

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Sand Ridge Preserve Habitat Restoration Project

FONSI 18-03-MP

Prepared by:



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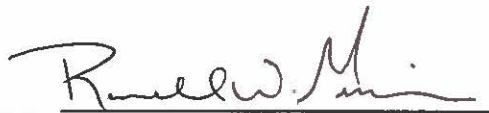
Reviewed by:



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Date: June 27, 2018



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region

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Background

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Sand Ridge Preserve Habitat Restoration Project. The EA was prepared to examine the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects associated with providing funding through the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) to the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) to conduct a habitat restoration project on approximately 19 acres of the Sand Ridge Preserve. The HRP helps mitigate the past impacts of Reclamation's Central Valley Project on threatened and endangered species and helps minimize future impacts.

The environmental assessment (EA) was available for public review from June 11, 2018 through June 22, 2018. No comments were received on the EA.

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

No Action: Reclamation would not award the Center for Natural Lands Management with a grant to conduct the habitat restoration project. CNLM would not be able to complete restoration activities and the Preserve would continue to function under existing habitat conditions that are less than optimal for the species that would benefit.

Proposed Action: Reclamation would provide \$254,161 to CNLM to conduct a habitat restoration project on 19 acres on Sand Ridge Preserve in Kern County, California. Restoration activities would include testing the effectiveness of weed removal treatments (harrowing treatment and herbicide treatment), harrowing a trail to provide beneficial conditions for the San Joaquin Valley giant flower loving fly, increasing the distribution of Bakersfield cactus, project effectiveness monitoring (conducting giant flower-loving fly surveys, assessing cactus vigor, assessing vegetative and abiotic factors), and analyzing monitoring data. The project would benefit the Bakersfield cactus (*Opuntia basilaris* var. *treleasei*), listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and the San Joaquin Valley giant flower loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas trochilus*), under review for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Findings

Based on the attached EA, Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The EA describes the existing environmental resources at the location of the Proposed Action and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives. The attached EA was prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46) and is hereby incorporated by reference. Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant:

1. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)).
2. The Proposed Action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
3. The Proposed Action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
4. The Proposed Action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
5. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
6. The Proposed Action will not have significant cumulative impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
7. The Proposed Action will not adversely affect any districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8). Pursuant to 54 USC § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Reclamation determined the undertaking would not affect historic properties.
8. The Proposed Action will not negatively affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
9. The Proposed Action will not violate Federal, State, local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).
10. The Proposed Action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
11. Implementing the Proposed Action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).
12. The Proposed Action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).