



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
ARIZONA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES STATE OFFICE
2321 W. Royal Palm Road, Suite 103
Phoenix, Arizona 85021-4951



Telephone: (602) 640-2720 FAX: (602) 640-2730

February 8, 1995

In Reply Refer To:
AESO/SE
2-21-94-F-173

MEMORANDUM

TO: Area Manager, Shivwits Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management,
St. George, Utah

FROM: State Supervisor

SUBJECT: Amendment of Formal Consultation for the Dixie-Escalante Rural Electric
Cooperative Powerline

This memorandum responds to your January 12, 1995, request for reinitiation of consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544), as amended, in regards to the Dixie-Escalante Rural Electric Cooperative Powerline. The Service issued a biological opinion for the project, dated March 9, 1994, in which the proposed action was found not likely to either jeopardize the continued existence of the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) or cause destruction or adverse modification of its critical habitat. The proposed action was construction, operation, and maintenance of a 69 kilovolt (kV) powerline with a 12.5 kV underbuild by Dixie-Escalante Rural Electric Association (Dixie-Escalante) from approximately one mile north of Beaver Dam, Arizona, to approximately 3.5 miles northeast of Mesquite, Nevada, a distance of 7.6 miles (Figure 1 of the March 9, 1994 biological opinion).

In your January 12, 1995, request for reinitiation, a modification to the proposed action is requested because Dixie-Escalante has been unable to obtain an easement across a private-lands portion of the powerline route. Approximately 2,100 feet of the powerline alignment in T40N, R15W, sections 18 and 19, is proposed to be relocated approximately 65 feet to the west in T40N, R16W, sections 24 and 13 (attachment). All other aspects of the proposed project would remain unchanged. The Service believes that inclusion of this modification, as described herein, would not alter our previous determination that the proposed action would not be likely to either jeopardize the continued existence of the desert tortoise or cause destruction or adverse modification of its critical habitat. All terms and conditions of the Service's March 9, 1994, biological opinion shall apply to this realigned portion of the powerline route.

No additional terms and conditions are necessary to reduce take associated with the modification to the proposed action.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Jim Rorabaugh or Ted Cordery of my staff.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sam F. Spiller".

Sam F. Spiller

Attachment

cc: Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, NM (AES)

