

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

APPENDIX H – Wildlife Monitoring Plan

March 17, 2011

Florence Copper Project Wildlife Monitoring Plan

Curis Resources (Arizona) Inc. (Curis Arizona) recognizes the importance of protecting threatened and endangered species, and area wildlife. As such, Curis Arizona has prepared this Wildlife Monitoring Plan to manage wildlife that may occur near to or on the Florence Copper Project (FCP) site. The Wildlife Monitoring Plan has three components.

Prevention of Access

Wildlife access to the FCP site will be prevented by installing two sets of fencing. A wildlife-friendly boundary fence will be constructed around the operating area, with access gates that will allow site personnel to enter, but prevent entry by area wildlife. A second fence will be installed inside this boundary fence and surrounding the impoundments. It will be constructed of interlocking wire that will be buried 12 inches below ground surface to prevent access by burrowing animals, such as the Sonoran desert tortoise, which has been sighted within three miles of the FCP site. The construction and planned depth below surface of the impoundment fencing will meet criteria as described in the Arizona Interagency Desert Tortoise Team's *Recommended Standard Mitigation Measures for Projects in Sonoran Desert Tortoise Habitat* (June, 2008).

Tortoise Handling Plan

In 2007, Arizona Game and Fish Department issued *Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects* (as attached). Curis Arizona's tortoise handling plan will follow these 2007 guidelines. Contractors and employees will be given initial and periodic instruction on the procedure to be used if a tortoise is encountered. Only trained site personnel will be allowed to interact with a tortoise.

Migratory Bird Observation Plan

There is sufficient non-process water in the area, such as canals and irrigation water, to attract birds, and Curis Arizona knows of no bird mortality on impoundments like the ones designed for the FCP. Site personnel will nevertheless be trained to conduct daily inspections of the impoundments and will record any bird landings or bird mortality. Any landings will be recorded in a daily log and reported in quarterly monitoring reports to USEPA. Any mortality will be reported immediately to Arizona Game and Fish Department and USEPA. Arizona Game and Fish Department will instruct the operators as to the action required to remove a bird from an impoundment. Bird mortality will also be reported to USEPA as part of the quarterly monitoring reports. If bird mortality occurs regularly, Curis Arizona will develop a more comprehensive migratory bird management plan in conjunction with USEPA.



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING SONORAN DESERT TORTOISES
ENCOUNTERED ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Revised October 23, 2007

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) has developed the following guidelines to reduce potential impacts to desert tortoises, and to promote the continued existence of tortoises throughout the state. These guidelines apply to short-term and/or small-scale projects, depending on the number of affected tortoises and specific type of project.

The Sonoran population of desert tortoises occurs south and east of the Colorado River. Tortoises encountered in the open should be moved out of harm's way to adjacent appropriate habitat. If an occupied burrow is determined to be in jeopardy of destruction, the tortoise should be relocated to the nearest appropriate alternate burrow or other appropriate shelter, as determined by a qualified biologist.

Tortoises should be moved less than 48 hours in advance of the habitat disturbance so they do not return to the area in the interim. Tortoises should be moved quickly, kept in an upright position parallel to the ground at all times, and placed in the shade. Separate disposable gloves should be worn for each tortoise handled to avoid potential transfer of disease between tortoises. Tortoises must not be moved if the ambient air temperature exceeds 40° Celsius (105° Fahrenheit) unless an alternate burrow is available or the tortoise is in imminent danger.

A tortoise may be moved up to one-half mile, but no further than necessary from its original location. If a release site, or alternate burrow, is unavailable within this distance, and ambient air temperature exceeds 40° Celsius (105° Fahrenheit), the Department should be contacted to place the tortoise into a Department-regulated desert tortoise adoption program. Tortoises salvaged from projects which result in substantial permanent habitat loss (e.g. housing and highway projects), or those requiring removal during long-term (longer than one week) construction projects, will also be placed in desert tortoise adoption programs. *Managers of projects likely to affect desert tortoises should obtain a scientific collecting permit from the Department to facilitate temporary possession of tortoises.* Likewise, if large numbers of tortoises (>5) are expected to be displaced by a project, the project manager should contact the Department for guidance and/or assistance.

Please keep in mind the following points:

- . These guidelines do not apply to the Mojave population of desert tortoises (north and west of the Colorado River). Mojave desert tortoises are specifically protected under the Endangered Species Act, as administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- . These guidelines are subject to revision at the discretion of the Department. We recommend that the Department be contacted during the planning stages of any project that may affect desert tortoises.
- . Take, possession, or harassment of wild desert tortoises is prohibited by state law. Unless specifically authorized by the Department, or as noted above, project personnel should avoid disturbing any tortoise.