MEMO **F-7.a**

TO: Larry D. Voyles, Director

FROM: Mike Senn, Assistant Director
Wildlife Management Division

PRESENTER: Josh Avey, Habitat Branch Chief

TITLE: Request for the Commission to Approve a Memorandum of Understanding with BLM for the Development of the Sonoran Solar Energy Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

DESCRIPTION: The Commission will be asked to vote to approve a Memorandum of Understanding to allow the Department to be a Cooperating Agency in the Development of the Sonoran Solar Energy Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Commission may vote to take action on, or provide the Department direction on this item.

DATE: March 15, 2010

Summary:

The BLM and the Department are currently developing a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Sonoran Solar Energy Project. The Department requested to have Cooperating Agency status in the development of the EIS. The purposes of this MOU are:

A. To designate Arizona Game and Fish Department as a Cooperating Agency in the Sonoran Solar EIS process.
B. To provide a framework for cooperation and coordination among BLM and the Department that will ensure successful completion of the Sonoran Solar Energy Project EIS in a timely, efficient, and thorough manner.
C. To recognize that the BLM has the responsibility for the completion of the Sonoran Solar Energy Project EIS and their respective Records of Decision (RODs).
D. To describe the respective responsibilities, jurisdictional authority, and expertise of each of the Parties in the Sonoran Solar Energy Project EIS process.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO APPROVE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TO ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT TO BE A COOPERATING AGENCY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SONORAN SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) AND TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS ATTACHED OR AS RECOMMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.**

MS:glr

Attachment: Memorandum of Understanding