

**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-A010-2015-0020-CX
Case File No.: N/A

Proposed Action Title/Type: Acoustic Bat Monitoring on the Arizona Strip

Applicant: Clarissa Starbuck, Northern Arizona University

Location of Proposed Action: Acoustic monitoring stations would be placed at 30 points across the Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO)(Map 1). 25 points would be located on lands managed by the ASFO while five would be located on Arizona State Lands which are not managed by the BLM. These stations are separated into two groups of 15 points each. Group 1 is located in the Lower Hurricane Valley between the Twist Hills and the Hurricane Cliffs approximately 18 miles south of St. George, UT (Map 2). Group 2 is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Fredonia, AZ (Map 3). No more than six stations would be in operation at one time.

Description of Proposed Action: Bat echolocation detectors would be placed at each location for 10 days during each of three seasons (spring migration: March 15 – May 15; summer/maternity: June 15 – August 15; fall migration: September 15 – November 15). A microphone would be attached to the detector via connected 3 meter and 50 meter cords. The microphone would be attached to a temporary tower so that it is 8 meters above ground (Figure 1). The microphones would be angled slightly downwards to prevent moisture from getting through the wind screen and on to the electrical parts of the microphone. Three guy wires would be attached to the tower to prevent it from falling over. Flagging would be tied to the guy wires to make them more visible to wildlife. If deemed necessary, a solar-powered electric fence may be set up around some of the monitoring towers to prevent livestock damage. Detectors would be placed in locations above surrounding tall vegetation so that the recorded sound would not be distorted. At the end of 10 days, data would be downloaded from the SD cards to a computer, batteries changed, and detectors moved to a new location. Access to each site would be by vehicle along existing routes to a location near the site then on foot to the setup location. No off-road use of vehicles would be authorized.

As described above, locations are grouped into two groups on the ASFO (Map 1). There would be three detectors in each group at one time, for a total of six detectors set up on the ASFO at a time. Each detector would be placed at four different locations for each season, resulting in 24 locations per season on the ASFO. Three extra locations per group have been selected as alternate locations in case of accessibility issues (Maps 2 & 3). Acoustic monitoring on the ASFO would be part of a larger research effort in which over 100 locations across northern Arizona would be monitored each season.

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 and page nos.: The proposed action is in conformance with the following RMP decisions:

DFC-SR-01. Approved scientific research will contribute to management of natural and cultural resources and achieving DFCs. (page 2-128)

MA-SR-01. Permits will be required for approved scientific research to ensure compatibility and reporting of results. (page 2-128)

Date plan approved/amended: January 29, 2008

This proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with this 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: J. Other

(3) Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Included are siting, construction, installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.

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.

PART IV. – EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION

PREPARERS/REVIEWERS:	DATE:
Shawn Langston, Project Lead	August 18, 2015
Gloria Benson, Tribal Liaison	No Response Received
Whit Bunting, Range/Vegetation/Weeds/S&G	August 5, 2015
Diana Hawks, Recreation/Wilderness/VRM	August 13, 2015
John Herron, Cultural Resources	July 29, 2015
Laurie Ford, Lands/Realty/Minerals	July 29, 2015
Jace Lambeth, Special Status Plants	August 4, 2015

John Sims, Supervisory Law Enforcement		No Response Received
Richard Spotts, Environmental Coordinator		August 4, 2015
Jeff Young, Wildlife/T&E Animals		August 14, 2015
Lorraine Christian, Field Manager, ASFO		August 5, 2015
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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: The Proposed Action is very small in scale and would not require the use of machinery, materials, or chemicals that would reasonably be considered hazardous to the public. No impacts to public health or safety are anticipated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: The installation and monitoring of bat echolocation devices at up to 25 locations (24 each season) on the Arizona Strip Field Office would have no significant impacts on recreation, designated wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or areas managed to maintain wilderness characteristics. The small size, unobtrusive nature and temporary deployment of these acoustic monitoring stations would provide for bat monitoring while being primarily unnoticeable by the recreating public. All proposed monitoring locations are outside designated wilderness, any areas managed to maintain wilderness characteristics and national monuments. There are no wild and scenic river segments near any of the proposed monitoring locations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> DCH </u></p>
(c) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2) (E)].		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: This type of project has not been controversial in the past. In addition, the project is very small in scale and the detectors would be in place for only 10 days at one time. No conflicts with other resources are therefore expected.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(d) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Rationale: Similar projects have occurred in the past with no significant environmental effects. Thus, no highly uncertain or unique/unknown environmental risks are anticipated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>

(e) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principal about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action would not be precedent-setting because it is considered a routine, non-invasive research project. Any future proposals would be individually evaluated, on a case-by-case basis. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(f) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action is very small in scale and is not anticipated to have cumulatively significant environmental effects when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions in the area. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(g) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: None of these properties are present in the Project Area. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> JH </u></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.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The California condor is the only listed species potentially found in the area. The Proposed Action would have no effect on condors because it would not alter habitat components or limit food sources important to this species. Any potential disturbance to condors would be limited due to mitigation measures included in the Mitigation Measures section of this CX (Part V). No designated Critical Habitat is present within the Project Area. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(i) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: The Proposed Action would be in compliance with all laws. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></p>
(j) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rationale: Low income or minority populations are not present in or near the Project Area and would therefore not be affected by the Proposed Action. <p style="text-align: right;">Preparer's Initials <u> SML </u></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).

Yes

No

Rationale: The Proposed Action would not involve the closure of or limit access to any areas, and would not impact access to public lands, including for ceremonial use.

Preparer's Initials SML

(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

Rationale: The Proposed Action would create no new ground disturbance that would allow for the establishment of noxious weeds. All vehicles associated with project activities would be required to remain on existing routes. No off-road travel is authorized.

Preparer's Initials SML

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:

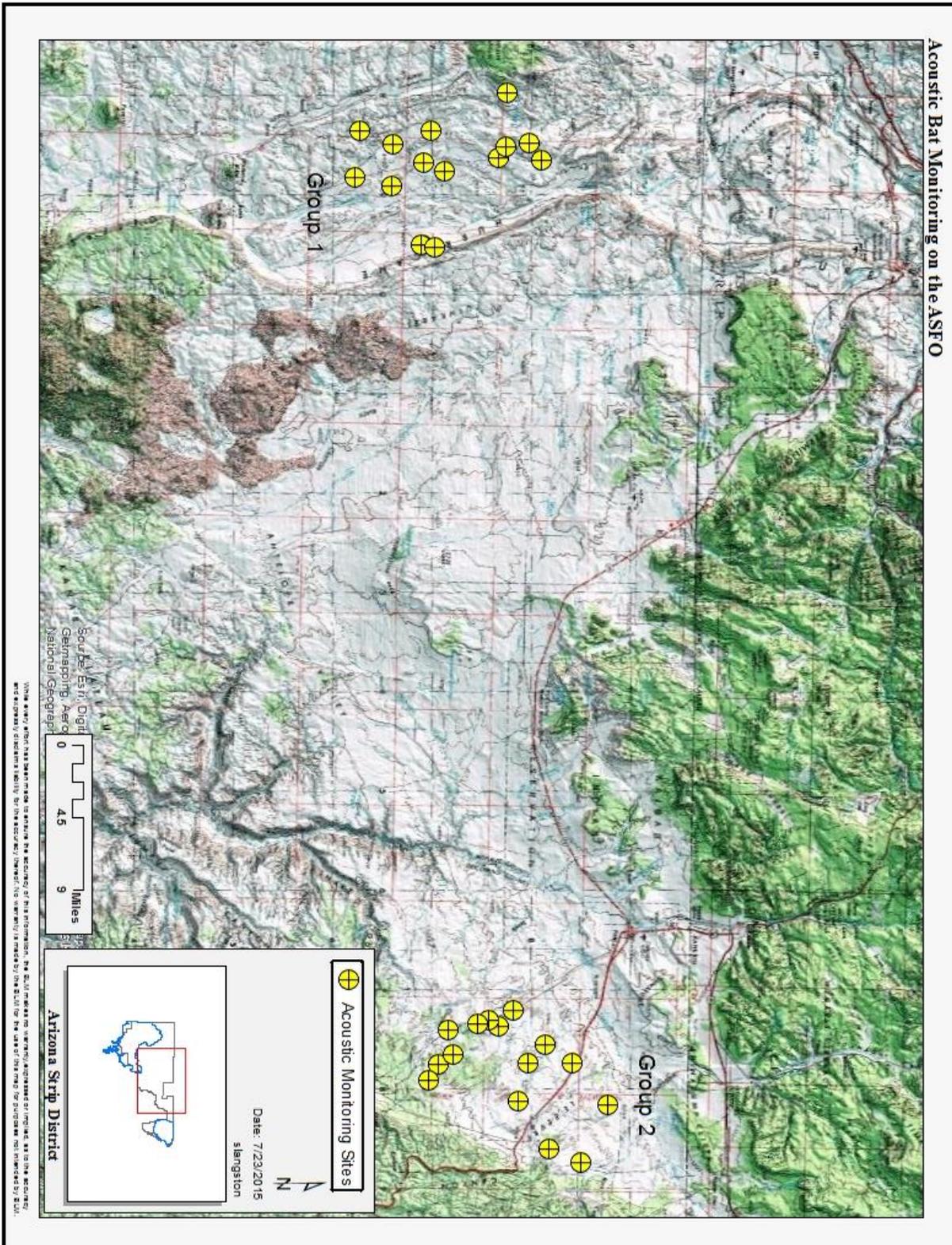
1. Any surface, or sub-surface archaeological, historical, or paleontological remains discovered and not covered in the Cultural Resource Protection Record (CRPR) during project work would be left intact; all work in the area would stop immediately and the Field Office Manager (435-688-3323) shall be 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 Field Office Manager immediately notified. The immediate area of the discovery would be avoided and protected until notification by the Field Office Manager that operations may resume.
3. Each project site would be cleaned up at the end of each day that work is being conducted (e.g., trash removed, scrap materials picked up) to minimize the likelihood of condors visiting the site.
4. 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.
5. All vehicles and equipment would be cleaned prior to entering the project area to reduce the spread of noxious weeds and non-native invasive species.

APPROVING OFFICIAL: Signed by Diana Hawks (acting Field Manager)_____ DATE: 9/9/2015

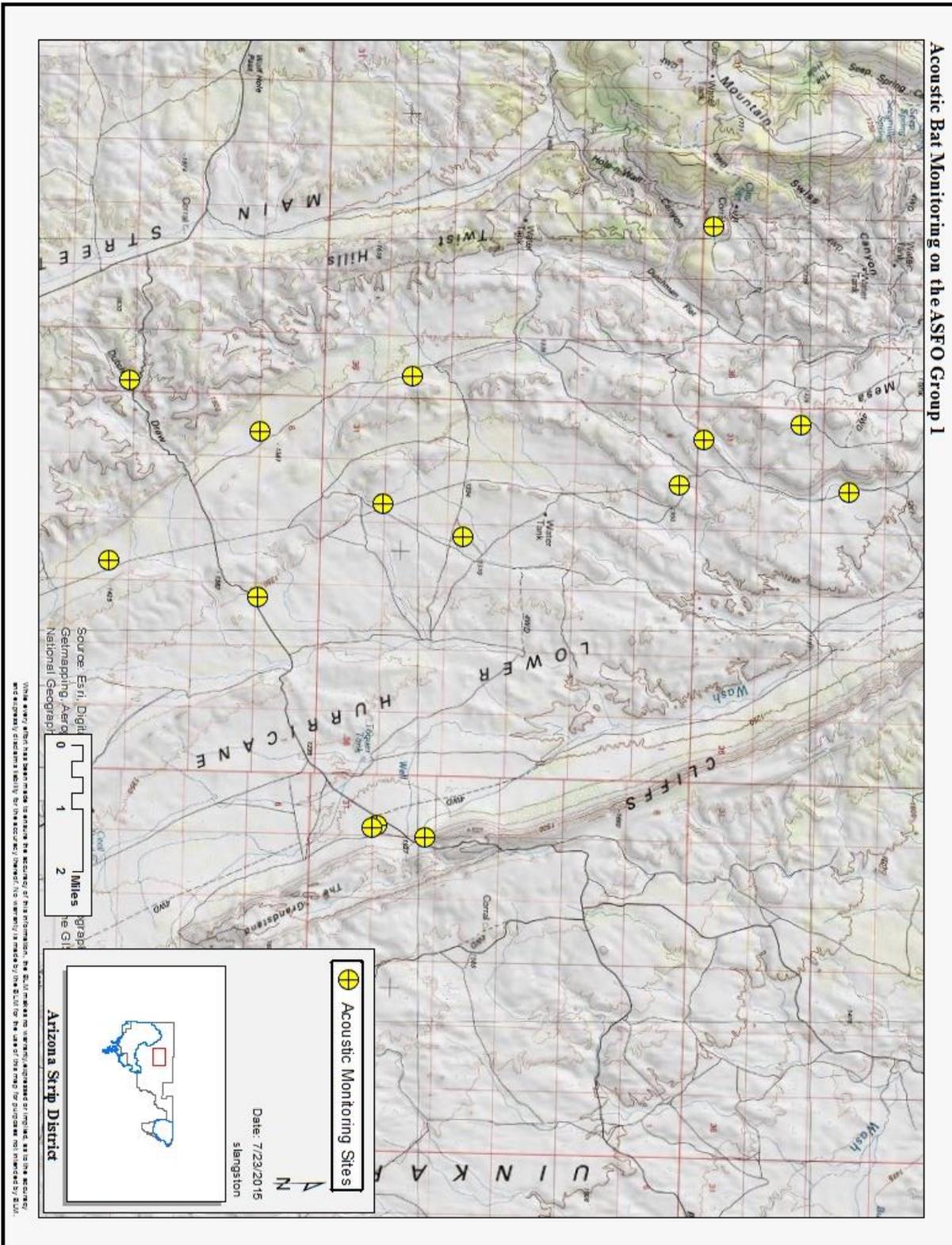
TITLE: Field Manager, Arizona Strip Field Office

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.

Map 1. Location of Acoustic Monitoring Points.



Map 2. Acoustic Monitoring Points in Group 1.



Map 3. Acoustic Monitoring Points in Group 2.

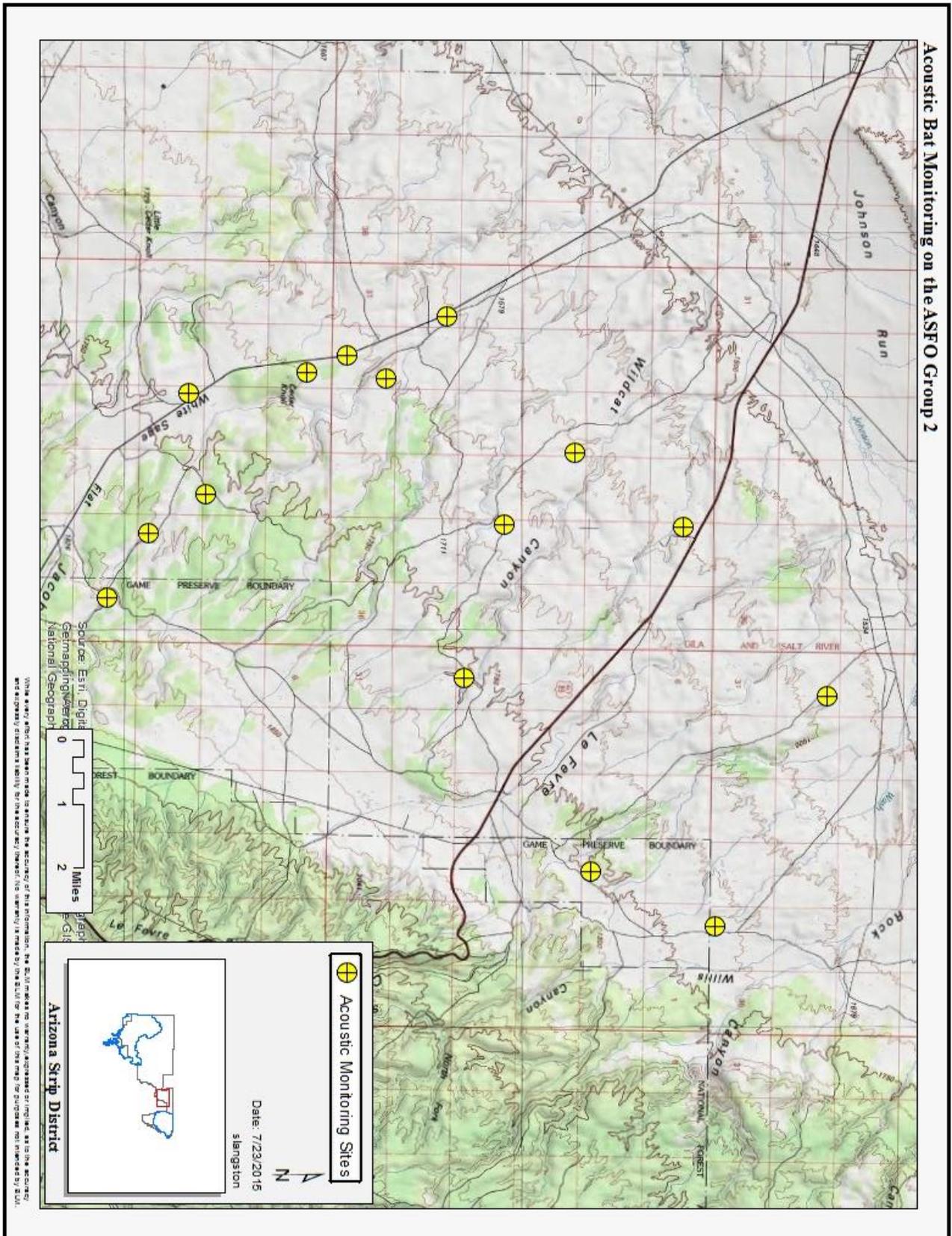


Figure 1. Photo of Acoustic Monitoring Setup.



**DECISION MEMORANDUM
ACOUSTIC BAT MONITORING ON THE ARIZONA STRIP
DOI-BLM-AZ-A010-2015-0020-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.

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 will be left intact; all work in the area will stop immediately and the 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.
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 will stop in the immediate area of the discovery, the remains and objects will be protected, and the Field Office Manager immediately notified. The immediate area of the discovery will be avoided and protected until notification by the Field Office Manager that operations may resume.
3. Each project site will be cleaned up at the end of each day that work is being conducted (e.g., trash removed, scrap materials picked up) to minimize the likelihood of condors visiting the site.
4. No project activities will 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.
5. All vehicles and equipment will be cleaned prior to entering the project area to reduce the spread of noxious weeds and non-native invasive species.

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: 9/9/2015 _____
Name: Diana C. Hawks
Title: Arizona Strip Field Office Manager (Acting)

Attachment: Form 1842-1