

Tucson Basin Shooting On Public Lands

May 2002 - June 2006

Location: Tucson, Arizona

Non-hunting shooting on public lands emerged as a controversial issue during preparation of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Ironwood Forest National Monument (IFNM). In May, 2002, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) asked the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution for help.

Shooting issues affect public land agencies across the Tucson Basin, not just BLM. So the first step was to bring all the land management agencies together to work on the issue, including the USDA Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish, Arizona State Land Department, and county governments.

The U.S. Institute assisted stakeholders in several ways. After conducting an assessment of public agencies and non-governmental stakeholders, the U.S. Institute facilitated several public dialogues. Stakeholder groups included the Tucson Rifle Club, the National Rifle Association, and the Tucson Rod and Gun Club. The dialogues focused on developing shooting management guidelines for both IFNM and the Tucson Basin as a whole and how the shooting community could help.

Results and Accomplishments

Participants reported significant accomplishments achieved through their collaborative work:

- A phone contact list was created to report illegal shooting activity.
- Volunteer clean-up programs and other opportunities for voluntary public participation were developed.
- An informational website devoted to shooting issues was established.
- Dialogue occurred between agencies and other stakeholders on a possible new shooting facility.



Highlights

- **Progress toward Resolution of Four Major Issues.** Through these dialogues, participants made progress on several challenging issues. These issues included identifying locations for non-hunting shooting and ensuring safety and enforcement. Education and limiting resource impacts were also major issues. Agency representatives agreed that getting stakeholders together to talk was an important accomplishment in and of itself.
- **Relationship-building.** Agency representatives also agreed that focused dialogues on shooting issues helped them develop better working relationships, better communication, and a broader understanding of other agencies' mandates. These improved relationships remain valuable as the agencies work on other land and resource management issues they have in common.
- **Better Understanding.** Participants felt that working through challenging issues expanded their understanding of each other and the topic. Members of key user groups gained insight into the need to balance recreation and resource protection on public lands. In the words of one participant, the collaborative process *"provided a great forum for management and the public to communicate."*

Credits

Partners

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