

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Ciervo Hills Giant Kangaroo Rat Habitat Protection Project – Martin Ranch Acquisition

FONSI 13-18-MP

Recommended by:

Douglas Kleinsmith

Douglas Kleinsmith
Natural Resource Specialist
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 10/31/13

Concurred by:

Dan Strait

Dan Strait
Program Manager, Central Valley
Project Conservation Program
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 10/31/13

Approved by:

Anastasia Leigh

Anastasia Leigh
Regional Environmental Officer
Mid-Pacific Region

Date: 10/31/2013



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region

Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to provide \$915,268 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch in the Ciervo Hills. The purchase will protect giant kangaroo rat, San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, and San Joaquin woolly threads habitat in the central Ciervo Hills, along with other special-status species. The Ciervo Hills is a low-lying north-south trending range that forms the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley between Panoche Creek and Cantua Creek in western Fresno County.

The purpose of the CVPCP is to help mitigate the past impacts of Reclamation's Central Valley Project (CVP) on threatened and endangered species, and minimizes future impacts. Four federally listed species will benefit from the Ciervo Hills acquisition, all of which have declined as a direct result of the conversion of arid grasslands and scrublands to irrigated agriculture in the western San Joaquin Valley, in part due to the availability of CVP water. Therefore, the Proposed Action fulfills the purpose of the CVPCP.

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

No Action: Reclamation will not provide \$915,268 from the CVPCP to BLM to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. BLM will be required to obtain the \$915,268 from other public and/or private sources. If the funding cannot be secured, BLM will not be able to purchase the parcels.

Proposed Action: Reclamation will provide \$915,268 from the CVPCP to BLM to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. After acquisition of the parcels, BLM will manage the lands consistent with the management goals and objectives of the Panoche-Coalinga Area of Critical Environmental Concern (PCACEC). BLM's goals and objectives for the PCACEC are to manage these lands for the protection of special status species and to promote scientific research and education. Further information on achieving these goals and objectives are in the Hollister Resource Management Plan which describes the approved management actions for lands administered by BLM's Hollister Field Office, including the PCACEC. A livestock grazing program will be established to meet both the management plan goals and objectives of the PCACEC, and to implement the terms and conditions and conservation recommendations for livestock grazing in selected allotments of the BLM Hollister Field Office under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion 1-1-92-F-11.

Findings

Based on the attached environmental assessment (EA), Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The attached EA describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed

Action area and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives on the resources. This EA was prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). Effects on several environmental resources were examined and found to be absent or minor. That analysis is provided in the attached EA, and the analysis in the EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

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

1. The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety.
2. The proposed action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.
3. The proposed action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.
4. The proposed action will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.
5. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial.
6. The proposed action will not have significant cumulative impacts.
7. The proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties
8. The proposed action will not affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species.
9. The proposed action will not violate federal, state, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.
10. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets. (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
11. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities. (EO 12898)
12. The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).
13. The proposed action will not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112.)

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Environmental Assessment

Ciervo Hills Giant Kangaroo Rat Habitat Protection Project – Martin Ranch Acquisition



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region**

October 2013

Mission Statements

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitment to island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BNLL	Blunt-nosed leopard lizard
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CVPCP	Central Valley Project Conservation Program
USFWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
GKR	Giant Kangaroo Rat
HRP	Habitat Restoration Program
ITA	Indian Trust Assets
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
PCACEC	Panoche-Coalinga Area of Critical Environmental Concern
SJKF	San Joaquin kit fox
USRP	Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and DOI Regulations (43 CFR Part 46), the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate and disclose any potential environmental impacts associated with providing \$915,268 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. The purchase would protect giant kangaroo rat (GKR) habitat in the central Ciervo Hills, along with other listed San Joaquin Valley threatened and endangered species. The Ciervo Hills is a low-lying north-south trending range that forms the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley between Panoche Creek and Cantua Creek in western Fresno County. (Figures 1 and 2).

1.2 Need for the Proposal

The CVPCP helps mitigate the past impacts of Reclamation's Central Valley Project (CVP) on threatened and endangered species, and minimizes future impacts. The CVPCP also helps meet mitigation required by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Decision 1641 (D-1641). D-1641 concurred with a Reclamation petition to expand Reclamation's authorized place of use to include certain areas already receiving CVP water. D-1641 also states that Reclamation will provide compensation and habitat values that mitigate for those associated with the delivery of CVP water to lands previously outside the authorized place of use. The CVPCP and the related Habitat Restoration Program are the main programs which provide mitigation to meet D-1641 requirements.

Four federally listed species would benefit from the Ciervo Hills acquisition, all of which have declined as a direct result of the conversion of arid grasslands and scrublands to irrigated agriculture in the western San Joaquin Valley (USUSFWS 1998), in part due to the availability of CVP water. Additional threats of habitat loss from large solar developments in the Panoche Valley increases the conservation value of any remaining San Joaquin Valley upland habitats in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area. The owners of the Martin Ranch are one of the few willing sellers BLM has identified whose property contains high quality giant kangaroo rat (GKR) habitat as well as habitat for San Joaquin kit fox (SJKF).

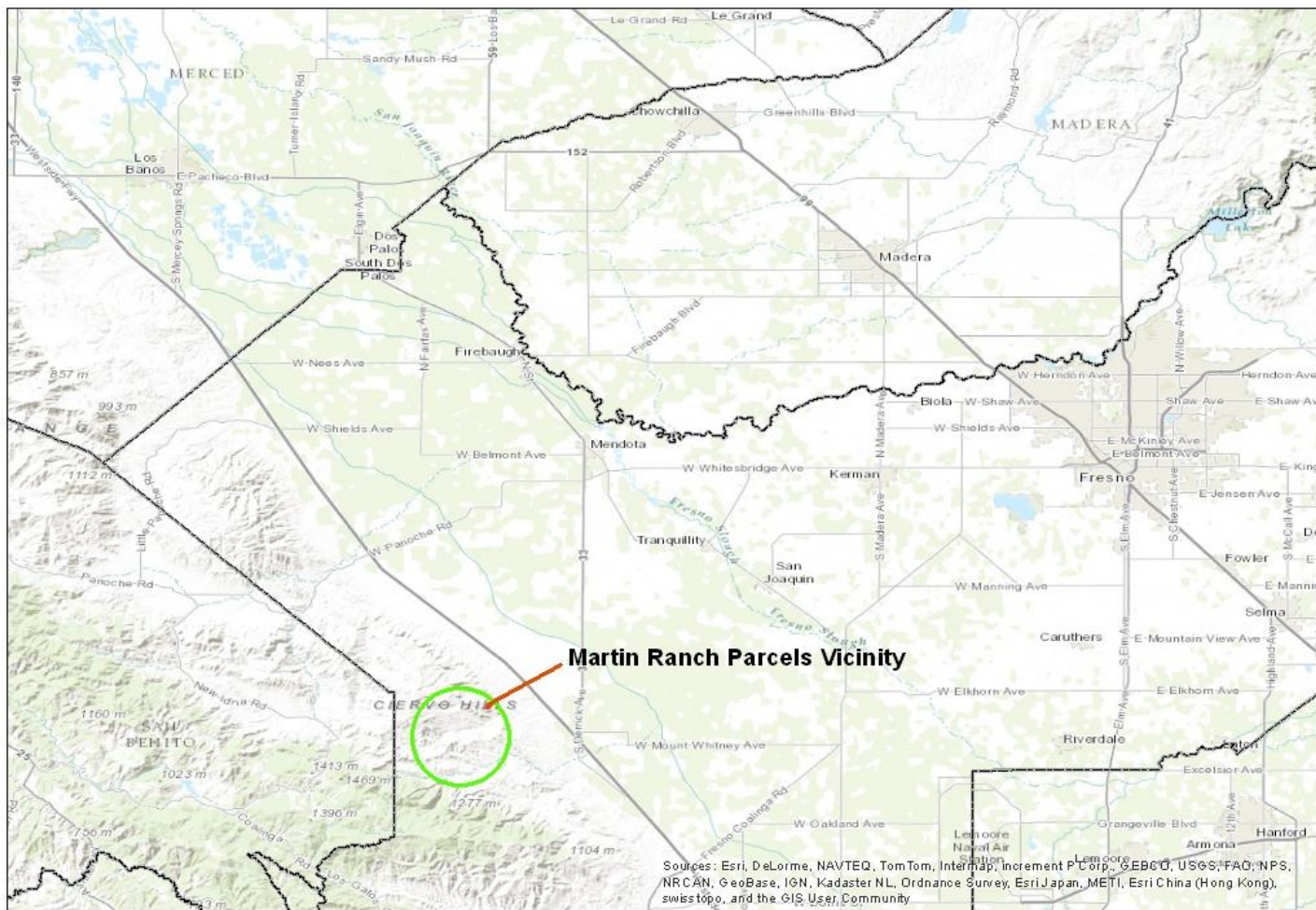


Figure 1 - Ciervo Hills-Martin Ranch Acquisition Project



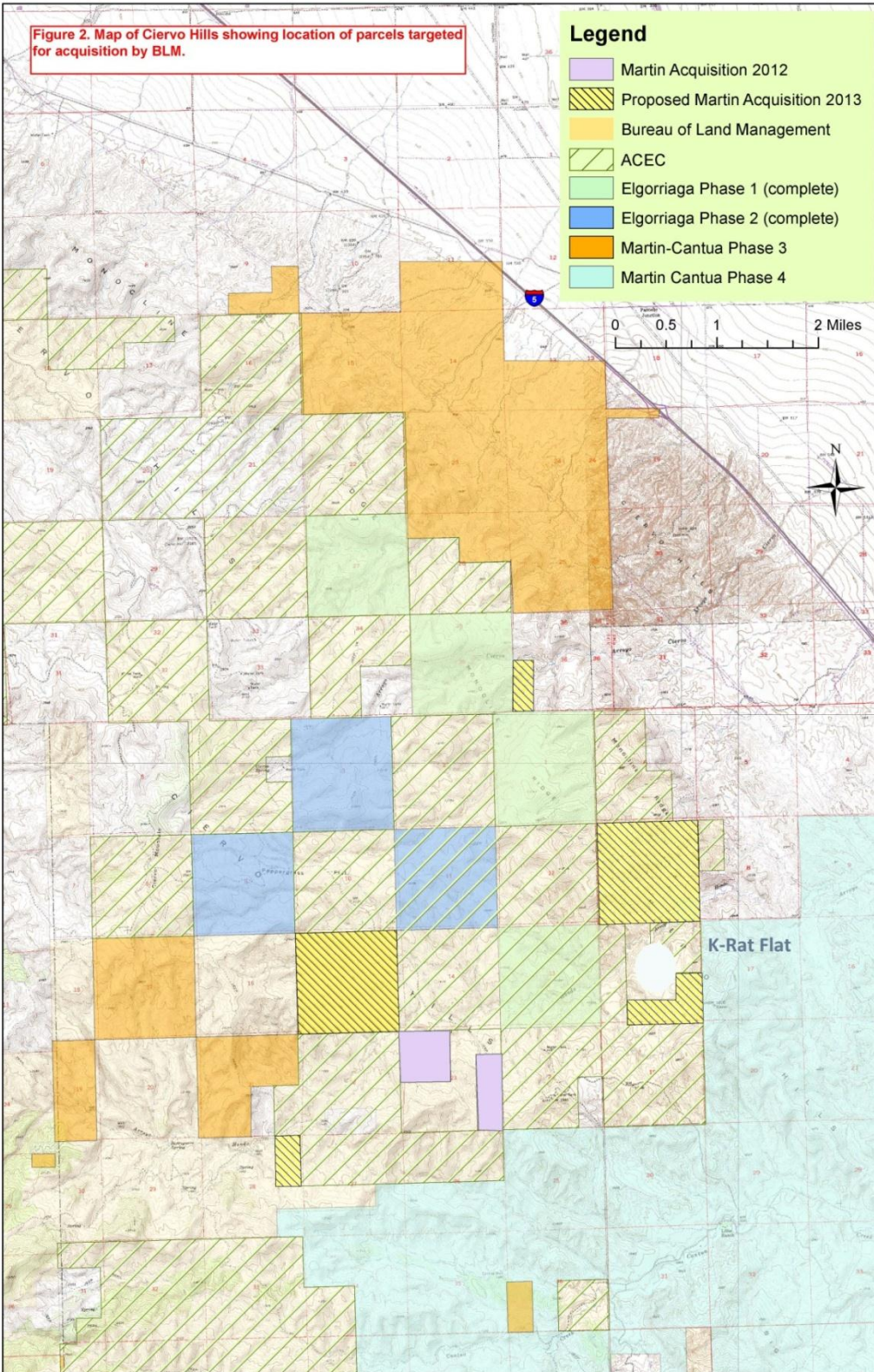


Figure 2. Martin Ranch Parcel Locations in the Ciervo Hills

Section 2 Alternatives Including Proposed Action

2.1 No Action Alternative

Reclamation would not provide \$915,268 from the CVPCP to BLM to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. BLM would be required to obtain the \$915,268 from other public and/or private sources. If the funding cannot be secured, BLM would not be able to purchase the parcels.

2.2 Proposed Action

Reclamation would provide \$915,268 from the CVPCP to BLM to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. After acquisition of the parcels, BLM would manage the lands consistent with the management goals and objectives of the Panoche-Coalinga Area of Critical Environmental Concern (PCACEC). BLM's goals and objectives for the PCACEC are to manage these lands for the protection of special status species and to promote scientific research and education. Further information on achieving these goals and objectives are in the Hollister Resource Management Plan (RMP) which describes the approved management actions for lands administered by BLM's Hollister Field Office, including the PCACEC (BLM 2007). A livestock grazing program would be established to meet both the management plan goals and objectives of the PCACEC, and to implement the terms and conditions and conservation recommendations for livestock grazing in selected allotments of the BLM Hollister Field Office under USFWS Biological Opinion 1-1-92-F-11 (USFWS 1991).

Information on the RMP and related documents, including how BLM will administer lands within the PCACEC, can be found at the Hollister Field Office's website at

http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/hollister/desert_hills.html

Section 3 Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

This section identifies the potentially affected environmental resources and the environmental consequences that could result from the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternatives.

3.1 Resources Not Analyzed in Detail

Department of the Interior Regulations, Executive Orders, and Reclamation guidelines require a discussion of the following items when preparing environmental documentation:

3.1.1 Cultural Resources

This is the type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, should such properties be present, pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 regulations codified at 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1). Reclamation has no further obligations under NHPA Section 106, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1).

The proposed action involves no ground disturbing activity, and constitutes solely the provision for funding from Reclamation to BLM toward acquisition of the land. Once obtained, the BLM would be the land managing agency of record, and thus responsible for any further NHPA Section 106 obligations outside the scope of this undertaking. (See Appendix A.)

3.1.2 Indian Trust Assets

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in property or rights held in trust by the United States for Indian Tribes or individual Indians. Indian reservations, Rancherias, and Public Domain Allotments are common ITAs in California. The nearest ITA is the Santa Rosa Rancheria approximately 42 miles east of the project location. The proposed action does not have a potential to affect ITAs. (See Appendix B.)

3.1.3 Indian Sacred Sites

Sacred sites are defined in Executive Order 13007 (May 24, 1996) as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on Federal land that is identified by an Indian tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion; provided that the tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion has informed the agency of the existence of such a site." After ownership is transferred to BLM, BLM, as a federal agency, will be responsible for working with any tribes to ensure any activities do not impede use of sacred sites

3.1.4. Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires each Federal agency to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects of its program, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. Since there

would be no impact to any populations, there would be no adverse human health or environmental effects to minority or low-income populations.

3.2 Biological Resources

3.2.1 Affected Environment

Habitats on the Martin Ranch parcels consist of approximately 1552 acres of valley grassland and approximately 50 acres of alkali scrub. The nonnative annual grasses are kept short from grazing and much of the ground is altogether bare, creating ideal habitat for SJKF and GKR.

Table 1 shows special-status species which, according to BLM, occur or could potentially occur on the Martin Ranch parcels. The occurrence, or potential for occurrence, of at-risk species listed in Table 1 in the area of the proposed action is as follows.

According to BLM, GKR exist at certain areas of the Martin Ranch parcels in extremely high densities due to the level bottomland area (referred to by BLM staff as “K-Rat Flat”) and the gentle side slopes of the surrounding occupied habitats. GKR populations are typified by large colonies with distinctive cropped “precincts” where individuals have removed all vegetation from the neighborhood of their burrows. The presence of precincts on a given piece of land can be detected even by satellite. GKR are limited by drought and food availability. Loew et al. (2005) found high genetic diversity within GKR populations in the region, and noted that even small populations contribute significantly to overall genetic diversity. Recent research by Tim Bean of Humboldt State University has revealed a very large new population of GKR in and around the parcels, which represents the southernmost subpopulation of GKR in the greater Ciervo-Panoche region.

SJKF have been recorded from Peppergrass Flat directly to the north of the Martin Ranch parcels in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) as well as in targeted surveys funded by BLM in 2009-2011. SJKF were recorded from the environs of the Martin Ranch parcels and the nearby Arroyo Hondo Plateau through dog-assisted scat collection during target surveys in 2012. SJKF were observed denning directly to the north on Peppergrass Flat in 1981 (O’Farrel et al. 1981) and on Arroyo Hondo Plateau in 2011 (T. Bean, pers. obs.). In 2011, kit fox scat (feces) was collected during GKR trapping on the Martin Ranch, confirming the presence of kit foxes at Martin Ranch.

The blunt-nosed leopard lizard (BNLL) in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area are confined to the Panoche Hills Plateau, scrubland in the bottom of Panoche Creek in the flatter parts of Panoche Valley, and along Panoche Road near the Fresno/San Benito County line (BLM data collected in 2009 and 2010). Even where they are found, they tend to be in low density. BNLL have not been detected from the Martin Ranch parcels in recent surveys, but the parcels provide highly suitable habitat and an attractive locality for potential BNLL reintroduction and repatriation experiments, due to its protected location and flat landscape of the type considered to be preferred by the species.

San Joaquin woolly threads have a high likelihood of being present, given the large extent of appropriate habitat in the Martin Ranch parcels.

Table 1. Special status species present or potentially present on or near Ciervo Hills parcels proposed for acquisition

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status ^a	State Status ^b	Other Designated Species ^c	Species Verified Presence (Y/N)
San Joaquin kit fox	<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	E	T		Y
Giant kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys ingens</i>	E	E		Y
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard	<i>Gambelia sila</i>	E	FP		N
San Joaquin woolly threads	<i>Monolopia congdonii</i>	E			Y
San Joaquin antelope squirrel	<i>Ammospermophilus nelsoni</i>		T		Y
Burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>			CSC	N
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxa</i>			CSC	N
Short-nosed kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys nitratoideus brevinasus</i>			CSC	N
San Joaquin pocket mouse	<i>Perognathus inornatus inornatus</i>			CSC	N
Tulare grasshopper mouse	<i>Onychomys torridus tularensis</i>			CSC	N
Coast horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>			CSC	Y
Panoche (=Jared's) pepper-grass	<i>Lepidium jaredii ssp. album</i>			List 1B	Y
Lost Hills crownscale	<i>Atriplex vallis</i>			List 1B	Y

E = federally listed as endangered, T= federally listed as threatened, P=federally proposed for listing

E = state listed as endangered, R = state listed as rare, T = state listed as threatened, C = state listed as candidate

C=federally listed as candidate, CSC = California species of special concern, FP = California fully protected species; List 1B = California Native Plant Society Sensitive Plant list ranking.

The San Joaquin antelope squirrel (SJAS) requires alkali and arid scrubland habitats and are usually absent from shrubless landscapes. They may be commensal with kangaroo rats, often using abandoned kangaroo rat dens. SJAS have been recorded from the Martin Ranch near the project area in the CNDDDB.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action

If Reclamation does not provide funding to help purchase the Martin Ranch parcels, BLM would have to find additional funds from other sources. If BLM were not able to purchase the parcels and the owner sold the parcels to a private party, the opportunity for its permanent conservation would be lost or jeopardized.

Proposed Action

The proposed project would directly benefit the long-term conservation and management of several federally-listed species, listed in Table 1, through permanent protection and management of their habitats on the Martin Ranch parcels.

Under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California (USRP) (USFWS 1998), the site-specific protection requirement needed to meet the criteria for delisting the San Joaquin kit fox includes protection of 90 percent of the existing potential habitat in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area. Therefore, protection of kit fox habitat in the Martin Ranch parcels would significantly further the recovery and eventual delisting of the species.

The current grazing regime at the project site provides benefits to GKR by reducing annual grass growth in the valley (T. Bean, pers. comm.). Therefore, grazing would likely continue through leases to the prior landowner. BLM is actively conducting research on grazing and revegetation strategies that, where necessary, can be employed to increase the carrying capacity of the land for endangered species. Should research identify restoration needs or opportunities, BLM would actively pursue funding to conduct such activities.

The preservation of the Martin Ranch parcels would contribute to BLM's long-range goals of preserving endangered species habitat and promoting species recovery through a strategic process of targeted land acquisitions and subsequent management activities. Management activities include prescribed grazing, habitat restoration, and research. The objective of BLM's strategy is to preserve and enhance core populations of endangered species identified in the USRP and to protect habitats of the western San Joaquin Valley corridor region. Recent land acquisitions by BLM along Monocline Ridge (including the Elgorriaga Ranch parcels funded by Reclamation through the CVPCP in 2005 and 2010) have secured a significant buffer zone for listed species habitats in the Ciervo-Panoche area by protecting lands along the eastern edge of the Ciervo Hills (Figure 2). In the near future, BLM intends to purchase more parcels from Philip Martin in the environs of the proposed action, thus creating a well-shaped polygon of protected habitats in the crucial wildlife corridor zone between Pleasant Valley and Panoche Valley (Cypher et al. 2007). Each of these acquisitions contributes to recovery criteria in the USRP by preserving core populations of San Joaquin kit foxes and giant kangaroo rats in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area. Therefore, acquisition of the Martin Ranch parcels and surrounding

lands is a crucial component of BLM's long-term acquisition strategy, and it would have major cumulative benefits on all special status species populations in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area.

The Martin Ranch parcel acquisition would not affect threatened or endangered species because there would be no construction or change in land use.

3.3 Cumulative Effects

According to CEQ regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, a cumulative impact is defined as *the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions*. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

There are no adverse impacts associated with implementing the Proposed Action, and therefore there are no cumulative effects to consider.

Section 4 Consultation and Coordination

CVPCP managers are guided by a Technical Team of biologists and natural resource specialists from Reclamation, USFWS, and CDFW. During the period of December 22, 2012 through March 9, 2013, members of the Technical Team reviewed and scored proposals submitted to the CVPCP for consideration for funding. The Ciervo Hills acquisition ranked in the top tier of proposals, and was selected for funding following evaluation by the Team. On March 29, 2013, Reclamation and USFWS management approved the proposal for funding.

Section 5 References

- Cypher, B., S.E. Phillips, and P.A. Kelly. 2007. Habitat suitability and potential corridors for San Joaquin kit fox in the San Luis Unit: Fresno, Kings and Merced Counties, California. Prepared for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, South-Central Area Office, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species Program. May 22, 2007. 34 p.
- Loew, S.S., D.F. Williams, K. Ralls, K. Pilgrim, and R.C. Fleischer. 2005. Population structure and genetic variation in the endangered Giant Kangaroo Rat (*Dipodomys ingens*). *Conservation Genetics* 6:495-510).
- O'Farrell, T.P., P. McCue, and T. Kato. 1981. Potential of BLM lands in western Fresno and eastern San Benito Counties, California, as critical habitats for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox, *Vulpes macrotis mutica*, and blunt-nosed leopard lizard, *Crotaphytus silus*. Prepared for the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior through interagency agreement CA-010-IA1-11 with the U.S Department of Defense, Nevada Operations Office, November 1981. 46 p. + 4 appendices.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2007. Record of Decision for the Hollister Resource Management Plan for the Southern Diablo Mountain Range and Central Coast of California. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington D.C.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1991. Formal Section 7 Consultation on an Interim Proposal to Authorize Livestock Grazing in Selected Allotments in the Hollister Resource Area. Sacramento, CA.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1998. Recovery plan for upland species of the San Joaquin Valley, California. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, OR.

Appendix A

Cultural Resources Compliance



IN REPLY
REFER TO:
MP-153
ENV-3.00

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

June 26, 2013
MEMORANDUM

To: Daniel Strait
Manager, CVP Conservation Program

From: Mark. A. Carper
Archaeologist – Division of Environmental Affairs

Subject: 13-MPRO-196 Ciervo Hills Giant Kangaroo Rat Habitat Protection Project

This proposed undertaking by Reclamation is to fund the acquisition of 1,602 acres to be used to protect the giant kangaroo rat habitat and other endangered species. This is the type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, should such properties be present, pursuant to the NHPA Section 106 regulations codified at 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1). Reclamation has no further obligations under NHPA Section 106, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1).

The proposed action involves no ground disturbing activity, and constitutes solely the provision for funding from the BOR to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) toward acquisition of the land. Once obtained, the BLM will be the land managing agency of record, and thus responsible for any further NHPA Section 106 obligations outside the scope of this undertaking.

This memorandum is intended to convey the completion of the NHPA Section 106 process for this undertaking. Please retain a copy in the administrative record for this action. Should changes be made to this project, additional NHPA Section 106 review, possibly including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, may be necessary. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Mark A. Carper, M.A., Archaeologist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, MP-153
2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: 916-978-5552 Email: mcarper@usbr.gov

CC: Cultural Resources Branch (MP-153), Anastasia Leigh – Regional Environmental Officer (MP-150)

Appendix B

Indian Trust Assets Compliance



KLEINSMITH, DOUGLAS <dkleinsmith@usbr.gov>

Re: Indian Trust Assets request for Cienro Hills acquisition

RIVERA, PATRICIA <privera@usbr.gov>

Tue, Sep 3, 2013 at 4:26 PM

To: DOUGLAS KLEINSMITH <dkleinsmith@usbr.gov>

Doug,

I reviewed the proposed action to provide \$915,268 from the CVPCP and FWS would provide \$86,057 from the HRP to BLM to help purchase 1,602 acres on 5 parcels of the Martin Ranch. The purchase would protect giant kangaroo rat habitat in the central Cienro Hills (a location known as "K-Rat Flat"), along with other listed San Joaquin Valley upland species. After acquisition of the parcels, BLM would manage the lands consistently with the management goals and objectives of the Panoche-Coalinga Area of Critical Environmental Concern (PCACEC). BLM's goals and objectives for the PCACEC are to manage these lands for the protection of these special status species and to promote scientific research and education.

The proposed action does not have a potential to impact Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA is the Santa Rosa Rancheria approximately 42 miles East of the project location.

Patricia Rivera
Native American Affairs Program Manager
US Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
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