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Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (SWIFL) Critical Habitat along the Amargosa River.

The following are my comments as a private citizen.

The area proposed in the Amargosa Management Map, is indeed critical SWIFL habitat, and has NOT been surveyed for SWIFL. From the point of confluence of Willow Creek and Amargosa River south, the east bank has an excellent canopy of Gooding's Willow, understory of Honey Mesquite, Screwbean Mesquite, Coyote Willow, Baccharis, Arrow Weed, Three Square Bull-rush, Cattails, Quailbush, and Tamarisk. The west bank is almost 100% Tamarisk. Year round flowing stream habitat along with standing pools, some quite deep, many beneath Willow canopy, are the preferred habitat of the SWIFL. It is important to micromanage habitat restoration, and Tamarisk removal projects, in order to maintain available nest tree structure, and improve the Amargosa River habitat for SWIFL.

From my personal observations of apparent Southwestern Willow Flycatchers in the Amargosa River, my opinion is that if the overall population of SWIFL increases, the the Amargosa would become a stronghold for them if Cowbird control measures, currently UNFUNDED for 2012 continue. My observations along the Amargosa River of male SWIFL behavior, in early June, several years in a row, are that un-mated males have selected specific habitat, held territory, singing, counter-singing, con specific, and inter-specific fighting, and advertizing for mates. These are all "breeding behaviors" that if females were available would have ended up with Southwestern Willow Flycatchers nesting again along the Amargosa.

There is more critical SWIFL habitat in the North portion of the Amargosa Canyon, in a willow grove where BLM land and Zellhoffer. If micromanaged habitat restoration continues, along with Cowbird control measures, then the remainder of the Amargosa River may become populated with SWIFL. China Ranch, Shoshone Wetlands, ALL of Amargosa Canyon above Sperry wash, should be surveyed for SWIFL. There is much input available from qualified individuals who may not have been aware of the redesignation for SWIFL.

The Service should meet with and take a walking tour and take input with local concerned citizens, and NGOs, already in place. Many members of Shoshone-Tecopa-China Ranch community, would be happy to provide such a tour.

Thank you for reading my comments.