

ATTACHMENT 7

**(Supplemental Documentation to the: Mogollon Rim Water Resource
Management Study Report of Findings)**

Social Assessment and Environmental Justice – Mogollon Rim Water Resource Management Study

MOGOLLON RIM WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STUDY

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A. Social Assessment

Social analysis is the process of considering impacts on humans, and social assessment is the product of the analysis (the results needed to describe the impacts on the human community from the action).

The goals of social analysis are to:

- Contribute to making projects more sound and sustainable by ensuring that projects fit the individuals and communities served and affected.
- Ensure project effectiveness by increasing support and tailoring institutional arrangements to the local culture.
- Make projects more inclusive by involving not only selected stakeholders but the larger, more diverse community

An extensive Social Analysis was not performed during this study. Rather an attempt has been made to identify significant area of social concern that could require additional research, analysis, and evaluation in subsequent studies. Social Assessment considerations for the Study Area include the following issues:

- Environmental Justice -- Distribution of minority population and low income populations of the Study Area within Gila County.
- Probable economic impacts – restrictive limits on growth for all economic units associated residential, commercial and industrial development and expansion.
- Reduced quality of life, changes in lifestyle, increased poverty in general, population migrations, reduction or modifications of recreation activities.
- Reevaluation of social values – growth vs. no-growth, community appearance, and cultural resources preservation and protection
- Public dissatisfaction with government water resource development and community growth policies and strategies -- moratorium on the issuance of water meters for community development (all considerations) and the introduction and application of restrictions on all community's planning and zoning policies and codes.
- Perceptions of inequity related to socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age, gender, and seniority, particularly with respect to water service rates.
- Recognition of institutional restraints on water use. Surface Water Rights
- Increased Restrictions and Conflicts -- Water user, Political, and Management (Community Fire Protection and Water Conservation), and (Other social conflicts?)
- Institutional Formation – Legal requirements and institutional organization

B. Environmental Justice

is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or a socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from

industrial, municipal and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. Meaningful involvement means that; (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision making process; and (4) the decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

In sum, environmental justice is the goal to be achieved for all communities and persons across this Nation. Environmental justice is achieved when everyone, regardless of race, culture, or income, enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

Environmental justice must be considered and where required appropriate mitigation measures will be established that will not create disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of federal programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the Study Area.

The populations that could be affected in the Study Area are minority and low income populations in the Study Area are, in general, Black or African Americans, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic or Latino. The minorities population distribution, by population centers and estimation are shown in Table A.

Table A Minority Population Distribution by Town and Census Designated Place (CDP)-
- 2000.

Table A

| Population Distribution Center | Gila County | Town of Payson | Pine CDP | Strawberry CDP |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Minority Groups | Population* | Population* | Population* | Population* |
| Black or African American | 197 | 36 | 3 | 1 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 6,630 | 257 | 10 | 6 |
| Asian | 220 | 72 | 2 | 7 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 28 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Some Other Race | 3,385 | 183 | 21 | 10 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8,546 | 708 | 34 | 32 |
| Total | 19,006 | 1,263 | 70 | 56 |

*2000 U. S. Bureau Census Data

The population distribution of minorities in the residual population of the Study Area's unincorporated community population, 4,762, is unknown, but mostly likely would be similar to the population distribution of minorities in the Pine and Strawberry Census Designated Places (CDP).

Low-Income populations are persons of low-income status. This status is based on U.S. Bureau of the Census definitions of individuals living below the poverty line, as defined by a statistical threshold that considers family size and income. Poverty levels census data -- 2000, in the Study Area, have been developed several ways, however, only two poverty status levels are presented in TableB., i.e. Families and Individuals.

Table B.

The Poverty Status of Families and Individuals in the Study Area. – 2000.

| Population Distribution Center | Gila County | Town of Payson | Pine CDP | Strawberry CDP |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Below Poverty Level | Numbers | Numbers | Numbers | Numbers |
| Families | 1,785 | 274 | 31 | 24 |
| Individuals | 8,752 | 1,360 | 176 | 111 |

The population distribution of family and individual poverty status in the residual population of the Study Area's unincorporated community population, 4,762, is unknown, but most likely will be similar to the number shown for the Pine and Strawberry CDPs.

There are enough population in both minorities and low-income groups to flag these population groups as being groups that will require further considerations regarding environmental justice with respect to any proposed action associated with any or all of the proposed alternative prior to its implementation, including the Future Without alternative.

Probable economic impacts – The local economy is dominated by the tourism, in-migrating retirees, and seasonal residents are the primary drivers of the Payson and surrounding area economy. Government provides the most employment of any sector in Payson area. Another significant area of the local economy is the construction industries. There is a growing emphasis on manufacturing and service firms. Also encouraged is light industry and high tech operations compatible with the community's "High Quality of Life."

With the overall water supply being limited in both Payson and the surrounding area, the potential for the placement of restrictive limits on growth or expansion, e.g. moratorium on the sale of water meters or limitations on the issuance of building permits, could occur and hinder all future residential, commercial and industrial economic growth. The placement of restrictive growth limits would have a serious economic impact upon the construction industry as well as having a trickle down effect on the rest of the supporting economic sectors in the area.

As certain economic sectors are impacted the expected results would be a reduced quality of life, changes in lifestyle, increased poverty in general, population migrations, reduction or modifications of recreation activities to identify a few of the potential impacts.

Reevaluation of social values – Payson and the surrounding communities and unincorporated areas could settle the ongoing argument concerning growth vs. no-growth. If the water supply is limited and the safe yield limits have been identified and perhaps encroached upon, it most likely that a political scenario would be developed that implements no-growth policies for Payson and the surrounding areas. Water currently used to maintain each community's appearance could be seriously reduced and perhaps eliminated from use. Other areas where water could be used but restricted or eliminated could include cultural resources preservation and protection and recreation facilities.

Public dissatisfaction with local government -- for past several years, water resource development and community growth policies and strategies have been hot topics with the citizens of Payson and the surrounding areas. Issues that have been regularly discussed over the years are growth and no-growth. In fact, election of mayors and council persons frequently revolve around this specific issue. Secondary to the growth and no-growth

issues is water resource development. Issues associated with special use permits, for groundwater exploration and development in the National Forest, have been quite difficult to acquire by the Town of Payson. It is expected that acquisition of special use permits by others will be equally difficult. Discussions that evolve around moratoriums, whether zoning or water supply availability, i.e. water meters; create heated and divisive discussions within the community.

Perceptions of inequity related to the cost of water services and water supply development and their impact upon the socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age, gender, and seniority of Payson's citizens and the surrounding unincorporated communities will require additional study. The concerns over the issues of inequity may become may require special deliberations with respect to their impacts upon each group's or grouping's quality of life.

Recognition of institutional restraints on water use -- As noted through out this Report, surface water rights in the Study Area can generally be regarded as owned by the Salt River Project. Land ownership is also an institutional restraint in a geographic area that is primarily owned by Federal and State governments. Very little private land is available for developing well sites and other water system facilities needed system development, particularly groundwater wells and associated pipelines.

Increased Restrictions and Conflicts – As each community's water supply reaches its "Safe Yield" limitations, the challenge will be to establish a process for sustainable water supply management that will protect both the supply and serve the water user. Groundwater has been the primary water resource for this are for several years. However, this supply is susceptible to drought conditions. As the aquifer storage is diminished and the assumptions associated with "Safe Yield" are violated; the impacts and conflicts between and among groundwater users will increase. Impacts that could be noticed are the reduction in available fire protection, increased use of restrictive water conservation measures – including policing of water use. Efforts to mitigate these impacts could include use of effluent for as a source to provide fire protection, persistent application of water conservation measures rather than seasonal application of those same measures.

Drought may be another area that creates water use restrictions and conflicts. As aquifer deplete and recharge and aquifer recovery fails to provide for an adequate water supply for a community conflicts between water resource managers and water users will increase. There will be a need to focus upon the issues of water demand management and supplement water supplies to alleviate these shortages.

Institutional Formation – Legal requirements and institutional organization – The only known formation of a legal institutional arrangement is between the Town of Payson and the Tonto Apache Tribe. This action is an extension of previous service agreements between the Town and the Tribe.

All considered alternatives are on or near Federal lands. The probability of the any project being impacted by one or more Federal laws is quite high, i.e. it should be expected that some type of Federal impact will occur to either a community or the environment. What has been presented here is a preliminary social assessment. Certainly, more intense research, analysis, and evaluation would be required prior to the implementation of any proposed projects. Even the activities associated with Future Without Alternative would have to have the same level of investigation prior to the implementation of this Alternative, particularly where the projects implemented traverse Federal lands.