

ARIZONA'S CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



District Conservation Action Plans

Arizona's Conservation Districts
Summer Conference
August 11, 2021

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Part 5

CHAPTER 5

ACTION PLAN

Priorities, Partnerships, Funding, Education

This chapter is the Conservation Action Plan developed by the NRCD working with the Local Work Group.

The plan is based on the information and analysis carried out in the previous chapters, i.e., identifying resource concerns, describing desired conditions and needed practices, documenting previous, ongoing and planned practices, and identifying potential partners and funding sources.

Participants in the Local Work Group will have been involved in all the previous steps but are especially important in this final phase of the planning.



STEPS IN THE PROCESS

- The District supervisors should review the information and analysis in the resource needs assessment (i.e., the first 4 chapters) and reach a consensus on priority resource concerns, needed practices and general locations for conservation projects.
- Make draft copies of the first 4 chapters available to members of the Local Work Group (LWG) to review. Ask them to come to a meeting ready to discuss.
- Conduct a discussion among the group to identify their priority resource concerns and priority areas. Also identify where additional information is needed and ask LWG members to supply such information if they have it.
- Include identification of possible funding sources and needs for education efforts.
- Continue to hold LWG meetings until a comprehensive plan for conservation treatments and the collection of additional information is written and generally agreed upon by the LWG.



SOME GENERAL COMMENTS

- The plan is to be a “living document”
- It is the best plan that can be produced at present given the amount of information available, the plans and priorities of cooperating groups, and anticipated financial resources.
- The plan will change as agency policies, funding, information, or resource conditions change. It should not just be stuck on the shelf, but periodically reviewed and updated by the Local Work Group.
- The Conservation Plan is the District’s plan. It should reflect the priorities and objectives of the District even if these are different than those of some of the Local Work Group members.

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO IDENTIFY AND RANK PRIORITY AREAS

The following slides are based on information from Big Sandy NRCD – but the action plan is not complete.

Ranchers were asked to identify resource concerns on their ranches and grazing allotments.

This example deals with the areas identified as needing brush management. Other resource concerns were inadequate livestock water, soil erosion, dry springs and wells, sediment in dirt tanks, etc. These are not directly considered in this example, but would be in an actual plan.

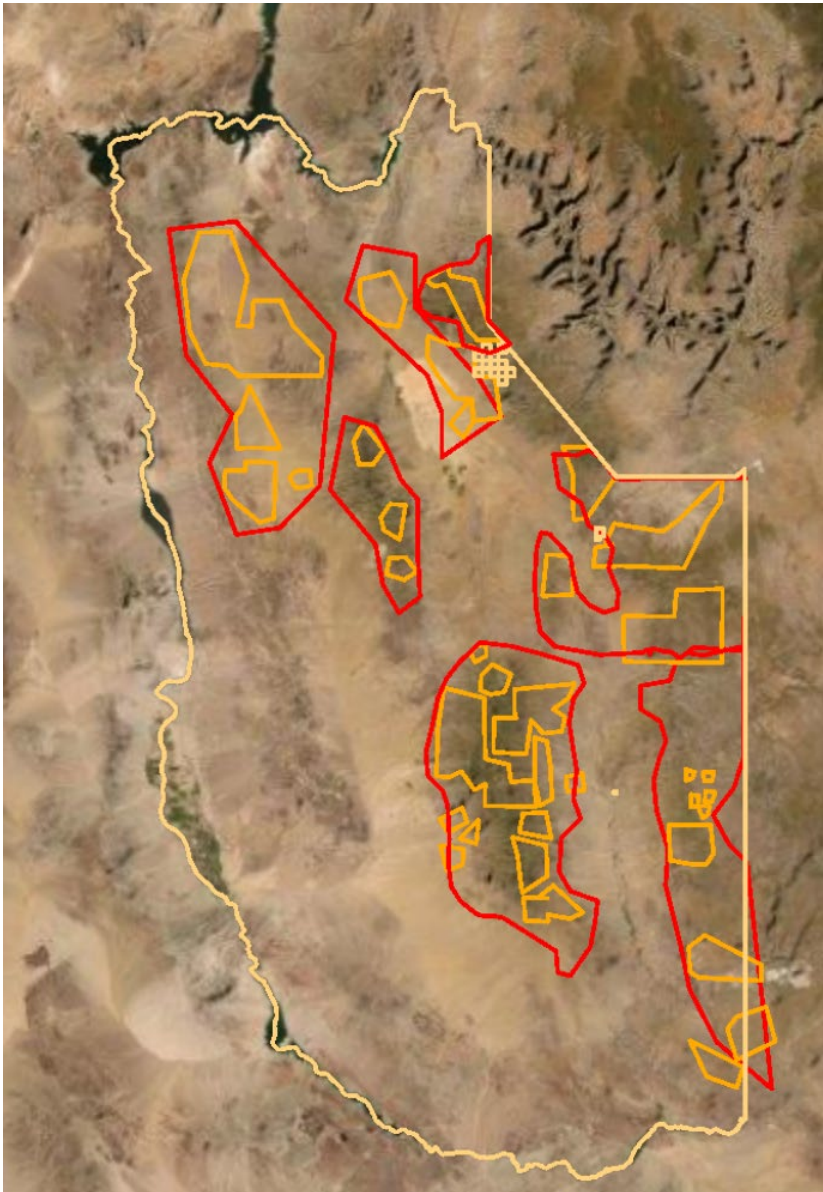


BRUSH MANAGEMENT AREAS IDENTIFIED BY RANCHERS

Each polygon indicates an area identified on a map as having resource concerns related to excessive amounts of brush of various species.

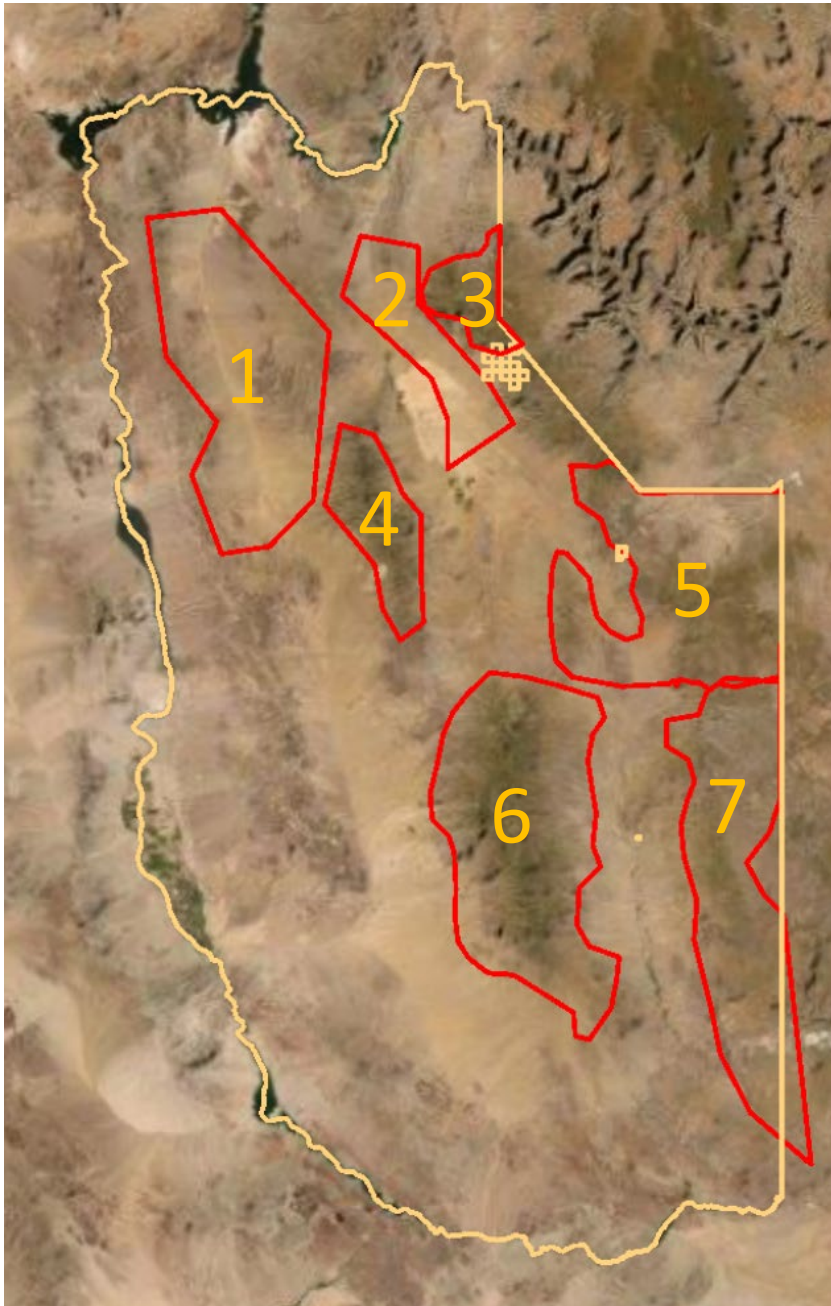
The target species were also identified.

The areas shown are approximate, not exact boundaries for treatment.



The red lines delineate priority areas identified based on the rancher input. These areas are drawn based on similar topography, vegetation, and other features to that in the areas identified by the ranchers.

The assumption was that resource concerns would likely be similar throughout these priority areas.

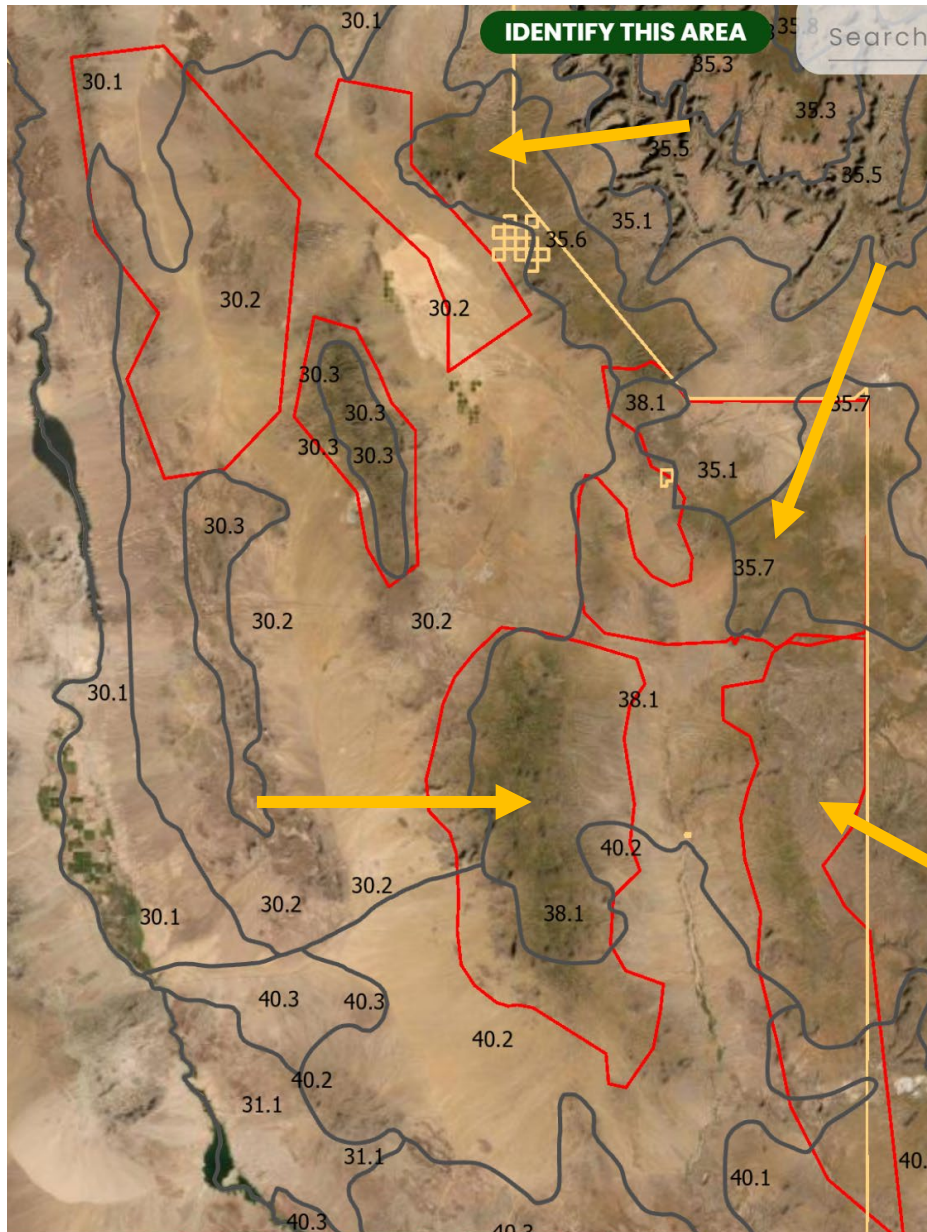


The priority areas are numbered from 1 to 7.

These 7 areas total 1,573,000 acres.

Although brush increase was identified as a resource concern in all of the areas, not all of the area needs treatment and not all of it is suitable for treatment. So, it is necessary to analyze them and set priorities for attention.

The following slides will show how some of that analysis can be done.



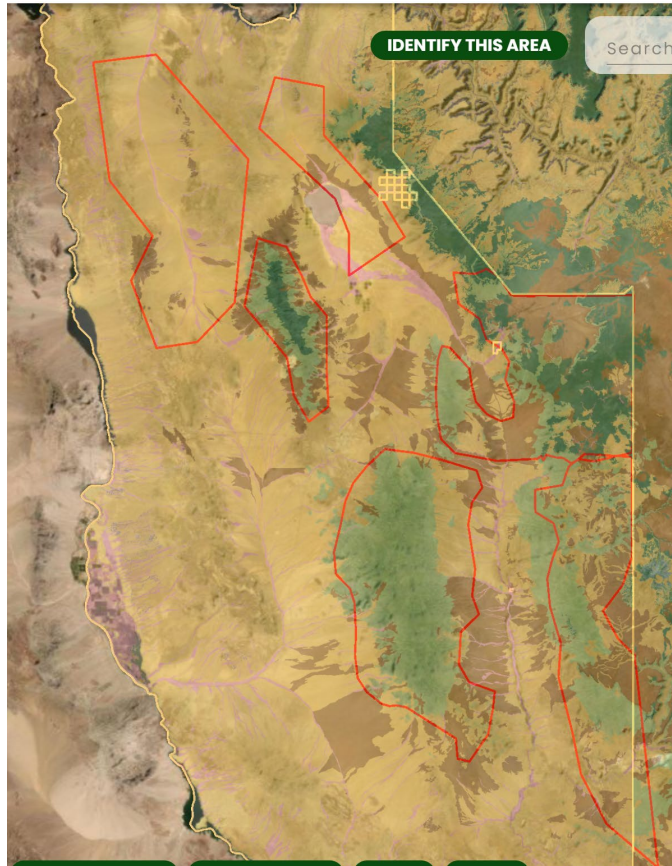
MAP OF COMMON RESOURCE AREAS FOR PAs

Only CRA 38.1, 35.1, 35.6, and 35.7 have enough annual rainfall to expect much response to brush treatments on most soils.

Only Priority Areas 3, 5, 6, and 7 have significant area in these CRAs, ranging from 60% to 100%.

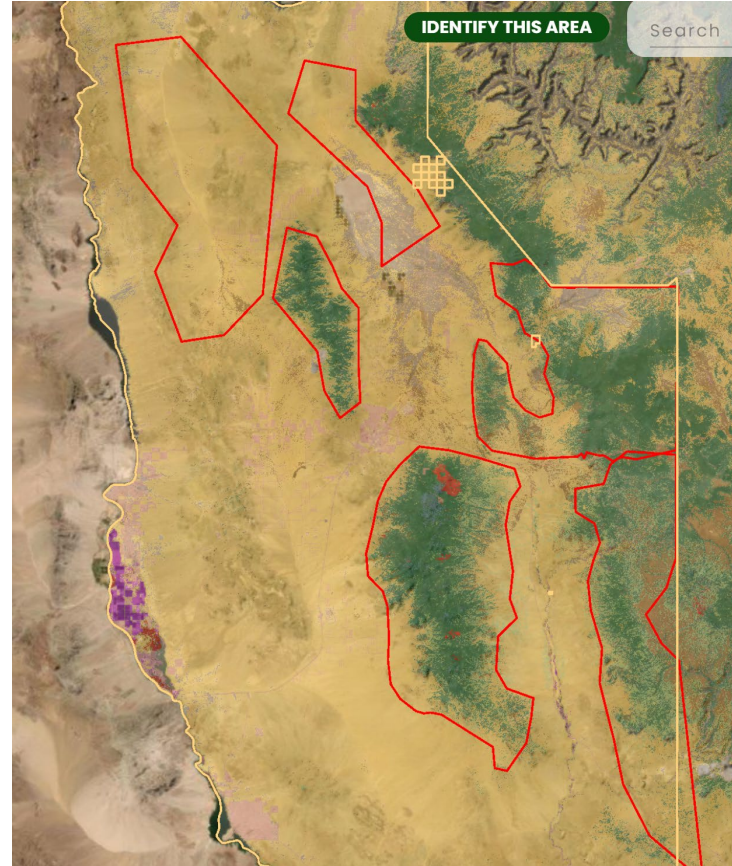


HISTORIC VEGETATION



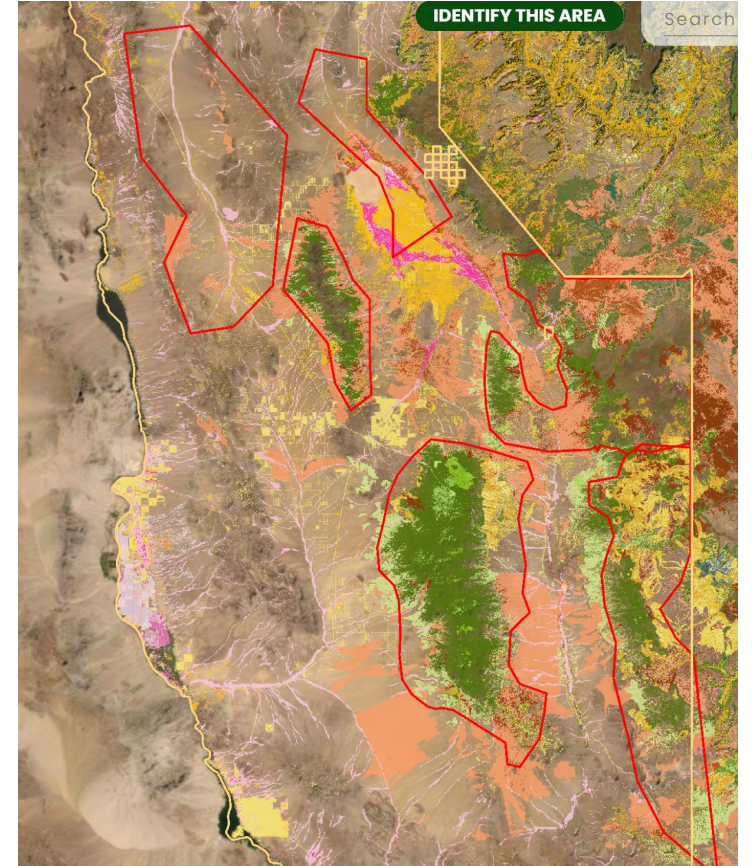
Yellow = desertscrub
Brown = grassland

EXISTING VEGETATION



Light green = chaparral
Dark green = pinyon-juniper

VEGETATION CHANGE



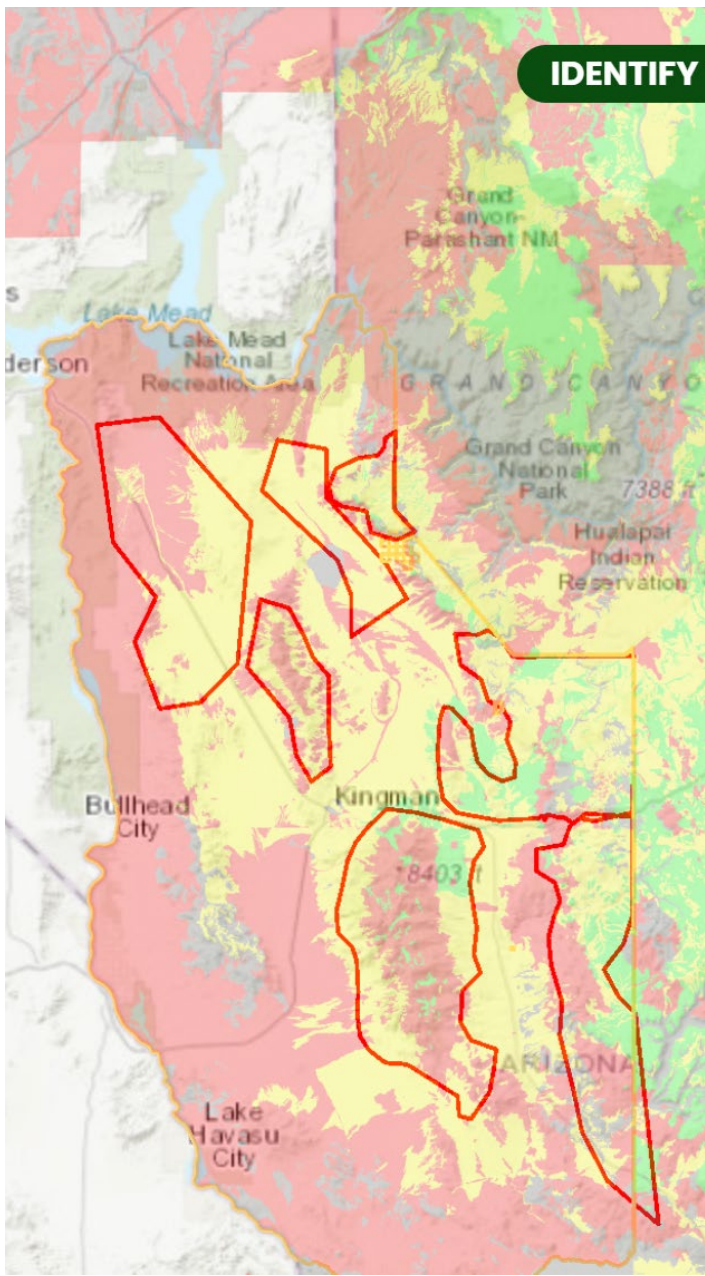
Dark green = juniper invasion
into other vegetation types

Major Changes in Vegetation Types for Priority Areas								
Acres (1000s)								
Priority Area								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
No Change	287	62	28	38	156	167	93	831
Grassland to Woodland	0.6 T	T		2.5	35	12	22	70
Grassland to Chaparral	1 T	T		3	8	9	24	45
Grassland to Desertscrub	27	10 T		22	82	77	1	219
Subtotal								334
Chaparral to Woodland	5	31	6	13	42	136	42	275
Chaparral to Desertscrub	2.5 T	T		5	15	44	10	153
Subtotal								428
Desertscrub to Woodland	T	1.7	6	1	13	16	37	75
Desertscrub to Chaparral	T	T	T	T	3.5	14	24	42
Subtotal								117

These data show that the largest vegetation changes have resulted from invasion of grasslands and chaparral by other types, e.g., woodland and desertscrub.



IDENTIFY

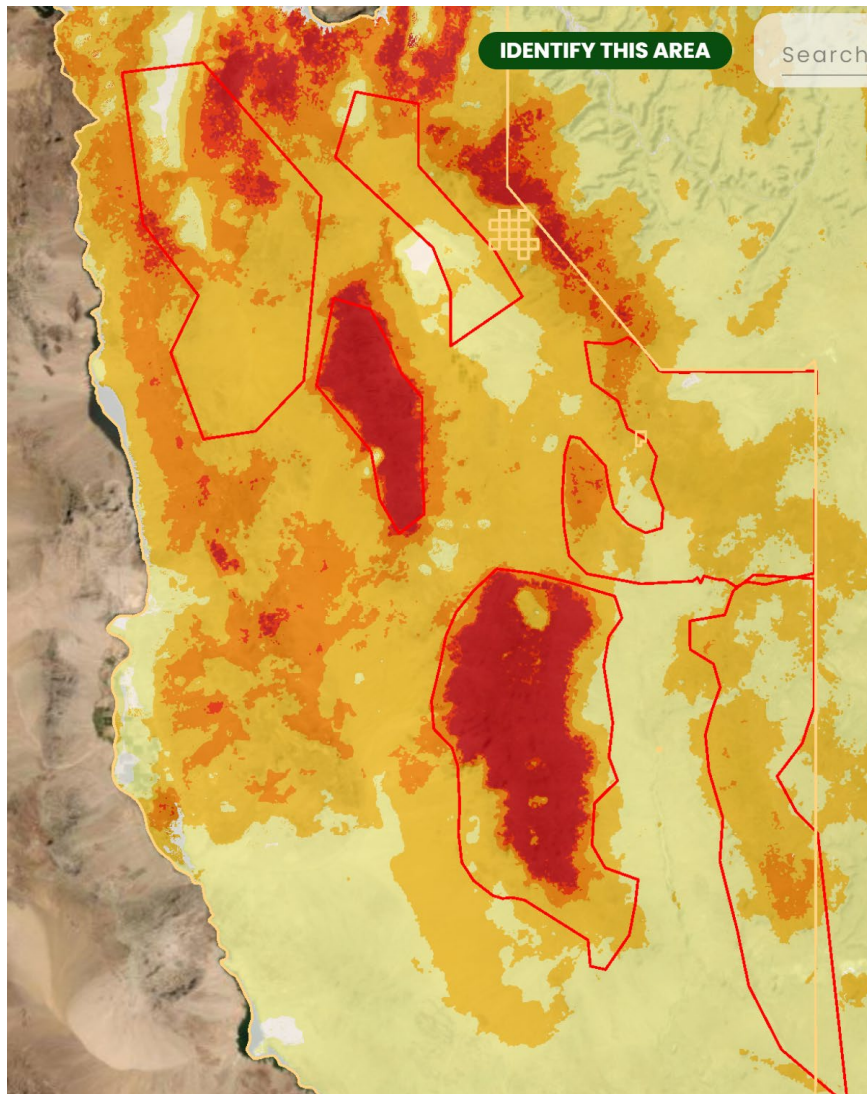


ACRES OF HIGH TO MODERATE SOIL RESTORATION POTENTIAL FOR PRIORITY AREAS

Priority Area	Total Acres	Acres (1000s)			% HM
		High	Moderate	Total H-M	
1	356	0	180	189	50%
2	107	0	88	88	82%
3	50	nd	nd	nd	nd
4	95	0	45	45	47%
5	321	71	177	248	77%
6	330	42	152	194	59%
7	314	62	105	169	53%
Total	1,573	175	747	922	59%

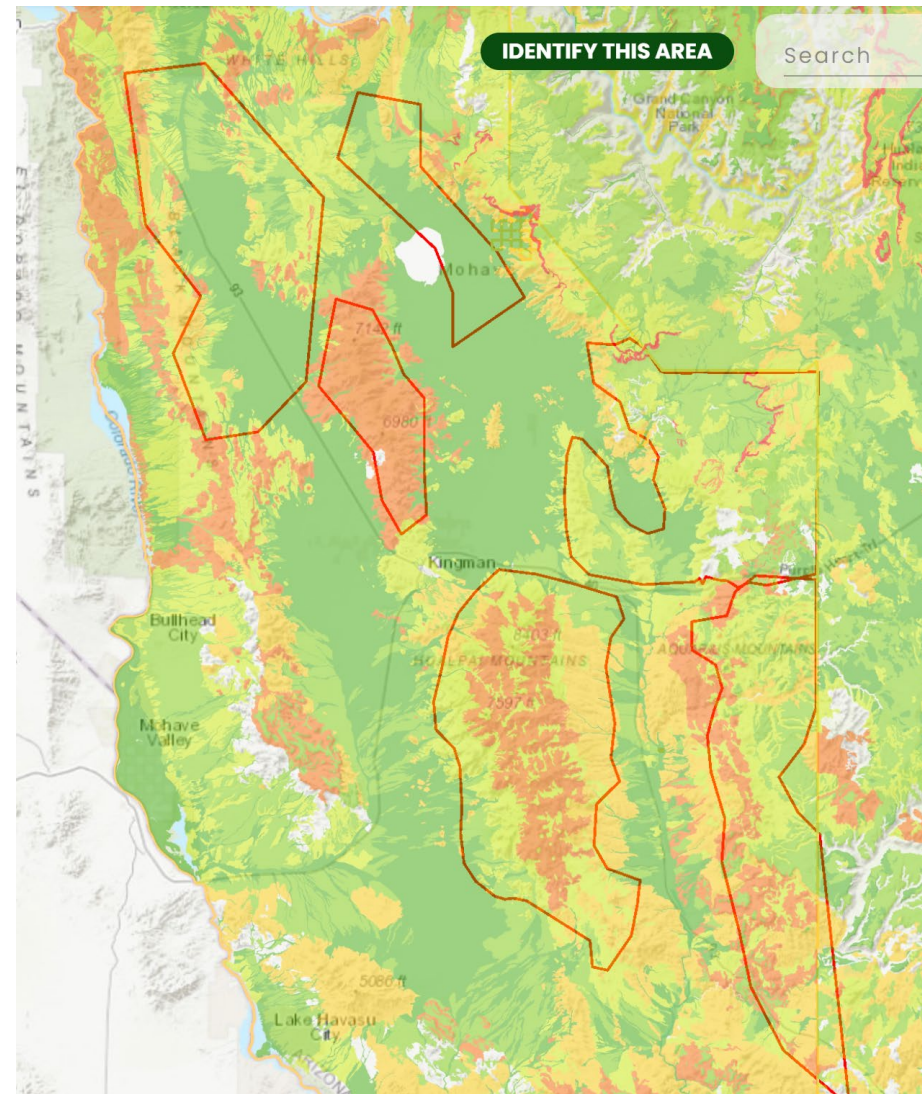
The table above shows that only an average of about 60% of the area within the priority areas has a mod-high soil restoration potential (based on slope, soils, rainfall, and other factors).

Each area has different potential, indicating the amount of land that might be treated.



Wildfire Risk

Areas 3, 4, and 6 have much higher wildfire risk than the others.



Slope

This map shows that slopes are steep in some areas, which can limit treatment methods.

EXAMPLE OF RATING SHEET FOR PRIORITY AREAS FOR BRUSH MANAGEMENT

Priority Area #	RESOURCE CONCERNS						OTHER CONSIDERATIONS					RANKING
	Vegetation Structure-Composition	Wildfire Risk	Soil Sheet and Rill Erosion Risk	Water Use and Yield	Upland Wildlife Habitat	Proven Mehods	Suitable Terrain	Land Ownership Pattern	Projects in Progress	Potential for Gov and Other Partners	Interested Ranchers	
FIVE	high	mod	high	mod	high	high	mod to high	high	high	high	high	First
FOUR	high	high	high	mod	high	mod	low	high	high	high	mod	Second
THREE	high	mod	mod	mod	high	mod	low	mod	high	high	mod	Third
SIX	high	high	mod	high	high	low	low	high	low	low	high	Fourth
SEVEN	high	mod	mod	mod	high	mod	low to mod	high	low	low	high	Fifth
TWO	mod	low	mod	low	mod	low	high	high	high	high	mod	Sixth
ONE	low	low	mod	low	mod	low	high	high	high	high	mod	Seventh

The previous slides showed how areas might be prioritized for brush management. A similar exercise could be done for other resource concerns, e.g., water developments, soil erosion, etc. These may identify other priority areas where there are significant concerns other than brush management.

It would be useful to discuss these ratings in the Local Work Group meetings and reach a consensus if possible.

The ratings should probably be kept subjective rather than assign numbers to them.

The priorities are based on overall expectation of getting positive results, of significant complementary or cooperative efforts by agencies, of significant numbers of interested producers, and sources of funding.

The priorities do not indicate that nothing will be done in low priority areas, only that the high priority areas offer the greatest opportunity to accomplish on-the-ground conservation projects. The discussion and ranking efforts should also include other resource concerns and areas that may be important.

THE PLAN SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE:

- Projections of estimated benefits of planned actions – may be quantitative or qualitative
- Projections of anticipated costs of applying these treatments
- Identification of those agencies, groups or individuals that will provide funding, equipment, technical support, or other resource to accomplish these objectives

The steps and types of data shown in this example of developing an action plan are appropriate to an initial plan which depends heavily on information in the ConserveAZ Portal. As additional information is obtained and field data collected, the plans can be made more specific. Additional information may be added into the Portal where appropriate, or it can be analyzed using GIS technology, or both.

THE END

Thank you for your attention. AACD staff will be ready and willing to assist you in any way to develop a Conservation Action Plan for your District.