

**U.S. Department of Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A VISITOR CENTER AND ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES  
AT ASH MEADOWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to construct a new visitor center (including administrative facilities) and future relocation of shop/maintenance facilities on Federal land within the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). This project is funded through the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). All new facilities would be located near the intersection of Spring Meadows Road and the present entrance road to the existing Refuge Headquarters. The visitor center and administrative facility would be located on the southeast corner of the intersection and the shop/maintenance building would be located on the southwest corner of the intersection. Two alternatives, including the no action alternative, were described in the Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA is herein incorporated by reference. The proposed action will improve the Service's ability to meet the increasing demand for visitor services, improve visitor safety, provide a high quality and educational visitor experience, increase awareness of desert habitats and species, and increase the Service's ability to manage sensitive habitat types, restore habitat, and recover native species.

**Decision**

Following review and analysis, the Service selected Alternative B for implementation because it is the alternative that best achieves the purpose and need.

**Alternatives Considered**

A brief summary of the alternatives considered is provided below. For a complete description of each alternative, please refer to the EA.

**Alternative A (No Action)**

The No Action Alternative would maintain existing visitor services, Refuge Headquarters, and shop/maintenance facilities in their existing locations. The Refuge administrative, visitor facilities and shop/maintenance facilities would not be constructed.

**Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)**

Under alternative B, the new visitor center, administrative facilities, and shop/maintenance facilities would be constructed near the junction of Spring Meadows Road and the existing Refuge Headquarters entrance road. The visitor center would be constructed on the southeast corner of the junction of Spring Meadows Road and the existing Refuge Headquarters entrance road. The shop/maintenance facilities would be constructed on the southwest corner of the junction of Spring Meadows Road and the existing

Refuge Headquarters entrance road. In order to improve visitor safety and reduce the effects of dust and noise on the overall visitor experience, separate roads would lead to the visitor center and shop/maintenance facilities.

The proposed facility would be a universally accessible building with adequate space for office staff and interpretation/education opportunities for the public. The new facilities would also feature environmentally sensitive designs including solar power and energy efficient construction. One of the primary goals of the proposed project is to construct a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified facility. From the parking area visitors would walk on concrete sidewalks and enter the new visitor center. Following a tour of the educational facilities and indoor displays, visitors would exit the visitor center to a new section of elevated boardwalk. The new section of elevated boardwalk would lead visitors from the visitor center along an old road and connect to the existing Crystal Springs viewing area and another section would provide a loop across desert upland habitat and connect to the existing Crystal Spring boardwalk along the Crystal Springs outflow. Educational displays and panels within the visitor center and along the boardwalk would enhance the visitor experience, increase the educational value of Refuge infrastructure, and interpret the cultural, historical, and natural history of the Ash Meadows environment.

#### **Effects of Implementation**

As outlined in the EA, implementation of Alternative B would have no significant, long-term impacts on resources identified in the EA. The proposed project would directly support the visitor services goal of providing "visitors with wildlife-dependent recreation, interpretation and environmental education opportunities that are compatible with and foster the appreciation and understanding of Ash Meadows NWR's wildlife and plant communities (USFWS 2009)". The proposed action meets the objectives of the Refuge and is consistent with the purposes for which the Refuge was established. A summary of the impact analysis and conclusions presented in the EA are provided below.

#### **Effects Related to Topography/Visual Quality**

Implementation of the proposed project would require site grading and leveling. However, the placement of the building and parking areas as well as the alignment of road and walkways were identified during conceptual site planning efforts in order to maintain and utilize existing topography in a manner that preserves a natural appearance. Due to low topographic relief and high vegetation density throughout the Refuge, structures within the Refuge are primarily visible only from a small number of high points inside and outside of the Refuge boundaries. Landscaping, native plantings and low berms would buffer the overall visibility of the parking areas and shop/maintenance facilities. Planting the grounds surrounding the proposed visitor center with native vegetation would lessen the overall visibility and contrast of the building with the surrounding environment. Color selection and construction materials would be selected to blend into surrounding area. Finally, the selected site for the proposed project is at a similar elevation (2,200 feet) to the existing Refuge Headquarters (2,190 feet). Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will have no significant impact on the topography/visual quality of the site.

### **Effects Related to Geology and Soils**

The subsurface materials and soils on site do not represent a hazard to development of the proposed project. Geotechnical surveys and analysis completed for the proposed project indicate that the site is suitable for the type of construction or use associated with the proposed project. Therefore, there will be no significant impact to these resources. Temporary impacts due to site clearing and preparation, foundation excavation and other activities that could disturb soils would be mitigated by the following best management practices (BMPs):

- Apply water to surface soils prior to excavation.
- Apply water to subsurface soils during excavation and loading operations.
- Apply water on roads and active construction areas at the beginning of each day, throughout the day as needed, and at the end of each day to minimize dust emission.
- Apply water to all soil stockpiles as needed to maintain a surface crust and prevent dust emission.
- Maintain dust control actions until final soil stabilization and revegetation actions have been completed.

### **Effects Related to Hydrology and Water Quality**

Implementation of the proposed project would result in exposed soils and would require the use of heavy equipment. Potential environmental impacts could result due to 1) increased runoff and sedimentation and 2) release of contaminants from construction equipment or fueling activities. Due to the distance of the project site from wetlands or a water source, the potential for impact from increased runoff and sedimentation is low. Best management practices would be implemented during construction, and during Refuge operations following project completion. In order to minimize impacts to water quality due to increased sedimentation during construction, the following BMPs would be implemented:

- Install silt fencing around construction perimeter.
- Install silt fencing around all soil stockpiles that are stored for a long duration.
- Direct flow away from and around construction areas to prevent increased sedimentation.
- Install turbidity barriers (weed-free fiber wattles) to trap mobilized sediment.
- Dispose of all construction debris, solid waste, and liquid waste in approved containers.
- Revegetate all disturbed areas with native vegetation to promote surface stabilization.

Potential impacts to water quality due to fuel or chemical spills during construction would be prevented with the following BMPs:

- Inspect all construction equipment for leaks prior to project start-up and regularly during the construction process
- Store all fuels and chemicals in a designated spill prevention zone.
- Provide secondary containment for all fuel and chemical storage tanks.
- Develop an emergency spill response plan prior to project implementation or follow Refuge spill plan guidelines.
- Maintain an on-site spill kit for the duration of construction.

To avoid impacts following construction, facilities, walkways and parking areas would be designed to direct surface runoff to containment areas or landscape areas to avoid water quality impacts. If feasible, rainfall would drain from the roof onto a water harvesting channel and would be used to irrigate landscaping and plantings of native vegetation. Impacts due to future chemical and fuel handling and runoff from within the proposed shop/maintenance area would be prevented by following guidelines in the existing Refuge spill plan. In addition, surface runoff from the proposed shop/maintenance area would be directed to a containment area and oil-water separator.

All areas disturbed due to implementation of the proposed project would be revegetated with native plants following project completion. Landscape design specifications would allow only native plants grown from seed or propagated from materials collected at Ash Meadows. Minimization of drainage alteration and soil erosion would be required. The BMPs to be implemented during and after construction, including measures related to construction equipment and materials staging, would reduce potential impacts related to hydrology and water quality to below a level of significance.

### **Effects Related to Water Resources**

An existing well at the Refuge headquarters is used to supply water to the existing headquarters, bunkhouse and shop/maintenance buildings. The existing well would be maintained for use in the proposed new facilities. Although increased staffing and visitation could result in increased water use in the proposed, new facilities, implementation of mitigation measures outlined above and throughout the EA would aid in offsetting such an impact. The application of the following water conservation measures would be incorporated into the overall project design to prevent potential impacts to water resources associated with increased staffing and visitation:

- If feasible, include rain water harvesting devices to deliver runoff from roofs to native plantings and landscaped areas surrounding the proposed facilities.
- Install high-efficiency, water saving fixtures in all proposed facilities.
- If necessary, install pit toilets outside of the proposed visitor center.

Implementation of the above BMPs and associated increases in water efficiency will reduce the potential impacts related to water resources to below a level of significance.

### **Effects Related to Air Quality**

Implementation of the proposed project will not result in any violation of air quality standard, increase the frequency or severity of any existing violations or delay attainment of an air quality standard. This conclusion is based on the size of the proposed project, duration of construction and comparison to similar projects. BMPs outlined in the above sections for Geology and Soils and Hydrology and Water Quality would also minimize particulate emissions. Specifically, the following BMPs would be implemented to mitigate for any temporary air quality impacts:

- Limit stockpile height to 8 feet
- Limit vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour in staging areas and on construction access roads
- Prevent trackout of soil and debris by installing a gravel trackout pad or mechanical track and wheel washer.
- Apply water to soil and debris during excavation, demolition and loading activities

Because construction is expected to be completed within one year, construction emissions would be short term, and project related dust would be controlled using best management practices, there would be no significant impact to air quality.

#### **Effects Related to Ambient Noise Levels**

The greatest potential for a temporary increase in noise levels within the Refuge due to the proposed project is from construction activities associated with the proposed project. These potential increases would be temporary and would return to existing levels following project completion. The proposed project would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels within or outside of the Refuge boundary. Construction of the proposed project and relocation of Refuge management, operation and maintenance activities outside of the Crystal Spring outflow will reduce the amount of wildlife disturbance in the riparian woodland due to noise. Furthermore, relocation of the shop/maintenance facilities will also reduce the amount of noise visitors experience along the Crystal Spring boardwalk. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have no significant impact on ambient noise levels.

#### **Effects Related to Floodplain and Wetlands**

The proposed project is located in dry, upland habitat and does not involve construction in a floodplain or wetland. The proposed project is not located within the FEMA designated 100 year floodplain and would not affect floodplains or ACOE jurisdictional wetlands. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on floodplains or wetlands.

#### **Effects Related to Endangered, Threatened and Rare Species**

Of the six endangered and seven threatened species that occur at Ash Meadows NWR, the following species occur within the proposed project area; Ash Meadows sunray (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugata*) and spring-loving centaury (*Centaureum namophilum*). The Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish (*Cyprinodon nevadensis mionectes*) occurs adjacent to but not within the proposed project area. The Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish (*Cyprinodon nevadensis mionectes*) is present in the Crystal Spring outflow channel adjacent to the existing and proposed boardwalk. Ash Meadows sunray (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugata*) plants occur within the 5 acre project permanent disturbance area but designated critical habitat does not. Ash Meadows sunray (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugata*) is present within the construction area of the proposed new visitor center and shop/maintenance buildings. Based on recent rare plant surveys (Bio-West 2010), there were approximately 79,508 sunray plants within the Refuge and approximately 812 sunray plants within the 60 acre proposed project area. Therefore, this project may impact less than 1.2% of the Ash Meadows sunray. Spring-loving centaury (*Centaureum namophilum*) plants and designated critical habitat are present within a portion of the construction area of the proposed boardwalk. Based on rare plant surveys (Bio-West 2010), there are approximately 4,593,871 spring-loving centaury plants within the Refuge and 6 spring-loving centaury plants near the project area. Therefore, this project may impact less than 0.01% of the spring-loving centaury plants. The USFWS (1985) designated 1,840 acres as critical habitat for spring-loving centaury. Up to 1.17 acres of critical habitat could be disturbed within the proposed project area. This disturbance is expected to be minimal.

The following BMPs would be used to minimize impacts to sensitive plant species:

1. Prior to construction, the action area will be surveyed for the two federally-listed plant species known to occur within the action area (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugata* and *Centaurium namophilum*) as well as any other sensitive plant species that may have colonized the area since the last survey date. Surveys will be conducted for *C. namophilum* preferably during the flowering season that immediately precedes construction, and the locations of these plants (relative to construction activities) will be mapped. *E. nudicaulis* var. *corrugata* can be surveyed at any time of the year, and will be surveyed as soon as the disturbance footprint is known to prepare for transplanting impacted plants. The disturbance footprint for this project will be adjusted, as practicable, to avoid harming these plants. Areas containing federally-listed plants will be delineated using conspicuous flagging and avoided, to the extent feasible.
2. Equipment and human access zones to be used during construction will be delineated by fencing and/or flagging to prevent disturbance to federally-listed plants.
3. Prior to construction, workers will be informed of federally-listed plant species that occur near and within the project area, and measures required to avoid or minimize impacts to these species.
4. Seed will be collected from all federally-listed plants in the area that cannot be avoided by the construction with assistance from the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office (NFWO) Ecological Services botanist. Seeds from each parent plant will be collected and stored in a separate coin envelope (maternal line collection). In the future, these collections will be used for seed regeneration; the separation of maternal lines will enable the restorationist to determine the number of maternal individuals contributing to the collection. This process allows for the greatest chance of reintroducing genetic diversity and increases the chance of survival of the augmented population. Seed will be stored in a cool, dry environment until used for restoration purposes.

In addition to seed collection, *Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugata* individuals that cannot be avoided will be translocated by transplanting them to nearby non-impacted sites with the assistance from the NFWO Ecological Services botanist. This will attempt to minimize genetic contamination (should it happen) since the genetic connectivity of populations within the Refuge is unknown. Plants will not be transplanted directly into a stable population, rather on the outskirts as to not disturb already established plants. Excavating, transporting, and transplanting will impose stresses on relocated plants, possibly resulting in mortality. Individuals should therefore be removed with as little physical disturbance as possible, and preferably at a phenologically appropriate time of the year, e.g., when the individual is dormant or photosynthetically inactive. To minimize stress, plants will be excavated with associated soils. The associated soils around the plant will keep the roots intact and may contain some of the natural seedbank, and soil microorganisms or mycorrhizal associations. Transplanted plants should be hand-watered after transplanting to aid in root re-establishment in the new location. *Centaurium namophilum* individuals will not be translocated and transplanted because of its annual duration. In areas where this species cannot be avoided, soil will be salvaged to preserve the soil seed bank. For both federally-listed plant species, if feasible, additional topsoil from the excavation project will be salvaged in an attempt to collect seed potentially stored in the soil.

5. The transplanting process will be documented and all transplanted *plants will be monitored for a minimum of 3 years or if possible for 5 years to determine the survival rate of the action.* Success will be measured by survival of plants, an increase in the number of reproductive plants, and recruitment of new individuals. The Refuge will provide reports to the NFWO in Las Vegas and the Nevada Department of Forestry describing the success of plant transplantation efforts. Reports will be provided at the end of the calendar year in which plants are first transplanted and at the end of the calendar year for the subsequent years of monitoring.
6. During construction, measures will be taken to minimize exposure of federally-listed plants to dust, including regular spraying of water along roads used by construction vehicles.
7. Construction vehicles will be required to be clean, *e.g.*, free of soil or plant materials from other areas, to prevent introduction of invasive species. Vehicles will be cleaned immediately prior to entering the Refuge.
8. Staging areas will be sited in already disturbed areas, and approved by the Refuge Manager prior to use.
9. To prevent weeds from becoming a problem on the Refuge, and where possible, all fill or landscaping materials brought in from outside the Refuge during this project, will be certified weed-free.

Although no major construction or earth moving activities would occur in or adjacent to the Crystal Spring outflow channel, the following precautions would be taken to prevent disturbance of the Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish (*Cyprinodon nevadensis mionectes*) during boardwalk and interpretive display installation:

- Special environmental conditions and construction requirements (including BMPs) would be included in construction designs, specifications and plans associated with interpretive display installation and would be thoroughly explained during pre-construction project meetings.
- Construction debris or sawdust would not enter the stream channel.
- All treated lumber would be pressure washed off-site.
- All treated lumber would be cut to size off-site in order to ensure that no sawdust from treated lumber falls on the ground or into the water.

The proposed project could result in increased Refuge visitation. Increased visitation would be expected to promote increased awareness and appreciation for the Ash Meadows environment and the rare species that occur there. Increased awareness and education would be accomplished through direct contact with refuge staff as well as interpretive and educational displays within the visitor center and installed along the Crystal Spring boardwalk. The elevated boardwalk will aid in the prevention of trampling effects on Ash Meadows sunray (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis var. corrugata*) and spring-loving centaury (*Centaurium namophilum*). In addition, displays along the boardwalk would interpret the ecology of rare plants as well as habitat restoration efforts. Adherence to BMPs as well as the implementation of mitigation measures outlined above will avoid or minimize impacts to endangered, threatened or rare species. Therefore, the FWS Section 7 Biological Opinion concluded the project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of Ash Meadows sunray and spring-loving centaury or

adversely modify critical habitat for spring-loving centauray. In addition, the project is not likely to adversely affect the Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish or its critical habitat (USFWS 2012).

#### **Effects Related to Migratory Birds**

Implementation of the proposed project could have a short term impact on migratory birds if construction activities occur during the spring or fall migration or breeding season. The following BMPs and precautions would be implemented in order to prevent disturbance of migratory birds:

- If construction activities are to be performed during breeding season, nest surveys would be completed within and adjacent to the project area prior to initiation of construction activities.
- If nests or nesting activity is observed, and deemed to be potentially disturbed, construction activities would not be initiated.

Construction of a new visitor center and relocation of the shop/maintenance facilities outside of the Crystal Spring outflow would decrease the level of disturbance to migratory birds associated with management and maintenance operations that presently occur within the existing Refuge Headquarters area. Furthermore, the proposed construction area is in upland habitat approximately 1,000 feet from the dense riparian woodland associated with Crystal Spring where migratory birds are most commonly observed resting, feeding or nesting. Therefore, implementation of the mitigation measures outlined above will reduce the potential, temporary level of impact to migratory birds to below a level of significance.

#### **Effects Related to Invasive and Non-Native Species**

In order to ensure that invasive or non-native plant species are not introduced, the following BMPs would be implemented:

- BMPs would be noted in Special Environmental Conditions to be included in the designs and specifications for the proposed project.
- All equipment would be thoroughly cleaned of soil and plant debris with a high pressure sprayer at an offsite location prior to being delivered for use on the proposed project.
- All equipment would be inspected by FWS personnel prior to unloading for use on the proposed project.
- All areas disturbed during construction would be stabilized and revegetated following the completion of the proposed project.
- Any invasive and non-native plant species that colonize the disturbed areas would be eradicated following the protocol set forth in the Ash Meadows Integrated Pest Management Plan (USFWS 2009).

There are no major infestations of non-native plants within the proposed project area. Implementation of BMPs outlined above will prevent any significant impacts due to invasive and non-native species.



### **Effects Related to Cultural Resources**

Although cultural resource surveys and clearance efforts have shown that no cultural resources are present within the proposed project area (HRA 2008; SHPO 2011), the following mitigation measures would be implemented to ensure that buried or previously unidentified cultural resources are not impacted:

- In the event that any buried and previously unidentified resources are located during construction, all work in the vicinity will cease and SHPO will be contacted for additional consultation.
- Incorporate interpretive media in the proposed visitor center explaining the rich cultural history of Ash Meadows NWR. In addition, the Service would conduct participatory interpretive planning with the seven nations of Nuwuvi and the Death Valley Timbisha Shoshone throughout the design phase and the development of culturally and historically accurate interpretive exhibits.

The Service consulted with the SHPO in accordance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A cultural resource survey completed on November 1, 2010 determined that no historic or cultural resources are present within the proposed project area. The SHPO concurred in a letter dated February 9, 2011 (SHPO 2011) that cultural resources completed to date throughout the Refuge and within the proposed project area are sufficient to identify historic and cultural resources and that the proposed project will not pose any effect to such resources. Implementation of the mitigation measures outlined above will reduce the impacts to cultural resources to below a level of significance.

### **Effects Related to Transportation, Traffic Circulation and Parking**

Population growth combined with increased public awareness and FWS outreach efforts has resulted in annual increases in visitation to Ash Meadows NWR since establishment in 1984. Implementation of the proposed project could increase visitation to the Refuge and visitor center. Continued visitation and public demand for the outdoor experiences offered at the Refuge is expected to increase independently of the proposed project. The proposed project is intended to address increased visitation and public demand as well as improve public understanding of resources managed by the FWS. As discussed in the EA, the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on local or regional transportation. Short term impacts to traffic circulation and parking would be mitigated by implementing the following BMPs:

- Install signs to provide clear direction for visitors seeking the existing Refuge headquarters and parking area.

Implementation of BMPs will alleviate any short term impacts to traffic circulation in the vicinity of the existing Refuge Headquarters. The impact of increased public visitation and infrequent increases in FWS and contractor use would be limited and the effect on surrounding roadways would be inconsequential. The proposed project would not create a significant increase in demand for parking by visitors and no significant effects related to parking would be expected due to the proposed project. The proposed project would alleviate future traffic circulation and parking problems if visitation continues to increase in the future as it has been increasing since Refuge establishment. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will have no adverse effect on local or regional transportation.

### **Effects Related to Public Utilities and Easements**

Implementation of the proposed project will not alter or affect easements within the Refuge. The proposed new visitor center will be designed to be energy efficient (LEED certification) in order to reduce overall energy requirements of the facility and will connect to existing power and telephone lines. If feasible, overhead power lines will be buried in order to improve visual quality. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on public utilities or easements.

### **Effects Related to Public Access and Recreation**

Under the Preferred Alternative, visitors would utilize the proposed visitor center as a gateway to the remainder of the Refuge. Educational and interpretive displays within the proposed visitor center and along the improved Crystal Spring boardwalk would enhance and improve the visitor experience. Mitigation measures for the temporary disturbance associated with implementation of the proposed project would include:

- Install signs directing visitors around the construction area, explaining the project and its completion date, identifying any temporarily closed areas, and identifying additional recreational opportunities throughout the Refuge (i.e., the Point of Rocks and Longstreet Springs boardwalks).

The proposed project would enhance visitor experience, increase awareness, facilitate education on the Ash Meadows ecology and environment, and provide improved recreational opportunities. The proposed project would not result in any modification of existing hunting access or any reduction of public access and recreational opportunities. Implementation of the proposed project would not limit public access or recreation. Access to the existing Refuge headquarters, parking and Crystal Spring boardwalk would be maintained during construction. Temporary signage would be installed to guide visitors around the construction area and explain the project. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on public access and recreation.

### **Effects Related to Economy, Employment and Environmental Justice**

Construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project would not result in any disproportionately high or unfavorable human health or environmental effects on low-income or minority populations. Implementation of the proposed project is expected to be accommodated by increased public use and visitation, similar to that observed following the completion of other public access improvement projects at the Refuge such as the Longstreet Spring and Point of Rocks boardwalks. It is anticipated that a great number of visitors to the new visitor center and boardwalk will be from immediately surrounding areas including Amargosa Valley and Pahrump. The continuation of existing public outreach activities such as volunteer and stewardship days as well as hosting local school groups for environmental education would promote access as well as equality. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will have no negative impact on economy, employment and environmental justice.

### **Cumulative Effects**

Based on the needs of Refuge staff and the public, replacement of the Refuge Headquarters and visitor and maintenance facilities would be the most environmentally sound and cost effective long-term solution to meeting future needs of Refuge staff and the public. Because 1) the impacts of past and future management actions as well as the short term impacts associated with the proposed project are individually minor and not expected to be major when considered collectively, and 2) the impacts are

separated throughout the Refuge and across a broad span of time, the cumulative impacts are not expected to be significant.

#### Public Availability

The draft EA was available for public review and comment for a period of 30 calendar days from July 19, 2011 to August 17, 2011 and was posted on the Refuge Complex webpage at <http://www.fws.gov/desertcomplex/ashmeadows.htm>. No comments were received from the public or federal agencies during the review period. The Final EA is available electronically at the website above and copies are also available for review at the Ash Meadows NWR (HCR 70 610 Spring Meadows Road, Amargosa Valley, NV 89020) and at the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex office (4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130).

#### Conclusion

Based on review and evaluation of the information contained in the EA and the Biological Opinion, it is my finding that implementation of the proposed project (Alternative B) does not constitute a major federal action of significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact and supporting EA are available electronically at <http://www.fws.gov/desertcomplex/ashmeadows.htm>. Copies are also available at the Ash Meadows NWR Headquarters (HCR 70 610 Spring Meadows Road, Amargosa Valley, NV 89020) and the Desert NWR Complex office (4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130).

#### References

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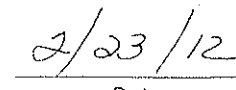
SHPO 2011. February 9, 2011 Memo from Review and Compliance Officer Rebecca Lynn Palmer to Ash Meadows NWR Refuge Manager Sharon McKelvey. Assessment of Effects for the Proposed Administration and Visitor Center Facilities on the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Nye County, Nevada. Undertaking #2011-1463.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2009. Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

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Date