

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Allotment Management Plan
Greaterville Allotment
Nogales Ranger District
USDA Forest Service
Pima County, Arizona

The following discussion summarizes key portions of the environmental assessment. The environmental assessment is available on request to the District Ranger, USDA Forest Service, Nogales Ranger District, 303 Old Tucson Road, Nogales, Arizona, 85621 (602-281-2296).

Key Issues - Three issues were identified from the scoping comments for analysis prior to making a decision. These issues define the scope of environmental concerns that were addressed in the environmental assessment.

1. **Environmental effects of livestock grazing.** There are concerns regarding the potential effects to soil, water, air, vegetation, riparian areas and wildlife conditions within and adjacent to the project area.
2. **Head cutting along west side of FDR 62.** There is a concern that head cuts are developing in the drainages along the west side of FDR 62 (Box Canyon Road).
3. **Effects on the Santa Cruz County economy.** There is concern regarding the effects of Forest Service decisions on the rural economy of nearby Santa Cruz County.

Alternatives Considered - The alternatives included a "no action" alternative and three action alternatives that respond to the need for action and issues. Chapter 2 and Appendix B of the environmental assessment contain complete descriptions of the alternatives.

- A. Continue Current Management
 - * There will be no change in the current management for this allotment.
- B. Modify Current Management
 - * A pasture will be transferred to this allotment.
 - * The season of use for this allotment will be changed.
 - * The number of permitted livestock for this allotment will be changed.
 - * The maximum utilization level will change.
- C. No Grazing (No Action)
 - * Livestock will be removed from this allotment.
 - * Maintenance and operation of existing improvements required for other Forest programs will become the responsibility of those program areas.
 - * All other existing improvements will be abandoned or removed.

Impact Summary - The following summary of impacts was developed from information found in the environmental assessment. The summary focuses on the key elements of the environment identified as issues in the scoping process.

1. Alternative A

- * There will be no impacts on soil conditions.
- * There will be no impacts on water quality.
- * There will be no impacts on air quality.
- * There will be no impacts on vegetation composition or trend.
- * There will be no impacts on riparian conditions.
- * There will be no impact on wildlife species that is likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability.
- * This alternative "may effect, but is not likely to adversely effect" the Gila topminnow.
- * Conditions along FDR 62 will not change.
- * There will be no impact to the Santa Cruz County economy.

2. Alternative B

- * An upward trend in soil conditions will develop.
- * Decreased soil impairment will increase water quality.
- * There will be no impact on air quality.
- * An upward trend in vegetation condition will develop.
- * There will be no impact on riparian conditions.
- * There will be no impact on wildlife species that is likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability.
- * This alternative "may effect, but is not likely to adversely effect" the Gila topminnow.
- * Conditions along FDR 62 will not change.
- * There will be a no impact to the Santa Cruz County economy.

3. Alternative C (No Action)

- * An upward trend in soil conditions will develop.
- * Decreased soil impairment will increase water quality.
- * There will be no impact on air quality.
- * An upward trend in vegetation trend will develop.
- * There will be no impact on riparian conditions.
- * There will be no impact on wildlife species that is likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability.
- * This alternative "may effect, but is not likely to adversely effect" the Gila topminnow.
- * Conditions along FDR 62 will not change.
- * There will be a negative impact to the Santa Cruz County economy.

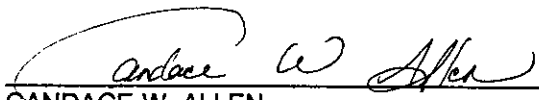
In this environmental assessment the agency's intended action is Alternative B. Alternative B provides for improvement in resource conditions while not having a negative impact on the local economy.

Context. This project is a site specific action that by itself does not have international, national, regionwide or statewide importance. The decision of the significance criteria that follows applies to the intended action and is within the context of local importance in the area associated with the Nogales Ranger District.

Intensity. The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1508.27).

1. Impacts from this site specific project are both beneficial and adverse. The adverse effects are short term in nature and will not impair land productivity. The long term effects are considered to be beneficial, especially for general watershed conditions and the local economy.
2. Public health and safety will benefit minimally through improved water and air quality.
3. The project area includes cultural resource sites.
4. There has been no evidence provided to indicate the environmental effects have been wrongly predicted; therefore, the effects are not likely to be controversial.
5. The environmental effects are typical for this type of project. The adverse effects will be short term and involve no unique or unknown risks.
6. Implementation of this project does not establish any precedent for other actions that may have a significant effect. Future actions will be evaluated through the NEPA process and will stand on their own environmental effects and project feasibility.
7. Cumulative effects were considered in the environmental assessment. There are no significant cumulative effects.
8. There will be no adverse effect to districts, sites, highways, structures or historic sites. There will be no loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.
9. A biological assessment and evaluation was completed for threatened and endangered species. The biological assessment and evaluation declared a "may effect, not likely to adversely effect" finding for the Gila topminnow. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has concurred with this finding. The biological assessment and evaluation declared a "no effect" finding for all other species evaluated.
10. This proposal is in compliance with all federal, state and local legal requirements. The state and local governments were consulted regarding this project.

The analysis and other evidence compiled for this site specific project proposal have not revealed any potential for significant environmental effects; therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not necessary.


CANDACE W. ALLEN

6/6/97
DATE