

Meeting Minutes

**Engineering/Minerals
Tonto National Forest
Phoenix, AZ**

To: Project Record

From: Donna Morey, SWCA

Re: Resolution Biology Working Group Meeting 8/27/2018

Attendees:

USFS: Mary Rasmussen

SWCA: Donna Morey, Eleanor Gladding

RCM: none

BLM: none

AGFD: Dana Warnecke, Julie Mikolajyck

Handouts:

None created by SWCA or USFS

AGFD: copies of 8/15/2018 email, select text from SWAP 2012-2022 Plan, and 3 figures

Flashdrive of data provided by AGFD during meeting (Modified SWRGap, riparian model and crosswalk)

Discussion:

Current Status of Project:

Working on analysis based on the issues brought forward in scoping.

Interested in data sets AGFD can provide for all areas now that project has extended past forest boundaries.

- HDMS provided (most recent submittal replaces all previous data)
- Linkage Data (provided today)
- SWAP (includes those not on another list) AGFD agrees with the USFS species on lists

AGFD Data

Output is full model, not to just species on project list.

SHCG – roll-up of all sub models. Developed to show disproportionality: species of special needs or relatively unfragmented habitat, important riparian & sport fishing. Sub models built using this, weighting was used, State-wide model. AGFD now has better datasets for unfragmented than that was used in SHCG model.

SGCN – richness index, weighted for species. Based on historic and potential distributions and actual species occurrence data.

- Julie can produce stats on pivot table for potential habitat within any particular alt footprint, and what % of overall statewide distribution.
 - Request rather than statewide distribution for comparison to use Tonto NF or BLM TFO boundaries.

ARID mapping – is in process within agency, a new way of looking at riparian rather than old SHCG_Riparian layer. Will be updated in next 10-year plan. AGFD would like to share once available for consideration in document. Forest believes timing would not occur till between DEIS and FEIS.

Forest expects AGFD to officially comment on DEIS with availability of new dataset for consideration.

SWAP

Known error - Sonoran mid elevation desert scrub is incorrectly identified as Mohave desert scrub

For more information and citation, please see SWAP plan. Models shown to this point can all be cited under SWAP (1st page).

SERI report being updated now and will include Skunk Camp, will provide in September. Wish to match FS for EIS – asked for copy of private and disturbed layers

Provided Figures – legend, not a categorial classification, more of an index where higher # = more

AGFD is cautious to provide a model as they are subject to being updated. Models are a conservative approach and overestimate. Model limitation is limitation of grid size of SWRGap – 30m x 30m.

Analysis area – both footprint and an extended analysis area based on GW, AQ, and other resources that are still in flux.

Model Presentation by Julie

- Wildlife linkages – layer can be provided, but none exist within our project area
- County stakeholder assessment – received with Richard’s previous email
- ICZ Network: CAT – connectivity areas – important connectivity zones layer “ICZs” (purple)
 - Flow paths or areas of permeability for any species or plant. Done with network-based analysis model. Done for state level, information by Ryan Percol Report. AGFD would not use for a quantitative assessment, but qualitative is acceptable.
 - AGFD has a white paper and updated purple linkage zones – it was a 10% filter they applied to it to get from Percol to purple lines.
 - Use layers from model to get symbology based on 2013 Percol report as citation
- Landscape Integrity Model: L1_1_Final – changes based on humans use (green)
- Landscape Blocks. light blue = zero removed from intact; blue – up to 3 removed, showing limited human changes to landscape
 - I-11 is using clusters of 1 blocks and noting if there was new fragmentation. 5,000 hectares = minimum acres for an intact block. Traffic volume has a threshold to keep connectivity – AGFD can provide

EIS plan is to show maps of blocks, barriers, and qualitative discussion.

Tribal lands are not considered for SWRGap, but are considered in the human footprint – green model

Mexico/AZ border is a known buffer zone (separate layer) to show edge effect due to limited information south of border.

Action Items:

1. Provide AGFD with ASLD lands layer and Disturbed layer
2. Eleanor to inform AGFD what 'Mohave desert scrub' label is converted to so they can do the same
3. SWCA provide AGFD a west/east/north/south to combined export files to rerun
4. AGFD can provide ICZ network, landscape blocks (blue), and landscape integrity model (green)– clip to Tonto and BLM TFO area
5. Later – make an addendum to last data request letter for new things but will not hold up process.