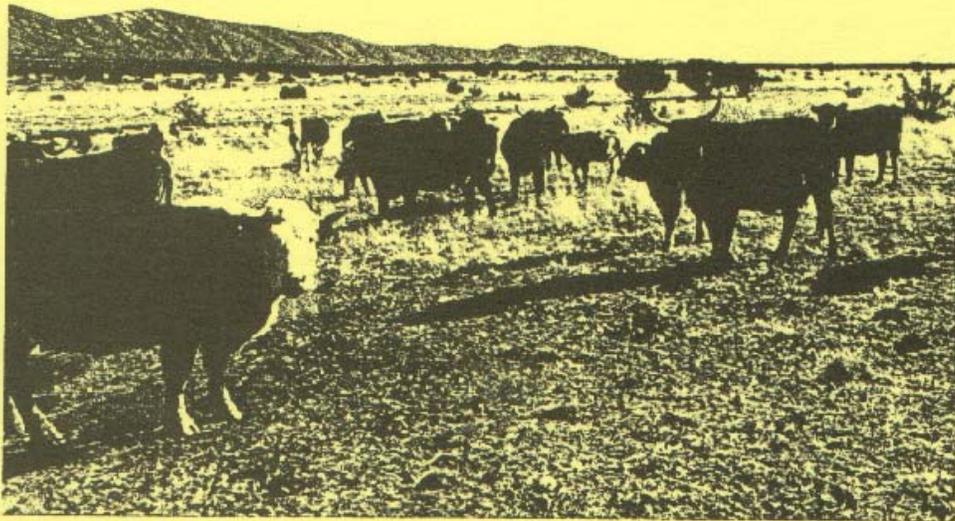


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Allotment Categorization

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SW of Sierra Ladronea

TABLE C—1  
SOCORRO RESOURCE AREA  
ALLOTMENT CATEGORIZATION

	CATEGORY M (Maintain)	CATEGORY I (Improve)	CATEGORY C (Custodial)
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	Maintain or Improve Existing Situation	Improve Existing Resource Conditions	Prevent Deterioration and Manage In a Custodial Manner
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Present ecological condition is satisfactory.</li> <li>—Trend is static to upward.</li> <li>—Present management is satisfactory.</li> <li>—Moderate to high potential for vegetative production and is producing near potential.</li> <li>—Limited or no resource conflicts exist with livestock grazing.</li> <li>—Land status may or may not be considered (includes low percentage of public lands, scattered tracts, or checkerboard land patterns within allotments.</li> <li>—Positive return on investment exists,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Present ecological condition is unsatisfactory,</li> <li>—Trend is apparently downward.</li> <li>—Present management practices are inadequate to meet long-term objectives,</li> <li>—Moderate to high potential for vegetative production and is producing at low to fair levels,</li> <li>—Resource conflicts are evident with livestock grazing.</li> <li>—Land status may or may not be considered (similar to Category M).</li> <li>—Positive economic return on public investment exists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Present ecological condition is variable.</li> <li>—Present management appears satisfactory or is the only logical practice under existing conditions.</li> <li>—Vegetative production is relatively low.</li> <li>—Limited potential for improvement.</li> <li>—Limited or no resource conflicts with livestock grazing.</li> <li>—No positive return on investment is likely.</li> </ul>
MONITORING LEVELS			
Actual Use -	As needed by allotment.	Annually.	As needed by allotment.
Utilization -	Every 2 years.	Annually or as needed.	Permit/Lease renewal.
Trend -	Baseline is gathered.	Every 4 years.	No minimum.
Climate -	Annually/growing season.	Annually/growing season.	Annually/growing season.
Condition -	Every 20 years.	Every 15 years.	Baseline data gathered.
Evaluation -	Every 2 years.	Annually.	Permit/Lease Renewal.
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Livestock use may remain the same or be increased,</li> <li>—High degree of management flexibility through consultation.</li> <li>—Low intensity supervision and monitoring,</li> <li>—Rangeland improvements with appropriated funds; 2nd priority.</li> <li>—Development of management plans; 2nd priority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Livestock use may increase or decrease to meet management objectives,</li> <li>—Proposals for resolving identified issues and conflicts include:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Season of use management,</li> <li>2. Change in kind and class of livestock,</li> <li>3. Adjust numbers of livestock,</li> <li>4. Distribution management through rangeland improvements or use of salt/supplement.</li> <li>5. Development of management plans; 1st priority.</li> </ol> </li> <li>—High intensity supervision and monitoring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Livestock use would remain the same, be excluded or authorized on a seasonal basis.</li> <li>—High degree of management flexibility.</li> <li>—Low intensity supervision and monitoring.</li> <li>—Rangeland improvement funding; 3rd priority.</li> <li>—Development of management plans; 3rd priority.</li> </ul>

TABLE C-2  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
00013	Stock Driveway	221		5	M
00021	San Ignacio Creek	804	AMP	2	I
00025	Cow Springs	1,332	AMP	7	I
00054	Shaw Canyon	6,936		300	M
00076	Santa Rita	9		0	M
00077	Emery	96	AMP	0	M
00078	Patterson	1,804		12	M
00079	Stokes Flat	2,400		18	M
00080	Box Car 9	111	AMP	6	M
00081	Lynch Ranch	2,100		24	I
00082	CN	240		2	M
00033	Cat Mountain	240		0	M
00084	Paul Lund	204	AMP	21	I
00085	Patterson Canyon	192		17	M
00086	Cat Mountain	144		0	M
00087	Cottonwood Spring	31		47	M
00088	Mariano Mesa Ranch	69		4	I
00089	Leandro Well	18	AMP	0	I
00090	Panther Canyon	31		0	M
00091	Cerro Prieto	24		0	M
00092	Agua Fria Creek	3,780	AMP	17	M
00093	Tres Montosas	444		14	M
00094	Escondido Creek	1,488	AMP	13	I
00095	Datil Airstrip	48		0	M
00096	Mayes Wash	912		11	M
00097	Tanque de Caballos	108		2	M
00098	Chavez Ranch	70	AMP	14	M
00099	Florenio Orona	420	AMP	4	I
00100	Gatlin Lake	576	AMP	8	M
00101	Chihuahua Lake	2,364	AMP	20	I
00102	Orona Largo Creek	708		53	M
00103	Lopez Draw	228		4	M
00104	Pueblito Ranch	48		0	M
00105	North Fork Alamocito	24		0	M
00106	Santa Rita	3,300		44	I
00107	Summers Community	271		3	M
	Summers Community	173			M
	Summers Community	233			M
	Summers Community	1,020			M
	Summers Community	95			M
00108	Reynolds	132		2	M
00109	Pattys Hole	852		17	M
00117	N Fox Mountain	108		2	M
00127	Fox Mountain	156		1	M

TABLE C-2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
00128	Williams Home	48		0	M
00129	R M Chavez	60		0	M
00130	Diamond X	60		2	M
00131	Box Car 8	84	AMP	1	M
00132	W Ranch	48		0	M
00133	Tres Lagunas	288		2	M
00134	Coal Canyon	60		0	M
00135	Bill G & W F Green	252		2	M
00136	Silver Creek	1,284	AMP	44	I
00137	Pietown Dike	55		0	M
00138	Iron Mountain	132		7	M
00139	Pietown Tr 15	8		0	M
00140	Lehew	144		0	M
00141	Sawtooth Mountain	120		0	M
00142	Oak Springs	36		0	M
00144	NM AZ State Line	48		0	M
00145	Hale Well	228	AMP	11	I
00146	Monticello Canyon	72		5	M
00147	Kinsely Canyon	120		5	M
00148	Wahoo Ranch	1,503	AMP	47	M
00149	Williamson	60		10	M
00150	Cat Lake	192		2	M
00151	Montoya	156	AMP	24	M
00152	Dusty Ranch	24		0	M
00153	Salvation Well	972		7	M
00154	Nichols Individual	36		0	M
00155	San Ignacio	156		0	M
00164	Lew Daniels	12		0	M
00165	Snake Hill	487		29	M
00166	Olguin Draw	96		13	M
00167	HQ	120		0	M
00168	Tarpley Well	96		0	M
00192	W Emery	36		0	M
00194	HQ Well	311		19	M
01106	Ojo Saladito	1,562		22	M
01112	Riley Community	156		0	M
	Riley Community	36		4	M
	Riley Community	60		0	M
01116	Puertecito Baranco	1,295	AMP	38	M
01117	Canon Bonito	408		5	M
01121	Rio Salado West	756	AMP	15	M
01122	Abeytas	300	AMP	0	M
01123	Abeytas	48	AMP	0	M
01136	Rio Puerco	1,176	AMP	2	M

TABLE C-2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
01137	North Ladron	1,464	AMP	39	M
01140	Monte Negro	480		0	M
01143	Comanche Arroyo	24		0	I
01145	D Cross Mountain	356		5	M
01158	Canon Alamito	720	AMP	6	M
01159	La Jencia Creek	1,992	AMP	67	I
01177	Ladron Peak	444	AMP	36	M
01181	Lopez Community	575	AMP	5	M
	Lopez Community	325	AMP	0	M
01186	West Ladron	2,460		67	M
01191	Canada Colorado	720	AMP	4	I
01250	Buffalo Head	144		0	I
01251	Harless Ranch	1,428		50	M
01252	Silver Road	1,607		44	I
01253	Sand Sage	240	AMP	15	I
01254	Bordo Atravesado	2,714	AMP	63	I
01255	Bosquecito	312	AMP	15	I
01256	Llano	612	AMP	25	M
01257	Antelope Well	132		0	M
01258	Tio Bartolo	365		13	M
01259	Four Hills	360		16	I
01260	Sierra Larga	2,112		52	M
01261	Scott Ranch	2,186	AMP	51	M
01262	Las Canas	1,560		52	I
01263	Black Mesa	790		53	I
01264	Armijo Community	667		26	I
	Armijo Community	308			I
01266	Coyote Spring	1,512		28	M
01267	VL Ranch	384		10	M
01268	Ryan Hill	246		5	M
01269	Torreon Community	2,822		133	M
	Torreon Community	976		20	M
01270	Milligan Gulch	485		38	C
01271	Mesa Redonda	1,704		62	M
01272	San Pasqual	1,836		24	M
01273	Bruton River	1,800		0	M
01274	Rock Creek	230		12	C
01275	Oscura	5,182		326	M
01276	Four Sections	362	AMP	11	M
01277	San Jose Canyon	2,161	AMP	50	I
01278	Anaya Well	348		0	I
01279	Silver Canyon	1,337	AMP	40	I
01280	Tecolote Draw	2,388	AMP	43	I
01281	SO Ranch	696		38	M

TABLE C—2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
01282	Bingham	60		5	M
01283	Blackington Mountain	1,572	AMP	39	I
01284	Mesa Well Canyon	1,287	AMP	36	I
01285	Sand Mountain	1,884		43	M
01286	Blackington Mountain West	312		0	C
01287	Arroyo Del Tajo	264	AMP	11	M
01288	Rio Grande	264	AMP	11	I
01289	Jornada Community	96	AMP	5	M
	Jornada Community	600	AMP	27	M
	Jornada Community	72	AMP	0	M
	Jornada Community	84	AMP	0	M
	Jornada Community	144	AMP	0	M
	Jornada Community	300	AMP	14	M
01290	Rock Springs Canyon	1,344	AMP	83	M
01291	Prairie Springs	1,536		17	M
01292	Chaunte Canyon	543		0	M
01293	Malpals	5,427		67	M
01294	Nogal Canyon	46		59	M
01295	Antelope Well	600		0	M
01296	Antelope West	372		0	M
01297	Puertecito Del Lemitar	1,233	AMP	30	M
01298	Wineglass	690	AMP	23	M
01299	Pequeno	422	AMP	30	C
01300	Casas de Pledras	318	AMP	8	M
01301	White Sage	4,727		85	M
01302	S0 Ranch	544		0	M
01303	Jornada Individual	1,032	AMP	24	M
01305	Chato	50		1	M
01306	Veranlto	445		13	M
01308	San Antonito	146	AMP	12	I
01309	5 Mesa Redonda	684		0	M
01310	Chupadera Wash	525		7	M
01312	La Arenosa	535	AMP	21	I
01315	Polvadera	102		6	C
01317	San Pedro	240	AMP	29	I
01318	Pueblito Community	24	AMP	0	C
	Pueblito Community	34	AMP	11	C
01321	Puertecito Gap	659		27	M
01322	Parida	1,248		46	M
01323	Water Canyon	508		74	M
01324	Water Canyon	240		17	M
01327	Cedar Pass	1,035	AMP	37	M
01328	Jones	912		11	M
01329	Las Lomas	240	AMP	8	M

TABLE C-2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
01330	East Well	461		26	M
01339	Twin Tanks	65		0	M
01340	Twin Tanks	155		10	M
01341	Scholle	23		0	M
01342	Cerro Pelon	300		10	M
01343	ABO	144		10	M
01344	La Jencla Ranch	804		0	M
01345	Hickman Ranch	48		5	M
01346	La Jencia Ranch	36		0	M
01347	Blue Springs	15		3	M
01348	Cerro Montoso	407		7	M
01349	Dripping Springs	234		4	M
01350	Viejo Arroyo	237		7	M
01351	Rienhardt Individual	228		7	M
01352	U Butte	624		19	M
01353	Red Tanks Canyon	276		7	M
01354	Granite Mountain	13		0	M
01356	Tip Top	24		2	M
01361	Brushy Mountain	166		2	M
01365	Black Hills Ranch	6,696	AMP	120	M
01366	Dragoo Tank	1,968		0	M
01367	Lobo Canyon	2,762		24	M
01368	Chupadera Mesa	7,776		180	M
01369	Lincoln County	132		0	M
01370	Cat Mesa East	1,218		30	M
01371	Cuate Canyon	858		6	M
01372	Largo Canyon	2,377	AMP	54	M
01373	Carrlzozo	2,160		48	M
01374	Red Lake	48		0	M
01375	Claunch SE	192		0	M
01376	Gallacher North	1,821		42	M
10001	Twin Peaks	134		3	M
10002	Quails	120		0	M
10003	Quails	132		0	M
10004	Criswell	744		0	M
10005	Horse Springs	180		0	M
10006	Criswell	8		0	M
10007	McBroom	180	AMP	1	M
10009	Sullivan	408		4	M
10010	Kellog Canyon	2,448		15	I
10011	D&D Land and Cattle	1,968	AMP	2	I
10012	Kellog Canyon	144		0	I
10014	Half Circle D	72		0	M
10015	Mangas	84		0	M

TABLE C-2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
10016	Jones Place	144		9	M
10017	Patterson Canyon	293		5	M
10018	Tejana Mesa	1,128		67	M
10019	East Salt Lake	132		2	M
10020	Wilbur Wadley Draw	96		2	M
10022	Augustine	197		5	M
10023	Box Lake	2,688	AMP	29	M
10024	Coyote Canyon	2,448		124	M
10026	Morine-White	240		57	M
10027	Burnett	108		1	
10028	V Ranch	3,993	AMP	234	I
10029	Cross Line	1,152		8	M
10030	Butler	864		9	M
10031	Arroyo Baca	67	AMP	2	M
10032	Adobe Ranch	7,020		147	I
10033	Castillo	50		2	M
10034	F E Chavez	168	AMP	2	M
10035	Mesa Ranch	504		36	M
10037	Wilbur Wadley Draw	180		0	M
10038	Red Hill South	1,716	AMP	14	M
10039	Pedro A Chavez Est	12		12	M
10040	Coyote Canyon	36		0	M
10041	Richard N Chavez	360		2	M
10042	Rito Creek	60		56	M
10043	Zuni Plateau	540		260	I
10044	Goat Ranch	720		7	M
10045	West Salt Lake	84		0	M
10046	Walker	1,161	AMP	60	M
10047	Durfee	1,392	AMP	10	M
10048	Curtis Ranch	864		4	M
10049	Baca Spring	76		0	M
10050	Eagar Red Hill	864	AMP	0	M
10051	Emery	836	AMP	6	I
10053	Lynch Ranch	1,764		28	I
10055	Kiehne Place	552		3	M
10056	Headquarters	2,220		25	I
10057	Carrizo Creek N	1,536		8	M
10058	Morine-White	3,628		6	M
10059	Adobe Ranch	240		0	M
10060	Leandro Well	508	AMP	4	I
10061	Mariano Hill	60		2	M
10062	Red Hill North	1,243		7	M
10063	Anderson Peak	900		23	M
10064	Evans Well	478		9	M

TABLE C-2 (continued)  
PRESENT ALLOTMENT STATUS AND CATEGORY

ALLOTMENT NUMBER	ALLOTMENT NAME	PREFERENCE	MANAGEMENT STATUS	WILDLIFE AUMS	MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
10065	Zuni Plateau	32		0	M
10066	Whitewater Canyon	276	-	13	M
10067	East Rita Creek	540		2	M
10068	Panther Canyon	192		8	M
10069	Cerro Prieto	588		39	M
10070	Rancho Alegre	8,536	AMP	105	M
10071	North Fork Alamocito	8,312		4	M
10072	Mangas Ranch	2,328		2	M
10073	Heavenly Acres	192		6	M
10074	Crosby Canyon	72		3	M
10110	West Horse Mountain	672	AMP	3	I
10111	East Horse Mountain	240	AMP	3	I
10112	Herman Sanchez	312	AMP	2	M
10113	Crosby Canyon	3		0	M
10114	Datil Airstrip	3		0	M
10115	Largo Creek	168	AMP	0	M
10116	Spring Canyon Ranch	514	AMP	3	I
10118	Alamito Ranch	6		0	M
10119	Windrider	444		6	M
10120	Aragon Well	264		2	M
10121	Orona Largo Creek	24		0	M
10122	Shay	72		0	M
10123	Goat Tank Canyon	228		4	M
10124	Hale Well	6		0	M
10126	Limestone Canyon	1,895	AMP	65	I

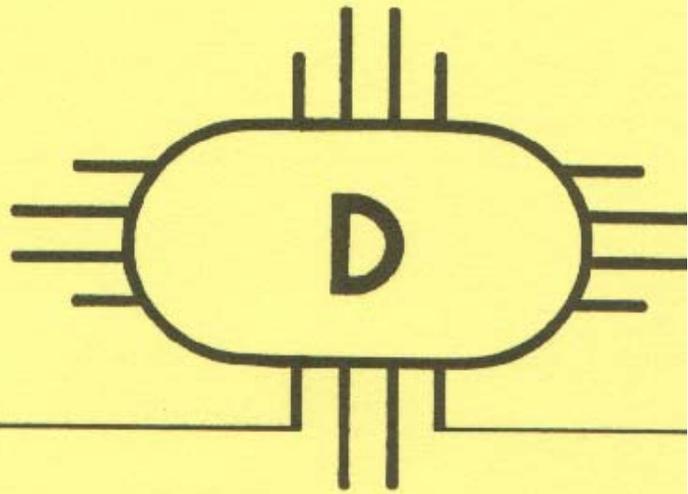
Table C-3  
CHUPADERA MESA ALLOTMENT CONDITION 1/

Allotment No.	Name	Ecological Condition Class				Average Condition Rating	Apparent Trend			Total Acreage
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		Up	Static	Down	
1365	Black Hills Ranch	0	15,650	13,769	0	50.8	27,388	1,250	781	29,419
1366	Dragoo Tank	0	7,719	752	0	60.3	4,788	3,683	0	8,471
1367	Lobo Canyon	0	13,178	838	0	61.0	13,035	261	123	14,019
1368	Chupadera Mesa	5,607	15,828	9,068	0	59.7	28,702	774	1,027	30,503
1369	Lincoln County	0	483	152	0	56.5	306	329	0	635
1370	Cat Mesa East	0	1,463	3,218	0	45.3	4,658	33	0	4,681
1371	Cuate Canyon	0	3,073	597	0	58.4	3,452	218	0	3,670
1372	Largo Canyon	3,191	5,105	2,758	0	63.5	7,658	2,813	583	11,054
1373	Carrizozo	0	6,608	1,751	1,141	51.9	7,528	1,845	127	9,500
1374	Red Lake	0	61	109	0	46.5	170	0	0	170
1375	Harvey Investment Co.	0	652	0	0	62.5	498	154	0	652
1376	Gallacher North	0	5,910	2,587	0	54.9	6,467	2,030	0	8,497
TOTAL		8,798	75,730	35,599	1,141		104,650	13,980	2,641	121,271

1/ Public land acres only

Table C-4  
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR CHUPADERA MESA ALLOTMENTS

Allotment No.	Name	Existing Preference AUMs	Implement AMP	Vegetative Land Treatments (ac)		Pipe- Line (ml.)	Fence (ml.)	Wells (no.)
				Chemical	Burning Mechanical			
1365	Black Hills Ranch	6,696	Revise	450	150	3	8	0
1366	Dragoo Tank	1,968	Yes	640	140	3	4	0
1367	Lobo Canyon	2,762	Yes	100	200	0	5	0
1368	Chupadera Mesa	7,776	Yes	700	240	7	4	1
1369	Lincoln County	132	No	0	0	0	0	0
1370	Cat Mesa East	1,218	Yes	100	100	2	0	0
1371	Cuate Canyon	858	Yes	80	80	0	0	0
1372	Largo Canyon	2,377	Revise	100	150	5	0	0
1373	Carrizozo	2,160	Yes	400	240	0	0	0
1374	RedLake	48	No	0	0	0	0	0
1375	Harvey Investment	192	No	0	0	0	0	0
1376	Gallacher North	1,821	Yes	200	100	3	4	0



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Access Analysis Methodology

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Quebradas Road

## ACCESS ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The intent of the RMP access evaluation procedure was to simplify inventory tasks, to accurately identify problems considering motorized/non—motorized access needs, and to establish achievable objectives whereby access concerns can be resolved according to their relative importance. Access plans developed in the implementation phase will be in accordance with objectives described in this Appendix.

Inventory of physical and legal access routes consisted of the collection of existing information compiled within the Socorro County Transportation Plan of 1981, and the Catron County Transportation Plan of 1982. These plans, prepared by the BLM upon the close coordination with Federal, State, and County road departments, identified the legal public road systems as well as other known physical transportation routes. Sources used for the collection of this data included BLM 1/2—inch to the mile color quad maps, as well as USGS topographic maps. Intensive field inventories were completed to verify the existence of these transportation systems. Once the legal status of these access routes was determined, they were graphically portrayed on the RMP “legal access” overlay (see Map 2—3).

The RMP’s interdisciplinary team of resource specialists, who represented the interests of cultural resources, range, wildlife, lands, minerals, forestry, recreation, and watershed, then divided the SRA into nine geographic regions whereby access needs and concerns could be more closely scrutinized. These nine geographic areas or access tracts (ATs) were then superimposed onto the legal access overlay and were then identified alphabetically, A—I (see Map D—1). The internal boundaries of these ATs were delineated based upon various physical and political features such as county boundaries, Federal, State and County highways, National Forests, Indian Reservations, and private land grants. Once these AT boundaries were identified and analyzed, along with the existing legal access routes, the interdisciplinary team of resource specialists could then make evaluations as to whether or not access to the public lands needed improvement or was adequate to accommodate existing and potential uses.

In accordance with the various themes of each of the four alternatives the ATs were then prioritized for the eventual development of detailed access activity planning. Some of the factors used for this prioritization, in addition to the legal access route overlay, included:

1. Configuration (AT size, shape, and amount of public land);
2. Resource values (quantity and quality);
3. Public demand and BLM administrative needs;
4. Proximity to population centers;
5. Proximity to major travel routes;
6. Potential for access closures;
7. Potential for public land disposal and/or acquisition;
8. Resource conflicts (caused by accessibility);
9. Presence of proposed special management areas.

Detailed access activity plans will be developed and will specifically identify certain easement needs and target acquisition dates. These access activity plans will be implemented upon a priority basis for each AT depending upon the alternative ultimately selected. Access activity plans will be prepared, in close coordination with SMA activity plans, to ensure that common goals are achieved.

Access activity planning will first concentrate its efforts toward a determination as to whether the existing legal access is sufficient, insufficient, excessive, or in some cases a mix of the three. In all analyses, the distinction between legal access and physical access will be addressed. Legal access acquisition will always be pursued over existing physical access routes before new road construction is considered as long as the existing physical access route serves the intended purposes. All ATs will be monitored throughout the life of the RMP to ensure that:

- 1) changing demands on the public land and its resources do not necessitate changes in the

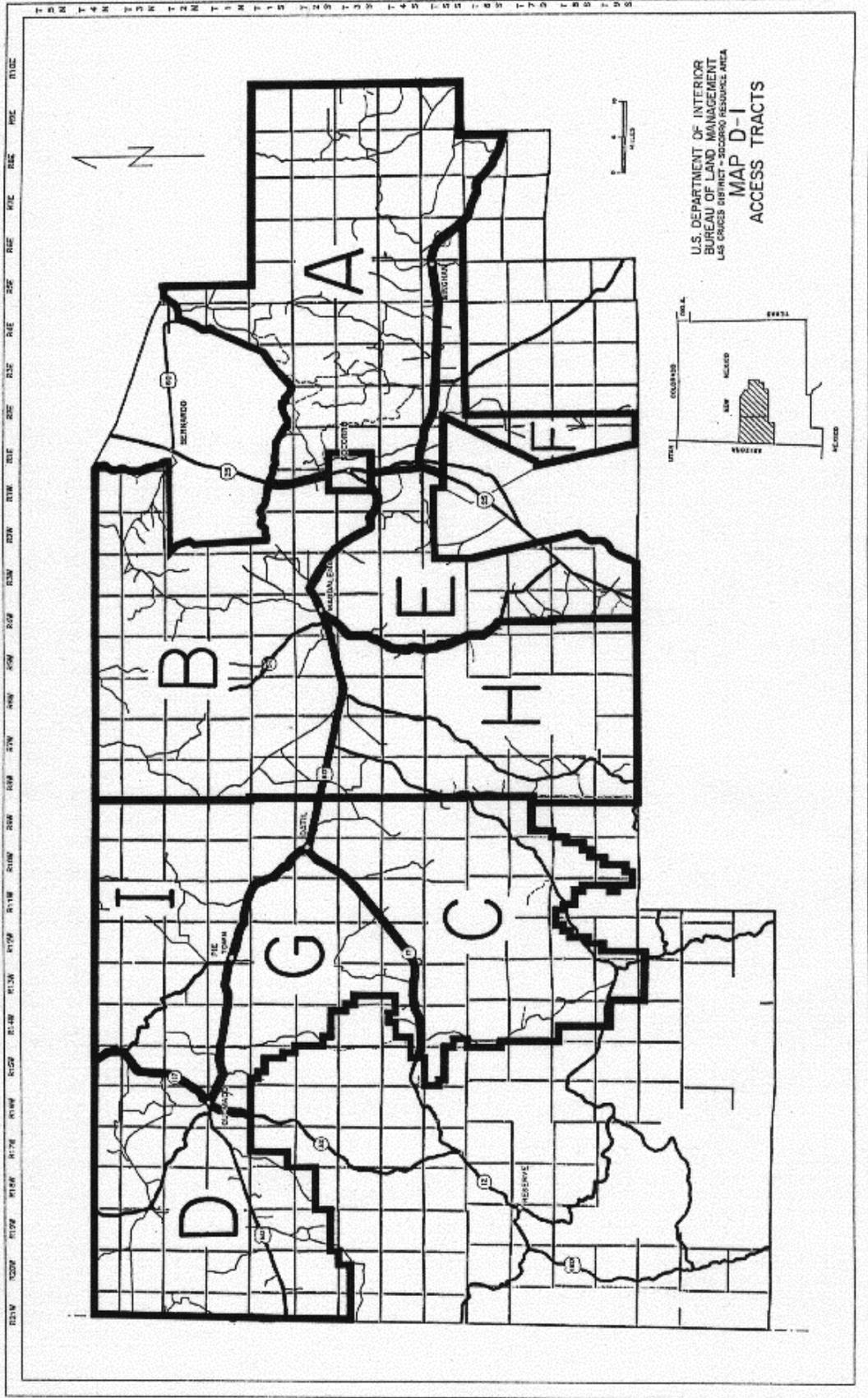
ATs existing access systems, and 2) that existing access systems receive proper maintenance in accordance with BLM standards.

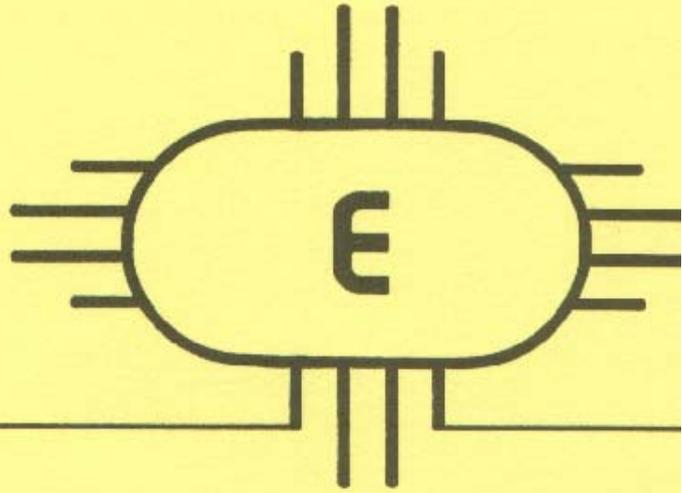
ATs that are determined to possess sufficient access systems will receive little attention other than those monitoring activities mentioned above. In ATs where access is excessive, road closures with proper rehabilitation will be considered based upon the resource values present within the AT. All road closure proposals will be aired for public comment prior to any closure action.

Where it is determined that existing access routes are insufficient and do not meet the

needs of a particular resource program or combination of programs, the SRA will pursue the acquisition of legal access. Factors or criteria to guide the SRA toward these acquisitions include, but are not limited to:

1. Private landowner's interests and/or concerns.
2. Number of private landowners affected.
3. Varying lengths of desired access routes.
4. Private property values.
5. Number of potential route users.
6. Season or seasons of potential use.
7. Road engineering design criteria.
8. Resource values enhanced versus resource values lost.





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Visual Resource Management Classes

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Ladron Peak from northeast

## VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### DETERMINATION OF VRM CLASS RATINGS

Visual resource classes are categories assigned to public lands which serve two purposes: (1) an inventory tool that portrays the relative value of the visual resources and (2) a management tool that portrays management objectives.

Ratings from scenic quality classes, visual sensitivity levels, and distance zones are combined to form visual resource management (VRM) classes (Map E—1). A VRM class identifies the suggested degrees of human modification that should be allowed in a certain landscape from a visual resource standpoint.

Scenic quality classes are rated for landform, water, color, vegetation, intrusions, and uniqueness. These elements are combined, and the area is classified as Class A — unique, outstanding features; Class B — outstanding features common to the physiographic region; or Class C — Features common to the physiographic region.

Sensitivity levels are determined on the basis of frequency of travel through an area, use of area, and public knowledge of the area. These elements are rated and the area is assigned a high, medium, or low sensitivity level.

Distance zones are placed in three categories: foreground/middleground zone, background zone, and seldom seen zone. The foreground/middleground zone is closest to the viewer and requires more attention and consideration in management decisions because of the great detail that can be seen in the landscape. The background and seldom seen zones are viewed in less detail by the observer and most impacts blend with the landscape because of the distance.

### CRITERIA FOR VRM CLASSES

After class ratings are completed for scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and distance zones, areas are assigned to one of four management classes. These classes are designed to maintain or enhance visual quality and describe the different degrees of modification to the basic elements of the landscape allowed.

CLASS I: Those areas where a management decision has been made previously to maintain a natural landscape (e.g. wilderness areas, wild sections of National Wild and Scenic Rivers, and other congressionally or administratively designated areas.

CLASS II: Landscapes with Class A scenic quality, or Class B scenic quality in the foreground/middleground zone with high visual sensitivity. Changes in any of the basic elements (form, line, color, texture) caused by a management activity should not be evident in the characteristic landscape.

CLASS III: Landscapes with Class B scenic quality and high visual sensitivity in the background zone, or with Class B scenic quality and medium visual sensitivity in the foreground/middleground zone or with Class C scenery of high visual sensitivity in the foreground/middleground zone. Changes in basic elements (form, line, color, texture) caused by management activity may be evident in the characteristic landscape; however, the changes should remain subordinate to the visual strength of the existing character.

CLASS IV: Landscapes with Class B scenic quality and high visual sensitivity in the seldom seen visual zone, or with Class B scenic quality and medium or low visual sensitivity in the background or seldom seen zones, or with Class C scenery quality (except with high sensitivity in the foreground/middleground zone). Changes may subordinate the original composition and character but must reflect what could be a natural occurrence within the characteristic landscape.

### MANAGEMENT AND CONTRAST RATING OBJECTIVES FOR VRM CLASSES

For activities proposed on public lands, impacts are evaluated with the visual resource contrast rating system, a method of evaluating the visual contrast of a proposed activity with the existing landscape character.

The amount of contrast is measured by separating the landscape into its major features (land and water surface, vegetation, and structures) and then predicting the magnitude of change in contrast with each of the basic elements (form, line, color, and texture) and then to each of the individual features. Assessing the amount of contrast for a proposed activity in this manner will indicate the severity of impact and serve as a guide in determining what is required to reduce the contrast so it will meet the visual management class requirements for the area. Objectives for the VRM classes are listed below:

CLASS I: The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.

CLASS II: The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

CLASS III: The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

CLASS IV: The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

