

***SECTION 2.0***  
***PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES***

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## **2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

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Two alternatives were evaluated in this EA: the proposed action alternative and the no action alternative. The proposed action is the only alternative that meets the purpose and need and no other key issues or alternatives were identified during the scoping process. The no action alternative provides a method of comparison for describing the effects of the proposed action and is required by NEPA and CEQ to be evaluated.

### **2.1 PROPOSED ACTION**

The Proposed Action Alternative would return 3,658 acres of land in Osage County, Oklahoma, currently owned by the Federal Government, to private ownership. The 26 parcels of land originally acquired would be offered to the original 21 landowners, or their descendants, at fair market value. If the original landowners or their descendants do not wish to purchase their original parcel(s), the land would be disposed of through the normal disposal process in accordance with PL 107-217. No parcels would be subdivided; parcels would only be sold in their original configuration and only at fair market value. However, after the parcels are sold, they can be subdivided in any legal manner.

If some or all of the parcels are not purchased by the original landowners or their descendants and enter the Federal screening process, it is probable that the remainder would be transferred to other eligible Federal agencies. If no other Federal agencies express interest, then the remaining tracts would be offered for public sale. However, the Osage Nation has expressed interest in acquiring any remaining tracts, and since the area is former tribal land, the Nation would have first option under PL 93-599.

Historically the land was used for cattle grazing. Some home sites were also present within the project area. Therefore, with the implementation of the proposed action, it is assumed that private landowners would convert the land from its present use as a wildlife management area (WMA) with no grazing to mostly grazing and rural housing. It is possible that some homes would be built on the 26 parcels after they were returned to private ownership. However, it is likely that oil and gas activities would continue unchanged with the proposed action.

## **2.2 NO ACTION**

The No Action Alternative would retain the 26 parcels of land in Federal ownership. The land would continue to be used as a WMA and be maintained by the USACE. The primary land uses would continue to be hunting and other outdoor activities. No development would occur on the site. Ongoing oil and gas activities would continue unchanged. No leases would be granted for grazing or other agricultural activities. The No Action Alternative would be in violation of Section 563 (c) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999.