

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT Needles Topock Bankline Stabilization**

### **U. S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation Yuma Area Office**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and based on the following, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has determined that implementation of Proposed Action (Alternative A) to stabilize approximately 2-miles of eroding bankline in the Needles Topock Area on the Lower Colorado River (LCR) would not result in a significant impact on the quality of the human and natural environment. The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) provides details on the Proposed Action and an analysis of potential impacts and should be used as companion document to this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The purpose of the proposed project is to correct and control erosion of Arizona bankline located on the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. Reclamation proposes to achieve this by (1) contouring the bankline slope to range between 2:1 and 4:1; (2) placing rock (averaging seven inches in diameter) on the lower bankline area; (3) placing a blend of gravel and river cobble on the upper bankline; and (4) planting poles of native riparian trees along the upper bankline.

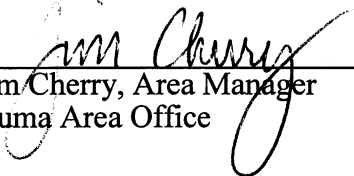
The analysis presented in the EA focused on those resource areas identified as potentially impacted by the alternatives considered, including the No Action. Those resources were aesthetics, air quality, biological, special status species, land use, water resources, and soils. Based on the location and nature of the project no effects were determined to have the potential to occur to prime and unique farmlands, cultural resources, Indian Trust Assets, socioeconomics, or present any environmental justice issues. The potential for impacts to air quality and hazardous materials were considered negligible because of stringent regulatory and best management practices.

Reclamation has identified several best management practices (BMPs) to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects that may result from the Proposed Action. A brief summary of the environmental commitments and practices Reclamation has committed to are listed below.

- All construction activities below Ordinary High Water will occur during seasonal low water periods (November to January) to avoid impacts to established shoreline vegetation and aquatic species.
- Unimproved surfaces, such as dirt and gravel roads, stockpile sites, and disturbed soils will be watered up to 20-times per day to minimize dust emissions.
- An upstream area of established Bulrush (less than 1/10 of an acre) will be avoided and monitored for up to 2-years to evaluate the effectiveness in controlling erosions on this limited section of bankline.
- Prior to any construction activities, Reclamation will ensure that a site specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is prepared and available onsite.
- Light maintenance and onsite fueling of equipment will be done in accordance with Best Management Practices established in a site specific SWPPP to minimize the potential for a release of petroleum products to the surrounding environment.
- Reclamation will plant and monitor the success of the pole planting up to 3-years after construction is completed.

- Avoidance and Minimization Measures 1, 3, and 6 of the Lower Colorado River Multi Species Conservation Program Biological and Conference Opinion will be implemented to avoid and minimize species managed under this program.
  - AMM 1: To the extent practicable, avoid and minimize impacts of implementing the LCR MSCP (Conservation Plan) on existing covered species habitats.
  - AMM 3: To the extent practicable, avoid and minimize disturbance of covered bird species during the breeding season.
  - AMM 6: Avoid or minimize impacts on covered species habitats during dredging, bank stabilization activities, and other river-management actions.
- Native upland trees (Honey mesquite and/or Palo Verde) will be planted to reclaim the temporary expansion at the upstream stockpile site.
- In the event a potential cultural resource is discovered, all work will cease and will not resume until Reclamation and or the appropriate regulatory authority issues clearance.

Based on analysis of the environmental impacts, BMPs, and environmental commitments, as presented in the EA, Reclamation has concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action (Alternative A) does not pose a significant adverse impact to the quality of the human and natural environment.

  
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Jim Cherry, Area Manager  
Yuma Area Office

5-5-06  
Date