

Finding of No Significant Impact:

EA Number: DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2011-0009
Lease/Serial/Case File No.: NA
BLM Office: Safford Field Office

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190, as amended), the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has issued the attached Revised Supplement to the Environmental Assessment on Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek, Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area, Graham County, Arizona (Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 2007) to disclose the potential environmental impacts resulting from sediment fill and reapplication of rotenone in Bonita Creek within the BLM-administered Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area. The BLM evaluated the Revised Supplemental Environmental Assessment and has determined that it adequately addresses environmental impacts of the proposed action and satisfies BLM's NEPA procedures. Therefore, the BLM, Safford Field Office, has adopted Reclamation's Revised Supplement to the Environmental Assessment on Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area, Graham County, Arizona and it has been reviewed extensively to determine this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Rational for the Decision:

Based upon Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2011-0009, I conclude that the proposed action is in conformance with the following approved land use plans, Safford District Resource Management Plan (RMP), Part I 1992 and Part II 1994 and the Final Gila Box Management Plan, Environmental Assessment and Decision Record. The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (CEQ) for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) were reviewed and I have determined that the proposed actions analyzed in EA# DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2011-0009 / Reclamation 2010, including placement of fill material, beaver dam breaching, mechanical salvage, transport, propagation, stockings, and rotenone application would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This finding was made by considering both the context and intensity of the potential effects, as described in the above EA, and that are based upon the following considerations:

1. No significant effects to federally-listed fishes will occur as a result of the proposed project. The possible effects to listed species resulting from the proposed action were addressed in a Biological Assessment prepared by Reclamation and BLM and submitted to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in September 2010 (Reclamation and BLM 2010). The project will improve the conservation status of Gila chub, loach minnow, spikedace, desert pupfish, and Gila topminnow by removing nonnative fishes that could suppress or eliminate native populations in Bonita Creek. Mortality of native fishes resulting from future renovations would be offset by the long-term, beneficial effects of eradicating nonnative fishes in the stream. Proposed critical habitat for spikedace and loach minnow would not be significantly affected by the proposed action; consequently, no destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat is anticipated. The terms and conditions of the reasonable and prudent measures specified in the biological

opinion (22410-2007-F-0233R1) to reduce impacts to federally listed species will be incorporated into the project.

2. No significant effect to southwestern willow flycatcher (SWWF) will occur as a result of the proposed action. Habitat suitability for SWWF will be evaluated prior to each chemical renovation. If habitat appears suitable, SWWF surveys will be performed in accordance with USFWS survey protocol. Salvage and renovation personnel would be required to minimize their activities near active SWWF territories within the treatment area.

3. The proposed action will be implemented in compliance with provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA) that regulate the use of a piscicide in waters of the United States. The proposed placement of fill material qualifies for CWA Section 404 coverage under the Nationwide Permit (NWP) number 27. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has issued a waiver of individual certification pursuant to CWA Section 401 for the action. The proposed action will comply with 401 general conditions that are part of NWP number 27.

Mitigation:

Please refer to the Environmental Assessment (AZ410-2007-0001) for mitigation measures and Biological Opinion (22410-2007-F-0233R1) for terms and conditions.



Authorized Officer



Date

Attachment: Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2011-0009

Documents related to this action are identified below.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010. Biological opinion for reinitiation of section 7 consultation for rotenone application and related native fish management action in Bonita Creek, Arizona. November 17, 2010.

Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management. 2007. Draft environmental assessment: Native fish restoration in Bonita Creek, Gila Box Riparian Conservation Area, Graham County, Arizona.

Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management. 2010. Biological assessment: Effects of rotenone application and related native fish management actions to federally-listed fishes in Bonita Creek, Graham County, Arizona. September 2010.

Bureau of Reclamation. 2010. Proposed reapplication of rotenone in Bonita Creek. Revised Supplement to the Environmental Assessment on Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek, Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area, Graham County, Arizona. Phoenix Area Office, Phoenix, AZ.

DECISION RECORD

EA Number: Supplement to the Environmental Assessment (AZ410-2007-0001) for Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek, Gila Box National Riparian Conservation Area, Graham County, Arizona

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: NA

BLM Office: Safford Field Office

DECISION: It is my decision to implement the proposed action as described and stipulated in the Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek Environmental Assessment Supplement and Finding of No Significant Impact. The proposed action addresses additional application(s) of rotenone in lower Bonita Creek to eradicate nonnative fishes that threaten resident and recently translocated, federally listed native fishes in a 1.7 mile reach of Bonita Creek. Rotenone was applied to this section of stream in 2008. However, three species of nonnative fish, two in 2009 and one in 2010 have been detected and repopulated a portion of this reach.

Under the Proposed Action, reapplication of rotenone to remove nonnative fishes will not result in significant impacts and that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate, and an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared. The Supplement and 2007 EA to which the Supplement is tiered are available at: www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix or you can contact Heidi Blasius at: 928:348-4427 for a copy.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION: The Proposed Action is consistent with the Safford District Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area Management Plan, Environmental Assessment, Finding of No Significant Impact, and Decision Record. A FONSI has been signed; therefore, there were no significant impacts to the environment that would require an Environmental Impact Statement. The action will not violate Federal, State, or local laws or requirement for the protection of the environment. Applicable laws, regulations and policies were considered in the EA.

MITIGATION MEASURES AND REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES:

Refer to the Draft Environmental Assessment on Native Fish Restoration in Bonita Creek (AZ410-2007-001) for mitigation measures.

APPEAL: This decision is subject to a 30-day appeal period in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations Part 4, General Appeal procedures, and may not be implemented until conditions under this regulation have been met.

COMPLIANCE MONITORING: The mitigation and monitoring requirements identified in the EA and stipulations will be implemented by BLM.

Authorized Officer:



Date:

1/24/11