

***Proposed Action***  
***Outfitter-Guide Management Plan***  
***Red Rock Ranger District, Coconino National Forest***

The focus and scope of the analysis is how best to serve the public's interests through outfitter-guides. The public's interests, as we understand them, are three fold: 1) have a wide-array of outfitter-guide services available, especially in the greater Sedona area, 2) an expectation that the National Forest's natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities are sustained for the long run, and 3) a reasonable balance is drawn between commercial (guided) and non-commercial (unguided, do-it-yourself) activities and opportunities with a bias toward non-commercial use of the National Forest. The effort will lead to an Outfitter-Guide Management Plan for the Red Rock Ranger District for the next 10 years. This document is organized as follows:

- I. Background (pages 1-2)
- II. Relevant current Coconino Forest Plan policy (page 2)
- III. Preliminary Issues (pages 2-3)
- IV. Glossary of terms and management concepts (pages 3-7)
- V. Project Area (page 7)
- VI. Details of Analysis (pages 8-22)
- VII. ***Proposed Action***. (pages 23-28)

The Proposed Action and/or alternatives developed with the public as the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process unfolds, will ultimately be the basis for a decision.

This is also available on the web at [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/nepa](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/nepa) or in hard copy from the Ranger District office.

***I. Background.*** During the last several years, the greater Sedona area with its tourism-based economy has marketed and attracted an ever-increasing number and diversity of commercial outfitter-guide interests. The Forest Service, however, has not increased existing authorizations or offered new ones until recently. It has become a very contentious situation.

The issue for a while was whether the Forest Service had the authority to regulate outfitter-guide use on the National Forest. In March, 2001 a federal judge, in litigation filed by a Sedona outfitter, upheld that the Forest Service had the authority to regulate, but ruled that its implementation procedures for the Sedona area were flawed. An "open-season" for commercial ventures followed, where anyone with a jeep, horse, ATV, mountain bike, hummer, etc. could operate a business National Forest roads and trails without a permit.

This led to exponential commercial growth on the National Forest causing the Forest Service, some local residents, and the general public concern about increasing and

uncontrolled environmental, social, and economic impacts. In response, the Forest Service developed a new regulation at 36 CFR 251.50 clarifying that all outfitter-guide activities on the National Forest, whether on or off roads and trails, require authorization and permits. This new regulation, in combination with strong local outfitter-guide interests, set the stage for the development of an outfitter-guide management plan. The Proposed Action presented here initiates the NEPA process required to develop this plan.

### ***Earlier Analysis and Public Involvement***

The Forest Service initiated a Public Needs Assessment and Capacity Analysis in the fall of 2004 and presented its preliminary findings for comment in an information packet and via displays at an open house in January, 2005. Comments received were used in the design of the Proposed Action. Continued and increased involvement from outfitter-guides, residents, and National Forest visitors is important. Another Open House is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2006 to provide an opportunity to review information and interact with Forest Service managers.

### **II. Current Policy--Amendment 12 to the Coconino Land and Resource Management Plan, (1998):**

The outfitter-guide issue has been around for a while. Amendment 12 to the Forest Plan made some outfitter-guide decisions and documented that although the public desires outfitter-guide services, they do not want them to substantially reduce or compete with “do-it-yourself” (unguided) opportunities and activities. The public and community, in that process, strongly encouraged the Forest Service to balance commercial (guided) use with non-commercial (unguided) use with a bias toward unguided use.

Further, Amendment 12 concluded that the level of permitted use for the existing outfitter-guide activities (i.e. jeep, equestrian, hiking, balloon, etc. tours) was adequate for the current public demand in the greater Sedona area. It concluded, however, that some existing outfitter-guide use should be redistributed; that some locations were over or under allocated. We started this “reallocation and redistribution” a couple of times since 1998, but had to suspend the efforts to focus instead on litigation initiated by disgruntled outfitters unable to get new permits. This current NEPA process has been designed to review and reevaluate the findings of Amendment 12.

### **III. Preliminary Issues.** Several issues have dominated the analysis and development of the Proposed Action:

- A. Existing long-term temporary outfitter-guide permit holders are concerned about the unavailability of “priority use” and 5-year priority use permits for long-standing outfitter-guide operations in the greater Sedona area.
- B. Potential outfitter-guides are concerned about how much outfitter-guide use is authorized and the limits on the number of permits (perceived to be a monopoly) for the popular and highly marketable tourist locations: Broken Arrow, Soldier Pass, Greasy Spoon, Honanki, etc.

- C. Potential and some existing outfitter-guides are concerned about what they perceive to be an imbalance in availability of business opportunities and income related to popular locations (also perceived to be a monopoly).
- D. Existing long-term outfitter-guides are concerned about the Forest Service's use limits on existing authorizations and the lack of increases in authorized use.
- E. Potential outfitter-guides are concerned about the un-availability of new outfitter-guide authorizations *in the greater Sedona area*.
- F. Forest Service is concerned about some inconsistencies and deficiencies in outfitter-guide's quality of service and performance.
- G. Outfitter-guides and sometimes the community are concerned about the Forest Service's reluctance to authorize group and large community events on the National Forest.
- H. Forest Service is concerned about the lack of permit system for commercial wedding planning and operations on the National Forest.
- I. Event proponents are concerned about the lack of streamlined permit system for recreation events, including size, location, type of event, resource clearances and limitations
- J. Forest Service is concerned about the authorization and management of educational institutions outfitter-guide activities.
- K. Outfitter-guides are concerned about the Forest Service's reluctance to provide for unlimited business growth.
- L. Forest Service is concerned about the resource and infrastructure impacts and damage from outfitter-guide activities and general recreation use.
- M. Forest Service is concerned about the implementation of new regulations at 36 CFR 251.50.
- N. Potential and some existing outfitter-guides are concerned that some existing outfitter guides allocations are not used and that this non-use has not been available for others.
- O. Potential outfitter-guides are concerned about the delay in completing reallocation of existing permitted guides as identified in Amendment 12 to the Coconino Forest Plan.
- P. Forest Service and the general public are concerned about some displacement of general public use as a result of outfitter-guide use, particularly in popular locations.

**IV. Glossary of Terms and Management Concepts:** Understanding a number of terms and concepts will be helpful in understanding the Proposed Action in Section VII. The terms and concepts that have strongly influenced our analysis and conclusions are:

- A. **Outfitting and Guiding.** Outfitting and guiding is supported by the Forest Service as a commercial public service activity. Outfitter-guides on the National Forest provide information, equipment, interpretation, skills, knowledge, etc. to visitors. Currently on the Red Rock Ranger District, the public enjoys and supports outfitter-guides via scenic tours, 4x4 driving, equestrian rides, hot-air balloon rides, heritage site interpretation, mountain bike rides, restorative/spiritual/metaphysical experiences, wildlife viewing, hummer tours, and ATV tours as well as rock climbing, fishing, and hunting.

Outfitter-guides additionally support the management and stewardship of the National Forest. Their presence provides additional “eyes and ears” to help in monitoring activities and impacts. Outfitter-guides also offer assistance in road and trail maintenance, litter patrol, and general visitor assistance.

The objective in this process is to develop an outfitter-guide management plan for the Red Rock Ranger District that will allow and encourage a beneficial symbiotic relationship between the National Forest visitor, the outfitter-guide, the Forest Service, and the community.

- B. **Carrying Capacity:** The science of carrying capacity commonly involves the calculation of a number that becomes the absolute cap for volume of use, whether for the general public, or in a case like this, for outfitter-guides. Also inherent in the science are several methods, or formulas, for doing the calculation. Linear methods calculate capacity by multiplying miles of roads and trails by coefficients reflecting certain kinds of experiences. Landscape methods calculate capacity by multiplying acres by other coefficients for various kinds of experiences. Others are hybrids of these methods.

We have crunched the numbers and we have estimates of capacity using these methods. We are not, however, proposing to use the results as absolutes. Instead, we have considered the estimates in combination with specific issues, natural and cultural resource conditions and values, the public’s interests, and the community and commercial interests to derive and develop the Proposed Action. In other words, the numbers are part of the mix, but not the focus.

- C. **RUU’s (Recreation Use Units):** We needed a way to break the Ranger District into bite-sized units (see Map). We settled on RUU’s. These are geographically-based units generally characterized by homogeneous natural and cultural features, similar public opportunities and activities, and a common transportation system.
- D. **Resource Models vs. Business Model:** The Forest Service primarily uses resource models in determining recreation capacities. They feature conservation and sustainability of the infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources first, with support for business opportunities when they benefit resource management or help meet demand for visitor service. Business models usually advocate for conservation and sustainability, but are more strongly influenced by visitor service and demand and the potential business opportunities and growth. Neither works for all situations. For this management plan, we use principles of both models, but tend to use more of the features of the resource model than the business model.
- E. **Mitigation Measures:** Actions to minimize or eliminate adverse affects to natural or cultural resources, infrastructure, etc.
- F. **Existing Permits vs. New Permits, Priority Use, Competition vs. Non-competition:** This topic is somewhat connected to the resource versus business model discussion,

but focuses specifically on Forest Service policy and outfitter-guide permit issuance. Some would advocate that the Forest Service “start-over” in the greater Sedona area; requiring all existing permit holders to compete for a new permit under the mitigation measures, terms and conditions adopted through this process. However, the Forest Service has long-standing policy that provides support for businesses that venture onto the National Forest to provide a needed public service. In accordance with this policy, holders of priority use permits are not required to compete for a new permit as long as performance remains satisfactory, including the meeting of all terms and conditions established for the management of the National Forest lands and resources potentially affected.

Similarly, although not to the identical degree as the priority use permit holders, the Forest Service gives deference to long-term temporary permit holders who have acceptable performance. In this process, we are considering long-term (5 or more years) permits “as-if” they were priority use. The Forest Service has deferred, for several years now, the conversion pending completion of a fresh public needs assessment and outfitter-guide capacity study.

Others concede that existing permits should have special consideration, but not if they limit other (new) opportunities in popular locations. They are advocating that regardless of tenure and performance, existing permits in popular locations should be adjusted down, if necessary, to allow additional (new) outfitter-guides an opportunity to carve out a market niche. Again, however, Forest Service policy does not support that specific strategy. Priority use permits are premised on the belief that tenured and high quality performance should have protection from competition as long as the public need and the land can support the authorization.

Consequently, the Proposed Action does not arbitrarily reduce existing permitted use to create new business venture opportunities.

- G. **Administration of Outfitter-guide permits:** The intent of the Forest Service is to be in partnership with outfitter-guides and strive to create a symbiotic relationship to provide high quality public service. A factor in the Forest Service being able to facilitate this partnership is its ability to administer the permits appropriately. A factor in the administration of permits is the literal number of permits and the permit holders’ performance.

Ultimately, this NEPA process will adopt mitigation measures that will improve the potential for a productive partnership. Additionally, in the prospectus process (see definition below) the Forest Service will be considering the proposals. Part of that decision is *how many* permits to issue. The Forest Service will be striving to balance opportunities, services, and its ability to administer the permits by selecting only the proposals and the number of proposals that it believes will accomplish the balance. The Forest Service does not guarantee permits to all applicants.

- H. **Education and Interpretation:** The Forest Service puts high priority on natural and cultural resource information, education, and interpretation. It has found that this information is sought by a very large percentage of the visitors to the Red Rock District and also helps to reduce impacts on the National Forest. The Forest Service expects all outfitter-guides to include a meaningful amount of such information and integrate it into their regular service activities. The Forest Service will support this expectation by providing regular training in how to communicate the information and provide the information itself through resource and program specialists.
- I. **LAC:** Limits of Acceptable Change is an added critical administrative component of National Forest management in recent years. One of the Forest Service's objectives is to use adaptive management, meaning that it adjusts management in response to critical changes. These critical changes can be identified by establishing thresholds for specific factors followed by active monitoring—part by the Forest Service (including volunteers), and part by the permit-holder, i.e. the outfitter-guide in this case. The specific factors needing to be monitored and the Limits of Acceptable change for each will be a part of the decision at the end of this process.
- J. **Monitoring:** This Proposed Action and the ultimate administration of outfitter-guide services is strongly dependent on monitoring of a few specific factors to determine when operations or management changes are needed. Examples of LAC's indicators monitor for changes in road width or depth, change in wildlife populations and their distribution, or evidence of invasive plant species.
- K. **Prospectus:** This is a formal written request for proposals for the new opportunities (activities not currently authorized) that ultimately will be made available. This solicitation is part of a competitive process and will describe the opportunities in detail along with the criteria that will be used for the selection of proposals.
- L. **Permitted Use:** This is the amount of use authorized in any type of outfitter-guide authorization: Temporary Special Use Permit (less than one year) or Special Use Permit (one year to ten years).
- M. **Priority Use:** Authorization of use for a period not to exceed ten years. The amount of use is based on the holder's past use and performance, resource conditions, and on land management plan allocations. See above Section F (Existing Permits vs. New Permits, Priority Use, Competition vs. Non-competition) for additional discussion on priority use.
- N. **Temporary Use:** An amount of use assigned the holder of a permit with a period of one season or less.
- O. **Actual Use:** This is the amount of service actually provided to the public by a permit holder. It can be all or a portion of the permitted Use.

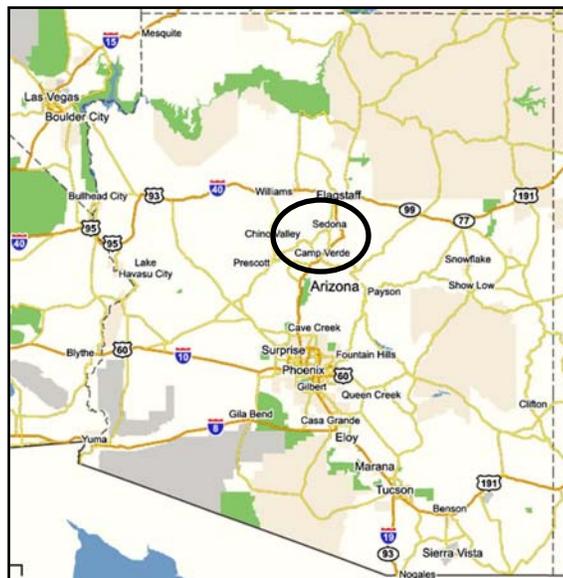
- P. **Lottery System:** This is a proposed technique to use in allocating some additional and new outfitter-guide use in the more popular locations. The intent would be to annually offer temporary use of the popular locations to provide a “market edge” for a one-year term. The opportunity would be governed by a number of rules analogous perhaps to those used in drawings used by State Game and Fish Departments to fill hunting and fishing tag limits.
- Q. **ROS:** Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classification system allows managers to describe a spectrum of opportunities across the landscape. The spectrum categories are Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Roded Natural, Rural, and Urban. For example, in a Semi-Primitive Motorized area, a visitor should expect to see or feel minimal controls of traffic and other regulations.

**V. Project Area:** The project area for the Outfitter-Guide Management Plan is the Red Rock Ranger District, Coconino National Forest, Coconino and Yavapai Counties in central Arizona (see Map).

This is a substantially larger area than is currently under permit to outfitter-guides. The greater Sedona, Arizona area (about 25% of the Ranger District’s land area) has been the focus for outfitter-guides during the past 20 years. The great scenery, easy access, high visitation, and the opportunities offered by the community itself are without-a-doubt major contributors to this long-standing interest and focus.

A larger project area, however, was purposely selected. Trends and predictions for the next several years indicate continued, substantial growth in population in the southwestern United States; and an ever increasing interest in the National Forest. And although the Forest Service sees continuing heavy demand and interest in the greater Sedona area, it does not believe the area can necessarily support the growing demand and use, AND sustain a high quality environment and visitor experience unless guided and perhaps unguided activities are carefully managed. Considering and encouraging a wider distribution of use would appear to be one method of tempering the effects and sustaining the environment. The project area reflects that objective and investigation.

**Vicinity map**



## **VI. Details of Analysis**

A. *Defining Purpose and Need*: The Forest Service develops a “Proposed Action” to initiate a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process when there is a specific ***purpose and need***. ***Purpose and need*** establishes the reason(s) for an analysis and decision(s).

The ***Purpose and Need*** in this situation relates to the unique character of the Ranger District’s landscape. It is attracting increasing numbers of people. Many of these visitors look to outfitter-guides to assist them have a safe, enjoyable, and learning experience on the National Forest. Additionally, an ever increasing number of people living and working nearby in adjacent communities are also using and enjoying the area. The National Forest’s natural and cultural resources are getting unprecedented pressure (and impact), sometimes eliminating, or at least diminishing solitude, natural quiet, and the natural appearing landscapes.

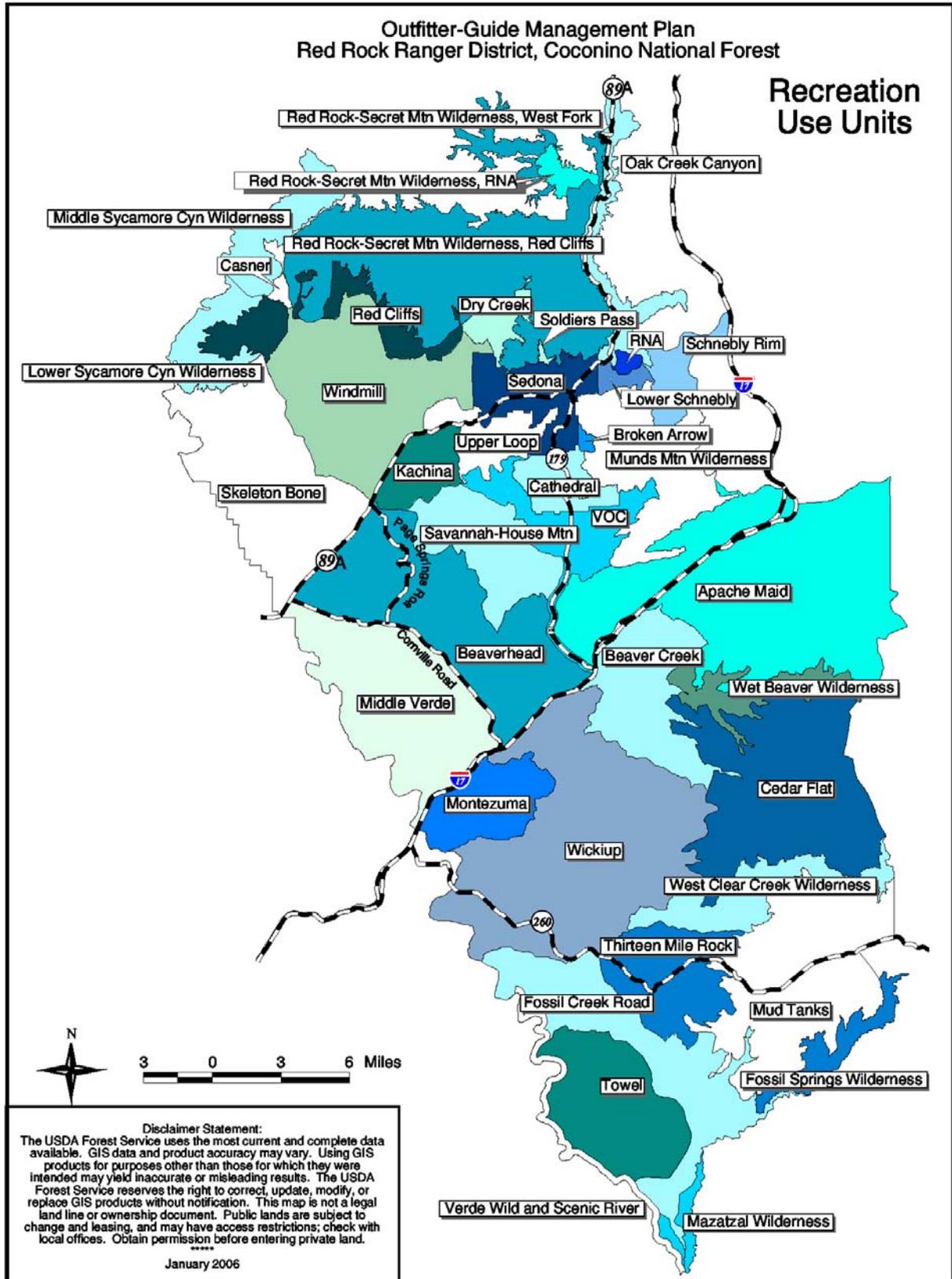
The use is not uniform. The red rock landscape around Sedona is currently the focus of the commercial outfitter-guide services. The Forest Service has supported these outfitter-guides because they offer opportunities that visitors might not otherwise have. Outfitter-guides provide knowledge, skills, and equipment that enhance a visitor’s experience or are required for safe participation in an activity. Outfitter-guides can provide accurate information to a greater number of people on a variety of topics, including minimizing recreational impacts on the land or Leave No Trace. They also provide another set of “eyes and ears” on the ground, an extension of management presence, and, as a result, assist in the protection of the natural and heritage resources.

During the last 10 years, competition between permit-holders and potential permit-holders has become evident and grown in intensity. As guided and unguided activities have increased, local residents and neighborhoods have been affected. They have developed a high level of interest since many of the desirable tour areas on National Forest lands are within the urban interface. Tour and general public use often occurs near private lands and residential subdivisions and sometimes adversely impact these neighborhood areas. Additionally, impacts due to high use from both groups of users and inadequate maintenance are evident across the landscape. Physical impacts include loss of vegetation due to trampling and soil compaction, un-planned roads, and rutting affecting water quality and soil erosion. Social impacts include reduced quality of experience, noise, and dust. Because of all the impacts, local residents and others have become active.

The focus of this NEPA analysis will be to develop an outfitter-guide management plan that will serve the public need for outfitting in ways that protect the area’s natural and cultural resources as well as the more primitive social settings desired for the National Forest by most visitors.

B. *Defining Recreation Units (see Map below)*: We needed a way to divide the Ranger District into bite-sized operational units. An interdisciplinary team considered the options and selected what we call Recreation Use Units (RUU’s). These units are

geographically-based and generally characterized by homogeneous natural and cultural features, similar public opportunities and activities, and a common transportation system.



- C. Existing Use Assessment: Next, we needed to assess the effects of current use on resources and infrastructure. This involved estimating current total use, unguided and guided, and an evaluation of this current use relative to roads and trails, the general forest area, and outfitter-guide services by RUU. Charts 1 and 2 summarize the information.

Chart 1 displays the Forest Service's estimate of current total use, i.e. general public (unguided) and outfitter-guides, and its interdisciplinary evaluation of the current condition of the infrastructure and natural resources using the relative ratings of L (low), M (medium), or H (high). Definitions of these relative values are listed below. Chart 1 also reveals the interdisciplinary evaluation of overall general conditions of impacts on roads, trails, and general forest areas.

#### Level 2 Road Concerns

- High= Large percentage of roads occur on soils that severely limit road construction, use and maintenance. Roads in the "High" category may occur on slopes greater than 40%, on highly erodible soils or on clayey soils with low bearing strength subject to trafficability problems and road failure when wet.
- Moderate= Large percentage of roads occur on soils that moderately limit road construction, use and maintenance.. Roads in the "Moderate" category occur on slopes less than 40%, on very gravelly clay or coarser textured soils and infrequently occur on erodible soils. Roads located on very gravelly clays may be subject to trafficability problems when wet but not likely to fail.
- Low= Large percentage of roads occur on soils that do not limit road construction, use and maintenance. Roads in the "Low" category occur on gentle slopes, coarse textured soils and have high bearing strength and are not subject to trafficability problems when wet. Roads in the "Low" category rarely occur on erodible soils.

#### Soil and Watershed Concerns

- High= Roads occur on soils with severe erosion hazard usually in steep areas. Following removal of vegetation, there is a high risk of sediment delivery downslope via the road network.
- Moderate= Roads occur on soils with moderate erosion hazard usually on moderately sloping areas. Following removal of vegetation, there is a risk of sediment delivery downslope via the road network.
- Low= Roads occur on soils with slight erosion hazard usually on nearly level areas. Following removal of vegetation, the risk of sediment delivery downslope via the road network is of low probability.

#### Wildlife/ Fish/ Rare Plant Concerns

- High= Multiple rare species and/or their habitat are present, rare species are wide spread, and required mitigation to minimize impacts is complex and can be cumulatively prohibitive for certain activities in specific areas.

- Moderate= Rare species and/or their habitat are present but are either few in number or limited to a specific area. Required mitigation to minimize impacts is not complex, even cumulatively.
- Low= Few to no rare species or habitat, minimal to no mitigation, and any mitigation required is easily implemented.

#### Heritage Resource Concerns

- High=0-50% survey or high density number predictions
- Moderate= Low survey and low-medium densities.
- Low=50-100% survey and low density site number predictions

#### ROS Concerns

- High= High encounter frequencies with other parties, low screening rates, inconsistency with ROS objectives
- Moderate= Areas where one or more characteristics in low range
- Low= Low encounter frequencies with other parties, high screening rates, consistency with ROS objectives

Chart 2 displays the existing permitted outfitter-guide actual use and the Forest Service's determination of whether the existing outfitter-guide use is generally compatible with resources, infrastructure, and visitor and community expectations.

- It does not include the six month temporary permits issued beginning in July 2005.
- Only RUU's with Outfitter-Guide use are shown.
- Existing Outfitter-Guide use is broken down by activity. All numbers are show as vehicles or parties (groups of 6 or less people) per day or per year.
- The total use by Outfitter-Guides shown in the first row is the average daily number. These numbers are derived from actual use reports which permit holders submit giving yearly amounts and are then divided by 365 days per year.
- The second row shows the percentage of total use occupied by Outfitter-Guides.

Chart 1

	Existing Total Use and Conditions	Recreation Use Unit																		
		Apache Maid	Beaver Creek	Beaverhead	Broken Arrow	Casner	Cathedral	Cedar Flat	Dry Creek	Fossil Creek Road	Kachina	Lower Schnebly	Middle Verde	Montezuma	Mud Tanks	Oak Creek Canyon	Red Cliffs	Savannah/House Mountain	Schnebly Rim	
	Estimate of existing total use (avg. Veh. or Parties/Day)	65	459	1420	89	20	8000**	4	173	69	30	326	400	14	6	5000**	268	21	220	
General Existing	Level 2 Road Concerns	H	H	H	M	H	M	H	M	H	M	n/a	H	L	H	H	M	H	Not avail.	
	Soil & Watershed Concerns	L	L	L	M	M	M	L	M	M	M	n/a	L	L	M	H	M	M	Not avail.	
	Wildlife/Fish/ Rare Plant Concerns	H-east L-west	L*	L*	L	L	L*	L	L	L*	L*	M	M*	M*	H-south L-north	H	L	L*	L	
	Heritage Resource Concerns	M	H	L	H	L	M	M	H	H	H	L	M	L	M	L	H	M	L	
	ROS Concerns	L	L	M	H	L	H	L	H	L	M	H	M	M	L	M	H	L	M	
	For the most part, road and trail use okay?	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	
	For the most part, General Forest Area use okay?	Y*	Y*	Y*	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y*	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	
H= High M= Moderate L= Low Y= Yes N= No * = High in riparian areas Y*=except in specific areas or seasons **=actual numbers measured on highway																				

Chart 1 Continued

	Existing Total Use and Conditions	Recreation Use Unit																		
		Sedona	Skeleton Bone	Soldiers Pass	Thirteen Mile Rock	Towel	Upper Loop	Village of Oak Creek (VOC)	Wickiup	Windmill	Fossil Springs Wilderness	West Clear Creek Wilderness	Wet Beaver Wilderness	Munds Mountain Wilderness	Lower Sycamore Canyon Wild	Middle Sycamore Canyon Wild	RR-Secret Mt. Wild, Red Cliffs	RR Secret Mt. Wild, RNA	RR Secret Mt. Wild, West Fork	
	Estimate of existing total use (avg. Veh. or Parties/Day)	3836**	80	39	2	<1	1320	8000**	120	256	4	4	4	19	3	<1	53	193	48	
General Existing	Level 2 Road Concerns	M	H	L	H	H	M	M	H	H	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Soil & Watershed Concerns	M	L	M	M	M	M	L	L	L	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Wildlife/Fish/ Rare Plant Concerns	L	M	L	L	L*	L*	L*	M	L	M*	M*	M*	M	L*	L	H	H	H	
	Heritage Resource Concerns	L	L	M	M	L	M	M	M	L	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	
	ROS Concerns	H	L	H	L	L	M	H	L	L	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	
	For the most part, road and trail use okay?	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	For the most part, General Forest Area use okay?	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y*	Y	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y	Y*	N	Y	
H= High M= Moderate L= Low Y= Yes N= No * = High in riparian areas Y*=except in specific areas or seasons **=actual numbers measured on highway																				

Chart 2

Existing Permitted Outfitter-Guide Actual Use (does not include short term temporary permits)		Recreation Use Unit	Apache Maid	Beaver Creek	Broken Arrow	Cathedral	Dry Creek	Kachina	Lower Schnebly	Montezuma	Oak Creek Canyon	Red Cliffs	Schnebly Rim	Sedona	Skeleton Bone	Soldiers Pass	Upper Loop	Village of Oak Creek (VOC)	Windmill	Munds Mountain Wilderness	Lower Sycamore Canyon Wild	RR-Secret Mt. Wild, Red Cliffs	
Existing permitted O/G actual use (avg Veh or Parties/Day)			<1	<1	33	2	34	9*	15	<1	<1	24	15	93	<1	6	10	<1	16	<1	<1	<1	
% of total existing use by Outfitter-Guides			< 1%	< 1%	37%	< 1%	19%	29%	5%	4%	< 1%	< 1%	7%	2%	< 1%	15%	1%	< 1%	6%	< 1%	< 1%	1%	
Activity	ATV Tours																						
	Equestrian							58 19267		3 1200							<1 39						
	Hiking					3 1227			<1 52		<1 11	3 1084	<1 55	5 1921	<1 1		1 425	<1 2	3 1228	<1 2	<1 1	<1 108	
	Hot Air Balloon Tours					<1 300						<1 300		3 1117			2 817		<1 300				
	Mountain Biking																						
	Public Transit																						
	Coach/Tour Busses								<1 28						<1 127				<1 73				
	Jeep Tours (4x4 and Scenic)				33 12057		11 3945		15 5330				11 3945	15 5330	64 23432		6 2100			11 3945			
	Canyoneering																						
	Backpacking																						
	Geo Caching																						
	Hunting																						
	Winter Sports																						
	Livestock Packing (Overnight)																						
	Rock Climbing																						
	Weddings																						
Metaphysical					<1 449	1 434		<1 9				1 374		1 495			1 374		1 434				
Fishing											<1 84			<1 84									
Heritage Site Visits		<1 61	<1 142		<1 165	18 6681			<1 23			9 3198		19 6846			5 1845	<1 165	9 3198				
Is Outfitter-Guide use generally			Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	

- D. Estimates of Carrying Capacity: Next we wanted to know what the capability of the land and infrastructure, i.e. the carrying capacity, might be to support expanding outfitter-guide services. This would allow a comparison of existing use and potential future use. Estimating carrying capacity is not a precise science. There are a number of models that have been used. Two models are based on landscape characteristics (acreage) and on linear (road and trail) features. Another is based on the visitor's experience. The Experiential Use model is based on patterns of use and the screening of visitors from one another by vegetation and terrain. Sometimes, managers use these estimates as absolutes. We did not. We used them as another factor or variable. They were considered in comparison to existing use, natural and heritage resource conditions, and known issues. Chart 3 displays estimated capacities using these various models.
- E. Determination of Need for Outfitter-Guide activities and reasons for supporting them on National Forest: Outfitter-guides can benefit three different interests: the community, the visitor, and the land manager. Chart 4 shows our assessment of the degree of need or benefit by comparing outfitter-guide activities with reasons for supporting the outfitter-guide service. The range of benefit or advantage is expressed from Low to High.
- Skills, Equipment, and Knowledge – Unique skills are necessary, such that the use of an outfitter is almost a prerequisite if the public is to have any opportunity to participate.
  - Education – Outfitter-guides improve the public's ability to enjoy the recreation opportunities in a manner that reduces resource damage, addressing the inherent impacts of a particular activity.
  - Safety – Without outfitter assistance, the public could seriously endanger their health or lose their lives.
  - Opportunity for Interpretation – Activity is conducive to the exchange of information with participants as an integral part of the activity.
  - Outfitter-guide Contribution to Maintenance of Infrastructure – Focuses on system roads and trails and developed sites.
  - Outfitter-guide Contribution to Resource Protection – Focus is on General Forest Areas rather than infrastructure. Outfitters and guides ensure special management objectives are met.
  - Demand – Is there unmet public demand for the types of services being offered that can be supported while furthering FS objectives and goals?
  - Blends with Other Uses –Activity will not generate user conflicts; nature of activity does not implicitly require exclusive use of an area, site, or trail.
  - Dependent on National Forest Setting - Can the activity be supported on National Forest while furthering FS objectives and goals? The extent to which the proposed service can be offered on private land or, in the case of Wilderness, in areas outside designated Wilderness, is a consideration for the need of an outfitter-guide service.
  - Potential Contribution to Local Economy –What contribution does a particular outfitter-guide service make toward the local economy?

Chart 3

<b>Estimates of Carrying Capacity</b>		<b>Recreation Use Unit</b>																	
		<b>Apache Maid</b>	<b>Beaver Creek</b>	<b>Beaverhead</b>	<b>Broken Arrow</b>	<b>Casner</b>	<b>Cathedral</b>	<b>Cedar Flat</b>	<b>Dry Creek</b>	<b>Fossil Creek Road</b>	<b>Kachina</b>	<b>Lower Schnebly</b>	<b>Middle Verde</b>	<b>Montezuma</b>	<b>Mud Tanks</b>	<b>Oak Creek Canyon</b>	<b>Red Cliffs</b>	<b>Savannah/House Mountain</b>	<b>Schnebly Rim</b>
	<b>Estimate of existing total use (avg Veh or Parties/Day)</b>	65	459	1420	89	20	8000**	4	173	69	30	326	400	14	6	5000**	268	21	220
	<b>Current O/G actual use(Veh/Day)AVG</b>	<1	<1	0	33	0	2	0	34	0	9	15	0	1	0	1	24	0	15
<b>Calculated Capacities</b>	<b>Landscape Method</b>	1,700	600	4,400	65	7	400	100	370	340	390	38	3,300	770	690	3,070	990	110	30
	<b>Roads/Trails Method</b>	2,000	700	1,500	86	23	360	450	120	800	410	168	1,200	630	500	370	340	50	50
	<b>Experiential Use Unit Method - Semi primitive areas only</b>	72	36	36	15	15	18	60	45	57	30	NA	NA	15	66	12	60	51	21
	<b>Theoretical Total Use Capacity</b>	1,850	650	2,950	75	15	380	275	245	570	400	103	2,250	700	595	1,720	665	80	40
		**=actual use numbers measured on highway																	

Chart 3 Continued

<b>Estimates of Carrying Capacity</b>		<b>Recreation Use Unit</b>																	
		<b>Sedona</b>	<b>Skeleton Bone</b>	<b>Soldier Pass</b>	<b>Thirteen Mile Rock</b>	<b>Towel</b>	<b>Upper Loop</b>	<b>Village of Oak Creek (VOC)</b>	<b>Wickiup</b>	<b>Windmill</b>	<b>Fossil Springs Wilderness</b>	<b>West Clear Creek Wilderness</b>	<b>Wet Beaver Wilderness</b>	<b>Munds Mountain Wilderness</b>	<b>Lower Sycamore Canyon Wild</b>	<b>Middle Sycamore Canyon Wild</b>	<b>RR-Secret Mt. Wild, Red Cliffs</b>	<b>RR Secret Mt. Wild, RNA</b>	<b>RR Secret Mt. Wild, West Fork</b>
<b>Estimate of existing total use (avg Veh or Parties/Day)</b>		3836	80	39	2	<1	1320	8000**	120	256	4	4	4	19	3	<1	53	193	48
<b>Current O/G actual use(Veh/Day)AVG</b>		93	<1	6	0	0	10	1	0	16	0	0	0	<1	<1	0	<1	0	0
<b>Calculated Capacities</b>	<b>Landscape Method</b>	3,980	840	8	210	23	1,090	2,660	5,100	340	5	7	5	13	14	7	31	0	28
	<b>Roads/Trails Method</b>	960	1,050	7	120	25	500	730	1,900	520	2	5	3	15	2	5	24	0	6
	<b>Experiential Use Unit Method - Semi primitive areas only</b>	RN	45	15	33	63	12	6	84	75	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU	6 per EUU
<b>Theoretical Total Use Capacity</b>		2,470	945	8	165	24	795	1,695	7,000	430	3	6	4	14	8	6	28	0	17

\*\*=actual use numbers measured on highway

Chart 4

	Determination of degree of Need for Outfitter-Guide Services	Reasons to entertain activity on NF									
		Potential Benefit to Local Economy	Public Demand for Outfitter-guided activity	Knowledge, Spec Skills & Equip	Safety	Opportunity to communicate messages to group	Blends well with other uses	O/G contribution to Mtnce of infrastructure	Potential for damage without education	O/G contribution to Resource protection	Dependence on NF lands
	Primary Benefit to:	Community	Visitor	Visitor	Visitor	Visitor	Visitor	Manager	Manager	Manager	Manager
Activity	ATV Tours	M	M	M	H	M	L	H	H	H	H
	Equestrian	M	M	H	H	M	M	H	M	H	H
	Hiking	L	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H	H
	Hot Air Balloon Tours	M	M	H	H	H	M	M	M	H	H
	Hummer Tours	M	M	L	L	H	M	H	M	H	H
	Scenic Tours	H	H	L	L	H	M	H	M	H	H
	Mountain Biking	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	H	H	H
	Public Transit	M	M	L	L	H	M	M	L	L	L
	Coach/Tour Buses	M	M	L	L	H	L	M	L	L	M
	4x4 Driving	H	H	H	H	M	L	H	H	H	H
	Canyoneering	L	L	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
	Backpacking	L	L	M	M	H	H	H	M	H	H
	Geo Caching	L	L	L	M	M	H	L	M	H	H
	Hunting	L	M	M	H	H	L	L	M	H	H
	Winter Sports	L	L	M	M	M	H	H	M	H	H
	Livestock Packing (Overnight)	L	L	H	H	M	H	H	M	H	H
	Rock Climbing/Caving	L	M	H	H	H	M	M	H	H	H
	Weddings	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	M	L	L
Metaphysical	M	M	M	L	H	M	H	H	H	H	
Fishing	L	L	M	L	H	H	L	M	H	H	
Heritage Site visits	H	H	H	M	H	H	H	H	H	H	

- F. *Suitability of outfitter-guide activities by RUU:* Chart 5 shows our assessment of which outfitter-guide activities, if existing, should continue, and which activities, if not existing, could be offered. Notice that some outfitter-guide activities are seasonally limited (i.e. YS).
- G. *Putting it all Together:* The last step involved using all of this information to decide what to specifically propose. Existing use and conditions, estimated capacity (physical and social), public need for outfitter-guide services, and the specific suitability for outfitter-guide activities are the critical components but they must be integrated and coordinated. (see Chart 6)

Clearly, the analysis supports an expanded outfitter-guide program to meet public need for services and to assist the Forest Service in caring for the land. The analysis also shows that the land, the Red Rock Ranger District, clearly has capacity to support additional use, including outfitter-guide services. However, there are unknowns, various reliabilities of data and information, and the Forest Service has limited resources to administer the program. Consequently, the Proposed Action describes an outfitter-guide management strategy that the Forest Service believes integrates all of these conditions, needs, and opportunities.

Additionally, proposed mitigation measures and permit terms and conditions are listed in the Proposed Action document to show the parameters within which outfitter-guide activities and operations need to be administered to create a balance between quality recreation experience, wildlife and cultural resource protection, stabilized soils and vegetation, etc.

Permitted activities will be limited to designated roads, trails, sites and areas, except for canyoneering. While meeting the need of all users is an objective, we recognize that sustaining the land and resource values for the long run is more important than to provide public or commercial opportunities in the short run at the expense of resource and land values. To achieve desired resource management balances, a maximum amount of commercial use has been proposed in some units. Some units are over capacity at present, and we are proposing certain types of outfitter-guide services to aid in minimizing traffic congestion and/or increasing management presence and maintenance. Additionally, all units will have unlimited general public use; however, some will require a free unlimited permit system for private use to monitor for management objectives. Monitoring of the areas through the Limits of Acceptable Change process will be implemented in order to adjust management through time as needed.

Chart 5

Outfitter-Guide Suitable Activities	Recreation Use Unit																																								
	Apache Maid	Beaver Creek	Beaverhead	Broken Arrow	Casner	Cathedral	Cedar Flat	Dry Creek	Fossil Creek Road	Kachina	Lower Schnebly	Middle Verde	Montezuma	Mud Tanks	Oak Creek Canyon	Red Cliffs	Savannah/House Mountain	Schnebly Rim	Sedona	Skeleton Bone	Soldiers Pass	Thirteen Mile Rock	Towel	Upper Loop	Village of Oak Creek (VOC)	Wickiup	Windmill	Fossil Springs Wilderness	West Clear Creek Wilderness	Wet Beaver Wilderness	Munds Mountain Wilderness	Lower Sycamore Canyon Wild	Middle Sycamore Canyon Wild	RR-Secret Mt. Wild, Red Cliffs	RR Secret Mt. Wild, RNA	RR Secret Mt. Wild, West Fork					
ATV Tours	YS	Y	Y			YS				Y		YS			Y				Y		Y				Y	Y															
Equestrian	YS	Y	Y		YS	YS			Y			Y	YS			Y			Y		Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Hiking	YS			Y			Y					Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Hot Air Balloon Tours			Y							Y														Y			Y														
Hummer Tours	YS	Y	Y			YS				Y						Y				Y						Y	Y														
Scenic Tours	YS	Y	Y							Y						Y	YL			Y				Y		Y	Y														
Mountain Biking	YS	Y	Y	Y		Y	YS	Y		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y														
Public Transit						Y									Y	Y			Y		Y			Y	Y																
Coach/Tour Buses																																									
4x4 Driving	YS	Y	Y	Y		YS											Y											Y													
Canyoneering																														Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y		Y		
Backpacking		Y														Y									Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y										
Geo Caching	YS																Y									Y															
Hunting	YS	Y	Y			Y		Y						Y			Y			Y		Y				Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Winter Sports	YS																																								
Livestock Packing (Overnight)	YS	Y			YS	YS								YS						Y					Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Rock Climbing						Y									Y								Y																Y*		
Weddings	YS					Y				Y														Y	Y																
Metaphysical						Y				Y									Y						Y																
Fishing															Y															Y											
Heritage Site visits	YS	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y					Y	Y	Y		Y		Y														

Y= Yes, activity suited to RUU

YS= Yes, Seasonally suited to RUU

YL= Limited to existing actual use

Chart 6

<b>Putting it all together - Proposed Action</b>	Recreation Use Unit	Apache Maid	Beaver Creek	Beaverhead	Broken Arrow	Casner	Cathedral	Cedar Flat	Dry Creek	Fossil Creek Road	Kachina	Lower Schnebly	Middle Verde	Montezuma	Mud Tanks	Oak Creek Canyon	Red Cliffs	Savannah/House Mountain	Schnebly Rim
	<b>Estimate of existing total use (avg Veh or Parties/Day)</b>		65	459	1420	89	20	8000**	4	173	69	30	326	400	14	6	5000**	268	21
<b>Estimated Theoretical Total Use Capacity</b>		1850	650	2950	75	15	380	275	245	570	400	103	2250	700	595	1720	665	80	40
<b>Proposed % Allocation of Total use to OG</b>		20%	10%	10%	65%	10%	0%	20%	30%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	10%	10%	10%	20%	60%
<b>Proposed Total Outfitter-Guide Allocation of Total use (veh or parties/day)</b>		370	65	295	49	2	0	55	74	114	80	21	450	140	60	172	67	16	24
<b>Current OG actual use(Veh/Day)AVG</b>		<1	<1	0	33	0	2	0	34	0	9	15	0	1	0	1	24	0	15
<b>Estimated priority use days</b>		<2	<2	0	47	0	3	0	49	0	13	21	0	<2	0	<2	34	0	21
<b>Potential New Offerings (units/day)</b>		368	63	295	2	2	0	55	25	114	67	0	450	138	60	170	32	16	3

\*\* actual numbers measured on highway

Chart 6 Continued

Putting it all together - Proposed Action	Recreation Use Unit	Sedona	Skeleton Bone	Soldier Pass	Thirteen Mile Rock	Towel	Upper Loop	Village of Oak Creek (VOC)	Wickiup	Windmill	Fossil Springs Wilderness	West Clear Creek Wilderness	Wet Beaver Wilderness	Munds Mountain Wilderness	Lower Sycamore Canyon Wild	Middle Sycamore Canyon Wild	RR-Secret Mt. Wild, Red Cliffs	RR Secret Mt. Wild, RNA	RR Secret Mt. Wild, West Fork
Estimate of existing total use (avg Veh or Parties/Day)		3836	80	39	2	<1	1320	8000**	120	256	4	4	4	19	3	<1	53	193	48
Estimated Theoretical Total Use Capacity		2470	945	8	165	24	795	1695	7000	430	3	6	4	14	8	6	28	0	17
Proposed % Allocation of Total use to OG		10%	20%	130%	20%	0%	10%	10%	20%	20%	Wilderness Dependent								
Proposed Total Outfitter-Guide Allocation of Total use (veh or parties/day)		247	189	10	33	0	80	170	1400	86	Wilderness Dependent								
Current OG actual use(Veh/Day)AVG		93	<1	6	0	0	10	1	0	16	0	0	0	<1	<1	0	<1	0	0
Estimated priority use days		133	<2	9	0	0	14	1	0	23	Wilderness Dependent								
Potential New Offerings (units/day)		114	187	1	33	0	65	168	1400	63	Wilderness Dependent								

\*\*actual numbers measured on highway

## **VII. Proposed Action.**

### **Proposed Changes in Management**

The following is a summary of *proposed changes* in administration of outfitter-guide activities on the Red Rock Ranger District for the next 10 years. Additionally, a few changes are proposed effecting general public use and management when they have a connection to the proposed outfitter-guide management.

- A. Support the public's need for outfitter-guide services, address the issue of the long-standing "temporary" outfitter-guide operations, and administratively provide a stronger foundation for business viability and stability:
  - 1. Make priority use and 5-year permits available to qualified holders of long-standing (minimum of 5 years) temporary outfitter-guide permits. Qualified is defined as:
    - a. Performed acceptably for the previous two consecutive years.
    - b. Have made services available to all members of the public.
  - 2. Assign priority use commensurate with actual use according to Forest Service guidelines (Forest Service Handbook 2709.11, Special Uses, Chapter 40, page 23). In most cases, priority use will be based on the average of the highest two years of the previous five years. Where capacity is determined to exist, these new qualified priority use holders maybe considered for additional priority use days beyond their actual use average for the highest two years out of the previous five such that their average actual use equals 70% of their authorized use.
- B. Improve consistency and equity of administration of permits, improve quality of public service, and improve outfitter-guide quality of performance:
  - 1. Adjust or assign priority use at permit re-issuance commensurate with actual use according to Forest Service Handbook 2709.11, Special Uses, Chapter 40, page 23
  - 2. Require payment of fees for all authorized (permitted) use in accordance with current Forest Service policy including unapproved non-use (Forest Service Handbook 2709.11, Special Uses, Chapter 40, page 23)
  - 3. Approve non-use (with the associated reduction in fee) if it is requested in advance in the operating plan or annual itinerary and it:
    - a. Protects natural and cultural resources
    - b. Addresses concern for public health and safety
    - c. Prevents conflicts with other authorized uses of National Forest lands.
  - 4. Forest Service conduct written annual performance reviews on each outfitter-guide permit.
  - 5. Establish and monitor Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) for permitted outfitter-guide activities to protect heritage sites, water quality, roads, vegetation, etc.
  - 6. Adjust permit Operating Plans commensurate with LAC monitoring.

- C. Optimize the availability of Broken Arrow for popular outfitter-guide activities and help mitigate impacts to adjacent residents and to the National Forest:
1. Install night gate with motorized traffic hours of daylight to dark.
  2. Require private (non-commercial) motorized vehicle users to have a non-fee permit to better track total use and provide Leave No Trace messages.
  3. Set an annual cap on Pink Jeep Tours permit of 12,100 vehicles.
  4. Authorize additional temporary (new) outfitter-guide services at no more than 2 vehicles per day using an annual lottery to select the permit-holder (existing permit holder excluded).
  5. Change existing ROS class of Semi-Primitive Motorized to ROS class of Roaded Natural to bring ROS class in compliance with existing and proposed use of area.
- D. Optimize the availability of Soldier Pass for popular outfitter-guide activities and help mitigate impacts to adjacent residents and to the National Forest:
1. Require public (non-commercial) motorized vehicle users to have a non-fee permit to better track total use and provide Leave No Trace messages.
  2. Reduce the at-one-time 4x4 vehicle limit for outfitter-guides from 10 to 3 vehicles.
  3. Increase the annual cap for Red Rock Jeep Tours (the existing jeep tour outfitter-guide) from 2100 to 3000 vehicles.
  4. Authorize additional temporary (new) outfitter-guide services at 1 vehicle per day using an annual lottery to select the permit-holder.
  5. Change existing ROS class of Semi-Primitive Motorized to ROS class of Roaded Natural to bring ROS class in compliance with existing and proposed use of area.
- E. Optimize the availability of Greasy Spoon (FR 152A in Windmill RUU) and the “pipeline” (FR 9513) for popular outfitter-guide activities
1. Set an annual cap for Sedona Adventures (the existing outfitter-guide) at the average use for the highest two years out of the previous five years plus growth.
  2. Authorize additional temporary (new) outfitter-guide services at 2 vehicles per day using an annual lottery to select the permit-holder.
- F. Expand the availability of Dry Creek for new (non-existing) outfitter-guide activities such as hiking, mountain biking, and heritage tours. No additional jeep or scenic touring will be offered.
- G. Expand the availability of Schnebly Rim for new (non-existing) outfitter-guide activities such as hiking. No additional jeep or scenic touring will be offered.
- H. Change existing ROS class at Lower Schnebly of Semi-Primitive Motorized to ROS class of Roaded Natural to bring ROS class in compliance with existing and proposed use of area.

- I. Address public's interest and need for outfitter-guides and address competitive interest in providing outfitter-guide opportunities :
  1. New opportunities are defined as excess capacity beyond the proposed priority use allocations within a RUU.
  2. Issue Prospectus to offer new outfitter-guide opportunities throughout the Ranger District.
    - a. Chart 6 contains the estimated proposed number of new outfitter-guide units/day by RUU. Chart 5 identifies the types of activities that will be considered in each RUU. The percentage of total capacity that is currently proposed to be allocated to outfitter-guide use ranges from 0-20%. The upper limit of 20% is based in Amendment 12 of the Coconino Forest Plan. In all cases, daily maximums per RUU may be tempered by mitigation measures.
    - b. 0% allocation is proposed in areas where the RUU is significantly over capacity or low historic demand is combined with resources concerns. Existing outfitter-guides actual use will be continued, if requested. These RUUs included:
      - i. Cathedral
      - ii. Towel
    - c. 10% allocation is proposed in RUUs at or near capacity combined with high noncommercial, general public use or wildlife issues. In RUUs with heavy visitation relative to theoretical capacity, new proposals will only be accepted if they provide management benefits or reduce visitor conflicts. RUUs included:
      - i. Beaver Creek
      - ii. Beaverhead
      - iii. Casner – new proposals not limited to management benefits only
      - iv. Mud Tanks– new proposals not limited to management benefits only
      - v. Oak Creek Canyon
      - vi. Red Cliffs
      - vii. Sedona
      - viii. Upper Loop
      - ix. Village of Oak Creek
    - d. 20% allocation is proposed in the remaining non-wilderness area. RUUs included:
      - i. Apache Maid
      - ii. Cedar Flat
      - iii. Fossil Creek Road
      - iv. Kachina
      - v. Lower Schnebly
      - vi. Middle Verde
      - vii. Montezuma
      - viii. Savannah/House Mountain
      - ix. Skeleton Bone

- x. Thirteen Mile Rock
    - xi. Wickiup
    - xii. Windmill
  - 3. Issue temporary permits until permit holders qualify for priority use and LAC monitoring support conversion to priority use, 5-year special use permits.
  - 4. Make permits with standard/pre-defined terms and conditions available across the counter to wedding planners on demand as long as LAC monitoring supports. Adjust terms and conditions and availability of permits commensurate with LAC monitoring.
  - 5. Designate group (60 or less participants) recreation event sites and make permits with preset terms and conditions available on-demand (across the counter) on a first-come, first serve basis.
  - 6. Accept Proposals during a one month window annually for educational institution outfitter-guide activities. Make 1-year temporary permits available with preset and other (based on Proposal and LAC monitoring) terms and conditions if LAC monitoring supports use.
- J. Eliminate all outfitter-guide use from developed concessionaire sites (Crescent Moon, etc.) and cabin rentals, except weddings at “Red Rock Crossing”.
- K. Give specific attention to outfitter-guide proposals and operations in congressionally-designated wilderness areas, requiring the activities to be wilderness dependent and characterized by opportunities for:
- a. Solitude.
  - b. Challenge and risk
  - c. Self reliance
  - d. Primitive and unconfined type of recreation
  - e. A wilderness setting
  - f. Group sizes of 12 or less, including guides.
  - g. Information, education, and instruction on wilderness i.e. legal Wilderness definitions and Leave No Trace principles.
  - h. No competitive events will be authorized.
- L. Address the issue of business growth:
- 1. Keep a database of available outfitter-guide capacity/opportunities for the Ranger District and manage *unallocated* opportunities as a “reserve” for “temporary” use and business growth potential. These days would be left over, or unallocated, from the prospective process specified in item G above.
  - 2. Accept Proposals for temporary use authorization for business growth during a one-month window annually. Make temporary use available in conjunction with an existing priority use permit if:
    - i. Capacity (as defined in the Outfitter-Guide Management Plan) is available for the proposed use.
    - ii. LAC monitoring supports the proposed use.
    - iii. Permit-holder wants to diversify to other outfitter-guide opportunities.

- iv. Proponent is willing to operate within the predefined terms and conditions for the activity.

M. Use mitigation measures, such as the following, to evaluate, screen, select, and regulate outfitter-guide operations throughout the Ranger District:

1. All existing priority and long-standing temporary outfitter-guide permit-holders will be required to submit new or revised operating plans to be in compliance with the provisions of the decision made at the end of this process.
2. All outfitter-guide proposals will be screened to ensure coordination for *site specific* factors related to the management of Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species, archeology, other wildlife, riparian, ROS, and watershed resources and values.
3. Use of roads and trails will be regulated (e.g. seasonal restrictions) to avoid soil and watershed issues.
4. No cross-country travel except as specifically authorized for an activity like canyoneering.
5. Roads and trails will generally be multi-purpose, not exclusive use by one group or activity.
6. Various use-level standards, i.e. vehicles/groups/service days-at-one-time, vehicles/groups/service days per day, and vehicles/groups/service days per year, will be used on all roads and trails, and in all activity locations to mitigate effects and regulate interaction between outfitter-guides and the general public.
7. All authorized activities will be screened to mitigate introduction of non-native species.
8. Favor outfitter-guide operations that minimize conflicts with public users such as limiting activities on peak use days, such as, holiday weekends.
9. In the Fossil Creek area affected by the APS decommissioning/deconstruction of the Childs-Irving hydropower (2006-2009) some areas may be excluded or restricted from access and activity to avoid conflict with operations or concern for public safety.
10. All approved uses are subject to pre-existing land use authorizations and their rights, especially utility corridors.
11. Relative to archeological site interpretation and touring:
  - i. Applicants will be required to assist in the Section 106 clearance process (i.e. inventorying, documentation, and development of management and interpretive plan, monitoring, etc.)
  - ii. Outfitter-guide operations must be in compliance with the clearance requirements.
  - iii. Permit-holders will be required to be trained and certified as Arizona Site Stewards.
  - iv. Outfitter-guides must agree to support the Forest Service by reporting heritage site disturbance or vandalism to Forest Service archeologist or Law Enforcement Officer within 24 hours.

12. Use of private lands in combination with National Forest lands must be coordinated and authorized. Private land owners must provide written approval of proposed activities.
- N. Outfitter-guide permits issued on the Red Rock Ranger District will include permit terms and conditions such as the following, as applicable to the specific outfitter-guide activities:
1. Operating Plans will be developed for every permit.
  2. Operating plans will be adjusted, as needed, in response to LAC monitoring.
  3. Outfitter-guide activities are limited to roads, trails, and land areas designated on a map(s) made a part of this permit or its associated operating plan.
  4. Vehicles authorized must be in compliance with Forest Service travel management plans, e.g. no mechanical devices will be allowed in a Wilderness.
  5. Vehicles used under the permit and the guides must be easily identifiable when on the National Forest (company, number, badge, name tag, etc.).
  6. Hot air balloons that do not land on designated roadways must be hand-carried out.
  7. Hot air balloons will be equipped with sound reduction mitigation, such as whisperers.
  8. Authorized operations will be suspended by the permit-holder when wet weather conditions cause damage to the roads and lands being used. Damage is defined as surface displacement, rutting, etc.
  9. Permit-holders will be required to contribute commensurately to the maintenance and stewardship of the National Forest, e.g. road and trail maintenance and reconstruction, social trail obliteration, litter patrol, rehabilitation or restoration of disturbed sites, fire prevention, etc.
  10. Outfitter-guides will support management of the National Forest, e.g. violation reporting, open/close gates for livestock control, no intentional pursuit of livestock or wildlife, obstructing/preventing livestock or wildlife access to water tanks/stock tanks, etc.
  11. Outfitter-guide client “scripts” will include information and education on Leave No Trace principles, environmental education, etc. relative to authorized activities.
  12. All authorized operations are subject to applicable Forest closures, i.e. fire, wildlife, wet weather, public health and safety, etc.
  13. The federal government and the Forest Service must be named as “additionally insured”.
  14. All Guides must be certified in First Aid and CPR.
  15. Authorized uses must be in compliance with all federal, state, county, and city laws and regulations.
  16. Any livestock feed brought onto National Forest lands must be certified weed free.
  17. Any improvements/infrastructure needed for outfitter-guide operations such as corrals, staging areas, storage, etc. must be authorized in the permit.