

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DOI-BLM-AZ-C030-2013-047-Gravel Pit # 913

Wildlife Water Improvement - #913 Gravel Pit

Arizona Game and Fish Department

LaPaz County

Lake Havasu Field Office
2610 Sweetwater Avenue
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406

Prepared by: Arizona Game & Fish Department
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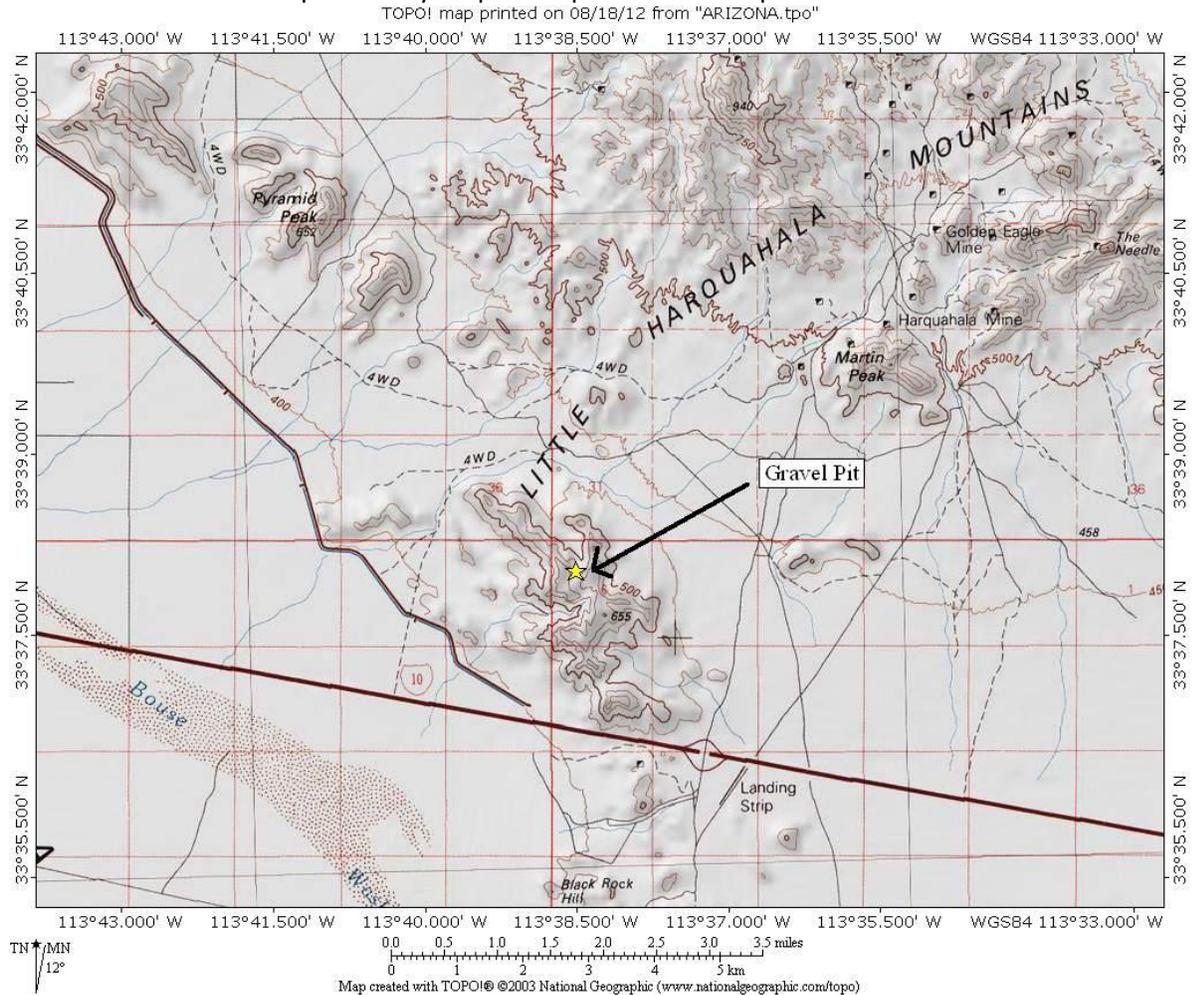
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Location

The site is located in the Little Harquahala Mountains in La Paz County, AZ southeast of Hope, AZ (Hope : T3N R13W S6 NW ¼). The site is approximately two miles northwest of the exit for Harquahala Mine Rd (see Map 1).

Map 1. Vicinity Map of Proposed Redevelopment of Gravel Pit



1.2 Project Background

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) has identified the need to redevelop Gravel Pit (#913) wildlife water catchment with another collection point. This structure was originally constructed in 1985 using a natural pothole to collect water to feed two 3,150 gallon sausage tanks. In 1993 this system was redeveloped again and another collection point was constructed above the current dam and included adding another fill line. The two 3150 tanks were replaced with a 16' by 5' deep fiberglass ring tank and the float valve trough was replaced with a 5'6" gravity fed walk-in trough.

Wildlife that have been observed using this water include desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis mexicana*), desert mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), mountain lion (*Puma concolor*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red tailed-hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*), dove (*Zenaida* spp.), various bat species, and other wildlife species.

1.3 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The LHFO is responding to AGFD's proposal improve the Gravel Pit wildlife water, located southeast of Hope, Arizona. AGFD has identified inefficiencies of water collection with the out-dated system currently in place. Currently, the water collected is not sufficient enough for the structure to supply perennial water to wildlife especially during the hot dry summer months. In order to meet the objective of supplying a perennial water source for wildlife, as identified in WF-22 of the Lake Havasu Field Office Resource Management Plan (2007), AGFD proposes to improve water collection for year-round use.

1.4 Decision to be Made

The BLM will decide whether to grant permission for AGFD to improve the efficiency of an existing wildlife water tank with an additional collection point or take no action.

1.5 Scoping and Issues

1.5.1 Internal Scoping

The Proposed Action was presented to the BLM interdisciplinary NEPA team by AGFD on October 16, 2012. The following table outlines resource presence/absence and potential for impact from the proposed action and alternatives.

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Resource Status</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
<u>Air Quality and Climate*</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	NP	Project area is within an attainment area.
<u>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern</u> <i>George W. Shannon, Jr., Ph.D</i>	NP	Project not within an ACEC.
<u>Cultural, Historic & Paleontological Resources*</u> <i>George W. Shannon, Jr., Ph.D</i>	PNI	Cultural Clearance was completed.

<u>Environmental Justice</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	Proposed Action not expected to impact Environmental Justice.
<u>Farmlands (Prime or Unique)</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	No farmlands exist within the project area.
<u>Fish Habitat*</u> <i>Doug Adams</i>	NP	No fish habitat present within project area.
<u>Floodplains*</u> <i>Vacant</i>	NP	Although the Proposed Action is within the vicinity of a wash, no impact to the floodplains is expected.
<u>Forest Management*</u> <i>Vacant</i>	NP	No forest exists within project area.
<u>Fuels/ Fire Management</u> <i>Mike Trent</i>	NP	The project site has sparse vegetation.
<u>Geology/ Minerals</u> <i>Amy Titterington</i>	PNI	No mineral operations currently exist in the project area. No future operations are permitted within Wilderness Areas.
<u>Grazing/ Rangeland</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	Although the project area is within the Genado allotment, no grazing occurs within the project area.
<u>Invasive & Non-Native Species</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	PI	See Section 3.1
<u>Lands & Realty</u> <i>Lisa Stapp</i>	PNI	Proponent already holds authorization for this wildlife water.
<u>Law Enforcement</u> <i>Jonathon Azar</i>	NP	No change to Law Enforcement activities is expected due to the Proposed Action.
<u>Migratory Birds*</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	PNI	Proposed Action will not remove vegetation or inhibit migratory birds.
<u>Native American Religious Concerns*</u> <i>George W. Shannon, Jr., Ph.D.</i>	PNI	Native American Consultations conducted with the Ft Mojave, Chemehuevi, CRIT and Hualapai Tribes
<u>Noise</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	The Proposed Action will not increase noise beyond the initial construction period.
<u>Public Health & Safety</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	The Proposed Action is not expected to impact public health and safety.
<u>Recreation</u> <i>Amanda Deeds</i>	PNI	The Proposed Action will not inhibit primitive recreational opportunities within the area.
<u>Socioeconomics</u> <i>Project Lead</i>	NP	Proposed Action not expected to impact Socioeconomics.
<u>Soils</u> <i>Vacant</i>	PNI	No soil loss is expected for the Proposed Action.
<u>T & E Species*</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	PI	See Section 3.2
<u>Travel Management</u> <i>Amanda Deeds</i>	NP	No OHV routes exist at project site. Access to site is provided via existing routes.
<u>Vegetation</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	PNI	No disturbance or removal of vegetation is expected.
<u>Visual Resources</u> <i>Amanda Deeds</i>	PNI	The Proposed Action is not expected to change the visual resources within the project area.

<u>Wastes Hazardous or Solid*</u> <i>Cathy Wolff-White</i>	NP	No hazardous waste is present or expected within the project area.
<u>Water Quality Surface and Ground*</u> <i>Vacant</i>	NP	No impact to water quality is expected. Water permits have been acquired.
<u>Wetlands and Riparian*</u> <i>Doug Adams</i>	NP	No wetlands present within the project area.
<u>Wilderness, WSAs, Wild & Scenic Rivers</u> <i>Amanda Deeds</i>	NP	No Wilderness, WSAs, or Wild & Scenic Rivers are present within the Project Area.
<u>Wilderness Characteristics</u> <i>Amanda Deeds</i>	NP	No Wilderness Characteristics are present within the project area. (See Section 3.3 for Wilderness)
<u>Wild Horses & Burros</u> <i>Chad Benson</i>	NP	No wild horses or burros are found within the project area.
<u>Wildlife Aquatic</u> <i>Doug Adams</i>	NP	No aquatic wildlife is present within the project area.
<u>Wildlife Terrestrial</u> <i>Jennifer House</i>	PI	See Section 3.3

*Consideration Required by Law or Executive Order

NP = Not Present

PNI = Present, Not Impacted

PI = Present and/ or Potentially Impacted

1.5.2 External Scoping

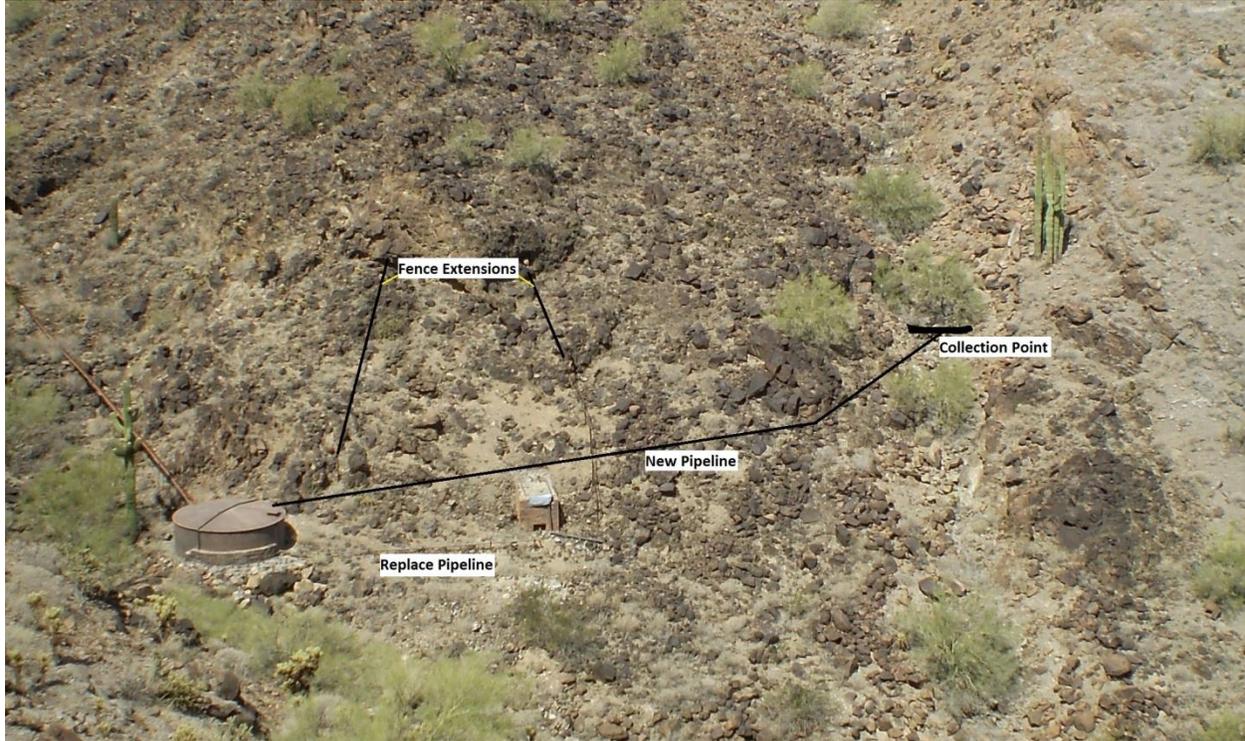
It was determined that no external scoping needed to be conducted because the project is small and more of a maintenance issue. All actions can be taken to minimize effects.

2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Proposed Action

The AGFD proposes to construct a new collection point and feed line to increase the amount of water collected during rain events, see Photo 1 below. Experience has shown that using small drainages with relatively large diameter feed lines allows the collection of short duration intense rain events that are relatively common rather than relying on the large and sustained rain events required by the existing structure. Two existing fences would be extended to a rock bluff to reduce the ability for livestock to access the water trough, see Schematic 1 below. All exposed pipe and manmade materials will be camouflaged using dyes, or paints.

Photo1. Gravel Pit development showing proposed collection dam, feed line, and fence extensions.



Design Features of the Proposed Action: The proposed collection point will have a small diversion made out of ready mix cement and native rock to eliminate visual impact. The diversion will be approximately 4' long and 8" high with a width of approximately 2-6". There will be 160' feet of 4" diameter pipe that will be buried and run from the proposed collection point to the tank. The two existing fences will be extended uphill to a rock escarpment to reduce the ability of cattle from getting to the water. This would encompass a total of approximately 70' of pipe rail wildlife specification fence. All materials will be flown in by helicopter. People will hike into the project. All surface rocks with patina will be saved and replaced with proper orientation to minimize visual obstruction. All activity will occur within 160-170' of existing structure.

Materials/Equipment:

- 8-10 bags of mortar/cement to construct 4' long x 8" tall x 6" wide diversion and berms above the trough to redirect sliding debris from falling into the trough.
- 150' of 4" schedule 10 black steel Gruvlock pipe, couplers, 90° ells, 45° ells.
- 40' of schedule 80 3" PVC pipe, fittings, 3" brass ball valve, pipe and valve box insulation, and valve box
- 60' of one 1.5" steel pipe for fence posts, and 320' of ½" steel pipe for rails, and Waterplug for filling post holes
- Cement mixing box, mixing hoes, shovels, hand tools
- Hardware cloth to cover intake and prevent debris entry
- 5-gallon buckets
- Camouflaging paint and paint brushes

Labor:

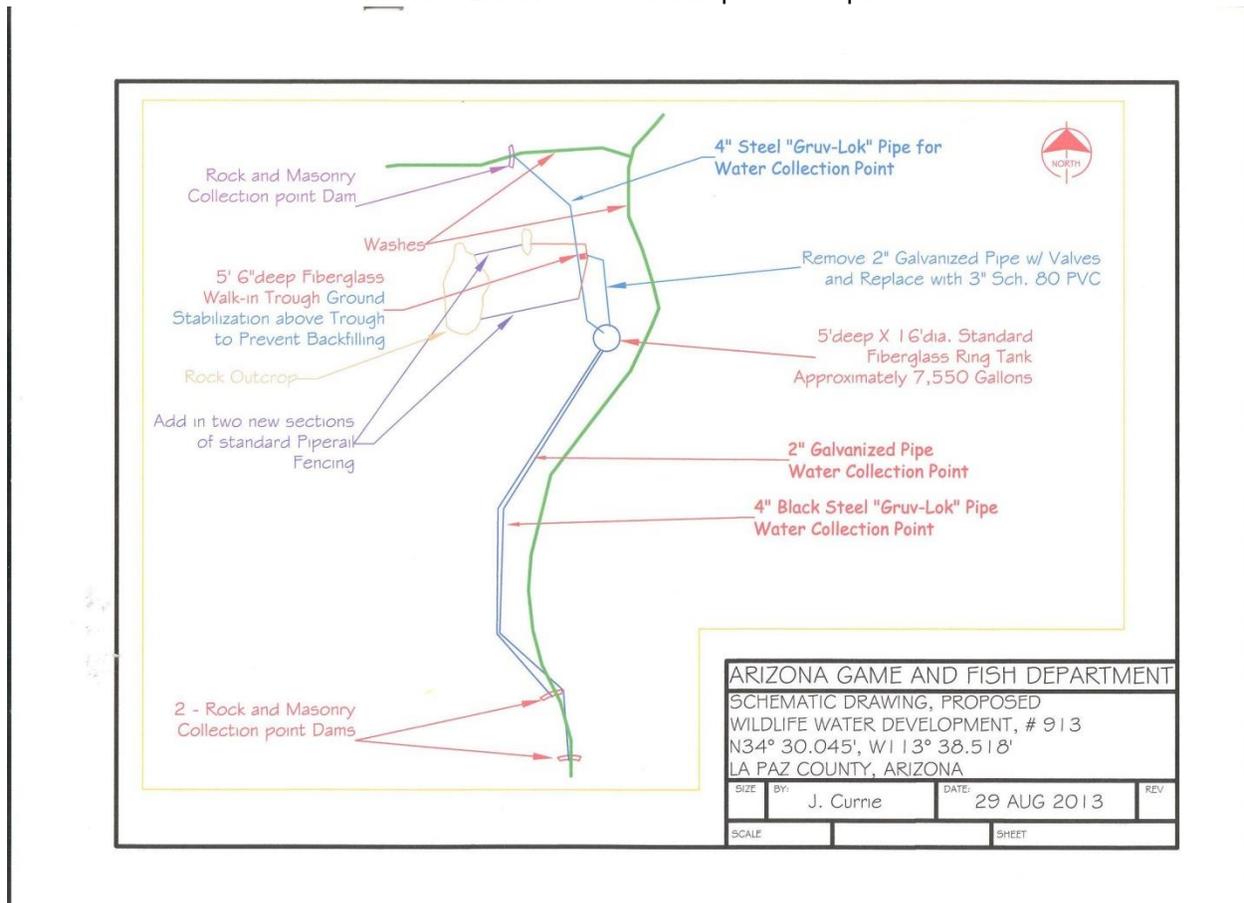
We are anticipating 20-30 people (AGFD personnel and Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society volunteers)

The entire project is estimated to take approximately two days to complete, sometime between January 1 and April 1, 2014. All work would occur during daylight.

The development would continue to be inspected periodically to determine water level and condition of materials by AGFD personnel. It would be monitored relative to effectiveness of the water collection and storage systems and wildlife use. Components of the new catchment system would be maintained and/or replaced as needed by AGFD.

Although after the initial filling, the need for water hauling should be reduced and/or eliminated with the new system. However, water will be hauled when necessary to maintain this primary perennial water source.

Schematic 1. Gravel Pit Redevelopment Proposal



2.2 No Action Alternative

No redevelopment of Gravel Pit wildlife water development would take place. The AGFD would monitor the existing site carefully. Water hauling would be expected to continue via helicopter at least two out of three years.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Detailed Analysis

The alternative action considered was to construct a new wildlife water approximately 1/3 mile downstream. This storage system for the wildlife water would be completely buried except for the wildlife friendly drinking trough. Once the system was complete and filled the old system would be removed and the area restored to previous conditions.

This alternative action was eliminated because the problem could be solved by putting in an additional feed line which would cost less. Also the alternative would be approximately 20 times more expensive, and require extensive use of mechanized equipment to construct.

2.4 Conformance with Land Use Plan

The proposed action is in conformance with the Lake Havasu *Field Office Resource Management Plan* (RMP) which was approved on January, 2007.

The proposed action is provided for in the following RMP decision(s):

“Distribution/density of wildlife waters throughout the planning area will be maintained, improved, and/or increased to sustain and enhance wildlife populations across their range. All existing wildlife waters will be maintained or improved as necessary to maintain the presence of perennial water for wildlife. New wildlife waters, including in new locations, may be constructed if necessary to replace old wildlife waters, restore, or enhance native wildlife populations and for improving wildlife distributions. All wildlife water projects will be evaluated through the NEPA analysis to determine necessity and effects.” Decision WF-23 on pg. 20.

“The BLM will manage all wildlife habitats with the objective to conserve native species for sustainable public benefits.” WF-2 pg. 17

“Wildlife habitat improvement projects will be implemented where necessary to stabilize or improve degraded or declining wildlife habitat conditions.” WF-17 pg. 19

2.5 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

The following section outlines statutes, regulations, and other requirements that apply to the Proposed Action.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Any action conducted on federally-administered lands or an action that utilizes federal dollars must be evaluated to determine if significant economic, social, or environmental effects may occur as a result of

the Proposed Action. The assessment of the Proposed Action must also identify a reasonable range of Action Alternatives and the associated environmental effects of the Actions.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)

The BLM is mandated by the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 to manage for multiple uses on BLM-administered lands. Land use planning is based on multiple use and sustained yield principles. This includes grazing, mining, land sales, acquisitions, and exchanges.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (Public Law 94-579) require that the Secretary of the Interior regulate mining operation to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation of the public lands.

Clean Water Act

Section 313 of the Clean Water Act of 1972 requires federal agencies be in compliance with all federal, state, interstate, and local requirements. In Arizona, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) implements the Clean Water Act.

Migratory Birds

Executive Order 13186 expressly requires that Federal agencies evaluate the effects of proposed actions on migratory birds (including eagles) pursuant to the NEPA “or other established environmental review process;” restore and enhance the habitat of migratory birds, as practicable; identify where unintentional take reasonably attributable to agency actions is having, or is likely to have, a measurable negative effect on migratory bird populations; and, with respect to those actions so identified, the agency shall develop and use principles, standards, and practices that would lessen the amount of unintentional take, developing any such conservation efforts in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Cultural Resource Laws and Executive Orders

BLM is required to consult with Native American tribes to “help assure (1) that federally recognized tribal governments and Native American individuals, whose traditional uses of public land might be affected by a proposed action, will have sufficient opportunity to contribute to the decision, and (2) that the decision maker will give tribal concerns proper consideration” (U.S. Department of the Interior, BLM Manual Handbook H-8120-1). Tribal coordination and consultation responsibilities are implemented under laws and executive orders that are specific to cultural resources which are referred to as “cultural resource authorities,” and under regulations that are not specific which are termed “general authorities.” Cultural resource authorities include: the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA); the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA); and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, as amended (NAGPRA). General authorities include: the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1979 (AIRFA); the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); and Executive Order 13007-Indian Sacred Sites. The proposed action is in compliance with the aforementioned authorities.

This action is also consistent with AGFD's Wildlife 20/20 Strategic Plan. Wildlife 20/20 calls for AGFD to mitigate habitat fragmentation to improve wildlife populations.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section describes the existing conditions of the affected environment and the potential environmental consequences. Those resources that have been identified by an interdisciplinary team as present and potentially affected are discussed below.

3.1 Invasive and Non-Native Species

Affected Environment

The project area, within Lower Sonoran Desertscrub, is dominated by white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*) and creosotebush (*Larrea tridentate*). Within drainage areas, ironwood (*Olneya tesota*), blue palo verde (*Cercidium floridum*), honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), as well as other shrubs and grasses, are more prevalent. Currently, no non-native plant species have been observed at the project site.

Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Non-native invasive plants could possibly be transported to the project sites by construction equipment. The area to be dug will be done with hand tools. This area will be disturbed temporarily allowing invasive species that prefer disturbed habitat to potentially occur.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, vegetation would not be disturbed because the catchment would not be improved.

3.2 Threatened & Endangered Species

Affected Environment

No Federally designated threatened or endangered species are known to occur within the proposed project area. Special status species, those either listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), on the BLM sensitive species list, or on the AGFD list of Wildlife of Special Concern in Arizona (AGFD 1996 in prep.) may occur in the project area. However, no evidence of these species has been observed at the project site.

The Sonoran population of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), may occur within 3 miles of the project area and impacts to this species is evaluated because it is currently listed as a candidate species by the USFWS. The proposed project is located in category II desert tortoise habitat.

The California leaf-nosed bat (*Macrotis californicus*) is the only other species of concern known to occur within three miles of the project area.

Other sensitive species in the area that may occur in the vicinity:

Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*)

Cave myotis (*Myotis velifer*)

Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugena*)

There are no known populations of sensitive plant species found within the project area.

Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

There would be no expected impacts to threatened and endangered wildlife and plants, because they are not present in the project area. Desert tortoise may be temporarily displaced for the three days

during construction of the additional collection point. No active tortoise dens are located in the project area. Future disturbance from water hauling activities would be reduced. The proposed action will increase the availability of permanent water which will be beneficial to California Leaf Nosed bat which is the only other special status specie that occur within three miles of the project.

No Action Alternative

No habitats of threatened, endangered, or special status species would be affected under the No Action Alternative because the catchment would not be improved. Helicopter intrusions to fill the tank would continue to occur, possibly causing temporary disturbances to special status species. Disturbance would be short-term lasting approximately 4-5 hours per filling.

3.3 Wildlife

Affected Environment

Four big game species occur within the Little Harquahala Mountains: desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, mountain lion and javelina. Four common species of small game are found throughout the area in desert washes and palo verde-mixed cacti habitats: Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*), white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), mourning dove (*Z. macroura*) and desert cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus auduboni*). Furbearers found in the plan area include bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). Other common mammal species include kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys* spp.), pocket mouse (*Perognathus* spp.), white-throated woodrat (*Neotoma albigula*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), and Harris's antelope ground squirrel (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*). Common bird species are red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), black-throated sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*), cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*), greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*), Gila woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*), verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*), and black-tailed gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*). Reptiles and amphibians include: sidewinder rattlesnake (*Crotalus cerastes*), speckled rattlesnake (*Crotalus mitchelli*) western diamondback rattlesnake (*C. atrox*), kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula*), Sonoran gophersnake (*Pituophis melanoleucus affinis*), rosy boa (*Charina trivirgata*), western whiptail lizard (*Cnemidophorus tigris*), desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*), zebra-tailed lizard (*Callisaurus draconoides*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*), red-spotted toad (*Bufo punctatus*), spadefoot toads (*Scaphiopus* ssp.).

Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

The redevelopment of the existing water source would continue to provide a reliable source of water for wildlife in the vicinity of this water. This may lead to improved habitat characteristics for wildlife populations within the Harquahala Mountains. There may be a temporary displacement of wildlife due to human activity at the site during the construction period.

All species currently using the existing water catchment may be impacted by the inability to access the water source during the two to three day construction period. Upon project completion, the perennial water source will be available to all species. This project will improve reliability of water collection and long-term availability of water. Prey species are not expected to be impacted by increased predator attacks. Lack of thick vegetation and nearby rock ledges limits the likelihood of increased predator attacks at this location.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, wildlife would not be disturbed by human presence or noise associated with the redevelopment activities. Gravel Pit would continue to be monitored and water hauled on an as-needed basis, possibly disturbing wildlife more frequently and during the period of greatest stress to the animals. Disturbance would be short-term lasting approximately 4-5 hours per filling.

4.0 MITIGATING MEASURES FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1. "Pack it in Pack it Out!" All trash and debris caused by the activity shall be removed. All litter, trash, and garbage shall be controlled by placing refuse in predator-proof, sealable receptacles and removing the debris regularly from the worksite.
2. Care shall be taken not to disturb or destroy desert tortoises or their burrows. Handling, collecting, damaging, or destroying desert tortoises are prohibited by Arizona State Statute. Any sightings of desert tortoise shall be immediately reported to the LHFO, Wildlife Biologist at (928) 505-1200. If a desert tortoise is endangered by any activity that activity shall cease until the desert tortoise moves out of harm's way on its own accord or is moved following the attached guidelines "Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects."
3. If a vehicle is left for any occasion the driver shall inspect underneath any parked vehicles immediately prior to moving the vehicles. If a desert tortoise is beneath the vehicle, the authorized biologist shall move the tortoise from harm's way. Alternatively, the vehicle shall not be moved until the tortoise has left of its own accord.
4. All wildlife and migratory birds shall be observed from a distance. Any injured wildlife shall be reported to Arizona Game & Fish Department at (928) 342-0091.
5. Harassment of wildlife or destruction of private and public improvements, such as fences and gates, is prohibited. The taking of any threatened or endangered plant or animal is prohibited.
6. Participants will be prohibited from approaching Bighorn Sheep on foot or by vehicle.
7. State protected plant species (all cactus, ocotillo, and native trees) shall be avoided. If they cannot be avoided they will be salvaged and replanted during reclamation. The operator shall report all State protected species destroyed or damaged to the Lake Havasu Field Office Biologist at (928) 505-1200.
8. All personnel should report any sightings of desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife species to the LHFO Biologist.
9. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological or historical cultural resources, the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office would be notified immediately. All activity in the discovery area would cease until an evaluation of the discovery is made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values.

5.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

5.1 Introduction

Cumulative effects are the impacts on the environment that may result from the incremental effect of the Proposed Action or No Action alternative in combination with other past, present, and reasonably

foreseeable future actions (RFFA) on BLM-administered lands, as well on those lands under other jurisdictions that are adjacent to or within BLM boundaries. Cumulative effects must consider the likely impact of the Proposed Action or No Action alternative when combined with these additional actions. This section describes the cumulative effects of those resources/concerns identified in Section 3 as present and/or potentially affected. The project area is completely within the Little Harquahala Mountain range, therefore will act as the Cumulative Impact Analysis Area (CIAA).

The cumulative effects of the proposed action would be increased water collection and therefore increased water storage. This would cause less stress on the animals utilizing this water. Helicopter water hauling would be reduced therefore disturbance to wildlife and human visitors will be decreased. The cumulative effects of the no action alternative would be decreased water storage and lower water levels in the trough causing stress and difficulty for animals to drink. Drinking is one of the most stressful times for animals because they become more concentrated at waters and increased vulnerability to predators.

5.2 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFA)

Historically, Gravel Pit #913 Catchment was developed in 1985 by modifying a natural pothole and installing two 3150 gallon fiberglass sausage tanks fed by the pothole. The storage tanks were plumbed to a float valve trough. In 1993 another collection point upstream from the pothole was installed and another 2" fill line was added from the collection point to the storage tanks. In 2002, the sausage tanks were removed and replaced with a 16' diameter by five foot deep fiberglass ring tank. The float valve trough was replaced by a 5' 6" walk-in trough. The feed line from the upper collection point was converted to 4" Gruvlock steel pipe. A pipe rail fence was installed on two sides of the trough to restrict cattle use.

Currently, this wildlife water is the only one maintained by AGFD in the Little Harquahala Mountains. Temporary disturbance of wildlife occurs when hauling water approximately two of every three years from the CAP canal via helicopter. Although the project area is within the K Lazy B grazing allotment, livestock has been excluded from this water source. This cumulative effect would continue if the proposed project is not implemented. If the proposed project is implemented the need for future water hauling via helicopter would be reduced if not eliminated. No other proposed actions are anticipated to occur within the next five years.

5.3 Cumulative Effects

5.3.1 Invasive & Non-Native Species

Actions potentially inviting invasive and non-native species into the CIAA have been limited due to the minimal land use. Cumulatively, the Proposed Action would provide an avenue for invasive species establishment during construction, but design features and mitigation measures limit this potential. No cumulative impact for invasive and non-native species is expected.

5.3.2 Threatened & Endangered Species

The minimal land use within the CIAA indicates no cumulative effect of the proposed action on threatened, endangered, and special status species. Although Sonoran desert tortoise may be displaced

during the three day construction period, design features and mitigation measures will limit the long-term impact to this species. Similarly, the California leaf-nosed bat may have limited access to this water source during the three day construction, but no long-term impacts are expected.

5.3.3 Wildlife

Throughout the Little Harquahala Mountains, only two wildlife water catchments have been established. The Harquar Tank is located approximately five miles north. These catchments have provided access to a perennial water source for a variety of species. These actions have improved habitat suitability for game and non-game species, including the Bighorn Sheep, throughout the Little Harquahala Mountains. The proposed action would allow for improved efficiency of water collection and continued use of the Gravel Pit catchment, therefore sustaining important habitat characteristics into the future.

6.0 TRIBES, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

Arizona Game and Fish Department
Bureau of Land Management-Havasu Field Office
Desert Bighorn Sheep Society
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Colorado River Indian Tribes
Hualapai Tribe
Chemehuevi Indian Tribe

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Stipulations

1. “Pack it in Pack it Out!” All trash and debris caused by the activity shall be removed. All litter, trash, and garbage shall be controlled by placing refuse in predator-proof, sealable receptacles and removing the debris regularly from the worksite.
2. Care shall be taken not to disturb or destroy desert tortoises or their burrows. Handling, collecting, damaging, or destroying desert tortoises are prohibited by Arizona State Statute. Any sightings of desert tortoise shall be immediately reported to the LHFO, Wildlife Biologist at (928) 505-1200. If a desert tortoise is endangered by any activity that activity shall cease until the desert tortoise moves out of harm’s way on its own accord or is moved following the attached guidelines “Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects.”
3. If a vehicle is left for any occasion the driver shall inspect underneath any parked vehicles immediately prior to moving the vehicles. If a desert tortoise is beneath the vehicle, the authorized biologist shall move the tortoise from harm’s way. Alternatively, the vehicle shall not be moved until the tortoise has left of its own accord.
4. All wildlife and migratory birds shall be observed from a distance. Any injured wildlife shall be reported to Arizona Game & Fish Department at (928) 342-0091.
5. Harassment of wildlife or destruction of private and public improvements, such as fences and gates, is prohibited. The taking of any threatened or endangered plant or animal is prohibited.
6. Participants will be prohibited from approaching Bighorn Sheep on foot or by vehicle.
7. State protected plant species (all cactus, ocotillo, and native trees) shall be avoided. If they cannot be avoided they will be salvaged and replanted during reclamation. The operator shall report all State protected species destroyed or damaged to the Lake Havasu Field Office Biologist at (928) 505-1200.
8. All personnel should report any sightings of desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife species to the LHFO Biologist.
9. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological or historical cultural resources, the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office would be notified immediately. All activity in the discovery area would cease until an evaluation of the discovery is made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values.