



# Programmatic NEPA for Roadway Fencing to Reduce Mojave Desert Tortoise Mortality – **UPDATE**



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# Presentation Overview

- ✓ Project Status Update
- ✓ BLM Interdisciplinary Team Update
- ✓ Review Project Schedule

# Project Status Update

## **Completed since September 2020**

- Reached out to cooperating federal agencies
- Revising GIS data for priority and programmatic road segments.

# BLM Interdisciplinary Team Update

## **BLM Project Sponsors/Leadership**

- Danielle Chi, BLM Deputy State Director(DSD) for Resources, California will be the DSD representative
- Jon Raby, BLM State Director, Nevada, will act as the BLM decision maker.

## **Current team vacancy filled**

- Contracting Officer Representative
- Archaeologist

# Project Schedule

## January 2021-November

- ❖ Baseline environmental data acquisition (cultural resources survey report inventory and botany survey) and report submittal.
- ❖ Initiate the Section 106 process for the project
- ❖ Initiate the Cooperating Agencies process

## December 2021-March 2022

- ❖ Finish the Section 106 process for the project

## April-October 2022

- ❖ Conduct necessary Class III cultural resources surveys
- ❖ Initiate necessary Section 106 consultation based on the process determined earlier
- ❖ Establish format and contents of the project NEPA document with Cooperating Agencies

## November 2022-January 2023

- ❖ Select contractor for the biological assessment and the NEPA document.

**Please note:** At this time, the results of baseline environmental data acquisition is expected to drive whether the NEPA document is going to be an EA or an EIS. The project schedule will vary accordingly.

# Draft Alternatives

**The No Action Alternative** describes the current level of desert tortoise exclusion fence (fence) construction and fence repair and maintenance. This alternative would maintain the status quo and would not involve an overall approach or strategy to construct fences, shade structures, cattle guards, and fence repair or maintenance. Federal and state agencies would continue to construct new fences and repair or maintain existing fences as agency funding and staffing become available. Fence construction projects and repair or maintenance projects would require a site-specific environmental review to include the NEPA process, and/or the CEQA process as appropriate.

**The Proposed Action Alternative** would provide for the construction or installation of the priority and programmatic fence segments as well as the desert tortoise shade structures and cattle guards. These actions would occur within the highway right-of-way (ROW) with fences installed at the edge of the ROW. The maintenance activities, as described above and conducted on an as-needed basis, would be funded using the method or process for maintenance reimbursement of maintenance activities described below.

## Relationship Between the Priority and the Programmatic Fence Segments

- Describe how and when priority segments would be fenced
- Describe how and when programmatic segments would be fenced

**The Reduced Project Area Alternative** would be the same as Alternative 2, with the following exceptions:

- There would be a 50% reduction in priority fence segments with only priority segments 1-7 being analyzed site-specifically and segments 8-15 would be excluded from the action.
- The numbers and lengths of programmatic road segments would be reduced by calculating a 70% chance or greater of containing a tortoise rather than the 50% calculation used in the proposed action alternative.

# Any Questions?

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