

2.3 LAND USE

2.3.1 Existing Land Use

A comprehensive review of existing documents including transportation studies, land use plans, general plans, and pertinent regional and corridor studies was conducted to summarize findings relevant to the Regional Framework Study in Northern Arizona. The following existing land use conditions section is a summary of generalized regional and local land uses and key activities identified. Information was gathered, where available, from county, municipal, tribal, regional, and public land organizations and was compiled by Focus Area to provide a snapshot of existing land use conditions in the area.

Coconino-Yavapai Focus Area

The Coconino-Yavapai Focus Area includes the cities of Flagstaff, Prescott, Chino Valley, Fredonia, Williams, Sedona, Page, Prescott Valley, Cottonwood, and Camp Verde, as well as several distinguished recreational areas (e.g., Grand Canyon, Glen Canyon, Lake Powell, San Francisco Peaks). This Focus Area has the largest land area with a multitude of land uses ranging from urbanized to large swaths of undeveloped public lands.

The largest jurisdiction in the Focus Area is Coconino County which is characterized by a sparsely populated large land area composed of multiple jurisdictions (e.g., Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), United States Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Navajo Reservation, National Park Service (NPS)). Coconino County has the second largest land area of any county in the United States and is one of the most least populated. Roughly, 13.3% of the land is privately owned; 38.1% is Tribal land/Reservation; 28.3% is Forest Service; 5% is BLM; 9.5% is ASLD; 6.8% is NPS (Figure 2-2a).

In general, the Focus Area is facing challenges related to a rapidly decreasing private land base, limited water resources, and public concern about high density development negatively impacting rural character. Located within the Focus Area is the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization. Currently, the Flagstaff region is composed of 85% public land, 72% county land and private land is generally concentrated along US highway crossings of I-40, I-17, SR-89 and SR-89A, and US-180.

Navajo-Hopi Focus Area

Existing land use conditions in the Navajo-Hopi Focus Area are generally rural with more dense land uses and activity centers located in incorporated areas such as Holbrook, Winslow, and Kayenta. Land ownership in Navajo County is, for the most part, Native American Reservation lands (66%). Private land ownership covers 18%, BLM and USFS combined covers 9%, and ASLD covers 5.9% of lands in Navajo County. In Apache County, 65% of the land is Navajo, Apache or Zuni reservation with the remainder being private, public, county or state land.

Given the rural nature of the Navajo-Hopi Focus Area, the counties use special development plans to ensure that new development includes necessary infrastructure, and is an efficient and appropriate use of land.

New River Focus Area

The New River Focus Area, which includes Wickenburg, Peeples Valley, Congress and portions of Yavapai and Maricopa Counties, is composed of mostly Federal and State lands. The respective Counties also have major land holdings in the area. Private lands are concentrated along major thoroughfares such as US-93 and US-60. In Yavapai County, the majority of lands are USFS, BLM and ASLD while private land holdings represent about one-quarter of the land.

2.3.2 Future Land Use

Future land use information was gathered from county and city general plans. Key land uses, major planned residential developments, employment centers and other economic activity centers within the three Focus Areas are summarized below using the information provided by available planning documentation (Figure 2-7a).

In general, growth is expected to occur in urban areas and adjacent to existing interstate highways. Freight traffic is expected to increase as Northern Arizona is an attractive warehousing, distribution, and manufacturing node due to its geographic and regional proximity. Improvements to intermodal transportation (e.g., roadway, rail, air) will serve to augment industrial and freight activities within the region. Population Projections by County shown below illustrates the degree of growth anticipated for Counties throughout the State and within the study area.

Population Projections by County			
County	Year 2005	Year 2030	Year 2050
Apache	74,600	93,500	104,200
Cochise	134,800	187,700	212,800
Coconino	132,800	173,800	198,200
Gila	55,100	70,000	78,300
Graham	35,900	44,600	49,900
Greenlee	8,300	8,300	9,100
La Paz	21,500	28,100	30,900
Maricopa	3,700,000	6,100,000	8,100,000
Mohave	194,900	330,600	401,000
Navajo	112,700	165,600	192,400
Pima	921,500	1,600,000	1,700,000
Pinal	276,000	1,300,000	2,200,000
Santa Cruz	45,300	71,000	84,700
Yavapai	212,700	355,400	418,700
Yuma	195,500	316,100	377,600
State of Arizona	6,100,000	11,000,000	14,100,000

Source: Arizona Department of Employment Security and COG/MPO Planning Agencies, 2008.