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Docket Number:	09-AFC-07C
Project Title:	Palen Solar Power Project - Compliance
TN #:	200065
Document Title:	CBD's Comments on SA Final - Attachment 9
Description:	Helix 2013. DPV2 MFTL Monitoring Summary 071113
Filer:	Sabrina Savala
Organization:	Center for Biological Diversity
Submitter Role:	Intervener
Submission Date:	7/29/2013 3:20:50 PM
Docketed Date:	7/29/2013

Memorandum

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Date: July 11, 2013

To: Vida Strong, Aspen Environmental Group

Cc: Fritts Golden and Ryann Loomis, Aspen Environmental Group

From: Jesse Miller and Shelby Howard

Subject: Summary of MFTL monitoring during DPV2 construction

HELIX Proj. No.: AEG-03.05

Message:

In response to Mojave Fringe-Toed Lizard (MFTL) mortalities that were occurring in 2012 along the Colorado River Substation (CRS) access road associated with the Devers to Palo Verde 2 (DPV2) transmission line project, HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) was contracted for MFTL monitoring. The monitoring commenced in October 2012 at a rate of 6 days per week and ended in November 2012 when MFTL were no longer active. Monitoring re-commenced in April 2013 at a rate of 5 days per week and ended in June 2013 when construction was completed in this portion of the project. The purpose of the monitoring was to document MFTL activity on and adjacent to the CRS access road, relocate MFTL away from the access road as appropriate to reduce mortality risk due to project vehicles, and report project vehicle speeding and lack of vehicle escorts to Southern California Edison (SCE) monitors.

Methods

HELIX conducted MFTL monitoring through a combination of driving and walking searches along the CRS access road, in accordance with the guidance provided by BLM for monitoring for this species. Driving searches consisted of driving slowly along the access road to search for MFTL. If a MFTL was sighted during a driving search, the biologist would pull over and attempt to relocate the lizard, in accordance with the methods described below. Walking searches consisted of a biologist walking along and adjacent to the CRS to search for lizards. Walking searches consisted of slow, meandering searches for lizards, including under shrubs and on sandy areas.

When a MFTL was observed on or near the CRS, the individual was relocated to a shady location away from the access road, a GPS point was recorded, and air and ground temperatures were recorded. HELIX biologists conducted both active (lizards were captured and physically moved to a shady location) and passive (lizards were chased away from the road until they moved to a safe location away from the road) relocations. The same data were collected when a dead MFTL was discovered. Air temperatures were recorded in a shady

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location using a handheld thermometer. Ground temperatures were recorded using a digital scanning thermometer. A daily monitoring report was provided to summarize relocations, mortalities, temperatures, and issues noted during the monitoring.

HELIX biologists evaluated driving speeds of DPV2 project trucks and whether those trucks had an escort by SCE monitors. General observations of compliance with speed limits and presence of vehicle escorts were provided in daily monitoring reports.

The MFTL monitoring was conducted by HELIX biologists Benjamin Rosenbaum, Brian Payne, Jesse Miller, and Robert Hogenauer.

Results

HELIX relocated a total of 304 MFTL (40 in fall 2012 and 264 in spring/summer 2013) and recorded 90 MFTL mortalities (9 in fall 2012 and 81 in spring/summer 2013) during the two seasons of monitoring. In fall 2012, a total of 29 days of monitoring were conducted, which resulted in an average of 1.4 MFTL relocated/day and 0.3 MFTL mortalities/day. In spring 2013, a total of 61 days of monitoring were conducted, which resulted in an average of 4.3 MFTL relocated/day and 1.3 MFTL mortalities/day. By comparison, 3 times as many MFTL were relocated per day in spring 2013 as compared to fall 2012, and approximately 4 times as many MFTL mortalities per day were noted in spring 2013 as compared to fall 2012.

There was variation in the number of individuals observed on any given day, which was attributed to a variety of environmental conditions, most notably wind speed, presence of blowing sand on the road, and temperature. Although this factor was not qualitatively assessed on a daily basis, when wind-blown sand was more prevalent on or directly adjacent to the CRS, more MFTL were observed during the monitoring.

The greatest concentration of MFTLs was found before the curve in the CRS access road and along the final stretch of asphalt before the substation. The mean air temperature for a MFTL observation was 84 degrees Fahrenheit, and the individual was often basking directly on the access road or on the berm adjacent to the road. Mean ground temperature during observations was 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

Day-to-day compliance with access road speed limits and vehicle escorts was variable during the two seasons of monitoring. All project personnel went through Workers Education Awareness Program (WEAP) training that included information on MFTL and project requirements. Despite the training, there were regular instances of trucks exceeding the speed limit or using the access road without an SCE escort. When project trucks were noted to be either speeding or travelling along the road without an escort, the vehicle number was reported to the lead SCE monitor. The SCE monitors were quick to respond when speeding and escort issues were reported to them. Even when drivers were following the speed limits, one of the major challenges seemed to be the difficulties for the drivers to see MFTL while driving because of the species' cryptic coloration and desire to stay close to sandy areas. Several of the drivers

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expressed confusion on why vehicle escorts were present and why speed limits were set at 15 or 25 mph.

Recommendations for Future Projects in MFTL Habitat

We have several recommendations for future projects where exclusionary fencing cannot be employed to keep MFTL out of the construction zone:

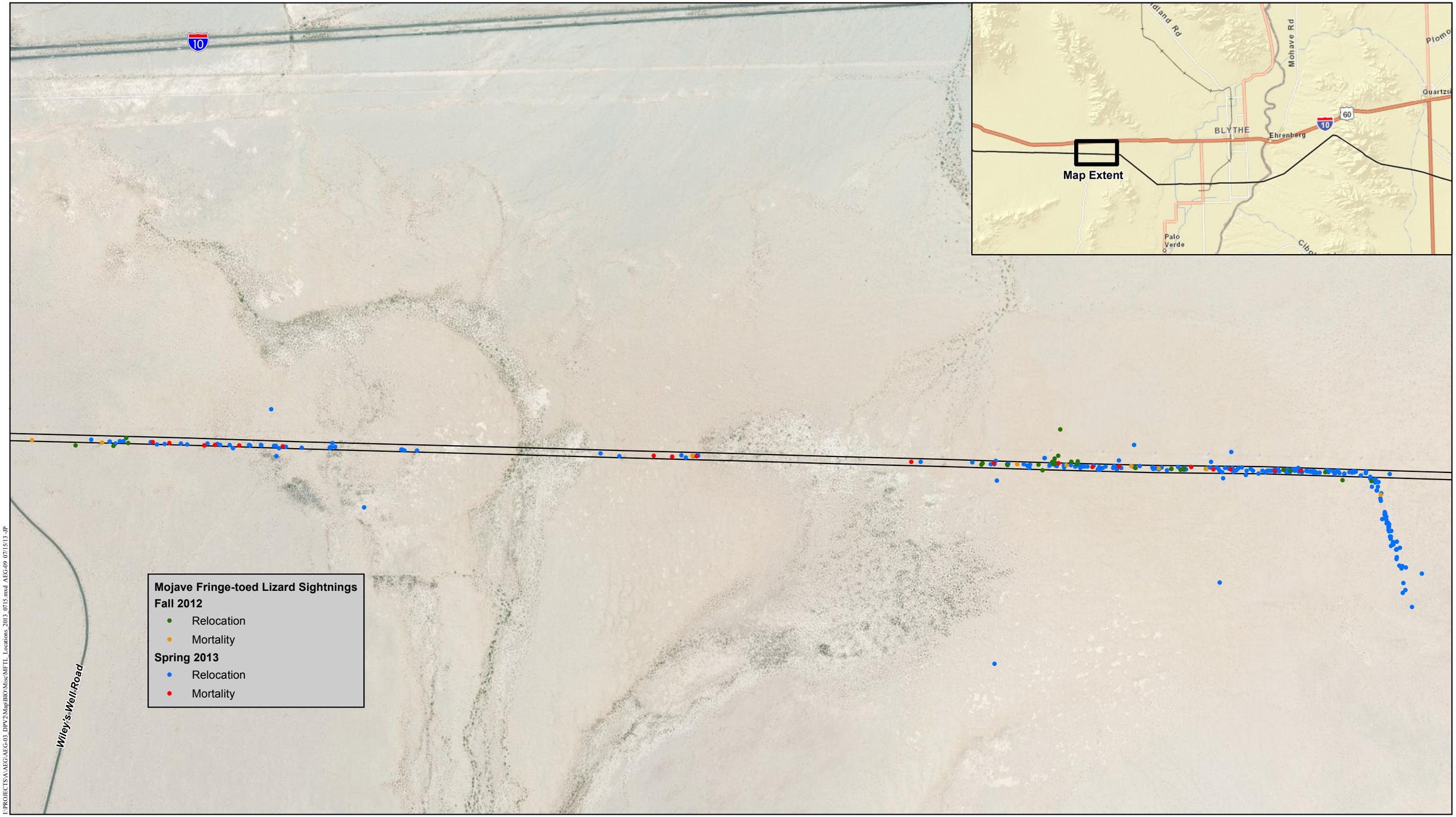
- Speed limits in areas where MFTL are known to occur or have high potential to occur should be 15 mph or less. The species is extremely difficult to see when vehicle speeds exceed 15 mph.

- Road bumps are effective at slowing vehicles down. The design and placement of bumps should be evaluated critically prior to installation. Larger and more frequent speed bumps in the areas of greatest potential would help keep vehicle speeds lower in the areas of greatest concern.

- Initial WEAP trainings can have a greater emphasis on MFTL threats and project requirements.

- Refresher WEAP trainings (e.g., quarterly) can be held periodically during the construction phase to reiterate project requirements and importance of compliance with minimization measures. This will allow for reminders of project requirements and the reasoning behind the project restrictions.

- Triggers may need to be considered if MFTL mortalities during construction exceed the number of mortalities assumed in the environmental document as “less than significant.” In order to track and implement triggers during construction, a regular monitoring program would need to be implemented to track effectiveness of the mitigation measure and to document mortalities. Examples of triggers could include installation of additional speed bumps in areas of high mortality, reduced speed limits in problematic areas, greater monitor presence, and enforcement actions against drivers who violate speed limits or escort requirements.



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Mojave Fringe-toed Lizard Sightings

DEVERS-PALO VERDE 2 TRANSMISSION LINE

HELIX Environmental Planning

0 1,500 Feet