



Apache Leap Special Management Area

Proposed Management Plan

A Framework for the Apache Leap SMA

The Tonto National Forest (Forest Service) has prepared a proposed management plan for the Apache Leap Special Management Area (Apache Leap SMA). The management plan establishes a comprehensive framework for managing the natural character of the Apache Leap SMA and its values, as specified in the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2015. The plan was prepared in consultation with affected tribes, the Town of Superior in Pinal County, Arizona, Resolution Copper and interested members of the public.

The proposed management plan establishes the desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines for the approximately 807-acre area. The Forest Service is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and soliciting scoping comments on the proposed management plan.

We want to hear from you!

The proposed plan is available for review and download at www.ApacheLeapSMA.us. The 45-day public comment period is open **March 17 through May 1, 2017**.

How to submit comments on the proposed plan:

- * Fill out the comment form provided at open house and drop in comment box or mail in at a later date
- * Provide a verbal comment at open house
- * Send email comments to: comments@ApacheLeapSMA.us
- * Send written comments via postal mail to: Apache Leap SMA Comments, P.O. Box 34468, Phoenix, AZ 85067-4468

Under 36 CFR 219, the Forest Service planning objection process, only individuals or entities that submit written formal comments on the proposed management plan will be able to participate in the future objection process.

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The Apache Leap SMA is managed for three purposes:

“-to preserve the natural character of Apache Leap;

-to allow for traditional use by Native American people; and

-to protect and conserve cultural and archeological resources of the area.”

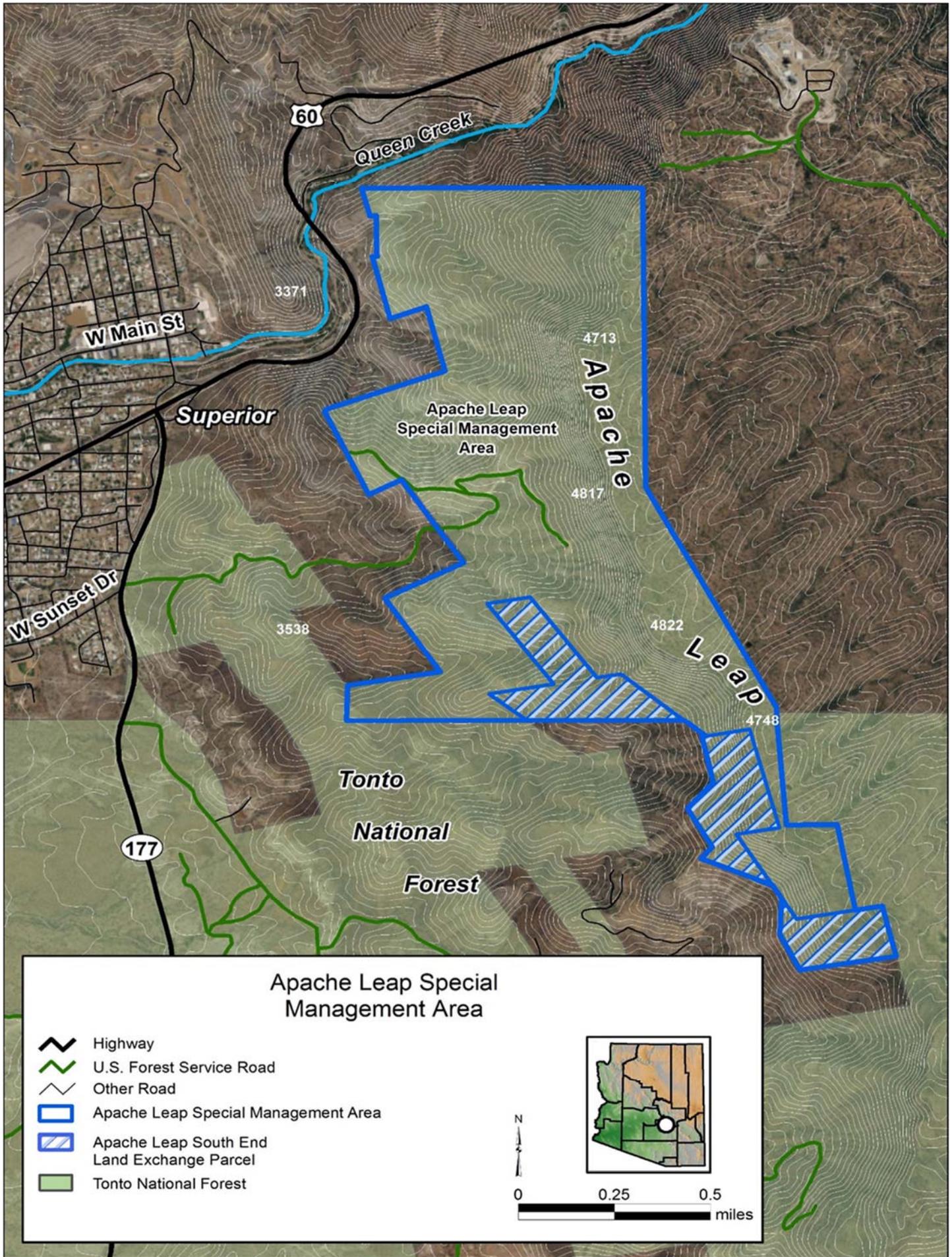
- NDAA, Section 3003 (g)2

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- Map of Apache Leap
- What changes does the plan propose?
- Land suitability
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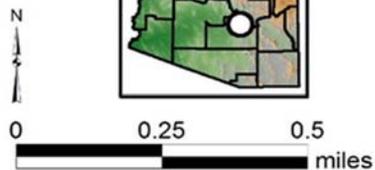
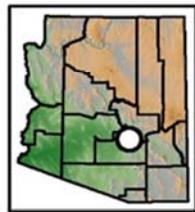


Looking south from the top of Apache Leap



Apache Leap Special Management Area

-  Highway
-  U.S. Forest Service Road
-  Other Road
-  Apache Leap Special Management Area
-  Apache Leap South End Land Exchange Parcel
-  Tonto National Forest



What changes does the management plan propose?

PLAN TOPIC	CURRENT MANAGEMENT	PROPOSED MANAGEMENT
CULTURAL / HISTORIC	Cultural resources are managed consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), Forest Service manual (FSM 2360) and handbook direction, additional Executive Orders, and a Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office	Continues current management direction with these new items:
		Additional emphasis given to identifying and nominating cultural resources eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places
		Seeks input from Tribes for maintaining archaeological sites, traditional use areas, and natural resources
NATURAL CHARACTER / SCENERY	Manage for some areas to appear natural and some areas to have significant deviations	Manage so the landscape appears natural with limited deviations
	Construction of new communications sites, utility lines, transmission lines is allowed	Construction of new communications sites, utility lines, transmission lines should not occur
	No seismic monitoring in place	Monitor for potential seismic impacts of proposed adjacent mining site
RECREATION	Opportunities for dispersed recreation are available to the public	
	Manage for mix of levels on the recreation opportunity spectrum ranging from 'Urban' to 'Semi-Primitive Motorized'	Manage for 'Semi-Primitive Non-motorized' to protect natural character and values while allowing for recreational use
	Overnight camping is permitted	Overnight camping is prohibited
MINERAL RESOURCES	Area is open to mineral exploration and development	Area is withdrawn from mineral leasing; mining is not permitted
	Abandoned mining infrastructure poses public safety hazard	Public safety hazards are mitigated within 5 years of detection
WILDLIFE	Manage to provide habitat for various animal species.	
VEGETATION	Manage to promote natural ecological processes and limit undesirable nonnative species	
PUBLIC ACCESS	Roads and trail access follows current Forest Service designations	
LIVESTOCK GRAZING	Grazing continues on Devil's Canyon allotment	
	Grazing occurs on Superior allotment	Grazing removed from Superior allotment
WILDLAND FIRE	Manage to protect human life, property, and natural and cultural resources.	
	Manage to sustain resources and natural ecological function.	



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Suitability of Lands

Suitability of lands refers to the appropriateness of applying certain resource management practices to a particular area of land, in consideration of the relevant social, economic, and ecological factors. Suitability determinations are one of the decisions made as part of creating a management plan. The table below shows which uses have been determined suitable for the Apache Leap SMA

	Land Use Categories				
	Livestock Grazing	Motorized Vehicle Use	Timber Production	Utility Corridors	Mining
	See management plan Section 3.8 for detailed plan components related to livestock grazing	See management plan Section 3.7 for detailed plan components related to public access	The National Forest Management Act requires that lands be classified as suitable/not suitable for timber production	See management plan Section 3.2 for further detail on how utility corridors relate to natural character and scenery	See management plan Section 3.10.1 below for an overview of the NDAA legislation that withdraws the area from future mining
East Apache Leap	Suitable* Devil's Canyon allotment is suitable for grazing	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Suitable A utility corridor currently exists in east Apache Leap SMA	Not Suitable
West Apache Leap	Not Suitable** Superior allotment is not suitable for grazing.	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable A utility corridor does not exist in east Apache Leap SMA, and additional utility corridors would not be suitable	Not Suitable

***Suitable**—The area or site is appropriate for the activity, whether the opportunity is available or not.

****Not Suitable**—The area or site is not appropriate for the activity or the activity is not allowed by law or regulation within the area.

Planning Process and Schedule:

Apache Leap SMA Planning Steps and Schedule	
September 2016 – January 2017	Consult with affected Indian tribes, the Town of Superior, interested members of the public, and Resolution Copper for input on plan development
Jan – Mar 2017	Prepare Management Plan
Mar – Apr 2017	Collect Public Comments on Management Plan Hold Public Meeting in Superior, AZ
Mar – Jun 2017	Prepare Environmental Assessment
July – Nov 2017	Hear and Resolve Objections
December 2017	Issue Decision Notice

Contact Us

For more information about the Apache Leap Special Management Area:

Visit us on the web at:
www.ApacheLeapSMA.us

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