

chapter 7

alternative actions

ALTERNATIVE 1: CONTINUE CURRENT EFFORTS

With this alternative, there would be no designation of a Little Colorado River Valley National Heritage Area and conservation, education, and tourism development efforts would continue as they have in the past.

Expected Outcomes of Alternative 1

Little Colorado community efforts to conserve resources, provide cultural education, or develop heritage tourism have largely been on a specific community-by-community or site-by-site scale. Many local governments and private businesses, organizations, and citizens have and would continue to donate their time, talents, and limited funding to projects in their immediate locale. Past efforts have been effective in ensuring the integrity of many individual heritage sites and practices, but coordination on a larger scale has not occurred to any great extent. Many community leaders recognize the importance of coordinating efforts across a larger region but lack the funding or personnel power to do so effectively.

There would be no one person, as in a paid staff member, specifically dedicated to coordination and development of the whole region and therefore such coordination and development would be highly unlikely.

ALTERNATIVE 2: DESIGNATION OF A STATE HERITAGE AREA

With this alternative, the Little Colorado River Valley would become a heritage area jointly designated by the States of Arizona and New Mexico.

Expected Outcomes of Alternative 2

Several established National Heritage Areas (Lackawanna Heritage Valley National Heritage Area and Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Corridor are two examples) were state-designated heritage areas before their national designations. In such cases, achieving state-level designation can be seen as a helpful, developmental step towards greater national recognition. Neither Arizona nor New Mexico has an established program of this type, however, and therefore this is not a viable alternative at this time. Arizona

has considered starting a state heritage area program, but nothing is in place now and will not be for the foreseeable future. Waiting for the establishment of a state-level program before seeking national-level designation would squander the considerable amount of time, energy, and resources that have been committed to this current effort.

ALTERNATIVE 3: DESIGNATION OF A LITTLE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

With this alternative, Congress would establish a Little Colorado River Valley National Heritage Area, would designate a local coordinating entity to carry out regional goals and projects, and would appropriate funds during the succeeding 15 years to ensure its success.

Expected Outcomes of Alternative 3

The establishment of a National Heritage Area would provide funding and a designated non-profit organization dedicated specifically to the development of the entire region. With a dedicated staff and financial support, success in executing educational, resource conservation, or heritage tourism development projects would be more likely than under the previous two alternatives. The status of a national designation would attract heritage tourists as well as additional non-federal investment in the region. As the Little Colorado River Valley National Heritage Area became more

established over time, it could tackle larger-scale efforts than any one community might be able to do on its own. For these reasons, Alternative 3 is the preferred alternative.

ALTERNATIVE 4: DESIGNATION OF A LITTLE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACCORDING TO THE MAP PROVIDED IN APPENDIX A

With this alternative, Congress would establish a Little Colorado River Valley National Heritage Area according to the map provided in Appendix XX, would designate a local coordinating entity to carry out regional goals and projects, and would appropriate funds during the succeeding 15 years to ensure its success.

Expected Outcomes of Alternative 4

The establishment of a National Heritage Area according to the map provided in Appendix XX would achieve many of the same regional coordination and financial benefits described in Alternative 3, except that a significant number of related resources of considerable quality would be ignored. The slight benefits realized by a somewhat smaller region in terms of easier coordination and a marginal concentration of financial resources were not viewed by a group consulted with in January of 2008 as outweighing the considerable loss of heritage resources and potential partnerships the map in Appendix XX indicates.