



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
P.O. Box 61470
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

IN REPLY REFER TO:

PXAO-1500
2.1.4.17

SEP 02 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Availability (NOA) – Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on the Proposed GSC Farm, LLC – Town of Queen Creek Water Partial Assignment and Transfer – La Paz, Pinal, and Maricopa Counties, Arizona

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Reclamation has prepared a final EA to analyze the potential environmental effects from the Town of Queen Creek's (Queen Creek) proposed GSC Farm, LLC (GSC Farm), Queen Creek water partial assignment and transfer. The EA analyzed two action alternatives and a no action alternative. Under the no action alternative, the proposed transfer of water between GSC Farm and Queen Creek would not occur. One action alternative analyzed the potential impacts of a partial assignment and transfer of 2,033.01 acre-feet per year (AFY), and the other action alternative analyzes a lower transfer amount of 1,078.01 AFY. Under both action alternatives Reclamation would approve: (1) the partial assignment and transfer of Arizona fourth priority Colorado River water between GSC Farm and Queen Creek, (2) a Colorado River water delivery contract between the United States and Queen Creek, (3) an amendment of the existing Colorado River water delivery contract between GSC Farm and the United States to reduce GSC Farm's Arizona fourth priority Colorado River water entitlement, and (4) a Wheeling Contract with Queen Creek to wheel the transferred water to the Queen Creek service area.

Reclamation has determined that the proposed project does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination is recorded in a FONSI. The final EA and FONSI can be viewed at: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/index.html>. A paper copy or CD can be obtained by calling Reclamation at (623) 773-6250 or by email at sheath@usbr.gov.

Reclamation initially solicited input from the public on the proposed project to assist in identifying key issues and defining the scope of the project and environmental analysis. Reclamation conducted scoping via email and mail (to 924 potentially interested agencies organizations, tribes, and public and private citizens), newspaper notices, internet publication, and a press release. Scoping for this project began on August 25, 2021. Within the 30-day scoping period, Reclamation received 132 comment letters.

INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA*, NEVADA*

* PARTIAL

Following scoping, Reclamation issued a draft EA on March 15, 2022, initiating a 30-day public comment period. Reclamation emailed and mailed a postcard announcing the NOA of the draft EA to all entities on the mailing list and any commentors from scoping. The NOA and draft EA were also advertised in three newspapers and on Reclamation’s website. Six comment letters or emails were received during the comment period, and the final EA was amended appropriately.

For additional information regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Sean Heath, Environmental Resources Management Division Manager, via email at sheath@usbr.gov or by calling (623) 773-6250.

Thank you for your help and cooperation with this project.

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Sincerely,

**JACKLYNN
GOULD**  Digitally signed by
JACKLYNN GOULD
Date: 2022.08.23
15:16:23 -07'00'

Jacklynn L. Gould, P.E.
Regional Director