

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Lower Colorado Region  
Phoenix Area Office**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Implementation of Groundwater Savings  
Facility Storage Agreement**

**Roosevelt Water Conservation District  
Maricopa County, Arizona**

Approved:   
Randy N. Chandler  
Area Manager  
Phoenix Area Office  
Bureau of Reclamation

Date: 9-27-12

FONSI No.: PXAO-12-02

## **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46), the Bureau of Reclamation, as the lead Federal agency, has issued the attached Environmental Assessment (Reclamation 2012) to disclose the potential environmental impacts that will result from implementation of a Groundwater Savings Facility (GSF) storage agreement (Agreement) with the Roosevelt Water Conservation District. The Agreement was executed on December 20, 2010, for a term of approximately 10 years.

The purpose and need for the proposed action is to implement the Agreement and provide Reclamation with a mechanism to earn long-term groundwater storage credits to firm 36,924 acre-feet of Non-Indian Agricultural water supplies reallocated to Arizona Indian tribes pursuant to Section 105 of Arizona Water Settlements Act of 2004. Under the terms of the Agreement, Reclamation would store excess Central Arizona Project (CAP) water at the GSF to earn the long-term storage credits. Existing infrastructure would be used to distribute water from the CAP system to the GSF. CAP water provided under the Agreement would be applied within the GSF only on a gallon-for-gallon substitute basis directly in lieu of groundwater that RWCD otherwise would have pumped from the Phoenix Active Management Area. The long-term effect would be to conserve groundwater supplies that otherwise would be reduced in the absence of the proposed action.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The Environmental Assessment and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) were posted on Reclamation's web site at [www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix](http://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix) for a 14-day public comment period. Paper copies of the Environmental Assessment and draft FONSI were distributed to the Arizona Department of Water Resources, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Central Arizona Water Conservation District, Roosevelt Water Conservation District, Tohono O'odham Nation, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, news releases regarding the availability of the Environmental Assessment and draft FONSI were distributed to the Arizona Republic and four other news media outlets. No substantive comments were received by Reclamation.

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based upon consideration of the effects presented in the attached environmental assessment, the Area Manager of Reclamation's Phoenix Area Office has determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action that would significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not warranted.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the proposed action are not significant:

1. Land use, air quality, and soils will not be affected.

2. There will be no impact to historic properties, traditional cultural properties or sacred sites.
3. The proposed action will not affect Indian trust assets
4. There will be no impact to unique ecological areas or other rare or unique characteristics of the landscape.
5. Biological resources, including sensitive species, will not be affected.
6. The proposed action is not related to other actions which are individually insignificant, but when considered collectively will result in cumulatively significant effects.
7. Low income or minority populations (EO 12898) will not be affected.
8. The proposed action will not have highly controversial environmental impacts or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. In addition, the action will not have highly uncertain environmental impacts or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
9. The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant effects.

Documents cited above:

Reclamation. 2010. Groundwater savings facility storage agreement between Roosevelt Water Conservation District and the United States Bureau of Reclamation. December 20, 2010.

Reclamation. 2012. Environmental assessment for implementation of groundwater savings facility storage agreement. Phoenix Area Office, Phoenix, AZ