

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

Game Branch / HPC Project Number:	11-512
Possible Funding Partners:	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Aravaipa South Rim Prescribed Fire

Region and Game Management Unit: 5/31

Local Habitat Partnership Committee (LHPC):
• Safford HPC

Was the project presented to the LHPC?
YES[X] NO[]

Has this project been submitted in previous years? YES[X] NO[]

If Yes, was it funded? YES[] NO[X] → **HPC Project #:** 10-505

Project Type: Prescribed Burn

Brief Project Summary: To improve bighorn sheep habitat and survivability by improving forage conditions and increasing visibility which may decrease limiting factors such as mountain lion predation. The Aravaipa South Rim prescribed fire area encompasses approximately 8,800 acres. The fire use area includes an additional 17,500 acres, which would be allowed to burn if the fire leaves the planned burn area.

Big Game Wildlife Species to Benefit: Bighorn sheep (50%), white tail deer (40%), and mule deer (10%).

Implementation Schedule (Month/Day/Year):

Project Start Date: March, 2012

Project End Date: September, 2013

Environmental Compliance:

NEPA Completed: YES[X] No[] N/A[]

Projected Completion Date: October, 2011. Internal NEPA and Scoping completed. Pending biological opinion from USFWS, no issues are anticipated as prescribed fires on the South Rim are identified in the loach minnow and spokedace recovery plans.

State Historic Preservation Office - Archaeological Clearance:

YES[] No[] N/A[X]

Projected Completion Date: _____

Arizona Game and Fish Department EA Checklist: N/A[X]

To be Completed by: _____

Projected Completion Date: _____

PROJECT FUNDING

Special Big Game License Tag Funds Requested: \$ 38,000

Cost Share or Matching Funds: \$ 38,000

Total Project Costs: \$ 76,000

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Applicant (please print):
Jeff Conn, BLM

Address:
711 S. Ave
Safford, AZ 85546

E-mail:
[@blm.](mailto:jeff.conn@blm.gov)

Telephone: 928-348-4470

Date: August 28, 2011

AGFD Contact and Phone No. (If applicant is not AGFD personnel): Duane Aubuchon, 520-591-1467

Project has been coordinated with: Duane Aubuchon

NEED STATEMENT – PROBLEM ANALYSIS:

The South Rim project area historically had frequent natural fires, which reduced shrubs and woody species in grassland areas, reduced understory in non-grassland habitats, and provided periodic increases in forage for wildlife such as deer and bighorn sheep. Maintaining open areas for bighorn sheep allows for their natural movement between areas, increases foraging areas, and decreases mountain lion predation.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Reduce woody plants which have increased in distribution and density to:

1. Improve bighorn sheep habitat
2. Improve mule deer forage
3. Improve white-tail deer forage
4. Improve watershed function

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIES:

Conduct a prescribed burn (Turkey and Parson’s burn units, approximately 8,800 acres total) on the South Rim. The fire use area includes an additional 17,500 acres, which would be allowed to burn if the fire leaves the planned burn area.

PROJECT LOCATION:

Township 6 South, Range 18 East, portions of Sections 34 and 35; Township 7 South, Range 18 East, portions of Sections 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 23, 24, 25, 26; Township 6 South, Range 19 East, portions of Sections 20, 21, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33; Township 7 South, Range 19 East, portions of Sections 4, 5, 7, 18, 19. Quadrangle: Oak Grove Canyon. See map on Page 5.

LAND OWNERSHIP AT PROJECT SITE (Please state specifically if PRIVATE PROPERTY and provide landowner’s name):

Public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Safford Field Office: 7,352 acres

Private lands owned by The Nature Conservancy: 2,363 acres

IF PRIVATE PROPERTY, IS THERE A STEWARDSHIP or LANDOWNER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LANDOWNER AND THE DEPARTMENT?

YES[] NO[X]

HABITAT DESCRIPTION:

The predominant vegetation community in the area is semidesert grassland, Madrean evergreen woodland, and small portions of interior chaparral and Great Basin conifer woodland. The ridges are dominated by grama grasses intermingled with semi-desert shrubs. Mesquite, catclaw, juniper, and snakeweed, are typical of the shrubs that are beginning to dominate portions of the proposed burn areas. Mixed broadleaf vegetation dominated by cottonwood, willow, sycamore, and ash occurs in

Aravaipa Creek, Turkey Creek, and Oak Grove Canyon, but these areas are outside of the burn areas.

ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:

Special Big Game License Tag Funds
\$38,000 – Prescribed burn

Cost Share or Matching Funds
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

- \$12,500 – Prescribed burn, aerial ignition contract

Bureau of Land Management

- \$25,500 – BLM for planning documents, environmental compliance, pre- and post-burn monitoring

Total Matching Funds

\$38,000

LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:

The Nature Conservancy – Private land owner
Bureau of Land Management – Oversight, environmental compliance, biologist staff time.
Arizona Game and Fish Department – Recommendations for burn areas, leave out areas, law enforcement support

PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:

Monitoring of the results of the prescribed burn will be completed by the Bureau of Land Management, Safford Field Office.

PROJECT MAINTENANCE:

There will be no maintenance requirement with the implementation of this project.

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY:

Jeff Conn, Bureau of Land Management

WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (*see attached worksheet*):

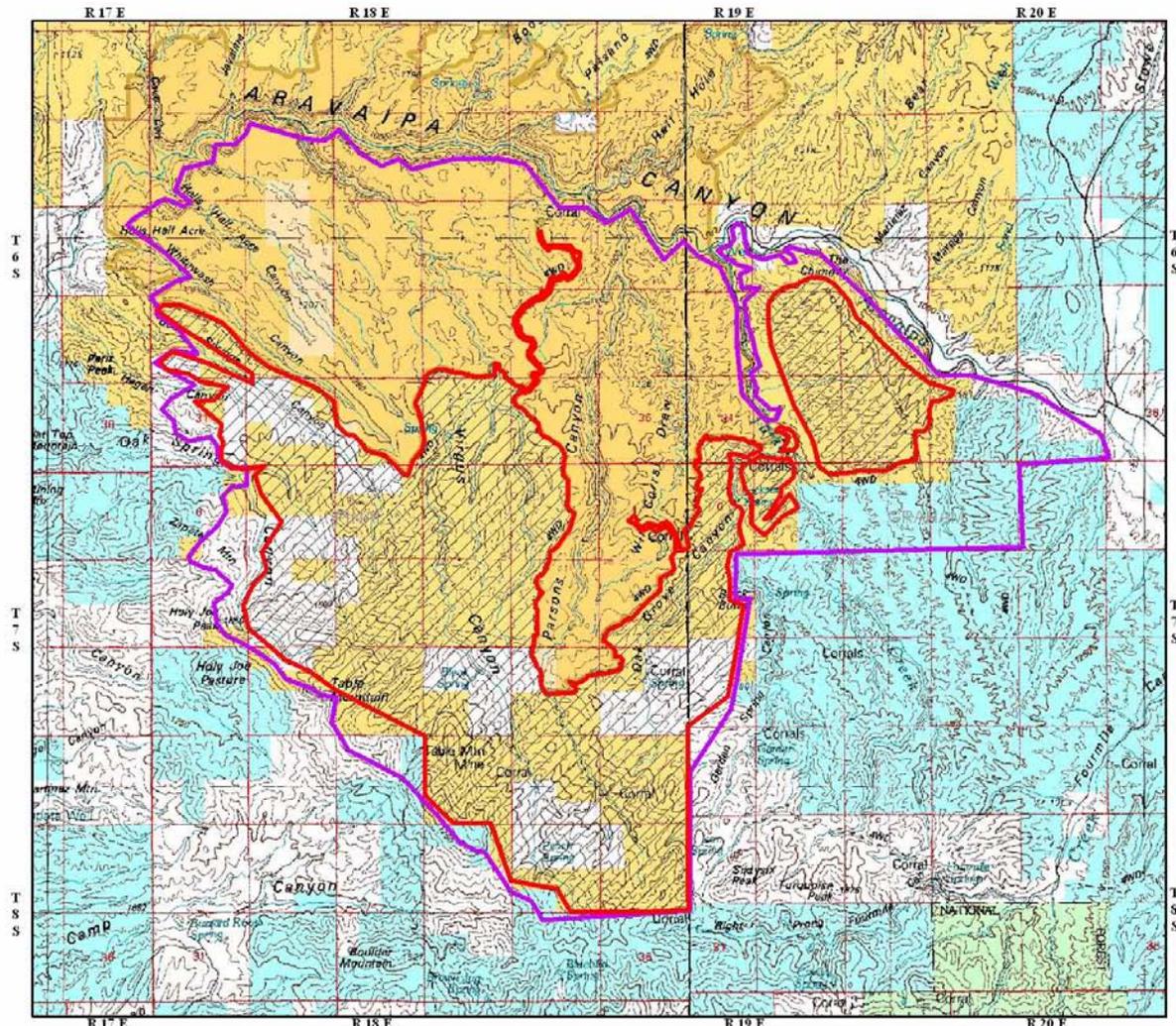
N/A

TREE SHEARING (AGRA-AXE, PUSH) PROJECTS (*see attached worksheet*):

N/A

South Rim Prescribed Burn Area

State of Arizona

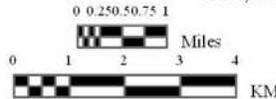


Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| Private Lands | Bureau of Land Management (BLM) | BLM Wilderness Area | Maximum Manageable Area |
| State Lands | National Forest Lands (USFS) | Forest Service Wilderness Area | Area of possible prescribed ignition |
| State Wildlife Area | National Park Service (NPS) | NPS Wilderness Area | Fire Exclusion Areas for resource protection |
| City, State, County Parks | USFW Service, National Wildlife Refuges | USFW Service Wilderness Area | BLM ACEC |
| County Lands | Indian Lands or Reservations | | |



1 = 113,316



United States Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Arizona State Office
 Land Status updated as of April, 2010
 Map created on Jun 27, 2010

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