



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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In Reply Refer to:

AESO/SE

02-21-03-F-0232

April 30, 2009

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon, Arizona

From: Field Supervisor

Subject: Fourth Addendum to the Biological Opinion for Prescribed Fire in Grand Canyon National Park

Thank you for your April 8, 2009, letter regarding the subject biological opinion that was issued on August 22, 2003. The project timeline for the April 9, 2003, Batch Biological Evaluation for Prescribed Fire in Grand Canyon National Park (GRCA), covered by the 2003 biological opinion, is 2003 through 2008. The April 8 letter requested an amendment to the 2003 biological opinion in order to treat three units in 2009 that were included in the original list of projects but were not implemented in the original timeframe. Previous addenda to the 2003 biological opinion were issued on July 8, 2005, August 18, 2006, and August 7, 2008.

The three units are the Moqui, Quarry, and Picnic units on the South Rim of GRCA. Prescribed fire will occur on a total of 1,287 acres of the ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper cover types. The burn units do not occur in Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*) (MSO) habitat but are as close as 1.5 miles to the nearest MSO protected activity center (PAC). At least four PACs could be in the path of smoke carried by prevailing winds from the three units. California condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) could occur in or near the project area. The units do not include sentry milk vetch (*Astragalus cremnophylax* var. *cremnophylax*) or habitat for the species.

The April 8 letter indicated that all of the conservation measures, reasonable and prudent measures, terms and conditions, and conservation recommendations for all species of the 2003 biological opinion will be implemented for the three units. In addition, all other aspects of the prescribed fire program remain as described in the 2003 biological evaluation and 2003 biological opinion.

In order to determine whether the prescribed fire program has been within the scope of the biological evaluation and 2003 biological opinion for the August 7, 2008 addendum, we reviewed annual fire reports that GRCA prepared under requirements of the biological opinion. For the most part, the reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions of the biological opinion were implemented through 2007. We have not yet received an annual prescribed fire report for 2008.

Treatment of the three units will implement all conditions of the 2003 biological opinion. No new effects to listed species are anticipated from the treatments. Therefore, the 2003 biological opinion is amended to include treatment of the Moqui, Quarry, and Picnic units in 2009.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Bill Austin (928) 226-0614 (x102) or Brenda Smith (x101).

Brenda H. Smith

for

Steven L. Spangle

cc: Director, Science and Resource Management, Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon, AZ
RV Ward, Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon, AZ
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