations that guide development of this RMP, including the following:

Chapter 1: PURPOSE AND NEED

- *Antiquities Act* of 1906
- *Taylor Grazing Act* of 1934, as amended
- Federal grazing regulations at 43 CFR 4100
- *Wilderness Act* of 1964
- *National Historic Preservation Act* of 1966, as amended
- *National Environmental Policy Act* of 1969
- *Federal Land Policy Management Act* of 1976 (BLM Organic Act), as amended
- *Endangered Species Act* of 1973, as amended
- *American Indian Religious Freedom Act* of 1978
- *Archaeological Resources Protection Act* of 1979, as amended
- *Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions Act* of 1996 (P.L. 104-134) (Recreational Fee Demonstration Program)
- 43 CFR 1610 (BLM planning guidance)
- Federal Register 68(151) 46684-46867 (Final Rule for designating critical habitat for vernal pool fairy shrimp and longhorn fairy shrimp)
- Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. This RMP incorporates the *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management* developed by the Central California Resource Advisory Council and approved by the BLM California State Director and the Secretary of the Interior on July 13, 2000. The RMP includes objectives that are more site-specific and focused on specific aspects of the Monument Proclamation and CPNM ecosystem. However, all of these objectives meet or exceed the Rangeland Health Standards.
- U.S. Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3270, Technical Guide, signed March 9, 2007 by Dirk Kempthorne (provides policy guidance and procedure for implementing adaptive management).
- *Energy Policy Act* of 2005

Additional legal and policy guidance is provided in Chapters 2 and 3, and in the Appendices of this document.

1.10 Monument Mission and Vision

The Mission is the guiding principle for management of the CPNM and will not change significantly over time. The Vision provides for management strategies that will help accomplish the Mission. Both the Mission and Vision were developed to be consistent with the January 2001 Presidential Proclamation that established the CPNM. The Proclamation cited the following as the purpose of the CPNM: protect the largest undeveloped remnant of San Joaquin Valley grassland ecosystem, providing for the long-term conservation of the endemic plant and animal species; a refuge for endangered, threatened and rare plant and animal species, as well as important populations of pronghorn antelope and tule elk; Soda Lake, the largest remaining alkali wetland in Southern California; geologic processes and the San Andreas fault; significant fossil assemblages; and archaeological and cultural resources.

Mission

The mission within the CPNM is to protect and enhance the indigenous species and natural communities, within a dynamic and fully functioning ecosystem; conserve the unique geologic, paleontologic, and cultural resources; and provide opportunities for compatible scientific, cultural, educational, and recreational activities.

Vision

The vision is to cooperatively employ management strategies that conserve the integrity of the CPNM as an ecological system and natural landscape with its full array of natural and cultural features.

The management of the CPNM should protect and enhance the full spectrum of physical and chemical processes necessary to support indigenous species, biological diversity, and ecological function and processes within the natural range of variation.

1.11 Organization of This Document

This Draft RMP EIS is composed of the following sections:

- Chapter 1– Purpose and Need.
- Chapter 2 – Alternatives lists four management alternatives for each major resource or program area in the CPNM. The agency’s preferred alternative is identified as well.
- Chapter 3 – Affected Environment provides a description and analysis of the current environmental conditions and management practices in the CPNM.
- Chapter 4 – Environmental Consequences presents an analysis of the effects, both beneficial and adverse, of implementation of the management goals, objectives, and actions for each of the identified alternatives.
- Chapter 5 – Coordination and Consultation describes the processes of gathering public input and consulting with other agencies and jurisdictions during the development of this RMP. It also includes a schedule for public review and comment on the Draft RMP EIS and a list of preparers of this document.
- Chapter 6 – References.
- Acronyms and Glossary.
- Appendices are included that support the analyses and conclusions of the planning process.

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