



# FACT SHEET

## Draft Wetland Restoration Plan/ Environmental Assessment October 2012 (Phase II)

### INTRODUCTION

In July 2009, the Tohono O’odham Nation and the Department of the Interior, acting as Trustees for the public, reached a settlement with the Cyprus Tohono Corporation through the Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration Program (NRDAR) to compensate for alleged injuries caused by release of hazardous substances at the Cyprus Tohono Mine. Phase I of the restoration settlement was to provide compensation for groundwater natural resource injury. Phase II of the restoration settlement was to provide compensation for non-groundwater natural resources injury. The primary resources affected were wetland migratory birds (Figure 1) which died as a result of alleged exposure to hazardous substances and low pH levels in ponds on the mine site.

A restoration planning team was formed that included biologists and others from the Tohono O’odham Nation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This team has prepared a document entitled “Phase II: Preliminary Draft Restoration Plan And Environmental Assessment For The Cyprus Tohono Mine Natural Resource Damage Assessment, Sif Oidak District, Tohono O’odham Nation” which details a strategy to replace, restore, or acquire the equivalent of the injured non-groundwater natural resources. The restoration would occur on within Sif Oidak District of the Tohono O’odham Nation (Figure 2).

### THE RESTORATION PLAN/ ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The restoration planning team proposes to use the settlement to create new wetlands and/or enhance existing wetlands to create habitat for migratory birds to compensate the public for the birds injured as a result of the alleged release of hazardous substances. The goal is to enhance or build approximately 20-40 acres of wetland habitat. Existing wetlands that could be enhanced include man-made earthen cattle tanks (charcos), wetlands created behind wide earthen dams across drainages (spreader dikes), and Lake St. Clair. The restoration plan/environmental assessment prioritizes a number of strategies for successful creation of migratory bird habitat and combines those strategies into four alternatives. It also analyzes the effects of implementing those alternatives on other natural resources, cultural resources, and socioeconomics. The plan must adhere to NRDAR regulations, which require that any selected alternative be feasible, safe,

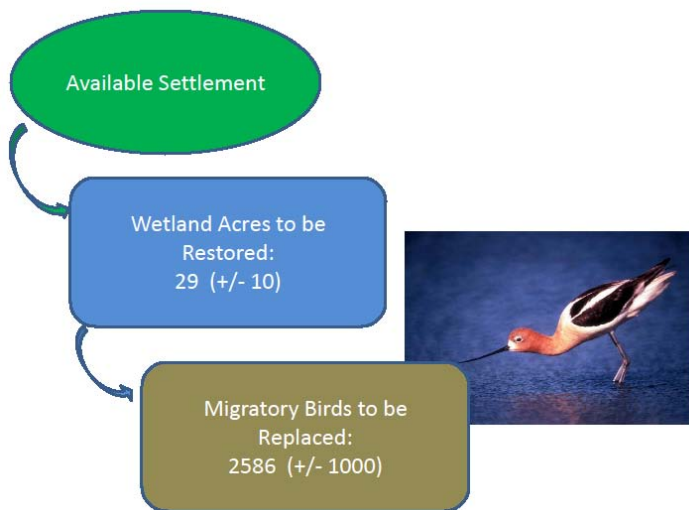


Figure 1: Restoration process following settlement

cost-effective, address injured natural resources, consider actual and anticipated conditions, have a reasonable likelihood of success, and be consistent with applicable laws and policies. The plan must also adhere to National Environmental Policy Act regulations.

The Proposed Alternatives are:

- A. No Action: No restoration or enhancement would occur.
- B. Wetland Enhancement: Enhance existing charcos, spreader dikes, and Lake St. Clair to create more and better habitat for shorebirds and other wetland species.
- C. Wetland Creation: Create new wetlands for shorebird habitat and other wetland species where none existed before
- D. Mixture of B and C: Enhance existing charcos, spreader dikes, and Lake St. Clair and create new wetlands where none existed before. Create additional and improved habitat for shorebirds and other wetland species.

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Public input is an important component of the restoration planning process. A public scoping meeting was held in July 22, 2009, at North Komelick, Tohono O’odham Nation. The draft restoration plan is now available for review and comment for 45 days commencing on **October 11, 2012**. The draft plan is available for review at the Sif Oidak District Office, North Komelick or can be downloaded from the USFWS Web site:

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/>

The planning team will hold an open house at the Sif Oidak District Office, North Komelick, from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM on October 20, 2012 to answer any questions the public has on the draft restoration plan.

**The deadline for submitting written comments is Monday, November 26, 2012.** Written comments received during the comment

period and the agencies' responses will be summarized in the final restoration plan.

Comments should be submitted, in writing, to:

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(602) 242-0210  
or via electronic mail to:  
carrie\_marr@fws.gov

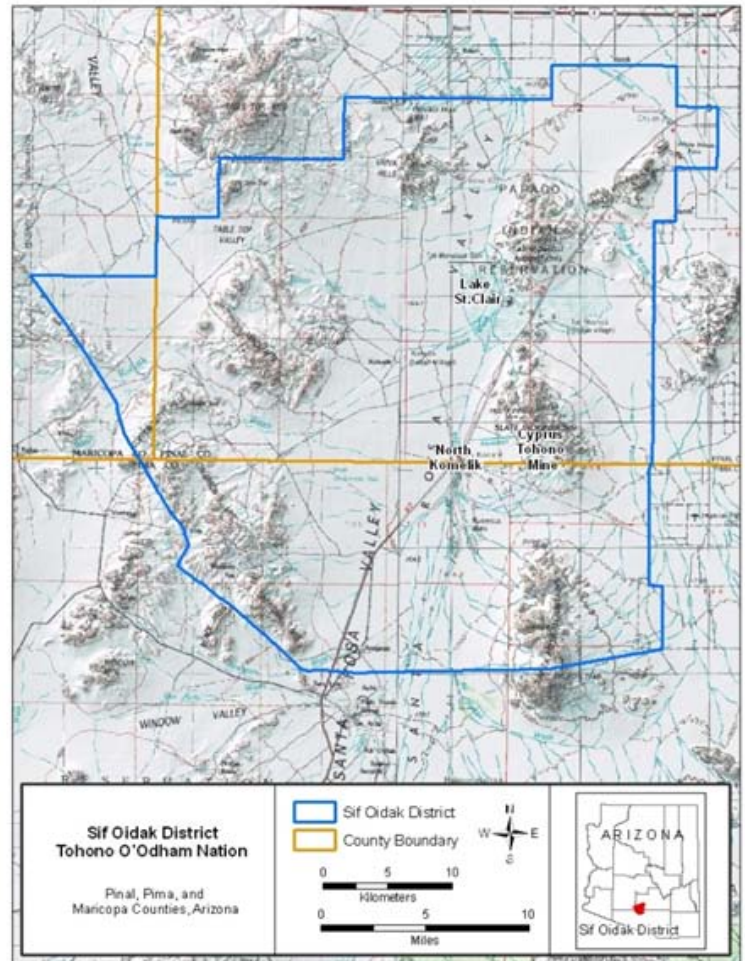


Figure 2: Map of the Sif Oidak District on the Tohono O'odham Nation