

Chapter 2

PROPOSED CONCEPT

One of the most important tasks in building a National Heritage Area is conceptualizing it in sufficient detail. Questions that must be answered include: “What are the underlying principles?” “What are the long-term goals?” and “What are the conceptual boundaries?” Those questions are addressed in this chapter of the Feasibility Study. The purpose here is to demonstrate: (1) the concept follows the principles of National Heritage Areas; (2) its goals have logic and vision; (3) it is appropriate for a National Heritage Area designation; and (4) it serves the interests and needs of communities in the region. The rationale for the boundaries is also explained. This chapter concludes with a summary of the roles of the various entities involved in the development of this Feasibility Study and management of the National Heritage Area after its designation.

PRINCIPLES

The National Heritage Area program of the National Park Service is based on innovative differences from other types of federal land designations for the purpose of resource conservation. Rather than being top-down, mandatory, and involving land set-asides or use-restrictions, this type of designation is based on grass roots organization and voluntary preservation, and it does not involve property or land-use regulation. The concept of a Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area is based on the following common principles of National Heritage Areas:

- ◆ heritage education
- ◆ voluntary preservation,
- ◆ security of property rights, and
- ◆ local management.

Heritage Education

A deeper understanding and appreciation of our cultural and natural legacy can be achieved through heritage education. In addition to nurturing a sense of continuity and connection with our historical and cultural experiences in this region, heritage education instills a stronger “sense of place,” and encourages residents to consider their past in planning for the future. In a National Heritage Area, heritage education fosters a stewardship ethic that leads to community-based, voluntary resource preservation.

Voluntary Preservation

A fundamental principle of the National Heritage Area concept is that conservation efforts are most successful when the people living closest to the resources set the agenda, identify priorities, and initiate preservation actions voluntarily. Participation by private property



Designation does not add any federal regulation of private property use or development.

owners is voluntary. The primary function of a National Heritage Area is to provide assistance to communities, groups, landowners, and other stakeholders to help them achieve their goals of resource preservation, promotion, and interpretation. Priorities are identified through an active public process.

Security of Property Rights

The National Heritage Area concept recognizes the importance of private lands, and that property owners are the primary planners of land use. Designation does not affect private property rights, property taxes, land-use zoning, or the right to renovate or remove existing buildings on private property. Like other National Heritage Areas, specific language will be included in the designation bill and subsequent management plan that the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area will have no regulatory authority, and it will be precluded from using federal funding to acquire real property or an interest in real property. Some important points on this issue include the following.

- ◆ National Heritage Areas are not parks and have no federal regulatory authority
- ◆ No zoning changes or changes in property taxes result from designation of a National Heritage Area

- ◆ The federal funding available to a National Heritage Area cannot be spent to acquire property
- ◆ Property owners within a National Heritage Area are not required to permit public or government access to their lands
- ◆ Property owners within National Heritage Areas are not restricted from demolishing old buildings on their properties, from selling or subdividing their properties, or from developing their properties

Local Management

The Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area will adhere to the National Park Service requirement that it be managed by a local entity with broad representation of the stakeholders. The primary goal of the management entity structure is equitable representation of jurisdictions, interest groups, and cultures within the National Heritage Area. The management entity proposed for the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area (see Chapter 6) will have a membership evenly divided between the two counties within the proposed boundaries, and that reflects the cultural diversity of the region. Local governments and tribes, ranching, agriculture, nature conservation, historic preservation, arts, education, tourism, lodging, and other local business interests will be represented. The appointment of a representative by the State of Arizona will ensure that planning and activities are coordinated among heritage areas within the state. Representation of the neighboring state of Sonora, Mexico, will advance the goal of improved cross-border connections.

GOALS

Building upon these principles, establishment of a Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area will create a locally controlled framework to support the management of heritage and nature



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Local entities representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders manage National Heritage Areas.

resources, without affecting property rights. A local management entity with broad representation of the region's stakeholders will select and assist voluntary efforts to preserve, restore, and interpret the heritage and nature resources that make this region unique. Opportunities for partnerships and funding for these activities will increase. A National Heritage Area will also coordinate promotion of the region's resources for heritage tourism and nature tourism, and will provide a framework to link related resources with nationally distinctive themes.

Increased Recognition of Unique Resources

A National Heritage Area designation for the Santa Cruz Valley will increase local, national, and international recognition of its unique historic treasures, cultural traditions, scenic landscapes, diverse wildlife, and other heritage and nature resources. This increased awareness will raise the perceived value of those resources, which will, in turn, encourage voluntary preservation of the resources. In this and other ways, a National Heritage Area will promote and assist the development of community-based, voluntary preservation.

A National Heritage Area will promote the region for heritage and nature tourism, and help stakeholders preserve and enhance the resources that attract tourists.



Development of a Stronger Sense of Place

Development of a stronger regional identity and a greater sense of place for residents will be additional outcomes of a National Heritage Area designation. Living in a National Heritage Area, newcomers, schoolchildren, and even long-term residents and natives will find a stronger connection to the place they live, and will take greater pride in its distinctiveness.

Individuals, neighborhoods, and communities with a strong sense of place will work voluntarily to preserve the things that make their home special. An important priority of the National Heritage Area will be support for development of programs and materials for environmental education and heritage education for schoolchildren and for the general public.

Linking of Resources to Improve Management

There will be increased potentials within a National Heritage Area for developing interpretive, promotional, and planning linkages among the diversity of heritage resources in the region. For example, planned projects such as the partial reconstruction of the eighteenth century Spanish Colonial mission and presidio in Tucson Origins Heritage Park and the development of Marana Heritage Park to showcase the long history of agriculture and ranching in this region, will become linked to the many existing heritage resources in the Santa Cruz Valley. Nature, open-space, and outdoor recreation resources can also be linked in ways that benefit both resources and residents.

New Opportunities for Funding and Partnerships

New sources of funding for locally selected preservation projects and educational programs will become available. Designation as a National Heritage Area will make the region eligible for 50-percent match funding of up to \$1 million annually over a period of 15 years.

This federal seed money has proven to be an important catalyst for raising other funds for local projects. In addition to creating new funding opportunities, a National Heritage Area will encourage and enable effective partnerships among local stakeholders and with federal agencies for preservation, interpretation, and economic development.

Sustainable, Place-based Economic Development

Increased recognition of the heritage and nature resources in the Santa Cruz Valley will also draw more visitors to the region, and a National Heritage Area will help direct them to destinations and events seeking higher levels of visitation.

Economic development from increased heritage tourism and nature tourism will be an important benefit of a National Heritage Area designation. Because heritage tourism and nature tourism are based on resource preservation rather than resource extraction, this type of economic development is sustainable, long term, and will also benefit future generations of residents.

National Heritage Areas balance voluntary promotion and voluntary preservation.



- ◆ *Nature, heritage, open-space, and outdoor recreation resources can be promoted for tourism at a regional scale.*
- ◆ *Communities and businesses can choose whether they want to be promoted for tourism.*
- ◆ *Opportunities increase for funding of preservation and restoration projects.*
- ◆ *Assistance can be provided for resources that need special protection and/or limited visitation.*

Balanced Preservation and Promotion

While a National Heritage Area could help develop tourism facilities in locations that need them, it could also aid efforts to restore and protect sensitive places. Communities and rural areas that do not want higher numbers of visitors may choose to not be promoted. Applicants for support will be required to show broad community support to receive assistance. Some of the economic benefits of a National Heritage Area designation can be invested in minimizing tourism impacts on the very resources that attract visitors, and they can also be used to protect places with fragile resources that need limited or restricted visitation.

Better Cross-border Connections

This will be the first National Heritage Area on the United States-Mexico border, and improved cultural and economic connections between the United States and Mexico are additional opportunities provided by designation. A coordinated cross-border strategy could be developed for tourism, educational programs, interpretive signage, development of sites for heritage tourism and nature tourism, and other programs that will benefit valley residents on both sides. Increased recognition of the important resources in the Santa Cruz Valley in Sonora may eventually lead to a comparable heritage zone established by the government of Mexico or the state of Sonora.

In summary, the concept proposed in this Feasibility Study is for local stakeholders to use the National Heritage Area as a framework to:

- ◆ increase local, national, and international recognition of the unique history, cultural traditions, and natural beauty of this region;
- ◆ encourage a stronger regional identity and sense of place;
- ◆ link related heritage, nature, open-space, and outdoor recreation resources for interpretation, promotion, and planning;

- ◆ develop a coordinated regional approach to their voluntary preservation and promotion;
- ◆ stimulate the economy of the region through increased heritage tourism, nature tourism, and other economic benefits of community-based, voluntary preservation;
- ◆ balance promotion and preservation to best benefit local communities; and
- ◆ improve cross-border connections between the United States and Mexico.

PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

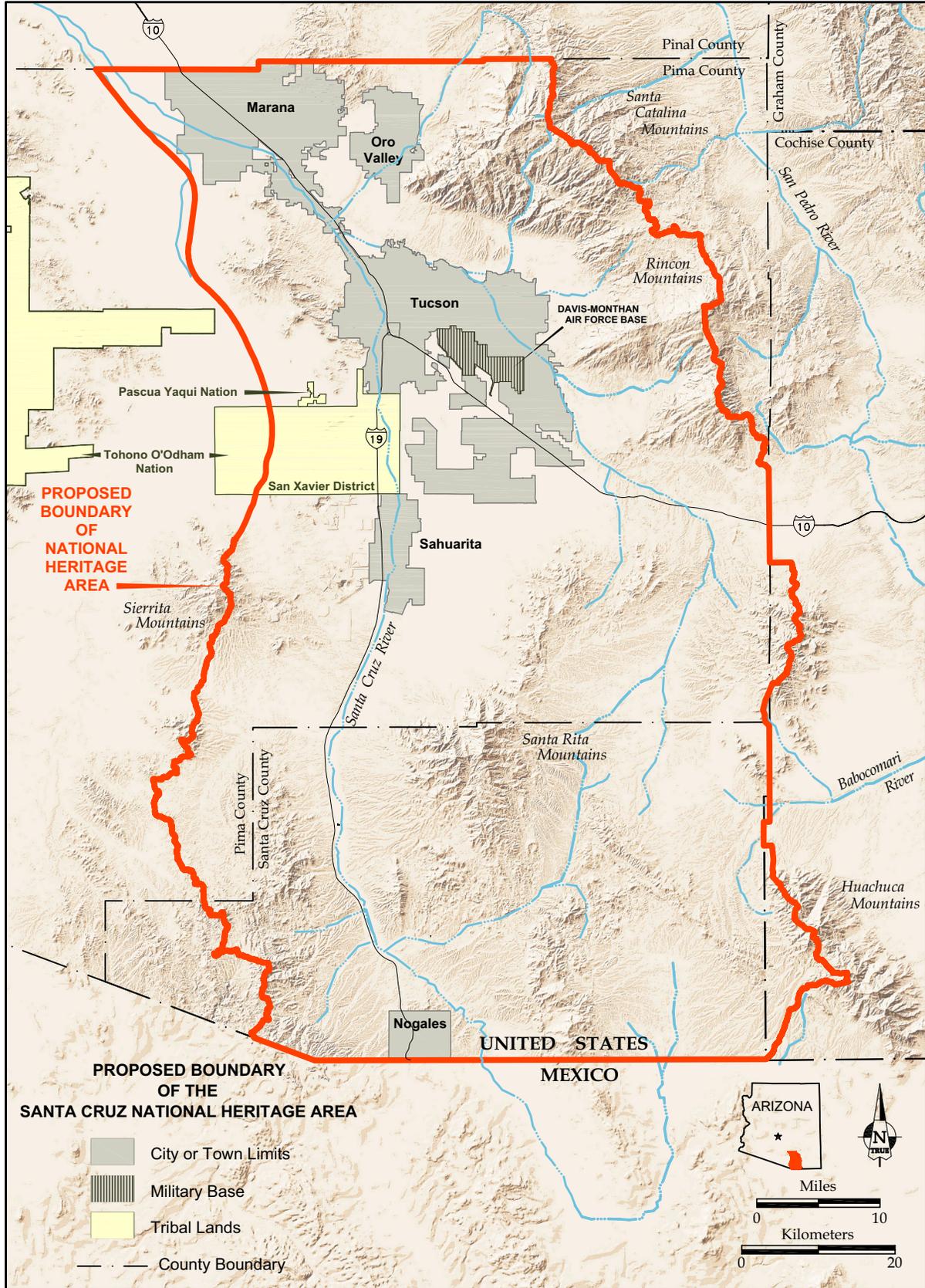
The proposed boundaries of a Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area encompass about 3,325 mi² in southern Arizona. The eastern and western boundaries are natural—they are essentially the watershed boundaries of the middle and upper Santa Cruz River and its tributaries, following the central spines of several bounding mountain ranges. These are the edges of the natural drainage basin, within which all surface and subsurface waters flow into the tributaries or main channel of the Santa Cruz River. The proposed eastern and western boundaries of the National Heritage Area deviate slightly from the edges of the watershed in only three places, in an effort to include the important nature and heritage attractions of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and Old Tucson Studios and to exclude private lands in Cochise County.

Although a portion of the Santa Cruz River watershed lies in Sonora, Mexico, the southern boundary will be the United States-Mexico border, because the boundaries of National Heritage Areas cannot cross international borders. The proposed northern boundary will be the Pima County-Pinal County line, because the north-flowing Santa Cruz River stops flowing on the surface beyond this location, and because citizens of Pinal County are currently working toward their own National Heritage Area designation in the vicinity of the Casa Grande National Monument. An additional rationale for limiting the boundaries to the upper and middle watershed of the Santa Cruz River is that this region has a common natural and cultural heritage unique to the region, such as historically year-round river flows in several reaches and a chain of Spanish colonial missions, fortresses, and ranches throughout this part of the valley.

These proposed boundaries of a Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area include eastern Pima County and most of Santa Cruz County, the incorporated municipalities of Tucson, Marana, Oro Valley, South Tucson, Sahuarita, and Nogales, and also the unincorporated communities of Green Valley, Tubac, Amado, Patagonia, Sonoita, Elgin, Vail, Catalina, and Summerhaven. Also within the proposed boundaries are all the lands of the Pascua Yaqui Nation, and a large portion of the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Tribe.

This area includes a mix of public and private lands. The largest public land holdings within these proposed boundaries are, in descending order:

- ◆ state lands, including four state parks (645,306 acres);
- ◆ Coronado National Forest lands (627,808 acres);
- ◆ National Park Service lands (92,067 acres);
- ◆ Bureau of Land Management lands (63,150 acres); and
- ◆ Pima County parks, preserves, and Flood Control District parcels (51,922 acres).



The proposed boundaries of the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area.

These boundaries mark an area that is a source of identity for residents, is a coherent natural and cultural landscape, and has sufficient nature and heritage resources to support a National Heritage Area designation. The boundaries are not regulatory, and designation will have no effect on private property rights, land-use zoning, property taxes, or government and agency jurisdictions. An analogy for a Heritage Area is an “enterprise zone,” in which an area has been designated for voluntary participation to obtain benefits. Stakeholder projects within the boundaries will be eligible for funding and other assistance from the National Heritage Area, and the local managing entity may also choose to support projects in neighboring areas outside the boundaries.

DESCRIPTIONS OF INVOLVED ENTITIES

Some existing and new groups and institutions, as well as a unit of the National Park Service, have participated in the designation process. Three of these will be involved in the management of the National Heritage Area after designation. The following summarizes their roles.

Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance, Inc.

- ◆ Incorporated in Arizona in 2004, as a nonprofit entity
- ◆ The Board of Directors is currently composed of 24 representatives of varying interests from throughout the region, with an equal number from each of the two counties within the proposed National Heritage Area
- ◆ New board members will be named in accordance with the specific formula identified in Chapter 6
- ◆ Has adopted bylaws
- ◆ A small Executive Committee will oversee operations
- ◆ Will be responsible for developing the Management Plan for the National Heritage Area, with funding from the U. S. Department of Interior
- ◆ Will negotiate 5-year Cooperative Agreements and annual amendments with a National Park Service partner
- ◆ Will likely develop a small paid staff
- ◆ Will have a major fundraising role
- ◆ Will be advised and assisted by a Partnership Council to incorporate stakeholder perspectives into plans
- ◆ Will be responsible for administering annual federal appropriations through a re-granting program

- ◆ Will evolve as the needs and capabilities of the National Heritage Area are better defined over time

Partnership Council

- ◆ Broadly representative group which will be assembled to advise the alliance board
- ◆ Will identify potential partnerships with the National Heritage Area
- ◆ Will have primary responsibility for review and selection of projects and programs to be assisted by the National Heritage Area; recommendations are provided to the Board of Directors
- ◆ Will identify long-term funding needs and priorities
- ◆ Will plan festivals and other events sponsored by the National Heritage Area
- ◆ Will conduct public outreach

Tumacácori National Historical Park

- ◆ Created through executive order by Theodore Roosevelt in 1908, as Tumacácori National Monument (9 acres); boundary changes in 1958 and 1978 enlarged the park to 15 acres; expanded by Congress into a National Historical Park including Guevavi (8 acres) and Calabazas (21 acres) in 1990; expanded by Congress to a total of 355 acres in 2004
- ◆ Serves as required National Park Service partner in development of Feasibility Study and Management Plan
- ◆ Will provide comments and input to National Park Service testimony about the Feasibility Study and the Management Plan
- ◆ Will be a partner in 5-year Cooperative Agreements with the alliance
- ◆ Will manage annual Congressional appropriations to the National Heritage Area through amendments to the Cooperative Agreement which describe the purposes of each year's funding
- ◆ Will be non-voting, ex officio member of the operational-phase Board of Directors of the management entity
- ◆ Will assist in the process for National Register nominations in the National Heritage Area
- ◆ Will provide expertise about Spanish Colonial heritage to the National Heritage Area and its partners

*Tumacácori
National
Historical Park
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and guide in the
designation
process and
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