

**United States Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103
Phoenix, Arizona 85021
Telephone: (602) 242-0210 FAX: (602) 242-2513**

July 5, 1994

In Reply Refer To:
AESO/ES
2-21-92-F-693

Mr. Charles W. Cartright, Jr.
Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service
517 Gold Avenue SW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102-3292

Dear Mr. Cartright:

This responds to your request of April 7, 1994, to the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for formal section 7 consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973 (as amended), on the Eastern Roosevelt Lake Watershed Analysis Area (ERLWAA). The listed species of concern in the project area are the Mexican spotted owl (Strix occidentalis lucida), bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) and razorback sucker (Xyrauchen texanus). Designated critical habitat for the razorback sucker in the Salt River and its 100-year floodplain is also within the project area. The Salt River in the project area has been designated an Experimental-Nonessential Population for the Colorado squawfish (Ptychocheilus lucius). The proposed endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (Empidonax traillii extimus) is also known from the project area.

The project area is on the Tonto National Forest (Tonto NF) in Gila County, Arizona. The 90-day consultation period began on April 11, 1994, the date your request was received in the Service's Arizona Ecological Services Office.

This biological opinion was prepared using information contained in the environmental assessment, biological evaluation, documents provided during the Integrated Resource Management (IRM) process, data in our files or in the published or grey literature, and other sources of information.

BIOLOGICAL OPINION

It is my biological opinion that the implementation of the proposed action for the ERLWAA is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the razorback sucker. The Service concurs with your finding of may affect, not likely to adversely affect for the Mexican spotted owl and your finding of no effect to the bald eagle. We also concur with the finding of may affect but not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the southwestern willow flycatcher.