



ARIZONA'S CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



District Conservation Action Plans

Arizona's Conservation Districts
Summer Conference
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Part 1

This presentation outlines the process of developing a District Conservation Action Plan including:

- Explanation of the standard format for the plans
- Explanation of each section of the plan
- Obtaining data and other information
- Analyzing additional data needs
- Setting priority areas and plans for implementation

OUTLINE FOR CONSERVATION PLANS

Introduction

Purpose and Need

Goals

Chapter 1 – General Description

Land ownership, administrative boundaries, physical features, demography, etc.

Chapter 2 – Resource Concerns – General Analysis

Types of concern, estimated causes, effects, needed practices, extent, and severity of concerns.

Chapter 3 – Desired Conditions and Needed Practices

Chapter 4 – Current Situation

Past, ongoing, and planned studies and treatments to address concerns.

Chapter 5 – Action Plan

Coordinated plan agreed upon by stakeholders to identify additional information and needs, prioritize concerns, make specific treatment plans, develop partnerships and public support, identify sources of funding, develop educational programs.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON CONSERVATION PLANS

Each Conservation District will prepare a plan that includes a resource needs assessment and conservation action plan to achieve conservation objectives identified.

The purpose of these plans is to identify and prioritize resource concerns and actions needed to address these concerns based on the best available data and opportunities for partnerships. The plans will also assist NRCS in setting their priorities for types of programs, funding levels, personnel needs, etc.

The plans will be general in nature at this time. They will identify the kinds, amounts, location, severity, and effects of resource concerns and practices needed to address them. At this time, the plans will not concentrate on specific individual projects. Plans will be subject to continual modification in response to new resource information, new funding sources, policy and plan revisions of agencies, and other factors. They are considered “living documents.”

Development of the plans is the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors of each District under the leadership of the Chairman. Districts may obtain help from volunteers or contractors in the collection and analysis of information and writing.

ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS IS PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THE DISTRICTS IN PREPARING THE PLANS

1. AACD is developing the ConserveAZ Portal, with support and funding from NRCS. The purpose of the Portal is to facilitate the collection of available data on resources, land ownership, administrative boundaries, and other information that will be needed in every plan so each District will have access to it.
2. AACD is also developing a series of reference materials or fact sheets on its website on some of the topics to be discussed in each plan that can be downloaded, cut and pasted, and edited to fit the needs of individual plans. The website also includes technical guides that describe how additional needed information on resources can be obtained.
3. AACD is also helping to locate contractors and funding for hiring them to assist the Districts as needed.
4. NRCS is supporting AACD and the Conservation Districts by providing funds for these efforts and furnishing technical data and support.

OUTLINE FOR NRCD RESOURCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Resource Needs Assessment should be a robust collection of natural resource conditions, trends, and concerns and how these conditions affect agricultural productivity, socio-economic prosperity in the district, and any observable trends. The following outline summarizes the content that NRCS would expect at a minimum level. However, there may be items in this outline that are non-applicable to some districts, and conversely, there may be additional items not listed here that require attention. Since NRCS is providing financial assistance to develop the RNA, NRCS must concur with the content.

Purpose and Need – Explain what the NRCD is and why it needs a plan

- NRCDs established by state law as local gov with elected officials
- Mandate includes all resources and all land ownerships
- Work with cooperators to achieve conservation on voluntary basis
- Provide technical assistance and financial assistance
- Educational activities
- Need this plan as basis for assessing needs, setting priorities, obtaining funding, cooperative efforts with other entities
- Development of plan prompted by increasing water supply problems, soil erosion, decreasing forage production and wildlife habitat, and increasing wildfire danger
- RNA should be GIS-centric—Develop resource maps to display land use, conditions, goals, objectives, etc.
 - ArcGIS Online (AGOL), gives public access
 - PDFs to provide easy-share capability
 - Story maps (ArcGIS)
 - Share newly developed layers with NRCS
 - Broad-based needs
 - Follow format of rapid watershed assessments

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Need

- NRCDs established by state law as an entity of local government with elected officials
 - Mandate includes all resources and all land ownerships
 - Work with cooperators to achieve conservation on voluntary basis
 - Provide technical and financial assistance
 - Educate cooperators and others on needs and benefits of conservation
 - Conservation Action Plans, including resource assessments, are needed as basis for assessing resource concerns, setting priorities, obtaining funding, and establishing cooperative efforts with other entities
 - Development of Conservation Action Plans prompted by increasing water supply problems, soil erosion, decreasing forage production and wildlife habitat, and increasing wildfire danger

Goals

- Identify local priorities and high-risk resource concerns based on local workgroup input
- Create and maintain vegetative conditions and resource management that will result in soil and water conservation and productive use of the land as well as reduced risk to human life and property by wildfire
- Coordinate these land management practices among the various landowners and jurisdictions within the District which is made necessary because of the complex pattern and interdependence of land ownerships in the area
- Assist District cooperators and others in obtaining financial and technical assistance to support conservation efforts on all land ownerships
- Assist District landowners in understanding resource conditions and needs
- Develop short-term action plans and long-term strategies to address the needs
- Educate local landowners and managers and the general public on the benefits of sound land management

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Geography, Economy, Administration,
Infrastructure

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCES IN THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This section will be a general description of the District including both the natural resources and other information such as economic factors, population trends, etc.

It would include basic general information on the following topics as appropriate (they may vary by District):

- Boundaries and acreage of District, population, cities, economic data
- Landownership patterns in the District
- Land Use – farming, irrigation, etc., including NASS data
- Land ownership patterns – history, problems, solutions?
- Climate
- Geology
- Soils
- Vegetation zones – MLRA, CRA,
- Watersheds
- Hydrology – streamflow, ground water, known dams (particularly NRCS-designed), etc.
- Wildlife
- Wildfire

The topics will include maps (Rapid Watershed Assessment style) and tables to document the area or numbers involved. Following are desired attributes to be mapped:

- 10-digit HUCs
- Geology
- Common Resource Areas (or LRUs)
- Slope classification
- Streams, lakes, gaging stations
- Riparian Vegetation
- Land cover/Vegetation
- Average annual precipitation
- Land Ownership
- Land use
- Mining and primary ores
- Impaired Streams and Lakes and Active Management Areas
- Air quality non-attainment areas
- Population density 1990 -2000-2010
- Housing density 2000 – predicted 2030



Mapping Tools

[Inventory](#) [Legend](#) [Identify](#)

General Description

- Land Ownership
- Township and Range
- Section
- Arizona Conservation District Boundaries
- Arizona County Boundaries
- Arizona Legislative District Boundaries - Upper
- Arizona Legislative District Boundaries - Lower
- Arizona Congressional District Boundaries
- NRCS Service Centers
- BLM Field Offices
- USFS Administrative Forest Boundaries
- USFS Ranger District Boundaries
- Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management Districts
- American Indian Reservations
- Irrigation Districts
- Annual Precipitation Average
- Geology - Generalized Lithology
- Slope

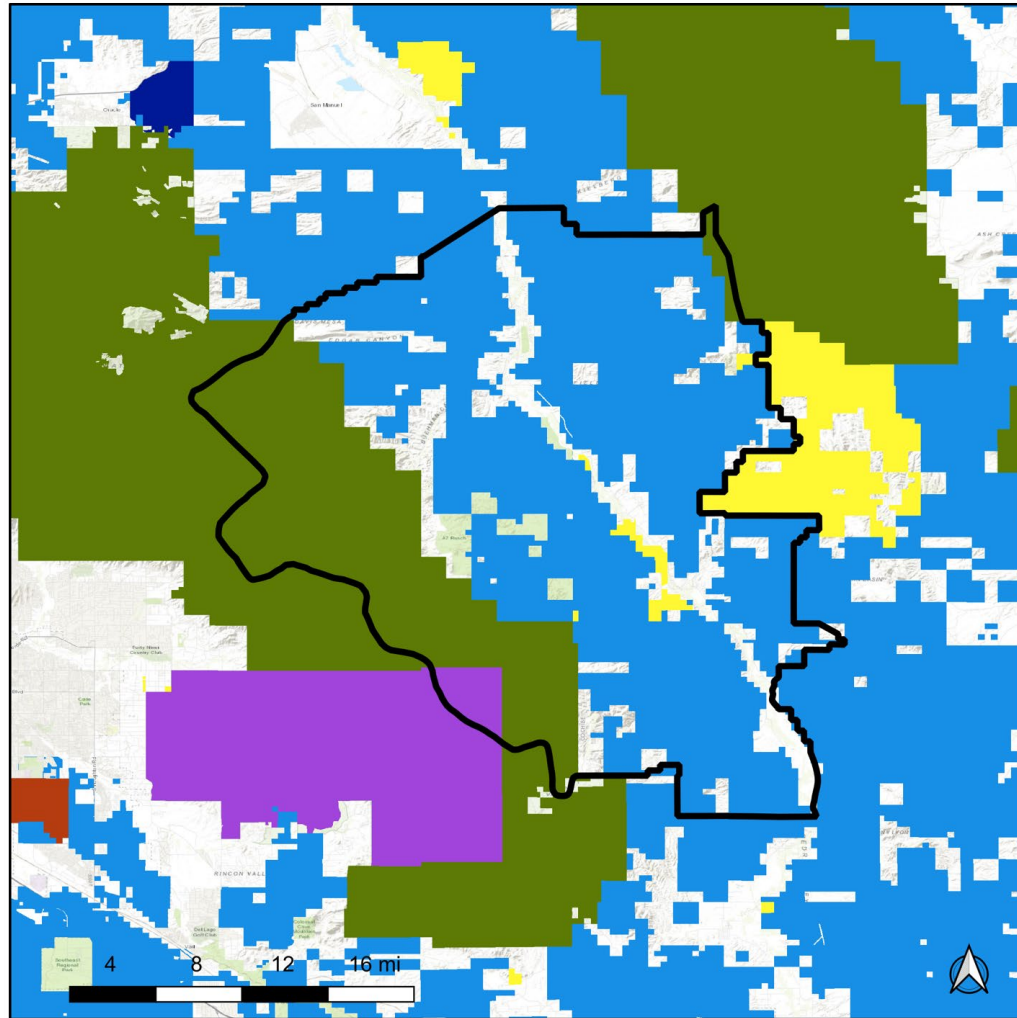


IDENTIFY THIS AREA Search

DRAW PRIORITY AREA **SELECT FEATURE** **IMPORT SHAPE** **PRINT** **FILTER**

50 mi

Land Ownership



This dataset depicts the surface management agency in Arizona.

Legend



Source Citations

Data: Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Land Resources Information System (ALRIS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Arizona State Office, and Premier Data Services. BLM Surface Management. Map Service.

SURFACE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Values in the below table are grouped by Surface Management Agency

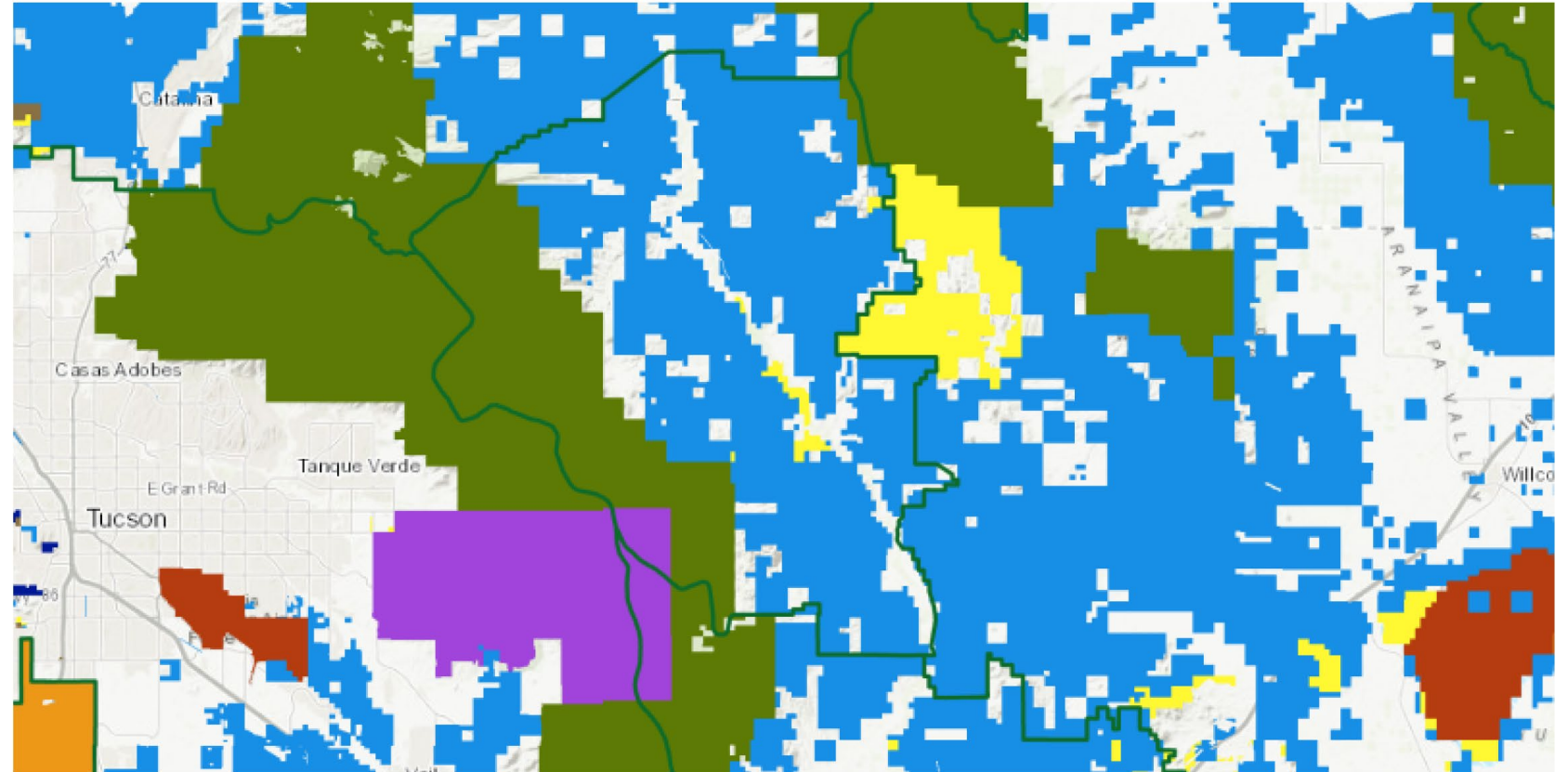
	Total Acres	Source Acres Percent
State	168,172	58%
USFS	68,371	24%
Private	45,127	16%
NPS	4,071	1%
BLM	2,487	1%
Total	288,226	100%

LAND OWNERSHIP - REDINGTON NRC

Legend

Land Ownership

- State
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- US Forest Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Indian Reservations
- Military
- Local or State Parks
- Private
- Other





Mapping Tools

[Inventory](#) [Legend](#) [Identify](#)

General Description

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CHAPTER 1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCES

Location and General Features

Land Ownership and Administration

Land Uses

Livestock Grazing

Farming

Urban, Commercial, and Residential

Wilderness and Other Restricted Use Areas

Recreational Use

Climate

Geographic Setting

Soils

Vegetation

Major Land Resource Areas, Common Resource Areas, and Ecological Sites

Major Land Resource Areas

Common Resource Areas

Ecological Sites

Watersheds

Hydrologic Units

Water Budget

Wildlife

Wildfire

Literature Cited

Location and General Features

Use “overview” map from Portal and describe towns, etc.

Land Ownership and Administration

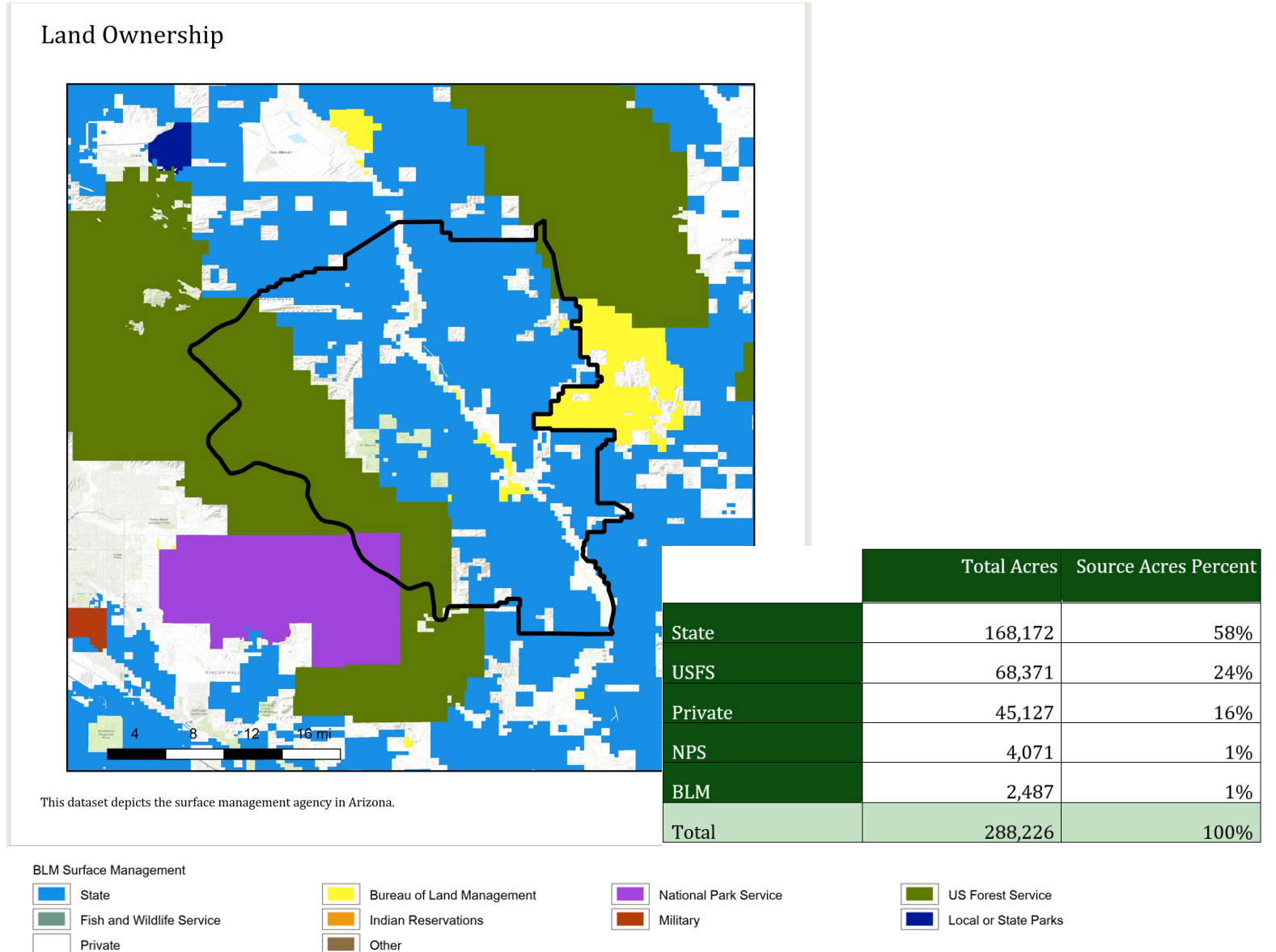
Use land ownership map from Portal and describe administrative boundaries with or without maps as needed.

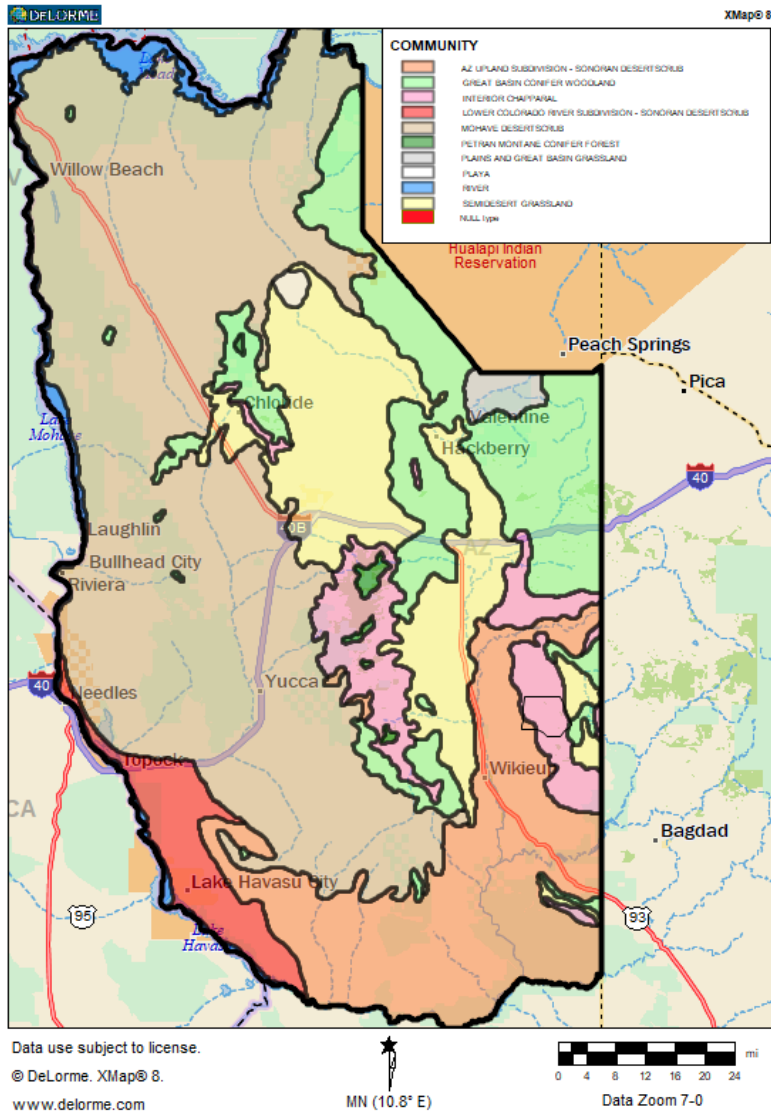
Land Uses

- Livestock Grazing
- Farming
- Urban, Commercial, and Residential
- Wilderness and Other Restricted Use Areas
- Recreational Use

(Brief description of each of the land uses and their economic importance. May use Portal map for existing vegetation which shows developed and cropland or get GAP land cover map which also shows areas not in native vegetation).

REDINGTON NRC





Climate

Describe general climate – good place to find description is in the soil surveys that cover the area. Use precipitation map from Portal-Gen Description layer. Attach an Appendix analyzing rainfall records for past 10-30 years if desired. Info on how to do this is on AACD website.

Geographic Setting

Describe the mountain ranges, valleys, rivers, etc. Use geology map from Portal – Gen Description layer.

Soils

Describe the general type of soils in the area. A map is not very useful here because it will be very complex at this scale. Useful information can usually be found in BLM or USFS environmental statements or land use plans.

Vegetation

Describe the major vegetation communities present in the District (dominant species and life forms, etc.). Use the vegetation formations that are identified in the Portal – Vegetation & Ecological Sites section. A good map to show vegetation types is that of Brown and Lowe which is widely used by agencies. Descriptions of the major types will be on the AACD website and can also be found in various land use plans and environmental studies.

Major Land Resource Areas, Common Resource Areas, and Ecological Sites

Major Land Resource Areas (MLRA)

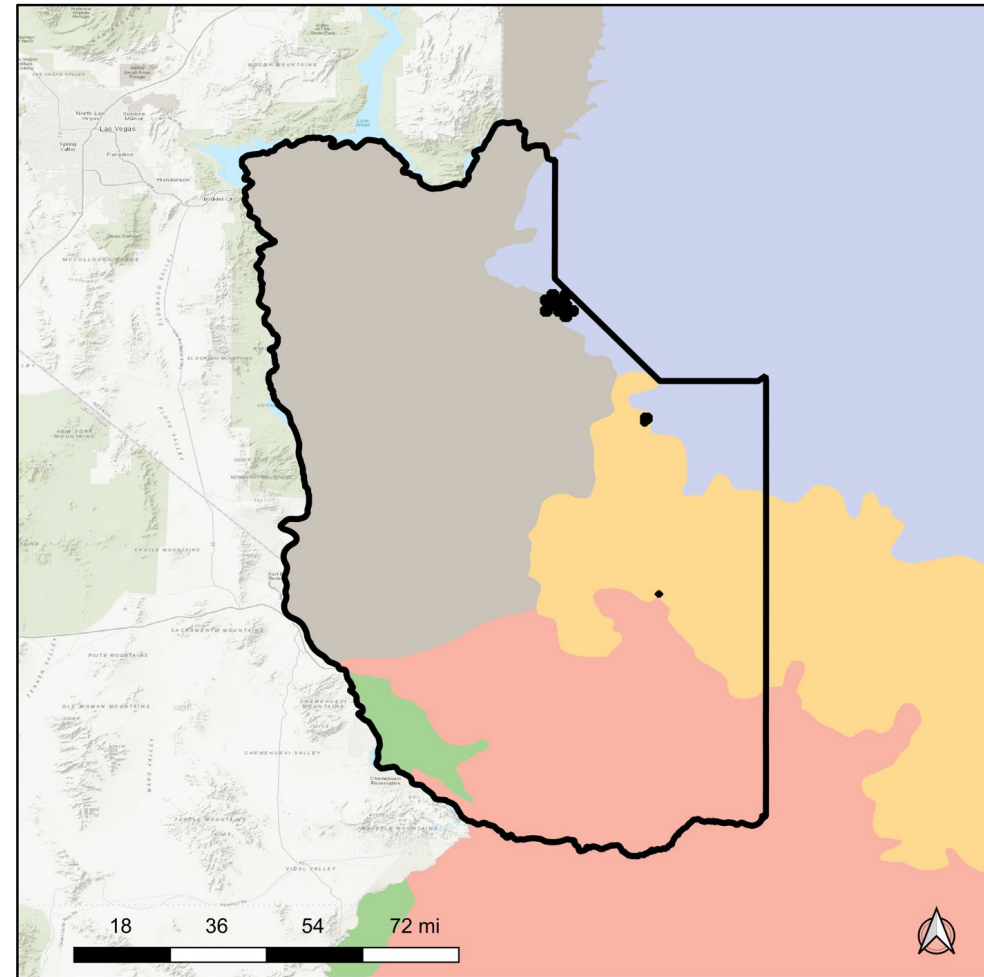
Put in map of MLRAs from Portal – Veg/Ecological Sites Section. Describe each MLRA present in the District – this can be obtained from AACD website. Some Districts may be entirely within one MLRA, so won't need map.

Common Resource Areas (CRA)

Put in a map of CRAs (environmental zones) from the Portal – Veg/Ecological Sites Section. This map also shows the MLRA number, so may not need MLRA map. Describe each CRA in terms of main vegetation type, precipitation, topography etc.

Ecological Sites

Describe what ecological sites are and they are important. Summarize some information about the kind and extent of ecological sites and include list and acreage of all sites in an appendix using the Portal Report data.

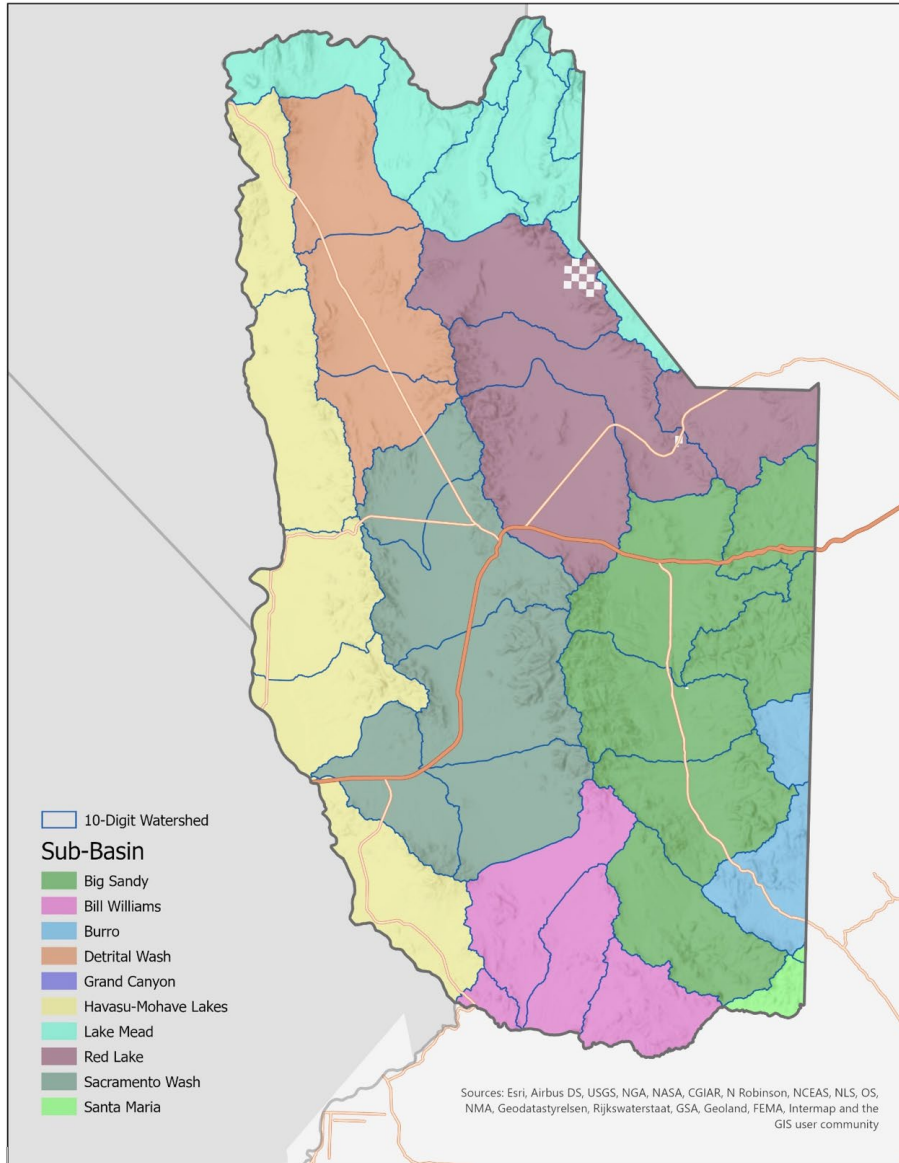


Major Land Resource Areas (MLRAs) are broad areas with similar patterns of climate, geology, topography, vegetation types, soils, and other environmental factors. Arizona includes all or part of 8 MLRAs, each with a unique number and name.

Legend

Major Land Resource Area			
Mojave Desert	Lower Colorado Desert	Colorado Plateau	Mogollon Transition
Arizona and New Mexico Mountains	Sonoran Basin and Range	Southeastern Arizona Basin and Range	

Data: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Soil Survey Center, National Coordinated Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Version 4.2.



Watersheds

Hydrologic Units

Put in a map of the hydrologic units (watershed) within the Priority Area. Maps of both HUC 8 (sub basins) and HUC 10 (watersheds) are in the Portal – Hydrology. HUC 8 units may be more useful for larger Districts and HUC 10 for smaller Districts. Put in a table with the names, numbers and acreage of each watershed in the District. Watersheds may overlap District boundaries – the acreages in the Report Tables are only the portion within the District.

Water Budget

It may be desirable to put in some figures on water use for different purposes, e.g., irrigation, urban, industrial, mining, etc. and the estimated supplies of surface and/or groundwater in relation to these uses. Such data can be found in USGS or ADWR publications or online sources. Alternatively, this type of information could be included in Chapter 2 and/or Chapter 4.

Wildlife

Describe the main types of wildlife present in the District, including both game species and non-game. These descriptions can often be found in agency plans or documents. Provide a list of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. These can be obtained from the AZGFD, Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, or USFS. There is a map of designated critical habitat in the Portal-Wildlife Section and the report will provide acreage included in these habitats.

Wildfire

This section will only be a general description of the occurrence and risks of wildfire in the District. More detailed discussion of wildfire should be included in Chapter 2 as a resource concern.

Literature Cited

Include citations of any literature or other information sources at the end of the chapter. This could include not only published scientific literature, but other sources such as personal communication, an office or individual from a government agency, an unpublished report, the ConserveAZ Portal, or the AACD website.