

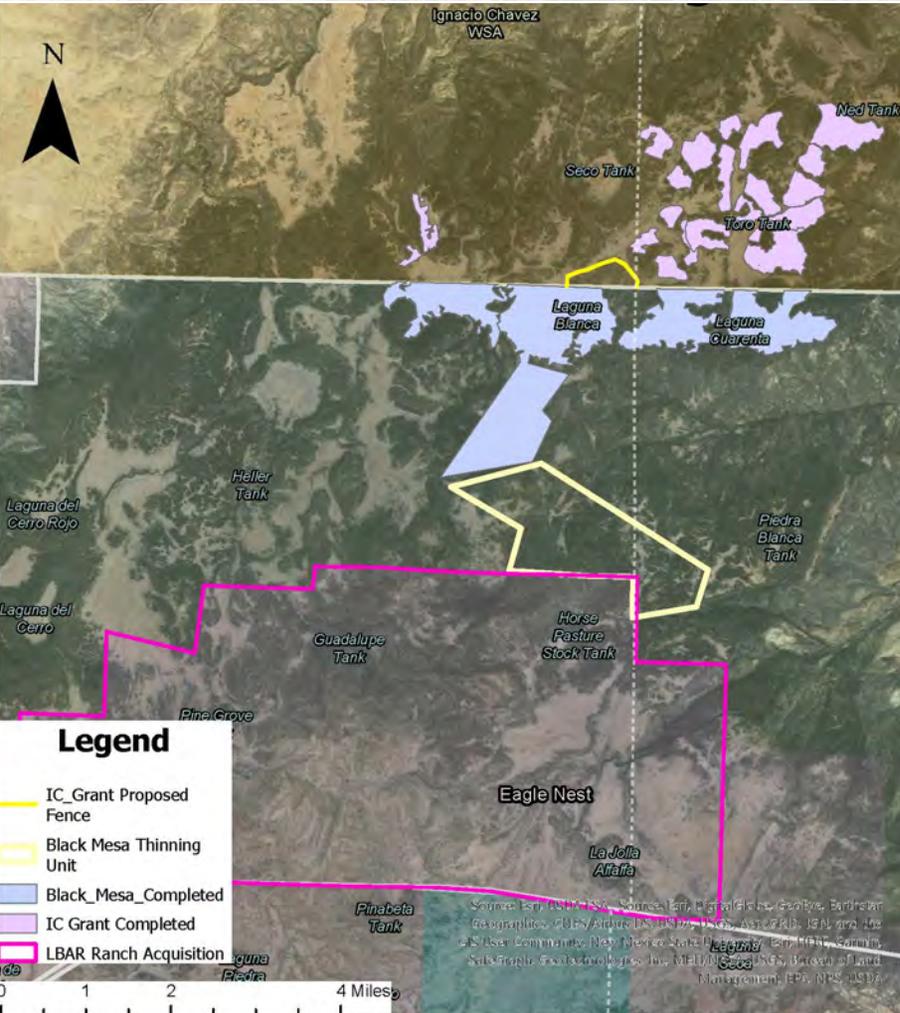


# Black Mesa Habitat Restoration Project (Ponderosa Forest Thinning)

## Background Information



- The Black Mesa area of the Cibola National Forest sits between the IC grant of the Rio Puerco BLM to the North, and the newly acquired L Bar Ranch of the NMDGF. The Rio Puerco BLM and the Cibola National Forest have been partners with the NMDGF in restoration efforts throughout this landscape on their managed lands. We have worked together to thin thousands of acres of Ponderosa Pine in an effort to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, improve and restore wildlife habitats, and allow for fire to be used as a management tool.
- As a continuation of these efforts, a new block of Ponderosa Pine dominated forest has been identified for more thinning efforts on the Black Mesa portion of the Cibola National Forest. This area is in close proximity to the NMDGF recently acquired L Bar Wildlife management area.
- These forests will be thinned to promote health and resilience and allow for reintroduction of low intensity surface fire. In addition to tree thinning, the shrubby browse will also be trimmed back to promote new growth of fresh shoots, which will provide an abundance of highly nutritious browse for mule deer.
- This effort will be one of the finishing touches for the thinning work, paving the way for future prescribed burns or managed wildfires to maintain this landscape.



## Mount Taylor Ranger District - Cibola National Forest

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### Proposed Management Action

- NMDGF, in collaboration with the Cibola NF, will contract the thinning of 300 acres.
- Current costs are projected at \$500/acre
- Cibola National Forest and NMDGF will share inspection duties, and will collaboratively finalize the prescription with the contractor on site prior to implementation.
  - Google earth link

**Estimated Budget for HSP: \$150,000**