



United States Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

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In Reply Refer To:

AESO/SE
2-21-96-F-160

November 3, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: Field Office Manager, Safford Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Safford, Arizona

FROM: Acting Field Supervisor

SUBJECT: Harper and Guthrie Allotments Coordinated Management Plan, and Amendment #1 to Biological Opinion for the Safford/Tucson Field Office's Livestock Grazing Program, Southeastern Arizona

This memorandum responds to your request for concurrence of effects determinations made in your September 29, 1998, letter pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544), as amended. Received in the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office October 1, 1998, your letter proposes management operation changes for Harper and Guthrie allotments located in Greenlee County, Arizona. The effects determinations are noted as "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum*), and Arizona hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus* var. *arizonicus*); and not likely to result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat for razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*).

Management operations for Harper and Guthrie allotments (through December 31, 2006) were addressed previously in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's September 26, 1997, biological opinion for the BLM Safford/Tucson Field Office's livestock grazing program (2-21-96-F-160). At that time, proposed management operations were to graze Harper yearlong and Guthrie under a deferred rotation system. The proposed change is to go to a best-pasture rotation system for both allotments as described in the Coordinated Management Plan (CMP).

Proposed changes are expected to result in a wider and more beneficial distribution of livestock than the currently-consulted-upon actions. Reduction of potential effects to the area's listed species are expected by implementing the CMP, and range conditions could be improved over time by the proposed action.

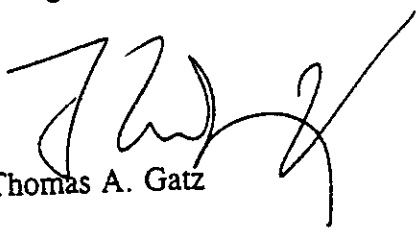
In the Safford/Tucson grazing biological opinion, the Service found the proposed action, which included grazing activities on the Harper and Guthrie allotments, would not jeopardize the continued existence of Kearney's blue star (*Amsonia kearneyana*), Pima pineapple cactus (*Corypantha scheeri* var. *robustispina*), Nichol's turk's head cactus (*Echinocactus*

horizonthalonius var. *nicholii*), Arizona hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus* var. *arizonicus*), Huachuca water umbel (*Lilaeopsis schaffneriana* var. *recurva*), desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularis*), spikedace (*Meda fulgida*), Gila topminnow (*Poeciliopsis occidentalis occidentalis*), loach minnow (*Tiaroga cobitis*), lesser long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris curasoae yerbabuena*), jaguar (*Panthera onca*), and New Mexico ridgenosed rattlesnake (*Crotalus willardi obscurus*), southwestern willow flycatcher and razorback sucker. The Service found the livestock program was not likely to result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat designated for the southwestern willow flycatcher and razorback sucker.

The proposed change in the action as described in the CMP does not alter these conclusions, and the proposed action evaluated in the Safford/Tucson grazing opinion is amended to include a best-pasture rotation system for both allotments, range improvements, and other components of the action as described in the CMP. Because actions in the CMP are addressed in this amendment to the Safford/Tucson grazing opinion, no concurrences with BLM's effects determinations are needed.

Terms and conditions in the incidental take statements for the southwestern willow flycatcher, razorback sucker, and lesser long-nosed bat, along with commitments made by the BLM for the Arizona hedgehog cactus (page 50 of the Safford/Tucson grazing BO) apply to Harper and Guthrie allotments.

The Service appreciates your concern and care for listed species and the public lands they inhabit. Call me, Angie Brooks or Thetis Gamberg at 602/640-2720 with any concerns or questions.



Thomas A. Gatz

cc: Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, NM (ES: Steve Chambers)
Field Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, NM

Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix AZ

HarperGuthrieBLMSafford.wpd:TATG