

Sample Take Minimization Measures from Mohave Ground Squirrel Incidental Take Permits

6.1. The Permittee shall develop a translocation plan for Mohave ground squirrels and desert tortoise which shall be submitted to DFG for review and approval prior to the start of ground disturbing activities.

6.2. Reclamation activities shall occur between September 1 and October 31 in order to avoid the reproductive season, potentially harmful summer heat, and winter torpor or hibernation.

6.3. No more than 30 days prior to ground disturbing activities, the Designated Biologist(s) shall conduct a pre-construction survey for Covered Species. These surveys shall cover 100 percent of the Project Impact Area (PIA) and the existing access route with a 50-foot buffer zone around the PIA and along the access route. All potential dens and burrows within this area shall be flagged to alert biological and work crews to their presence. A report documenting the results of the pre-construction surveys shall be submitted to DFG within 30 days after performing them.

6.4. Designated Biologists shall be present at ALL times work is being done to monitor ALL activities, to ensure impacts to Covered Species are minimized. To provide adequate coverage, two Designated Biologists shall be on site at all times; one to monitor the reclamation activities and another to monitor the approach and departure of vehicles on the access road.

6.6. Prior to the start of ground disturbing activities, the Designated Biologist(s) shall conduct a second survey of the PIA, access route, and buffer zone for desert tortoises and Mohave ground squirrels and their burrows. Within the PIA, the use of specialized equipment (e.g., fiber optics) may be necessary to thoroughly inspect all burrows in preparation for collapsing them. Before initiating the collapse of any burrows or dens, the Permittee shall adhere to the following provisions specific to each species and DFG-approved translocation plan for tortoise and Mohave ground squirrels.

6.7. Any Mohave ground squirrel burrows present within the portion of the Project area to be disturbed and suspected or known to be occupied by Mohave ground squirrels, will be fully excavated by hand by the Designated Biologist(s). Any Mohave ground squirrels encountered in the excavated burrows during their active period will be allowed to escape out of harm's way. Mohave ground squirrels encountered during their dormant period will be collected and moved immediately to an artificial burrow at a protected off-site location approved in advance by DFG's Regional Representative. The Mohave ground squirrel may only be relocated by the Designated Biologist. The relocation burrow shall be prepared in the following manner: Dig a hole at least two (2) feet deep, place a nine (9) inch diameter plastic container (with thick enough walls that it will not collapse when buried) in the hole, place cotton bedding material in the container, connect the container to a three (3) inch diameter flexible plastic pipe (with thick enough walls that it will not collapse when buried) running to the surface at a 45 degree angle, cover

the artificial burrow with dirt leaving the surface end of the three (3) inch pipe open, and place the Mohave ground squirrel in the artificial burrow and lightly plug the burrow mouth with soil (in a manner similar to what Mohave ground squirrels do in natural burrows).

i) All Project-related parking and equipment storage shall be confined to the Project site. Off-site Covered Species habitat shall not be used for parking or equipment storage. Project-related vehicle traffic shall be restricted to established roads, staging, and parking areas. Permittee shall post signs; place posting stakes, flags, and/or rope or cord; and place fencing as necessary to minimize the disturbance of Covered Species habitat. Vehicle speeds shall not exceed 20 mph in order to avoid Mohave ground squirrels on or traversing the roads during Project-related construction and development activities.

ii) If a Mohave ground squirrel is found in a burrow during Project-related activities on the Project site, it shall be immediately relocated to a burrow at a protected off-site location approved by the Department's Regional Representative. The Mohave ground squirrel may only be relocated by a qualified biologist. The relocation burrow shall be prepared in the following manner: dig a hole at least two (2) feet deep, place a nine (9) inch diameter plastic container (with thick enough walls that it will not collapse when buried) in the hole, place cotton bedding material in the container, connect the container to a three (3) inch diameter flexible plastic pipe (with thick enough walls that it will not collapse when buried) running to the surface at a 45 degree angle, cover the artificial burrow with dirt leaving the surface end of the 3 inch pipe open, and place the Mohave ground squirrel in the artificial burrow and lightly plug the burrow mouth with soil (in a manner similar to what Mohave ground squirrel do in natural burrows). The Designated Representative shall immediately notify the Department of the incident unless the incident occurs outside of normal business hours. In that event, the Department shall be notified no later than noon on the next business day. Notification to the Department shall be via telephone or email, followed by a written incident report. Notification shall include the date, time, location and circumstances of the incident, the name of the party that actually relocated the animal, and the location (including GPS coordinates) to which the animal was moved.

In the event that the Authorized Biologist specifically identifies Mohave ground squirrels with burrows inside of the fenced work areas, the Department will be consulted regarding the need for a trapping effort to relocate these animals. The scope and timing of any trapping program and the identification of relocation sites will be determined by the Department. The approach selected may vary depending on ambient air temperature and season, to best protect the squirrels.

17. The Authorized Biologist shall be present during all initial brushing and grading activities within the Project area. During Project implementation, all workers shall inform the Authorized Biologist if a Covered Species is seen within or near the Project area. All work in the vicinity of the Covered Species which could injure or kill

the animal, shall cease until the Covered Species is moved by the Authorized Biologist or it moves from the construction area of its own accord.