

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ISSUANCE OF A RESTORATION PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESMENT ADDENDUM FOR THE TEXMO DIESEL SPILL AND FIRE

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), we prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the issuance of the Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment Addendum (RP/EAAAd) to compensate for natural resource injuries and associated lost services resulting from the spill of diesel and subsequent fire from the Texmo Oil Company Jobbers tanker truck accident into the Bill Williams River on the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge (BWRNWR). The Trustee, the United States Department of the Interior represented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reviewed, evaluated, and selected a suite of restoration projects that offset the injury estimated at the BWRNWR.

This Final RP/EAAAd to the November 2011 “Final Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for Restoring Injuries to Wildlife and Fisheries Habitats from the Texmo Diesel Spill and Fire” (2011 Texmo RP/EA) details additional restoration projects that have been identified by the USFWS due to the inability to implement the restoration actions selected in the 2011 Texmo RP/EA.

Preferred Alternative

The selected preferred alternatives are six projects that will restore mixed riparian woodland and desert wash habitats on-refuge, but off-site, along the Bill Williams River and will restore habitat along the Bill Williams River Corridor or between Needles, California and Parker Dam, Arizona.

The Trustee evaluated each proposed restoration project according to restoration screening and evaluation criteria in the Oil Pollution Act Regulations, 15 C.F.R. § 990.26 and analyzed the environmental consequences of the restoration projects pursuant to NEPA. Preferred Alternative H, Project 3: Seed Collection and Project 4: Natural Regeneration Enhancement, fit within categorical exclusion—516 DM 8.5 B.3(c): The planting of seeds or seedlings and other minor revegetation actions—and is not subject to this finding of no significant impact.

Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

A proposal from the United States Geological Survey for hydrologic mapping, analysis, and re-contouring of the Mohave Wash floodplain was considered and eliminated from further consideration due to costs and minimal usefulness to other restoration projects within BWRNWR.

Public Comment

The Draft RP/EAAAd was available for public comment and review for 30 days from the date of publication (July 21, 2021). An electronic version of the drafted document was posted on the DOI’s Restoration Program website (<https://www.doi.gov/restoration/news/>), and on the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office site (<https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/>). An email and

mail address for the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office were included in the Draft RP/EAA as channels for the public to submit comments or input. No public comments were received from the public, and no substantive changes were made.

Determination

Based upon information contained within the Final RP/EA Addendum, we have determined that this action is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(c). Effects to physical, biological, socio-economic, and cultural resources are identified in the RP/EAA, all are minor and beneficial. This action is not an action that would typically require the development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Accordingly, preparation of an EIS on the proposed action is not warranted.

It is my decision to issue the Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment Addendum and begin implementation.

Regional Director/DOI Authorized Official