

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern
Region



February
2005

Final Environmental Impact Statement for Arizona Snowbowl Facilities Improvements Volume 1

**Coconino National Forest
Coconino County, Arizona**

Legal Description:

Northeast corner of section 1, Township 22 North, Range 6 East
Southeast corner of section 36, Township 23 North, Range 6 East
Southern half of section 31, Southwestern corner of section 32,
Township 23 North, Range 7 East
Northern portion of section 6, Northwestern portion of section 5,
Township 22 North, Range 7 East

The Proposed Action may impact individual Navajo Mountain Mexican voles (a Forest Service sensitive species), but is not likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability of the species. Nine of the 13 locations where evidence of voles has been found would be temporarily disturbed by recontouring, rock/stump removal, or widening of existing ski trails. The number of individual voles potentially affected is not known. Recolonization of temporary disturbance areas would likely occur. Widening of existing ski trails and clearing of new trails would create more potential habitat for this species. Snowmaking would increase grass and forb density and cover on ski trails and could result in a local increase in the population of Navajo Mountain Mexican voles.

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The Proposed Action may affect habitat for the northern goshawk, but is not likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability. An estimated 54 pine trees would be removed in the Mars Hill PFA. The largest tree to be removed is approximately 18 inches DBH. All of these trees are adjacent to existing forest roads. Four of these trees would be removed from CNF lands; the remaining 50 would be removed from private land. Construction activities associated with installation of the reclaimed water pipeline would not affect nesting northern goshawks. Timing restrictions on construction activities within the Snowbowl PAC would largely prevent potential effects on nesting northern goshawks in the Viet Spring PFA. These restrictions would be extended to September 30 within ½-mile of any active nest site (i.e., no construction from March 1 to September 30) in the Viet Spring PFA to avoid impacts to nesting northern goshawks. Construction related traffic is not expected to affect northern goshawks nesting within this PFA. Northern goshawks using the Viet Spring PFA are likely habituated to traffic on Snowbowl Road. Timing restrictions on construction activities within ½-mile of any active nest site within the Mars Hill PFA (i.e., no construction from March 1 to September 30) would prevent disturbance to nesting northern goshawks.

As stated previously, there is no habitat in the analysis area for the Region 3 Forest Service sensitive peregrine falcon.

Management Indicator Species

The Proposed Action would result in the removal of approximately 156 trees (134 pine and 22 aspen trees) along approximately 14.8 miles of the Snowbowl Road and the reclaimed water pipeline alignment. All trees are immediately adjacent to roadways and previously cleared utility easements. Trees that would be removed are generally eight to 10 inches DBH; the largest tree removed would be about 18 inches DBH. Fifty-two of the 136 trees are located along Snowbowl Road. No snags or old-growth trees would be removed. Neither late seral stage aspen nor its associated snag component would be affected. Trees to be removed occur sporadically along Snowbowl Road and the remainder of the reclaimed water pipeline alignment. Therefore, their removal would not alter overall stand characteristics.

The importance of trees to be removed to management indicator species is limited by their relatively small size and young age, and their scattered locations adjacent to existing roadways and cleared utility easements. Based on these factors, tree removal would not substantially alter habitat for the Abert squirrel, pygmy nuthatch, wild turkey, elk, hairy woodpecker, red squirrel, red-naped sapsucker, or pronghorn antelope. Habitat impacts would be minor and would not alter overall stand structure; therefore there would be no impacts to Forest-wide habitat or population trends for these MIS.