



United States Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service

Arizona Ecological Services Field Office

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In Reply Refer To:  
AESO/SE

2-21-96-F-114

March 5, 1998

Mr. John McGee  
Forest Supervisor  
Coronado National Forest  
300 West Congress

Dear Mr. McGee:

This letter acknowledges your January 7, 1998, letter requesting concurrence on the conditions, actions, and assumptions outlined in your letter and serves to amend the March 3, 1997 Biological Opinion issued for the Maverick Prescribed Burn. All goals, objectives, planned actions, and the planning area described within the original opinion, and the terms and conditions of the March 3, 1997 Biological Opinion still apply with one exception of a revised description of the implementation of burn ignitions. The following amendment services to revise the original description of the project to include this exception.

A statement addressing implementation of the burn in 1998 is found on page 6 within the "PROJECT DESCRIPTION" section of the original March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion that reads, "If conditions do not allow for fire ignition in 1997, the fire ignition would be rescheduled for 1998". As described in your Memo 2670, dated December 12, 1997, Subject: Maverick Management Ignited Fire Status/Monitoring Report, a portion of the primary burn area was not ignited and thus, not implemented due to a change in conditions associated with time and funding limitations. Such funds and available time were absorbed in the partial treatment of the primary burn area. To clarify, the resources used in controlling the burn which spread between the primary and secondary perimeters upon ignition on June 23, 1997, would limit the funds available to fully implement the project in fiscal year 1997.

Objectives of the prescribed burn were not fully met during the June 1997 ignitions. A relatively large portion, which equated to approximately 4000 acres of the proposed 17,000-acre primary burn area, was not treated due to funding constraints. One of the untreated areas appears to be approximately 2000 acres in size at the southeast corner of the primary burn area and is the area proposed for ignition in the late spring of 1998 per your January 7, 1998, letter. This amendment is written to follow up on discussions held on January 29, 1998, at the Arizona Ecological Services Office in Phoenix between our staff members regarding the completion of the Maverick Prescribed Burn in the late spring of 1998 and the assurances provided by the original biological opinion for the proposed action. It was concluded at this meeting that the Service would issue an amendment to the original biological opinion.

## **BIOLOGICAL OPINION AMENDMENT**

This amendment does not change the findings for any species discussed in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The goals, objectives, actions, and the description of the project apply as stated in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion issued to cover the Maverick Prescribed Burn with the exception of the following revision number 1.

1. The March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion discusses only four areas being ignited with flammable materials dropped from a helicopter. The actual Maverick Burn Plan intended to ignite eight areas to treat and meet the objectives across the 17,000 acre primary burn area by using: 1) flammable materials dropped from a helicopter (i.e. ping pong dispenser with magnesium permanganate and ethylene glycol, and a heli-torch), and 2) drip torches to establish protective burn lines up against areas where the treatment is not intended to be applied. These protective boundary lines are achieved by using a back firing technique with a drip torch. This technique is often referred to as "black lining" and is conducted to control the spread of fire at specific locations. Often the spread of fire is controlled in this manner to protect nearby private property or valuable cultural and natural resources that may not be intended to undergo burn treatment under the proposed action. Thus, the amended "PROJECT DESCRIPTION" for the Maverick Prescribed Burn includes the application of eight ignition sites within the primary burn area and the use of drip torches to ignite black lined areas.

### **EFFECTS OF THE ACTION**

This amendment does not change the effects from the Maverick Prescribed Burn on any species discussed in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion.

### **INCIDENTAL TAKE**

This amendment does not change the amount or effect of incidental take expected from the Maverick Prescribed Burn as stated in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion. The Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species.

### **REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES**

This amendment does not change the reasonable and prudent measures listed in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion.

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

This amendment does not change the terms and conditions listed in the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion.

### **SUMMARY**

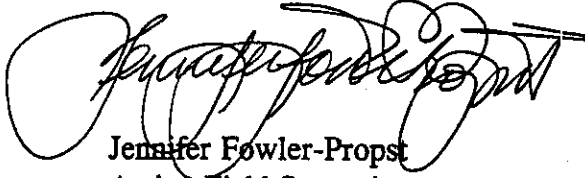
The provisions in the Summary of the March 3, 1997, Biological Opinion for re-initiation of consultation under certain circumstances apply to this amendment.

Mr. John McGee

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In accordance with this amendment and your January 7, 1998, letter, the Service concurs with your outlined conditions, actions, and assumptions regarding the implementation of ignition site number seven to conclude the Maverick Prescribed Burn. If you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Tricia Roller at (520)670-4859 or Angie Brooks at (602) 640-2720.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Fowler-Propst". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "F".

Jennifer Fowler-Propst  
Acting Field Supervisor

cc: Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, NM (GMA)  
Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, AZ