**BLM Afton SEZ - Evaluation Criteria for Candidate Mitigation Sites and Actions to Address Impacts to Vegetation.**

Afton SEZ General Characteristics and Information (for comparison with mitigation sites) - Contiguous area: 30,668 acres (all BLM-administered land); 29,964 acres identified as developable in Solar PEIS; through this Solar Regional Mitigation Strategy (SRMS) recommend revision to 22,600 acres developable. Sources of data are the Solar PEIS, draft Tricounty Resource Management Plan (RMP), and Mimbres RMP.

SEZ Average Current Landscape Intactness Score: 0.53

Dominant ecological systems and vegetation communities: Chihuahuan Mesquite Upland Scrub (78%), Chihuahuan Mixed Desert and Thornscrub (13%), Chihuahuan Stabilized Coppice Dune and Sand Flat Scrub (6%), Chihuahuan Creosotebush Desert Scrub (2%).

Afton SRMS Mitigation Desired Outcome for vegetation: Minimize net degradation to vegetation; offset degradation on the SEZ by improving vegetation off of the SEZ. Restoration and maintenance of equivalent functional acreage of the small but highly productive riparian and arroyo habitats will be underscored.

|  | **Stakeholder Candidate Mitigation Site/Action #1** | **Stakeholder Candidate Mitigation Site/Action #2** | **Stakeholder Candidate Mitigation Site/Action #3** |
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| **SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND GENERAL RESOURCE INFORMATION** | | | |
| **Contiguous area of candidate mitigation site (acres, also include township range and section if available); please provide GIS files if possible** |  |  |  |
| **Acres on BLM-administered land** |  |  |  |
| **Private acres** |  |  |  |
| **Other Public Management (State, County, Tribal, other federal)** |  |  |  |
| **Sources of data for the candidate mitigation site/action(s)** |  |  |  |
| **Description of Mitigation Site/Action** |  |  |  |
| **What are the proposed component activities associated with this mitigation site/action? (e.g., restoration/enhancement, acquisition, preservation, closing trails, etc.)** |  |  |  |
| **What is the average current landscape intactness score for the candidate mitigation site?  This can be calculated if GIS data are available. Landscape intactness GIS data available on the SRMS web page (http://blmsolar.anl.gov/sez/nm/regional-mitigation/).**  **Enter "Unknown" otherwise.** |  |  |  |
| **Dominant ecological systems and vegetation communities (based on LANDFIRE Existing Vegetation Types)** |  |  |  |
| **For Mitigation Criteria Areas 1 through 8 below, the BLM will use information provided by stakeholders as well as BLM resource specialist knowledge of the mitigation sites and/or actions to provide subtotal and overall scores.** | | | |
| **1. IMPORTANCE** | | | |
| **1a. Degree of support from tribal governments, other tribal entities, local communities, federal, state, and local governments, subject matter experts, and the public at large.** *Rate as high, moderate, or low and provide supporting information if possible.* |  |  |  |
| **1b. If site is located on BLM-administered land, is proposed mitigation consistent with the Resource Management Plans? Please explain.** *Yes if one or more Plan goals are addressed; maybe if no Plan goals are addressed; No if use is inconsistent with Plan goals. Enter N/A if not applicable (i.e., not on BLM land).* |  |  |  |
| **1c. Site and its proposed actions meet local, State, and/or other Federal regional conservation planning goals and objectives?** *Yes if one or more Plans goal are addressed; maybe if no Plan goals are addressed; No if use is inconsistent with Plan goals. Enter N/A if not applicable (i.e., not on BLM land).* |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Importance Score (range of 0 to 5):**  *Based on input to criteria 1a. to 1c., score of 0 to 5 will be assigned, where 5 indicates that the nominated site/action is highly important and 0 indicates very low importance based on the degree of support from tribal governments; other tribal entities; local communities; Federal, State, and local governments; subject matter experts; and the public at large.* |  |  |  |  |
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| **2. FEASIBILITY** | | | |
| **2a. What level of documentation is available to demonstrate feasibility of mitigation action? (i.e., Is there documentation to show that this type of action has been used previously?)** *Rate as little to no documentation, some documentation, or well-documented - list documents and provide with submission if possible.* |  |  |  |
| **2b. Based on action proposed (e.g., restoration, BLM land management action, land acquisition, Congressional action), how difficult will implementation be?** *Rate as highly difficult, moderately difficult, or relatively easy, and provide rationale.* |  |  |  |
| **2c. Cost estimate. (2017 $)** |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Feasibility Score (range of 0 to 5):**  *Based on input to criteria 2a. to 2c. assessing technical, administrative, and political feasibility, score of 0 to 5 will be assigned, where 5 indicates that the nominated site/action is highly feasible technically, administratively, and politically. 2-4 points for moderate technical, administrative, and/or political feasibility. 0-1 indicates very low feasibility.* |  |  |  |
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| **3. EFFECTIVENESS** | | | |
| **3a. How effective will the mitigation be in the context of achieving regional compensatory mitigation goals/objectives for conserving/restoring resource impacts?** *Rate as high, moderate, or low effectiveness, and provide rationale.* |  |  |  |
| **3b. To what degree does this action mitigate for all or most identified residual impacts to vegetation that warrant compensatory mitigation?** *Indicate which types of SEZ vegetation are found in the mitigation location.* |  |  |  |
| **3c. Is the candidate site in the same geographic region as the SEZ?** *Yes or No. Also please indicate approximate distance to SEZ.* |  |  |  |
| **3d. Does the mitigation site possess similar landscape value, ecological functionality, biological value, species, habitat types, and/or natural features as the SEZ? (Based on landscape intactness and dominant vegetation communities.)** *Yes or No.* |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Effectiveness Score (range of 0 to 5):**  *Based on input to criteria 3a. to 3d., score of 0 to 5 will be assigned, 5 points for actions/locations that fully mitigate all of those unavoidable impacts that warrant mitigation; 2-4 points for actions/locations that fully or partially mitigate some of the unavoidable impacts that warrant mitigation; and 0-1 point for partially mitigating one of the unavoidable impacts that warrants mitigation.* |  |  |  |
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| **4. TIMELINESS** | | | |
| **4a. Timeframe needed to establish site as mitigation location. (estimated years)** |  |  |  |
| **4b. Timeframe for achieving mitigation goals and objectives from start of mitigation implementation. (estimated years)** |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Timeliness Score (range of 0 to 3):**  *Based on input to criteria 4a. and 4b., score of 0 to 3 will be assigned, 3 points for projects that are expected to deliver full benefits immediately; 2 points for projects that are expected to deliver benefits that are not immediate but within a reasonable amount of time after implementation; and 0-1 point for projects that will deliver benefits with a significant delay after implementation.* |  |  |  |
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| **5. RISK** | | | |
| **5a. List the constraints or threats present at the site or in surrounding areas that could jeopardize long-term success of the mitigation action(s) (e.g., presence of prior land use designations such as corridors, mining rights, oil and gas leases, grazing, OHV trails, etc.)** |  |  |  |
| **5b. To what extent will surrounding land uses impact mitigation success (e.g., proximity to expanding urban areas, pressures on region for recreational land use, excessive groundwater withdrawal and drawdown intactness that could affect resources on the mitigation site)?** *Note if surrounding land uses are similar to or compatible with mitigation actions, surrounding land uses are incompatible with mitigation actions or present significant pressure for use of the site for incompatible uses, or if surrounding land uses effects on mitigation actions are unknown.* |  |  |  |
| **5c. Are there documented results of similar mitigation actions that have been successful?** *List documents and provide with submission if possible.* |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Risk Score (range of 0 to 5):**  *Based on input to criteria 5a. to 5c., score of 0 to 5 will be assigned. 5 points for a high degree of certainty based on documented results of success in similar situations. 3-4 points for moderate degree of certainty based on documented results of success in similar situation. 1-2 point for moderate degree of certainty based on expert opinion. 0 points for high risk proposal.* |  |  |  |
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| **6. DURABILITY** | | | |
| **6a. How durable would the mitigation be from a timeframe and management perspective?** *Rate as high, moderate, or low durability and provide rationale.**Durability considerations include time (mitigation should be effective throughout the duration of project impacts), administration (restricting incompatible uses), and financial (funds available to maintain, monitor, and adaptively manage the mitigation measures).* |  |  |  |
| **6b. Would the mitigation require maintenance to remain effective?**  *(e.g., would vegetation treating need retreatment in 10-20 years?)* |  |  |  |
| **6c. How durable would the mitigation likely be in the context of permanence of conservation and biodiversity protections and considering climate change impacts?**  *Rate as high, moderate, or low durability and provide rationale.* |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Durability Score (range of 0 to 5):**  *Based on input to criteria 6a. to 6c., score of 0 to 5 will be assigned. 5 points for actions/locations that are a one-time investment and have a high level of certainty that they will last longer than the impacts. 2-4 points for action/locations that have moderate level of certainty that they will last longer than the impacts and/or require additional funding. 0-1 points for actions/locations that are at risk of failing to last longer than the impacts.* |  |  |  |
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| **7. ADDITIONALITY** | | | |
| **7a. For mitigation on BLM-administered lands, does mitigation consist of actions not eligible for Bureau or other sources of funding?** *Yes or no. Please explain.* |  |  |  |
| **7b. Have previous mitigation/restoration actions been taken to mitigate impacts in this area?**  *Yes or no. Please explain.* |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Additionality Score (range of 0 to 3):**  *Based on input to criteria 7a. and 7b., score of 0 to 3 will be assigned, where 5 indicates that 100% of the nominated site/action is in addition to currently funded BLM or other activities and 0 indicates that 100% of the nominated site/action is not additional.* |  |  |  |
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| **8. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS** | | | |
| **8a. List indirect benefits to other resources identified to warrant compensatory mitigation (*Special Designations*).** |  |  |  |
| **8b. List indirect benefits to other resources identified to warrant compensatory mitigation (*Visual Resources*).** |  |  |  |
| **8c. List indirect benefits to other resources not identified to warrant compensatory mitigation?** |  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Additional Considerations Score**  **(range of 0 to 3):**  *Based on input to criteria 8a. to 8c., score of 0 to 3 will be assigned, where 3 indicates that the nominated site/action addresses several additional considerations and 0 indicates no additional considerations.* |  |  |  |
| **VISUAL RESOURCE EVLUATION SUMMARY & TOTAL** |  |  |  |
| **Total Site/Action Score (range of 0 to 34):**  *Subtotal scores will be added to get total score for each mitigation site/action, as a basis for comparison.* |  |  |  |