

PERALTA REGIONAL PARK

Draft Master Plan



View looking east (photo by Cate Bradley)

Prepared by
Pinal County Open Space and Trails Department



PINAL • COUNTY

Wide open opportunity

**In partnership with the National Park Service
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
September 2015**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Peralta Regional Park will be a spectacular natural jewel on the outer edge of the Phoenix metro area. It will attract local, regional (and possibly national and international) individuals and families with amenities designed to interest new user groups and underserved populations.

In the 2007 Pinal County Open Space and Master Plan, Regional Park #5 (RP#5) was identified as one of 7 proposed regional parks to be developed in the County. This draft master plan is the result of collaborative efforts and input from local residents, public and private landowners, County officials and staff to create a recreation and development plan for RP#5, Peralta Regional Park (Peralta RP).

The draft master plan highlights different recreation use areas for picnicking, camping and multi-use trails of various skill levels. The trail system features loops and connector trails that total approximately 8 miles. Two unique and signature activities are proposed for this 480 acre park – rock climbing and dark-sky designation for night sky viewing.

The stakeholder Working Group for this planning process defined guiding values for Peralta RP and identified goals and objectives to make the vision a reality. They are to:

- Maintain biological integrity;
- Be thoughtful about access and connectivity;
- Include opportunities for education about the site, the natural desert, responsible public stewardship;
- Attract new demographics of users and underserved populations;
- Identify future park acquisition opportunities ;
- Protect, conserve and incorporate the values for wildlife habitat and connectivity including natural drainage features);
- Work with local, regional and national organizations and other community groups to develop and maintain the trails offered at this park;
- Establish distinctive recreation options such as tent camping, rock climbing, night sky viewing and as a staging area to other, larger-scale outdoor recreation areas such as the Lost Goldmine Trail, the FS Peralta Trailhead and the Superstition Wilderness area and other near-by trail systems.

Partners involved in the development of this master plan include the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (FS), Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), Arizona Game and Fish Department (AG&FD) and the City of Apache Junction. BLM administers the lands of this proposed park. The County has applied to BLM to manage this land through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act designated by Congress in 1954.

Future policies for the management of this park will be in accord with County adopted rules for park use and reflect the identified vision, goals and objectives identified in this master plan.

Phasing and scheduled implementation of this park plan will be incremental over a five to ten year time frame, according to available funding and other resources.

Funding opportunities for implementation of this park plan are similar to those identified in the Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan.

Peralta RP will offer unique, responsive and forward thinking recreation for future growth – presenting Pinal County as a great place to “live, work and play.”

INTRODUCTION

In the 2007 Pinal County Open Space and Master Plan, Regional Park #5 was identified as one of 7 proposed regional parks to be developed in the County. Concept planning for Regional Park #5 began in December 2014 and became known as Peralta Regional Park (Peralta RP).

The Peralta Regional Park Master Plan (Park Plan) is the result of collaborative efforts and input from local residents, state and federal agencies, public and private landowners, County officials and staff to create a recreation and development plan for Peralta R P. The County would like to thank, especially, the consistent and dedicated members of the Peralta Regional Park Working Group (Working Group), consisting of County residents, representatives of key user groups, local, regional, state and federal agency staff, and area non-profit representatives, who contributed their values, ideas and support for this park.

This planning process included six Working Group meetings, one field trip, 2 public open house meetings, and presentations and public meetings with County staff, the Open Space and Trails Advisory Commission and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

The Park Plan includes a dynamic range of recreational experiences for picnickers, hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, rock climbers, dark-sky observers, tent campers and other low impact outdoor recreation users – recreation themes identified through the public input process.

The proposed master plan highlights different recreation use areas (picnicking, camping, rock climbing) and multi-use trails of various skill levels accessed via an organized parking/trailhead area. The trail system features loops and connector trails that total approximately 8 miles. Two unique and signature activities are proposed for this 480 acre park – rock climbing and dark-sky designation for night sky viewing activities.

PURPOSE of the PLAN

This master plan was prepared to define a vision for Peralta RP and to identify goals, objectives and a phasing plan to make that vision a reality. Guiding principles in the development of this plan were:

- Identify recreational amenities which offer a variety of activities that take advantage of and fit in with the unique physical character of the site.
- Secure public access on the west side of the park and allow for pedestrian, equestrian access in other logical sites.
- Increase communication and understanding among the Park's adjacent landowners about mutual interests for recreation and conservation activities.
- Leverage funding.

This document represents general ideas and values expressed during the public planning process. It does not recommend specific numbers of amenities nor estimated costs for implementation. That information will be developed, after this Park Plan is approved, with user group and public input, further in the site planning and design stage which will also include fee schedule opportunities and other specifics.

BACKGROUND

Peralta RP is located in the northern reaches of Pinal County off of Peralta Road which intersects with AZ Hwy 60, about 3 miles east of Gold Canyon and about a mile and a half south of the USFS Tonto National Forest boundary and the Superstition Wilderness area in T1S, R9E, T1S, R10E. Peralta RP is approximately 480 acres currently administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The County has applied to BLM to manage this land through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) designated by Congress in 1954. Through this management vehicle, any jurisdiction can apply to manage, for 25 years, certain lands identified on the BLM disposal list, with the opportunity to obtain patent after that time for minimal acquisition costs.



View of the Superstition Mountains from Peralta Regional Park (photo by Kent Taylor)

VISION and VALUES

The Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan (OSTMP) is the over-arching document that guides the Peralta RP master planning process. As stated, the guiding vision for this plan is the same as the OSTMP Vision – *“to promote the quality of life of the region by providing areas of passive and active recreational opportunities, while conserving existing resources, such as natural scenic beauty, view corridors, wildlife habitat, agricultural resources designated at risk, and cultural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations....it is to encourage appropriate long-range growth planning opportunities, provide for a wide range of recreational activities for residents and visitors, preserve the county’s rural and natural open space character, and contribute to the well-being of its communities.”* OSTMP p. 39 [Click here to view the Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan](#)

Members of the Working Group developed values and a vision for creating the Park Plan. Following are those values which served as goals for this Master Plan:

- Maintain biological integrity of the site;
- Be very thoughtful about access and connectivity to, within and from the site;
- Include opportunities for interpretation signage and education about the site, the natural desert, uses at the site and other information that promotes responsible public stewardship, by all users of the site;

- Proposed uses should respect and safeguard the special nature of this site while providing unique and relevant outdoor recreation opportunities to attract new demographics of users and underserved populations;
- Identify future park acquisition opportunities which could incorporate other sensitive and/or important areas surrounding the site;
- Conserve wildlife resources and maintain a natural network of connected landscapes described by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD); Engage local, regional and national organizations and other community groups, whose missions align with the purpose and goals for Peralta Regional Park, to help design, develop and maintain the trails and other recreation opportunities at this park (see Map #1).



View looking southeast within Peralta Regional Park (photo by Cate Bradley)

Map #1

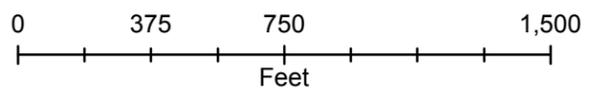


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Proposed Peralta Regional Park Draft Plan

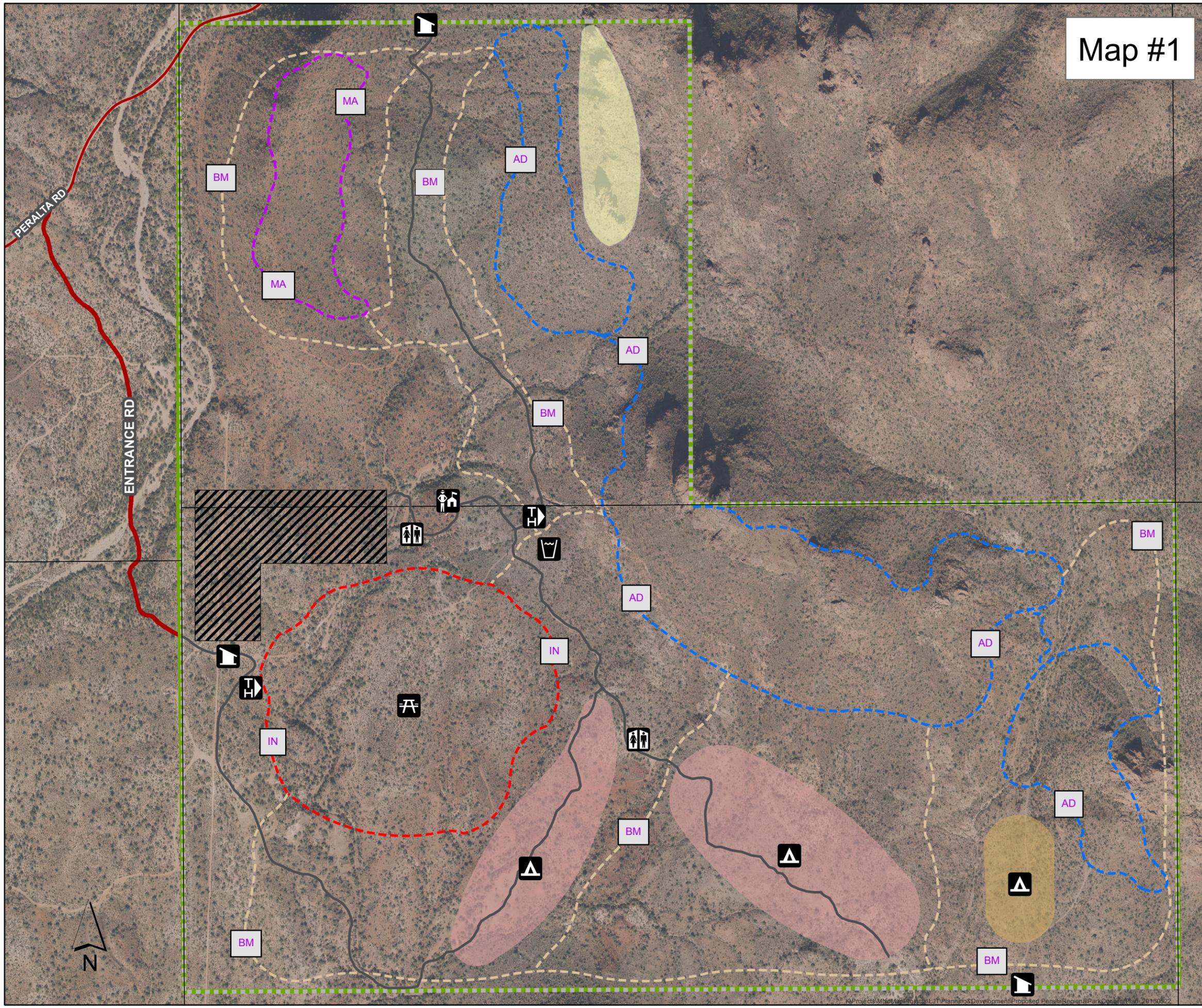
Legend

- Camping
- Drinking Water
- Iron Ranger / Entrance Point
- Picnic Area - Individual Sites
Group site
- Restrooms (Vault Style)
- Trailhead
- Volunteer Park Host
- AD - Advanced Trail
- MA - Moderate/Advanced Trail
- BM - Beginner/Moderate Trail
- IN - Interpretive Trail
- Climbing Area
- Car/Tent Camping - Individual Sites
Group site
No Elec/Water, No RV's/Trailers
- Primitive Camping - Walk In Only
- Proposed Park Boundary
- Parking (Phased)
- Park Roads
- Section Line
- Fence Boundary



* ALL TRAILS - Non Motorized, Multi Use, Natural Surface

September 2015



GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives for Peralta Regional Park have been developed based on Working Group, user group(s) and public input.

Goal 1: Maintain the natural resource integrity of the site.

- Objective 1.1: Minimize additional disturbances to natural desert areas – newly adapted recreation areas should take advantage of previously disturbed land.
- Objective 1.2: All recreational trails within the park will be non-motorized, multi-use.
- Objective 1.3: Use existing tracks/ roads, from past ranching/mining operations, when possible, and locate picnic and camping amenities along those corridors.
- Objective 1.4: Provide portable toilets, vault or similar style, to protect site and maintain public health.
- Objective 1.5: Protect ridges and natural drainage features through careful site design.
- Objective 1.6: Wildlife-compatible fencing along the park boundary to prevent unauthorized uses from adjacent land and allow for permeability and connectivity of wildlife.

Goal 2: Be thoughtful about access and connectivity to, within and from the site.

- Objective 2.1: Create an agreement among the County, Arizona State Land Department, U.S. Forest Service to legalize and improve Peralta Road to accommodate daily and seasonal traffic.
- Objective 2.2: Establish the main park access on the western boundary from Peralta Road in partnership with the Arizona State Land Department.
- Objective 2.3: Develop a low impact vehicular crossing method across Peralta Creek into the parking lot.
- Objective 2.4: Design the parking lot to accommodate autos as well as trucks with horse trailers. Equestrian spaces should include nearby tie up posts and mounting rocks or platforms, when possible.
- Objective 2.5: Maintain the existing access on the park's north boundary as secondary and emergency access.
- Objective 2.6: Provide equestrian gates along the south and north boundary fence.

Goal 3: Include opportunities for interpretive signage and education about the site, the natural desert, uses at the site and other information that promotes responsible public stewardship, by all users of the site.

- Objective 3.1: Develop a directional and way-finding signage and interpretive trail plan to include information about the:
 - Setting, recreational opportunities, adjacent land forms, watershed and past uses;
 - Natural desert vegetation, water and precipitation, wildlife and seasonal variations;
 - Unique uses within the park for rock climbing, dark-sky/night sky viewing, and camping, as well as the more typical uses of trails, interpretation and picnicking.
 - Wildlife viewing and applicable habitat information.
- Objective 3.2: Promote “pride of place” and the value of shared public responsibility for stewardship of the park including “pack it in, pack it out”, “stay on trails” and park and trail etiquette signage.
- Objective 3.3: Provide a suitable location and needed amenities for a seasonal volunteer site host, i.e., solar electricity, septic system.

Objective 3.4: Encourage the establishment of a Friends of Peralta Regional Park volunteer group.

Objective 3.5: Explore additional partnership opportunities with other like-minded organizations, non-profit and user groups.

Objective 3.6: Recruit an AmeriCorps (or similar) volunteer to provide on-site management, operations and safety oversight during the first 2-3 years of park operation.

Goal 4: Recreation opportunity should respect and safeguard the special nature of this site while providing unique and relevant outdoor recreation opportunities to attract new demographics of users and underserved populations.

Objective 4.1: Design recreation areas to accommodate a reasonable capacity, based on site evaluation, for various uses (trails, picnic ramadas, tent camping sites, rock climbing routes).

Objective 4.2: Develop a camping and picnic ramada reservation system (research on-line as well as traditional systems).

Objective 4.3: Create all trails for non-motorized, multi-use hiking, mountain biking, horse riding that also accommodate beginner skill levels to encourage new users and diverse populations to outdoor recreation.

Objective 4.4: Create designated low-impact trails to special places such as an interpretive trail, the highest peak, and specific rock climbing routes.

Objective 4.5: Design at least one large picnic and camping area to accommodate large group gatherings.

Objective 4.6: Research further opportunities to develop a low-impact climbing area with routes that offer climbing aides suitable for the beginner/intermediate skill level.

Objective 4.7: Explore options to restore the existing well on the property as a central source of water for camping, hiking and picnicking.

Goal 5: Create a buffer zone, if necessary, that may need to incorporate other sensitive and/or important areas surrounding the site.

Objective 5.1: Explore future opportunities to expand the park boundary to include the peak area identified in Map #2 as a destination trail location.

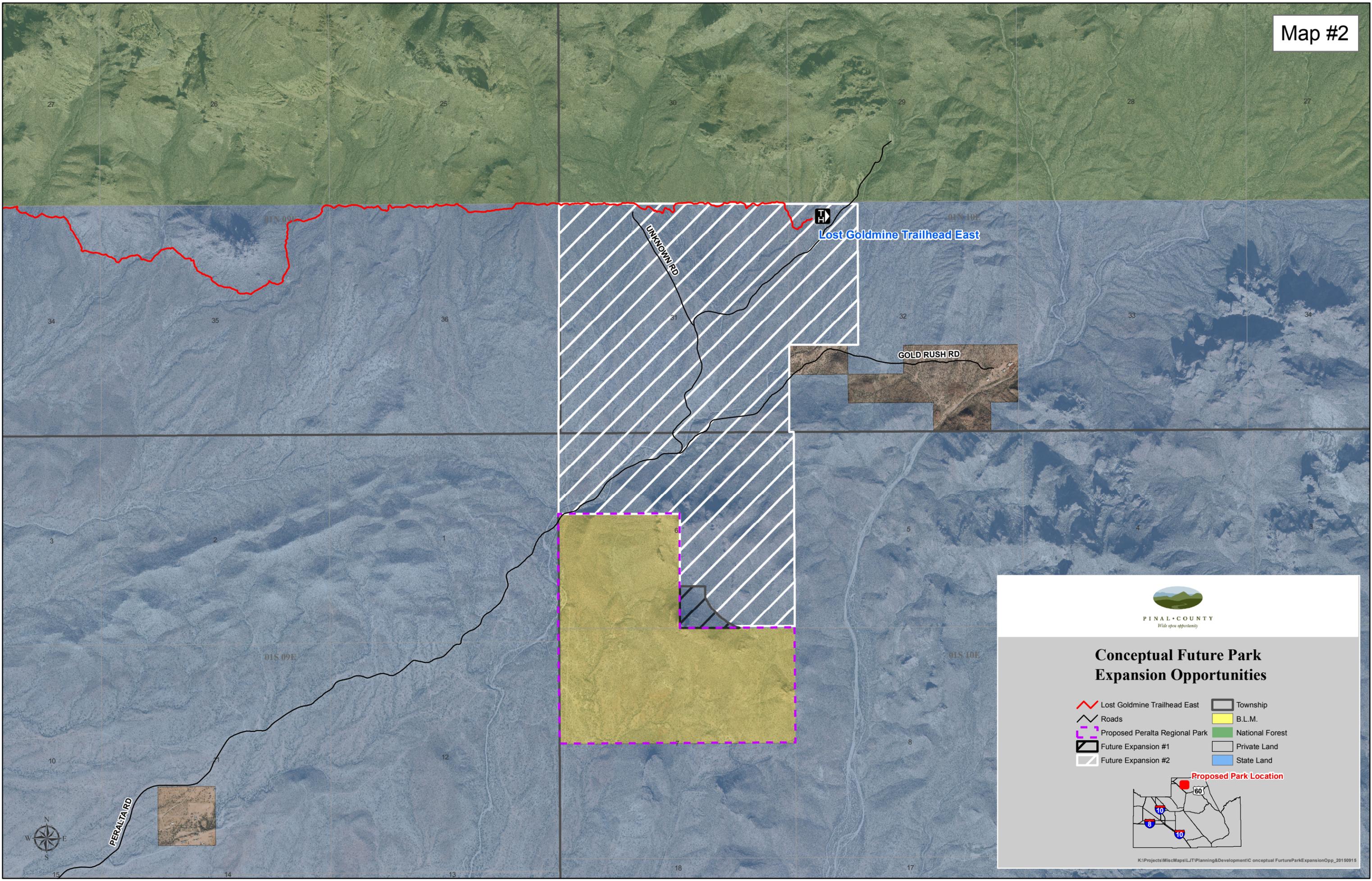
Objective 5.2: Explore the future expansion of the existing park boundary which would connect Peralta RP with U.S. Forest Service land and the Superstition Wilderness area and the Lost Goldmine Trail creating a world class outdoor recreation opportunity (see Map #2).

Objective 5.3: If park expansion takes place, re-evaluate uses within the park related to hunting and other consumptive recreation activities.

Goal 6: Protect, conserve and incorporate the values for wildlife corridors and linkages for movement between wildland blocks.

Objective 6.1: Minimize land use or disturbance that would cause erosion and sedimentation in the natural drainage areas within the park boundaries.

Objective 6.2: Include signage within the park to discourage feeding or disturbing wildlife, providing educational information on the wildlife in the area for promotion of wildlife watching experiences.



Conceptual Future Park Expansion Opportunities

- Lost Goldmine Trailhead East
- Roads
- Proposed Peralta Regional Park
- Future Expansion #1
- Future Expansion #2
- Township
- B.L.M.
- National Forest
- Private Land
- State Land



PARK RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Planning for and designation of Peralta RP represents several important opportunities for Pinal County including:

- It is a remote and remarkable natural desert area located in close proximity to the Phoenix metro area with a population of greater than 4 million people at this writing.
- The Park setting and features represent a strong opportunity to establish distinctive recreation options such as tent camping, rock climbing, night sky viewing and as a staging area to other, larger-scale outdoor recreation areas such as the Lost Goldmine Trail, the FS Peralta Trailhead, the Superstition Wilderness area, and other trails.
- The large area group camping and shaded picnic areas would be opportunities for larger group gatherings, to encourage more diverse park user groups.
- The proximity of this site to the Superstition Wilderness provides a great location for a “jumping off” point for excursions into the Wilderness.
- Overnight and day use activities will be supported by access, within the park, to restrooms and a central water supply.

The Working Group identified the following recreation amenities (features) as the major focus for this park (see Map #1). Following are the highlight activities intended to provide recreational activities that maximize the site and surrounding area uniqueness:

Camping

Car camping would be provided and limited to two designated areas in the bottom central portion of the park. The total number of camp sites will be determined during the park site planning phase. Due to access road limitations, desired visitor experience and an effort to preserve the current natural setting of the parcel, car camping is defined as automobiles and/or standard truck or van sizes.

Walk-in camping sites will allow backpackers, long distance bike riders or thru-hiker to stay at a designated reserved camp site in the lower east portion of the park and be more removed from the other activities in the park.

Group camping site(s) will be available to provide opportunities for larger gatherings.

Dark-Sky/Stargazing

The location of Peralta Regional Park represents a unique opportunity for the growing trend of dark-sky/night sky viewing. The park could benefit from designation as a dark sky place by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) for their Parks Protected Areas (PPA) program. This recreation opportunity should be applied for as soon as possible in the planning process. A close partnership with the IDA will be important, especially for development of a quality outdoor lighting management plan. (<http://darksky.org/>).

Multi-use non-motorized Trails

Approximately 8 miles of multi-skill level trails will be offered to enhance the recreation experience for picnickers, day users and campers. Trails will be designed to focus mostly on beginner/intermediate skill levels for hikers, mountain biker riders and equestrians. All trail surfaces will be natural, hard packed soil, to reduce land disturbance and erosion, some of which are on nearly flat and relatively smooth surfaces. Trails will be designed as interconnecting loops near and around major site features such as the camping and climbing areas.

An interpretive trail will surround the picnic/ramadas area and feature a wider trail for beginning hiker skills and to allow multiple use access to the larger trails system, with interpretive signs and themes identified in Objective 3.1, along the way.

Picnicking

Peralta Regional Park will offer a unique relaxed day use picnic opportunity within close proximity to the greater Phoenix metro population. Since this will likely be a very popular feature, the picnic ramadas will be available on weekends and holidays through a designated reservation system.

The picnic area will be designed in small and group sites with shade ramadas and tables, in close proximity to restrooms and a central water supply. It will be adjacent to the Interpretive Trail which connects with the entire park trail system.

Rock Climbing Area

An introductory climbing area for beginners and sport climbers will be a distinct and unique recreation opportunity for the County to offer within a regional park setting. New rock climbers can enjoy outdoor climbing as an alternative to an indoor “rock gym”. This feature is likely to attract an atypical park user and a place where beginners can learn and hone their skills.



View of potential rock climbing area (photo by Kent Taylor)

LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY PROGRAMS and POLICIES THAT IMPACT THIS PLANNING PROCESS

Public land management philosophies are often rooted from the same seed – that natural resources have intrinsic values that must be managed for the public good. Public land management strategies, however, differ according to the mission of each agency. Management approaches for natural resource conservation can be consumptive or non-consumptive, or both, depending on the multi-use directives for each agency. The County has consulted with pertinent federal, state, county and local public land management entities in this planning process. And, to the best extent possible, has incorporated compatible values, missions and management strategies in this Plan. There is never a perfect fit in addressing all needs – this is also true with the needs and perspectives of the general public. This Plan aims to create general understanding and guidance for development of the proposed park based on the vision, values, goals and objectives that were revealed and developed during the planning process.

Bureau of Land Management

Recreation and Public Purposes Act

The U.S. Congress enacted the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) in 1954 (a revision of the Recreation Act of 1926) that is administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). R&PP authorizes the sale or lease of public lands for recreational or public purposes to State and local governments and to qualified nonprofit organizations. [Click here to learn about BLM R&PP process](#)

Peralta Regional Park is currently administered by the BLM and the R&PP is the mechanism by which Pinal County has applied to assume management of the land for use as a regional park.

Mining Leases

There is an active “right to mine” lease on about 20 acres of the parcel (see Map #5). The nature of the sub-surface mining lease on file with the BLM for these 20 acres is of the “casual use” category – a rough equivalent of rock hounding, but no mechanical earth moving. The mining claim holders have been contacted by County staff for discussions related to this planning process.

More detailed information about mining on BLM land – authorities, descriptions, limitations, etc. are described in Appendix A of this document. The entire surface area within the proposed boundary of the park is available for recreation use under the principles of multiple uses.

There is also evidence of other historic mining activity on this parcel. These sites will need to be investigated and mitigated as part of the environmental review process dictated by BLM and other agency stakeholders such as Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Grazing Leases

Under the principles of multiple-use land management, as is very common on BLM lands in the western U.S., there is a current grazing lease on this parcel. Discussions with the grazing lease holder have been cooperative and on-going during this planning process. Possible future partnership opportunities with the lease holder, including water rights, will be explored during the R&PP and site plan development process.

More detailed information about grazing on BLM land – authorities, descriptions, limitations, etc. are described in Appendix B of this document.

U.S. Forest Service

Peralta RP is about one mile south of the U.S. Forest Service (FS) Tonto National Forest boundary, the FS managed Peralta Trailhead, and the FS managed Superstition Wilderness area. FS staff from the Tonto National Forest participated in the Park Plan process from the beginning. They expressed concerns about more trail use demand and more impact to the Superstition Wilderness area, but acknowledged a new regional park could alleviate some of the current pressures on FS resources. Currently the Peralta Trail and trailhead are one of the busiest access points into a Wilderness Area in the US.

Access to Peralta Trailhead and the Superstition Wilderness area is from Peralta Road, which is an unpaved road for approximately 6 miles. The road is not recognized as legal by Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), administrators of state trust lands. Discussions with ASLD, FS and the County are required to address this issue and make access to Peralta Regional Park, Peralta Trailhead and the Superstition Wilderness area unambiguous.

Arizona State Land Department

Adjacent Land Uses

Peralta RP is entirely surrounded by Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) trust land. There are existing grazing leases on all sides of the park boundaries. Observations from satellite imagery indicate the adjacent ranch fence encroaches into the park's western boundary. In future planning phases, this will be addressed for liability issues.

Recreation use on any State Trust Land requires a use permit ([Click here to learn about ASLD permits](#)). Signs posted at all access/egress points within the park boundaries will remind users of the need for an ASLD use permit beyond the park. To the extent possible, and to accommodate past recreation uses of this greater area, access/egress points within the park will be aligned with existing external pathways to facilitate a contiguous trail experience. This in no way endorses trail use or trail development on State Trust Lands without proper approvals, permissions and permits.

Peralta Road Access

Peralta Road, the access road to Peralta RP, runs across state land although it is not recognized as a legal road by ASLD beyond the Peralta Trail residential development. Peralta RP master plan includes acquisition of a transportation corridor on state lands to provide access to the park off of Peralta Road and a low impact design for a wash crossing to access the proposed park parking lot. The plan also calls for a secondary road access on the north boundary for safety. Land acquisition, Peralta Road status, and boundary fencing are among the issues to be included in discussions with ASLD.

Possible Park Expansion Opportunity

A swath of as yet undeveloped State Trust land approximately 1.25 miles long by .5 mile wide lays between the northern boundary of Peralta RP and the Lost Goldmine Trailhead East and the southern boundary of the Tonto National Forest and Superstition Wilderness Area. In the future, acquisition of a portion of this land, or a portion of it, could be desirable to create a recreation linkage between the regional park and the national forest (see Map #2). The feasibility of such an acquisition is a possibility that could be explored but is not the subject of this plan.

The configuration of the BLM parcel cuts off full access to the highest peak of the park property, which is on State Trust land (see Map #2). This peak area presents another park expansion opportunity. Including this small parcel in the park boundary would offer the opportunity to provide a scenic "destination" peak for trail users.

Adjacent Trail System

Also on State Trust land, but not legal, is the Gold Canyon Trail System – an interconnected, user-built trail system of about 10 miles. This system, west of the park boundary, links to the Lost Goldmine Trail, which is legal and owned and managed by the County.

Connecting from Peralta RP to the Lost Goldmine Trail and the Gold Canyon Trail System, could create a remarkable and world-class outdoor trail opportunity for which Peralta RP is the hub and the host.

The Gold Canyon Trail System is on State Trust Land which is managed by the Arizona State Land Department for the benefit of the trust beneficiaries. The Department is required by State Statute to maximize revenue for the beneficiaries, and is unable to dedicate right-of-way without compensation. If County residents want to protect this trail from potential future development they would need to work with the ASLD to obtain a right-of-way.

Arizona Game and Fish

Wildlife Habitat and Corridor Protection

The AGFD has public trust responsibility and jurisdictional authority under Arizona Revised Statute, Title 17 (§17-102 codifies state ownership of wildlife) to manage and regulates take of fish and wildlife within the state of Arizona irrespective of landownership, excepting those wildlife existing on tribal trust-status lands. This includes law enforcement authority. The mission of the AGFD is to conserve Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

The AGFD vision for the future of wildlife and their habitats in Arizona includes interconnected networks of large natural areas (crucial habitats) supporting viable populations of wildlife, while providing ample opportunity for people to enjoy and benefit from the presence of wildlife. AG&FD has been working to map important wildlife habitat landscape blocks and wildlife corridors to at the state, county, and local levels to be included as part of various land use planning and permitting processes in Arizona. These efforts have resulted in the identification of wildlife corridors and landscape blocks across the greater Pinal County region [Click here to view the AZGFD Pinal County report](#). Peralta RP is within a landscape movement area. The Department also provided a list from the *Species of Economic and Recreation Importance* [Click here to view more AZGFD information](#).

Hunting

Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) §17-231 A.3, General Powers and Duties of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, establish hunting, trapping and fishing rules and prescribe the manner and methods which may be used in taking wildlife. ARS Title 13 prohibits political subdivisions enacting any such ordinance limiting the take of wildlife, irrespective of the land classification or purpose of the city property. House Bill 2543 preempts the authority of political subdivisions to limit or prohibit the discharge of firearms in parks and preserves approved as hunting area by the Commission. City and County parks are closed to hunting unless specifically opened by Commission order 27. The formal designation of Peralta RP as a County managed facility, and fenced around its boundaries, would ensure clarity for the outdoor recreationist hunting is prohibited under A.R.S. Sections 17-303 and 17-304 or Commission Rules R12-4-321, R12-4-801, R12-4-802 and R12-4-803.

Should a park expansion occur in the future, a re-evaluation of the park management plan for recreation opportunity and diversity of users related to hunting and other consumptive activities would be required.

Pinal County Planning

The Pinal County Comprehensive Plan update in 2009 identifies a moderate low density, 1 to 3.5 dwelling units per acre, land use status for the area in proximity to Peralta RP (see Map #3). [Click here to view the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan](#)

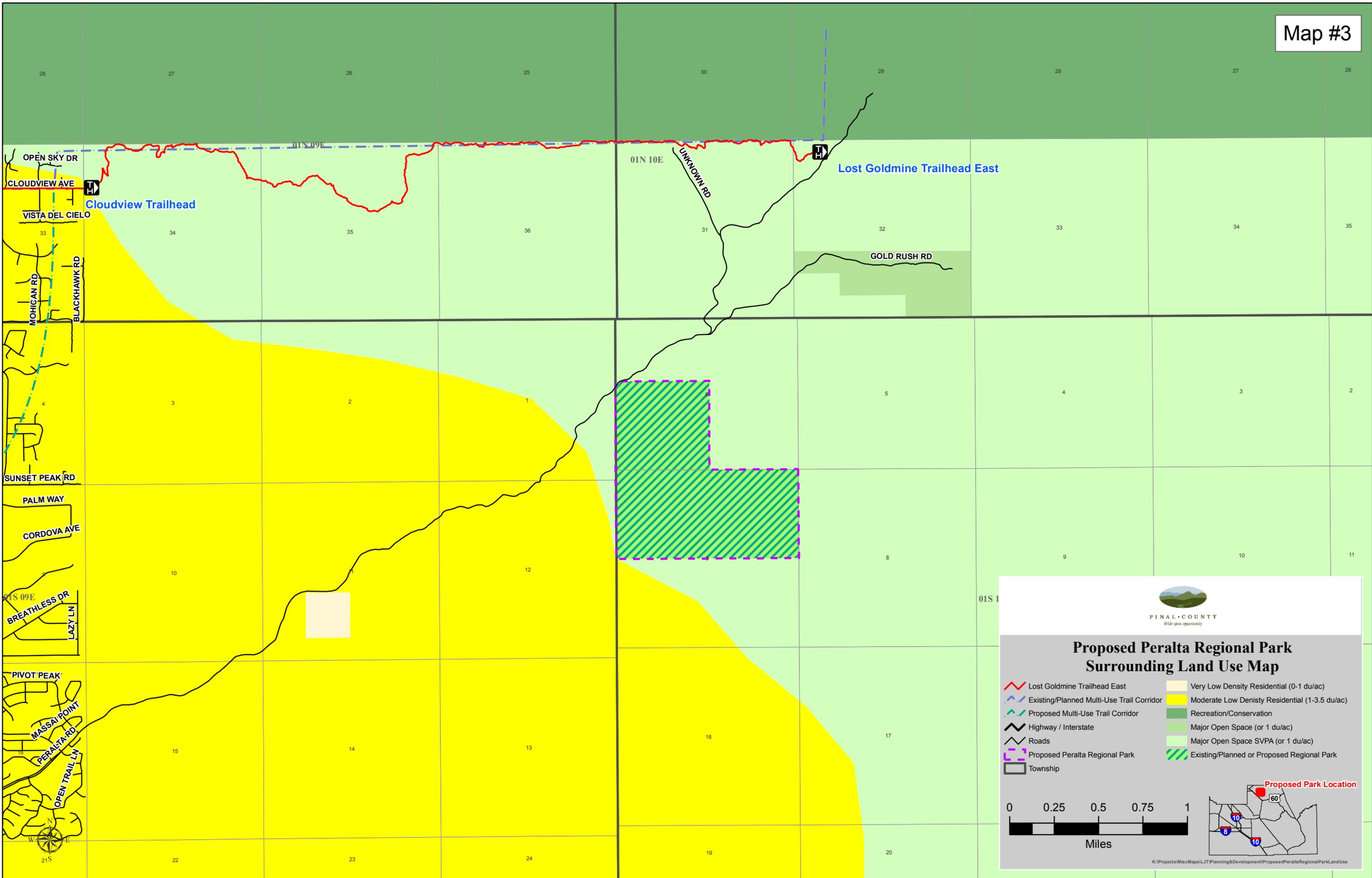
It is inevitable that future land development will occur on the state trust lands in this area. While growth and development have not occurred yet, when/if it does, Peralta RP will provide resource protection and recreational opportunities for adjacent county residents, as well as regional, national and international visitors.

Pinal County Sheriff

The Pinal County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement throughout the jurisdictional areas in County, which would include this park site. Search and Rescue (SAR) operations are conducted through the Sheriff's Office. [Click here to learn more about Pinal County Search and Rescue](#) The Sheriff's Office will be consulted during the site design process to include necessary accommodation for law enforcement and SAR at the park.



View of proposed camp site area (photo by Cate Bradley)



Proposed Peralta Regional Park Surrounding Land Use Map

- Lost Goldmine Trailhead East
- Existing/Planned Multi-Use Trail Corridor
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Corridor
- Highway / Interstate
- Roads
- Proposed Peralta Regional Park
- Township
- Very Low Density Residential (0-1 du/ac)
- Moderate Low Density Residential (1-3.5 du/ac)
- Recreation/Conservation
- Major Open Space (or 1 du/ac)
- Major Open Space SVPA (or 1 du/ac)
- Existing/Planned or Proposed Regional Park



POLICIES

Pinal County has adopted rules for park use which were approved by the Board of Supervisors in September of 2013. [Click here to view Pinal County Park Rules](#)

Additionally, specific camping, picnicking and site use regulations will be developed for Peralta RP which reflects the identified vision, goals and objectives identified in this master plan. The timing of the development of these regulations will be consistent with the development of a park plan of operations and associated fee schedule which will come as Phase One implementation comes on-line.

PHASING and SCHEDULE

Development of Peralta Regional Park is proposed in two phases (see Map #4). Phasing implementation is significantly dependent on the County completing the necessary steps to finalize the Bureau of Land Management Recreation and Public Purposes Act application and process.

Implementation of the park plan will occur in incremental phases over a five to ten year time frame, according to available funding and other resources. Adjustments can be made as development occurs and actual costs impacts are better known. Future phases of planning for Peralta RP will explore;

- appropriate numbers of tent and car camping sites;
- practical number of large size and small size ramada/picnic areas;
- number of auto, truck and horse trailer parking spaces needed to accommodate demand;
- reasonable number of beginner and intermediate level trails throughout the site and rock climbing routes in the north west quadrant;
- estimate costs for ramadas, toilets, water source, parking, trails, etc.;
- develop a fee schedules for day use, weekly use, annual pass;
- directional, way-finding, and interpretive sign designs and locations;
- reservation system options, including online opportunities.



View to west (photo by Kent Taylor)

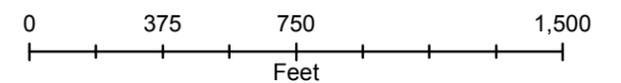
Map #4



Proposed Peralta Regional Park Phasing Map

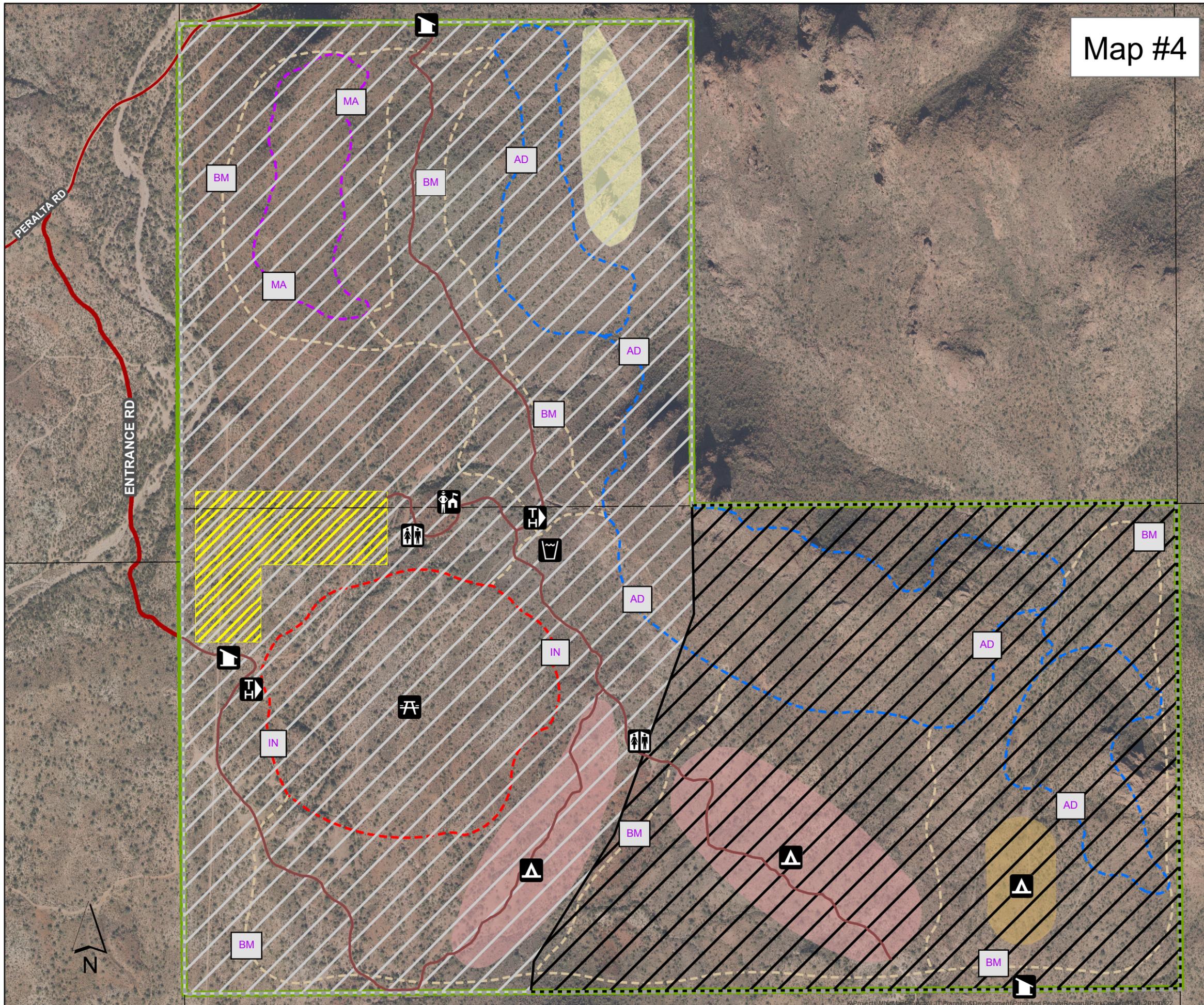
Legend

- Phase #1
- Phase #2
- Camping
- Drinking Water
- Iron Ranger / Entrance Point
- Picnic Area - Individual Sites
- Group site
- Restrooms (Vault Style)
- Trailhead
- Volunteer Park Host
- AD - Advanced Trail
- MA - Moderate/Advanced Trail
- BM - Beginner/Moderate Trail
- IN - Interpretive Trail
- Climbing Area
- Car/Tent Camping - Individual Sites
- Group site
- No Elec/Water, No RV's
- Primitive Camping - Walk In Only
- Proposed Park Boundary
- Park Roads
- Parking (Phased)
- Section Line
- Fence Boundary



* ALL TRAILS - Non Motorized, Multi Use, Natural Surface

September 2015



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with other jurisdictions, nonprofits, community organizations, volunteers, residents, supporters and friends are critical to the development, management, operations and maintenance of this park. The value of public resources leveraged as a result of these vital partnerships is stunning, yet often hidden from the bottom line. Nationally, 62.8 million Americans contribute 8.1 billion hours for a value of around \$173 billion dollars annually http://www.independentsector.org/release_value_volunteer_time

Without the collaboration and cooperation from partners, this park will be very slow to develop.

During the planning process, the Superstition Area Land Trust (SALT), Superstition Area Horsemen's Association, International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), Peralta Trails HOA, Oracle Dark Skies Committee, other County residents and local, state and federal agency staff contributed their time and ideas for these park concepts. SALT, IMBA, the Superstition Horsemen's Association and Oracle Dark Skies Committee have offered their expertise in the next phases of site planning and budget/estimates development. The County will also turn to them for implementation of the adopted plan for trail layout, design and building, among other needs.

FUNDING

As identified in the Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan, funding and resources for Peralta Regional Park may include any and/or all of the following:

- County General Fund
- General Obligation Bonds (For Capital Infrastructure)
- Grants
 - Indian Community 12 D Funding
 - Recreational Trail Program (Administered by Arizona State Parks)
 - User Group Grants and partnerships (AZGFD, IMBA etc)
- User Fees (Board of Supervisor approved Fee Schedule)
- Development Impact Fees
- Partnerships, Intergovernmental Agreements
- Volunteer Groups



View within the park after a rain storm (photo by Kent Taylor)



Mining Claim Site Location

- Roads
- Mining Claim
- Proposed Peralta Regional Park
- Township
- B.L.M.
- National Forest
- Private Land
- State Land



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PERALTA RD

01S 09E

01S 10E



Appendix A

Mining on BLM land

“The BLM regulates surface management of mining activity conducted on lands administered by the BLM. All mining activities require reasonable reclamation. The lowest level of mining activity, “casual use,” is designed for the miner or weekend prospector who creates only negligible surface disturbance (for example, activities that do not involve the use of earth-moving equipment or explosives may be considered casual use). Dredging at any level of use may require a permit from the appropriate state agency administering water quality. The second level of activity is where surface disturbance is 5 acres or less per year and requires a notice advising BLM of the anticipated work 15 days prior to commencement. This notice needs to be filed with the appropriate field office. No approval is needed although bonding is required. State agencies need to be notified to assure that their requirements are met. The next level of activity involves more than 5 acres and requires a detailed plan of operation that must be filed with the appropriate BLM field office. Bonding is required to ensure proper reclamation.”

“Placer mining involves deposits of unconsolidated materials, such as sand and gravel, containing free gold or other minerals. Placer mining is often done individually by one prospector working these surface deposits on their own.”

“Mining claims are limited in size to 20 acres per claim. The identified claimants include individuals, groups of individuals, prospecting clubs, and corporations. Maintaining an active claim on BLM land requires an annual maintenance fee of \$140 (or a waiver certificate for a claimant with 10 or fewer active claims) and annual assessment work, which includes a minimum of \$100 in labor or improvements.”

Excerpts from Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department Vulture Mountain Cooperative Recreation Management Area Master Plan (2012) p.51

http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/vulture/pdf/Vulture_Mtns_Cooperative_Recreation_Management_Area_Master_Plan_Final.pdf

Appendix B

Grazing Leases on BLM Land

“The BLM, which administers about 245 million acres of public lands, manages livestock grazing on 157 million acres of those lands, as guided by federal law. The terms and conditions for grazing on BLM-managed lands (such as stipulations on forage use and season of use) are set forth in the permits and leases issued by the Bureau to public land ranchers.

In managing livestock grazing on public rangelands, the BLM’s overall objective is to ensure the long-term health and productivity of these lands and to create multiple environmental benefits that result from healthy watersheds. The BLM administers public land ranching in accordance with the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, and in so doing provides livestock-based economic opportunities in rural communities while contributing to the West’s, and America’s, social fabric and identity. Together, public lands and the adjacent private ranches maintain open spaces in the fast-growing West, provide habitat for wildlife, offer a myriad of recreational opportunities for public land users, and help preserve the character of the rural West.

Excerpts from Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department Vulture Mountain Cooperative Recreation Management Area Master Plan (2012) p.71

[http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/vulture/pdf/Vulture Mtns Cooperative Recreation Management Area Master Plan Final.pdf](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/vulture/pdf/Vulture_Mtns_Cooperative_Recreation_Management_Area_Master_Plan_Final.pdf)

DOCUMENTS CITED

Arizona Environmental Online Review Tool Report

http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/edits/hdms_status_definitions.shtml

AG&FD Pinal County Wildlife Connectivity Assessment

http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/documents/FinalPinalReport20130416.pdf

Arizona Revised Statutes

<http://www.azleg.gov/ArizonaRevisedStatutes.asp>

Independent Sector Announces New Estimate for Value of Volunteer Time

http://www.independentsector.org/release_value_volunteer_time

Pinal County Open Space and Trails Master Plan 2007 -

<http://www.pinalcountyyaz.gov/OpenSpaceTrails/Documents/FINAL%20Open%20Space%20and%20Trails%20Master%20Plan.pdf>

Pinal County Comprehensive Plan Update 2009 –

<http://pinalcountyyaz.gov/CommunityDevelopment/Planning/Pages/CompPlan.aspx>

Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department Vulture Mountain Cooperative Recreation Management Area Master Plan (2012)

http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/vulture/pdf/Vulture_Mtns_Cooperative_Recreation_Management_Area_Master_Plan_Final.pdf

Recreation and Public Purposes Act

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2004-title43-vol2/xml/CFR-2004-title43-vol2-part2740-subpart2740.xml>