

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
LOWER SONORAN FIELD OFFICE  
YUMA FIELD OFFICE**

**Herbicide Application at Three Western Area Power Administration Substations  
DOI-BLM-AZ-P020-2016-0005-EA**

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

I, the undersigned authorized officer, considering the criteria provided by 40 CFR 1508.27 and the information contained in the *Herbicide Application at Three Western Area Power Administration Substations Environmental Assessment* (DOI-BLM-AZ-P020-2016-0005-EA), and as explained further below, find that the proposed action and alternatives will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared.

**Context**

Western Area Power Administration (Western) operates and maintains three substations located on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Maricopa County, Arizona; Yuma County, Arizona; and Imperial County, California. Western must manage vegetation near and within substations to provide a safe and reliable supply of electricity and to prevent blackouts and wildfires, which can harm people, wildlife, habitat, and property. Western proposes to manage undesirable vegetation at substations using herbicides. Because these substations are on BLM lands, the BLM must decide whether to issue Pesticide Use Permits for the Proposed Action.

The BLM completed the *Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* (PEIS) in 2007. The *Herbicide Application at Three Western Area Power Administration Substations Environmental Assessment* tiers to this PEIS and defines the parameters for use of herbicides within the three Western on BLM-managed lands.

**Intensity**

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

The EA describes potential minor, short-term adverse impacts regarding hazardous materials and human health, vegetation, and wildlife as well as long term beneficial impacts related to control of noxious and invasive non-native vegetation.

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

No impacts to public health and safety are anticipated from this action. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and best management practices (BMPs) provide guidance and would be followed by the BLM to ensure that risks to human health and the environment resulting from

the Proposed Action would be minimized or prevented. The SOPs and BMPs are included in Section 2.1.2 of the EA.

**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 unique characteristics were identified at any of the three substations.

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

Western and the BLM conducted public scoping for the Proposed Action to solicit input on the scope of the EA and to identify issues, concerns, and suggestions that should be considered in the environmental assessment. A scoping letter was issued on August 28, 2015, which started a 30-day scoping period for the Proposed Action (August 28 through September 30, 2015), and included information about the Proposed Action and instructions on how to provide comments. The letter was mailed and emailed to 48 entities including tribal, federal, state, and local agencies, property owners, and non-governmental organizations. The scoping letter was also posted on Western's website for public review. Only three responses were received and all suggestions were incorporated into the Proposed Action. The level of public involvement does not indicate a high level of controversy.

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

Integrated weed management has become a common practice for government agencies and private industry to manage undesirable vegetation and maintain healthy ecosystems. The effects of the proposed treatment methods are well understood and do not involve any unique or unknown risks.

**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**

All future proposed actions not described in the this EA would continue to be subject to further evaluation in accordance with Western, BLM, and National Environmental Policy Act regulations and policies.

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

No significant cumulative impacts were identified.

**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:**

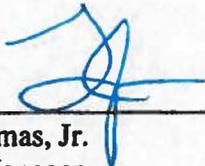
No cultural resources were identified within the project area; therefore, no effects to cultural resources are anticipated.

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

The Proposed Action will have no effect on any listed threatened or endangered species, or any designated critical habitat.

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

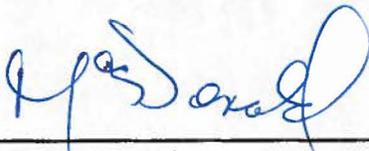
The proposed action has been developed and reviewed in accordance with applicable agencies to ensure its consistency with plans and requirements of other Federal, State, and local agencies.



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Leon Thomas, Jr.  
District Manager  
Phoenix District Office

1-27-16

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Date



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John MacDonald  
Field Manager  
Yuma Field Office

February 1, 2016

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Date