

COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

*William E. Frost¹ and
George B. Ruyle²*

Increasing demand for natural resources has resulted in intensified conflicts between interest groups, land users and resource management agencies. Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) has evolved as a means for reducing these conflicts and reaching mutually agreeable management strategies. In recognition of this process the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension System, USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, USDA Soil Conservation Service, and the Arizona State Land Department have signed a Memorandum of Understanding supporting and encouraging the use of CRM in Arizona. In addition, the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts and the Arizona Game and Fish Department signed the memorandum as witnesses, adding their support to the process.

WHAT IS CRM?

Coordinated Resource Management is a process by which natural resource owners, managers, users and related interests work together as a team to formulate and implement plans for the management of all major resources and ownerships within a specific area and/or resolve specific conflicts. The purpose of CRM is to resolve conflicts or issues that may hinder or preclude sound resource management decisions. It can also be proactive in planning for improvement of natural resources and is based upon the belief that people with common interests can work together to develop viable man-

agement strategies. The goal of CRM is to enhance the quality and productivity of natural resources by achieving compatibility among the multiple uses in a specific area. The objective is to improve and maintain natural resources in ways consistent with the priorities of the landowners, land users, interest groups and land management agencies.

Coordinated Resource Management is a voluntary, non-regulatory process that uses consensus as the strength of the process. Land owners, users, managers and other interested parties work together as a team from beginning to end. The exchange of values and viewpoints on objectives, problems and alternatives is essential to achieving common goals and meeting resource needs. The most effective process is one which involves the local community from the outset and where the regulating agency is comfortable with the local community being involved at the highest level of decision making.

CARDINAL RULES OF CRM

CRM involves the use of four cardinal rules:

1 - *Management by consensus.*

Participation in CRM is voluntary and consensus promotes involvement. Everyone will agree on conclusions before it is accepted by the group, with abstentions permitted.

2 - *Commitment.*

All participants must be committed to the success of the program.

3 - *Broad involvement.*

All interested and/or affected parties should participate. To leave out interests which care is to invite criticism and generate conflict.

4 - Express needs not positions.

Expressing positions creates confrontation while expressing needs generates trust and the group will take care to address legitimate needs.

INITIATING A CRM EFFORT

CRM is usually initiated because of a resource management problem or conflict that those involved and affected want resolved. Good coordinated management can also exist where immediate problems are not present but plans are developed to keep problems from developing.

Preferably, a CRM program is initiated at the local level by a request from a person, group, organization or agency that sees the need for a group action approach to resolving a local resource management problem. For example, a Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) might receive a request for a CRM effort as these districts are legal subdivisions of the state government with responsibility for land and water conservation. Processing of this request would include assignment of priorities and creation of timetables and schedules with the other agencies, organization and interests involved.

The CRM process should be reviewed with all interests to assist them in deciding whether or not to proceed. If the decision is made to proceed using the CRM process, a list of everyone to be invited to participate should be drafted and notices sent. A chairman should be selected to guide the organization of the planning group, assemble available inventory data, schedule meetings and otherwise motivate the individuals involved in this planning process.

The general flow of a CRM process is:

- CRM program request from private or public entity

- private and public landowners and managers, resource managers, and other interested parties in the general planning area are invited to initial meeting
- at end of initial meeting, consensus is reached to continue
- specific planning area is defined, issues, problems and concerns listed, goals and objectives developed
- information available and needed is determined
- checklist developed to ensure all resources have been considered
- each objective is addressed and all actions needed to accomplish it are determined, for each action who, what, when and how long is determined
- plan is developed using all information from prior steps and plan is reevaluated
- system set up to maintain and implement plan
- plan implemented
- annual reviews of plan, plan progress, accomplishments, problems, new objective development and years plan of work.

For more details about the actual process and steps of the CRM process consult the **Arizona Coordinated Resource Management: Handbook and Guidelines** distributed by the USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, USDA Soil Conservation Service, Arizona Land Department and the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in association with the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts and the Arizona Game and Fish Department or **Coordinated Resource Management: Guidelines for Doing**, published by the Society for Range Management.

REFERENCES

Arizona Coordinated Resource Management Executive Group. 1993. **Arizona Resource Management: Handbook and Guidelines.**

Society for Range Management. **Coordinated Resource Management: Guidelines for Doing**, Denver, CO.

*County Director¹
Gila County Extension Office
Range Management Specialist²
College of Agriculture
The University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721*

FROM:

Arizona Ranchers' Management Guide
Russell Gum, George Ruyle, and Richard Rice, Editors.
Arizona Cooperative Extension

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, James Christenson, Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture, The University of Arizona.

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