

Comments on the Bureau of Reclamation's 5-Mile Zone Study Area Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Assessment

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has done a commendable job of attempting to develop a plan that has something for everyone. The choice of Alternative D however, is not the best alternative. The City of San Luis has proposed an Alternative which takes parts of C and D thus allowing their community to grow, new jobs to be created, and still ensure that the BOR is able to carry out its mission.

The Federal government through the BOR has a responsibility to the citizens of San Luis and Yuma County to work together, enabling the city of San Luis to expand within the area while protecting the wells and infrastructure necessary to fulfill the 242 agreement with Mexico. The area designated for the management of the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard is set and should be retained. However, the land located to the West should be reviewed with the community of San Luis for development potential.

Land could be declared excess by the BOR and sold with restrictions to protect the underground water as required by Treaty. Land deemed necessary to be retained should be used to allow corridors for utilities which could be placed underground to allow for the retention of visual aesthetics. Land which has cultural significance should be protected or showcased in an environment that would allow for people to view it in a park like setting if possible.

The BOR and the City of San Luis working together could develop the preferred alternative following the final Resource Management Plan as it is adopted. This is an opportunity to create goodwill within the Community, and a better final plan to implement.

Treaties need to be protected as well as our environmental process, but not without ensuring that the Citizens of San Luis, Arizona have as much opportunity as citizens elsewhere to new jobs and community growth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James E. Ferguson
President/CEO,
Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation