

## **Program Specific and General Resource Management Plans Evaluation Questions**

### **Air Quality:**

1. Does the Resource Management Plan (RMP) identify air quality standards and provide management practices to achieve them?
2. Based upon the information available have air quality standards being met? If not, what management actions or mitigation measures are prescribed?
3. Does the RMP recognize the authority of the State of Arizona, or other delegated authority to regulate air quality impacts and establish emission standards?
4. Does the RMP identify existing non-attainment areas, State Implementation Plans (SIPs), and measures/actions to meet general conformity requirements with SIPs?

### **Climate Change:**

1. If approved after January 2009, does the RMP recognize the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Air Quality Manual (MS7300) and adequately assess climate change as required by Secretarial Order 3289-1 and Departmental Manual 523 DM1? If not, explain.
2. Does the RMP analysis address climate change effects on natural resources? Explain.
3. Does the RMP analysis address greenhouse gas emissions for affected resource programs?
4. Does the RMP address Regional Mitigation or identify a mitigation strategy as it pertains to climate change adaptation (SO 3330 October 2013)?

### **Soils:**

1. Are problem areas in which uses are restricted by low soil productivity, limited water quality, etc. identified in the RMP?
2. Are soil survey data described and used to assess the suitability/capability of landscapes to achieve RMP objectives?
3. Are soil survey data used to set priorities for restoration/rehabilitation and to guide development of site-specific prescriptions?
4. Are soil survey data used to identify erosion hazards or erodible classes throughout the planning area?

### **Water Resources:**

1. Does the RMP discuss water quality, water quantity, and current or foreseeable beneficial uses in the planning area?
2. Do inventoried water sources demonstrate available water for proposed uses (wildlife, recreation, wild horse and burros, etc.)?
3. Are there any impaired water bodies in the planning area identified on the State of Arizona's list (303d)? Are any impaired water bodies linked to public land use?
4. Does the RMP identify area wide use restrictions and/or Best Management Practices (BMPs) to meet water quality requirements?
5. Does the RMP set objectives for the restoration of identified impaired waters?
6. Does the RMP identify BLM water rights policy, voluntary conformance with State water law, and provisions to perfect sufficient water rights to meet land management activities (BLM Manual 7250)?

**Vegetation:**

1. Does the RMP identify appropriate desired future conditions (or goals and objectives) for important vegetation communities?
2. Does the RMP identify characteristics of healthy vegetation communities? Are these characteristics used to design monitoring to assess health of those communities?
3. Does the RMP adequately identify areas where commercial and/or non-commercial vegetation product harvesting is open, restricted or closed?
4. Does the RMP contain strategies to conserve threatened or endangered and special status plant species, including listed species and species proposed for listing? Are there new species that need to be considered since the RMP was completed?
5. Are the RMP decisions consistent with objectives and recommended actions in recovery plans, conservation agreements, and applicable biological opinions for threatened and endangered species?
6. Do RMP decisions support Healthy Landscapes, or similar landscape restoration activities?
7. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve management of vegetation?
8. Does the RMP adequately provide management direction to address the introduction and spread of noxious and invasive species?

**Riparian:**

1. Are riparian Desired Future Conditions (DFCs) or goals and objectives being achieved as shown by PFC surveys?
2. Are management actions prescribed in the RMP sufficient to meet DFCs (Actions may also be described under other management areas such as vegetation, soils, sensitive species, etc.)?
3. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve management of riparian areas?

**Fish and Wildlife, and Threatened/Endangered and Special Status Species:**

1. Does the plan designate priority species and habitats? Are those designations still appropriate? If not, explain.
2. Does the plan provide for Special Areas such as Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), etc.?
3. Are there management plans or prescriptions in place for priority habitats?
4. Are there adequate decisions and management actions in the RMP to maintain habitat continuity (minimize fragmentation) and connectivity (maintain movement between habitat areas)?
5. Does the RMP identify appropriate management actions and area-wide use restrictions needed to achieve desired population and habitat conditions while maintaining a thriving natural ecological balance? If not, explain.
6. Are RMP decisions consistent with the supporting Biological Assessments, Biological Opinions, and Recovery Plans? If not, explain.

7. Are there activity plans (be they Habitat Management Plans or ACEC plans, for example) relating to Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species that have not been implemented? If so, explain why.
8. Have new species been listed, or new critical habitat for listed species been designated since development of the RMP? If so, has consultation been completed on these species?
9. Have the results of Section 7 consultations, such as mandatory terms and conditions, been implemented?
10. Has plan conformance been completed on any conservation measures or terms and conditions resulting from Section 7 consultations?
11. Have recovery plans been completed for T&E species since finalization of the RMP?
12. Are there impacts to T&E species on public lands not anticipated when the RMP was finalized?
13. Are other management plans/strategies such as the Desert Tortoise Rangewide Plan and Arizona Implementation Strategy being implemented through the RMP?
14. Are prescriptions or objectives identified in RMP for special status species being implemented? If not, explain.
15. Are there impacts to special status species on public lands not anticipated at the time of RMP finalization?
16. Does the RMP provide adequate direction to protect migratory birds?
17. Are desired plant community objectives adequately described to meet the habitat needs of listed and special status species?
18. Is management direction contained in current guidance documents adequately addressed in the RMP (e.g. Migratory Bird Treaty Act Executive Order 13186, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Revised 6840 Manual)?
19. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve wildlife management?

**Wild Horses and Burros:**

1. Are Herd Area boundaries identified in the RMP? If so, are they still adequate (does the boundary correctly portray where wild horses and burros were found in 1971)?
2. Are the boundaries of the Herd Management Areas identified in the RMP appropriate?
3. Does the RMP identify an initial estimated herd size that could be managed to achieve a thriving ecological balance and allow multiple use of the area? Does the RMP contain guidelines and criteria for adjusting herd size when needed?
4. Does the RMP identify the need to prepare Herd Management Plans (HMPs) that will establish Appropriate Management Levels and a population range within which the herd size may fluctuate? Have HMPs been completed?
5. Does the RMP identify area-wide restrictions needed to achieve objectives? Have these been implemented? Are they effective?

### **Native American Concerns and Coordination:**

1. Have Native Americans identified new issues or concerns that need to be addressed through land use plan decisions, e.g., (a) protection of sacred sites or needs for access to them, (b) need for protection or use of areas for gathering plants for traditional purposes such as medicinal plants or basketry materials, (c) restricting certain kinds of land uses adjacent to reservation boundaries that may be incompatible with existing or proposed tribal land uses or tribal land use plans. If so, explain.
2. Are places of traditional cultural importance to Native Americans, including sacred sites, adequately addressed? Does the RMP discuss such areas, or state that none have been identified by tribes? If such places have been identified, does the plan prescribe actions appropriate to their protection and use? Are the prescribed actions achieving their objectives?
3. Have new issues or resources been identified, especially in newly acquired lands, that call for additional potential ACECs to be evaluated for possible designation through RMP amendment, e.g., new discoveries of important cultural resources; or Native American traditional use areas such as plant gathering locations?

### **Indian Trust Resources:**

1. Does the RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) adequately address impacts on Indian trust resources through one of the following: (a) by explaining what Indian trust resources are and clearly stating that they were considered, but would not be affected by any actions analyzed in the plan, or (b) by containing a separate analysis of impacts to Indian trust resources that identifies any potential effects on them, explicitly addresses those effects, states the rationale for the recommended decision, and explains how the decision will be consistent with the Department's trust responsibility.

### **Cultural Resources:**

1. Are all classes of cultural properties, both known and projected to occur, allocated to one or more of the use categories defined in Manual 8110?
2. Are management decisions about individual cultural properties being made in reference to, and consistent with, the uses to which the properties have been allocated?
3. Is there a need to change any use allocations based on new information, public demand, or research needs?
4. Have new opportunities come to light for using cultural properties for scientific, educational, recreational, traditional, or experimental purposes, or for conserving unique properties for the future, that are not addressed in the RMP?
5. Are there areas containing important cultural resources that should be considered for special designation, i.e., National Register, National Historic Landmark, or ACEC, that were not adequately considered in the RMP?
6. Is there new information indicating areas of important cultural resources that should be considered for acquisition?
7. Is there any cultural property that should be identified in the RMP as not suitable for disposal; not subject to uses which would alter its setting, integrity, or present use; and/or not subject to mitigation through destructive means (e.g., data recovery)?
8. Are additional inventories or consultations needed to provide the data necessary to address these questions?

9. Does the RMP contain a separate section on managing National Historic Trails (NHT) as specified by Manual 6280?
10. Does the RMP establish NHT management corridors or address how such corridors will be established in the future?
11. Does the RMP fully address land use applications that may affect cultural resources?
12. Do area or route designations in the RMP address cultural resource needs and protection?

**Paleontological Resources:**

1. Does the RMP identify area-wide criteria or site-specific use restrictions to ensure that:  
a) Areas containing, or likely to contain, vertebrate or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils are identified and evaluated prior to authorizing surface disturbing activities; (b) management recommendations are developed to promote the scientific, educational, and recreational uses of fossils; and (c) threats to paleontological resources are identified and mitigated as appropriate.
2. Does the RMP identify appropriate protection measures and scientific, educational and recreational use opportunities for paleontological localities?
3. Do area or route designations in the RMP address paleontological resource needs and protection?

**Visual Resource Management:**

1. Were VRM classes allocated in the RMP? Do they reflect current resource demand and public sensitivity to visual change?
2. Are the constraints imposed by the VRM classes appropriate for protecting visual values while managing development? Explain.
3. Are the VRM data/maps from the RMP easily accessed and readily available to assist with questions of RMP conformance?
4. If the VRI and VRM data are in GIS, do they conform to the national data standard?
5. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve management of visual resources management?

**Fire & Fuels:**

1. Was the “Arizona LUP Amendment for Fire, Fuels, and Air Quality Management” incorporated into the RMP? This Amendment was completed in 2004 and amended 6 RMPs (Phoenix, Kingman, Arizona Strip, Safford, Yuma and Lower Gila South) and one MFP (Lower Gila North).
2. Do the current RMP decisions meet the requirements of the National Wildland Fire Policy? If not, explain.
3. Do the fire management decisions consider firefighter and public safety, benefits and values to be protected, strategies that result in minimum suppression costs?
4. Does the RMP provide appropriate objectives and management actions for use of unplanned ignitions and hazardous fuel treatments?
5. Does the RMP identify geographic areas suitable and unsuitable for the use of wildland fire from unplanned ignitions to meet resource objectives? If so, are these areas still appropriate?
6. Do the management actions to achieve the fire management goals and objectives, conflict with the goals and objectives for vegetation, wildlife and other resources? If so, explain.

7. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve management of the Arizona fire program?

**Special Area Designations (ACECs, Back Country Byways, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Trails, National Landmarks, Lands with Wilderness Characteristics):**

1. Does the RMP set appropriate Desired Future Conditions (DFC) or goals and objectives for Special Area Designations? If not, explain.
2. Are monitoring studies and adaptive management practices and triggers in place to assess and respond to changing conditions in areas with special designations?
3. Where there is overlap between special management designations and other management allocations, are the management objectives consistent? This could include an ACEC overlapping an SRMA, or other various management allocations within a single management area.
4. Since the Statewide Wild and Scenic River Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was completed, has new information or changes in stream condition changed what should be recommended?
5. Are there other streams or tributaries that should be reviewed for eligibility?
6. For public lands along streams identified as potentially suitable for inclusion the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, have interim management measures been established and implemented? If not, explain. If so, are they adequately protecting the WSR suitability?
7. If the RMP says that activity plans will be developed for Wild and Scenic Rivers, Lands with Wilderness Characteristics, SRMAs, Back Country Byways, National Historic or Scenic Trails, etc., have these plans been completed? If so list the name of the plan and date it was completed.

**Areas of Critical Environmental Concern:**

1. If the RMP calls for the preparation of separate ACEC management plans, have these plans been written and are the management prescriptions being implemented?
2. Are existing ACEC management prescriptions adequately protecting the resources for which the areas were designated?
3. Have new issues or resources been identified, especially in newly acquired lands, that call for additional potential ACECs to be evaluated for possible designation through an RMP amendment, e.g., new discoveries of important cultural resources; or Native American traditional use areas such as plant gathering locations?

**Wilderness and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics:**

1. Does the RMP set appropriate DFC or clear goals and objectives for designated Wilderness and lands with wilderness characteristics? If not, explain. Are the goals and objectives being met? Explain.
2. Are monitoring studies and adaptive management practices and triggers in place to assess and respond to changing conditions in designated Wilderness and lands with wilderness characteristics?
3. Has the wilderness characteristics inventory been updated since the original inventory? If so, are there new areas that exhibit characteristics of wilderness where it would be appropriate to manage for those characteristics?

4. Are there new RMP decisions, or changes to current RMP decisions that would improve management of wilderness or areas exhibiting characteristics of wilderness?
5. Is there designated wilderness in the planning area? If so, has a wilderness management plan been completed?

**Forestry:**

1. Does the RMP identify desired future conditions for health and distribution of forest and woodland types found in the planning area?
2. Are the management actions and best management practices appropriate for meeting the goals and objectives?
3. Does the RMP identify resources available for woodland product harvest and identify appropriate sustainable harvest levels?
4. Does the RMP identify areas where commercial and/or non-commercial harvesting is open, restricted or withdrawn from commercial activities?

**Livestock Grazing Management:**

1. Does the RMP identify lands available or not available for livestock grazing? Have changes occurred, or are changes needed, in the identification of these lands since the RMP was completed? If so, explain.
2. For areas identified as available for grazing, does the RMP identify the amount of existing forage available for livestock (expressed in animal unit months)?
3. Is the classification for allotments appropriate? (perennial-ephemeral, ephemeral only)?
4. Does the RMP identify selective management categories (Improve, Maintain, and Custodial)? If so, do the selective management categories still reflect current resource conditions? For instance do recent designations of Critical Habitat for T&E species now include allotments that are classified as custodial?
5. Are modifications to existing management actions or new management actions needed to support land health standards?
6. Does the RMP incorporate the Standards for Healthy Public Lands and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management? If so, does the RMP apply the standards to all resource programs?

**Recreation:**

1. Are all public lands clearly designated as SRMAs, ERMAs, or public lands not designated as recreation management areas? Are those designations still valid? List the RMAs.
2. Does the RMP identify recreation opportunity spectrum classes or setting characteristics and/or recreation management zones? If so, are those still valid?
3. Does the RMP include adequate management objectives for the specific recreation opportunities to be produced?
4. Does the RMP identify the allowable types and level of land uses to sustain recreational values? List any limitations or restrictions on land uses to maintain recreational values. Are these restrictions still appropriate?
5. Does the RMP identify the allowable kinds and levels of recreational use to sustain other resource values in the planning area? List any limitations or restrictions on recreational activities to sustain other resource values? Are these restrictions still appropriate?

6. Have the Recreation Management issues changed since the RMP was completed? If yes, how are those issues being handled?
7. Are there significant cave resources present in the planning area? If so, are specific management goals outlined for the preservation or protection of significant cave resources?

### **Travel and Transportation:**

1. Does the RMP identify all public lands as: open, limited, or closed to off-highway-vehicle use?
2. Are the OHV designations still meeting resource objectives?
3. Does the RMP outline travel prescriptions under each designation?
4. Have implementation level travel plans been completed? If not, does the RMP provide a mechanism to complete implementation plans? Explain.
5. Are there designated Trails in the RMP? If so, are they meeting Designed Use objectives/Trail Management Objectives with respect to resource objectives?
6. Are travel management objectives clearly stated for the various Travel Management Areas?
7. If the RMP designates travel as "limited to existing roads and trails", then there should be a map, at a minimum, of existing roads and trails at the time the RMP ROD was signed. Is this true?

### **Lands and Realty:**

1. Does the RMP identify areas as potentially suitable for retention, disposal, and/or acquisition? Do these areas reflect current priorities for landownership adjustments? Are the land tenure decisions in RMP still valid? List any new areas for disposal not described in the RMP.
2. Does the RMP identify lands available for disposal by parcel or by specific areas on a map or by legal description?
3. How are planning decisions in the RMP applied to newly acquired lands? Does the RMP adequately address management of acquired land?
4. Does the RMP address the criteria outlined in Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) (Sections 203 and 206) for land available for disposal by sale or exchange?
5. Do the Land Tenure decisions in the plan conform to the BLM State Land Tenure Strategy?
6. Does the RMP properly identify lands which are potentially suitable for Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases and patents? Is the discussion in the Land Use Plan clear that R&PP is a disposal authority, not merely a leasing authority?
7. Does the RMP identify lands currently under withdrawal and any proposed or new withdrawals? Have proposed withdrawals been pursued and implemented?
8. How are planning decisions applied to lands returned to the public domain from relinquished withdrawals, where administrative jurisdiction is returned to the BLM?
9. Does the RMP clearly identify right-of-way corridor locations? Are the designated corridors in conflict with other resource management decisions? If so, explain. If corridors extend beyond the boundary of the RMP into the jurisdiction of another Field Office RMP, are they consistent across boundaries with respect to corridor width, management requirements etc.?



10. Does the RMP identify avoidance areas, and exclusion areas along with any general terms and conditions that may apply?
11. Are there new RMP decisions or changes to current decisions that would improve management of the Lands and Realty program? If so, explain.

**Wind, Solar, and Geothermal Energy:**

1. Does the RMP adequately address current demand for energy facilities, including renewable energy? Does it identify existing and potential development areas for renewable energy projects, communication sites, and other facilities?
2. Was the RMP amended by the Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development, the AZ. Restoration Design Energy Project, and the Solar Energy Development in Six Southwestern States? If not, how is wind and solar energy being addressed?
3. Does the RMP address or incorporate the Fish and Wildlife Service Bald and Golden Eagle Guidelines with respect to renewable energy development? If not, how are these guidelines being addressed?

**Minerals:**

1. Does the RMP identify areas open or closed to mineral leasing or disposal and identify constraints necessary to meet resource protection objectives? Are these still valid?
2. Are Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) scenarios for mineral exploration and development in the planning area appropriate for the level of activity occurring now, and projected in the near term (3-5 years)?
3. Does the RMP address how RFD scenarios will be kept up to date?
4. Are there restrictions that should be eliminated or modified because they no longer are needed or appropriate, or are there industry technological changes that make the restriction(s) unnecessary?
5. Are there areas recommended for closure to the mining laws for locatable exploration or development? If so, have those areas been withdrawn?
6. Does the RMP incorporate sustainable development concepts or objectives relative to post-mining uses (example: BMPs, reclamation)?
7. Can issues associated with Split-Estate be better addressed through the RMP?
8. Are there new decisions, or changes to current decisions that would improve management of the minerals program?

**Hazardous Materials:**

1. Does the RMP address identification, inventory and closure actions for abandoned mine lands?
2. Does the RMP identify an inventory of hazardous material sites, including Formerly Used Defense sites, and outline objectives for management and disposal of known or potential future hazardous material sites?

**Geospatial Data:**

1. Does Field Office/District Office geospatial data conform to State and BLM data standards?
2. Is the RMP geospatial data incorporated into the corporate data for the District, State, and the BLM?

3. Does the geospatial data for the RMP have metadata? If so, is this metadata up to date and maintained?

**New Management Considerations:**

1. Regional Mitigation: Does the RMP address mitigation and monitoring in such a way to meet the Regional Mitigation objectives identified in Draft BLM 1794 Manual and Instruction Memorandum No. 2013-142 on regional mitigation? If not, does the plan require maintenance to incorporate the new 1794 Manual?
2. Rapid Ecoregional/Landscape Assessments: Does the RMP consider relevant data and information from Rapid Ecoregional Assessments (REA) or other landscape-level assessments per Instruction Memorandum No. 2014-125? If not, does the plan require maintenance to incorporate the REA data and information (update inventory data and geospatial extent of resources)?

**General Questions to be answered by all participants:**

1. Are management actions outlined in the plan being implemented?
2. Does the plan establish desired outcomes (goals and objectives)?
3. Are the allocations, constraints, or mitigation measures effective in achieving, or making progress towards achieving, the desired outcomes?
4. Have there been significant changes in the related plans of Indian Tribes, state or local governments, or other Federal agencies?
5. Are there new data or analyses that significantly affect the planning decisions or the validity of the NEPA analysis?
6. Are there unmet needs or new opportunities that can best be met through a plan amendment or revision, or will current management practices be sufficient?
7. Are new inventories warranted pursuant to the BLM's duty to maintain inventories on a continuous basis (FLPMA, Section 201)?
8. Are there new legal or policy mandates as a result of new statutes, proclamations, executive orders, or court orders not addressed in the plan?
9. Does the RMP have an implementation schedule? Is the implementation schedule kept current? If not, why?