

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**EA Number:** DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2013-0025-EA  
**Serial/Case File No.:** 45240  
**BLM Office:** Safford Field Office

The type of impacts to the human environment expected from implementation of the Proposed Action (now referred to as the Selected Alternative) of the Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2013-0025-EA) were anticipated and declared within the analysis of the Safford Resource Management Plan (RMP, 1991)(ROD:1992, 1994) and the Upper Gila San Simon Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (9/1978). The site specific impacts described in the EA are no greater than those anticipated in the RMP and EIS. The EA specifically tiers to and incorporates by reference the analysis in the Safford RMP and grazing EIS, in accordance with CEQ regulations, Sec. 1502.20 and 1502.21. To the extent there are impacts beyond those described in the RMP, they are not significant.

The Selected Alternative allows BLM to manage livestock grazing on federal land through applicable laws and regulations. Specific resource objectives are identified in the RMP and where appropriate, these RMP objectives are repeated through the impact analysis section of the EA along with indications of how these objectives would be met. For the Selected Alternative, these objectives, as well as specific objectives identified in the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public lands in AZ would be achieved without creating any significant impacts.

The EA thoroughly analyzes the impacts of a range of alternatives developed through scoping and it clearly indicates that the Selected Alternative, with specific mitigation measures, would not significantly affect the human environment. Specific mitigation measures ensure that resource values are protected through avoidance, reducing impact to a level so that it is not significant, or rectifying disturbance through rehabilitation actions. Mitigation is applied to Selected Alternatives to minimize or avoid impacts, as noted in the EA, even though the action(s), without mitigation, may not rise to the level of “significant” as defined in 40 CFR 1508.

The Horse Mountain allotment does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance. The Selected Alternative, as described, would have little if any effect on the human environment at the national level or beyond.

The “intensity” of impacts, beneficial and adverse, is thoroughly described in the Environmental Impacts section of the EA. Intensity is a component of “significance” and is determined by applying ten criteria (CEQ regulations, Sec 1508.27). In review of these criteria, relative to the Selected Action, I have found:

- Beneficial and adverse effects (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(I)): The environmental assessment

has analyzed and disclosed both beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action and subsequent connected actions. Implementing the proposed action is expected to improve aquatic and terrestrial habitat conditions for a variety of wildlife species, which meets management objectives identified in the Safford District Resource Management Plan, will enable progress towards proper functioning condition on Deer Creek, and will protect an unnamed spring and Horse Springs. There will be no significant adverse or beneficial impacts on the quality of the human environment including water, air, land use, soil, and cultural and biological resources. Impacts to physical and biological resources will be highly localized and limited to the project area. Impacts of the project would be minimized through a variety of mitigation measures, which are identified in the EA.

- Public Health or Safety (40 CFR 1508.2(b)(2)): Public health and safety are minimally affected by the project. The project area is mostly unpopulated and isolated and no residential properties are located within the project area. There will be no disproportionate direct or indirect effects on populations defined in Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice) and Executive Order 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks). Appropriate hazardous material management and waste disposal associated with fence construction will minimize any potential risks to public health, safety, and the environment.
- Unique geographic characteristics (cultural or historic resources, park lands, prime and unique farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness or wilderness study areas or ecologically critical areas (ACECs, RNAs)) (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)): There are no historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, areas of critical environmental concern, wild and scenic river or wilderness located within the project area. Analysis in the environmental assessment indicates that the existing resource values (aquatic and riparian habitat) within the Horse Mountain allotment will improve or not be degraded from the proposed action.
- Highly Controversial Effects (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(4)): The effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial because there are no known controversies over the impacts of the project.
- Unique or Unknown Risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)): The Bureau of Land Management has experience and expertise in installing wildlife friendly fence within the Safford Field Office to protect aquatic and riparian resources. The effects of such projects are monitored and effects of the proposed project are expected to be similar to the effects of those past similar actions implemented by Bureau of Land Management. I find that the effects are not uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risk.
- Precedent for future actions (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)): The selected alternative does not set a precedent for future actions. The proposed action is independent of all other actions, and does not represent a commitment of BLM resources beyond that described in the environmental assessment.

- Cumulative Effects (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(7)): The cumulative impacts were considered in the EA and are not significant when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions that have affected, or will affect, the project area.
- Impacts to significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(8)): A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory will be conducted for the proposed action prior to any ground disturbance work. Class III inventory data are sufficient to indicate that the specific environmental situation did not support human occupation or use to a degree that would make further inventory information useful or meaningful.
- Federally listed endangered or threatened species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)): The Safford Field Office implements its grazing program consistent with the Biological Opinion (BO) rendered on the Gila District Livestock Grazing Program for the Safford/Tucson Field Offices' Livestock Grazing Program, Southeastern Arizona (22410-2006-F-0414). This BO was reviewed to insure that all mitigation measures and terms and conditions stated in the BO are being followed. Effects to other sensitive species will be minor and temporary.
- Compliance with Federal, State or Local Law (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(10)): The proposed project will not violate any Federal, State, or local environmental laws and meets disclosure requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The effects from the selected alternative are not significant because the action does not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local laws.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the Environmental Assessment and all other available information, I have determined that the Selected Alternative does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

/s/ Scott C. Cooke  
Scott C. Cooke  
Field Manager

8/29/2013  
Date