



FRIENDS OF THE RED DESERT

www.reddesert.org

Why a National Conservation Area?

The Northern Red Desert is a unique landscape and deserves a form of protection that incorporates its history while leaving a lasting legacy. We researched National Monuments, National Parks, National Recreation Areas and other forms of protection. The National Conservation Area designation is the one form of protection that allows the majority of existing uses to continue while leaving a lasting legacy. We believe this is one option that should be explored to permanently protect portions of the Northern Red Desert.

What is a National Conservation Area?

According to the Sonoran Institute, “The 26 million-acre National Landscape Conservation System (which National Conservation Areas are under) brings together the crown jewels of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under a stronger conservation mandate than most BLM lands” (Retrieved 7/22/05 from http://www.sonoran.org/programs/si_se_res_nlcs.html).

National Conservation Areas (NCA) are created by Congress to protect the outstanding cultural, ecological and scientific values of specific landscapes for the benefit of current and future generations. They are tailored to meet the specific needs of an area and the concerns of local citizens; they are not a one-size-fits-all solution. Each NCA is protected for unique reasons and the BLM is mandated to manage these landscapes to be “healthy, open and wild.” Unlike other areas the BLM manages, the primary management objective for National Conservation Areas is conservation, restoration of the landscape and its biological diversity.

Currently, 12 NCA’s exist within the western United States including: Red Rock Canyon (Nevada), Snake Rivers Birds of Prey (Idaho), Gunnison Gorge (Colorado), California Desert (California) and Steese (Alaska).

For more information on National Conservation Areas go to: <http://www.discovernlcs.org>

Over....

An NCA for the Northern Red Desert may mean...

- Management priorities will seek to maintain the Red Desert’s remote and wild character, to safeguard habitat for plants and animals, and to protect historic, cultural and archeological sites.
- Within three years of designation the BLM, in conjunction with the public, will develop a comprehensive plan for the long-term protection and management of the conservation area.

Unchanged Activities

Prohibited Activities

<p>Hunting opportunities will continue under current Wyoming Game and Fish regulations.</p>	<p>Future oil, gas and coalbed methane leasing and new large scale mining activities will be prohibited, which are the biggest threats to the natural qualities of the Red Desert.</p>
<p>Recreational opportunities will continue to be managed by the BLM, including commercial outfitters.</p>	<p>The BLM will acquire all existing mineral leases and claims on public lands within the National Conservation Area using funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.</p>
<p>Off-road vehicle use will continue on designated roads, trails and in existing motorized-use areas.</p>	
<p>Livestock grazing will continue under BLM management.</p>	
<p>Native American people will continue to exercise their tribal rights to pursue spiritual, cultural and food-gathering activities.</p>	
<p>Active access roads will remain open to public use and visitor facilities may be provided to enhance recreation opportunities.</p>	
<p>The current management of Wilderness Study Areas that are contained within the National Conservation Area will remain unchanged.</p>	
<p>The state of Wyoming will continue to manage wildlife and hunting.</p>	