

view. This falls within the exception (B-6) provided in the decision which allows surface disturbance within the buffer that is not visible from the Trail.

*Alternative C* : No surface disturbance under alternative C would occur within the ¼-mile buffer of the Butterfield Trail as defined in either the White Sands RMP or the 2005 RMPA.

Any area to be disturbed by drilling and construction operations would receive cultural clearances prior to any ground disturbance occurring. Any historic property or sacred site identified during clearance surveys would be avoided. No direct or indirect adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated.

#### **4.3.1 Mitigation**

Mitigation is not required.

#### **4.4 Native American Religious Concerns**

No impacts to Native American religious concerns are anticipated to result from either alternative.

#### **4.4.1 Mitigation**

Mitigation is not required.

#### **4.6 Invasive, Non-native Species**

*Alternative B*: Although there are no known weed populations in the actual project area, there are known populations along the shoulder of the main access routes into the project area. Weed seeds could be picked up on the wheels equipment and carried into the project area. Ground disturbing activities associated with roads and drill pads would create a favorable environment for the establishment and spread of noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are detected, abatement measures would be implemented. These include weed inventory surveys, weed monitoring programs, and a control program. Impacts from and mitigation for invasive, non-native species would be the same for steel tanks as for earthen pits.

*Alternative C*: Impacts to invasive, non-native species under Alternative C would be the same as Alternative B.