



Reply to: 4060 Research Facilities

Date: October 29, 1984

Subject: Research Natural Area (RNA) Proposals Sierra Vista RD

To: District Ranger, Sierra Vista RD

On Friday, October 19, 1984 I spent the day in the field looking at the existing Elgin RNA and the four proposed RNAs west of the Huachuca Mountains on your district, with nine members of the State Natural Areas Committee. A list of those committee members is attached. - see file "Coronado NF"

They were particularly interested in reviewing the 1974 Arizona Academy of Science proposals (Scotia Canyon, Sunnyside Canyon and Lochiel) and learning what the Forest reaction to those proposals was. We also looked at the proposed Canelo RNA.

I indicated the preferred alternative of the draft Coronado Land Management Plan would include none of the Academy of Science proposals for the following reasons:

1. The pine-oak woodland type of the Scotia Canyon area is limited to only a few acres and is better represented in our proposed addition to the Pole Bride RNA in the Chirichua Mountains.
2. The oak savannah type is not well represented in the Sunnyside Canyon area because much of the area was "pushed" about 20 years ago, most of the canyon bottom is private land and there are numerous man-made intrusions and disturbances. The Canelo area we are proposing for RNA designation is far superior because while its species composition is similar, the condition is much more natural with no obvious disturbance. Also the Sunnyside area is grazed while the Canelo area is not.
3. The grassland type of the Lochiel area is now represented by the Elgin RNA (designated in 1976, two years after the Academy of Science proposal).

Goals and objectives, as well as desirable attributes of RNAs vs State Natural Areas were discussed. It became obvious that there can be significant differences. While RNAs "should represent unmodified conditions" (FSM 4063.03), biologic composition seems to be the overriding criteria for State Natural Areas, and grazing or other human generated disturbances may not be cause to eliminate an area from consideration. We discussed the possibility that some State Natural Areas on National Forest lands within Arizona may be more appropriately classified as zoological, botanical or geologic areas rather than RNAs.

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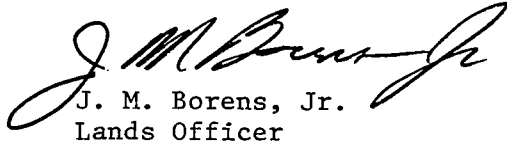
SOIL & WATER



District Ranger, Sierra Vista RD

Page 2

I indicated the draft Land Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement would be available in a few months and suggested that might be an appropriate time to comment or make recommendations regarding RNAs or other designations. The committee members indicated they would be discussing their review of the Natural Area proposals and course of action at their next committee meeting. They may want to review other RNAs and proposed Natural Areas on the Coronado.



J. M. Borens, Jr.
Lands Officer

Enclosure

Greg Goodwin	Cochino N.F.
Susan Hebel	U. of AZ
Matts Myhrman	U. of AZ
Wes Peirce	Up A State Geol. Survey
Robert Scarborough	private consulting geologist
Art Phillips	Museum of Northern Arizona
Barbara Phillips	Museum of No. AZ
May Butterman	BLM
Jan Bowers	U.S. Geological Survey

STATE NATURAL AREA COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 WHO PARTICIPATED IN A FIELD REVIEW
 OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED RNAs ON
 THE WEST SIDE OF THE HUACHUCA
 MOUNTAINS (CANELO HILLS), SIERRA
 VISTA RANGER DISTRICT, CORONADO
 NATIONAL FOREST ON OCT. 19, 1984.

Mike Downs

Coco

DATE

MAY 23 1984

CROSS REFERENCE (1)

Out-lands Group

CROSS REFERENCE (2)

Rocky Gulch RNA (Coconino NF) ✓

CROSS REFERENCE (3)

Coconino NF ✓

CROSS REFERENCE (4)

Coronado NF ✓

TO

T. Johnson, AZ Game & Fish Dept.

FROM

M. Hughes (for J. Overbay, Reg'l Forester)

SUMMARY

Reply to 4/26/84 letter with information on the current state of RNA program. Includes Rocky Gulch & Elgin RNA's, and Coconino, Coronado, Apache-Sitgreaves & Kaibab NF's. (Johnson's request is attached to it.)

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REMARKS

✓ These files contain this form only

Other x-refs include Elgin RNA & Apache-Sitgreaves & Kaibab NFs

AD-170-4 CROSS REFERENCE
(4-58)