**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**
**HASSAYAMPA FIELD OFFICE**
**PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
## Turner Allotment Ephemeral Grazing Permit Renewal Decision
## DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2014-0037-EA

I, the undersigned authorized officer, considering the criteria provided by 40 CFR 1508.27 and the information contained in the Turner Allotment Ephemeral Grazing Permit Non-reissuance Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2014-0037-EA), and as explained further below, find that the proposed action and alternative will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared.

Context:

The Proposed Action focuses on livestock grazing management on 8,080 acres of federal public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 45,430 acres of private land, and 6,290 acres of State land within the Turner Allotment. The allotment is located in Maricopa County west of Phoenix and south-southeast of Tonopah, AZ, with the town of Wintersburg contained centrally within the allotment. The majority of federal public lands are along the western side of the allotment, including and surrounding the Palo Verde Hills due south of Tonopah and the Salome Highway. The BLM issued a Draft Rangeland Health Evaluation for Standards and Guidelines in 2014, which was included as Appendix A in the EA. The BLM determined that the applicable standards and objectives for the Turner Allotment have been met for Standard 1, and that the applicable standards and objectives for Standard 3 were not met. The allotment's Federal public lands contain no riparian areas so Standard 2, Riparian Wetland Sites, was not evaluated.

Intensity:

*1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*

The analysis identifies some beneficial impacts on upland vegetation, soil resources, and wildlife resources that may arise as a result of the proposed non-issuance of the ephemeral grazing lease renewal. A full description of the expected impacts is provided in Chapter 3 of the EA.

*2. Degree of effect on public health and safety.*

The proposed action will have no effect on public health or safety.

*3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas:*

No park lands, prime or unique farmlands, or wild and scenic rivers exist within the allotment. Wildlife habitat has been monitored and analyzed for effects of ephemeral grazing. The analysis concluded that implementing the proposed action is expected to provide for maintenance of wildlife habitat standards and objectives throughout the allotment as defined by 43 CFR §4180.

*4. Degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

The analysis contained within the EA concludes that the proposed action will result in progress towards meeting the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health. Ecological conditions on the allotment have not shown consistent maintenance or improvement, and conditions are expected to improve under the proposed action.

The BLM conducted public scoping for the EA in July 2014 when the Draft Rangeland Health Evaluation for Standards and Guidelines Assessments for the Turner Allotment was issued for public review. Only one comment letter was received. Issues raised by interested parties during the scoping period were incorporated into the EA and informed the range of alternatives. No issues were raised that indicate that the action is highly controversial.

*5. Degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk.*

Possible effects are neither highly uncertain nor do they include unique or unknown risks. The analysis is based on monitoring information, and all ephemeral livestock grazing authorizations are subject to applicable procedures to prevent undue environmental harm and risk.

*6. Degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

The non-issuance of the ten-year ephemeral grazing permit strives to protect resources from significant adverse effects. This action does not make any commitments for BLM approval for any future actions beyond those outlined in the proposed action. All future proposed ephemeral livestock management actions not described in the proposed action would continue to be subject to further consideration in accordance with BLM grazing and NEPA regulations and policies.

*7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

All resources are evaluated for cumulative impacts in the EA, and no significant impacts are identified. As a standard procedure, cumulative impacts would continue to be subject to further review in the event that new projects are proposed, and on a site-specific basis.

*8. Degree to which the action may adversely affect district, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.*

The proposed action as described would have no adverse effects to cultural resources.

*9. Degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical habitat.*

No listed species are known to occur within the Turner Allotment. As discussed for special status species in the EA, the allotment does provide habitat for the Sonoran desert tortoise, a BLM-sensitive species of concern. The proposed action includes measures to prevent adverse impacts to these species and to conserve their habitats and is not expected to result in the listing of any species of concern.

*10. Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local environmental protection law.*

The proposed action has been developed and reviewed in coordination with applicable agencies to ensure its consistency with plans and requirements of other Federal, State and local agencies.

D. Remington Hawes — 9/10/2014

David R. Hawes
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Date