



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

---

Forest  
Service

February 2006



# Environmental Assessment

## “Camp Verde Townsite Act” Project

**Red Rock Ranger District, Coconino National Forest  
Yavapai County, Arizona**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

List of Figures ..... iii

List of Tables ..... iii

**1. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION ..... 1**

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE..... 1

LOCATION ..... 1

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION ..... 1

PROJECT BACKGROUND..... 4

Parks and Recreation Study..... 4

City Council Meetings..... 5

DECISION TO BE MADE..... 5

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY ..... 6

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION..... 6

**2. ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION ..... 7**

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL ..... 7

Alternative Locations Considered ..... 7

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FURTHER ..... 8

Alternative A (No Action Alternative)..... 8

Alternative B (Proposed Action) ..... 8

Comparison of Alternatives..... 9

**3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES..... 13**

APPLICABILITY OF THE FOREST PLAN, LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND  
OTHER DIRECTIONS ..... 13

Plans of Other Agencies ..... 13

Applicable Laws, Regulations, and Policies ..... 13

Forest Plan Management Direction and Consistency..... 14

EFFECT ON PHYSICAL FACTORS OF THE SITE..... 14

Soils ..... 14

Affected Environment..... 14

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects..... 14

Minerals and Energy Resources ..... 15

Affected Environment..... 15

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects..... 15

Visual Resources ..... 15

Affected Environment..... 15

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects..... 17

Cultural Resources..... 19

Affected Environment..... 19

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects..... 19

**Table of Contents, continued**

Water Resources .....	20
Affected Environment .....	20
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	20
Noise .....	21
Affected Environment .....	21
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	21
Land Use and Land Use Requirements .....	22
Affected Environment .....	22
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	22
Air Quality .....	22
Affected Environment .....	22
<b>EFFECT ON BIOLOGICAL FACTORS OF THE SITE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Vegetation .....	23
Affected Environment .....	23
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	23
Wildlife .....	24
Affected Environment .....	24
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	24
Special Status Species .....	24
Affected Environment .....	24
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	28
Invasive Species .....	28
Affected Environment .....	28
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	28
<b>EFFECT ON THE ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE SITE .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Economic Base .....	29
Affected Environment .....	29
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	30
Cost .....	30
Affected Environment .....	30
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	30
Environmental Justice .....	30
Affected Environment .....	30
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	31
<b>EFFECT ON THE SOCIAL FACTORS OF THE SITE .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Public Access and Recreation Issues .....	31
Affected Environment .....	31
Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects .....	32
<b>4. LIST OF PREPARERS .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>5. LIST OF AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES, AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED AND/OR PROVIDED COPIES OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>LITERATURE CITED .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>APPENDIX - Public Scoping Comment Summary</b>	

## **List of Figures**

1. General project vicinity. ....	2
2. Land Ownership.....	3
3. Visual resource quality objective of the project area.....	18

## **List of Tables**

1. Significant Issues within the Scope of the EA.....	6
2. Comparison of Alternative Impacts.....	10
3. Special Status Species of Coconino National Forest, Red Rock District, That Are Not Known to Occur or Are Unlikely to Occur within the Project Area.....	25
4. Special Status Species that are Known to Occur, or for Which There Is Potentially Suitable Habitat within the Project Area.....	26
5. Ethnic Characteristics .....	31
6. List of Preparers.....	33

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION**

---

Chapter 1 describes the project scope, background, purpose and need for action, proposed action, decisions to be made, public involvement, and issues.

### **DOCUMENT STRUCTURE**

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to describe and assess the environmental consequences that may result from the Coconino National Forest (CNF) sale of land under the Authority of the Townsite Act (P.L. 85-569, 72 Stat. 438) and for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations. The Town of Camp Verde (the Town) would purchase the land for development of a park.

This document discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that would result from the No Action and Preferred Action alternatives and is organized into four parts: Chapter 1, Purpose and Need; Chapter 2, Alternatives; Chapter 3, Environmental Consequences; Chapter 4, Agencies and Persons Consulted; and Chapter 5, References and Literature Cited.

### **LOCATION**

The parcel that would be purchased by the Town, called the airstrip site, is approximately 223 acres in size and is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the Town's center in portions of Sections 4 and 9 of Township 13 North, Range 5 East (Figures 1 and 2). It currently falls within the jurisdiction of the Coconino National Forest Red Rock Ranger District.

Camp Verde is located in Yavapai County approximately 86 miles north of Phoenix, Arizona. The U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) administers a majority of the area surrounding the Town, with Coconino National Forest bordering the community to the east and Prescott National Forest to the west. Adjacent national forest land, the Verde River, and tributary creeks and washes are popular areas for outdoor recreational use.

### **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION**

In 1990, the Town prepared a Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Study that identified a need for additional park and recreational facilities within the community. According to this 1990 study (BRW 1990), the Town population was projected to reach 11,000 by 2010. To accommodate the anticipated increase in the number of Town residents, the study identified a need for an additional 119 acres of park and recreational use space. Since the 1990 study, the Town has increased in population by over 4,000 residents and has added only two additional acres of parkland. In 2000, the Town's population was 9,451 (U.S. Census) and increased to 9,940 in 2002 (Arizona Department of Commerce). At this growth rate, the Town's population is expected to exceed the 1990 projection.





The Town's purpose in acquiring the project area is to obtain an appropriate community park site that would provide its residents with additional parkland and recreational opportunities. The Town's population growth and the small amount of parkland within the community have created a need for this additional park and recreational space.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The Town has been looking for a community park site for several years to meet the area's current and future recreational needs. In anticipation of purchasing one of several possible sites, including the currently proposed project area (the airstrip site), for development of a community park, the Town began a public scoping effort in 1990.

The purchase of the airstrip site was considered after a thorough exploration of possible private and public land acquisitions. Other sites initially considered included property currently occupied by the Verde Ranger Station site and a 260-acre parcel of State Trust Land (each being proposed for sale separately by a competitive sale process). It is unlikely that the Town can afford properties sold through a competitive sale process due to its limited budget; however, site acquisition is feasible if the acquisition falls under the Townsite Authority Act. Therefore, the airstrip site, which can be purchased through the Townsite Act, became the Town's preferred location. The site selection process is described in more detail in Chapter 2, Alternatives.

Town planners determined that public outreach would be important to their decision-making process. By using input from Town residents, planners could incorporate the community's preferences as a basis for the activities and facilities that would be developed for the park. To acquire this information, town planners worked with the Arizona Hospitality Research and Resource Center (AHRRC) at Northern Arizona University (NAU) to conduct a study on parks and recreation. The NAU group prepared and distributed a survey questionnaire to Town households, evaluated the responses to the questionnaire, and prepared a report on the study for the Town (AHRRC 1999).

In addition to collecting information from residents through survey, the park's development was discussed in several City Council meetings (the idea having been discussed, periodically, in these meetings since 1998), as well as reported about in local newspapers. Information gleaned from these sources, along with subsequent Town planning, helped in the development of the Town's current proposal of park uses.

## ***PARKS AND RECREATION STUDY***

A total of 1,848 AHRRC Parks and Recreation Study questionnaires were sent to Town households in 1999. Of the 1,848 questionnaires, the U.S. Postal Service returned 34 as undeliverable, resulting in 1,814 questionnaires successfully mailed. A total of 453 usable responses were returned to the Town. Because the Town was still considering different locations at the time of the survey (the project location had not been finalized), the public feedback was sufficiently general to be applied to any of the park locations still being considered.

Approximately 61% of the respondents stated that they used park and recreation facilities. Of the respondents who indicated that they did not use park and recreation facilities, two-thirds were 61 years of age or older.

According to the questionnaire responses, the greatest use was of Town swimming pools and softball/baseball fields. Class/meeting rooms, weight rooms, and indoor basketball courts also had a high amount of daily or weekly use, as did open areas, playgrounds, and football and soccer fields. Citizens also stated that current sports fields and other developed recreation facilities are not adequate to meet the needs of the community's residents.

Respondents indicated that development of picnic areas, playground areas, neighborhood parks, open areas, and softball fields was necessary for the community within the next five years. Less of a need was expressed for additional baseball fields, equestrian trails, fishing ponds, and rodeo grounds. Residents did not perceive a need for a stargazing observatory, shuffleboard, golf course, driving range clubhouse, ATV-motor bike area, or BMX track.

Approximately 83% of the survey's respondents believed that Camp Verde needs additional park and recreation facilities to meet its growing population. The majority of residents surveyed believed that the community requires expanded park and recreational facilities within one to three years from the date when they were surveyed (1999). Another 20% believed these facilities needed to become available within one year.

### ***CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS***

Since 1998, several Camp Verde City Council meetings have included discussions concerning the development of a park in town. The airstrip and the Verde Ranger Station sites were alternatives already being considered in 1998. In 1999, the Council directed Town staff to develop methods to purchase a park site and also approved a 1% sales tax increase to be used for funding a list of projects, noting the development of parks as a priority on that list. In 2000, the Council directed Town staff to pursue a binding Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Service to document the Town's intent to purchase property from them. Within the same year, the Council created a Special Projects fund from sales tax revenues, with 40% of it going to parks. In 2001, the Town directed the prioritization of some alternatives for a park location, designating the Verde Ranger Station site as their first priority and the airstrip site, the current project area, as their second priority.

As noted above, the Verde Ranger Station site may be proposed for sale through a competitive sale process, likely at a value the Town could not afford; therefore, the airstrip site became the Town's preferred park location.

The Town has not finalized its site plan for the airstrip site. If the site were to be purchased, the Town would incorporate all public input, including its most recent scoping effort (see Public Involvement Summary section of this chapter and Appendix), into the design of the park and its facilities.

### **DECISION TO BE MADE**

The Coconino National Forest Supervisor will decide whether to authorize the transfer by sale under the authority of the Townsite Act of July 31, 1958 (72 Stat. 438, 7U.S.C. 1012a; 16 U.S.C. 478A), as amended by Sec. 213 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (90 Stat. 2760) of a 223-acre parcel to the Town as described in Alternative B (Preferred Alternative).

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

A site visit and meeting between the project proponent (Town) and Forest Service personnel occurred on March 29, 2004. A mailer detailing the purchase of the parcel, the project background, and the NEPA process was mailed on April 23, 2004, to members of the public who were known to be interested in projects related to the Coconino National Forest and the Town (adjacent landowners, interested organizations, and other local agencies). The mailer was also available at the Verde Ranger Station and the Town's Park and Recreation Department, and a public notice requesting the public's involvement was published in a local newspaper. The Yavapai Apache Tribe, the Native American tribe in the immediate vicinity, was also contacted during preliminary scoping for consultation.

Sixty-one (61) comments were identified within the 28 responses received during the 30-day public scoping period in May. Public input was favorable regarding the development of the park. Comments also addressed the park's proposed location; the need for a park; access to park facilities; the security and safety of the park; authorized uses (including off-highway [OHV] use); monetary concerns related to park development and maintenance; noise, light, and air pollution; and the area's soil, vegetation, and water resources.

A Draft EA was released in May 2005 for 30-day comment. Four (4) comment letters were received. Comments related to Town need for land, water resources, and "historic" airstrip.

## ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Based on comments received in response to the scoping mailer, the Forest Service interdisciplinary (ID) team summarized the issues as shown in Table 1. Besides the issues stated in the table, public input also identified concerns already described in the Public Involvement Summary section of this document.

The Town, through its design of park facilities and adherence to existing Town code and zoning regulations, would address some comments, particularly related to specific site design and management of park (see Comment Summary, Appendix), and others outside the scope of this analysis, through the subsequent park planning process. The community's residents would have opportunities to voice concerns related to the park's design through the Town's community planning public outreach program. For the purposes of this analysis, however, the Forest Service has identified the following issues as significant, and these will be addressed in this document (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Significant Issues within the Scope of the EA

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Location in Document where These Concerns Are Addressed</b>
Sale of proposed park site could result in loss or blocking of existing recreation opportunities, such as equestrian trails, informal aircraft use and OHV activities.	Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30
OHV users displaced by the sale of the site would move to other areas in the Town or other nearby national forest lands and cause soil and vegetation impacts in those areas.	Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30
Noise and lights from a park site and associated recreation developments and activities could result in disturbance or impacts to land values for adjacent residential areas.	Visual Resources, Page 14 and Noise, Page 20

## CHAPTER 2

### ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

---

---

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for transfer of the land and/or development of a park site for the Town. Each alternative considered is described, as well as other alternatives that were initially considered but eliminated.

#### ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL

##### *ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS CONSIDERED*

As described in the discussion of the project background in Chapter 1, the Town investigated several parcels within and surrounding the community for developing a park. Criteria for a site included its proximity to the Town's population center, accessibility to the area, proximity to a water supply that could be used for irrigation and possible associated activities, and the parcel's size. The Town's Parks and Recreation five-year master plan identifies a desire to provide neighborhood parks, community parks, and specific-use areas. The neighborhood park is typically 10 acres or smaller and is most accessible to the residents within a particular neighborhood. The Town currently has four such parks and is in the process of developing a fifth park in the Verde Lakes area. The Town also recognizes that not all recreational activities (e.g., equestrian arenas and ball fields) are appropriate for a neighborhood park. These uses would need more land for development and would be included in the planning of a community park. Community parks typically range in size from 60 to 200 acres and are large enough for the variety of activities described above. The purpose of this project is to develop a community park that could include these types of uses, and, therefore, locations for the park site were limited to larger parcels.

The Town initially investigated five sites and quickly narrowed that number to three feasible locations. The two sites eliminated from further consideration were a site near the Camp Verde School System and a site located adjacent to, and on the east side of, the airstrip site. These sites are both 20 acres in size. The first site was eliminated primarily due to its small size; a 20-acre site is not large enough for development of a community park. Development of that parcel also would have been difficult due to drainage issues on site. In addition, the noise and light impacts of a community park would have been more significant at this location, as it is surrounded by numerous residential neighborhoods. Although the second site also was too small for a community park, the site was given some consideration because it could be combined with the airstrip parcel; the two parcels together would be more than adequate for development of a community park. The Town ultimately did not pursue acquisition of this property for two reasons: (1) the site alone was not large enough to be developed as a community park; and (2) the expense of \$35,000 per acre was cost prohibitive. Therefore, only three of the five parcels originally considered remained feasible for a community park. In addition to the airstrip site, which was ultimately selected, the Town considered the State Trust site on Hwy 260 and the Verde Ranger Station site.

The State Trust and the Verde Ranger Station sites are no longer being considered because they are obtainable only through a competitive sale process with no guarantee that the Town would be able to afford the ultimate purchase price of either site. In particular, the State Trust land was eliminated from further consideration due to the onerous acquisition process. The purchase of the parcel would have to begin with the submittal of a request that the land be put up for sale. If the Town were successful in getting the land put up for sale, the State would then offer it through a competitive sale process. The Town decided that it would not be able to obtain the parcel through competitive sale. In addition, the

land itself was going to be more costly to develop due to the topography (hills) and drainage issues. The property would also require irrigation through either drilling a well or using water from the Camp Verde Water system.

The probability of the Town acquiring either the State Trust parcel or the Verde Ranger Station site is unknown, whereas the airstrip site is available to the Town through the Townsite Act. Park planning and development needs to occur on a site the Town can realistically purchase; therefore, both the State Trust and the Verde Ranger Station sites were eliminated from further consideration.

The Town recently acquired (through donation) a 30-acre parcel with recreational potential but which is unsuitable for development as a community park. It is located within the Verde River floodplain near Interstate 17. The site is not being seriously considered as a site for a community park because 1) it is too small to accommodate the desired facilities; 2) constraints on building in floodplains preclude development of the desired facilities; and 3) the site is frequently flooded (three times in 2005 alone). The Town is considering developing this site as part of a river trail system. Development of a such a system would require acquisition of a another property referred to as the Black Bridge site, which the Town has applied for a grant to purchase. Currently, the 30-acre parcel is not considered or maintained as a Town-sponsored recreation area.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FURTHER**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)***

Under the No Action alternative, the land purchase would not occur. The United States of America would retain ownership of the parcel and the Forest Service would administer the parcel; a community park would not be developed at this site. The parcel would continue to be managed as national forest.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under the Proposed Action, the Forest Service would sell the airstrip site to the Town. This site is considered the preferred location due to the site's:

- availability for purchase under the Townsite Act;
- topography (it is relatively flat and would be easy to develop); and,
- close proximity to
  - the water treatment plant (which would provide irrigation water for the park);
  - existing utilities and infrastructure;
  - business district (the park is not directly adjacent to many homes, which is beneficial given the proposed activities and hours of operation regarding concerns about noise and light); and,
  - ready access to the majority of the Camp Verde population base.

The 223-acre site that the Town would like to purchase and develop into a community park is currently owned by the Forest Service and is undeveloped. This parcel, which is already used recreationally by some residents, lies within the Town boundaries and includes an old airstrip, which people occasionally use to land small, recreational aircraft. Some areas, however, are being abused through illegal trash dumping, vandalism, and trail creation and vegetation destruction from OHV use.

The Town would acquire the 223-acre site to develop a park. Once purchased, the Town would complete the park's design and decide the type of recreational activities and facilities that would occur on-site. This design process would include public input opportunities through the Town Park and Recreation Department's public involvement process and Town Council Meetings. Some uses initially considered include the development of ball fields, an equestrian arena, open space, and an on-site trailhead. The Town is working with developers to bring Camp Verde water (potable water source) closer to the project area for park facilities. If that occurs, the Town would look to extend that service to the proposed park site.

Treatment plant water (reclaimed effluent) would be used for irrigation. If the Town acquires the 223-acre site, it may decide to develop a trailhead for hiking and equestrian use on approximately one and one-half acres on the north side of Hwy 260 (within the project area). The Camp Verde Trails and Pathways Committee has asked the Town for a trailhead within the park site. The one and one-half acres would provide safer passage to the community trails and the Mail Trail, which is in the process of receiving State recognition, on the north side of the highway (State Route 260) without the need to cross the highway. This trailhead would help accomplish the mission of the trails committee to connect the entire community with trails.

All uses are subject to compliance with Town code and zoning regulations such as Camp Verde's Noise Ordinance (Town Code, Section 10-2-1 Noise), the Town's Dark Sky Ordinance, and Zoning Code (Zoning Code, Section 406 Outdoor Lighting). Under this analysis, it is assumed that any development to occur on-site would comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Only the purchase and the intent to develop the 223-acre site is within the scope of this analysis, not the specific uses intended for this site. Details regarding park facilities and uses are outside of the scope of this analysis. Decisions regarding these aspects of the park's design would be planned through Town processes after completion of the sale.

### ***COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES***

This section provides a summary table of the effects of implementing the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives (Table 2). Information in the table is focused on effects, if any, that can be distinguished between alternatives.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Alternative Impacts

Topic	Impacts	
	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Proposed Action)
Soils	Soil disturbance would continue under the No Action alternative. Indirectly, loss in soil productivity resulting from ongoing soil disturbance and loss would occur. Cumulative impacts would likely include more disturbance of soil on-site and on other undeveloped lands within the vicinity.	No direct impacts would occur. Indirect impacts however, may include soil disturbance during construction activities. Short-term soil loss during construction would be minimized through stormwater control planning and BMPs. Cumulatively, under Alternative B, with more development and an increasing population, development of a park would help alleviate some of the need for recreational space in Town and may reduce the amount of cumulative soil disturbance when compared to Alternative A.
Minerals and Energy Resources	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.
Visual Resources	There would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to visual quality within the project area.	Scenic vistas would not be impacted; There would be minimal direct and indirect impacts to dark skies because activities would comply with dark sky preservation measures. Although the Proposed Action will not meet the prescribed VQO of Partial Retention, it will meet the standards for a Modification VQO, one classification level below Partial Retention; therefore the Proposed Action is consistent with Forest Plan criteria for scenic quality management. Cumulatively, the proposed action would continue the trend of community and residential development at the expense of the natural appearing landscape. As noted, the parcel has already assumed some of the characteristics of a developed site so the transition would not be as drastic as it would be with a site that was less altered.
Cultural Resources	Cultural resources would be vulnerable to disturbance due to the current activities; however, current uses of the project area are not likely to disturb subsurface features.	One prehistoric site was considered eligible. Mitigation has occurred as agreed to in the Memorandum of Agreement with SHPO and tribal entities to address adverse effects.
Water Resources	Soil disturbance may result in some erosion losses, indirectly impacting water resources. Illegal dumping may have impacts to surface and ground-water quality if hazardous materials are involved. No cumulative impact.	Substantial additional consumption of groundwater or surface water resources is not expected. Proposed reclaimed water use would not constitute a risk to ground-water or surface water quality. Dumping is less likely to occur due to development of the area. No cumulative impact.
Noise	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	Any action on-site must comply with local noise ordinances; therefore, no adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts would occur.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Alternative Impacts, continued

Topic	Impacts	
	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Proposed Action)
Land Use and Land Use Requirements	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	The project area's use would change however the uses proposed under this alternative would still comply with the Town's General Plan, retaining the parcel as undeveloped and for recreational uses. No cumulative impacts.
Air	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts.	No direct or indirect, or cumulative impact to air quality of the project area or its vicinity in the long-term. Construction activities would be conducted with the appropriate dust abatement.
Vegetation	Disturbance of vegetation by current activities would continue. Cumulatively, other Forest Service parcels developed would also lose vegetation, decreasing the amount of undeveloped, vegetated land within the project area's vicinity.	Vegetation would be removed and replaced with recreational facilities; it is expected that any open space at the site would be landscaped with non-native grasses and trees. Under the Proposed Action, cumulative impacts would be the same as described under the No Action alternative.
Wildlife	Disturbance is likely to continue, resulting in less groundcover and foraging habitat for wildlife species compared to nearby non-disturbed areas. There are no structures, walls, or fences currently on the property except along the portion of the property that is adjacent to State Route 260; therefore, no fragmentation of habitat is occurring. Cumulatively, under Alternative A, with more development, fragmentation of habitat would continue to occur within the vicinity but not on-site.	Wildlife use within the area is not anticipated to change considerably if the site is developed into a park. Existing vegetation within the area would be replaced with native species commonly used for park landscaping and non-native grass for fields. Wildlife species that currently use the area would likely be displaced to the surrounding landscape. However, there may be an increase in species that thrive in the presence of human activity. Depending of the final uses of the site, there is a potential for habitat fragmentation due to fencing, however, no fencing is planned for the perimeter of the park, minimizing habitat fragmentation. The only fencing that would occur would be around ball fields, if developed. Cumulatively, fragmentation of habitat would continue to occur as described under the No Action alternative.
Special Status Species	Current uses of the property would not likely affect the Arizona night lizard, Tonto Basin agave, Hualapai milkwort, and Ripley wild buckwheat and would not result in a trend toward listing of the species. This alternative would have no adverse impact on any of these species or alter their potential to occur within the project area, and therefore would have no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on these species.	The Proposed Action alternative would eliminate any existing or potential habitat for Arizona night lizard, Tonto Basin agave, Hualapai milkwort, and Ripley wild buckwheat within the project area; however, this loss of this habitat would be inconsequential in comparison to the large amount of habitat available habitat for this species region-wide and therefore would have no direct impacts on these species; however potential habitat would be impacted or lost as a result of construction at the site in the future and cumulatively on other adjacent projects.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Alternative Impacts, continued

Topic	Impacts	
	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Proposed Action)
Invasive Species	No invasive plant species were documented within the project area. If the No Action alternative were implemented, continued use of OHVs in the project area would directly and indirectly increase the risk of invasive plant introduction on site. The Coconino National Forest also follows BMPs for weed control (USDA 2005). Cumulatively, development of other parcels within the vicinity may increase the potential for weed introduction without proper BMPs.	Disturbance and use of equipment would increase the potential for invasive species introduction. To minimize this potential, (1) all earth moving and hauling equipment should be washed at the contractor's storage facility prior to arriving on site and (2) any disturbed ground should be seeded using native, weed-free species, if applicable.  Cumulative impacts under the Proposed Action would be the same as described under the No Action alternative.
Economic Base	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	No direct, indirect or cumulative impacts to community demographics are expected to occur under this alternative.
Cost	Direct and indirect impacts would be the loss of funding for project site and other funding used for other projects. Cumulative, funding for other development surrounding the project area would not affect Town funding, unless the Town was the project proponent. If the Town were the project proponent, the no action would affect Town funding distribution.	Under this alternative, the above stated funding sources would be used to develop and maintain park facilities within the project area. Cumulative impacts would be the same as described under the No Action alternative.
Environmental Justice	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.
Public Access and Recreation Issues	No direct, indirect, or cumulative impact.	There is an adverse impact potential due to elimination of off-road vehicle use but it not measurable. Indirect impacts due to this change in use would likely be minor. Cumulatively, other development in the area would likely lead to further displacement of these activities. Area will be public for approved Town recreation activities.

## CHAPTER 3

# AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

---

This chapter describes the effects that the alternatives, if implemented, would have within the project area. While some effects would occur within the project boundary, others may be cumulative with environmental effects from the past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future within or near the project area. For each impact topic, the analysis includes a brief description of the affected environment and an evaluation of effects.

Major issues define the scope of the environmental concern for this project. These issues were described in Chapter 1 (Issue Identification and Management). Environmental resources considered during this evaluation include: land resources, water resources, living resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic conditions, and other values. Resource areas that were not evaluated due to the lack of relevance to the proposed activities include wilderness resources, resource use patterns, and fish recreation resources.

## APPLICABILITY OF THE FOREST PLAN, LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND OTHER DIRECTIONS

### *PLANS OF OTHER AGENCIES*

There are no other federal lands adjacent to or within the immediate vicinity of the project area. Therefore, other agency plans would not impact any Forest Service decision-making actions.

### *APPLICABLE LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES*

Following is a list of federal laws and executive orders pertaining to project-specific planning and environmental analysis on federal lands. While most pertain to federal lands in general, some are specific to Arizona.

*Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended)*  
*The National Forest Management Act NFMA of 1976 (as amended)*  
*Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1980*  
*Executive Order 11593 (cultural resources)*  
*Executive Order 11988 (floodplains)*  
*Executive Order 11990 (wetlands)*  
*Executive Order 12898 (environmental justice)*  
*Executive Order 13186 January 11, 2001 (Migratory Bird Treaty Act)*  
*National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, amended 1986*  
*National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (as amended)*  
*Arizona Administrative Code, Title 12, Natural Resources.*  
*Arizona Administrative Code, Title 18, Environmental Quality, Chapters 9 and 11*

## ***FOREST PLAN MANAGEMENT DIRECTION AND CONSISTENCY***

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA of 1976 [as amended]) calls for developing, adopting, and revising land and resource management plans for the National Forest System as required by the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended. These regulations prescribe how land and resource management planning is to be conducted on National Forest System lands.

The project area is located within the Coconino Forest, Management Area 11, Verde Valley and is managed under the Coconino National Forest Plan (CNF 1987) as amended. Management in this area is focused on watershed condition, range management, wildlife habitat for upland game birds, and dispersed recreation. The specific standards and guidelines with respect to lands states that the Coconino National Forest coordinates with local governments in evaluation of land proposals. The project site was identified in the Forest Plan as appropriate for conveyance. The Proposed Action is consistent with the Coconino Forest Plan and therefore is in compliance with NFMA.

## **EFFECT ON PHYSICAL FACTORS OF THE SITE**

### ***SOILS***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Most of the site consists of soils belonging to the Penthouse-Latene-Cornville Association. This association consists of well-drained soils on dissected fan surfaces along the Verde River and is formed from old alluvial sediments derived from calcareous sedimentary and volcanic rocks. These soils have fair to good potential for forage production, but such production is limited by precipitation. They commonly are used as winter range for cattle and sheep due to their proximity to the high plateaus to the east. The dominant limiting factors for community use on these soils are the cobbly surface and slow permeability of the subsoils (Hendricks 1985).

Less than 10% of the soils at the site, those along the eastern edge, belong to the Lithic Torriorthents-Lithic Haplustolls-Rock Outcrop Association. This association consists of well-drained, shallow soils and rock outcrops on semiarid, mid-elevation hills and mountains. These soils formed from a variety of rock types, including granite, gneiss, rhyolite, andesite, tuffs, limestone, sandstone and basalt. Factors limiting the potential of these areas for community uses are steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock and rock fragments on the surface (Hendricks 1985).

#### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

##### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Current use of the site by OHV enthusiasts has resulted in a soil disturbance of the site. The amount of actual soil loss due to erosion is unknown. Soil disturbance would continue under the No Action alternative. An indirect impact of this alternative would be the continued loss in soil productivity resulting from ongoing soil disturbance and loss. Recreation use, including OHV disturbance, is resulting in accelerated soil erosion and vegetative loss and would continue if OHV use continues.

Cumulatively, under Alternative A, several undeveloped areas are available for future development in the vicinity of the project area. It is likely that the two parcels initially considered as park sites that were up

for a competitive sale process, previously mentioned, would be developed once purchased, and the Forest Service has stated it is considering the Camp Verde School District's offer for purchase of another site. The parcel north of State Route 260 on the east side of the project area was sold to the Camp Verde Sanitary district for a water treatment facility. In addition, Highway 260 is being developed and other private property is being developed in the area. Developed areas would not contribute to erosion losses due to local ordinances and Best Management Practices (BMPs). However, this may lead to a cumulative increase in residents using this undeveloped site as recreational space due to the fact that and there would still be a need for recreational facilities in Town under the No Action alternative. Cumulative impacts would likely include more disturbance of soil on-site and on other undeveloped lands in the vicinity.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under this alternative, no direct impacts would occur. Indirect impacts however, may include soil disturbance during construction activities. Once constructed, use of the recreation facilities would not result in further unwanted soil disturbance or soil loss. Short-term soil loss during construction would be minimized through implementation of stormwater control planning and BMPs. Any long-term effect would be mitigated by landscaping or other measures.

Cumulatively, under Alternative B, with more development and an increasing population, development of a park would help alleviate some of the need for recreational space in Town and may reduce the amount of cumulative soil disturbance when compared to Alternative A.

## ***MINERALS AND ENERGY RESOURCES***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

No oil, gas, or metallic mineral resources are located in the vicinity of the project area. The Camp Verde area, however, has potential for gypsum mineral resources, as is evidenced by the presence of the active Verde Gypsum Mine and the presence of the old Camp Verde Salt Mines, located south of Town. Gypsum mineral resources have not been identified on the site itself.

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION) AND ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

The No Action and Proposed Action alternatives would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impact on mineral or energy resources.

## ***VISUAL RESOURCES***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

One objective of the Town's General Plan includes the preservation of dark sky and scenic vistas; the Town prides itself on these values. The view of the Verde Valley from the Mogollon Rim, as well as from the southern access road entrance into the Town, are considered valuable viewsheds for Camp Verde visitors (Town of Camp Verde 1998). The project area's northern boundary, for the most part, is adjacent to State Route 260, a 4-lane, state highway. The southern boundary is adjacent to residential developments.

The Town adheres to recommendations of “dark sky” with respect to public lighting; its General Plan aims to preserve dark sky by implementing lighting ordinances that promote not only dark skies but property owners’ needs, as well. Through planning, the Town is committed to updating and enforcing ordinances regulating lighting systems and has recommend lighting types for all Town areas and signage. These ordinances are to prevent the implementation of lighting that would invade neighboring property or obscure views of the night sky.

The project is proposed for a parcel of public land managed by the US Forest Service as part of the Coconino National Forest. The parcel would be transferred to the Town of Camp Verde prior to project construction and would not be under the jurisdiction of the US Forest Service when developed.

All landscapes within the National Forest System are classified by “character type” that defines the broad regional context for the appearance of the landscape, and by “variety classes” that define the relative “attractiveness” of the landscape within each character type. Character types for the Forest Service’s southwest region are described in “Landscape Character Types of the National Forests in Arizona and New Mexico,” an appendix to the Visual Management System handbook (FSH 462).

#### Character Type and Variety Class

The project area is located within the Tonto character type and Upper Tonto sub-type. This sub-type is located in central Arizona and typically consists of tablelands (mesa and buttes). The dominant feature of this sub-type is the Mogollon Escarpment or “Rim” located to the north and east of the project area. The predominant vegetation in the higher elevations is coniferous forest and pinyon-juniper woodland in the intermediate and lower elevations. The principle perennial watercourses of this sub-type are the Gila, Verde, and Salt Rivers, and Oak, Beaver, Clear, Tonto, and Cherry Creeks.

The project area is classified as variety class “C – minimal” (C) (Forest Service 1989); meaning that compared to other areas within the character type, this site has “minimal” scenic attributes.

Characteristics of this site include a rolling or slightly dissected landform that provides little illusion of special definition or landmarks. Vegetation is desert grassland with little variation in texture and color. There are no water bodies on the site. The site has suffered some degradation from the natural appearing condition through past use. An airstrip is still evident on the site along with other evidence of casual use typical of unoccupied lands adjacent a community (vehicle tracks, areas of bare ground, some trash, etc).

#### Distance Zones

Distance zones are divisions of a landscape; zone determinations describe the part of a characteristic landscape that is being viewed. There are no topographic features on site and the parcel is relatively flat. Therefore, the distance zone for this area has been determined as “Foreground” (FG) (Forest Service 1974) as seen from the adjacent state highway and from nearby residences.

#### Sensitivity

Sensitivity levels are a measure of people’s concern for scenic quality. Levels are determined for travel routes through the Forest on developed, system roads and trails, and for “use areas” and residences within and adjacent the Forest. The project area is adjacent a well-traveled state road classified as Level 1 and from nearby residences (1), (Forest Service 1974). Therefore; the area is within the foreground view of sensitivity level 1 viewing areas as seen from the highway and from the residences. Level 1 is the highest sensitivity level in the Forest Service rating system and reflects the highest level of concern for scenic quality by those likely to view the area.

### Visual Quality Objective

Evaluation of these characteristics determines the visual quality objective of the site. Due to this site's characteristics, the project area is managed by the Forest Service for Partial Retention. When the Forest manages an area that is designated for management under Partial Retention (PR), activities must remain visually subordinate to the natural characteristic landscape (Forest Service 1974) (Figure 3). The site has been classified for management, as documented in the Coconino Forest Management Plan (1989) as FG1C/PR. The site's existing conditions meets the criteria for "modification" visual quality and therefore falls short of Plan objectives for the area.

## **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under the No Action alternative, Coconino Forest Management Plan direction would guide eventual visual resource enhancement of the project area to a "natural appearing" condition. Practically, considering present and projected funding and other Forest priorities for visual resource enhancement; the project area would remain basically the same as it now appears for the foreseeable future. The existing airstrip would still be visible, as would private property development along the west and south sides. The parcel would continue not to meet the partial retention (PR) visual quality objectives due to the disturbed conditions of the site.

There would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to visual quality within the project area. The parcel may return to the natural characteristics of the Upper Tonto sub-type C in the future and the Forest would maintain the authority to manage the site.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under the Proposed Action, assuming the proposal is implemented as described, the site will be altered significantly from the natural characteristics of the area and assume characteristics more typical to community recreation park development as outlined in the proposal. Therefore, based on the Proposed Action description, the proposed development would not meet the management goal of Partial Retention. Under the Proposed Action, a park would be developed and would not restore the natural characteristics of the Upper Tonto sub-type. The Proposed Action, as described, does meet the objective of Modification. Modification is a management objective with a degree of greater acceptable alteration of the natural landscape. Under Modification, management activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape. The Coconino Forest Management Plan allows "one classification movement downward" in visual quality objectives. Although the Proposed Action will not meet the prescribed VQO of Partial Retention, it will meet the standards for a Modification VQO, one classification level below Partial Retention; therefore the Proposed Action is consistent with Forest Plan criteria for scenic quality management.

Once the parcel is transferred out of Federal ownership, there is no requirement or guarantee that the project proposal will be implemented or that the parcel will remain in community ownership. Assessing other possible development scenarios aside from the project proposal are beyond the scope of this assessment.

Cumulatively, the proposed action would continue the trend of community and residential development at the expense of the natural appearing landscape. As noted, the parcel has already assumed some of the characteristics of a developed site so the transition would not be as drastic as it would be with a site that was less altered.

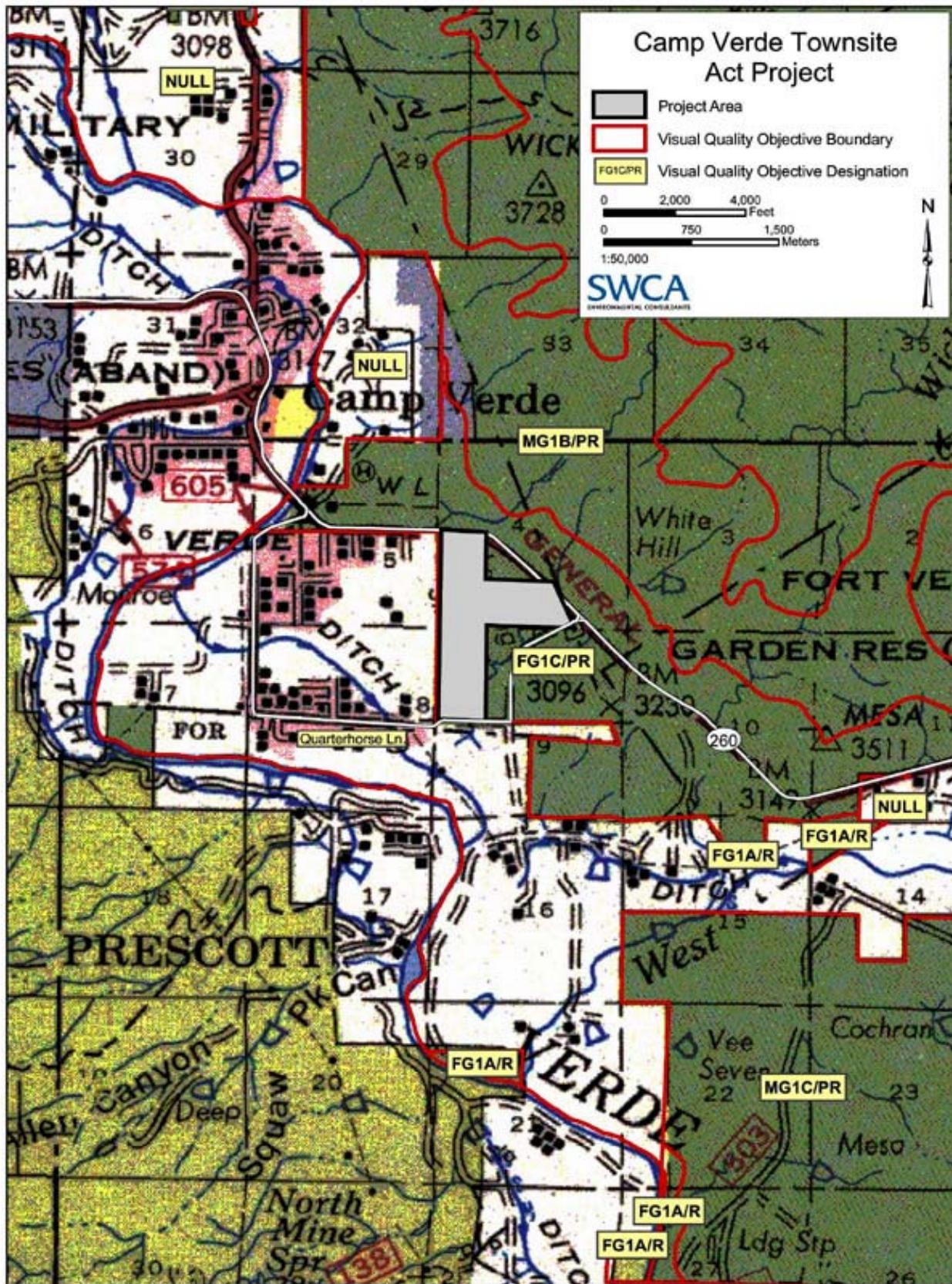


Figure 3. Visual resource quality objective of the project area.

Therefore, based on the information and Proposed Action description, the Forest Service has determined that proposed activities would not meet the management goal of Partial Retention. Under the Proposed Action, a park would be developed and would not restore the natural characteristics of the Upper Tonto sub-type. The Proposed Action, as described, does meet the objective of Modification. Modification is a management objective with a degree of greater acceptable alteration of the natural landscape. Under Modification, management activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape. Although, Modification is not this site's management objective, it is an acceptable change under the Coconino National Forest Plan.

## ***CULTURAL RESOURCES***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

An archaeological site file search and pedestrian survey of the project area was completed for this project. All isolated occurrences and sites identified during the course of this survey were evaluated for cultural and historical significance in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

The archaeological site file search was conducted at the CNF Supervisor's office to identify previous surveys and known sites in or immediately adjacent to the current project area. The site file search and survey resulted in relocating one previously recorded archaeological site and identifying four isolated features and 20 isolated occurrences.

One site is recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); the isolated features and occurrences are recommended as ineligible for inclusion.

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under the No Action alternative, the cultural resources identified within the project area would not be disturbed by construction activities or ground clearing. These resources, however, would remain vulnerable to disturbance due to the current public uses of the property, including the use of OHVs.

The other probable development/sale of public lands within the Town would equal several hundred acres. Any sites identified would require archaeological investigations prior to development. Therefore, cumulatively, there would be no impact to cultural resources on-site.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

In order to minimize the potential risk of disturbance resulting from implementation of the Proposed Action, testing and data recovery at a prehistoric site would be required prior to approval and sale of the property to the Town. Since the Camp Verde Airport is not considered eligible for listing on the NRHP, its transfer to the Town of Camp Verde would not result in a determination of adverse effect under NHPA or a finding of significant impact under NEPA. One prehistoric site was determined eligible for listing on the NRHP. Data recovery and appropriate consultation and concurrence will be completed as agreed to in the Memorandum of Agreement between the Forest Service and SHPO. Alternative B adversely impacts cultural resources in relation to this eligible site. Cumulatively, other eligible sites may be impacted from casual use of adjacent areas that have not been surveyed for cultural resources or on private lands.

## ***WATER RESOURCES***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

There is no perennial surface water within the boundaries of the site, which is located approximately 0.5 mile from the Verde River. No wetlands occur within the project area. No surface water rights within the site have been registered with the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR 2001).

No groundwater wells are registered with ADWR on the site; however, there are a large number of small-capacity domestic wells located on the private land immediately west of the site (ADWR 2004). Groundwater occurs at relatively shallow depths in the vicinity of the project area, and can be at or near ground surface in the Holocene alluvial material immediately along the Verde River. Depth to groundwater generally is 50–100 feet below ground surface for wells completed away from the Verde River in the Verde Formation (ADWR 2003).

Water quality in the vicinity of the site is generally acceptable for domestic use, with concentrations of total dissolved solids (TDS) ranging from approximately 600 to 1,000 milligrams per liter (mg/L), although these levels exceed the advisory secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 500 mg/L set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). There are widespread problems with excessive concentrations of arsenic associated with groundwater from the Verde Formation, in excess of both the current Arizona Aquifer Water Quality Standard (AWQS) of 0.05 mg/L and the new USEPA MCL of 0.01 mg/L that takes effect in 2006 (USEPA 2003). Well yields in the vicinity of the site are modest, generally less than 50 gallons per minute (gpm), with some wells discharging several hundred gpm (ADWR 2003).

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Current site use does not involve use of groundwater resources, and there are no surface water resources present within the project area. No wetlands occur on-site; therefore wetlands would not be impacted under this alternative. Under the No Action alternative, delivery of sediment and potential contaminants via stormwater conveyance from the site to the section of the Verde River closest to the project area, 0.5 mile, may occur. Soil disturbance may result in some erosion losses that may impact water quality if drainage reaches perennial water bodies such as the Verde River. Illegal dumping observed at the site could have impacts to surface and groundwater quality if hazardous materials are involved.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

The proposed future site use does not include well drilling or substantial additional consumption of groundwater or surface water resources. While specific plans for park facilities have yet to be developed, ball fields, which require irrigation for turf, may be included. If so, experience from other projects indicates that 3–4 acre-feet of water may be needed to irrigate 1 acre of turf per year (Schalau 2005). Reclaimed effluent would be used to meet irrigation needs. Water from the Town's water supply may eventually reach the site to satisfy needs for potable water (e.g., human consumption). Groundwater availability and use is the responsibility of the Town of Camp Verde as they consider development.

Under this alternative, delivery of sediment and potential contaminants to the section of the Verde River closest to the project area, 0.5 mile, would occur in the short-term during construction; however, implementation of storm water control planning and BMPs should minimize the effects. Any long-term

effect would be mitigated by landscaping and other measures. No wetlands occur on-site; therefore wetlands would not be impacted under this alternative. The Proposed Action may call for the use of septic tank systems or sewer installation at the site; systems are widely used in the area, and would not constitute a risk to local surface water and groundwater quality.

Eventually, reclaimed effluent would be used for any irrigation needs on the site. Use of reclaimed effluent does not constitute a risk to groundwater or surface water quality. The Town is working with developers in the hopes of bringing Camp Verde water (potable) to the project area. If final park planning includes sewer installation, and if this were to be accomplished with a septic tank system installed per local and state regulations, then there would be no adverse effect on local surface water and groundwater resources from wastewater.

Cumulative impacts would be similar to those described under the No Action alternative. While the Verde Valley is undergoing rapid development with ever-increasing demands on the regional water supply, the proposed action is not expected to contribute to cumulative impacts on that water supply. The primary reason for this is the planned use of reclaimed effluent rather than potable water to meet the park's irrigation needs. Public concern has been expressed about potential cumulative impacts of the proposed action in conjunction with the proposed Yavapai Ranch land exchange. This land exchange, if approved, would likely result in additional development and water consumption in the Verde Valley. However, the final disposition of properties, the level of development, and resulting water demands are too speculative at this point to judge future impacts of the proposed land exchange.

## ***NOISE***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Town noise regulations do not apply to national forest lands. Those current on-site uses that generate noise include OHV, aircraft use, and other recreation activities. Because the site is currently undeveloped national forest land, there are no noise-generating facilities located within the project area.

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under the No Action alternative, the Town would not purchase the parcel. There would be no direct, indirect impacts, or cumulative impacts to the current soundscape of the area resulting from this alternative. Current uses would continue to occur, creating some noise, but this noise is not measurable due to the unknown levels of motorcycle and OHV use on-site; these noise levels vary by day, time of day, and by level of use.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under the Proposed Action alternative, the Town would purchase the parcel and a community park would be developed. Town noise regulations would apply to this project area after conveyance to the Town. Any activities planned for the park would comply with local noise ordinances; therefore, no adverse direct or indirect impacts, and therefore no cumulative impacts, would occur.

## ***LAND USE AND LAND USE REQUIREMENTS***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Within the incorporated Town boundary of Camp Verde there are approximately 28,000 acres of land, approximately 43% of which are public lands, mostly administered by the Forest Service. Land is administered and managed by the Forest Service for multiple use under the direction of the Prescott and Coconino National Forest Plans and Forest Service policies and regulations. These resources and uses include recreation, as well as grazing, utilities, roads, trails and wildlife habitat. The proposed site was identified in the Coconino National Forest Plan as base for exchange lands.

According to the current General Plan, retaining public lands as undeveloped or for public recreational use also serves the vision of the townspeople (Town of Camp Verde, 1998). The General Plan has also identified the project area as open space. The Town is zoned for industrial, commercial, and residential uses. Industrial uses are authorized for 600 acres of land, and approximately 31% of this area is in such use. Of the 410 acres currently zoned for commercial use, 54% is utilized for commercial purposes. Residential land use accounts for approximately 14,250 acres in Town.

Within the project area, the airstrip has been officially closed and removed from all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) records and maps, but FAA regulations do not prohibit the landing or takeoff of a plane from any location considered safe by the pilot. Therefore, the Forest Service has not officially prohibited use of the project area by aircraft (Bonomo 2004).

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under the No Action alternative, the project area would remain CNF land and would be managed under current management regulations, policies, and guidelines. The other probable development/sale of public lands within the Town would equal several hundred acres. There would be no change in land use; therefore, no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts would occur.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under the Proposed Action, land use and ownership would change. The project area's use would become more formal after the sale to the Town. The Town has proposed the area be developed into a community park. This land use change would still comply with the Town's General plan, retaining the parcel as undeveloped and for recreational uses, consistent with the open space definition as stated in the Town's General Plan. The sale is consistent with the Coconino National Forest Plan as it is base in exchange. Change in land use of other areas would not cumulatively impact the overall land use of the area.

## ***AIR QUALITY***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Air quality in the CNF, specifically in MA 11, has been included in the watershed management objectives of the area in the CNF Plan (CNF 1987) and although mentioned in the "Program" description ("Watershed, Soil, Air"), does not make specific mention to air quality. There is no management emphasis for air quality within the management area.

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under the No Action alternative, the project area would remain CNF land and current uses would continue. Although current uses would continue to contribute emissions, they would not directly, indirectly, or cumulatively alter the overall air quality of the project area or its vicinity.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Construction of park facilities would contribute short-term emissions; however, these emissions would not directly, indirectly, or cumulatively alter the overall air quality of the project area or its vicinity in the long-term. Construction activities would be conducted with the appropriate dust abatement.

## **EFFECT ON BIOLOGICAL FACTORS OF THE SITE**

### ***VEGETATION***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

SWCA Biologist Suzanne Rhodes conducted a biological survey of the site on April 9, 2004. The project area occurs within the Creosotebush-Crucifixion-thorn Series of the Arizona Upland Subdivision of the Sonoran Desertscrub ecotone (Brown 1994). Portions of the site are highly disturbed, with an unvegetated landing strip and several unpaved roads. In undisturbed areas, vegetation is dominated by either creosotebush or mesquite. Dense stands of mesquite occur throughout the site, and mature trees are present. No wetlands or wetland plants were noted. The area has been heavily disturbed by OHV use. An invasive species survey was conducted and is discussed in the Invasive Species section of this document. According to current landownership information for the Town, approximately 12,900 acres of national forest land is located within the Town of Camp Verde's town limits. The project area consists of approximately 220 acres of vegetation within its boundary.

#### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

The area has been heavily disturbed by OHV use and weedy plants are present. Under the No Action alternative, this type of disturbance is likely to continue. Other undeveloped Forest Service parcels sold and subsequently developed would also sustain vegetation loss, decreasing the amount of undeveloped, vegetated land in the vicinity of the project area. Cumulatively, however, when compared to the amount of Forest Service land within the Town, would not result in a large area of vegetation removal even with multiple land use proposal in the area.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Some native vegetation would likely be removed and replaced with recreational facilities. The majority of open space would be landscaped with native grasses and trees that would thrive in the new park environment. The type of grass to be used if ballparks were developed has not yet been decided. The Town intends to leave as much native vegetation as possible and would plant trees that would be, for the most part, native. Approximately 1.7% of Forest Service land within Town limits that consists of vegetation would be impacted. Under the Proposed Action alternative, cumulative impacts would be the same as described under the No Action alternative.

## ***WILDLIFE***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

SWCA Biologist Suzanne Rhodes conducted a biological survey of the site on April 9, 2004. The disturbed nature of the site has resulted in less groundcover and foraging habitat for wildlife species than in nearby non-disturbed sites. Wildlife species typically found in this type of desertscrub habitat would include jackrabbit (*Lepus* spp.), cottontail (*Sylvilagus* spp.), Merriam's Kangaroo Rat (*Dipodomys merriami*), ground squirrels, deer (*Odocoileus* sp.), javelina (*Tayassu tajacu*), and a variety of birds, snakes, and lizards (Brown 1983).

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under this alternative, disturbance is likely to continue, resulting in less groundcover and foraging habitat for wildlife species compared to nearby non-disturbed areas. There are no structures, walls, or fences currently on the property except along the portion of the property that is adjacent to State Route 260; therefore, no fragmentation of habitat is occurring.

Cumulatively, under Alternative A, with development of the area reasonably foreseeable, fragmentation of habitat may occur.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Due to the existing activities at the site, wildlife use within the area is not anticipated to change considerably if the site is developed into a park. Existing vegetation within the area would be replaced with some non-native grasses for ballfields and native species commonly used for park landscaping either through salvaging native species on site or through native species of nursery stock. Wildlife species that currently use the area would likely be displaced to the surrounding landscape; however, there may be an increase in species that thrive in the presence of human activity. Species may benefit from a park-like setting instead of existing human activities. Depending on the final uses of the site, there is a potential for habitat fragmentation due to fencing; however, no fencing is planned for the perimeter of the park, minimizing habitat fragmentation. The only fencing that would occur would be around ball fields, if such a development occurs.

Cumulatively impacts are the same as described under the No Action alternative.

### ***SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Special status species that are known to occur, or for which there is existing or potential habitat within the CNF, Red Rock District, are addressed in this section.

Those special status species that are known to occur, or have existing or potential habitat within the Coconino National Forest, Red Rock District, but are not known to occur within the project area, or are unlikely to occur based on the absence of suitable habitat within the project area, are listed in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Special Status Species of Coconino National Forest, Red Rock District, That Are Not Known to Occur or Are Unlikely to Occur within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Determination of Effect
<b>Federally Listed Endangered, Threatened, and Proposed (12 species)</b>		
<b>Birds</b>		
Mexican Spotted Owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	No effect
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	No effect
Yuma Clapper Rail	<i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i>	No effect
<b>Fish</b>		
Colorado Pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	No effect
Razorback Sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	No effect
Gila Chub	<i>Gila intermedia</i>	No effect
Loach Minnow	<i>Tiaroga cobitis</i>	No effect
Gila Trout	<i>Oncorhynchus gilae gilae</i>	No effect
Spikedace	<i>Meda fulgida</i>	No effect
<b>Amphibians</b>		
Chiricahua Leopard Frog	<i>Rana chiricahuensis</i>	No effect
<b>Plants</b>		
Arizona Cliffrose	<i>Purshia subintegra</i>	No effect
<b>Regional Forester's Sensitive Species (33 species)</b>		
<b>Mammals</b>		
Southwestern River Otter	<i>Lutra canadensis sonora</i>	No effect
<b>Birds</b>		
American Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	No effect
Common Black-Hawk	<i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i>	No effect
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	No effect
Bell's Vireo	<i>Vireo bellii</i>	No effect
<b>Fish</b>		
Roundtail Chub	<i>Gila robusta</i>	No effect
<b>Amphibians and Reptiles</b>		
Lowland Leopard Frog	<i>Rana yavapaiensis</i>	No effect
Northern Leopard Frog	<i>Rana pipiens</i>	No effect
Arizona Toad	<i>Bufo microscaphus</i>	No effect
Narrow-headed Garter Snake	<i>Thamnophis rufipunctatus</i>	No effect
Mexican Garter Snake	<i>Thamnophis eques megalops</i>	No effect
<b>Snails</b>		
Fossil Springsnail	<i>Pyrgulopsis simplex</i>	No effect
Page Springsnail	<i>Pyrgulopsis morrisoni</i>	No effect
<b>Invertebrates</b>		
Maricopa Tiger Beetle	<i>Cicindela oregona maricopa</i>	No effect
Tiger Beetle	<i>Cicindela hirticollis corpuscular</i>	No effect
Freeman's Agave Borer	<i>Agathymus baueri freemani</i>	No effect
Neumogen's Giant Skipper	<i>Agathymus neumogeni</i>	No effect

**Table 3.** Special Status Species of Coconino National Forest, Red Rock District, That Are Not Known to Occur or Are Unlikely to Occur within the Project Area, continued

Common Name	Scientific Name	Determination of Effect
<b>Invertebrates, cont.</b>		
Aryxna Giant Skipper	<i>Agathymus aryxna</i>	No effect
Blue-black Silverspot Butterfly	<i>Speyeria nokomis nokomis</i>	No effect
Mountain Silverspot Butterfly	<i>Speyeria nokomis nitocris</i>	No effect
Obsolete Viceroy Butterfly	<i>Limenitis archippus obsolete</i>	No effect
Early Elfin	<i>Incisalia fotis</i>	No effect
Comstock's Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys comstocki</i>	No effect
Spotted Skipperling	<i>Piruna polingii</i>	No effect
<b>Plants</b>		
Eastwood Alumroot	<i>Heuchera eastwoodiae</i>	No effect
Flagstaff Penstemon	<i>Penstemon nudiflorus</i>	No effect
Heathleaf Wild Buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum ericifolium var. ericifolium</i>	No effect
Verde Valley Sage	<i>Salvia dorrii mearnsii</i>	No effect
Cliff Fleabane	<i>Erigeron saxatilis</i>	No effect
Flagstaff Pennyroyal	<i>Hedeoma diffusum</i>	No effect
Arizona Bugbane	<i>Cimicifuga arizonica</i>	No effect
Rusby Milk-Vetch	<i>Astragalus rusbyi</i>	No effect
<b>Management Indicator Species (1 species)</b>		
Antelope	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>	No effect

A summary of special status species that are known to occur or may occur based on the presence of potentially suitable habitat within the project area is provided in Table 4. SWCA Biologist Suzanne Rhodes conducted a site reconnaissance of the project area on April 9, 2004. No species-specific surveys were conducted as part of this reconnaissance.

**Table 4.** Special Status Species that are Known to Occur, or for Which There Is Potentially Suitable Habitat within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	ESA Status	Suitable Habitat	
			Present	Occupied
<b>Federally Listed Endangered, Threatened, and Proposed (1 species)</b>				
<b>Birds</b>				
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Threatened	No	No
<b>Regional Forester's Sensitive Species (5 species)</b>				
<b>Birds</b>				
Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	Candidate	No	No
<b>Amphibians and Reptiles</b>				
Arizona Night Lizard	<i>Xantusia vigilis arizonae</i>	-	Yes	No
<b>Plants</b>				
Tonto Basin Agave	<i>Agave delamateri</i>	-	Yes	No
Hualapai Milkwort	<i>Polygala rusbyi</i>	-	Yes	No
Ripley Wild Buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum ripleyi</i>	-	Yes	No

### ***BALD EAGLE***

A small resident population of bald eagles is found in central Arizona, while wintering bald eagles are found in both central and northern Arizona (AGFD 2002a). Territories and nesting localities in Arizona have been documented along the upper and lower Verde River. Areas selected as wintering habitat have an adequate food supply and open water such as river rapids, impoundments, dam spillways, and lakes. Nesting habitat usually consists of areas with tall trees that are taller than surroundings, although bald eagles in Arizona typically nest on cliff faces, ledges, and pinnacles. In general, bald eagles prefer areas with high water-to-land edge, and areas with unimpeded views. The diet of the bald eagle is composed mainly of fish, followed by small mammals, carrion, birds (normally waterfowl), and to a lesser extent various amphibians and reptiles (AGFD 2002a).

No bald eagle nesting habitat exists in the project area; however, bald eagles may forage in the area for small mammals, reptiles, and carrion.

### ***WESTERN YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO***

The yellow-billed cuckoo is known from southern, central, and extreme northeastern Arizona (AGFD 2002b). It utilizes streamside cottonwood and willow groves and larger mesquite bosques for migrating and breeding, and has been observed, although rarely, as a transient in xeric desert settings. Diet of the yellow-billed cuckoo consists of bird eggs, frogs, lizards, ants, caterpillars, beetles, wasps, flies, berries, and fruit.

Yellow-billed cuckoos may find habitat in the project area suitable for foraging.

### ***ARIZONA NIGHT LIZARD***

In central Arizona, the Arizona night lizard ranges from the western slope of the Central Plateau (Weaver, McCloud, and Superstition Mountains, Tonto National Monument, and Valentine), in the Hualapai, Harquahala, Kofa, and Castle Dome mountains, and at other scattered localities (Stebbins 1985). Habitat for this secretive lizard is arid or semiarid lands, where it lives beneath fallen branches of Joshua trees, dead clumps of various other species of yucca, nolina, agave and cardons, in rock crevices, beneath cow chips, soil-matted dead brush and other debris, and beneath logs. Arizona night lizards are seldom found in the open away from cover. The species is widely distributed in the region and potentially suitable habitat, in the form of mesquite tree debris, is present in the project area.

### ***TONTO BASIN AGAVE***

This species is usually found between 2,800 and 3,400 feet atop benches (often high benches), at the edges of slopes, and on gentle slopes overlooking major drainages and perennial streams. It may also be found in association (sometimes direct, often indirect) with archaeological features, including multi-room foundations, and also above check dams and alignments. As with most agave species, *Agave delamateri* requires well-drained soil, being susceptible to root rot. Suitable habitat for the Tonto Basin agave occurs within the project area as well-drained soils on dry slopes at elevations between 2,800 and 3,400 feet.

### ***HUALAPAI MILKWORT***

Since little is known about the habitat of this species, it is possible that suitable habitat for the Hualapai milkwort may occur within the project area, which is within the known elevation range of the species (3,200–5,000 feet).

### ***RIPLEY WILD BUCKWHEAT***

Ripley wild buckwheat is a much-branched, low-growing sub-shrub 2–8 inches in height. This woody perennial is found on calcareous soils in Sonoran desertscrub and pinyon-juniper woodland. It grows at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 6,000 feet and flowers between April and June. When not in flower it is difficult to see because it forms low mats that blend in with the soil. In Arizona it is known from near Horseshoe Lake and Chalk Mountain, the Cottonwood area, and from Frazier's Well on the Hualapai Indian Reservation (AGFD 1997). The project site lies at the lower elevational distribution for this species and no pinyon-juniper habitats are found within the project area.

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Current uses of the property likely would not affect the Arizona night lizard, Tonto Basin agave, Hualapai milkwort, or Ripley wild buckwheat and would not result in a trend toward listing of these species. This alternative would have no adverse impact on any of these species or alter their potential to occur within the project area and, therefore, would have no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on these species.

#### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

The Proposed Action alternative could eliminate all existing or potential habitat for Arizona night lizard, Tonto Basin agave, Hualapai milkwort, and Ripley wild buckwheat within the project area, depending on the scale of future site development. This loss of habitat, however, would be inconsequential in comparison to the large amount of habitat available for this species region-wide. Therefore the Proposed Action alternative would have no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on these species but may affect habitat. The Proposed Action may impact individuals but not result in a downward trend for any of these species.

### ***INVASIVE SPECIES***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Colorado Plateau Field Station's Southwest Exotic Plant Mapping Project database was accessed for the current list (Arizona Noxious Weed List) of invasive weed species in Arizona (available online at <http://www.usgs.nau.edu/swepic/asp/swemp/list.asp?status=Arizona>). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service, Plant Services Division, Arizona Noxious Weed report (USDA 2003) was also reviewed. A formal inventory for invasive plant species within the project area was conducted on April 9, 2004, by SWCA biologist Suzanne Rhodes. No invasive plant species were documented within the project area.

### **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

#### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

If the No Action alternative were implemented, continued use of OHVs in the project area would increase the risk of invasive plant introduction on site, however, the CNF follows BMPs for weed control (see Project Record) to minimize introduction. Cumulatively, development of other parcels within the vicinity

of the project area, with proper implementation of BMPs, would not increase the potential for invasive plant introduction.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Although the sale of the parcel would not affect the risk of invasive plant introduction on site but development activities could result in potential species spread. To minimize this potential, however, the Town is willing to implement strategies to minimize invasion such as: (1) all earth moving and hauling equipment would be washed at the contractor's storage facility prior to arriving on site; and (2) any disturbed ground would be seeded using native species, if applicable. These measures are not required and would not be included as a deed restriction. It is undetermined whether OHVs would be authorized in the future park. If they were, the potential for introducing invasive species to the project area would be the same as under the No Action alternative.

In order to minimize the introduction of invasive species onsite, the Town has elected to follow the CNF's BMP (USDA 2005). The Town is interested in taking actions regarding noxious weeds but implementation of these practices would not be a requirement of this sale or used as mitigation. Cumulative impacts under the Proposed Action alternative would be the same as described under the No Action alternative.

## **EFFECT ON THE ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE SITE**

### ***ECONOMIC BASE***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Construction, ranching, farming, light industry, trade and service, a casino, and public administration serve as the Town's major employment sources (Town of Camp Verde, 2000). The County's major industries include retail trade, services, and public administration (Arizona Department of Commerce, 2002). The majority of land surrounding the project area is residential.

Neither the U.S. Census nor the Town had information regarding the resale values of homes based on their proximity to recreational facilities or parks. Tourism and the revenue generated from use of community parks have not been measured. There are numerous articles, however, that discuss the benefits of parks and recreational opportunities on community economies.

Open space and parks provide amenities, such as convenient educational and recreational opportunities, attractive views, and wildlife viewing opportunities; these benefits can be reflected in increased real property values and increased marketability for property located near open space and parks. Also, by conserving open space and parks rather than permitting intensive development, local agencies can reduce costs for public services, building schools, and other services that residential spaces require. Further, communities along park boundaries can provide visitor services, including special events, food, recreational equipment sales and rentals, lodging, and convenience items.

## **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under this alternative, there would be no direct, indirect, and therefore cumulative impact to the Town's employment or household income characteristics.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under the Proposed Action alternative, there would be no direct, indirect, and therefore no cumulative impact to the Town's employment or household income characteristics. There is no evidence to suggest that the community would react negatively (i.e., moving out of the neighborhood) to having a park in that neighborhood (public scoping identified a desire for a park).

## ***COST***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

In 2000, the Town Council created a Special Projects Fund from sales tax revenues, with 40% of the fund going to the development and maintenance of community parks. In addition, the Town has secured some additional funding through the Local, Regional, and State Parks (LRSP) Heritage Fund of the Arizona Department of Parks for the development of community parks.

## **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under this alternative, the Town would not develop a park within the project area. The Special Projects Fund would be used to fund other Town projects based on the recommendations of the Council and the Arizona Department of Parks funding secured for this project would not be granted. Cumulatively, the Town may suffer a loss of credibility regarding its inability to spend grant money on the project, therefore may jeopardize future financing for projects or any other potential park site that may be found later.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under this alternative, the Special Projects Fund and LRSP Heritage Grant money would be used to develop and maintain park facilities within the project area. Cumulative impacts would result in available Town funding being used for maintenance and administration of the site into the future, whether the park facilities are fully developed or not.

## ***ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE***

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Non-white residents make up approximately 11%, 15%, and 8% of the total populations of the project area neighborhood, the Town, and Yavapai County, respectively (Table 5). Hispanic people make up a greater percentage of the project area neighborhood than that of the Town or County. As shown in Table 5, minority and Hispanic populations are not disproportionately represented in the project area neighborhood when compared to the Town or the County.

**Table 5. Ethnic Characteristics**

	<b>Census Tract 4, Census Block 16*</b>	<b>Town of Camp Verde</b>	<b>Yavapai County</b>
Total Population (2000)	1,892	9,451	167,517
White	1,677	8,038	153,933
Black or African American	7	33	655
American Indian or Alaska Native	34	691	2,686
Asian	3	21	851
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2	13	138
Some other race	119	444	5,990
More than one race	50	211	3,264
Percentage of Non-White Population	11%	15%	8%
Of Total Population, Percentage of Hispanic or Latino	14%	11%	10%

\*portion of Town where site is located

## **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

The No Action alternative would not result in any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to minority or Hispanic populations in the vicinity of the project area.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

No direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to minority or Hispanic populations in the vicinity of the project area would occur under this alternative because they are not disproportionately represented in the project area neighborhood when compared to the Town or the County.

## **EFFECT ON THE SOCIAL FACTORS OF THE SITE**

### ***PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION ISSUES***

#### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Residents and visitors currently can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities within the Camp Verde area, such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, OHV use, jeep tours, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The Town also has a public library, community swimming pool, soccer and baseball fields, parks, and picnic sites. The Town constantly reviews the conditions and amenities provided in their parks. Public concern has been expressed about the lack of restrooms at the skate park during the six months the pool at the park is not open; however, public restrooms are available year-round at nearby Butler Park. Restrooms may be constructed at the skate park if current efforts to reduce the high rates of vandalism in the park prove successful. Town goals include establishing facilities for a Yavapai College satellite center, a trade school, and a regional park (Town of Camp Verde 2000). Camp Verde also boasts that more than 18 miles of the Verde River is located within town limits (Town of Camp Verde 1998).

Currently, the project area is primarily used for OHV activity. Other recreation uses, such as equestrian, aircraft use, walking, and wildlife viewing also occurs. OHV use has created impacts to vegetation and soils at the site, which impacts other users. The site is open to the general public, and as in other forest areas around the communities of the Verde Valley, has been used for illegal dumping of garbage. There are OHV trails in the area that do not connect to any community trails or Forest Service trails.

In addition, the Forest Service has stated that recreational pilots (ultra-light planes) can still utilize the runway on-site. The Forest Service does not have an estimate of how often planes land on-site, but both planes and motorized parachutes are known to use the site occasionally (Bonomo 2004). The old airstrip provides these users with a large open landing area in Town. This activity does not require permitting by either the Town or the Forest Service.

## **DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### ***ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)***

Under this alternative, the parcel would be managed under Forest Service policies, guidelines, and regulations with no direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to access or recreation within the project area. Uses would likely remain the same for the short-term.

### ***ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION)***

Under this alternative, the parcel would be sold to the Town, and a park would be developed. It has not yet been decided which uses would be allowed within the park, but OHV and equestrian uses would be considered. The Town's Park and Recreation Department would determine all public access and recreational uses, and would incorporate public involvement opportunities into the design phase of the project prior to development.

If OHV use is allowed in the project area, the area in which it would be allowed would be smaller than the current area of use due to the other components of a community park that would be constructed; it is highly unlikely that the entire project area would be open to OHV use. There is also a possibility that OHV use would not be incorporated into the park design. In this case, OHV users may move to other areas to recreate. Community park development would likely result in increased administrative presence at the site and reduce illegal activities such as dumping. OHV and illegal activities could be displaced to other undeveloped property in the near vicinity. Cumulatively, other development in the area would likely lead to further displacement of these activities as well as change in Forest Service off-road policies that may prohibit off road travel.

Trails, including General Crook Trail, are located in the vicinity of the project area. In the event of closures on the property, users would not need to travel more than a few miles to access other trails. Indirect impacts include providing additional community recreational facilities.

## CHAPTER 4

### LIST OF PREPARERS

---

A number of people participated in the analysis and preparation of this Environmental Assessment. Table 6 lists these individuals, along with their organization and contribution.

**Table 6.** List of Preparers

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Bill Leibfried	SWCA	EA Project Manager
Jennifer Hogan	SWCA	NEPA Specialist
Dorothy House	SWCA	Technical Editor
Chris Garrett	SWCA	Hydrologist
Matt Laurretta	SWCA	Biologist
Suzanne Rhodes	SWCA	Botanist
Lisa Dickerson	SWCA	Project Administrator
Casey Wyatt	SWCA	Admin Record
Judy Adams	USFS	NEPA Specialist
Janie Agyagos	USFS	Wildlife Biologist
Jack Norman	USFS	Soil and Water
Jim Beard	USFS	Scenery
Peter Pilles	USFS	Archeology



## CHAPTER 5

# LIST OF AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES, AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED AND/OR PROVIDED COPIES OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

---

### Agencies/Organizations/Businesses

- Anna Colba Family Living Trust
- B & W Co. Camp
- Bank of New York
- Bebow Family Trust
- Bedair Family Trust
- Bennett Starr Living Trust
- Camp Verde Historical Society
- Clear Creek Cemetery Association
- Coffey Commercial Center, LLC
- Crosser Family Trust
- D W Northern Enterprises, LLC
- Delnicki Family Revocable Trust
- Diamond Creek Homeowners Association
- Everett Louis Hunt Living Trust
- Go Post International Inc.
- Irish Inc.
- M A Verde Partners LLC
- McCann Family Trust
- McInnis Family Trust
- McMahan Investments II, LLC
- Mid-State Guard Rail Fence and Sign Inc.
- National City Mortgage Co.
- Park Central Properties
- Quatros Corporation
- Roper Plumbing and Mechanical
- Rosie Pearl January Living Trust
- Second Advent Broadcasting Network
- Rev. Sullivan Family Trust
- Teague Family Revocable Living Trust
- Terry Family Living Trust
- Town of Camp Verde
- Woodruff Family Trust
- Zellner Family Limited partnership LLP

### Tribes

- Yavapai Apache Tribe

### Individuals

- Darkwood and Delores Adams
- Debra Alcala
- Steven Alton
- Jessie and Jocelyn Alvey
- Laura Archer
- Edwin and Patricia Armstrong
- William and Tani Lynn Armstrong
- Ricky and Debora Ashby
- Sidney and Sandra Ashton
- M E Aultman
- Stephen and Maria Austin
- Nelda Avery
- Jeremy and Merika Back
- Ann Baker
- William and Joan Baker
- Ronald Barto
- John and Mary Bassous
- Mary Alma Bigsby
- Earl and Geneva Bird
- Francis and Dawn Blaire
- Walter and Mary Blaire
- Jack and Chloe Blazer
- James and Vicki Bleak
- Jack and Susanne Blum
- Michael and Colleen Boler
- Karen Sue Borg
- Dwight and Anna Bowser
- Leonard and Janet Bowser
- Glenn and Lori Boyce
- Keith and Sandra Bracken
- Janie Brady
- Walter and Debra Brandis

- Fay Brandon
- Judy Bridge
- Matthew and Tonya Brogdon
- James and Helen Brooks
- Dorothy and Gene Brown
- AJ Burgbacher
- Ella Chandler
- Pamela Chapin
- David and Ida Chapman
- Albert and Eva Clements
- Tammie Coberly
- Grace Ann Cole
- GW and Wilma Collier
- Clarence and Margaret Collins
- David Lee Combest
- Raymond and Joyce Coon
- Arthur and Daphne Coppinger
- Lillie Creach
- Ronald and Karen Crowder
- Gwynora Dare
- Jeffrey Dartt
- John and Dena Davis
- Gary Davix
- Tammy Day
- Devin Delnicki
- Diann Delnicki
- Andrea Dickey
- Mitchel and Heidi Dickinson
- RW and Kaidie Dickinson
- Irene Dodge
- Stephen and Jennifer Dutton
- Gary Edblad
- Randall and Sally Epperson
- Gerardo Esparza
- Terrence and Marilyn Footer
- Bryce and Sharon Ford
- Bette Foreman
- Robert and Miriam Forshner
- Steven and Marilee Forst
- Lawrence and Wilma Fouts
- Marvin and Carol Gabel
- Joe and Angelita Gallegos
- Darrel and Lois Gehring
- Kenneth and Charla Geyser
- Larry and Misty Gibb
- Donnie Gilbert
- Lamoin and Judy Gilbert
- Lamoin Gilbert
- William Gilliam
- Paul Godesiabois
- Candis Gomez
- Ronald and Annie Gomez
- Kathy Grant
- John and Joyce Gray
- Brian and Lori Greene
- Mark Gugliemoni
- Donald and Gwendolyn Gunnell
- Harold and Fonda Hammond
- Leslie and Laura Hammond
- Gene and Evelyn Hatcher
- Richard and Brenda Hauser
- Richard and Laura Helgerson
- Richard and Nikki Henderson
- Jehanne Henry
- Lynda Hilton
- Antoinette Van Horn
- Donald and Deborah Hough
- Twyla Hough
- David and Lorna Housenga
- Beckwith and Maigel Hubbell
- Louis Everett Hunt
- Steven and Shannon Irwin
- Debbie Jacobsen
- Kurt and Tracy Jacobsen
- Robert Edmond and Patricia Marie Jasman
- Joseph and Ellie Jasman
- James and Roxanne Jasman
- Melvin and Ruth Jensen
- Marcia Johns
- David and Barbara Johnson
- Henry and Gloria Johnson
- James and Lisa Johnson
- Douglas and Virginia Jones
- Paul and Constance Jordan
- Robert and Debra Justus
- Jerome and Willa Anne Kennedy
- James and George Ann Kilby
- Glenn King
- Janice Klann
- James and Clara Kling
- Ora Klotz
- Gerald and Lois Knutson
- Richard and Bernice Kohler
- John and Jill Lacy
- Damon Lanier
- James and Charlotte Larue
- Howard Lavitt
- Timothy Lawrence
- Don and Elizabeth Lee
- George Leslie and Ruby Lee
- Elberta Lightfoot

- Coleen Lindren
- Gary and Athene Lollman
- Frank Lopez Jr.
- William and Joyce Manifee
- Philip and Lee Marcacci
- William and Betti Mash
- Lisa Mathews
- Alan and Sandra McCracken
- Tanner and Brian McDonald
- Dennis and Susan McDonald
- June Meacham
- AG and Shirley D Menkee
- Johnny and Diana Miles
- Judy Miles
- James and Bonnie Miller
- Rosemary Miller
- Derek and Lisa Mina
- Andrea Moncibaez
- Steven and Denna Morrow
- Jess and Shanna Mulcaire
- Donald Lynn Murdock
- Walter and Mary Murdock
- Katherine Murray
- Clayton Myers
- Linda and Charles Myers
- Kathleen Nelson
- Richard Nelson
- Robert and Donna Nichols
- Donna Norton
- Otha Dee Orr
- Dolly Ortega
- Mary Ortman
- Aleksander and Krystyna Ostrowski
- Benjamin Pareja
- Danny and Thyna Parker
- Marlin and Lynda Parker
- William and Audrey Parker
- Howard and Betty Parrish
- Robert and Frances Peace
- Lorrie Pearson
- Timothy and Ruth Perry
- Beverly Petska
- CA McDonald and J Phyllis
- Frederick and Corinne Piccirilli
- Charles and Elizabeth Pierce
- Eugene and Sandra Pine
- Jose and Patty Pineda
- William and Nancy Pohlman
- Katharine Pollock
- Wayne and Norene Pouliot
- Paul and Carolyn Przeracki
- Richard and Donna Ralston
- John and Victoria Reay
- Lester and Sharon Reddell
- Peggy Reddell
- Gregory Reeves
- Jesse and Jessica Reeves
- Charles and Shirley Renaud
- Betty and Louise Rhoda
- Michael and Patricia Rohlfling
- Ronald and Lillian Ross
- Gary and Jo Roth
- Timothy and Robyn Roth
- David and Ramona Sanders
- Eli Sanders
- Roy and E Louise Sanderson
- David and Melanie Schmid
- Kim and Kelly Seekins
- Patrick Seekins
- Robert and Dorothy Sheidler
- Duane and Nancy Shepard
- Melba Shill
- Larry Shutes
- Michael and Anne Skovron
- Gail Smith
- James and Maureen Soper
- David and Pamela Spear
- John and Roxanne Spendlove
- Sadie Marie Starr
- Lawrence and Wanda Stiffler
- Chad William Stoll
- Daniel and Nancy Swan
- Jim and Lynn Sweitzer
- Ray and Paula Taber
- Ernest and Eloisa Tachias
- Daniel Tackitt
- James and Helen Tackitt
- Ricky and Nancy Tackitt
- Robert and Stella Talley
- Chet and Shelly Teague
- Gary Thomas Thompson
- Nocona Kenfield Thompson
- Richard and Laro Thompson
- Jerome and Therese Tobish
- Rudy and Patricia Valen
- Paul and Naomi Van Liew
- Robert and Lauren Waite
- Thomas and Christine Walker
- Charles and Dianne Warnacutt
- William and Barbara Watson
- Hilaire and Avalee Smith Webb
- Betty Weir

- Robert and Daria Lee Weir
- Michael and Linda Welch
- Douglas White
- James and Linda Williams
- Thomas and Juanita Williams
- Joyce Wilson
- Ross and Carolyn Withers
- Donald Wochner
- Christopher and Anna Woida
- Gerald W Wright
- William and Estelle Yates
- Clayton and Donna Young
- John and Janie Young
- Stephen Youngkin
- Darrell and Lynda Zellner
- Rodney Zohner

## LITERATURE CITED

---

- Arizona Department of Commerce. 2002. Yavapai County, Arizona Community Profile. Phoenix, Arizona.
- Arizona Department of Commerce. 2003. Camp Verde, Arizona Community Profile. Phoenix, Arizona. <http://www.azcommerce.com/doclib/commune/campverd.pdf>. Accessed March 30, 2004.
- Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). 2004. Well Registry database, updated February 2004.
- Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). 2003. Groundwater Site Inventory (GWSI) database, updated September 2003.
- Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). 2001. Surface Water Filings database, updated April 2001.
- Arizona Game and Fish Department. 2002a. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. Unpublished abstract compiled and edited by the Heritage Data Management System, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, Arizona. 8 pp.
- Arizona Game and Fish Department. 2002b. *Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*. Unpublished abstract compiled and edited by the Heritage Data Management System, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, Arizona. 4 pp.
- Arizona Geological Survey (AZGS). 2002. Digital spatial data for the Geologic Map of Arizona, D18-v3.0, August 12, 2002.
- Arizona Hospitality Research and Resource Center (AHRRC). 1999. Town of Camp Verde Parks and Recreation Study - 1999. Northern Arizona University. Prepared for the Town of Camp Verde Parks and Recreation Department.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2004. Q3 Flood Data Coverage for Yavapai County, Arizona.
- Bonomo, T. 2004. District Ranger, Prescott and Coconino National Forests. Personal Correspondence with J. Hogan, SWCA. June 8, 2004.
- Brown, D.E., ed. 1994. Biotic communities: southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Brown, D.E. 1983. Desert Plants. Special Issue. Biotic communities of the American Southwest – United States and Mexico. Published by The University of Arizona for the Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum.
- BRW, Inc (BRW). 1990. Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Study. Prepared for the Town of Camp Verde. Phoenix, Arizona.
- Coconino National Forest (CNF). 1987. Coconino National Forest Plan. U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Forest Service.

- Hendricks, D. 1985. Arizona Soils, University of Arizona College of Agriculture.
- National Park Service (NPS). 1995. Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors, A Resource Book. Fourth Edition Revised.
- Schalau, J. 2005. Associate Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Yavapai County. Email Correspondence with B. Lee, Town of Camp Verde. July 20, 2005.
- Spencer, J. 1992. Radon Gas – A Geologic Hazard in Arizona. AZGS Down-to-Earth Series No. 2.
- Town of Camp Verde. 1998. Adopted General Plan. Adopted September 23, 1998. <http://www.cvaz.org/planning/pzmisc/adoptedgeneralplan.htm>. Accessed April 2, 2004.
- Town of Camp Verde. 2000. Community Profile. [www.cvaz.org/community/docs/community\\_profile.htm](http://www.cvaz.org/community/docs/community_profile.htm). Accessed March 30, 2004.
- U.S. Census. 2000. Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics. <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Accessed April 2, 2004.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2003. Plant Services Division. Arizona State-Listed Noxious Weeds ([http://plants.usda.gov/cgi\\_bin/topics.cgi?earl=noxious.cgi](http://plants.usda.gov/cgi_bin/topics.cgi?earl=noxious.cgi)).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2005. Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Integrated Treatment of Noxious or Invasive Weeds Coconino, Kaibab, and Prescott National Forests within Coconino, Gila, Mojave, and Yavapai Counties, Arizona. U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Southwestern Region. Albuquerque, New Mexico. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/nepa/2005/feis-weeds/index.html>.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2003. Legacy and Modernized STORET water quality databases (<http://www.epa.gov/STORET>).
- U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service). 1974. National Forest Landscape Management, Volume 2. The Visual Management System. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Handbook Number 462.
- U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service). 1989. Landscape Character Types of the National Forests in Arizona and New Mexico. The Visual Management System.
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). 2004a. Landslide Incidence and Susceptibility of the Southwestern United States (<http://geochange.er.usgs.gov/sw/impacts/geology/landslides/>).
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). 2004b. National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP) Maps ([http://eqhazmaps.usgs.gov/html/nehrrp\\_maps.html](http://eqhazmaps.usgs.gov/html/nehrrp_maps.html)).
- Western Regional Climate Center. 2004. Climatological data for Cottonwood, Arizona station (002193).

## **APPENDIX**

### **Public Scoping Comment Summary**



## PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT SUMMARY

Location in Document where Concern is Addressed if within the Scope of this Document	Document Code	Comment #	Comment
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>L1</b>	1	We have been able to ride our horses...into said acreage. A park will necessarily be fenced, blocking access.
Economic Base, Page 28		2	The resale value of our properties would be greatly diminished when people know they will either ride the streets of the neighborhood or trailer to the arena.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30		3	It is unlikely that the arena would be available at the hours the neighborhood would want to use it.
Alternatives, Page 6		4	There are other more central locations for this park; there is open space along the bypass road and on Finnie Flat Road.
Visual Resources, Page 14; Noise, Page 20		5	Ball field in the park means lights and noise into the late evening.
N/A		6	A park would bring strangers through the neighborhood, some of which may not be desirable.
N/A		7	Camp Verde doesn't have enough staff of deputies to oversee the park
Purpose and Need, Page 1	<b>L2</b>	8	Recreational space is in great need in the Town and a recreational space will be a great improvement over what is there now. The area is now devoid of vegetation due to current uses.
N/A	<b>L3</b>	9	How will this site be monitored to prevent abuse, illegal trash dumping, and vandalism after the project is finished?
Chapter 3 discusses Alternative B's impact, Page 14		10	How will the baseball/soccer and or football fields impact the environment?
Soils, Page 13; Vegetation, Page 22		11	What will the heavy-equipment that would be required to construct the park do to soil and vegetation?
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30		12	Will there be an OHV recreational options at the park or will OHVs have to go somewhere else?
Water Resources, Page 19		13	Where will the water come from for this project?
N/A	<b>F1</b>	14	My request is that there be a minimum of 500-foot buffer between any residential properties and the park.
N/A		15	I support Camp Verde moving ahead with expanded recreational facilities for the community.
N/A	<b>F2</b>	16	I support it, sounds good.
Visual Resources, Page 14; Noise, Page 20	<b>F3</b>	17	Ball fields, lights, and noise should be located close to Highway 260, away from the residential areas on the other sides of the park site.
Visual Resources, Page 14; Noise, Page 20	<b>F5</b>	18	We are concerned about and lights or noise causing activities the park would generate, we value the quietness of our neighborhood.

Location in Document where Concern is Addressed if within the Scope of this Document	Document Code	Comment #	Comment
Noise, Page 20; Air Quality, Page 21	<b>F6</b>	19	Keep the dust, noise, and traffic to a minimum.
Visual Resources, Page 14		20	Don't position bright lights facing west.
Water Resources, Page 19	<b>F7</b>	21	Concerns include use of groundwater for irrigation and ponds
N/A		22	Security for the neighborhood and Park
Visual Resources, Page 14		23	Concerns include light pollution of night skies
Noise, Page 20		24	Concerns include noise after dark
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30		25	Concerns include access to the park from Quarterhorse Lane
N/A		26	Safety for children's access across Hwy 260
Proposed Action, Page 7	<b>F8</b>	27	This project would benefit the community by providing sports and recreation areas.
Proposed Action, Page 7		28	The project would also provide property for a fire station.
Alternatives, Page 6	<b>F9</b>	29	The project area is an excellent site for a community park.
N/A		30	The USFS should efficiently facilitate this purchase with quick and reasonable appraisals based on the undeveloped nature of the site.
N/A	<b>F10</b>	31	We agree with the use of this property as it states in the Camp Verde Master Plan.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30		32	The property should not be used for dangerous livestock activity, such as bull riding, or motorcycle or ATV motor vehicle use or other activities that generate excessive noise.
N/A	<b>F11</b>	33	The site would be an asset to the town.
Noise, Page 20		34	The Park design will still provide the area with a quiet country living environment.
N/A		35	The Forest Service should sell this property to the Town for pennies on the dollar if not donate it because out tax dollars pay for the parcel now. Make the parcel affordable for the Town.
Purpose and Need, 1	<b>F12</b>	36	This project would make good use of this property. The property will provide much needed recreational opportunities.
Economics, Page 28		37	The project would have a wonderful economical impact for the Town. This park will draw tourism through its rodeos, tournaments, etc.
Visual Resources, Page 14		38	It will also provide a benefit to the aesthetics of the Town.
Purpose and Need, Page 1	<b>F13</b>	39	This is a great plan to obtain land for a park because our Town and adjoining-populated areas are growing so fast that our present parks are not adequate for our future growth.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F14</b>	40	We support this plan; we need more fields and especially an equestrian arena.
Alternatives, Page 6		41	The project area is a perfect location for a park.

<b>Location in Document where Concern is Addressed if within the Scope of this Document</b>	<b>Document Code</b>	<b>Comment #</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F15</b>	42	An equine trail should be added that would not be utilized by quads and dirt bikes. For safety, horse and dirt bike paths should be separate.
Purpose and Need, Page 1	<b>F16</b>	43	We strongly support the purchase and see the need for additional park and recreational facilities in our community.
Soil, Page 13; Vegetation, Page 22; Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30		44	Current uses are destroying soil and vegetation with motorcycles and off-highway vehicles and shouldn't be considered recreation.
Chapter 3 discusses Alternative B's impact on the resources, Page 14		45	Creating the park would protect the environment from these uses.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F17</b>	46	We agree with the proposal if no off-highway vehicle use would be utilized within the park.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F18</b>	47	If the park is built it will displace off-road vehicles and ultra light planes. Off-road vehicles will destroy other areas within the Town.
Cost, Page 28		48	Park development will cost tax dollars to build, insure, and maintain.
Purpose and Need, Page 1		49	We have enough parks at this time.
Alternatives, Page 6	<b>F19</b>	50	I would prefer a park to go on that parcel rather than a subdivision or golf course.
Water Resources, Page 19		51	I agree with using reclaimed water.
N/A	<b>F20</b>	52	We look forward to this area being used for recreational purposes and the community would benefit from this project.
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F21</b>	53	Making this park will not stop abuse, dumping, vandalism; it will only relocate it and the Town does not have the resources to prevent it.
Economics, Page 28		54	How can the Town afford to acquire and maintain such a facility at this time when our police, library, and fire departments are in need?
Cost, Page 28		55	What is the project budget of this park?
Water Resources, Page 19		56	What are the water needs of this facility?
Economic Base, Page 28		57	What will the development do to the community's taxes?
Public Access and Recreation Issues, Page 30	<b>F22</b>	58	This project would put to good use a piece of land to entertain a large group of young people.
N/A	<b>E1</b>	59	Sell this property to the Town of Camp Verde at the very best price as possible.
N/A	<b>E2</b>	60	Sell this property to the Town of Camp Verde.
N/A	<b>E3</b>	61	[We] don't like a lot going on as places or park – have been started but are not done and will not pass health inspection.

N/A=did not provide comment relevant to Purpose and Need, Out of Scope of this analysis