

DES 03-50

Draft
Environmental Impact Statement

LC-03-045

Transfer of Title
to Facilities, Works, and Lands
of the Gila Project,
Wellton-Mohawk Division
to Wellton-Mohawk
Irrigation and Drainage District

Yuma County, Arizona



August 2003

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Yuma Area Office
Yuma, Arizona



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Yuma Area Office
7301 Calle Agua Salada
Yuma, Arizona 85364

IN REPLY REFER TO:

YAO-7100
ENV-6.00

MEMORANDUM

To: All Interested Persons

From: ^{Acting} Jim Cherry
Area Manager *Cynthia Harft*

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Wellton-Mohawk Title Transfer

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) NEPA Handbook (2000), Reclamation has prepared this DEIS to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed title transfer of property in Yuma County, Arizona, to the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District (District). This information will be used in the decision-making process pursuant to the Wellton-Mohawk Transfer Act of June 20, 2000 (P.L. 106-221), whereby the Secretary of Interior (Secretary) was authorized to convey certain works, facilities, and lands of the Gila Project (61 Stat. 628), including the conveyance of designated acquired, public, and withdrawn lands within or adjacent to the Gila Project, to the District. The District is a cooperating agency with Reclamation in the NEPA review of this proposed project.

This proposed action involves the works, facilities, and lands of the Wellton-Mohawk Division (Division) of the Gila Project, an irrigation project in southwestern Arizona serving the District. The District has met its Federal repayment obligation for the construction of the Division. Reclamation, on behalf of the Secretary, proposes to:

1) transfer the ownership of the Division's irrigation, drainage, and flood control facilities to the District at no additional cost,

2) transfer the ownership of certain Division lands included in the District's repayment obligation on behalf of the Secretary to the District at no additional cost, and

3) make available, for purchase by the District at appraised fair market value, certain other lands that were not included in the District's Federal repayment obligation.

Reclamation has issued this DEIS for public review and invites public comments by letter no later than October 29, 2003, or orally at the following public hearings:

Antelope Union High School, 9168 South Avenue 36E,
Wellton, Arizona, on Wednesday, October 1, 2003, from
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Ramada Inn Chilton and Conference Center - Inca Room,
300 East 32nd Street, Yuma, Arizona, on Thursday, October 2,
2003, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Written comments may be sent to Ms. Margot Selig, Lower Colorado Regional Office, Bureau of Reclamation, P.O. Box 61470, BCOO-4451, Boulder City, Nevada, 89006-1470 or via facsimile to 702-293-8042. Additional copies of the DEIS are available upon written request to Ms. Selig at the address above. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Selig at 702-293-8192.

**Wellton-Mohawk Title Transfer
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
LC-03-045**

Lead Agency:

United States Department of Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Lower Colorado Region
Yuma Area Office
Yuma, Arizona

Abstract:

This Draft EIS addresses the effects of a proposed Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) irrigation project title transfer under Reclamation's title transfer policy. The proposal involves the facilities and lands of the Wellton-Mohawk Division (Division) of the Gila Project, an irrigation project in southwestern Arizona. The Wellton-Mohawk Division serves the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District (District), which has repaid the federal cost of constructing the Division. Reclamation proposes to 1) transfer ownership on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) of the Division's irrigation, drainage, and flood control facilities to the District, 2) transfer certain lands acquired for the Division on behalf of the Secretary to the District, and 3) make certain other lands acquired in connection with the Division available for purchase by the District. This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) has been prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Reclamation's NEPA Handbook to assess the potential effects of the proposed ownership changes.

For further information, contact:

Ms. Margot Selig
Bureau of Reclamation
Lower Colorado Regional Office
PO Box 61470, BCOO-4451
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470
(702) 293-8192

Statement Number: DES 03-50

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