

Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

OFFICE: *Hassayampa Field Office (HFO)*

NEPA/TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2016-0005-DNA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: None

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Riparian Vegetation Transplanting in the Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: A 2.5 mile reach of the Hassayampa River in the Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness, approximately 10 miles northeast of Wickenburg, AZ, on the JV Bar grazing allotment, T9N R3W S 30 and 31; T 9N R 4W S 25 and 26

APPLICANT (if any): None

A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

The proposed action is to pole-plant native riparian trees, and transplant plugs of native herbaceous riparian plants, along the banks of the Hassayampa River in the Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness (see map below). The poles will be obtained from cuttings from local trees along the treatment reach. This is a cooperative project with BLM and the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, funded by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant. BLM will provide project oversight and guidance while the Arizona Wilderness Coalition will provide the labor to implement the project. The specific methods used are described in the programmatic environmental assessment Riparian Vegetation Propagation EA (DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2011-021). Since this project is located in a wilderness area only those methods that do not require motorized or mechanized equipment will be used. Pole-planting would be carried out in the winter when the trees are dormant (between December 15 and February 15). Transplanting riparian vegetation will occur in the spring (March 1 – May 30).

A grazing permit renewal for the JV Bar allotment was recently completed. The proposed action for the JV Bar allotment restricts grazing in the riparian area along the Hassayampa River to winter-season only, when riparian vegetation is dormant and livestock spend less time in riparian areas. This restricted season of use is expected to improve the likelihood that this project will be successful.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan (LUP) Name: Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan

Date Approved/Amended: April 2010

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

VM-1 - Maintain, restore, or enhance the diversity, distribution, and viability of populations of native plants, and maintain, restore, or enhance overall ecosystem health.

RP-1 - Riparian areas will include a plant community that consists of stream banks dominated (> 50 percent) by native species from the genera *Scirpus*, *Carex*, *Juncus*, and *Eleocharis*. The size class distribution of native riparian obligate trees will be > 15 percent seedlings, > 15 percent mid-size, and > 15 percent large size (depending on existing conditions and the site potential). Size classes are defined as follows:

- Seedlings are < 1 inch in basal diameter.
- Mid-sizes are 1 to 6 inches in basal diameter.
- Large sizes are > 6 inches in basal diameter.

LH-3 - Productive, diverse upland and riparian-wetland plant communities of native species exist and are maintained.

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

This DNA is tiered to the Hassayampa Field Office programmatic *Riparian Vegetation Propagation EA* (DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2011-021). A rangeland health assessment (RHE) was completed for the JV Bar Grazing allotment (where the project area is located) in 2014. This document contains the latest monitoring data and riparian proper functioning condition assessments. The EA, RHE, and data appendices for the RHE are attached.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes. The EA to which this DNA is tiered analyzed the effects of the same actions proposed in this DNA. The project is located within the same analysis area (riparian habitat in the Hassayampa Field Office), and the geographic and resource conditions are sufficiently similar.

- 2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

Yes, the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document is appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given the current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values.

- 3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

The *Riparian Vegetation Propagation EA* to which this DNA is tiered, considered habitat impacts to the yellow-billed cuckoo, which was a candidate species at the time. The yellow-billed cuckoo is now threatened, but there is no information or circumstances related to yellow-billed cuckoo that would substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action.

- 4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed action are similar to those analyzed in the *Riparian Vegetation Propagation EA*.

- 5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA documents(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

With the exception of the informal consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) mentioned below, public involvement and interagency review associated with the existing EA is adequate for the current proposed action.

BLM consulted informally with the USFWS on the effects of the proposed action in this DNA on yellow-billed cuckoo. Both the USFWS geographic lead for central Arizona and the yellow-billed cuckoo species lead agreed with BLM that the project would have no effect on the yellow-billed cuckoo. The rationale for this no effect determination is that the habitat along the treatment reach is unlikely to be used for nesting by yellow-billed cuckoo due to the sparse cover of riparian vegetation, and due to the treatment area being located in a narrow, steep-sided canyon. Habitat along the treatment reach may be used by migrating cuckoos, but it is unlikely that the treatments will have an effect on transient birds traveling through the area.

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted

Name	Title
Gloria Tibbetts	Planning and Environmental Coordinator, BLM Phoenix District
Chris McLaughlin	Archaeologist, Hassayampa Field Office
Brian Lausten	Archaeologist, Agua Fria National Monument/Hassayampa Field Office
Amanda James	Assistant Field Manager, Renewable Resources, Hassayampa Field Office
James Holden	Rangeland Specialist, Hassayampa Field Office
Mary Skordinsky	Recreation Planner, Hassayampa Field Office
Mike Martinez	US Fish and Wildlife Service Geographic Lead for central Arizona
Susan Sferra	US Fish and Wildlife Service Species Lead for the yellow-billed cuckoo
Arizona Game and Fish Department	State wildlife agency

Note: Refer to the EA/EIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents

CONCLUSION:

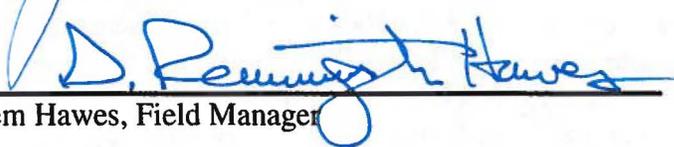
Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitute BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

 12-1-15

 Codey Carter, Project Lead

 12/1/2015

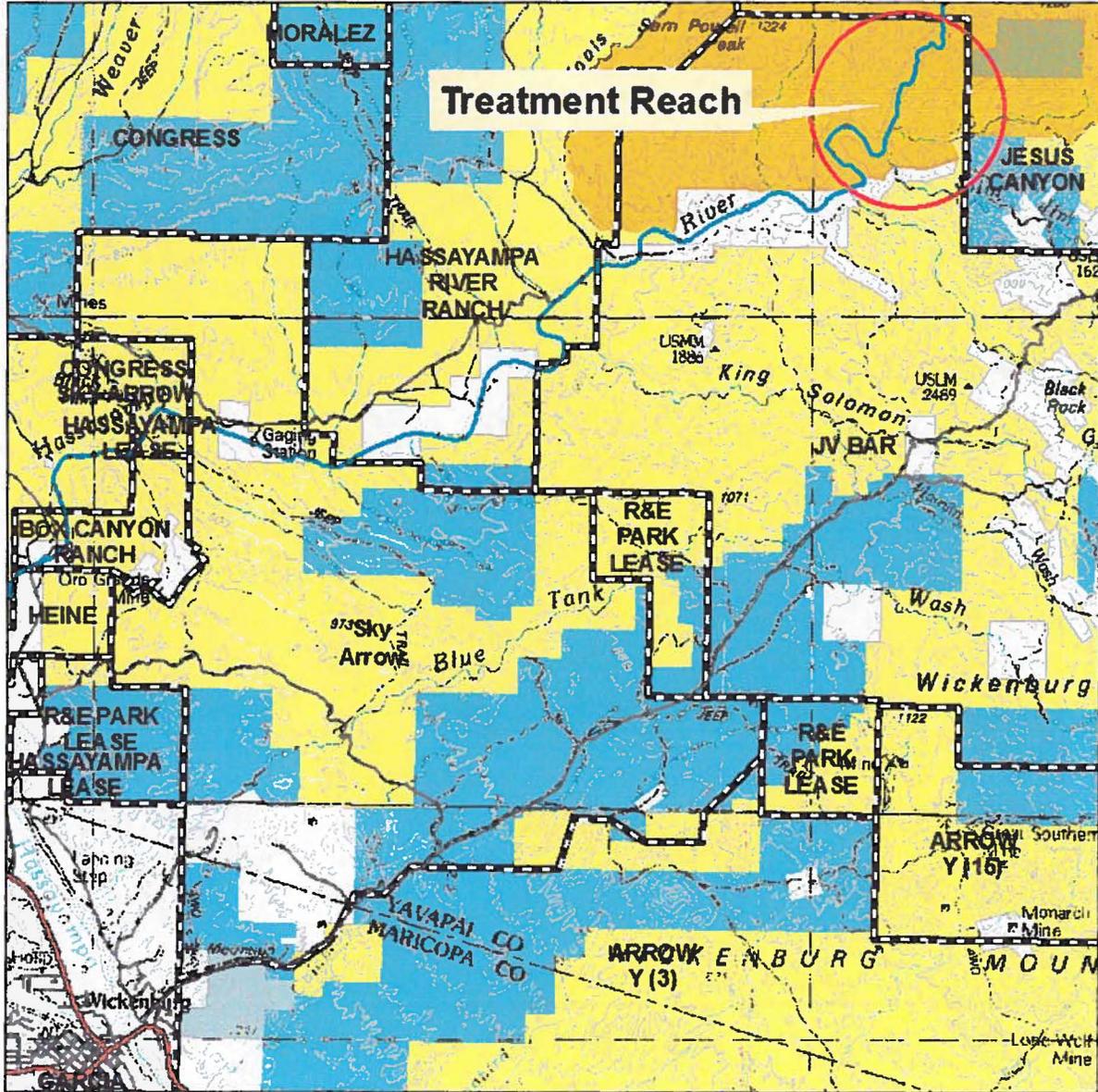
 Gloria Tibbetts, NEPA Coordinator

 12/2/2015

 Rem Hawes, Field Manager Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.

Map of Treatment Reach



Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Private Lands | BLM Wilderness Area | National Forest Lands (USFS) | BLM National Monument |
| State Lands | Forest Service Wilderness Area | National Park Service (NPS) | National Conservation Area |
| Bureau of Land Management (BLM) | NPS Wilderness Area | USFS Service National Wildlife Refuges | Military Reservations/Corps of Engineers |
| State Wildlife Area | USFS Service Wilderness Area | Indian Lands or Reservations | Bureau of Redamation (BOR) |
| City, State, County Parks | County Lands | | |



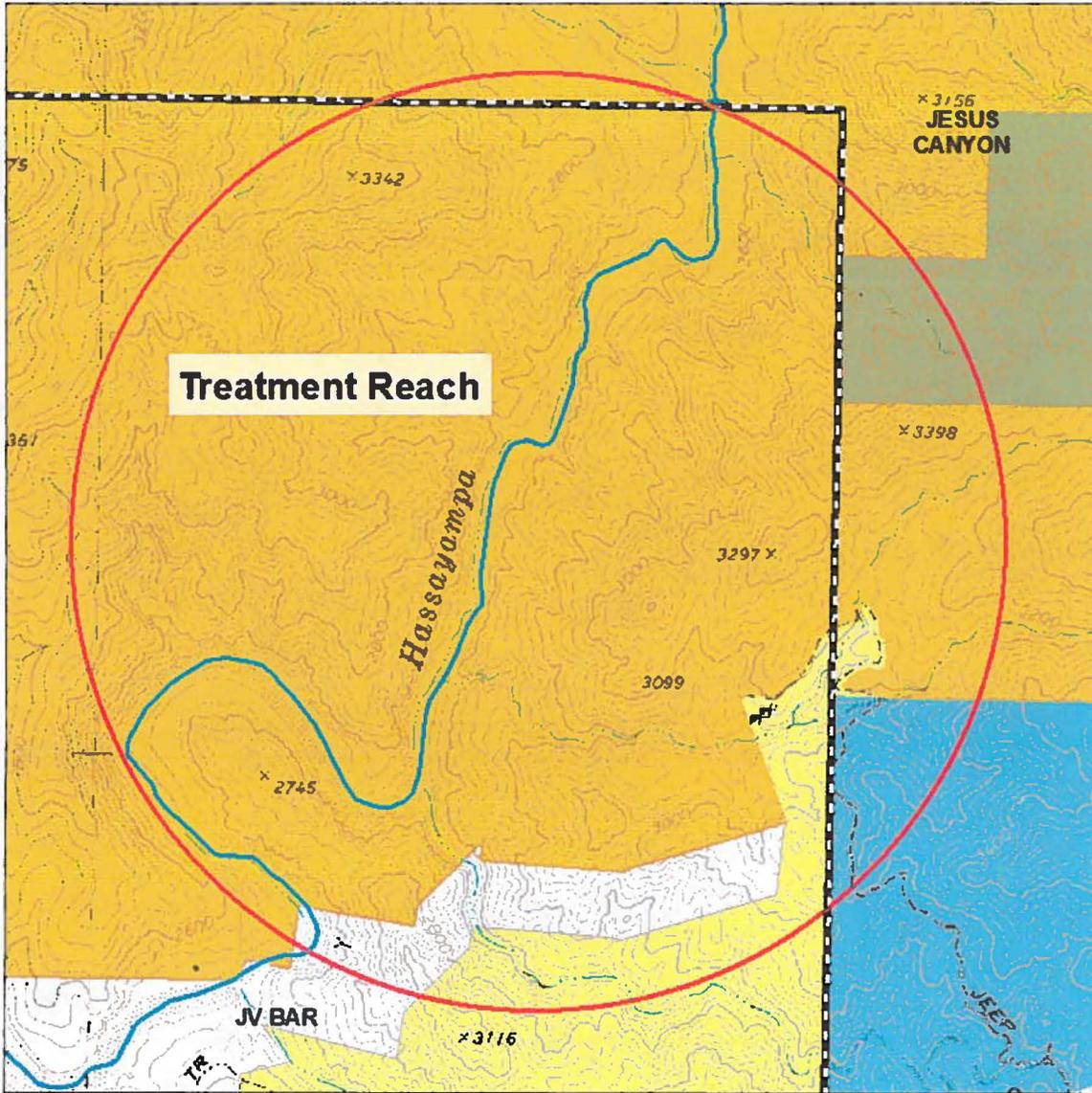
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Arizona State Office
Land Status current as of the date of the map
Map Prepared: 9/28/2015

SCALE 1:74,321



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Map of Treatment Reach



Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Private Lands | BLM Wilderness Area | National Forest Lands (USFS) | BLM National Monument |
| State Lands | Forest Service Wilderness Area | National Park Service (NPS) | National Conservation Area |
| Bureau of Land Management (BLM) | NPS Wilderness Area | USFW Service, National Wildlife Refuges | Military Reservations/Corps of Engineers |
| State Wildlife Area | USFW Service Wilderness Area | Indian Lands or Reservations | Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) |
| City, State, County Parks | County Lands | | |



United States Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Arizona State Office
 Land Status current as of the date of the map
 Map Prepared: 9/29/2015

SCALE 1:14,666



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