

Checklist for Interdisciplinary Review of Categorical Exclusions

Document Title: Modification of Water Development to Improve Fish & Wildlife Habitat in Spring Canyon

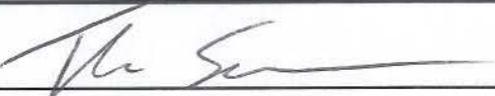
Document Number: DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2015-0018-CX

Case File Number:

Preparer Name and Title: Heidi Blasius

Date Scoping Initiated:

Date Scoping CLOSED: 2/18/15

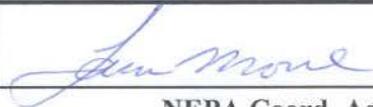


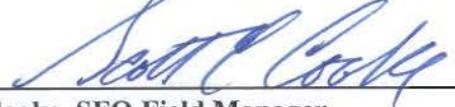
Thomas J. Schnell, AFM for Non-Renewable Resources

Jeff Conn - Heidi Blasius
 Biologist Assigned

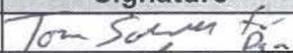
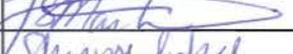
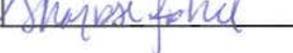


Acting, AFM for Renewable Resources


 NEPA Coord. Assigned



Scott C. Cooke, SFO Field Manager

Critical Elements and Other Issues	Specialists	Affected		Comments		Document Review Signature	Date
		Yes	No	Yes	No		
1. NRHPP/Cultural	Dan McGrew		X		X		2/18/15
2. T&E Species	Jeff Conn		X		X		2/18/15
3. Floodplains/Wetlands	Lann Moore		X		X		2/18/15
4. Invasive Species	Jason Martin		X		X		2/18/15
5. NEPA Map	Sharisse Fisher		X		X		2/18/15

Attachments:

Planning and Environmental Coordinator:  Date: 2/18/15

 Date: 2/18/15

Authorized Officer - Reviewed/Recommended

**NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX)
Safford Field Office**

NEPA #: DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2015-0018-CX

Serial/Case File No.

Proposed Action Title/Type: Modification of water development to improve fish and wildlife habitat in Spring Canyon.

Introduction and Background:

Prior to the designation of the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area (RNCA), livestock grazing and operations were located along Bonita Creek at Lee Trail. After Congressional designation of the RNCA and the subsequent development of its Management Plan, livestock grazing was deferred from the riparian areas within the RNCA and the livestock operation facilities were moved to the uplands to improve water quality. As part of this action, the BLM explored well development in the uplands outside of the RNCA to provide water for livestock and to eliminate pumping from Bonita Creek at Lee Trail. An upland well site was selected adjacent to and above Spring Canyon, a small tributary to the Gila River.

In November of 2000, the Spring Canyon well was drilled and became operational in 2003. Shortly after the well became operational, flow measurements showed a diminished quantity of streamflow in Spring Canyon and substantial drying both longitudinally and laterally and subsequent fragmentation of aquatic habitats attributable to pumping and drought conditions. It was also documented that as the system became dryer the springhead emerged further downstream than the original location identified in 2000. Currently the water flow in spring canyon continues to be at very low levels and mitigation is needed to help reduce the impacts to the riparian area, and subsequently the longfin dace and lowland leopard frog.

Description of Proposed Action:

Approximately 2.9 miles of two inch polyethylene pipe will be temporarily placed above-ground to connect an existing water development in the Red Knolls pasture along West Bonita Creek Rim Road to an existing water system (pipeline, troughs, and storage tanks) in the Salt Trap pasture. Once the two existing systems are connected the use of the Spring Canyon well will be significantly reduced or eliminated. There will be no increase in total water use as a result of this action.

Applicant (if any): Not Applicable

PART I: PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW.

This proposed action is subject to the following land use plan: Safford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Record of Decision approved September 1992 and July 1994.

WF05: Maintain and enhance priority species and their habitat. RMP page 33.

WF07: Conserve candidate species to ensure that BLM authorized actions do not contribute to the need to list any species as threatened or endangered. RMP page 33.

- WF09:** Manage priority wildlife species habitat (vegetation communities) or special features of that habitat (water, riparian vegetation, cliffs, etc.) to maintain or enhance population levels. RMP page 33.
- WF10:** Focus management efforts on enhancing biological diversity. RMP page 33.
- WF17:** Continue to maintain and improve wildlife habitat, emphasizing priority habitat. RMP page 34.
- WF18:** Protect springs and associated indigenous riparian vegetation for wildlife water, cover and forage. RMP page 34.

The proposed action has been reviewed and determined to be in conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM MS 1617.3).

Abigail Beasly 2/18/2015
Specialist Signature Date

PROGRAM CONSULTATION & COORDINATION/CX CHECKLIST
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SAFFORD FIELD OFFICE

PART II: CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW

NEPA #: DOI-BLM-AZ-G010-2015-0018-CX

Subactivity: 1120, 1110, and 1040

Case/Project No.:

Project Name: Modification of water development to improve fish and wildlife habitat in Spring Canyon.

Location (legal description): Spring Canyon: SE1/4SW1/4SW1/4 Sec. 17, T.6S. R.28E

Project Lead: Heidi B. Blasius, Fisheries Biologist

Draft Review: Unit Manager/Supervisor: Lann Moore

Date: 2/18/15

Technical Review:

Applies? Yes No	NAME	EXCEPTION	SIGNATURE	DATE
() (X)	R.J. Estes	(1) Have Significant adverse effects on public health or safety?	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	<u>Lann Moore</u>	(2) Have adverse effects on such unique geographic characteristics as principal drinking water aquifers, or wetlands.	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	<u>Todd Murdock</u>	(3) Have adverse effects on such unique geographic characteristics as parks, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, or ecologically significant or critical areas including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks.	<u>Todd Murdock</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	Dan McGrew	(4) Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, on such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners.	<u>Tan Schwan for Dan McGrew</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	<u>Jeff Coon</u>	(5) Have adverse effects on species listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	<u>Jeff Coon</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	<u>Jason Martin</u>	(6) Contribute to the introduction, continuation existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.	<u>Jason Martin</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	<u>Lann Moore</u>	(7) Have highly controversial environmental effects.	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	↓ ↓	(8) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	↓ ↓	(9) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() (X)	↓ ↓	(10) Individually Insignificant, but cumulatively significant effects.	<u>Lann Moore</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>
() ()	<u>Jason Martin</u>	(11) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.	<u>Jason Martin</u>	<u>2/18/15</u>

Final Review:

Environmental Coordinator: Lann Moore

Date: 2/18/15

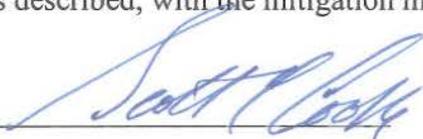
This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under the Environmental Policy Act in accordance with 516 DM 11, 11.9, A (2): Minor modification of water development to improve or facilitate wildlife use. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed (See Table 1), and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

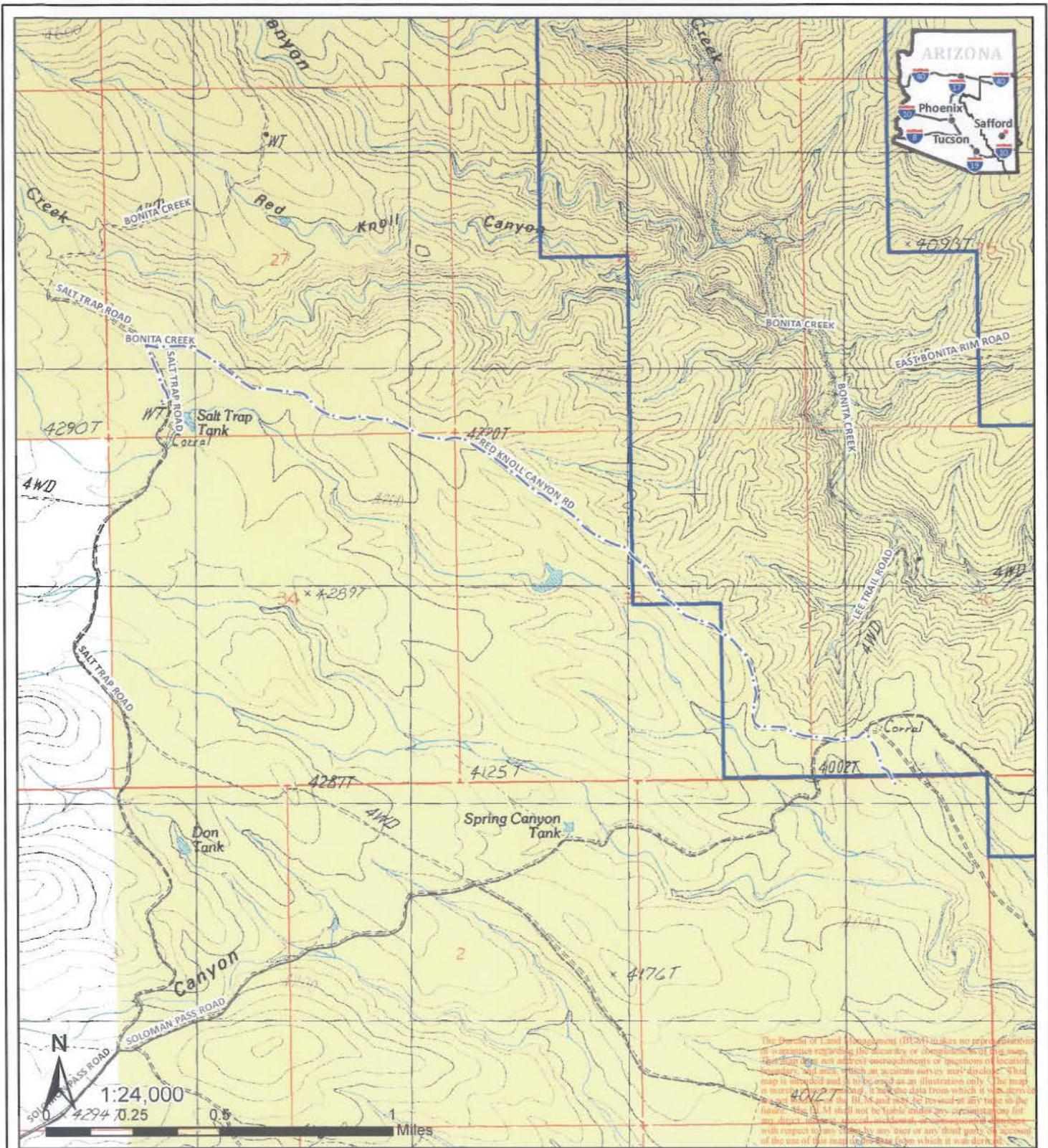
Table 1. Extraordinary Circumstances Review.

Exclusion Criteria	Yes	No
1. Have significant effects on public health or safety.		X
2. 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.		X
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
5. Establishes a precedent for future action or represents a decision in principle about future actions with significant environmental effects.		X
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
8. 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.		X
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
11. 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).		X
12. 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).		X

Mitigation Measures/Stipulations:

Part III: DECISION. I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed action does not conflict with major land-use-plans and will not have any major adverse impacts on other resources. Therefore, it does not represent an exception, and is categorically excluded from further environmental review. It is my decision to implement the project, as described, with the mitigation measures attached.

Authorized Official:  Date: 2/18/15



DOI-BLM-G010-2015-0018-CX

Modification of Water Development to Improve Fish & Wildlife Habitat in Spring Canyon

- Proposed Pipeline (2.9 Miles)
- ▭ Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area

- Surface Management**
- BLM
 - Private



US Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Safford Field Office
 Date Created: 2/17/2015
 Author: slfisher