



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Colorado River District Office
1785 Kiowa Avenue
Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403-2847
www.blm.gov/az/

June 8, 2016

Linda Miller
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Draft Recreational Boating CD
317 Mesquite Avenue
Needles, CA 92363

Re: Comments on Draft Compatibility Determination for Motorized and Non-motorized Recreational Boating on Havasu National Wildlife Refuge

Dear Ms. Miller:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has reviewed the Draft Compatibility Determination (CD) for Motorized and Non-motorized Recreational Boating on Havasu National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). The following comments are provided for your consideration.

The BLM recognizes the challenging mission of the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans. BLM also recognizes the pressure associated with such a focused mission.

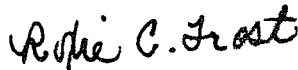
Recognizing the value of partnerships and collaborative management, on November 20, 2014, representatives from eleven federal, state, local and tribal agencies, including BLM and Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate collaborative regional administration of Lake Havasu. This marked a positive step by providing an excellent venue for individual organizations to work through future topics of controversy or dispute related to management of the lake. In this light, the BLM is disappointed that the FWS chose not to utilize this forum to inform and coordinate with the other signatory agencies in the development of the CD. We believe that input from the other agencies would have resulted in a more constructive review process, less confusion and contention among public stakeholders and in a general, a better CD. The BLM requests closer coordination with the FWS on this CD, with an emphasis on collaboration in future planning and regulatory efforts.

The BLM has extended (on two occasions) the opportunity for the FWS to present the CD to the partners in a BLM-facilitated environment. This venue will provide an opportunity for an open, transparent and collaborative approach in the spirit of the MOU. We remain optimistic that FWS will present at such a venue.

BLM has reviewed and concurs with the recommendations made by The Department of Arizona Game and Fish letter addressed to Dr. Benjamin Tuggle Re: Comments on Draft Compatibility Determination for Motorized and Non-motorized Recreational Boating on Havasu National Wildlife Refuge dated May 20, 2016. Rather than repeat all of their comments, they are attached to this letter and we request they be considered for the record to be BLM's comments on the CD.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the CD. If you have any questions or comments please contact Lake Havasu Field Manager, Jason West at 928-505-1205.

Sincerely,



Roxie C. Trost
District Manager

Attachment:

Department of Arizona Game and Fish Letter

cc:

Glenn Klingler
Bill Williams National Wildlife Refuge Complex Manager

Ray Suazo
BLM Arizona State Director

Pat Barber
Arizona Game and Fish Department