



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



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**October 29, 2019**

# Presentation Overview

- ✓ What is the BLM's Regional NEPA Support Team and why we are discussing NEPA today?
- ✓ Describe the four approaches the team considered for conducting a NEPA analysis for roadway exclusion fence installations.
- ✓ Discussion: Are MOG members comfortable with the Regional Support Team's recommendation to move forward with Option 3? Are there any suggestions or concerns that the team should be aware of?

# What Is the Regional NEPA Support Team?

- ✓ Interdisciplinary team that provides NEPA support for landscape level projects in the Great Basin Region.
- ✓ Established in 2017
- ✓ Currently working on 4 landscape level NEPA documents in Oregon and Nevada.
- ✓ Team includes a wildlife biologist, hydrologist, archeologist, botanist, range specialist, GIS specialist, NEPA specialist, and a fuels ecologist.

# Purpose

- ✓ Recovery priority for MOG to reduce Mojave desert tortoise mortality along roadways
- ✓ Agencies often suffer from “the NEPA barrier”
- ✓ Fall 2019 - Team asked to conduct an assessment regarding assistance with **conducting a NEPA analysis for roadway exclusion fence installations to reduce Mojave desert tortoise mortality across critical and suitable habitat in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah.**
- ✓ USFWS identified 324 miles of prioritized shovel-ready roadway fence projects and 2,883 miles in need of programmatic NEPA analysis.

## **Programmatic Analysis**

Broad review of actions that will require site-specific analysis before implementation. Provides for an expansive view of environmental impacts for a proposed action

## **Site-Specific Analysis**

Project level review of environmental impacts for a proposed action. Requires project level data for analysis.

# Option 1

**Option 1:** Conduct a programmatic NEPA analysis for all 2,883 miles of roadway fence line installation in AZ, CA, NV, and UT (across all land ownership types).

Benefits	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Robust cumulative effects analysis</li><li>✓ Possible streamlined NHPA consultation</li><li>✓ Provide for streamlined site-specific NEPA for projects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Coordination with four sets of state stakeholders may be cumbersome</li><li>✓ Additional site-specific NEPA would still be required for shovel ready projects</li></ul>

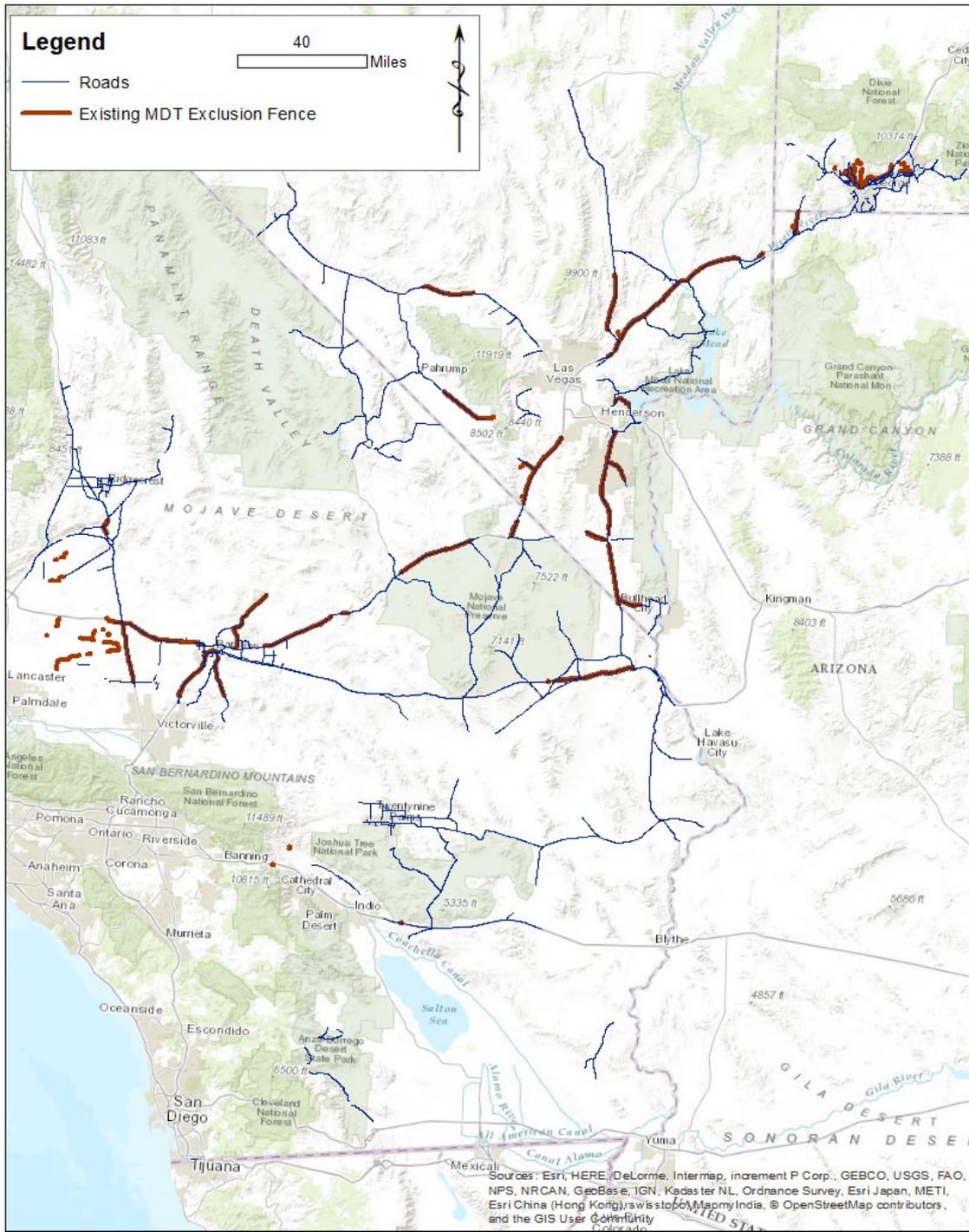
**Timeline:** Approximately 12-14 months

# Legend

— Roads

— Existing MDT Exclusion Fence

40 Miles



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBC, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

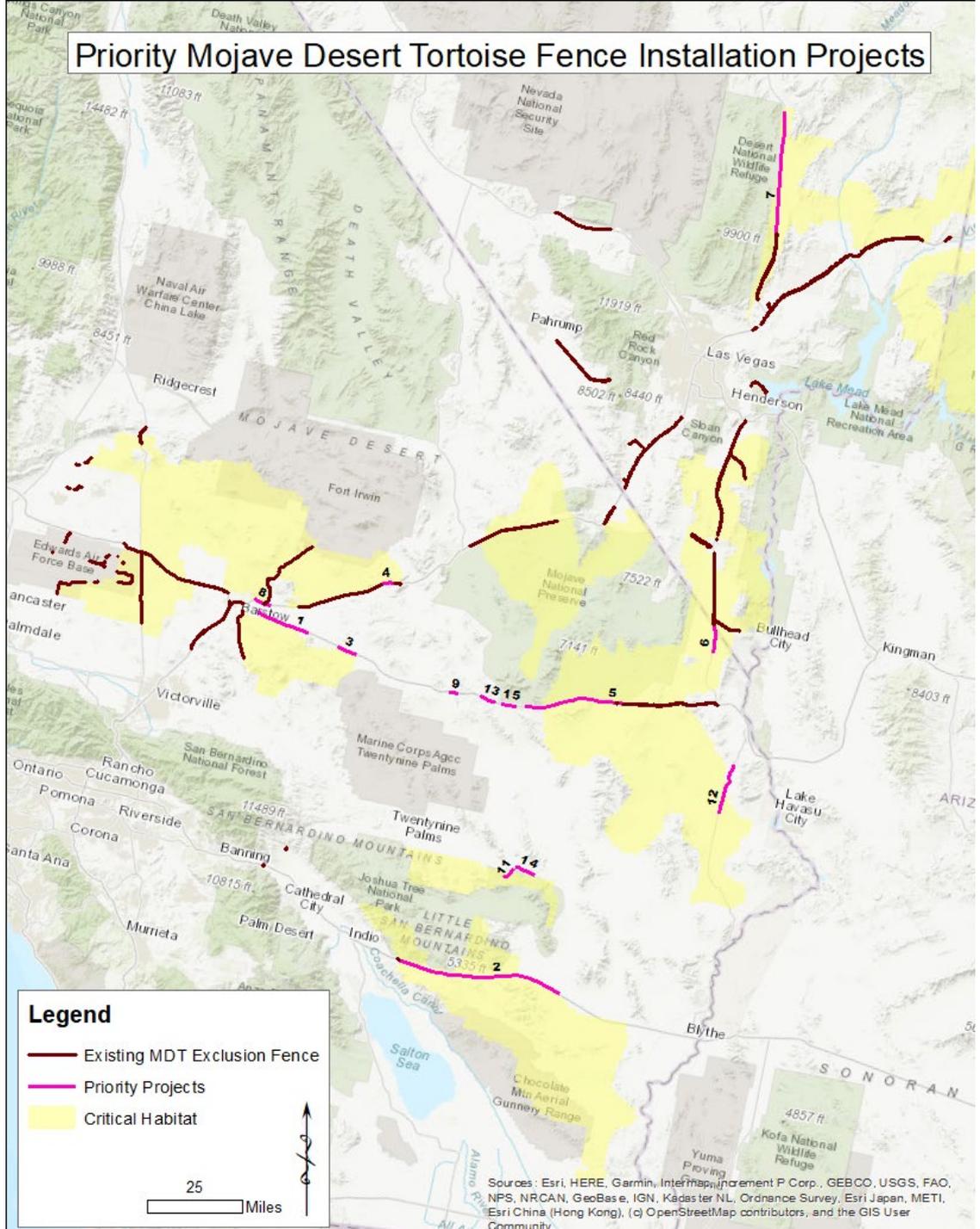
# Option 2

**Option 2**: Conduct a site-specific NEPA analysis for 14 priority fence installation projects and a programmatic NEPA analysis for the remaining 2,883 miles.

Benefits	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Expedited construction of priority projects following the completion of the NEPA analysis</li><li>✓ Analysis from the priority projects could be used to incorporate by reference into site-specific analysis for the remaining 2,883 miles</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Coordination with four sets of state stakeholders may be cumbersome</li><li>✓ Additional NEPA would still be required for non-shovel ready projects</li><li>✓ Potential for delay given that formal NHPA consultation may be necessary for site specific fences</li></ul>

**Timeline:** Approximately 20-22 months

# Priority Mojave Desert Tortoise Fence Installation Projects



**Legend**

- Existing MDT Exclusion Fence
- Priority Projects
- Critical Habitat

25 Miles

Sources : Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

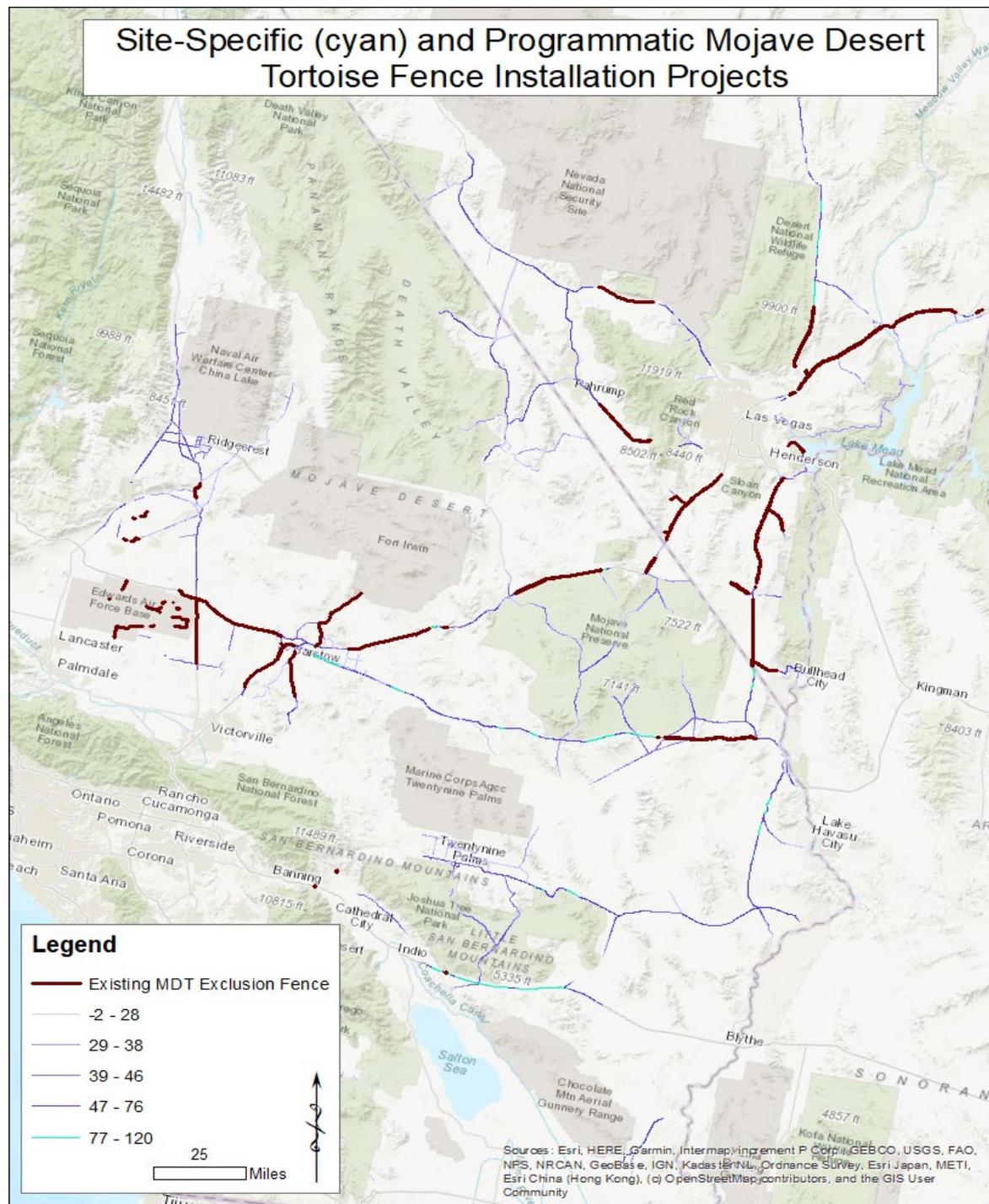
# Option 3

**Option 3 (Recommended):** Conduct site-specific NEPA analysis for 14 priority fence installation projects on private, CSLC, and Federally managed lands in NV and CA, programmatic NEPA analysis for 1,848 miles of road within these same states, and a screening process for potential projects in UT and AZ.

Benefits	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Expedited construction of priority projects following NEPA completion</li><li>✓ Analysis of impacts from the priority projects could be used to DNA/IBR into site-specific analysis for the 2,883 miles</li><li>✓ Coordination with stakeholders would be more streamlined</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Site-specific analysis will require site specific data collection prior to the initiation of the NEPA analysis</li><li>✓ Potential for delay given that formal NHPA consultation may be necessary for site specific fences</li></ul>

**Timeline:** Approximately 18-20 months

# Site-Specific (cyan) and Programmatic Mojave Desert Tortoise Fence Installation Projects



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# Option 4

**Option 4**: The team does not conduct any analysis.

Benefits	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Single project coordination would be more streamlined as each project would have its own coordination and consultation process</li> <li>✓ In some instances, NEPA could be categorically excluded for certain fence segments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Duplication of effort</li> <li>✓ Cumulative effects analysis to desert tortoise would be minimal</li> <li>✓ No consistent process for analysis and fence installation priorities would be deemphasized</li> <li>✓ Risk of appearing to segment the analysis.</li></ul>
<b>Timeline:</b> Unknown	

# Discussion

- **Are MOG members comfortable with the BLM's Regional Support Team conducting this analyses based on Option 3?**
- **Are there any suggestions or concerns that the team should be aware of in regards to conducting this analysis?**

**Thank you!**