

SR 95, Relocation Study; I-40 to SR68 Corridor Location Report and Environmental Overview *BLM Kingman RMP compatibility*



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The purpose of this memo is to more specifically address potential conflicts between a proposed SR95 realignment and the Kingman Resource Area Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP) published September 1993.

This issue was raised several times during the course of the study and has been generally answered that any SR95 realignment corridor to the east of the currently developed Colorado River Corridor will be inconsistent with the RMP. This is because such a major transportation corridor is neither planned for nor considered in that document. While true, a more specific accounting is desired. The following memo is based on the RMP Record of Decision dated March 07, 1995 and the RMP. This memo will follow the presentation of decision topics in the ROD.

Minerals

The decision is non-specific in its determination of precisely where mineral withdraws will occur. It can be stated at this time that any of the corridors will consume some of the areas potentially available for withdraw. Additionally, it can be stated that corridor alternative segments C and D have a greater potential to reduce of the area available for mineral withdraw, especially locatable minerals, based on proximity of prior mining operations. However, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Lands

All corridors will segment BLM properties and are therefore in conflict with this decision. Corridors located nearer the western BLM property limits would be in less conflict because the degree of segmentation would be less.

Watershed (Soil, Water, and Air) Resources

Any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Vegetative Products Management

No vegetative products currently harvested are within the study limits. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Rangeland Management

The majority of the BLM property within the study area is closed to grazing. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Cultural Resources

Five areas are identified as significant cultural resources in the RMP. They include the Carrow and Stephens Ranch, Grand Wash Cliffs and plains below, the Black Mountains in Mohave County, Wright and Cottonwood creeks and surrounding watersheds, and Burro Creek. Of these, only the Black Mountains in Mohave County are in the proximity of this study. Since the Black Mountains form the eastern edge of the study limits, no direct conflicts with this decision are anticipated.

This statement is not intended to suggest that other significant cultural resources will not be identified in the NEPA process. It only addresses consistency with the RMP ROD decisions regarding specific cultural properties and areas set aside for cultural resource protection. Indirect impacts from secondary development, increased access and visitor use, visual impacts, and related concerns on Native American cultural resources may result from the construction of any alternative. Eastern-most alternatives would have the greatest potential for these secondary effects.

Recreation Management

Six special recreation management areas have been identified in the RMP. They include Joshua Tree Forest/Grand Wash Cliffs, Kingman Regional Park, Historic Route 66, Hualapai Mountain, Carrow-Stephens Historic Ranches, and Burrow Creek. Of these, only Historic Route 66 is within the Study Limits. Any proposed corridor will be in conflict with this decision.

However, Route 66 will likely require mitigation as a historic resource that will accommodate the recreational resource requirements. Impacts to this resource will be assessed in consultation with the BLM and the State Historic Preservation Office in accordance with provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Mitigation based on the assessment will also incorporate measures to address the Special Recreation Management Status of this resource per NEPA.

Wilderness Management

Since the Warm Springs and Mount Nutt Wilderness areas form the eastern edge of the study limits, and all corridors under consideration lie outside its boundaries, no conflicts with this decision are anticipated.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

The following is a listing of potentially eligible wild and scenic rivers from Table 2 of the RMP:

- Burrow Creek (Segments A, B, C, D, E)
- Francis Creek
- Big Sandy River (Segments A, B)
- Bill Williams River (Segments A, B)
- Santa Maria River (Segments A, B)
- Wright Creek

None of these resources are within the study limits. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Wildlife Habitat Management

Designated wildlife movement corridors closest to the project area cross SR68 and are within the northern boundaries of the study limits. None of the corridors should affect existing crossings. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Special Status Species Management

Endangered and candidate species for which ACEC's are proposed include Arizona cliffrose, white margined penstemon, Hualapai Mexican vole, Sonoran Desert tortoise, bald eagle and a cadre of native southwestern fishes. None of the ACEC's established by the approval of the RMP are affected by any of the corridors. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

This statement is not intended to suggest that none of these or other endangered or candidate species will be affected by a proposed realignment corridor. The study has documented significant habitat for the Sonoran Desert tortoise within the study limits. All corridors but Alternative D will impact some of it's habitat. It only addresses consistency with the relevant RMP ROD decision.

Riparian Area Management

Proposed riparian management areas are outside the study limits. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Hazardous Materials Management

No known hazardous materials exist within proposed corridors. Some existing and previous land uses may result in hazardous materials sites not currently identified. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Management

The entire study area is within the Black Mountain Herd Management Area. Therefore all alternatives are directly in conflict with this decision.

Wildfire Management

Any corridors would provide better access to BLM properties for ground response vehicles. Therefore, any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Resource Access Travel Management

The goal of this decision is to reduce the amount of roads within the BLM. Therefore all alternatives are directly in conflict with this decision.

Support Services

Any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Law Enforcement

Any realignment corridor appears to be consistent with this decision.

Special Management Areas

Twelve Areas of critical environmental concern are identified in the RMP. They include Joshua Tree Forest, Black Mountains, Hualapai Mountain, White Margined Penstemon, Wright and Cottonwood Creek, Carrow-Stephens Ranch, McCracken, Aubrey Peak, Burro Creek, Clay Hills, Three Rivers, and Poachie ACECs. Of these, only the Black Mountains in Mohave County are in the proximity of this study. Since the Black Mountains form the eastern edge of the study limits, and all alternatives lie outside its boundaries, no conflicts with this decision are anticipated.

Visual Resource Management Classes

Visual resource management classes are depicted on Map 19 of the RMP. All corridors will encounter class II, III, and IV visual resource management (VRM) areas. All northern corridor segments lie primarily in class III VRM designations. The northern end of the central corridors lie within a class II VRM zone. The majority of the central corridors are designated class IV. The southern end of the corridors again encounter class III VRM designation. All corridors will be in class II designated areas as they cross the Sacramento wash. Any build alternative will be required to mitigate visual resource impacts as identified later in the NEPA process to maintain consistency with the RMP.

Conclusion

The study has recognized many environmental concerns throughout its development. Some are included in the RMP. Although the project is generally not in conflict with most of the KRMP decisions, it is in direct conflict with several. These include *Land, Recreation Management, Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Management, and Resource Access Travel Management* decisions. This is not to say that these conflicts cannot be minimized or mitigated, however it does not appear that any realignment corridor could avoid all conflicts with the RMP ROD decisions.