



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
P.O. Box 1306
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R2/WSFR/052118

JUL 24 2012

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Black Canyon Dam and Recreational Facilities Improvements, Navajo County, Arizona

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Forest Service propose to improve safety, floodwater holding capacity, and boating access at Black Canyon Lake. Safety and flood capacity will be achieved by raising the crest height of the dam six feet, reconstructing the spillway, modifying and reinforcing the stilling basin, and grading the access road to the dam. Boating access will also be improved by expanding the existing parking lot and relocating the boat ramp farther north to a location which better ensures water access during low lake levels.

This FONSI written by us, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, largely mirrors and accepts the August 16, 2010 FONSI and environmental assessment written by the U.S. Forest Service for Black Canyon Dam and Recreational Facilities Improvements. The Modified Proposed Action will result in neutral or beneficial affects to public safety by improving flood protection for people on the lake and in downstream flood zones. Boating facilities improvements will result in safe and convenient lake access.

The proposed improvements at Black Canyon Lake fall below thresholds of concern normally considered under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The proposed improvements and associated grant will not adversely affect historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, nor ecologically critical areas. The proposed improvements are not controversial, not uncertain, and do not involve unique nor unknown risk. The proposed improvements do not establish precedent and do not predetermine future decisions by the agencies involved. Effects from the improvements are strictly local, and cumulative impacts are minimal to none. These actions will not comply with Federal, State and local laws.

The proposed improvements are in compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). The U.S. Forest Service, along with the Arizona Game and Fish Department as cooperator, formally consulted with us under ESA Section 7 for the Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*). We issued a "no jeopardy" Biological Opinion with no reasonable and prudent measures on February 8, 2010. We conclude there is not likely to be adverse modification to Mexican spotted owl critical habitat. We also conclude there is not likely to be incidental take, since project-related noise disturbance will be minimal, on the periphery of suitable habitat, and buffered by topography.

Based upon review of our 2010 Biological Opinion and the 2010 Environmental Assessment and FONSI written for the U.S. Forest Service, I have determined the proposed improvements do not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, as described in Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. As such, an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required. The environmental assessment prepared for the U.S. Forest Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department is adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay E. Nicholson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Regional Director

Enclosures