## TITLE: SPRINGFIELD PLATEAU REGIONAL RESTORATION PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Missouri Trustees (Trustees) for natural resource damage assessment and restoration (including the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) recently completed the Springfield Plateau Regional Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment (SPRRP and EA). The SPRRP creates a framework to select and implement restoration projects in order to restore injured resources and compensate the public for lost services in a timely manner. After careful consideration of the Alternatives presented in the SPRRP, the Trustee selected a preferred Alternative. The preferred Alternative (Alternative D) in the plan expedites on-the-ground projects as settlement funds are recovered. The plan allows restoration funds to be combined with other smaller settlements and/or leveraged with other funding sources to achieve greater natural resource restoration in southwest Missouri.

For the reasons briefly presented below and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the supporting references enumerated below, we have determined that restoring, replacing and/or acquiring the equivalent of injured resources in the Springfield Plateau as described under Alternative D in the SPRRP and EA is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An Environmental Impact Statement will, accordingly, not be prepared.

**Reasons:**

1. There are no known or anticipated endangered, threatened or candidate species or designated critical habitat that will be adversely affected (Appendix I, Endangered Species Act Compliance). Implementation of the proposed action would involve further protection and potentially aid in the recovery of certain species.

2. Implementation of the proposed action may result in minimal short-term impacts to habitat due to physical manipulation needed to restore and enhance injured natural resources. However, all necessary permits will be obtained and regulations, policies and laws followed. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as defined in 36 CFR Part 800 will be followed (Section 7 and Appendix C of the SPRRP and EA).

3. Preservation of habitats through acquisition of land or easements will only be from willing sellers or participants. Neighbors adjacent to land purchased for preservation under this restoration plan will retain all of their current rights to their land. Since habitat preservation will be through fee title or easements with willing sellers who would be paid fair market value, acquisition procedures would have little or no impact on the market price, or on landowners who choose not to sell. (Sections 3 and 5 of the SPRRP and EA).

4. Alternative D, a tiered project selection process evaluating the feasibility of primary restoration, compensatory restoration, and acquisition of equivalent resources, provides

for the opportunity of considering the ecosystem as a whole and maximizes the benefits from natural resource damage assessment restoration. Even though Alternative D potentially extends the geographic area for restoration implementation beyond the immediate area where natural resource injuries have occurred, the SPRRP provides a strong preference and mechanism to keep restoration in proximity to where injuries have been determined. (Section 3 and 5 of the SPRRP and EA)

5. Public review comments regarding the Draft SPRRP and EA indicate broad general acceptance and approval of the proposed action (Appendix H of the Restoration Plan and EA).

6. Implementation of Alternative D in the SPRRP/EA is not anticipated to cause any significant adverse effects on wetlands as directed by the President in *Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands.*

7. *Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management,* directs all federal agencies to take action to avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains. Alternative D of the SPRRP and EA will not have any significant adverse effects associated with modification and occupancy of floodplains.

Supporting References:


1. The Draft Springfield Plateau Regional Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment
2. Section 7 Consultation (Appendix I of the SPRRP and EA)
3. Public Comments (Appendix H of the SPRRP and EA)
4. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands
5. Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management


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