

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)
COMPLIANCE RECORD FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS (CX)
U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

PART I. – PROPOSED ACTION

BLM Office: Arizona Strip Field Office **NEPA No.:** DOI-BLM-AZ-A010-2014-0001-CX
Case File No.: 6820

Proposed Action Title/Type: Black Rock Mountain Wild Turkey Augmentation

Applicant: N/A

Location of Proposed Action: This augmentation would utilize three release locations on Black Rock Mountain: Black Rock COOP Catchment, the road near the Black Rock Lookout, and near the Blake Wildlife Catchment.

Release Locations on Black Rock Mountain:

Black Rock COOP Catchment:	N 36 50.029 W 113 45.141	T40N R14W Sec 25
Road near Blake Wildlife Catchment:	N 36 46.911 W 113 48.539	T39N R14W Sec 17
Near Black Rock Tower Lookout:	N 36 48.222 W 113 44.917	T39N R14W Sec 1

Description of Proposed Action: The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) propose to augment the existing population of wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*), through multiple releases, in the Black Rock Mountain area of Game Management Unit (GMU) 13B. In 2007 and 2008, 140 Rio Grande turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo intermedia*) were translocated to the Black Rock Mountain area following an interdisciplinary team assessment of the habitat. These turkeys have done well, and have begun to occupy the available habitat in the Black Rock Mountain area. The wild turkey population on Black Rock would continue to benefit from further augmentations and allow the BLM and AGFD to continue to meet wild turkey management goals on the Arizona Strip.

Wild turkeys would be obtained from Arizona or Utah sources not managed by the BLM. The turkeys would be transported to the proposed release sites via truck on designated routes. No off-road vehicle travel is anticipated. Travel on excessively wet roads would be avoided. Upon arrival at the release sites the turkeys would be released from their transport boxes. It is expected that these releases would begin in the winter of 2014.

All release operations would be conducted by AGFD and BLM personnel following established big game translocation procedures. If necessary, crews would stay in BLM administrative sites or camp in previously disturbed areas.

Turkeys would be marked with wing tags and/or leg bands and if AGFD funding is available, some turkeys would be fitted with radio telemetry equipment. If radio telemetry equipment is used, post release monitoring would occur using established ground monitoring efforts on designated roads, and potentially from aerial survey methods.

The turkey population would continue to be monitored through annual surveys and hunter harvest data and reported through AGFD reporting procedures.

PART II. – PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

This proposed action is subject to the following land use plan(s): Arizona Strip Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Decisions: The proposed action is in conformance with the following RMP decisions:

DFC-WF-02: Native wildlife communities will be protected. A complete range of diverse, healthy and self-sustaining population of native animal species will occupy all available suitable habitats.

MA-WF-06: Reintroductions, transplants, capture operations and supplemental stockings (augmentations) of native wildlife populations into historic habitats will be carried out in collaboration with the AGFD and/or the USFWS where consistent with achieving DFCs, and within applicable agencies policies. Restoration of native wildlife will be for the following purposes:

- To maintain current populations, distributions, and genetic diversity;
- To conserve or recover threatened or endangered species; and/or
- To restore or enhance native populations, diversity, or distribution of special status species.

Species that may be reintroduced, transplanted, or augmented include but are not limited to the following: pronghorn antelope, mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, Merriam's Turkey, Kaibab squirrel, and special status species.

MA-WF-35: Priority game bird species will include Merriam's turkey, Gambel's quail, white-winged dove, mourning dove, chukar partridge, and band-tailed pigeons.

MA-WF-36: Self-sustaining populations of Merriam's turkey will be established within all habitat areas, including Black Rock. New habitat areas can be added where appropriate. Initial or supplemental transplants will be authorized on a case-by-case basis.

MA-WF-39: Game bird populations will be managed for healthy, self-sustaining populations in accordance with population goals and objectives established in the AGFD Strategic Plan for these species.

Date plan approved/amended: January 29, 2008

This proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with the plan (*43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM Manual 1601.04.C.2*).

PART III. – NEPA COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION REVIEW

A. The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, [Appendix 4: A. Fish and Wildlife

(5) Routine augmentations, such as fish stocking, providing no new species are introduced.

And

B. Extraordinary Circumstances Review: In accordance with **43 CFR 46.215**, any action that is normally categorically excluded must be subjected to sufficient environmental review to determine if it meets any of the 12 Extraordinary Circumstances described. If any circumstance applies to the action or project, and existing NEPA documentation does not adequately address it, then further NEPA analysis is required.

IMPORTANT: Appropriate staff must review the circumstances listed in Part IV, comment and initial for concurrence. Rationale supporting the concurrence must be included in the appropriate block.

PART IV. – EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION

REVIEWERS:	DATE:
Gloria Benson, Tribal Liaison	11/27/13
Diana Hawks, Recreation/Wilderness/VRM	11/4/13
Laurie Ford, Lands/Realty/Minerals	11/18/13
Shawn Langston, Wildlife/T&E Wildlife	11/4/13
John Herron, Cultural	11/4/13
Jace Lambeth, Special Status Plants	11/4/13
Ray Klein, GCPNM Supervisory Ranger	11/12/13
Whit Bunting, Range/Vegetation/Weeds/S&G	11/5/13
Richard Spotts, Environmental Coordinator	11/7/13
John Sims, Supervisory Law Enforcement	11/25/13 (No response given)
Lorraine Christian, Field Office Manager	11/26/13

The action has been reviewed to determine if any of the extraordinary circumstances (43 CFR 46.215(a)-(1)) apply. The project would:		
(a) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action is relatively routine in nature and small in scope. No impacts to public health or safety are anticipated. Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u>
(b) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action was reviewed by a team of resource specialists who determined that no significant impacts would occur to the resources mentioned above. Preparer's Initials SML, also see list under "Reviewers" above.____
(c) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2) (E)].		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: This type of project has not been controversial in the past. Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u>
(d) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: Similar projects have occurred numerous times in the past with no significant environmental effects. Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u>
(e) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principal about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action is not precedent-setting and is considered a fairly routine wildlife management operation. Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u>

<p>(f) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: The Proposed Action is very small in scale and would not have a direct relationship to other projects in the area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u></p>
<p>(g) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau.</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: None of these properties are present in the Project Area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>JH</u></p>
<p>(h) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: No Endangered or Threatened species, or designated Critical Habitat are present within the project area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u></p>
<p>(i) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: The Proposed Action would be in compliance with all laws.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>RK</u></p>
<p>(j) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: Low income or minority populations are not present in or near the Project Area and would not be affected by the Proposed Action.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>SML</u></p>
<p>(k) 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 (Executive Order 13007).</p>		
Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: The Proposed Action would have no impact to public access, including for ceremonial use, and would only occur on designated roads.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u>GB</u></p>

(l) 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 Executive Order 13112).

Yes

No

X

Rationale: The Proposed Action would occur only on designated roads and create no new ground disturbance.

Preparer's Initials WB

PART V. – COMPLIANCE REVIEW CONCLUSION

I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record, and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required.

MITIGATION MEASURES/OTHER REMARKS:

1. Any surface, or sub-surface archaeological, historical, or paleontological remains discovered and not covered in the Cultural Resource Protection Record (CRPR) during project work would be left intact; all work in the area would stop immediately and the BLM Field Office Manager (435-688-3323) shall be notified immediately. Commencement of work would be allowed upon the okay of the Field Office Manager in consultation with the archaeologist.
2. If in connection with operations any human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony – as defined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (P.L. 101-601; 104 Stat. 3048; 25 U.S.C. 3001) are discovered, work would stop in the immediate area of the discovery, the remains and objects would be protected, and the BLM Field Office Manager immediately notified. The immediate area of the discovery would be avoided and protected until notification by the BLM Field Office Manager that operations may resume.
3. No project activities would be performed during periods when roads are too wet to adequately support vehicles. If vehicles create ruts in excess of three inches deep, roads shall be deemed too wet to adequately support vehicular activities.

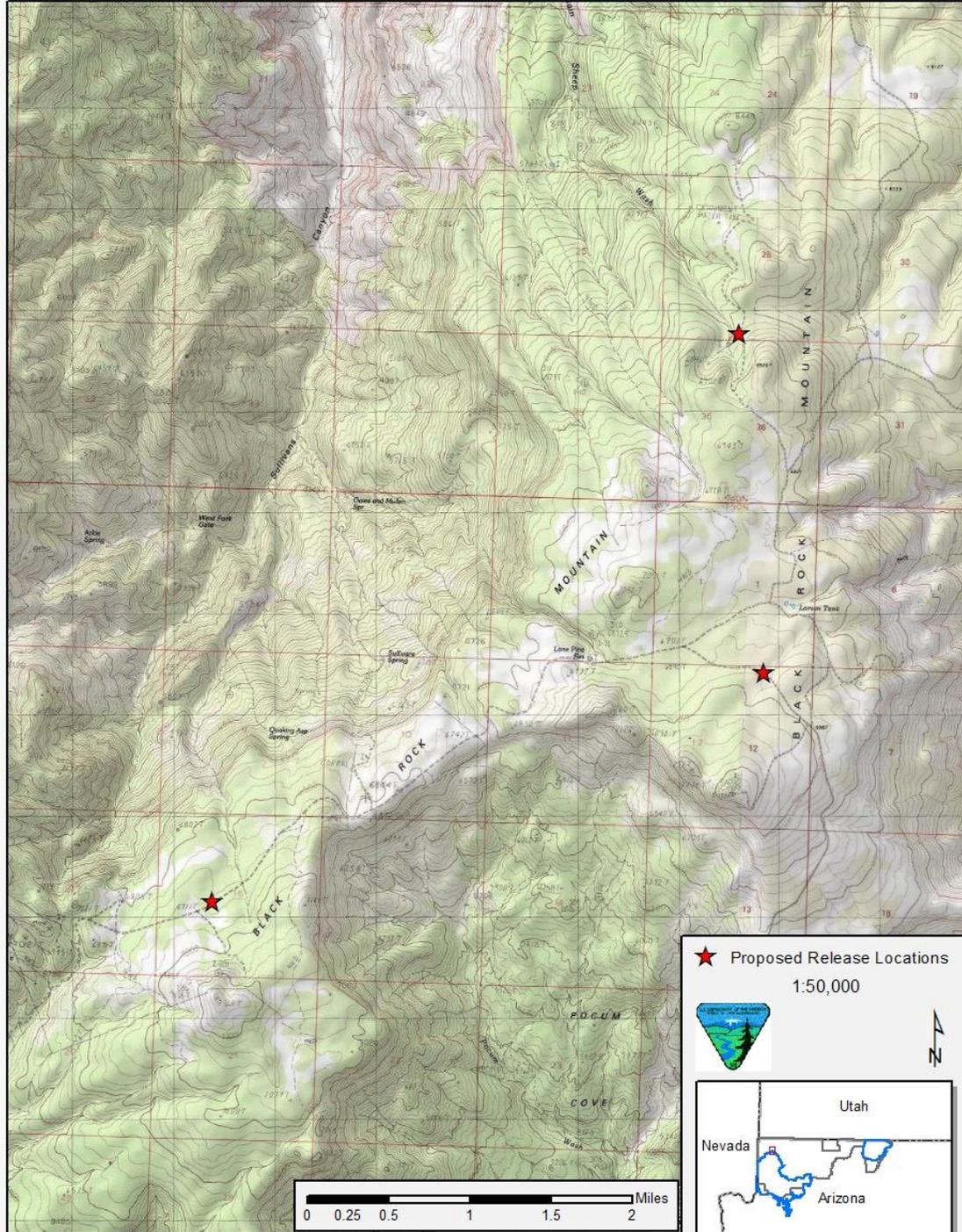
APPROVING OFFICIAL: Signed by _____ DATE: 12/3/2013 _____

NAME: Lorraine M. Christian

TITLE: Arizona Strip Field Office Manager

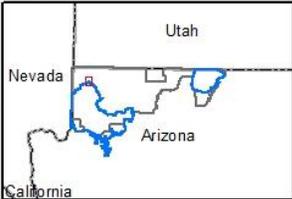
Note: The signed conclusion on this compliance record is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. A separate decision to implement the action should be prepared in accordance with program specific guidance.

Black Rock Mountain Turkey Release Locations



★ Proposed Release Locations
1:50,000





Arizona Strip District

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the BLM makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy and expressly disclaims liability for the accuracy thereof. No warranty is made by the BLM for the use of this map for purposes not intended by BLM.

DECISION MEMORANDUM
BLACK ROCK MOUNTAIN WILD TURKEY AUGMENTATION
DOI-BLM-AZ-A010-2014-0001-CX

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Arizona Strip Field Office

Approval and Decision

Based on a review of the project described in the attached Categorical Exclusion documentation and staff recommendations, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the Arizona Strip Field Office Resource Management Plan (approved 2008) and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed with the following stipulations/mitigation measures in an effort to minimize impacts of the proposed action to social and natural environmental resources.

- Any surface, or sub-surface archaeological, historical, or paleontological remains discovered and not covered in the Cultural Resource Protection Record (CRPR) during project work will be left intact; all work in the area will stop immediately and the BLM Field Office Manager (435-688-3323) shall be notified immediately. Commencement of work will be allowed upon the okay of the Field Office Manager in consultation with the archaeologist.
- If in connection with operations any human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony – as defined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (P.L. 101-601; 104 Stat. 3048; 25 U.S.C. 3001) are discovered, work will stop in the immediate area of the discovery, the remains and objects will be protected, and the BLM Field Office Manager immediately notified. The immediate area of the discovery will be avoided and protected until notification by the BLM Field Office Manager that operations may resume.
- No project activities would be performed during periods when roads are too wet to adequately support vehicles. If vehicles create ruts in excess of three inches deep, roads shall be deemed too wet to adequately support vehicular activities.

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and the attached Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed at the Arizona Strip Field Office, 345 East Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah 84790, within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition (pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) (request) for a stay (suspension) of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the Office of the Solicitor (Department of the Interior, Office of the Field Solicitor, Sandra Day O'Connor U.S. Court House #404, 401 West Washington Street SPC44, Phoenix, AZ 85003-2151) (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Signed by _____ Date: 12/3/2013 _____
Name: Lorraine M. Christian
Title: Arizona Strip Field Office Manager

Attachment: Form 1842-1