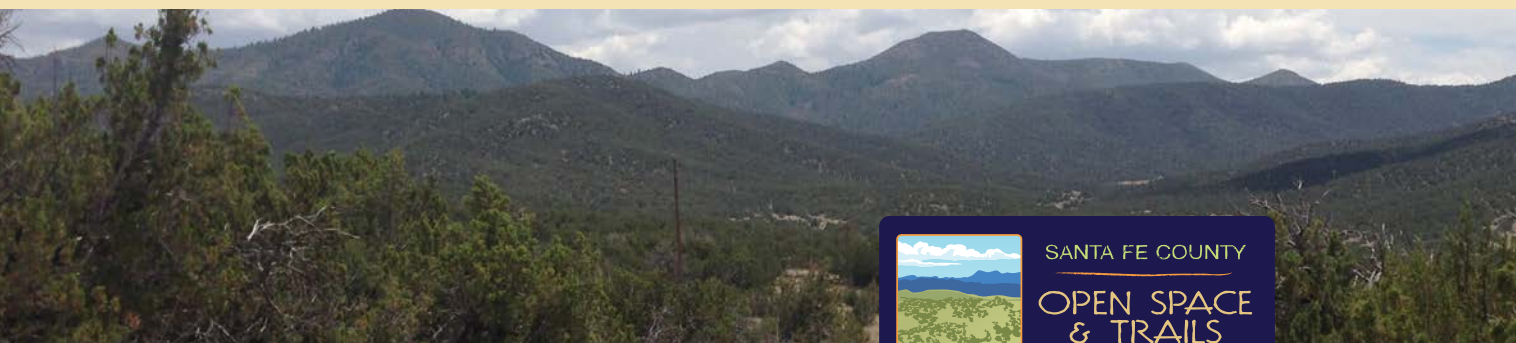




# SANTA FE COUNTY OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS PROGRAM

## **SAN PEDRO OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

FINAL DRAFT  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2016



**Ecotone**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The planning team acknowledges the support and insights offered by the 2015-2016 Board of County Commissioners of Santa Fe County.

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Furthermore, the planning team wishes to acknowledge the support and insights offered by the County Open Lands, Trails, and Parks Advisory Committee (COLTPAC).

The extensive knowledge, effort and guidance from the County Open Space and Trails (OS&T) planning, project development, and maintenance staff was invaluable in developing this plan.

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This plan is informed by input from the approximately thirty people who participated in the stakeholder input process for this plan. Stakeholder input was particularly important in the planning process to confirm the network of stakeholders, identify critical land and water conservation issues, understand land management issues in the area, formulate a vision for the property, identify preferred land uses and management activities, verify Management Plan priorities, and obtain feedback on draft management plan language.

The planning team obtained stakeholder input in a variety of ways:

- Meetings, telephone interviews, e-mail communications, and field walks with approximately 12 advisory people in the community
- Three community meetings at the Edgewood Fire Station in Edgewood; between 15 and 25 people participated in each of the meetings
- A public review and input process of the public review draft version of the Management Plan; comments were summarized in a table and responses were formulated behind each one of the comments; seven people submitted written comments on the Draft Management Plan.

The San Pedro Open Space Management Plan was developed by a planning team led by Ecotone. The Ecotone planning team included:

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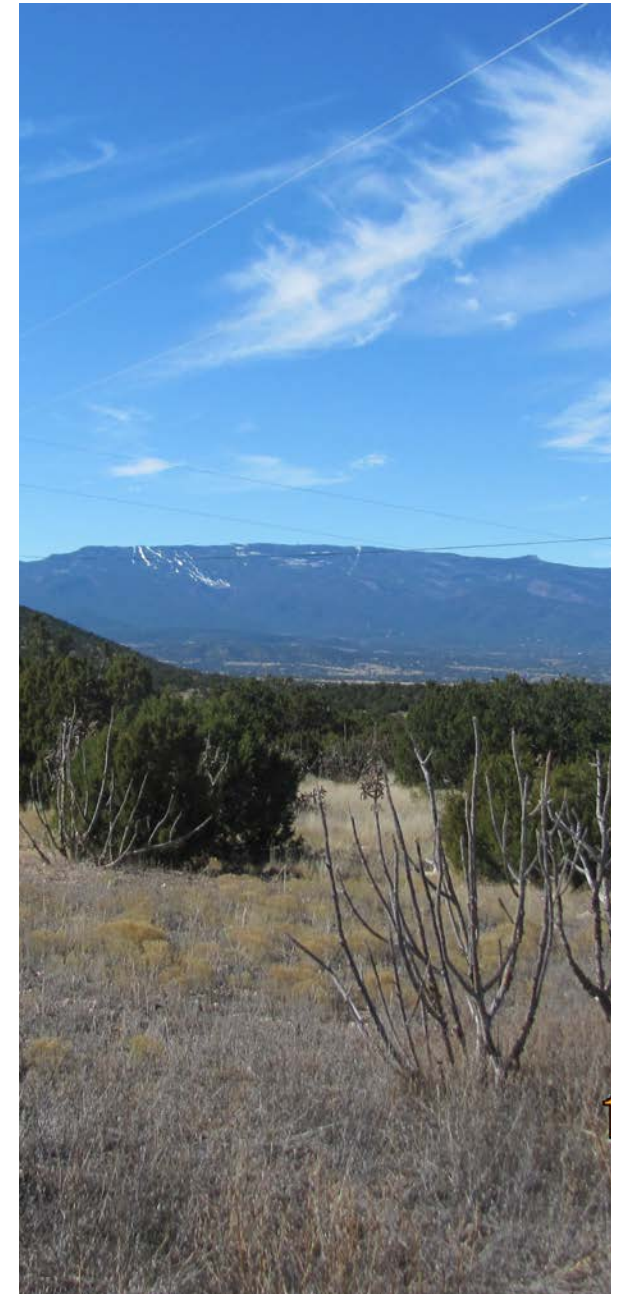
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

San Pedro Open Space (SPOS) is a 160 acre property in San Pedro in southern Santa Fe County. This property was acquired in 2011 as a scenic gateway to the San Pedro Mountains and southern Santa Fe County. It provides recreational and educational opportunities as a connector to public lands, and potential regional trail hub.

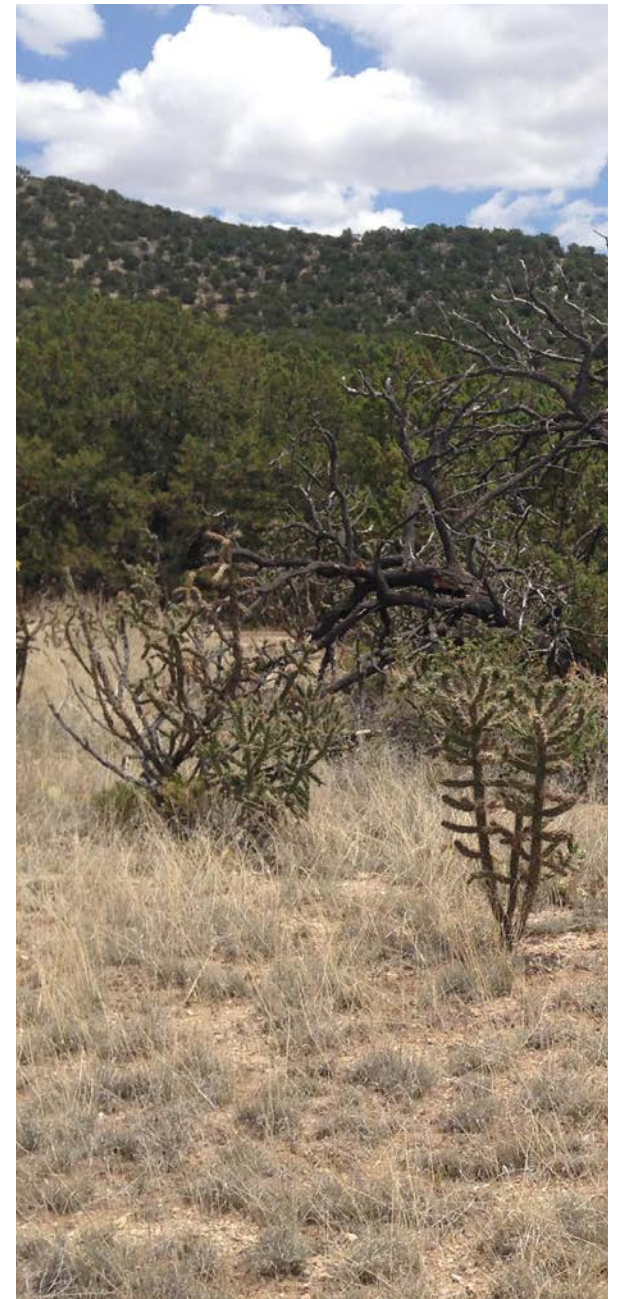
The acquisition of this property was strongly supported by the residents of San Pedro for the preservation of its scenic beauty, connection to public lands, and its potential for linking regional recreation facilities.

The goal of this plan is to provide practical and effective management steps to maintain and enhance the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of San Pedro. This plan was developed in collaboration with community members, adjacent property owners, and Santa Fe County staff. The plan has received strong support from residents of San Pedro.

This open space property includes important wildlife habitat as well as significant, historic and cultural resources. Management site challenges include hazard mitigation, protection of cultural resources, appropriate access, and environmental restoration. The property's ecological and cultural resources are impacted by natural processes and a lack of consistent maintenance. Current threats include erosion and grassland degradation, impacts on significant cultural resources, and public safety related to historic mining activities. This management plan was developed to preserve, protect and restore the property's valued resources and outlines a vision, regular and scheduled maintenance activities, land improvement priorities, as well as stakeholder involvement in land stewardship.

The SPOS Management Plan identifies short-term, mid-term, and long-term management priorities for the property. The short-term phase focuses on ecological restoration and maintenance activities related to public safety and stabilization of cultural resources. In the mid- to long-term, Santa Fe County will work with stakeholders and neighboring BLM to develop recreation opportunities to realize the goal of a regional trail hub and an interpretive education program at SPOS to help visitors explore and understand the unique history, geology and ecology of the area.

The Management Plan for SPOS emphasizes the importance of collaboration regarding stewardship, conservation, and development of this property in the short and mid-long term phases. The plan identifies several opportunities for active public participation in stewardship activities to enhance preservation and restoration of the property to reach the vision for San Pedro Open Space.



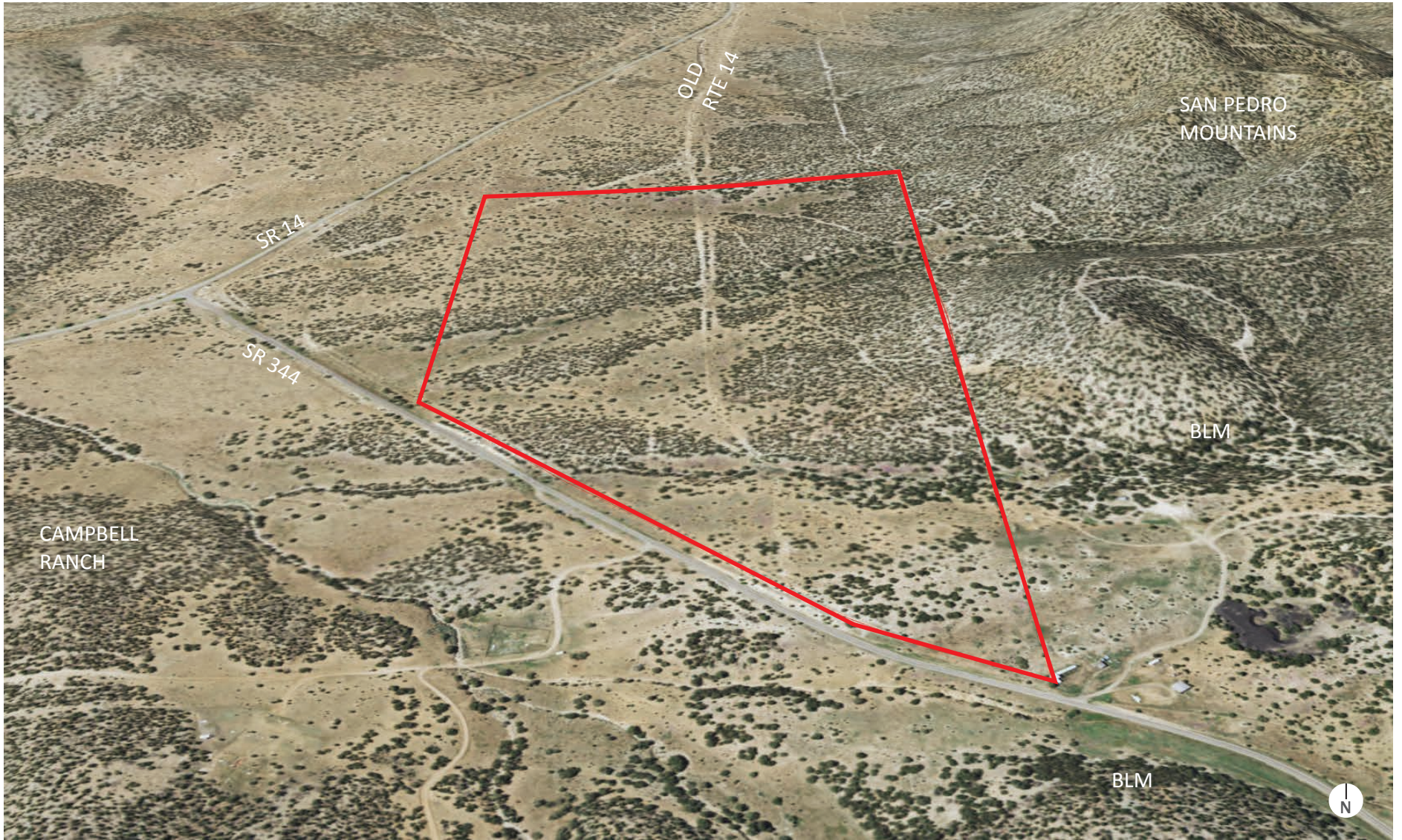


Figure 1. View of San Pedro Open Space - from south looking to north Source: Google Earth

*This Management Plan for the San Pedro Open Space was developed with community members, neighbors, property owners and other stakeholders from San Pedro and the surrounding area.*

*The planning team worked with participants to formulate a vision for the San Pedro Open Space and to verify the final plan components and priorities.*

## 1.1. Plan Purpose and Need

The San Pedro Open Space (SPOS) Management Plan was developed between June 2015 and May 2016. Along with the Management Plan, a Field Characterization Report, a detailed Maintenance Plan, a cultural resources survey, and a Planners' Guide for County staff accompany this plan. The Planners' Guide includes technical planning methods, approaches to County capacity building, best management practices (BMPs), and recommendations for plan implementation.

The SPOS Management Plan outlines a planning direction and specific action priorities for short-term, mid-term, and long-term phases. The Plan was written for Santa Fe County policy makers, staff, community stakeholders, and site stewards with the purpose to:

- Describe the vision, goals, and objectives for management of the property;
- Help staff and the public understand terrain conditions and suitability of the land for different uses of the property;
- Clarify priorities for site restoration and maintenance;
- Identify projects for future investment and financing mechanisms to fund them;
- Streamline management protocols within Santa Fe County.

The Plan was developed in response to a recommendation from the County Open Lands, Trails, and Parks Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) and with clear and strong support for enhanced management of open space properties from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The Plan arose from a growing need for:

- A strategic management plan that includes community outreach, a conceptual master plan, funding analysis, and maintenance plan to direct County staff in managing SPOS;
- A strong vision with clear objectives and strategies for resource conservation, agricultural preservation, passive recreation, and public access;
- An overview of existing conditions and a site-specific inventory report;
- A detailed maintenance plan with recommendations for labor and equipment needed;
- A conceptual plan that identifies, prioritizes and estimates timing and costs for key projects;
- An analysis of potential funding mechanisms to implement the plan.

### Management Plan Need

The SPOS Management Plan is a priority due to the completion of the first phase of a mine hazards assessment on SPOS and the neighboring Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property by the State Abandoned Mine Land Program (AML). Additionally, the management plan is needed to address ecological and functional site conditions that require systematic attention, consistent maintenance and resource management.

In recent years, community members and trail advocates have expressed an urgent need for transparency and clarity about timelines and actions toward realization of a regional trail hub and opportunities for community-stewardship of the SPOS.

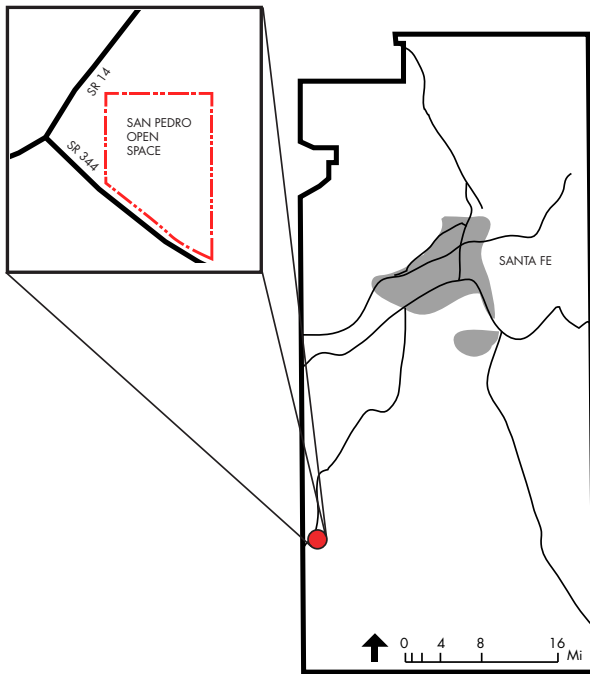


Figure 2. Location Map - San Pedro Open Space

## 1.2. Property Description

The San Pedro Open Space (SPOS) is a 160-acre County Open Space property in the southern part of Santa Fe County in the western foothills of the San Pedro Mountains. Located east of the intersection of State Road 14 and State Road 344, SPOS has frontage and access on State Road 344. The location creates the potential for the site to be a regional trailhead center and access point to public lands, such as the adjacent BLM lands to the east of the SPOS (*Figure 2*).

The SPOS property includes significant cultural resources associated with the historic mining town of San Pedro and pre-historic Native American presence on the land. Pinon-juniper woodlands and grasslands weave in an interlocking landscape pattern across the site. The hills offer impressive sweeping views to the south, the west and north. The quiet, semi-pristine natural environment offers valuable wildlife habitat. The local community has discussed with Santa Fe County the desire to create a regional trail hub and other low intensity recreational facilities for local residents and visitors at SPOS.

The SPOS Management Plan is informed by a landscape assessment (“A Field Characterization for the San Pedro Open Space Property Santa Fe County, New Mexico - An Existing Conditions and Inventory Report”) completed as part of this management planning process (*APPENDIX B*). The plan also incorporates findings of a cultural resources survey of the entire SPOS property conducted by TAMARCH in 2016 (*APPENDIX C*).

Current conditions create needs for resource protection and restoration. Threats to the property’s resources and public safety include:

- Potential degradation of important cultural resources associated with pre-historic Puebloan artifacts and ongoing ancestral Puebloan connections to the land, the historic San Pedro settlement, and historic mining activities;
- Wildfire risk in grassland and woodland edges;
- Erosion risk at headcuts of gullies and along steep stream banks;
- Degradation of wildlife habitat qualities due to lack of water and inappropriate fencing;
- Safety risks associated with off-site shooting, hazardous mine sites on the SPOS property and immediately across the eastern boundary on BLM land, arroyo areas and flood-prone areas;
- Illegal uses on site, such as dumping, shooting, off-road vehicle use, night use and campfires.



Recently, BLM staff conducted a mine site reconnaissance survey at the SPOS and identified a small number of mine pits that require rehabilitation or protective measures for public safety. Several meetings with BLM and New Mexico Abandoned Mine Lands Program (AML) staff were held to clarify plans and timelines for abandoned mine rehabilitation on the County and BLM lands.

The BLM and AML discussions highlighted that completion of mine rehabilitation plans for the County and BLM properties will dictate the timing for implementation of the SPOS Management Plan. In addition, the completion of any mine hazard remediation required by the AML mine rehabilitation plan will affect the timing of any regional trail hub development on the SPOS property.

Significant cultural and historical resources on the SPOS property are related to the historic period of the San Pedro mining settlement, beginning around 1900. The 2016 comprehensive cultural resource survey for the property identified two additional historic sites and expanded the boundaries of a previously known site. These cultural sites comprise approximately 30% of the SPOS land area. All three sites are being recommended for protection under the National Register of Historic Places.

The cultural resources affect management of the SPOS. The required review process with the State Historic Preservation Office will affect detailed development plans for trails, other site development and activities. Implementation schedules must include time for safety and cultural resource clearances for any proposed activities in the identified cultural resource areas.

Any trail design will be influenced by soil conditions, stormwater runoff, views, and the existence of old trails on rocky grades. Trail development will be most suitable on the wooded, higher ridges with gravelly and rocky soils, and on the eastern, gravelly and rocky slopes, which afford spectacular views to the south, west and north. The eastern part of the property also includes several old trail alignments that could be readily used for new trails

During the planning process, stakeholders repeatedly stated grave concerns about ongoing shooting activities on adjacent BLM property to the southeast of SPOS. Concerns about shooting focus on stray bullets and noise impacts to SPOS. Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of clarity and the slow pace of the mine assessment and reclamation process which affects developing trails and other recreational infrastructure on SPOS and adjacent BLM lands. Local residents and other stakeholders also expressed an urgent desire for transparency about timelines and steps toward a regional trail hub and community stewardship of the SPOS.

The San Pedro Mountains are part of a regional wildlife link between the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the north and the Sandia-Manzano Mountains to the south. This linkage is important for cougar, mule deer, black bear, bobcat, foxes, and various smaller mammals. The area is also habitat to bats and raptors. Native ungulates graze on the site's grasslands and find cover in the woodlands. Various rodents live in both the grasslands and woodlands. Wild felines and canines benefit from the ecotones offered in the transitions between woodland and grassland, and the many little canyons and rocky outcrops. However, wildlife movement is hampered in this area by gradual ex-urban development, sparse water sources, and wildlife-unfriendly fencing. Community members noted that the undeveloped character of the SPOS can play a role in accommodating wildlife needs in this area.



### 1.3. Management Plan Development Process

The planning process was informed by the County's initial goals for acquisition of the San Pedro Open Space, and a set of planning principles. The planning principles were formulated based on goals for the County Open Space and Trails Program.

#### ***INITIAL GOALS FOR ACQUISITION***

- Preserve open lands qualities.
- Develop an open space gateway to southern Santa Fe County by developing trail connections (to BLM land, and regional trail hub) and public recreation.
- Preserve the scenic, historic, and cultural landscape qualities and develop interpretive education.

#### ***PLANNING PRINCIPLES***

- Adhere to goals and purpose of Open Space program.
- Ensure public access and safety.
- Keep maintenance needs to a minimum (commensurate to County capacity and community-based stewardship support).
- Minimize needed investments related to master planning.
- Minimize the disturbance of cultural and ecological resources.
- Identify and enhance opportunities for agricultural use of Open Space properties.
- Involve youth and create educational opportunities.

The planning process included three phases:

#### **Scoping and Reconnaissance Phase**

- Interviews with key stakeholders, community members, and County staff to develop an initial understanding for engaging the community in the management plan process.
- Review of relevant Santa Fe County plans and policies.
- Site visits to identify specific research needed for this management plan.
- The first public input meeting to develop an initial community vision for the site.

## Research Phase

- Follow-up interviews with key stake-holders and community members to refine the approach for the second public input meeting.
- Research on topics identified in the Scoping and Reconnaissance phase.
- Additional site visits to confirm terrain management units and collect data for a land suitability assessment and the development of management recommendations.
- Mapping of findings of the Scoping/Reconnaissance and Research phases.

## Planning Phase

- The second public input meeting to present research and land suitability findings and formulate ideas for management of the property.
- Writing the first draft of the management plan.
- Interviews and reviews with County staff to confirm plan coordination and implementation opportunities.
- The third public meeting to confirm the draft vision statement and goals and review the major components of the draft management plan.
- Writing and submittal of the final draft management plan for official approval.

## Information Management

Santa Fe County will gradually streamline and enhance the procedures that help staff acquire, store, and share knowledge that is essential for effective resource management of SPOS. Recommendations about County capacity building, knowledge development, information management, plan updates and community involvement methods are described in the Planners' Guide.

## Plan Updating

This plan is a living document which will be updated and amended when necessary. The scope of the plan is approximately 15-20 years. Plan information is specific for the short-term (years 1-5), descriptive for the mid-term (years 6-10), and preliminary for the long-term (year 11 and beyond).

Changing community needs, terrain conditions, and County management capacity will inevitably lead to the need for plan adjustments. Priorities and timelines may shift, and objectives for planned projects, maintenance activities, and community relations may change or expand. Following completion and assessment of actions beyond the mid-term span of this plan (10-15 years), this plan may need a thorough updating.



Photo 1. Views from San Pedro Open Space to Sandia Mountains



Photo 2. Historic pit-mining example



Photo 3. Transition between grasslands and pinon-juniper woodland



## 2.0 SAN PEDRO OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

*This section describes the San Pedro Open Space vision, the management goal and specific site management objectives.*

*Included are recommendations for monitoring and information management, a conceptual master plan with key projects, community stewardship, terrain management, and funding options.*

### 2.1. A Vision + Goals for San Pedro Open Space

#### **Vision Statement**

The San Pedro Open Space vision statement is based on responses from community meeting participants to questions that asked “What would “good” look like?”, “What do you want for the future of this place?”, “What might other people think would be good for this site, but you don’t?”, and “What would worry you if it happened on the site?” The draft vision statement was shared and verified with community members at the third community meeting.

#### ***San Pedro Open Space Vision Statement***

In 2025, the San Pedro Open Space (SPOS) is a safe and peaceful area for people and wildlife. The open space includes viewing areas, public access, some primitive trails, and public education about the scenic, historic, and cultural landscape. The open land remains wildlife habitat and a wildlife corridor. Local residents, especially younger generations, are actively involved in the maintenance and stewardship.

In the longer term, the SPOS may serve as a regional hub for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders to access a system of trails through southern Santa Fe County. The area may also include additional space for children’s play or community gatherings.

The SPOS will not include loud or disruptive activities or overly-developed facilities.

#### ***San Pedro Open Space Management Goal***

Based on the vision statement, the central management goal for SPOS is:

Santa Fe County and community members of the area collaboratively maintain and enhance the open land qualities of San Pedro Open Space and its wildlife habitat and corridors; its scenic, historic, and cultural resources; and its local and regional recreation opportunities.

SPOS management aims for the gradual development of a regional trail hub to public land and to trails in the wider region, including some simple trail head and interpretive education facilities, at a scale that requires little maintenance, encourages local community stewardship, and respects the area’s significant cultural resources.



Photo 4. Eroded historic wagon trails



Photo 5. Typical pinon-juniper woodland conditions



Photo 6. Example of mine hazards on BLM along SPOS boundary

## Management Goals + Objectives

### *San Pedro Open Space Specific Management Objectives*

Specific management objectives in support of the vision and the central goal are:

1. **Holistic & Neighborly.** Manage the property in a way that the different values and objectives are balanced as a whole, and that improvements and changes are introduced in a gradual way; seek and maintain optimal working relationships with neighbors and other local stakeholders, and encourage the involvement of people from younger generations.
2. **Public Safety.** Enhance public safety by prohibiting motorized vehicles, open fire pits, and the use of fire arms, and by protecting the public from any potential harm associated with old mine sites .
3. **Access.** Control access by managing easements, roads, trails, fences, gates, stiles, drainage crossings and signage.
4. **Natural appearance.** Maintain the area's natural appearance and sweeping scenic views, and keep maintenance limited; maintain a rural, natural visual quality by using natural design principles and natural materials, and by allowing natural processes to assist in management activities when possible.
5. **Education.** Provide and maintain interpretive education, and encourage educational and research opportunities.
6. **Cultural Resources.** Protect the area's cultural, historic, and pre-historic resources.
7. **Ecological Health.** Maintain the ecological health, resilience, and productivity of the SPOS, and maintain wildlife habitat qualities and connectivity across the landscape.
8. **Grazing.** Explore and use – when appropriate – managed, restorative grazing practices (and rest periods) as a way to improve grassland health and examine options to develop agricultural uses on the site.
9. **Infrastructure.** Develop basic infrastructure such as space for parking, benches at viewing areas, and community spaces that serve the vision for SPOS.

Management Objective #1 is Holistic & Neighborly management. Management of the SPOS property will need to be done in coordination with activities and conditions on the adjacent properties.

Santa Fe County acquired the SPOS, in part, as a possible trail head and gateway to landlocked BLM lands to the east of the SPOS. Another purpose was the preservation of cultural resources associated with the historic San Pedro mining settlement and wildlife pathways both of which extend into the larger landscape beyond the SPOS.

Santa Fe County, the BLM, and local stakeholders acknowledge the many connections that SPOS has with the surrounding properties, the San Pedro Mountains, and beyond. The long-term success of the Plan will require coordination and collaboration with adjacent property owners, community stakeholders, BLM, and open space initiatives in Bernalillo County, Sandoval County, and other agencies.

## 2.2. Monitoring, and Information Management

### Monitoring

To ascertain that progress is made toward achieving management goals, County staff together with local community partners will periodically monitor certain indicators of progress (*Table 1*).

Monitoring activities for SPOS include a first tier of five measurements for which baseline data was established during the management planning process; and a second tier consisting of five additional monitoring activities that Santa Fe County staff may conduct as staff time and budget allow. The first tier monitoring activities are numbered and their locations indicated by number on a TMU map (*Figure 6*). Locations for the second tier of monitoring activities will need to be established later.

Based on the monitoring overview described below, and as part of plan implementation, Santa Fe County staff will develop a detailed monitoring plan. A detailed monitoring plan will enable staff and stakeholders to track progress made toward specific goals and objectives. Ideally, the monitoring plan will be updated annually with community members and stakeholders.

A detailed monitoring plan specifies how the indicators will be measured or documented, when and where this will be done, who will do, and what equipment or supplies are needed. Additionally, a detailed monitoring plan will establish or estimate numerical thresholds and conditions that serve to indicate whether corrective action will be needed.

Base-line methods and findings are described in “A Field Characterization for the San Pedro Open Space Property Santa Fe County, New Mexico - An Existing Conditions and Inventory Report” (2016). Methods for additional monitoring activities are in a list of BMPs in the Planners’ Guide.



Photo 7. Grasslands, when disturbed, are susceptible to erosion.



Photo 8. An arroyo associated with water management



Photo 9. Typical grass land productivity in 2015.

### Monitoring Example

To reduce fire hazard and juniper encroachment on grassland areas, a simple method is to monitor the increase of junipers, dead wood, and brush in grassland areas using GPS data-linked photos on a regular basis. If the monitoring indicates that management activities are not resulting in a reduction of junipers, dead wood and brush in the monitored area, an evaluation can be done to identify the reasons for the impairment (e.g., lack of fire, thinning, grazing, or natural die back) and adjustments made to continue toward the goal of reducing fire hazard and juniper encroachment.

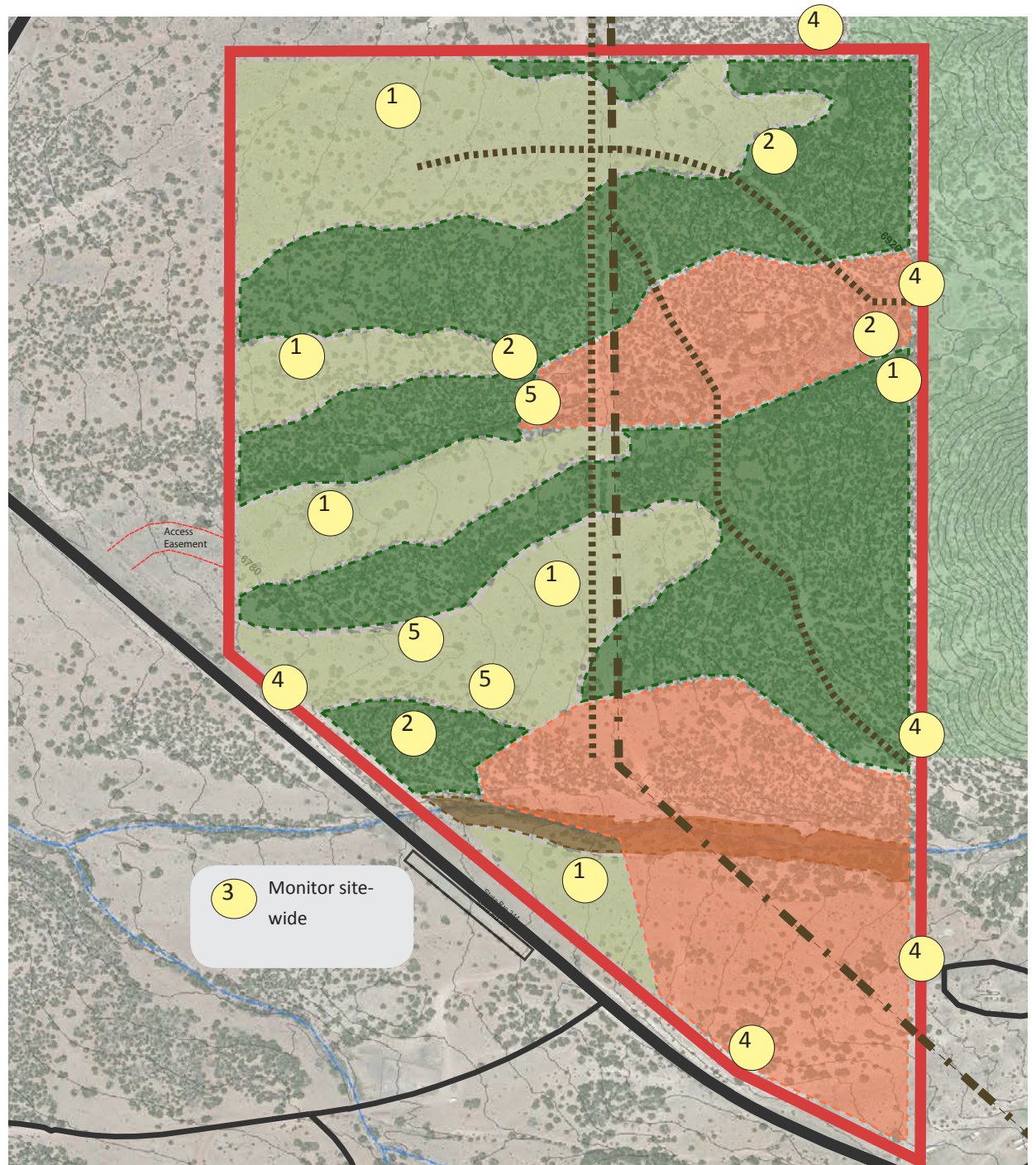


Figure 3. Monitoring Points for San Pedro Open Space



No.	Conditions Monitored	Mgmt. Objectives	Indicators and Monitoring Method	Monitoring Frequency and Season
1	Grassland vegetation cover and richness, and potential forage quality of grasslands	Ecological Health / Grazing	Species richness and plant cover assessments in 10 sample plots along a transect; literature review of forage quality and quantity of plants found in transects	Once in 2-3 years (in the fall)
2	Fuel load of grassland and woodland units	Ecological Health	“Brown’s Line” transects for fuel load estimates	Every 3 years in spring or fall
3	Dead & down wood in woodland and grassland units	Ecological Health	Visual observation during walk- through and photo point documentation; tally number of stems	Every 3 years in spring or fall
4	Fence conditions	Access	Visual observation during walk- through and photo point and GPS/Avenza PDF Map of fence conditions for people and wildlife	Annually
5	Erosion and headcut features	Public Safety / Ecological Health	Visual observation during walk- through and photo point and GPS/Avenza PDF Map of erosion features	Annually or at least every 5 years
6	Neighbor and stakeholder stewardship, relations	Holistic & Inclusive	Public participation and initiative; public feedback and expressions of support	Annually
7	Scenic quality	Natural Appearance / Education	Visual observation during walk through and photo point documentation	Annually or at least every 5 years
8	Liability and public safety risks (also in connection with BLM land)	Holistic & Inclusive / Public Safety	Visual observation during walk through and photo point documentation	Quarterly or at least Annually
9	Preservation of cultural resources	Cultural Resources	Visual observation during walk- through and photo point and GPS/Avenza PDF Map any cultural resource disturbances	Annually or at least every 3 years
10	Infrastructure and signage conditions	Infrastructure	Visual observation during walk- through and photo point and GPS/Avenza PDF Map infrastructure damage	Once installed bi-annually or at least annually

**Note:** The table indicates the minimum suggested monitoring frequency. In some circumstances frequencies may need to be increased if/when staff time and funds allow, or if monitoring activities can be conducted by community volunteers.

Table 1. Monitoring Matrix



## 2.3. Conceptual Master Plan

The Conceptual Master Plan for San Pedro Open Space (SPOS) describes proposed land improvement projects and associated investments to support the SPOS vision and management goals. The proposed projects result from stakeholder wishes and planning opportunities given the limiting conditions set by the suitability of the land and the need to protect cultural resource of the site. The Conceptual Master Plan describes alternatives for site access, improvements, specific projects, their purposes, priorities, and a suggested timeline for implementation.

### Land Use and Development Plan

The SPOS Conceptual Master Plan aims to conserve the site's scenic beauty and integrity, wildlife habitat, and protect its unique historic and cultural resources. The conceptual master plan envisions recreational and interpretive education facilities for a regional trail hub and local recreational uses.

Land conservation is already the de facto land use at SPOS. This plan does not propose any immediate changes to that land use. However, within the context of land conservation, gradual improvements will be made toward planned recreational and interpretive education uses.

The scope, scale and timing of recreational uses and trail development depend on the nature and timing of mine hazards mitigation and cultural resource protection requirements on the adjacent BLM property and the SPOS property. In the short- and mid-term, Santa Fe County will work with stakeholders to plan and establish a few recreational improvements. Short-term recreational improvements may include the construction of a few entry stiles, a natural surface trail, benches, and some interpretive education signage. Santa Fe County will work to conserve cultural resources through careful trail alignment design and review with the State Historic Preservation Office. In the mid-term, steps will be taken to develop a master plan for long-term recreational development, with options varying from regional trail hub facilities to rustic park facilities. Longer-term improvements may include entry gates, parking areas, trails expansion, trail head facilities, and enhanced interpretive education facilities.

Other uses and activities in support of the vision, such as managed grazing and construction of wildlife drinkers and wildlife-friendly fencing, will take place gradually during and after the short-term maintenance and restoration phase. Improvements will in addition focus on grassland health, wildfire prevention, and soil conservation in the grassland units.

Baseline site conditions indicated a need for maintenance of fences, management of juniper encroachment and gully erosion in the grasslands, and a need for dead wood removal in woodland units. Archaeological sites and a few hazardous abandoned mine pits will require additional planning to avoid or mitigate soil disturbance caused by proposed activities in the Cultural Resources TMU (*Figure 6*). All proposed activities that have a potential to disturb soil will need approval from the State Historic Preservation Office.

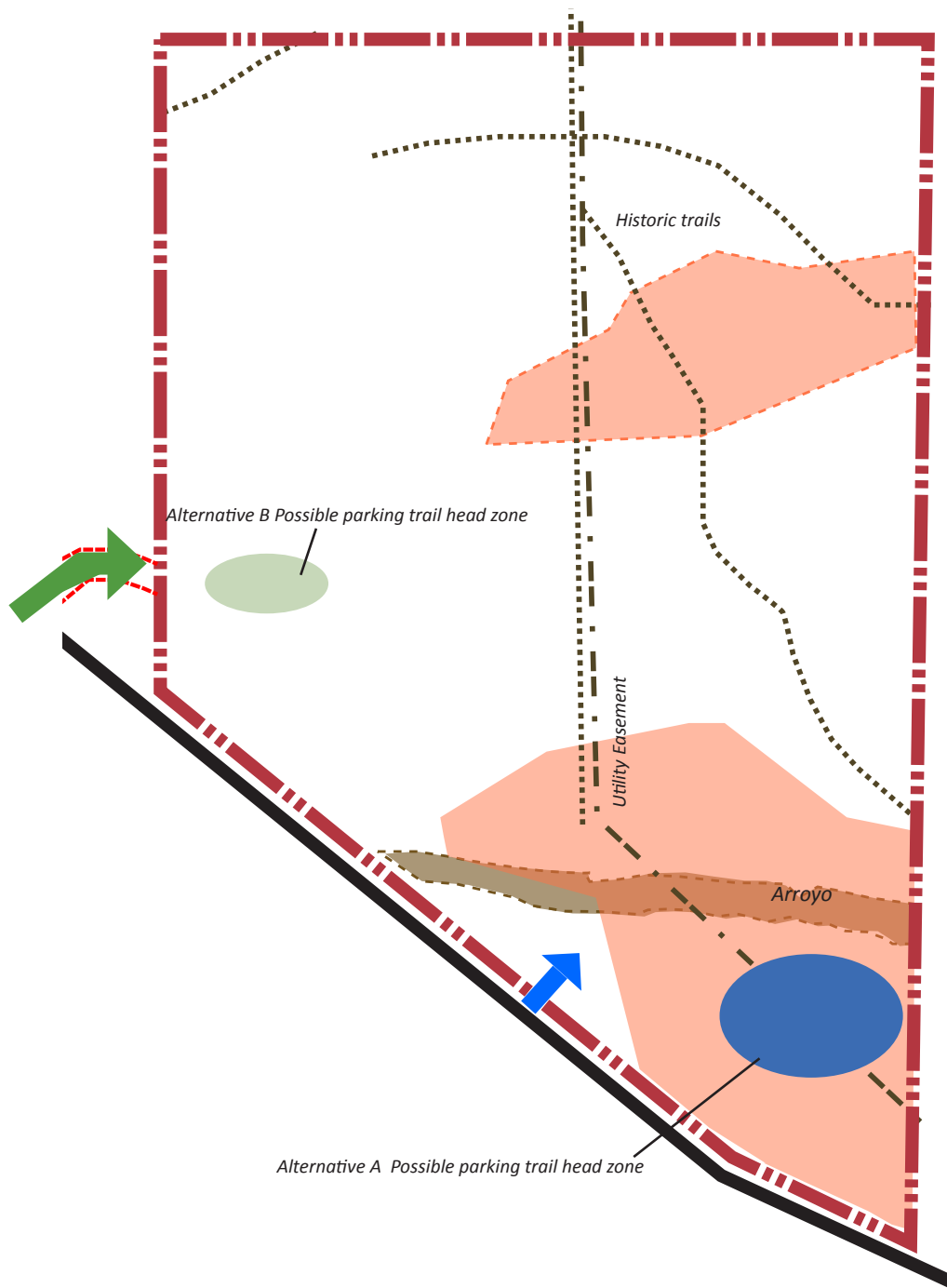


Figure 4. Alternative A - Access at southeastern area and Alternative B- Use off-site easement to the southwest

Possible long-term recreational and access development alternatives identified during this planning process with the community were 1) No Action, 2) Preferred Solution, and 3) Alternative Solution.. The two alternatives to the No Action Alternative were developed in response to cultural resource preservation concerns (Figure 4). Other alternatives may need to be developed during the future planning processes for specific improvements.

**No Action Alternative**

No Action Alternative has been the default situation since the time of purchase of the SPOS property. This alternative will likely end during the Short Term phase of the Management Plan. Santa Fe County and local stakeholders prefer an action alternative that begins to prepare the property for the development of access, recreational activities, and a proposed regional trailhead.

No Action helps preserve the significant cultural resources of the property and the semi-pristine natural character. However, this alternative would preclude investments in ecological terrain improvements, safety improvements, and signage.

**Alternative A: Preferred Solution / Development at the Southeastern Corner**

Alternative A is the preferred option and will be developed first for review and approval by the State Historic Preservation Office. If this alternative is met with serious cultural resource protection concerns that delay implementation, seriously limit development options, or significantly increase implementation costs, Alternative B will be explored.

**Description.** Alternative A includes an entrance point to the north into the property across from the eastern end of the pullout strip along the south side of State Road 344. The proposed access road would loop eastward up the hill out of sight from State Road 344, offering parking opportunities on higher ground, and avoiding sheet flow and viewshed impacts on the lower part of the slopes. From there, a trailhead area would be developed on solid terrain south of a large arroyo that crosses the SPOS from east to west. A trail would run at a suitable point across the arroyo to give access to connections for trails northward on the SPOS and potentially eastward onto BLM land.

Advantages of this alternative are that the improvements are all on solid, mostly gravelly and rocky, substrate with minimal needs for drainage management and erosion control features. This alternative would also offer the least total square footage of ground disturbance for the improvements, have the least impacts on the area's predominant views to the west, and connect best to existing historical trail alignments and to future trails on BLM land.

Disadvantages of this alternative are that the improvements will take place on one or more recorded cultural resource sites, and that the potential impacts of the improvements will need to be evaluated and cleared with the State Historic Preservation Office. This may constitute a costly and time-consuming, iterative planning process. Additionally, this alternative would require a well-designed trail crossing across the large arroyo that dominates the southern part of the SPOS property.

#### **Alternative B: Alternate Solution / Development Using Southwestern Easement**

**Description.** Alternative B includes an entrance point on the southwest side of the property via an existing access easement from State Road 344 across private property located on the west side of the SPOS. The proposed access road within the easement would curve eastward across the lower end of a grassland swale and end at the western tip of a woodland area on gravelly soils. Parking and a trailhead area would be developed in the woodland strip, and cars would be partly concealed from view by the remaining juniper and piñon trees. Trails would run eastward through the woodland strip and northeast through the grasslands to such points on the eastern part of the SPOS property that would allow trail connections to existing old trail alignments that run northward on the SPOS and trail connections onto BLM land to the east.

Advantages of this alternative are that it largely avoids the cultural resource sites and would be able to proceed with fewer regulatory oversight procedures. Much of the improvements would be on solid gravelly soil with limited needs for any drainage and erosion control features. There would also not be a need to construct an arroyo crossing for the main trail into the SPOS.

Disadvantages of this alternative include that road construction within the access easement would need to be supported with engineered drainage and erosion control features, because the access road would cross a wide, grassy drainage swale that is expected to carry considerable sheet flow after rain storms. This alternative would require a greater square footage of soil disturbance and a longer total trail length to be built to reach connection points to trails going north and east on BLM land. The alternative would also involve greater impacts of the predominant views to the west from higher vantage points on the eastern parts of the property.

Other implementation-level alternatives will occur in relation to choices regarding locations of improvements, the use of materials, and the selection of implementation techniques for specific projects. Review and selection of alternatives for individual projects will be addressed during the Detailed Master Plan phase and the design process for each project.



### **Key Planning and Research**

Every proposed projects requires planning and research beforehand, so that projects are well conceived, funded and implemented. Because planning and research is critical to achieve this plan, the following are key planning and research activities that are recommended.

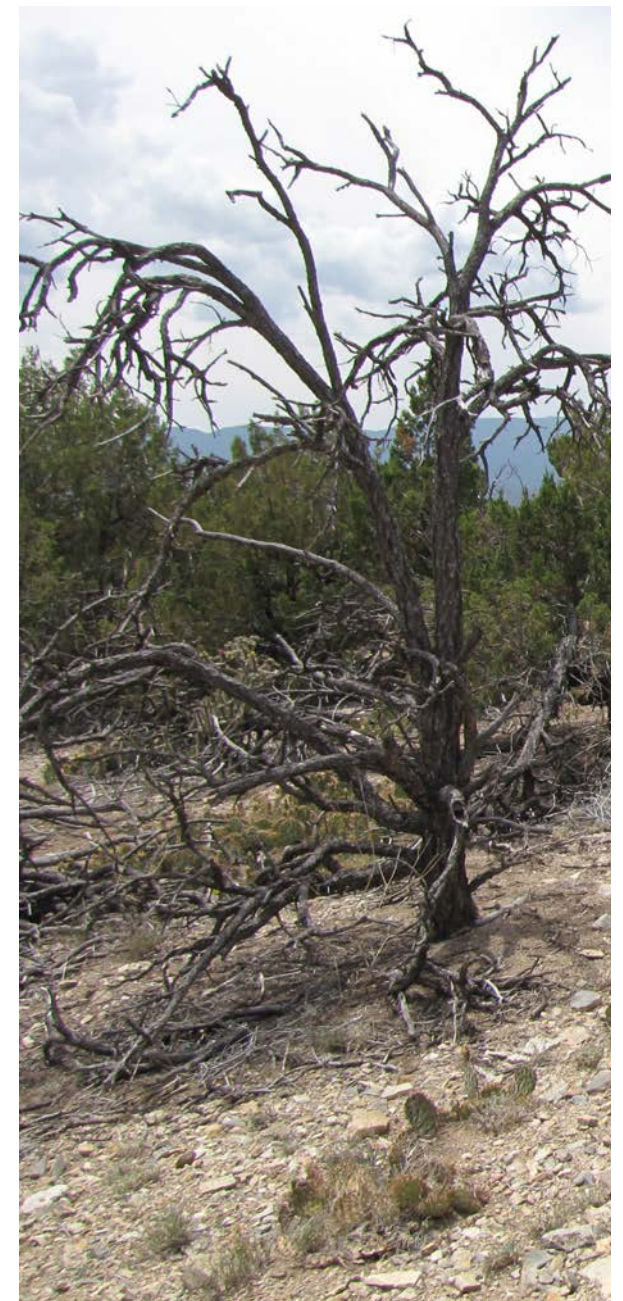
### **Short-Term Planning and Research**

1. Develop protocols for communication and verification about maintenance and land restoration work, mapping, monitoring, and team coordination.
2. Develop and implement a monitoring plan to develop base-line data for all scheduled activities and associated terrain conditions.
3. Develop a basic signage plan with signs for boundary marking and/or acknowledgement of the SPOS and acknowledgement of any relevant access easement, along with a bulletin board that will serve to post flyers and announcements; it will be useful if signage address public safety rules, leave-no-trace principles, and Santa Fe County contact information; signage design that has a natural appearance and is simple and unobtrusive will best meet the vision for the SPOS.
4. Identify hazardous mine sites.
5. Select appropriate methods to protect the cultural resource sites.
6. Plan a community stewardship structure and specific stewardship events.
7. Research and plan a construction project for water harvesting-based wildlife drinkers.
8. Develop a grassland management plan, including removal of encroached juniper and brush, wildfire prevention, weed management, and developing, testing and evaluating a restorative grazing pilot program.

9. Develop a woodland management plan based on rotational woodland treatment over a 20-year rotation period.
10. Plan an erosion control project including arroyo bank stabilization and headcut stabilization at various locations.
11. Plan fence upgrades and property fencing projects.
12. Plan the implementation of preliminary, small-scale trail development.
13. Identify funding and financing of all identified projects.

#### **Mid- and Long-term Planning and Research**

14. Guide ongoing development of the community stewardship structure.
15. Develop educational and research opportunities.
16. Plan Recreational and Regional Trail Hub Master Plan for the future use of the SPOS.
17. Plan a comprehensive interpretive education program for the SPOS.
18. Plan the implementation of the Recreational and Regional Trail Hub Master Plan.



The Concept Master Plan proposes projects and activities as listed below and as generally shown in *Figure 5* on this page and the next.

The proposed projects are prioritized based on prioritization criteria outlined in the Planners' Guide.

Prioritization and phasing of projects and activities for SPOS are also based on the assessment of terrain conditions in early 2016, protection of archaeological resources, and mitigation of abandoned mine hazards.

### Short-term

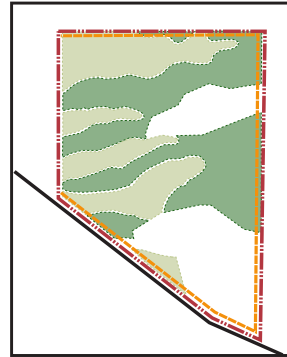
- Activities focus on land restoration, maintenance, and the improvement of wildlife habitat to address conditions caused by deferred maintenance
- Install site signs and bulletin board
- Research and planning activities for longer-term land health improvements and the implementation of projects in support of recreational development.

### Mid-term

- Fence improvements.
- Grassland and woodland restoration activities, including possibly the introduction of managed, restorative grazing practices.
- Possible construction of a simple, natural surface trail loop within the SPOS property, using the historical trail alignments as much as possible.

## SHORT TERM

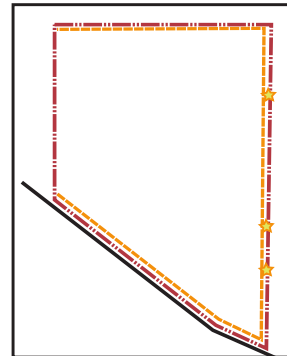
### MAINTENANCE



#### ANNUAL / BIENNIAL

- Initiate tree removal in grassland areas  
Begin in 15 to 20 acre sections  
Continue annually across site
- Initiate woodland thinning dead wood clearing  
Begin in approx. 5 acre sections  
Continue annually across site  
Spread dead wood as bare soil cover, surface erosion control
- Maintain and repair fencing

### IMPROVEMENTS



#### FENCING IMPROVEMENTS

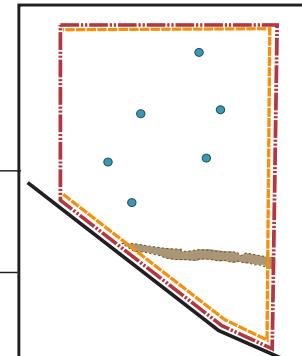
- Close gaps in fencing on east side
- Upgrade overall perimeter fence

#### WILDLIFE IMPROVEMENTS

- Wildlife friendly fencing
- Wildlife drinkers

#### EROSION CONTROL

- Headcut stabilization
- Arroyo bank stabilization



### PLANNING

#### HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

- Develop woodland management plan  
Rotational plan (15 to 20 year cycle)  
Treatment scale (4 to 5 acres per year)
- Study and plan restorative grazing program  
Design program  
Conduct test  
Evaluate results

#### EROSION CONTROL PLANNING

- Plan and design headcut and arroyo stabilization

#### INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

- Research and design interpretive plan

#### COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

- Organize community stewardship group
- Community maintenance events  
Wildlife improvements

#### COUNTY-BLM-SHPO COORDINATION

- Coordination with BLM and SHPO needed
- Begin plans when appropriate for  
Hazard mitigation  
Cultural resource protection  
Public access of site  
Trails and connectivity



# MID TERM - LONG TERM

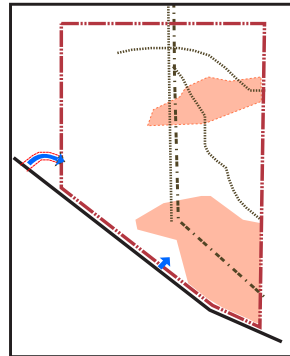


## ANNUAL / BIENNIAL CONTINUED

- Continue rotational grassland tree removal program
- Continue rotational woodland thinning, dead wood management
- Continue fence maintenance and repair

## RESTORATIVE GRAZING MANAGEMENT

- Implement restorative grazing program in cleared grasslands
- Manage as per restorative grazing plan



## CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Install fencing if needed for restorative grazing plan
- Interpretive and signage improvements

## COORDINATED IMPROVEMENTS

- Cultural resources protection
- Hazard protection
- Trails improvements
- Access improvements

## TRAIL + SITE PLANNING

- Create master trails and site plan
- Fund trails and site projects (in phases)
- Implement trails and site projects (in phases)

## COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

- Strengthen community stewardship group
- Continue community events
- Develop educational and research opportunities

## INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

- Fund interpretive projects (in phases)
- Implement interpretive projects (in phases)

## Long-term

- Ongoing annual grassland and woodland restoration activities.
- Master plan components, such as the possible development of facilities for a regional trail hub, including connections to trails on BLM land.
- Installation of interpretive education signage.

Planning and preparation is required for all improvements proposed. Implementation of improvements will be based on maintenance and repair activities and schedules.

Community involvement is essential for the maintenance, improvement and planning for SPOS. Public involvement may include feedback on proposed project details during future planning and design sessions; active engagement in the planning and implementation of projects; and on-going maintenance of the site. Several maintenance activities will be suitable for community or volunteer participation, which will facilitate community stewardship for open space care and maintenance.

Figure 5. Maintenance/Improvement/Planning Diagram

Santa Fe County intends to include and involve a diverse group of community stakeholders in volunteer stewardship activities at the San Pedro Open Space.

These groups would include:

- Immediate neighbors and members of the San Pedro Neighborhood Association
- Local youth, Boy Scouts, area schools and their students (e.g., East Mountain High School or San Antonio Elementary School in Sandoval County)
- Camp Oro Quay
- The East Mountain Regional Trails Council
- The Turquoise Trail Preservation Trust
- The Turquoise Trail Regional Alliance
- Equestrian groups in the area
- Local livestock owners
- Local mining and prospecting groups and individuals
- Native American communities, such as Santa Ana Pueblo and San Felipe Pueblo
- Regional conservation groups, hiking and outdoor organizations, and other similar entities that are interested in SPOS.

## 2.4. Community Relations

Santa Fe County intends to develop and maintain productive, neighborly and collaborative relations with the San Pedro community and other stakeholders as a critical activity in the implementation of the SPOS Management Plan.

### Information Exchange

Santa Fe County plans to expand and develop several methods for information exchange with community members and stakeholders.

#### Signage

Santa Fe County will install simple signage to identify the San Pedro Open Space property. Signage will inform the public about safety aspects, leave-no-trace principles, suggestions for general care and stewardship behavior, and contact information for Santa Fe County. Santa Fe County will install safety signage, flagging, and/or fencing to keep people and pets away from hazardous mine sites and develop ways to protect sensitive cultural resource sites. Boundary markers will be installed for maintenance and access control. A bulletin board will be placed on the SPOS property along State Road 344 for public notices, such as specific events, meetings, and terrain management activities.

#### Website

Santa Fe County will maintain the website pages dedicated to the County Open Space & Trails program. The website may be expanded with a specific webpage describing the SPOS landscape and history, management plan information and activities, and planned events at the SPOS.

#### Community Contact

Santa Fe County will work with the community to identify a communication structure with community members who are available to field comments and questions and contact County staff for follow-up actions. Communication may address signage, cultural resource management and site protection, public safety measures, grassland management, wildfire prevention, and collaboration on fencing and wood removal projects, among other initiatives, especially in the initial phase of plan implementation.

### **Education, Coordination and Collaboration**

Santa Fe County and community members understand that it is important to cultivate educational and research activities at SPOS to raise awareness about the area's unique mining history, cultural resources, and ecology and to mobilize support for future stewardship. Santa Fe County and community members encourage youth engagement and will include school groups in educational activities and site maintenance.

A significant portion of the community relations will revolve around maintenance of the open space property, both to announce maintenance work done by Santa Fe County and its contractors, and to plan and coordinate maintenance work done in collaboration with community members. All maintenance and restoration activities will be reviewed with affected neighbors and stakeholders prior to implementation, or discussed and coordinated in community meetings.

Maintenance activities that are suitable for groups of volunteer stewards include:

- Maintenance of stiles, fence repair and fence adjustments for wildlife,
- Removal of dead wood and woody debris in grasslands,
- Trail maintenance, drainage management, and erosion control around old and new trails (if/when established).

Maintenance activities can provide benefits for the community. Such benefits may include the distribution of dead wood as firewood to community members and sharing of information about cultural resources or wildlife in the area.





Collaboration on maintenance activities will be most effective by organizing community partners around specific, tangible projects to foster communication and trust, and generate additional objectives, priorities, and creative new ideas for problem solving. The following topics are of interest in the community and may serve as pilot projects for implementation of this plan:

- Fencing upgrades for wildlife and construction of stiles to access the property
- Wildlife habitat conservation,
- Wood harvesting,
- Trail building and stewardship,
- Interpretive education programming, including recording oral history narratives,
- Public and youth education.

A more detailed list for community involvement is included in Section 2.6 about short-term implementation activities.

## 2.5. Terrain Management

For purposes of maintenance and land use suitability, the SPOS Management Plan identifies several **Terrain Management Units** (TMUs) (*Figure 2*). Each TMU encompasses an area with similar landscape features, maintenance requirements, and land suitability characteristics (i.e., opportunities for land use). The dominant terrain types are grasslands and pinon-juniper woodlands. The TMUs organize the spatial management aspects of this plan.

Terrain management activities are described in detail in a separate Maintenance Plan for SPOS. The following sections summarize terrain management in the context of the SPOS Management Plan. The proposed terrain management activities also reference specific Best Management Practices (BMPs), which are described in the Planners' Guide.

### Maintenance and Restoration Plan Summary

Terrain management includes land restoration, maintenance, and community stewardship. Terrain management activities are specific for each different Terrain Management Unit (TMU). Each TMU requires a discrete set of management activities to maintain their ecological functions as part of the central management goal for the SPOS.





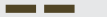

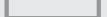
An overview of terrain management activities is included in *Table 2*. A comprehensive Maintenance Plan for SPOS is included in *APPENDIX D*. Detailed lists of terrain management activities in Year-1 are included in *APPENDIX E*. The County will face challenges to finance all the maintenance needs that will arise in the future. Strategies that can be useful to optimize maintenance dollars and effort, include:

- Collaborate with adjacent properties, agencies and community stewards to leverage working together to address maintenance needs;
- Invest smaller consistent amounts of time and labor in well-planned maintenance activities;
- Conduct maintenance activities at the optimum time based on monitoring information or a regular schedule.



# TERRAIN MANAGEMENT UNITS

## LEGEND

-  SP-GRA-P GRASSLAND-PASTURE UNIT  
relatively dry, high-quality pasture, valley bottomlands
-  SP-WOO WOODLAND UNIT  
higher, rugged upland areas with piñon-juniper vegetation
-  SP-CUL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE UNIT  
areas highly altered by historical land use (mining, habitation, grazing, etc.)  
requires close collaboration with BLM, AML and SHIPO to manage these units
-  SP-ARR ARROYOS UNIT  
arroyo channels and arroyo banks
-  UTILITY EASEMENT
-  PATHS - EXISTING
-  PROPERTY BOUNDARY
-  OFF-SITE PARKING

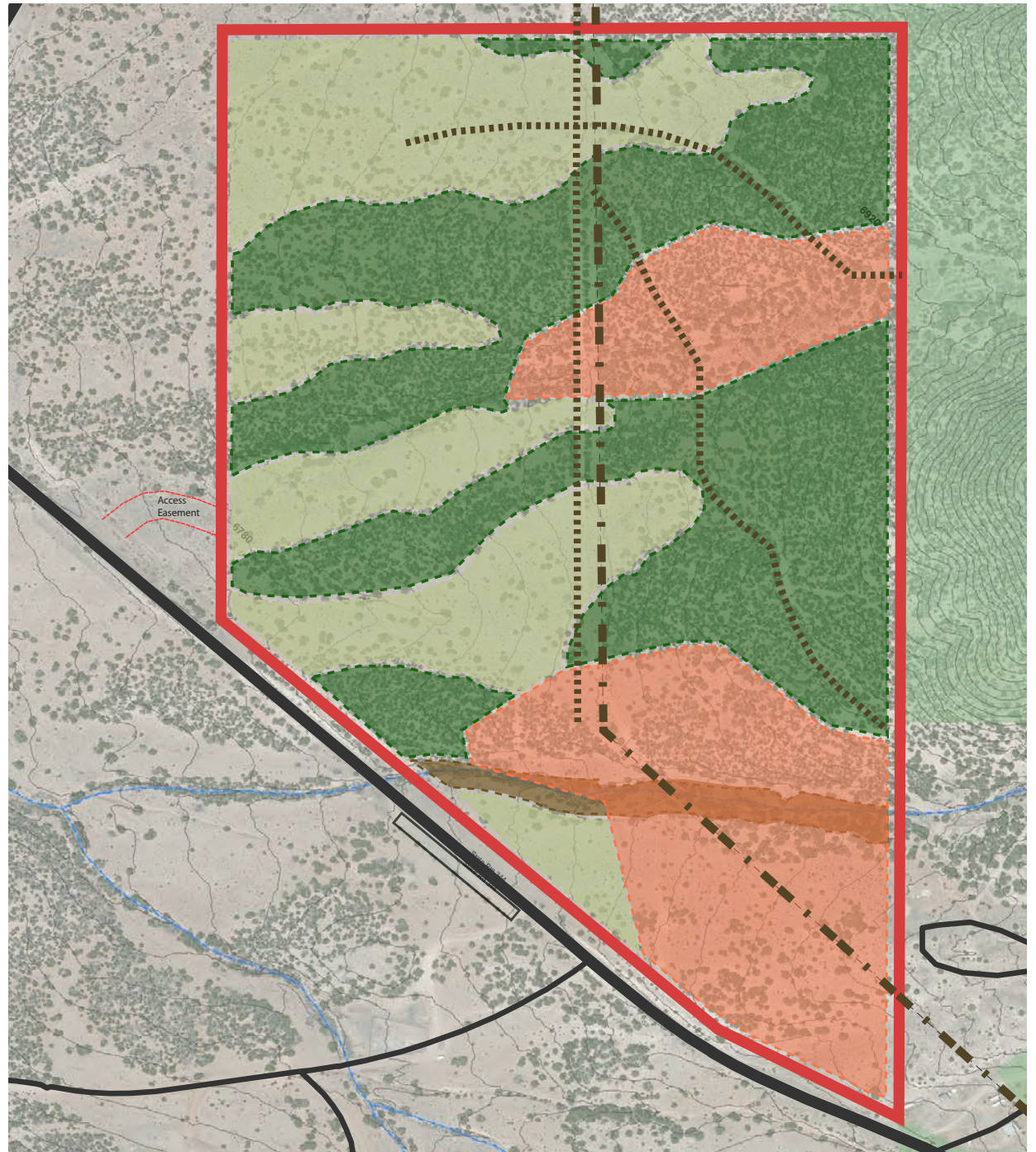


Figure 6. San Pedro Open Space - Terrain Management Units Map

Where	What	Why	When
TMU	Anticipated Regular Maintenance Activities	Objective	Maintenance Frequency*
All TMUs	Communication and outreach with neighbors and stakeholders and integrate feedback in planning	Holistic & Inclusive	Annually
All TMUs	Inspect property boundary markers	Public Safety	One time (year-1) and when needed
All TMUs	Inspect and repair:	Public Safety / Access / Education / Infrastructure	a. Annually
	a. Fences, gates and stiles		b. Annually
	b. Roads and trails		c. Annually
	c. Signage		d. Annually
	d. Benches and trash cans		e. Annually
	e. Drainage crossings		
All TMUs	a. Change fencing to be wildlife friendly	Ecological Health	a. Year 1 and annual inspection
SP-CUL	a. Maintain signage	Education / Cultural Resources	a. Annually
SP-GRA-P	a. Thin juniper that encroached on grassland, spread branches to cover soil, limit erosion, protect artifacts	Ecological Health	a. Years 1+2; and then once in 10 years
SP-GRA-P	a. Thin juniper and pinon encroaching on grassland	Ecological Health	a. Annually (14 ac/yr)
	b. Spread branches to cover soil and reduce erosion		b. Annually (14 ac/yr)
	c. Check and remove any noxious weeds		c. Annually
	d. Headcut stabilization and erosion control in rills		d. When needed (after year 2)
SP-GRA-P	a. Inspect and repair fences	Ecological Health / Grazing	a. Annually
	b. Develop and manage restorative, managed grazing (limited acreage/year)		b. Annually (after year 3)
	c. Deliberately rest selected acres		c. Annually
SP-WOO	a. Remove dead and leaning trees	Cultural Resources / Ecological Health	a. Every 5 years
	b. Thin trees and spread branches (lop & scatter) to cover soil against erosion and to protect artifacts		b. Annually: 5 ac/y (esp. in first 5 y)
SP-WOO	a. Thin woodlands based on stewardship plan	Ecological Health	a. Annually (5 ac/yr) (20-yr rotations)
	b. Spread branches to cover soil and reduce erosion		b. Annually (5 ac/yr) (20-yr rotations)
SP-ARR	a. Inspect and remove brush that inhibits flow and causes bank erosion	Ecological Health	a. Annually
	b. Erosion control and bank stabilization		b. When needed (once in 5 y)

Table 2. Terrain Management Units- Maintenance Activities



## 2.6. Plan Implementation and Financing Mechanisms

Plan implementation will start by identifying priorities and timelines among staff for activities regarding maintenance, planning and project preparation, community outreach, and community stewardship involvement. Prioritization will be based on balancing the recommended tasks at hand, and the staff and funds available to accomplish the tasks.

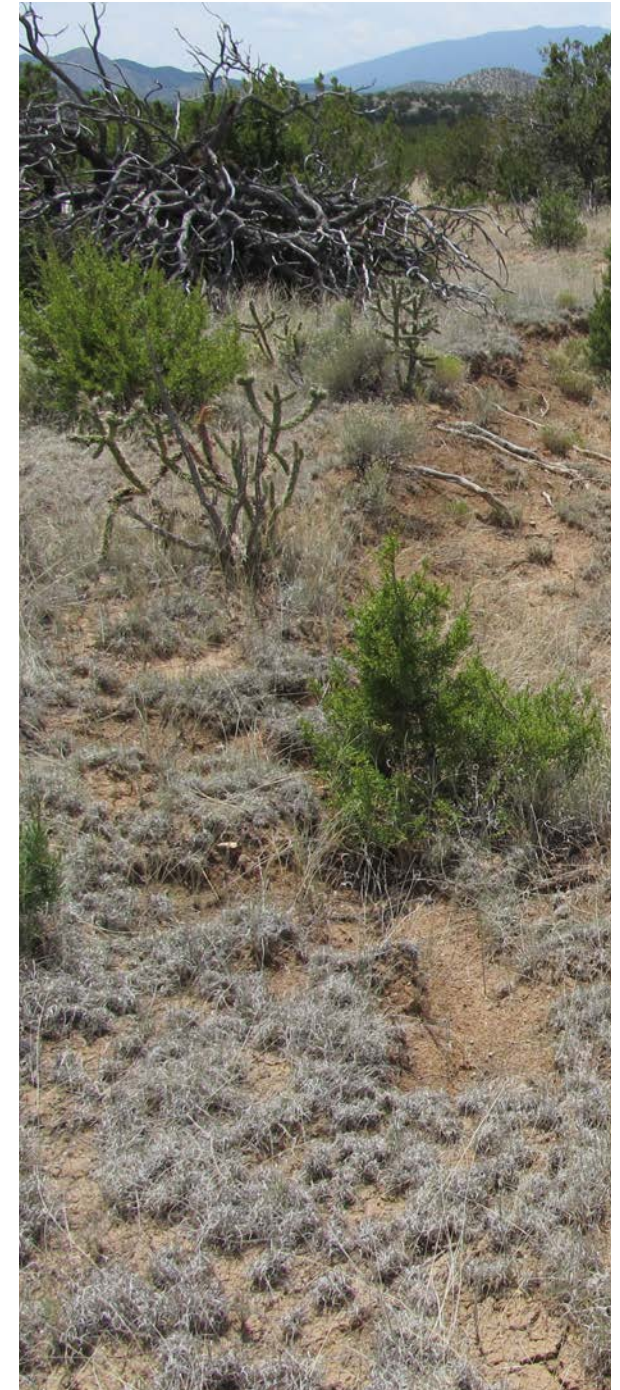
### First Year Implementation

Implementation of this plan will start upon approval of the plan by the County. Recommended Year-1 implementation activities include:

1. Periodic community meetings to explain and work through the planned implementation activities with an emphasis on:
  - b. Clarification regarding protection of cultural resource sites, rehabilitation and public safety around abandoned mine sites on SPOS and BLM lands and an update on timelines;
  - c. Terrain inspections, base-line data collection, priority maintenance activities, and planning activities for a few, short-term key projects for community activities, repairs and improvements;
  - d. Identifying community interest and capacity to assist with the planned activities.;
  - e. Developing as specific as possible, outlines and timelines for collaborative community activities between Santa Fe County and neighbors and other local stakeholders.;
  - f. Coordinating specific community involvement with the selected projects;
  - g. Evaluating at the end of Plan Year-1, the outcome of Year-1 activities and establishing priorities for Year-2.
2. Implementation of selected terrain inspections, base-line data collection for future monitoring, maintenance activities by County staff and with neighbors and local volunteers. Inspections, data gathering and priority maintenance will include:
  - h. Fencing of hazardous mine sites;
  - i. Inspecting conditions of cultural resource sites;
  - j. Inspecting and repairing exterior fence conditions;
  - k. Removing dead wood, dead brush, and live and dead junipers in the grasslands;
  - l. Inspecting arroyo banks to assess whether ongoing erosion and woody debris in arroyos could lead to more bank erosion



3. Planning, collaboration, and community organizing to implement priority projects and community activities (“Things people can do”), which may include:
  - a. Enlarging the group of interested people and involving more youth;
  - b. Development and placement of sign, a bulletin board and marking cultural resource areas;
  - c. Counting animals to support fence repair and readjustments;
  - d. Identifying feasible entry points and future trail alignments;
  - e. Juniper cutting and removal dead wood removal in grasslands;
  - f. Installation of wildlife drinkers and their water-harvesting systems;
  - g. Collecting stories and historical information for future interpretive education programming;
  - h. Collecting botanical and ecological information for future interpretive education programming.
4. Research and planning activities for the preparation of larger initiatives that are planned to be implemented at a later date, including:
  - a. Development of protocols and methods of information management, staff development, and coordination;
  - b. Development of a interpretive education signage plan, site specific signs; public outreach and communication strategies;
  - c. Grassland management planning and the development of a managed, restorative grazing program;
  - d. Development of a woodland stewardship program;
  - e. Planning for headcut stabilization;
  - f. Interpretive education planning;
  - g. Evaluation of the Short-Term phase and adaptive planning for subsequent years.





### **Financing Mechanisms, Funding Sources, and Partners**

Santa Fe County owns and manages more than 6,600 acres of open space properties and park areas, but it has insufficient funding and staff resources to meet the acquisition and management goals for the properties. Santa Fe County will be able to implement this plan and other property, if it successfully continues to develop new funding mechanisms, identify new funding sources, and cultivate collaborative relationships with neighbors, local stakeholders, and other interest groups.

To implement this plan, Santa Fe County will include neighbors, stakeholders and other partners for monitoring, planning, and implementation of specific projects. This collaborative approach will help build neighborly relationships and increase buy-in from and stewardship by the people with the greatest interest in the property and it will reduce the need for outside funding for property management.

Santa Fe County will pursue funding sources and explore creative funding mechanisms to ensure the financial viability of managing the SPOS according to the recommendations of this management plan. Potential funding sources and funding mechanisms are outlined in *Table 3*.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	PURPOSE	ACQUISITION TIME FRAME
General Fund (Santa Fe County)	Staff costs	Annual budgeting process
Grants	Staff and consultants for various tasks, such as:	Dependent on funding source timelines
	Fencing	
	Signs, bulletin board	
	Managed grazing	
	Monitoring program	
	Arroyo banks and headcut stabilization	
	Wildlife drinkers and water harvesting systems	
	Trail and recreational development	
	Mine rehabilitation and protection work	
	Cultural resource protection	
	Interpretive education research and implementation	
Wildfire prevention: grassland and woodland thinning		
CIP funds	For all the above	Annual budgeting process
FFS (Fee for Service)	Grazing contract	On a contract basis
Hiring a grant writer for OS funding	Pursue more grant funding	Short-term
Cultivating community stewards	Delegating word to local community stakeholders	Short-mid term
Organizing social/cultural (fund raising) events with non-profit partners	Generating discretionary income and public outreach	Mid-long term
Establishing a “Friends of SPOS” group	Generating discretionary income and public outreach	Mid-long term
Collaboration with non-profit entities for co-management activities	Sharing the burden with organized stakeholders	Mid-long term
Voter-approved Revenue Initiatives	Providing a dedicated annual revenue stream for OS, Parks and Trails	Long-term
Establishing an NGO for overarching support to OS property management	Sharing the burden with organized stakeholders	Long-term

Table 3. Potential Funding Sources and Mechanisms



**SAN PEDRO OPEN SPACE APPENDICES (separate document)**

**APPENDIX A: Overview of Management Activities for San Pedro Open Space**

**APPENDIX B: A Field Characterization for the San Pedro Open Space Property Santa Fe County, New Mexico - An Existing Conditions and Inventory Report**

**APPENDIX C: Abstract Of An Archaeological Survey Of 160.8-Acre San Pedro Open Space Santa Fe County, New Mexico**

**APPENDIX D: Maintenance Plan for San Pedro Open Space**

**APPENDIX E: Maintenance, Stewardship, and Restoration Projects for Year-1**

