El Paso Natural Gas Company, L.L.C.
a Kinder Morgan company

May 20, 2026

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426

Attention: Ms. Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary

Re: El Paso Natural Gas Company, L.L.C.;
Docket No. CP26-156-000
Supplemental Environmental Information

Dear Ms. Reese:

El Paso Natural Gas Company, L.L.C. ("EPNG") is herein filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("Commission"), supplemental environmental information intended to update Environmental Resource Report No. 3 submitted as part of Attachment A in its Permian West Expansion Project ("Project") Prior Notice Application ("Application").

Description of Proceeding

On March 27, 2026, EPNG submitted a Request for Prior Notice Authorization Pursuant to Blanket Certificate in the above-referenced docket seeking authorization to construct, install, operate and maintain an approximately nine-mile, 30-inch outside diameter pipeline loop extension and related appurtenances, located in Hudspeth County, Texas as part of its Project. The comment period for EPNG's Project commenced on April 6, 2026, and closes on June 5, 2026.

Description of Information Being Filing

EPNG is providing as Attachment A to this letter a revised Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Assessment narrative ("Assessment") originally provided as Appendix 3A to Environmental Resource Report No. 3 of the Application.[1] The Assessment has been updated to reflect a "no effect" determination for all federally

[1] To aid in the Commission's review, EPNG is providing in Attachment A, two versions of the Assessment: one version showing highlighted changes, and a clean revised version.

protected species with potential to occur in the Project area.[2] EPNG is also providing as Attachment B to this letter, a copy of the new D-key review and concurrence letter dated March 2, 2026 for reference.

Filing Information

EPNG is e-Filing this letter and attachments with the Commission's Secretary in accordance with the Commission's Order No. 703, *Filing Via the Internet*, guidelines issued on November 15, 2007 in Docket No. RM07-16-000.

Respectfully submitted,

EL PASO NATURAL GAS COMPANY, L.L.C.

By /s/
Francisco Tarin
Director, Regulatory

Enclosures

Cc. Ms. Kristen Trinh, OEP
Ms. Celeste Horton, OEP

[2] EPNG notes that the Assessment originally provided included an outdated effects determination to one federally listed species, the Northern Aplomado Falcon, as "May Affect, but not likely to Adversely Affect", as a result of the Project. This assessment was based on an earlier review on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS") Information for Planning and Consultation ("IPaC") system. In March 2026, the USFWS made available, a new Determination Key ("D-key"), via their IPaC system, that encompassed all of the state of Texas. While EPNG utilized this new D-key prior to submitting their Application on March 27, 2026, which resulted in a "No Effect" determination for the Northern Aplomado Falcon, EPNG did not update in the applicable portions of the Assessment to correctly reflect the determination of this species, as well as a "no effect" determination for all federally protected species with potential to occur in the Project area.

ATTACHMENT A

Revised Appendix 3A
Threatened and Endangered Species
Habitat Assessment

PERMIAN WEST EXPANSION PROJECT
Docket No. CP26-156-000

Revised Appendix 3A
Threatened and Endangered Species
Habitat Assessment

(Marked-up Version)

EPNG is only providing the narrative portion of the Habitat Assessment.

Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Assessment

Permian West Expansion Project

Hudspeth County, Texas

January 26, 2026 - Revised May 13, 2026

Prepared for

El Paso Natural Gas Company, L.L.C.
a Kinder Morgan company

El Paso Natural Gas Company, LLC
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables

Appendices

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of El Paso Natural Gas Company, LLC (EPNG), Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) has completed a protected species habitat assessment for the Permian West Expansion Project (Project) located in Hudspeth County, Texas (TX) (Project Area; **Appendix A, Figure 1**).

Project Description

El Paso Natural Gas, LLC (EPNG), an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Kinder Morgan, Inc. (Kinder Morgan), is proposing to construct an additional nine miles of looping pipeline in Hudspeth County, Texas along the existing Line 1110 system, natural gas pipeline which extends from the Permian Basin in Texas to the California/Arizona border (Project). Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) conducted field delineations of aquatic features within an approximately 291.11-acre site (Project area) located in Hudspeth County, Texas (**Appendix A, Figure 1 and 2**). EPNG requested this habitat analysis to identify and evaluate the habitat requirements and potential presence of federal and state threatened and endangered (T&E) species as well as other federally protected species within the Project Area.

Project Location

The Project area is located approximately nine miles from the town of Cornudas, Texas and approximately 48 miles from the City of El Paso, Texas. The Project is defined by three (3) separate parts- the main survey area and two permanent access roads (PAR 1 and PAR 2), that are located north and east of the project, respectively. The northern permanent access road is located approximately 2.6 miles from State Highway 180, while the eastern permanent access road is abutting Ranch-to-Market (RM) 2317. The main survey area of the Project Area is located roughly 4.8 miles south of the northern PAR and approximately 2.2 miles west of the eastern PAR. The Project Area predominantly consists of scrub-shrub areas with components of desert grassland, and developed, open space (**Appendix A, Figure 1)**.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Background Data Review

In December 2025, Tetra Tech conducted a desktop analysis via aerial photograph interpretation review of the following available resources:

- United States (U.S.) Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle topographic maps for the Project area (Tepee Butte 2022, Molesworth Mesa South 2022, Molesworth Mesa North 2022, and Adobe House Tank 2022) - (**Appendix A; Figure 2**; USGS 2022a-d);
- USGS Annual National Land Cover Database (NLCD) (USGS 2025; MRLC 2023a; MRLC 2023b);
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (USDA-NRCS 2026a);

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2026a);
- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) – Hudspeth County, TX (USFWS 2026b);
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas data for Hudspeth County, TX (TPWD 2026a); and
- Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD) Geographic Information System (GIS) element occurrence data (TXNDD 2026).

2.2 Field Investigation

The on-site habitat assessment was conducted between December 17th and December 18th, 2025, by Tetra Tech biologists who completed an in-field pedestrian survey of the approximately 291.11-acre Project area. The assessment focused on the evaluation of the potential for suitable habitat capable of supporting federal and state listed T&E species, as well as other federally protected species, to be located within the Project area. Land cover, habitat, and species observations were noted and recorded. If viewed, species observations were confirmed through visual (*i.e.*, direct observation, tracks, scat) or auditory (*i.e.*, calls) assessments.

2.3 Reporting

This report provides a summary of the on-site habitat assessment results for the Project area as presented in the general location map **(Appendix A, Figure 1)**.

3.0 RESULTS

The results of the background data review and the December 2025 on-site habitat assessment are summarized in the following sections. Additionally, a photographic record of the proposed Project area can be found in **Appendix D** and locations of points are shown in **Appendix A, Figure 5.**

3.1 Land Cover

In December 2025, Tetra Tech conducted a desktop analysis using Google Earth aerial photograph interpretation (Google Inc. [Google] 2026) and utilized data from the NLCD (**Table 1**) (MRLC 2023a). Land cover within the Project area is primarily characterized by shrub/scrub with the next most dominant land cover types represented by developed, open space and grassland herbaceous which comprise less than 53 percent of the total land cover (**Appendix A, Figure 3**). The field survey revealed that the Project area predominantly consists of scrub/shrub areas and developed, open space throughout the site.

Table 1: Land Cover Identified within the Project Area

Habitat/Land Cover Type	Description	Acreage*	Percentage
Developed, Open Space	Areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.	110.73	38%
Developed, Low Density	Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20% to 49% percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.	2.45	1%
Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay)	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than five (5) meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.	3.89	1%
Shrub/Scrub	Areas dominated by shrubs; less than five (5) meters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage or tress stunted from environmental conditions.	130.04	45%
Grassland/Herbaceous	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than five (5) meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.	44.01	15%
Total	**291.11**		**100.00**

*Acreages and percentage calculations are based on the Project area. These calculations are estimates and do not represent actual potential impacts.

Source: MRLC 2023b

3.2 General Habitat Characteristics

3.2.1 Eco-Region

The Project area occurs within the Ecoregions of Texas Level III: Chihuahuan Deserts (24), and Ecoregion Level IV: Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands (24b) (Griffith et al. 2007). The *Ecoregion of Texas Report* (Griffith et al. 2007) describes the regions as follows:

- The Level III Ecoregion of Texas Chihuahuan Deserts (24): This desert ecoregion extends from the Madrean Archipelago in southeastern Arizona to the Edwards Plateau in south-central Texas. The physiography of the region is generally a continuation of basin and range terrain (excluding the Stockton Plateau) that is typical of the Mojave Basin and Range (14) and the Central Basin and Range (13) ecoregions to the west and north, although the pattern of alternating mountains and valleys is not as pronounced as it is in Ecoregions 13 and 14. The mountain ranges are a geologic mix of faulted limestone reefs, volcanoes and associated basalt, rhyolite, and tuff extrusive rocks. Outside the major river drainages, such as the Rio Grande and Pecos River, the landscape is largely internally drained. Vegetative cover is predominantly semi-desert grassland and arid shrubland, except for high elevation islands of oak, juniper, and pinyon pine woodland. The extent of desert shrubland is increasing across lowlands and mountain foothills due to gradual desertification caused in part by historical grazing pressure.
- The Level IV Ecoregion of Texas Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands (24b): The Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands occur in areas of fine-textured soils, such as silts and clays, which have a higher water retention capacity than coarse-textured, rocky soil. The grasslands occur in areas of somewhat higher annual precipitation (10 to 18 inches) than the Chihuahuan Basins and Playas (24a), such as elevated basins between mountain ranges, low mountain benches and plateau tops, and north-facing high mountain slopes. Grasslands in West Texas were once more widespread, but grazing pressure in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was unsustainable, and desert shrubs invaded where the grass cover became fragmented. In grassland areas with lower rainfall, areal coverage of grasses may be sparse, 10% or less. Typical grasses are black, blue, and sideoats grama, bush muhly, tobosa, beargrass, and galleta, with scattered creosotebush and cholla cactus. Effective management strategies for grasslands take into account their fragile and erosive nature.

3.2.2 Soils

A review of the USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey (USDA-NRCS 2025b) indicates that there are five (5) soil units present within the Project area, none of which are listed as hydric or having hydric components. Descriptions of the soil mapping units were abbreviated from the USDA Web Soil Survey Report. A full description is located in **Appendix E**. Abbreviated descriptions of each soil map unit located within the Project Area are provided in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Soil Map Units within the Project Area

Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Drainage Class	Hydric Rating
BHE	Bissett-Beach complex, 10 to 30 percent slopes	Well drained	No
BID	Bissett-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 20 percent slopes	Well drained	No
CVC	Culberspeth-Chilicotal complex, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	No
CWC	Culberspeth-Kahn complex, moist, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	No
RLA	Reyab loam, moist, 0 to 1 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Well drained	No
Source: USDA-NRCS 2025b			

3.2.3 Vegetation Communities

Wetland and Riparian Plant Communities

No distinct wetland or riparian vegetation communities were observed within the Project area during the December 2025 site survey.

Upland Plant Communities

Plant species diversity and vegetation density in the Project area were typical of the surrounding region. The Project area consists of upland scrub-shrubland, upland grassland communities, and developed, open space. Observed plant species are listed in **Table 3** below. Indicator status for each species was determined utilizing the current National Wetland Plant List (NWPL) (USACE 2022).

Table 3: Upland Community Vegetation Identified within the Project Area

Strata	Scientific Name	Common Name	NWPL Classification
Tree	*Prosopis glandulosa*	Honey mesquite	FACU
Sapling/Shrub	*Ephedra trifurca*	Long leafed ephedra	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Flourensia cernua*	American tarwort	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Larrea tridentata*	Creosote bush	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Prosopis glandulosa*	Honey mesquite	FACU
Sapling/Shrub	*Yucca elata*	Soaptree yucca	NI
Herbaceous	*Acourtia nana*	Dwarf desertpeony	NI
Herbaceous	*Amaranthus palmeri*	Palmer's amaranth	FACU
Herbaceous	*Aristida purpurea*	Purple threeawn	NI
Herbaceous	*Atriplex canescens*	Fourwing saltbush	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua dactyloides*	Buffalo grass	FACU
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua eriopoda*	Black grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua gracilis*	Blue grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua hirsuta*	Hairy grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Chloris virgata*	Feather finger grass	FACU

Strata	Scientific Name	Common Name	NWPL Classification
Herbaceous	*Clematis drummondii*	Drummond's clematis	NI
Herbaceous	*Ephedra trifurca*	Long leafed eohedra	NI
Herbaceous	*Eragrostis cilianensis*	Stinkgrass*	FACU
Herbaceous	*Eragrostis lehmanniana*	Lehmann's lovegrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Eryngium yuccifolium*	Button eryngo	NI
Herbaceous	*Leptochloa dubia*	Green sprangletop	NI
Herbaceous	*Muhlenbergia porteri*	Porter's muhly	NI
Herbaceous	*Opuntia stricta*	Erect prickly pear	NI
Herbaceous	*Pleuraphis mutica*	Tobosagrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Scleropogon brevifolius*	Burro grass	NI
Herbaceous	*Setaria vulpiseta*	Plains bristlegrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Solanum elaeagnifolium*	Horse nettle	NI
Herbaceous	*Solanum rostratum*	Buffalo bur	NI
Herbaceous	*Sporobolus cryptandrus*	Sand dropseed	FACU
Herbaceous	*Verbesina encelioides*	Golden crownbeard	FACU
Herbaceous	*Yucca glauca*	Soapweed yucca	NI

*- considered an introduced species
FACU = Facultative upland
NI = Non-indicator

3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species and Other Sensitive Resources

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) gives the USFWS federal legislative authority for the protection of federally listed T&E species. This protection includes a prohibition of direct take (*i.e.,* killing, harassing) and indirect take (*i.e.*, destruction of critical habitat). In addition, the TPWD Code Chapter 68 has established a state regulatory mandate for protection of state listed T&E species and their habitats by prohibiting the "take" of such species. Authority for protecting state listed T&E species is designated to the TPWD.

3.3.1 Federally Designated Critical Habitat

A review of the USFWS Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2025a) indicates that there is no critical habitat located within the Project area.

3.3.2 Federally Listed T&E Species and Other Protected Resources

According to the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025a) for Hudspeth County, TX two (2) federally endangered species, three (3) federally threatened species, and one (1) federally proposed threatened species have the potential to occur within the Project area (**Appendix B**). **Table 4** outlines habitat requirements, potential of occurrence, and the effect determination of the Project for each species.

Each species addressed below in **Table 4** was assigned a potential for occurrence in a category as defined below:

- ***High*** – highly suitable habitat present in Project area or known populations exist in Project vicinity.
- ***Moderate*** – suitable habitat present in Project area or species known to occur in habitat similar to Project area.
- ***Low*** – marginally suitable habitat in the Project vicinity.
- ***Unlikely*** – there is no suitable habitat present in the Project area.
- ***Does not occur*** - the species does not occur within the Project area.

After evaluating the potential for occurrence, one (1) of the following determinations were made for each species based on USFWS guidelines addressed in the Endangered Species Consultation Handbooks Effect Determination (USFWS 1998). Effect Determinations include:

- ***No effect*** - there will be no impacts, positive or negative, to the species.
- ***May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect*** - all effects to the species are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable.
- ***May affect and is likely to adversely affect*** - the species is likely to be exposed to the action or its environmental consequences and will respond in a negative manner to the exposure.

Table 4: Federally Listed T&E Species with the Potential to Occur within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Birds						
Northern Aplomado falcon	*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*	Federally Endangered	Habitat is variable throughout the species range and includes palm and oak savannahs, various desert grassland associations, and open pine woodlands. Within these variations, the essential habitat elements appear to be open terrain with scattered trees, relatively low ground cover, an abundance of insects and small to medium-sized birds, and a supply of nest sites (USFWS 2025d).	~~Suitable~~ Potential forage habitat is present in Project area.	Low	~~*May affect, but is not likely to adversely effect*~~ *No effect.*
Piping plover*	*Charadrius melodus*	Federally Threatened	Migrant: Estuarine habitats include tidal flats/shore; Palustrine habitats include riparian wetlands; Terrestrial habitats include sand/dunes; Breeding occurs in sandy upper beaches. Found on the Great Plains on shorelines around small alkaline lakes; large reservoir beaches, river islands and adjacent sand pits, beaches on large lakes, and industrial pond shorelines (USFWS 2025c).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Rufa red knot*	*Calidris canutus rufa*	Federally Threatened	Migrant: Estuarine habitats include tidal flats/shore and herbaceous wetlands; terrestrial habitats include sand/dunes and tundra. Primarily seacoasts on tidal flats and beaches, less frequently in marshes and flooded fields. On sandy or pebbly beaches, especially at river mouths; feeds on mudflats, loafs and sleeps in *Salinas* and salt-pond dikes. Nests on ground in barren or stony tundra and in well-vegetated moist tundra (USFWS 2025d).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Federally Endangered	Southwestern flycatchers require moist microclimatic and vegetative conditions. They breed strictly in dense riparian vegetation near water or saturated soil conditions (NPS 2016). They breed in much of the western and northern U.S., as well as in southern Canada. They winter along the east and west coasts of Central America in addition to the bottom half of Mexico's western coast. Nests are built low in a bush or small tree near water, on the outer edge of shrubs. Nests consist of open cups woven of weed stems, plant fibers, pine needles, shredded bark, and grass; lined with feathers, hair, rootlets, and fine materials (TPWD 2025c, 2025f)	No suitable habitat is present in Project area	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus*	Federally Threatened	Yellow-billed Cuckoos use wooded habitat with dense cover and water nearby, including woodlands with low, scrubby, vegetation, overgrown orchards, abandoned farmland, and dense thickets along streams and marshes. In the Midwest, look for cuckoos in shrublands of mixed willow and dogwood, and in dense stands of small trees such as American elm. In the central and eastern U.S., Yellow-billed Cuckoos nest in oaks, beech, hawthorn, and ash. In the West, nests are often placed in willows along streams and rivers, with nearby cottonwoods serving as foraging sites (USFWS 2025d).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area	Unlikely	*No effect.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Insects						
Monarch butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	Federally Proposed Threatened	During the spring and summer months of their annual migration from central Mexico to their northern breeding grounds, Monarchs depend upon open fields and meadows that contain milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) and a variety of nectar-producing plant species. During the breeding season, Monarchs lay their eggs on their obligate milkweed host plant (primarily *Asclepias* spp.) – the sole food source of the Monarch caterpillar (UFSWS 2025f).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect*
*= This species is only considered for wind energy projects						

No suitable habitat for the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), rufa red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa)* southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), the yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus),* or the monarch butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus)* is located within or near the Project area. The proposed Project area does not contain flowing streams or rivers and does not contain any marshland or dense woodlands that these species prefer. Additionally, there was no milkweed observed within the Project area that the monarch butterfly depends on. Therefore, is it Tetra Tech's opinion that these species "*Do not occur*" within the Project Area and the Project will have "*No effect*" on these species.

3.3.2.1Northern Aplomado Falcon

Potential forage habitat for the northern aplomado falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis)* is present throughout the Project area in the form of some open terrain desert grasslands and scattered trees (USFWS 2025e). Although the Project does contain potential habitat for this species, higher quality habitat appears to be present in areas adjacent to the Project area. Additionally, most of the Project area is scrub/shrub instead of the desert grassland habitat that this species is most commonly found in. Any individuals in the Project area would be incidental and transitory. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project ~~*"May affect, but not likely to adversely affect"*~~ would have "*No effect*" on the northern aplomado falcon.

3.3 Bald and Golden Eagles

No preferred habitat for bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), or golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) was observed within the Project area during the in-field protected species habitat assessment. Habitat in the Project area is predominately comprised of scrub/shrub habitat. Trees and cliffs capable of supporting bald eagle and golden eagle nests were not observed within the Project area. Additionally, no bald eagle or golden eagle individuals or nests were observed during the December 2025 field survey.

Tetra Tech recommends that construction crews be trained in the identification of eagles and their nests in the unlikely chance that the species is present on the site during the development phase of the Project. With these mitigation measures in place, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project will not likely result in the "*take*" of bald eagles or golden eagles.

3.1 Migratory Birds

A review of the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025a) indicates that there are three (3) Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) with potential to occur in the Project area and 15 species with the potential to occur within the Chihuahuan Desert Bird Conservation Region (BCR), where the Project lies. **Table 6** summarizes the results of the on-site habitat assessment conducted on December 17 and December 18, 2025, and the presence of nesting habitat.

Table 5: Birds of Conservation Concern that have the Potential to Occur within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
American Avocet	*Recurvirostra americana*	BCC	American avocets commonly are found on mudflats, in saline lakes, in fresh water and saltwater marshes and on coastal bay. They may be found in migration from March to May, and again from July to October. Their nesting grounds are in the Great Basin region of the western United States. Locally, they breed in the Panhandle and in West Texas on the shores of inland playas and along the Gulf coast. American avocets winter as far south as Mexico and Guatemala (USFWS 2025).	No
American Kestrel	*Falco sparverius*	BCC	American kestrel habitat consists of open fields containing widely scattered trees, pastures adjacent to woodland borders, deserts, as well as rural, urban, and suburban settings consisting of buildings and other structures providing perching and nesting sites. Common foraging habitats used by kestrels include open grassy meadows and highway and power line rights-of-way. Foraging habitat is supplemented by nearby trees that can serve as perching or nesting sites. Perches in the forms of isolated trees and utility poles and wires are essential habitat components for the kestrel's hunting activities (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Bewick's Wren	*Thryomanes bewickii*	BCC	Bewick's Wrens favor brushy areas, scrub and thickets in open country, or open woodland. Depending on where you live, you may find them in chaparral-covered hillsides, oak woodlands, mixed evergreen forests, desert scrub, stands of prickly pear and other cacti, mesquite and century plant, willows and tamarisk, hedgerows, or suburban plantings. Bewick's Wrens normally breed in areas that contain a mixture of thick scrubby vegetation and open woodland (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Burrowing Owl	*Athene cunicularia*	BCC	Burrowing owls live in flat open habitats with sparse vegetation, short grass, and bare soil such as prairies, grasslands, desert, and sagebrush steppe environments. They live in burrows they dig themselves or take over from prairie dogs, ground squirrels and even tortoises, so they are often associated with these burrowing animals. Prairie dog towns, which were ideal burrowing owl habitats, were once common throughout the west; these are now scarce, and the owls have adapted to live in urban and agricultural areas. Some examples are golf courses, pastures, airport medians, road embankments, cemeteries, vacant lots, and any open areas they can find (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Cactus Wren*	*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*	BCC	Cactus Wrens live in scrubby areas in the Chihuahuan, Sonoran, and Mojave Deserts as well as in coastal sage scrub in California and thorn-scrub areas in Tamaulipas, Mexico. They inhabit areas with cholla,	Yes

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
			saguaro, and prickly-pear cacti, catclaw acacia, mesquite, whitethorn, desert willow, yucca, palo verde, and other desert shrubs. Small patches of prickly-pear and cholla cacti mixed with short sagebrush and buckwheat are great spots for Cactus Wrens in coastal California and northwestern Baja California, Mexico (USFWS 2025)	
Cassin's Sparrow*	*Peucaea cassinii*	BCC	Cassin's Sparrows inhabit dry grasslands with scattered shrubs, cactus, yucca, and small trees such as oak, acacia, mesquite, or hackberry throughout the year, avoiding areas of dense brush or shrubbery. They nest from sea level to about 7,000 feet elevation. They generally do not breed in cultivated fields, with the exception of alfalfa on occasion, and they tend to use native grasslands that are ungrazed and unburned. In the northern parts of their range, Cassin's Sparrows breed in grassy sandhills with sand sagebrush, rubber rabbitbrush, greasewood, yucca, and prickly pear. In South Texas, they occupy bunchgrass communities with spiny hackberry and prickly pear, while in West Texas they inhabit grasslands with scattered mesquite and juniper. In Arizona and New Mexico, Cassin's frequent similar grassland habitats as well as desert flats with creosote bush. Migrants and wintering birds select similar habitats throughout the range (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Chestnut-collard Longspur*	*Calcarius ornatus*	BCC	Chestnut-collared Longspurs breed in the shortgrass and mixed-grass prairies of the northern Great Plains. They are typically found in areas where the grass is shorter than one foot but will occasionally be found in tallgrass prairie that has been grazed or mowed. Because of its affinity for short grasses, it is most abundant in areas that have been recently grazed, and to a lesser extent mowed or burned. It also uses very dry areas where grasses remain short without grazing or other disturbance. The species migrates through shortgrass prairie, black-tailed prairie dog towns, fallow fields, and cropfields. In the winter, Chestnut-collared Longspurs move to the southern Great Plains and the Chihuahuan Desert, where they use shortgrass prairie and desert grasslands where there are little to no shrub cover. On the wintering grounds, they use black-tailed prairie dog colonies, cultivated fields, and isolated water sources. They are not as closely associated with grazed areas during winter as they are in summer and may avoid overgrazed areas (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Chihuahuan Raven	*Corvus cryptoleucus*	BCC	Chihuahuan Ravens inhabit very dry areas in which Common Ravens and American Crows are less common or absent. They nest in grasslands and deserts with yucca and scattered small trees such as mesquite, acacia, shinnery oak, and creosote bush. Where nesting structures such as utility poles are present, they also nest in shortgrass prairie. At the edges of these habitats, Chihuahuan Ravens range into pinyon-juniper woodlands and into cottonwood-sycamore stream corridors, where they sometimes nest. After nesting, some individuals move into agricultural landscapes, landfills, and cattle lots, where food may be more plentiful, especially during winter (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Curve-billed Thrasher	*Toxostoma curvirostre*	BCC	Curve-billed Thrashers in the eastern part of the range (*curvirostre* group) dwell in open country of many kinds, including brushlands, thorn scrub with mesquite, thickets bordering woodlands, pinyon-oak woods, and desert flats with prickly pear, yucca, and cholla cactus. To the west, the Sonoran Desert population (*palmeri* group) favors similar habitats that usually hold creosote bush, saguaro, palo verde, and cholla. Farther north, in the plains of Colorado, grasslands with cholla provide habitat (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Great Blue Heron	*Ardea herodias*	BCC	Great Blue Herons live in both freshwater and saltwater habitats, and also forage in grasslands and agricultural fields, where they stalk frogs and mammals. Most breeding colonies are located within two to four miles of feeding areas, often in isolated swamps or on islands, and near lakes and ponds bordered by forests (USFWS 2025)	No
Lark Bunting	*Calamospiza melanocorys*		Lark Buntings are endemic to the grasslands and shrubsteppe of North America—they occur nowhere else. When breeding, they are most likely	Yes

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
		BCC	to be found in large areas of native grassland vegetation, especially wheatgrass, blue grama grass, needle-and-thread grass, and big sagebrush. Lark Buntings live among many species of prairie vegetation, including red triple-awn grass, four-winged saltbush, cottonthorn hornbush, and green-plumed rabbitbrush, all plants in which the birds may nest. Lark Buntings avoid bare ground when nesting, preferring shortgrass and taller habitats. They usually nest at the base of a small shrub or cactus, so pure grassland is usually not suitable for breeding habitat. Heavily grazed shortgrass habitats, prairie dog towns, and recently burned fields are not generally used. Wintering and migrating Lark Buntings usually occur in flocks, sometimes with other sparrows, in many types of open habitats, including dry lake beds (playas) at times (USFWS 2025).	
Lesser Yellowlegs	*Tringa flavipes*	BCC	During migration and throughout the winter, Lesser Yellowlegs use a wide variety of fresh and brackish wetlands, including mudflats, marshes, lake and pond edges, wet meadows, sewage ponds, and flooded agricultural fields such as rice paddies. They tend to be found in vegetated wetlands rather than in bare habitats, contributing to their "marshpiper" nickname. On their breeding range, Lesser Yellowlegs use open or semiopen woodlands and wet meadows interspersed with marshes, bogs, and ponds. They also nest in altered habitats such as gas line rights-of-way and mine clearings. Once the eggs hatch, the parents take fledglings to nearby wetlands and shallow, vegetation-filled ponds surrounded by trees or sedges (USFWS 2025).	No
Northern Harrier	*Circus hudsonius*	BCC	Breeding Northern Harriers are most common in large, undisturbed tracts of wetlands and grasslands with low, thick vegetation. They breed in freshwater and brackish marshes, lightly grazed meadows, old fields, tundra, dry upland prairies, drained marshlands, high-desert shrub steppe, and riverside woodlands across Canada and the northern United States. Western populations tend to breed in dry upland habitats, while northeastern and Midwestern populations tend to breed in wetlands. During winter they use a range of habitats with low vegetation, including deserts, coastal sand dunes, pasturelands, croplands, dry plains, grasslands, old fields, estuaries, open floodplains, and marshes (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Pyrrhuloxia	*Cardinalis sinuatus*	BCC	Pyrrhuloxias live in upland deserts, mesquite savannas, riparian (streamside) woodlands, desert scrublands, farm fields with hedgerows, and residential areas with nearby mesquite. When not breeding, some Pyrrhuloxias wander into urban habitats, mesquite-hackberry habitats, and riparian habitats with Arizona sycamore and cottonwood (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Semipalmated Sandpiper	*Calidris pusilla*	BCC	Semipalmated Sandpipers nest in low tundra, usually not far from marshes or ponds. They use both dry upland habitats and lowland heath, in areas with a mix of sedges, grasses, mosses, willows, birch, and berry plants. They rarely nest in areas devoid of plants. In preparation for migration, they gather into flocks in shallow-water mudflats or lakeshores (USFWS 2025)	No
*= Species listed on USFWS IPAC (USFWS 2025)				

Based on current design plans, vegetation disturbance and clearing activities will occur throughout the Project area and are likely to impact shrub/scrub upland areas where potential migratory bird nesting habitat was observed. Should vegetation disturbance or clearing activities for the Project occur within the migratory bird breeding season (mid-March through late-August in Texas), USFWS and TPWD recommend that a migratory nesting bird survey be conducted no more than one (1) week prior to

clearing within areas proposed for ground disturbance and/or vegetation clearing activities to ensure Project compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

3.4.2 State Listed T&E Species

According to the TPWD Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas data for Hudspeth County, TX, seven (7) state listed T&E species have the potential to occur in the Project Area (**Appendix C**). **Table 6** outlines the habitat requirements, potential of occurrence, and impact determination of the Project for each state listed species. Review of the TPWD TXNDD elemental occurrence layers indicated that no state-listed species have occurrence data intersecting the Project Area (**Appendix A, Figure 4**).

Each species addressed below in **Table 6** was assigned a potential for occurrence in a category as defined below:

- ***High*** – highly suitable habitat present in Project area or known populations exist in Project vicinity.
- ***Moderate*** – suitable habitat present in Project area or species known to occur in habitat similar to Project Area.
- ***Low*** – marginally suitable habitat in the Project vicinity.
- ***Unlikely*** – there is no suitable habitat present in the Project area.
- ***Does not occur*** - the species does not occur within the Project area.

After evaluating the potential for occurrence, one (1) of the following determinations were made for each species based on USFWS guidelines addressed in the Endangered Species Consultation Handbooks Effect Determination (USFWS 1998). Effect Determinations include:

- ***No impact*** - there will be no impacts, positive or negative, to the species.
- ***May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact*** - all impacts to the species are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable.
- ***May impact and is likely to adversely impact***- the species is likely to be exposed to the action or its environmental consequences and will respond in a negative manner to the exposure.

Table 6: State Listed T&E Species with the Potential to Occur in Hudspeth County, TX

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Birds						
American peregrine falcon	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	State Threatened	Year-round resident and local breeder in west Texas mountain regions that nests in tall cliff eyries. A migrant across the state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada, winters along coast and farther south; occupies a wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands. Low-	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area	Unlikely	*No impact.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
			altitude migrant, with stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands (TPWD 2025).			
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	State Endangered	Southwestern flycatchers require moist microclimatic and vegetative conditions. They breed strictly in dense riparian vegetation near water or saturated soil conditions (NPS 2016). They breed in much of the western and northern U.S., as well as in southern Canada. They winter along the east and west coasts of Central America in addition to the bottom half of Mexico's western coast. Nests are built low in a bush or small tree near water, on the outer edge of shrubs. Nests consist of open cups woven of weed stems, plant fibers, pine needles, shredded bark, and grass; lined with feathers, hair, rootlets, and fine materials (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
White-faced ibis	*Plegadis chihi*	State Threatened	Found in marshes, swamps, ponds, and rivers, mostly in freshwater habitats; nesting habitat is in marshes; in low trees, on the ground in bulrushes or reeds, or on floating mats (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Mammals						
Black bear	*Ursus americanus*	State Threatened	Historically found throughout Texas. Currently found in Chisos in higher elevations where pinyon-oaks predominate, occasionally sighted in desert scrub of the southern Trans-Pecos (Black Gap Wildlife Management Area) and Edwards Plateau in juniper-oak habitat. (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Reptiles						
Mountain short-horned lizard	*Phrynosoma hernandesi*	State Threatened	Found only in higher elevations, in the forests of the Davis and Guadalupe mountains of West Texas (TPWD 2025g) Prefers high elevation grasslands and forested areas with open ground; soil may vary from rocky to sandy; burrows into soil or occupies rodent burrow when inactive. (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Texas horned lizard	*Phrynosoma cornutum*	State Threatened	Found in open arid and semiarid plains to high mountains; usually in open, shrubby, or openly wooded areas with sparse vegetation at ground level with soils varying from rocky to sandy (TPWD 2025).	Suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Moderate to High	*May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact.*
Plants						
Gypsum scalebroom	*Lepidospartum burgessii*	State Threatened	Found in the gypsum dune system in the salt basin west of the Guadalupe Mountains, east of Dell City; sparsely vegetated areas; some plants on and around shifting, unstabilized dunes; others in stabilized gypseous soils with a well-developed microbiotic crust; flowering late April- early October, peaking late July-early September (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No impact*
Sources: USFWS 2025; TPWD 2025						

3.4.3 Project Impact Determinations for State Listed T&E Species

3.4.3.1 American Peregrine Falcon

The American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) prefers high altitude cliffs for nesting sites and most commonly occupy northern coastal breeding areas in the U.S. and Canada (USFWS 2025g). The Project area is not near the Guadalupe or Davis Mountain ranges where this species could find cliffs for nesting. Additionally, the Project area consists of mostly mesquite shrubs with buffalo grass lands intermixed and does not contain sufficient trees that would be able to support a raptor nest (TPWD 2025). Moreso, there were no raptor nests seen at the time of the December 2025 survey. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the American peregrine falcon.

3.4.3.2 Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) can be found in moist climatic conditions with dense riparian vegetative communities. This species breeds strictly near water or near saturated soil conditions and can mainly be found in much of the western and northern U.S. and well as southern Canada. The southwestern willow flycatcher nests in low bushes and small trees near a permanent water source (TPWD 2025). The Project area does contain potential nesting habitat in the form of low bushes and trees (honey mesquite and creosote bush), however the Project does not contain any permanent water sources that this species requires, and any streams that were found on site were highly ephemeral due to the arid climate and it is unlikely that they would hold water long enough to be considered potential habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the southwestern willow flycatcher.

3.4.3.3 White-Faced Ibis

The white-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) can be found year-round along the east coast of Texas. This species inhabits areas with shallow water such as marshes, flooded pastures, irrigated fields, and will occasionally utilize damp meadows (TPWD 2025). The Project area does not contain any potential seasonal habitat that this species requires. The Project area does contain several streams, but they are highly ephemeral features due to the arid climate, and it is unlikely that they would hold water long enough to be considered suitable habitat. No ideal nesting habitat for the species was observed in the Project area. Due to the Project area not containing any potential habitat, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" the white-faced ibis.

3.4.3.3 Mountain Short-Horned Lizard

The mountain short-horned lizard (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*) requires higher elevation forests and grasslands with soils that vary from rocky to sandy that would support burrows that they can use when inactive. The mountain short-horned lizard is known to forage on harvester ants as well as spiders and grasshoppers (TPWD 2025). The Project area contains high quality foraging habitat including abundance of grasshoppers and other insects that would provide food for this species. However, the Project is not situated in the Guadalupe or Davis Mountains, where this species is most commonly found and also does not contain the appropriate elevation that the mountain short-horned lizard prefers. Additionally, the Project area is mainly scrub/shrub habitat, which does not align with the forested or grassland habitat that is preferred by the species. During the December 2025 field surveys, there were no individual sightings within the Project area. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the mountain short-horned lizard.

3.4.3.3 Texas Horned Lizard

Habitat for the Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) in open arid and semiarid plains are usually found in open, shrubby, or openly wooded areas with sparse vegetation at ground level with soils varying from rocky to sandy. The Texas horned lizard is known to forage on harvester ants as well as termites and grasshoppers (TPWD 2025). The Project area contains high quality foraging habitat including an abundance of grasshoppers and other insects that would provide food for this species. Additionally, the Project area is mainly scrub/shrub habitat, which is preferred by the species. Although there were no individual Texas horned lizards spotted during the December 2025 field surveys, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project "May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact" the Texas horned lizard. If individuals of this species are present in the Project area, it is likely that they would temporarily avoid areas during construction activities. The large amount of similar habitat adjacent to the Project area would provide the same level of habitat requirements and the species would only incur minor, temporary displacements during construction activities. The Project would also employ best management practices (BMPs) during construction to alleviate any potential impacts to Texas horned lizards. BMPS would include, but are not limited to:

- imposing speed limits along access roads,
- staying within access road boundaries and permitted workspaces only,
- providing construction staff with environmental training so they are aware of the species' potential presence and can alert environmental field staff of any sightings,
- inspecting open trenches every morning to ensure no wildlife has been trapped,

- following a site-specific Noxious Weed Management Plan to prevent and control the spread of noxious weeds, and
- restoring the site to natural contours and revegetating with native plant species.

3.4.3.4 Black Bear

The black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is mostly found in the Chisos, where higher elevation pinyon-oak forests dominate, but is occasionally sighted in desert scrub of the southern trans-Pecos and Edwards Plateau in juniper-oak habitat (TPWD 2025). Although the Project area does contain desert scrub, black bears in the Trans-Pecos are found much farther south than the proposed Project area. Additionally, there are no TXNDD occurrence records of this species within 5 miles of the Project area (TPWD 2025) Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" on the black bear.

3.4.3.4 Gypsum Scalebroom

Gypsum scalebroom (*Lepidospartum*) is found in the gypsum dune system in the salt basin west of the Guadalupe Mountain range and east of Dell city, in sparsely vegetated areas which usually consist of unstable or shifting dunes (TPWD 2025). The Project area does not contain any gypsum dunes that would serve as possible habitat for the gypsum scalebroom. Additionally, there were no individuals observed during the December 2025 survey effort. Therefore, due to lack of potential habitat, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" on the gypsum scalebroom.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025b) generated lists of T&E species for Hudspeth County, TX two (2) federally endangered species, three (3) federally threatened species, and one (1) federally proposed threatened species have the potential to occur within the Project area.

Federally Listed T&E Species

Based on the desktop habitat assessment and in-field survey conducted in December 2025 for federally listed species with the potential to occur in the Project area, it is Tetra Tech's professional opinion that development of the proposed Project:

- ***No effect*** on the federally endangered aplomado falcon, the federally threatened piping plover, federally threatened rufa red knot, federally threatened yellow-billed cuckoo, the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, and the federally proposed threatened monarch butterfly.
- ~~***May effect, but not likely adversely effect*** the federally endangered aplomado falcon.~~

Bald or Golden Eagles

No bald eagle or golden eagles or their nests were observed during the December 2025 survey within the proposed Project area. Additionally, no suitable nesting habitat or foraging habitat for bald or

golden eagles was observed in or adjacent to the proposed Project area. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have *"No effect"* on bald eagles or golden eagles.

Migratory Birds

Suitable nesting habitat for migratory birds is present throughout the Project area. Should vegetation disturbance or clearing activities be required for the Project and need to occur within the migratory bird breeding season (mid-March through late August in Texas), USFWS and TPWD recommend that a migratory nesting bird survey be conducted no more than one (1) week prior to areas proposed for ground disturbance and/or vegetation clearing activities.

State Listed T&E Species

According to the TPWD T&E Species list for Hudspeth County (TPWD 2025), seven (7) state listed T&E species have the potential to occur within the Project area. Based on the desktop habitat assessment and in-field observations from December 2025 for state listed species with the potential to occur in the Project area, it is Tetra Tech's professional opinion that the Project:

- ***May impact but is not likely to adversely impact*** state threatened Texas horned lizard. TPWD consultation as well as mitigation protocols (*e.g.,* construction crew training, on-call biologists, and/or biological monitors) may be required in order to minimize and/or prevent any "take" of this species.
- ***Will have no impact*** on the state threatened mountain short-horned lizard, the state threatened American peregrine falcon, the state threatened white-face ibis, the state threatened black bear, that state threatened gypsum scalebroom or the state endangered southwestern willow flycatcher .

Informal coordination with TPWD is recommended to determine the potential impacts/affects that Project development may have on the state listed species identified within this habitat assessment.

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Appendix A: FIGURES

Appendix B:
USFWS OFFICIAL SPECIES LISTS (IPaC)

Appendix C:
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE (TPWD) T&E SPECIES LIST FOR HUDSPETH COUNTY, TEXAS

Appendix D:
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Appendix E:
USDA-NRCS SOIL REPORT

Revised Appendix 3A
Threatened and Endangered Species
Habitat Assessment

(Clean Revised Version)

EPNG is only providing the narrative portion of the Habitat Assessment.

Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Assessment

Permian West Expansion Project

Hudspeth County, Texas

January 26, 2026 - Revised May 13, 2026

Prepared for

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables

Appendices

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of El Paso Natural Gas Company, LLC (EPNG), Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) has completed a protected species habitat assessment for the Permian West Expansion Project (Project) located in Hudspeth County, Texas (TX) (Project Area; **Appendix A, Figure 1**).

Project Description

El Paso Natural Gas, LLC (EPNG), an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Kinder Morgan, Inc. (Kinder Morgan), is proposing to construct an additional nine miles of looping pipeline in Hudspeth County, Texas along the existing Line 1110 system, natural gas pipeline which extends from the Permian Basin in Texas to the California/Arizona border (Project). Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) conducted field delineations of aquatic features within an approximately 291.11-acre site (Project area) located in Hudspeth County, Texas (**Appendix A, Figure 1 and 2**). EPNG requested this habitat analysis to identify and evaluate the habitat requirements and potential presence of federal and state threatened and endangered (T&E) species as well as other federally protected species within the Project Area.

Project Location

The Project area is located approximately nine miles from the town of Cornudas, Texas and approximately 48 miles from the City of El Paso, Texas. The Project is defined by three (3) separate parts- the main survey area and two permanent access roads (PAR 1 and PAR 2), that are located north and east of the project, respectively. The northern permanent access road is located approximately 2.6 miles from State Highway 180, while the eastern permanent access road is abutting Ranch-to-Market (RM) 2317. The main survey area of the Project Area is located roughly 4.8 miles south of the northern PAR and approximately 2.2 miles west of the eastern PAR. The Project Area predominantly consists of scrub-shrub areas with components of desert grassland, and developed, open space (**Appendix A, Figure 1)**.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Background Data Review

In December 2025, Tetra Tech conducted a desktop analysis via aerial photograph interpretation review of the following available resources:

- United States (U.S.) Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle topographic maps for the Project area (Tepee Butte 2022, Molesworth Mesa South 2022, Molesworth Mesa North 2022, and Adobe House Tank 2022) - (**Appendix A; Figure 2**; USGS 2022a-d);
- USGS Annual National Land Cover Database (NLCD) (USGS 2025; MRLC 2023a; MRLC 2023b);
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (USDA-NRCS 2026a);

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2026a);
- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) – Hudspeth County, TX (USFWS 2026b);
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas data for Hudspeth County, TX (TPWD 2026a); and
- Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD) Geographic Information System (GIS) element occurrence data (TXNDD 2026).

2.2 Field Investigation

The on-site habitat assessment was conducted between December 17th and December 18th, 2025, by Tetra Tech biologists who completed an in-field pedestrian survey of the approximately 291.11-acre Project area. The assessment focused on the evaluation of the potential for suitable habitat capable of supporting federal and state listed T&E species, as well as other federally protected species, to be located within the Project area. Land cover, habitat, and species observations were noted and recorded. If viewed, species observations were confirmed through visual (*i.e.*, direct observation, tracks, scat) or auditory (*i.e.*, calls) assessments.

2.3 Reporting

This report provides a summary of the on-site habitat assessment results for the Project area as presented in the general location map **(Appendix A, Figure 1)**.

3.0 RESULTS

The results of the background data review and the December 2025 on-site habitat assessment are summarized in the following sections. Additionally, a photographic record of the proposed Project area can be found in **Appendix D** and locations of points are shown in **Appendix A, Figure 5.**

3.1 Land Cover

In December 2025, Tetra Tech conducted a desktop analysis using Google Earth aerial photograph interpretation (Google Inc. [Google] 2026) and utilized data from the NLCD (**Table 1**) (MRLC 2023a). Land cover within the Project area is primarily characterized by shrub/scrub with the next most dominant land cover types represented by developed, open space and grassland herbaceous which comprise less than 53 percent of the total land cover (**Appendix A, Figure 3**). The field survey revealed that the Project area predominantly consists of scrub/shrub areas and developed, open space throughout the site.

Table 1: Land Cover Identified within the Project Area

Habitat/Land Cover Type	Description	Acreage*	Percentage
Developed, Open Space	Areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.	110.73	38%
Developed, Low Density	Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20% to 49% percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.	2.45	1%
Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay)	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than five (5) meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.	3.89	1%
Shrub/Scrub	Areas dominated by shrubs; less than five (5) meters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage or tress stunted from environmental conditions.	130.04	45%
Grassland/Herbaceous	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than five (5) meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.	44.01	15%
Total	**291.11**		**100.00**

*Acreages and percentage calculations are based on the Project area. These calculations are estimates and do not represent actual potential impacts.

Source: MRLC 2023b

3.2 General Habitat Characteristics

3.2.1 Eco-Region

The Project area occurs within the Ecoregions of Texas Level III: Chihuahuan Deserts (24), and Ecoregion Level IV: Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands (24b) (Griffith et al. 2007). The *Ecoregion of Texas Report* (Griffith et al. 2007) describes the regions as follows:

- The Level III Ecoregion of Texas Chihuahuan Deserts (24): This desert ecoregion extends from the Madrean Archipelago in southeastern Arizona to the Edwards Plateau in south-central Texas. The physiography of the region is generally a continuation of basin and range terrain (excluding the Stockton Plateau) that is typical of the Mojave Basin and Range (14) and the Central Basin and Range (13) ecoregions to the west and north, although the pattern of alternating mountains and valleys is not as pronounced as it is in Ecoregions 13 and 14. The mountain ranges are a geologic mix of faulted limestone reefs, volcanoes and associated basalt, rhyolite, and tuff extrusive rocks. Outside the major river drainages, such as the Rio Grande and Pecos River, the landscape is largely internally drained. Vegetative cover is predominantly semi-desert grassland and arid shrubland, except for high elevation islands of oak, juniper, and pinyon pine woodland. The extent of desert shrubland is increasing across lowlands and mountain foothills due to gradual desertification caused in part by historical grazing pressure.
- The Level IV Ecoregion of Texas Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands (24b): The Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands occur in areas of fine-textured soils, such as silts and clays, which have a higher water retention capacity than coarse-textured, rocky soil. The grasslands occur in areas of somewhat higher annual precipitation (10 to 18 inches) than the Chihuahuan Basins and Playas (24a), such as elevated basins between mountain ranges, low mountain benches and plateau tops, and north-facing high mountain slopes. Grasslands in West Texas were once more widespread, but grazing pressure in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was unsustainable, and desert shrubs invaded where the grass cover became fragmented. In grassland areas with lower rainfall, areal coverage of grasses may be sparse, 10% or less. Typical grasses are black, blue, and sideoats grama, bush muhly, tobosa, beargrass, and galleta, with scattered creosotebush and cholla cactus. Effective management strategies for grasslands take into account their fragile and erosive nature.

3.2.2 Soils

A review of the USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey (USDA-NRCS 2025b) indicates that there are five (5) soil units present within the Project area, none of which are listed as hydric or having hydric components. Descriptions of the soil mapping units were abbreviated from the USDA Web Soil Survey Report. A full description is located in **Appendix E**. Abbreviated descriptions of each soil map unit located within the Project Area are provided in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Soil Map Units within the Project Area

Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Drainage Class	Hydric Rating
BHE	Bissett-Beach complex, 10 to 30 percent slopes	Well drained	No
BID	Bissett-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 20 percent slopes	Well drained	No
CVC	Culberspeth-Chilicotal complex, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	No
CWC	Culberspeth-Kahn complex, moist, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	No
RLA	Reyab loam, moist, 0 to 1 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Well drained	No
Source: USDA-NRCS 2025b			

3.2.3 Vegetation Communities

Wetland and Riparian Plant Communities

No distinct wetland or riparian vegetation communities were observed within the Project area during the December 2025 site survey.

Upland Plant Communities

Plant species diversity and vegetation density in the Project area were typical of the surrounding region. The Project area consists of upland scrub-shrubland, upland grassland communities, and developed, open space. Observed plant species are listed in **Table 3** below. Indicator status for each species was determined utilizing the current National Wetland Plant List (NWPL) (USACE 2022).

Table 3: Upland Community Vegetation Identified within the Project Area

Strata	Scientific Name	Common Name	NWPL Classification
Tree	*Prosopis glandulosa*	Honey mesquite	FACU
Sapling/Shrub	*Ephedra trifurca*	Long leafed ephedra	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Flourensia cernua*	American tarwort	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Larrea tridentata*	Creosote bush	NI
Sapling/Shrub	*Prosopis glandulosa*	Honey mesquite	FACU
Sapling/Shrub	*Yucca elata*	Soaptree yucca	NI
Herbaceous	*Acourtia nana*	Dwarf desertpeony	NI
Herbaceous	*Amaranthus palmeri*	Palmer's amaranth	FACU
Herbaceous	*Aristida purpurea*	Purple threeawn	NI
Herbaceous	*Atriplex canescens*	Fourwing saltbush	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua dactyloides*	Buffalo grass	FACU
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua eriopoda*	Black grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua gracilis*	Blue grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Bouteloua hirsuta*	Hairy grama	NI
Herbaceous	*Chloris virgata*	Feather finger grass	FACU

Strata	Scientific Name	Common Name	NWPL Classification
Herbaceous	*Clematis drummondii*	Drummond's clematis	NI
Herbaceous	*Ephedra trifurca*	Long leafed eohedra	NI
Herbaceous	*Eragrostis cilianensis*	Stinkgrass*	FACU
Herbaceous	*Eragrostis lehmanniana*	Lehmann's lovegrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Eryngium yuccifolium*	Button eryngo	NI
Herbaceous	*Leptochloa dubia*	Green sprangletop	NI
Herbaceous	*Muhlenbergia porteri*	Porter's muhly	NI
Herbaceous	*Opuntia stricta*	Erect prickly pear	NI
Herbaceous	*Pleuraphis mutica*	Tobosagrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Scleropogon brevifolius*	Burro grass	NI
Herbaceous	*Setaria vulpiseta*	Plains bristlegrass	NI
Herbaceous	*Solanum elaeagnifolium*	Horse nettle	NI
Herbaceous	*Solanum rostratum*	Buffalo bur	NI
Herbaceous	*Sporobolus cryptandrus*	Sand dropseed	FACU
Herbaceous	*Verbesina encelioides*	Golden crownbeard	FACU
Herbaceous	*Yucca glauca*	Soapweed yucca	NI

*- considered an introduced species
FACU = Facultative upland
NI = Non-indicator

3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species and Other Sensitive Resources

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) gives the USFWS federal legislative authority for the protection of federally listed T&E species. This protection includes a prohibition of direct take (*i.e.,* killing, harassing) and indirect take (*i.e.*, destruction of critical habitat). In addition, the TPWD Code Chapter 68 has established a state regulatory mandate for protection of state listed T&E species and their habitats by prohibiting the "take" of such species. Authority for protecting state listed T&E species is designated to the TPWD.

3.3.1 Federally Designated Critical Habitat

A review of the USFWS Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2025a) indicates that there is no critical habitat located within the Project area.

3.3.2 Federally Listed T&E Species and Other Protected Resources

According to the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025a) for Hudspeth County, TX two (2) federally endangered species, three (3) federally threatened species, and one (1) federally proposed threatened species have the potential to occur within the Project area (**Appendix B**). **Table 4** outlines habitat requirements, potential of occurrence, and the effect determination of the Project for each species.

Each species addressed below in **Table 4** was assigned a potential for occurrence in a category as defined below:

- ***High*** – highly suitable habitat present in Project area or known populations exist in Project vicinity.
- ***Moderate*** – suitable habitat present in Project area or species known to occur in habitat similar to Project area.
- ***Low*** – marginally suitable habitat in the Project vicinity.
- ***Unlikely*** – there is no suitable habitat present in the Project area.
- ***Does not occur*** - the species does not occur within the Project area.

After evaluating the potential for occurrence, one (1) of the following determinations were made for each species based on USFWS guidelines addressed in the Endangered Species Consultation Handbooks Effect Determination (USFWS 1998). Effect Determinations include:

- ***No effect*** - there will be no impacts, positive or negative, to the species.
- ***May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect*** - all effects to the species are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable.
- ***May affect and is likely to adversely affect*** - the species is likely to be exposed to the action or its environmental consequences and will respond in a negative manner to the exposure.

Table 4: Federally Listed T&E Species with the Potential to Occur within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Birds						
Northern Aplomado falcon	*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*	Federally Endangered	Habitat is variable throughout the species range and includes palm and oak savannahs, various desert grassland associations, and open pine woodlands. Within these variations, the essential habitat elements appear to be open terrain with scattered trees, relatively low ground cover, an abundance of insects and small to medium-sized birds, and a supply of nest sites (USFWS 2025d).	Potential forage habitat is present in Project area.	Low	*No effect.*
Piping plover*	*Charadrius melodus*	Federally Threatened	Migrant: Estuarine habitats include tidal flats/shore; Palustrine habitats include riparian wetlands; Terrestrial habitats include sand/dunes; Breeding occurs in sandy upper beaches. Found on the Great Plains on shorelines around small alkaline lakes; large reservoir beaches, river islands and adjacent sand pits, beaches on large lakes, and industrial pond shorelines (USFWS 2025c).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Rufa red knot*	*Calidris canutus rufa*	Federally Threatened	Migrant: Estuarine habitats include tidal flats/shore and herbaceous wetlands; terrestrial habitats include sand/dunes and tundra. Primarily seacoasts on tidal flats and beaches, less frequently in marshes and flooded fields. On sandy or pebbly beaches, especially at river mouths; feeds on mudflats, loafs and sleeps in *Salinas* and salt-pond dikes. Nests on ground in barren or stony tundra and in well-vegetated moist tundra (USFWS 2025d).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Federally Endangered	Southwestern flycatchers require moist microclimatic and vegetative conditions. They breed strictly in dense riparian vegetation near water or saturated soil conditions (NPS 2016). They breed in much of the western and northern U.S., as well as in southern Canada. They winter along the east and west coasts of Central America in addition to the bottom half of Mexico's western coast. Nests are built low in a bush or small tree near water, on the outer edge of shrubs. Nests consist of open cups woven of weed stems, plant fibers, pine needles, shredded bark, and grass; lined with feathers, hair, rootlets, and fine materials (TPWD 2025c, 2025f)	No suitable habitat is present in Project area	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus*	Federally Threatened	Yellow-billed Cuckoos use wooded habitat with dense cover and water nearby, including woodlands with low, scrubby, vegetation, overgrown orchards, abandoned farmland, and dense thickets along streams and marshes. In the Midwest, look for cuckoos in shrublands of mixed willow and dogwood, and in dense stands of small trees such as American elm. In the central and eastern U.S., Yellow-billed Cuckoos nest in oaks, beech, hawthorn, and ash. In the West, nests are often placed in willows along streams and rivers, with nearby cottonwoods serving as foraging sites (USFWS 2025d).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area	Unlikely	*No effect.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Insects						
Monarch butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	Federally Proposed Threatened	During the spring and summer months of their annual migration from central Mexico to their northern breeding grounds, Monarchs depend upon open fields and meadows that contain milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) and a variety of nectar-producing plant species. During the breeding season, Monarchs lay their eggs on their obligate milkweed host plant (primarily *Asclepias* spp.) – the sole food source of the Monarch caterpillar (UFSWS 2025f).	No suitable habitat is present in Project area.	Unlikely	*No effect*
*= This species is only considered for wind energy projects						

No suitable habitat for the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), rufa red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa)* southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), the yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus),* or the monarch butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus)* is located within or near the Project area. The proposed Project area does not contain flowing streams or rivers and does not contain any marshland or dense woodlands that these species prefer. Additionally, there was no milkweed observed within the Project area that the monarch butterfly depends on. Therefore, is it Tetra Tech's opinion that these species "*Do not occur*" within the Project Area and the Project will have "*No effect*" on these species.

3.3.2.1Northern Aplomado Falcon

Potential forage habitat for the northern aplomado falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis)* is present throughout the Project area in the form of some open terrain desert grasslands and scattered trees (USFWS 2025e). Although the Project does contain potential habitat for this species, higher quality habitat appears to be present in areas adjacent to the Project area. Additionally, most of the Project area is scrub/shrub instead of the desert grassland habitat that this species is most commonly found in. Any individuals in the Project area would be incidental and transitory. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project would have "*No effect*" on the northern aplomado falcon.

3.3 Bald and Golden Eagles

No preferred habitat for bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), or golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) was observed within the Project area during the in-field protected species habitat assessment. Habitat in the Project area is predominately comprised of scrub/shrub habitat. Trees and cliffs capable of supporting bald eagle and golden eagle nests were not observed within the Project area. Additionally, no bald eagle or golden eagle individuals or nests were observed during the December 2025 field survey. Tetra Tech recommends that construction crews be trained in the identification of eagles and their

nests in the unlikely chance that the species is present on the site during the development phase of the Project. With these mitigation measures in place, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project will not likely result in the "*take*" of bald eagles or golden eagles.

3.1 Migratory Birds

A review of the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025a) indicates that there are three (3) Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) with potential to occur in the Project area and 15 species with the potential to occur within the Chihuahuan Desert Bird Conservation Region (BCR), where the Project lies. **Table 6** summarizes the results of the on-site habitat assessment conducted on December 17 and December 18, 2025, and the presence of nesting habitat.

Table 5: Birds of Conservation Concern that have the Potential to Occur within the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
American Avocet	*Recurvirostra americana*	BCC	American avocets commonly are found on mudflats, in saline lakes, in fresh water and saltwater marshes and on coastal bay. They may be found in migration from March to May, and again from July to October. Their nesting grounds are in the Great Basin region of the western United States. Locally, they breed in the Panhandle and in West Texas on the shores of inland playas and along the Gulf coast. American avocets winter as far south as Mexico and Guatemala (USFWS 2025).	No
American Kestrel	*Falco sparverius*	BCC	American kestrel habitat consists of open fields containing widely scattered trees, pastures adjacent to woodland borders, deserts, as well as rural, urban, and suburban settings consisting of buildings and other structures providing perching and nesting sites. Common foraging habitats used by kestrels include open grassy meadows and highway and power line rights-of-way. Foraging habitat is supplemented by nearby trees that can serve as perching or nesting sites. Perches in the forms of isolated trees and utility poles and wires are essential habitat components for the kestrel's hunting activities (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Bewick's Wren	*Thryomanes bewickii*	BCC	Bewick's Wrens favor brushy areas, scrub and thickets in open country, or open woodland. Depending on where you live, you may find them in chaparral-covered hillsides, oak woodlands, mixed evergreen forests, desert scrub, stands of prickly pear and other cacti, mesquite and century plant, willows and tamarisk, hedgerows, or suburban plantings. Bewick's Wrens normally breed in areas that contain a mixture of thick scrubby vegetation and open woodland (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Burrowing Owl	*Athene cunicularia*	BCC	Burrowing owls live in flat open habitats with sparse vegetation, short grass, and bare soil such as prairies, grasslands, desert, and sagebrush steppe environments. They live in burrows they dig themselves or take over from prairie dogs, ground squirrels and even tortoises, so they are often associated with these burrowing animals. Prairie dog towns, which were ideal burrowing owl habitats, were once common throughout the west; these are now scarce, and the owls have adapted to live in urban and agricultural areas. Some examples are golf courses, pastures, airport medians, road embankments, cemeteries, vacant lots, and any open areas they can find (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Cactus Wren*	*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*	BCC	Cactus Wrens live in scrubby areas in the Chihuahuan, Sonoran, and Mojave Deserts as well as in coastal sage scrub in California and thorn-scrub areas in Tamaulipas, Mexico. They inhabit areas with cholla, saguaro, and prickly-pear cacti, catclaw acacia, mesquite, whitethorn, desert willow, yucca, palo verde, and other desert shrubs. Small patches	Yes

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
			of prickly-pear and cholla cacti mixed with short sagebrush and buckwheat are great spots for Cactus Wrens in coastal California and northwestern Baja California, Mexico (USFWS 2025)	
Cassin's Sparrow*	*Peucaea cassinii*	BCC	Cassin's Sparrows inhabit dry grasslands with scattered shrubs, cactus, yucca, and small trees such as oak, acacia, mesquite, or hackberry throughout the year, avoiding areas of dense brush or shrubbery. They nest from sea level to about 7,000 feet elevation. They generally do not breed in cultivated fields, with the exception of alfalfa on occasion, and they tend to use native grasslands that are ungrazed and unburned. In the northern parts of their range, Cassin's Sparrows breed in grassy sandhills with sand sagebrush, rubber rabbitbrush, greasewood, yucca, and prickly pear. In South Texas, they occupy bunchgrass communities with spiny hackberry and prickly pear, while in West Texas they inhabit grasslands with scattered mesquite and juniper. In Arizona and New Mexico, Cassin's frequent similar grassland habitats as well as desert flats with creosote bush. Migrants and wintering birds select similar habitats throughout the range (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Chestnut-collard Longspur*	*Calcarius ornatus*	BCC	Chestnut-collared Longspurs breed in the shortgrass and mixed-grass prairies of the northern Great Plains. They are typically found in areas where the grass is shorter than one foot but will occasionally be found in tallgrass prairie that has been grazed or mowed. Because of its affinity for short grasses, it is most abundant in areas that have been recently grazed, and to a lesser extent mowed or burned. It also uses very dry areas where grasses remain short without grazing or other disturbance. The species migrates through shortgrass prairie, black-tailed prairie dog towns, fallow fields, and cropfields. In the winter, Chestnut-collared Longspurs move to the southern Great Plains and the Chihuahuan Desert, where they use shortgrass prairie and desert grasslands where there are little to no shrub cover. On the wintering grounds, they use black-tailed prairie dog colonies, cultivated fields, and isolated water sources. They are not as closely associated with grazed areas during winter as they are in summer and may avoid overgrazed areas (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Chihuahuan Raven	*Corvus cryptoleucus*	BCC	Chihuahuan Ravens inhabit very dry areas in which Common Ravens and American Crows are less common or absent. They nest in grasslands and deserts with yucca and scattered small trees such as mesquite, acacia, shinnery oak, and creosote bush. Where nesting structures such as utility poles are present, they also nest in shortgrass prairie. At the edges of these habitats, Chihuahuan Ravens range into pinyon-juniper woodlands and into cottonwood-sycamore stream corridors, where they sometimes nest. After nesting, some individuals move into agricultural landscapes, landfills, and cattle lots, where food may be more plentiful, especially during winter (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Curve-billed Thrasher	*Toxostoma curvirostre*	BCC	Curve-billed Thrashers in the eastern part of the range (*curvirostre* group) dwell in open country of many kinds, including brushlands, thorn scrub with mesquite, thickets bordering woodlands, pinyon-oak woods, and desert flats with prickly pear, yucca, and cholla cactus. To the west, the Sonoran Desert population (*palmeri* group) favors similar habitats that usually hold creosote bush, saguaro, palo verde, and cholla. Farther north, in the plains of Colorado, grasslands with cholla provide habitat (USFWS 2025)	Yes
Great Blue Heron	*Ardea herodias*	BCC	Great Blue Herons live in both freshwater and saltwater habitats, and also forage in grasslands and agricultural fields, where they stalk frogs and mammals. Most breeding colonies are located within two to four miles of feeding areas, often in isolated swamps or on islands, and near lakes and ponds bordered by forests (USFWS 2025)	No
Lark Bunting	*Calamospiza melanocorys*	BCC	Lark Buntings are endemic to the grasslands and shrubsteppe of North America—they occur nowhere else. When breeding, they are most likely to be found in large areas of native grassland vegetation, especially wheatgrass, blue grama grass, needle-and-thread grass, and big	Yes

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Habitat Description	Nesting Habitat Present?
			sagebrush. Lark Buntings live among many species of prairie vegetation, including red triple-awn grass, four-winged saltbush, cottonthorn hornbush, and green-plumed rabbitbrush, all plants in which the birds may nest. Lark Buntings avoid bare ground when nesting, preferring shortgrass and taller habitats. They usually nest at the base of a small shrub or cactus, so pure grassland is usually not suitable for breeding habitat. Heavily grazed shortgrass habitats, prairie dog towns, and recently burned fields are not generally used. Wintering and migrating Lark Buntings usually occur in flocks, sometimes with other sparrows, in many types of open habitats, including dry lake beds (playas) at times (USFWS 2025).	
Lesser Yellowlegs	*Tringa flavipes*	BCC	During migration and throughout the winter, Lesser Yellowlegs use a wide variety of fresh and brackish wetlands, including mudflats, marshes, lake and pond edges, wet meadows, sewage ponds, and flooded agricultural fields such as rice paddies. They tend to be found in vegetated wetlands rather than in bare habitats, contributing to their "marshpiper" nickname. On their breeding range, Lesser Yellowlegs use open or semiopen woodlands and wet meadows interspersed with marshes, bogs, and ponds. They also nest in altered habitats such as gas line rights-of-way and mine clearings. Once the eggs hatch, the parents take fledglings to nearby wetlands and shallow, vegetation-filled ponds surrounded by trees or sedges (USFWS 2025).	No
Northern Harrier	*Circus hudsonius*	BCC	Breeding Northern Harriers are most common in large, undisturbed tracts of wetlands and grasslands with low, thick vegetation. They breed in freshwater and brackish marshes, lightly grazed meadows, old fields, tundra, dry upland prairies, drained marshlands, high-desert shrub steppe, and riverside woodlands across Canada and the northern United States. Western populations tend to breed in dry upland habitats, while northeastern and Midwestern populations tend to breed in wetlands. During winter they use a range of habitats with low vegetation, including deserts, coastal sand dunes, pasturelands, croplands, dry plains, grasslands, old fields, estuaries, open floodplains, and marshes (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Pyrrhuloxia	*Cardinalis sinuatus*	BCC	Pyrrhuloxias live in upland deserts, mesquite savannas, riparian (streamside) woodlands, desert scrublands, farm fields with hedgerows, and residential areas with nearby mesquite. When not breeding, some Pyrrhuloxias wander into urban habitats, mesquite-hackberry habitats, and riparian habitats with Arizona sycamore and cottonwood (USFWS 2025).	Yes
Semipalmated Sandpiper	*Calidris pusilla*	BCC	Semipalmated Sandpipers nest in low tundra, usually not far from marshes or ponds. They use both dry upland habitats and lowland heath, in areas with a mix of sedges, grasses, mosses, willows, birch, and berry plants. They rarely nest in areas devoid of plants. In preparation for migration, they gather into flocks in shallow-water mudflats or lakeshores (USFWS 2025)	No
*= Species listed on USFWS IPAC (USFWS 2025)				

Based on current design plans, vegetation disturbance and clearing activities will occur throughout the Project area and are likely to impact shrub/scrub upland areas where potential migratory bird nesting habitat was observed. Should vegetation disturbance or clearing activities for the Project occur within the migratory bird breeding season (mid-March through late-August in Texas), USFWS and TPWD recommend that a migratory nesting bird survey be conducted no more than one (1) week prior to clearing within areas proposed for ground disturbance and/or vegetation clearing activities to ensure Project compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

3.4.2 State Listed T&E Species

According to the TPWD Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas data for Hudspeth County, TX, seven (7) state listed T&E species have the potential to occur in the Project Area (**Appendix C**). **Table 6** outlines the habitat requirements, potential of occurrence, and impact determination of the Project for each state listed species. Review of the TPWD TXNDD elemental occurrence layers indicated that no state-listed species have occurrence data intersecting the Project Area (**Appendix A, Figure 4**).

Each species addressed below in **Table 6** was assigned a potential for occurrence in a category as defined below:

- ***High*** – highly suitable habitat present in Project area or known populations exist in Project vicinity.
- ***Moderate*** – suitable habitat present in Project area or species known to occur in habitat similar to Project Area.
- ***Low*** – marginally suitable habitat in the Project vicinity.
- ***Unlikely*** – there is no suitable habitat present in the Project area.
- ***Does not occur*** - the species does not occur within the Project area.

After evaluating the potential for occurrence, one (1) of the following determinations were made for each species based on USFWS guidelines addressed in the Endangered Species Consultation Handbooks Effect Determination (USFWS 1998). Effect Determinations include:

- ***No impact*** - there will be no impacts, positive or negative, to the species.
- ***May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact*** - all impacts to the species are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable.
- ***May impact and is likely to adversely impact***- the species is likely to be exposed to the action or its environmental consequences and will respond in a negative manner to the exposure.

Table 6: State Listed T&E Species with the Potential to Occur in Hudspeth County, TX

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Birds						
American peregrine falcon	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	State Threatened	Year-round resident and local breeder in west Texas mountain regions that nests in tall cliff eyries. A migrant across the state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada, winters along coast and farther south; occupies a wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands. Low-altitude migrant, with stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area	Unlikely	*No impact.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	State Endangered	Southwestern flycatchers require moist microclimatic and vegetative conditions. They breed strictly in dense riparian vegetation near water or saturated soil conditions (NPS 2016). They breed in much of the western and northern U.S., as well as in southern Canada. They winter along the east and west coasts of Central America in addition to the bottom half of Mexico's western coast. Nests are built low in a bush or small tree near water, on the outer edge of shrubs. Nests consist of open cups woven of weed stems, plant fibers, pine needles, shredded bark, and grass; lined with feathers, hair, rootlets, and fine materials (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
White-faced ibis	*Plegadis chihi*	State Threatened	Found in marshes, swamps, ponds, and rivers, mostly in freshwater habitats; nesting habitat is in marshes; in low trees, on the ground in bulrushes or reeds, or on floating mats (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Mammals						
Black bear	*Ursus americanus*	State Threatened	Historically found throughout Texas. Currently found in Chisos in higher elevations where pinyon-oaks predominate, occasionally sighted in desert scrub of the southern Trans-Pecos (Black Gap Wildlife Management Area) and Edwards Plateau in juniper-oak habitat. (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Reptiles						
Mountain short-horned lizard	*Phrynosoma hernandesi*	State Threatened	Found only in higher elevations, in the forests of the Davis and Guadalupe mountains of West Texas (TPWD 2025g) Prefers high elevation grasslands and forested areas with open ground; soil may vary from rocky to sandy; burrows into soil or occupies rodent burrow when inactive. (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No effect.*
Texas horned lizard	*Phrynosoma cornutum*	State Threatened	Found in open arid and semiarid plains to high mountains; usually in open, shrubby, or openly wooded areas with sparse vegetation at ground level with	Suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Moderate to High	*May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact.*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status	Preferred Habitat	Suitable Habitat Present?	Potential for Occurrence	Effects Determination
			soils varying from rocky to sandy (TPWD 2025).			
Plants						
Gypsum scalebroom	*Lepidospartum burgessii*	State Threatened	Found in the gypsum dune system in the salt basin west of the Guadalupe Mountains, east of Dell City; sparsely vegetated areas; some plants on and around shifting, unstabilized dunes; others in stabilized gypseous soils with a well-developed microbiotic crust; flowering late April- early October, peaking late July-early September (TPWD 2025).	No suitable habitat is present in Project Area.	Unlikely	*No impact*
Sources: USFWS 2025; TPWD 2025						

3.4.3 Project Impact Determinations for State Listed T&E Species

3.4.3.1 American Peregrine Falcon

The American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) prefers high altitude cliffs for nesting sites and most commonly occupy northern coastal breeding areas in the U.S. and Canada (USFWS 2025g). The Project area is not near the Guadalupe or Davis Mountain ranges where this species could find cliffs for nesting. Additionally, the Project area consists of mostly mesquite shrubs with buffalo grass lands intermixed and does not contain sufficient trees that would be able to support a raptor nest (TPWD 2025). Moreso, there were no raptor nests seen at the time of the December 2025 survey. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the American peregrine falcon.

3.4.3.2 Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) can be found in moist climatic conditions with dense riparian vegetative communities. This species breeds strictly near water or near saturated soil conditions and can mainly be found in much of the western and northern U.S. and well as southern Canada. The southwestern willow flycatcher nests in low bushes and small trees near a permanent water source (TPWD 2025). The Project area does contain potential nesting habitat in the form of low bushes and trees (honey mesquite and creosote bush), however the Project does not contain any permanent water sources that this species requires, and any streams that were found on site were highly ephemeral due to the arid climate and it is unlikely that they would hold water long enough to be considered potential habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the southwestern willow flycatcher.

3.4.3.3 White-Faced Ibis

The white-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) can be found year-round along the east coast of Texas. This species inhabits areas with shallow water such as marshes, flooded pastures, irrigated fields, and will

occasionally utilize damp meadows (TPWD 2025). The Project area does not contain any potential seasonal habitat that this species requires. The Project area does contain several streams, but they are highly ephemeral features due to the arid climate, and it is unlikely that they would hold water long enough to be considered suitable habitat. No ideal nesting habitat for the species was observed in the Project area. Due to the Project area not containing any potential habitat, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" the white-faced ibis.

3.4.3.3 Mountain Short-Horned Lizard

The mountain short-horned lizard (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*) requires higher elevation forests and grasslands with soils that vary from rocky to sandy that would support burrows that they can use when inactive. The mountain short-horned lizard is known to forage on harvester ants as well as spiders and grasshoppers (TPWD 2025). The Project area contains high quality foraging habitat including abundance of grasshoppers and other insects that would provide food for this species. However, the Project is not situated in the Guadalupe or Davis Mountains, where this species is most commonly found and also does not contain the appropriate elevation that the mountain short-horned lizard prefers. Additionally, the Project area is mainly scrub/shrub habitat, which does not align with the forested or grassland habitat that is preferred by the species. During the December 2025 field surveys, there were no individual sightings within the Project area. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that the Project area does not contain suitable habitat and will have "*No impact*" on the mountain short-horned lizard.

3.4.3.3 Texas Horned Lizard

Habitat for the Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) in open arid and semiarid plains are usually found in open, shrubby, or openly wooded areas with sparse vegetation at ground level with soils varying from rocky to sandy. The Texas horned lizard is known to forage on harvester ants as well as termites and grasshoppers (TPWD 2025). The Project area contains high quality foraging habitat including an abundance of grasshoppers and other insects that would provide food for this species. Additionally, the Project area is mainly scrub/shrub habitat, which is preferred by the species. Although there were no individual Texas horned lizards spotted during the December 2025 field surveys, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project "May impact, but is not likely to adversely impact" the Texas horned lizard. If individuals of this species are present in the Project area, it is likely that they would temporarily avoid areas during construction activities. The large amount of similar habitat adjacent to the Project area would provide the same level of habitat requirements and the species would only incur minor, temporary displacements during construction activities. The Project would also employ best management practices (BMPs) during construction to alleviate any potential impacts to Texas horned lizards. BMPS would include, but are not limited to:

- imposing speed limits along access roads,
- staying within access road boundaries and permitted workspaces only,
- providing construction staff with environmental training so they are aware of the species' potential presence and can alert environmental field staff of any sightings,
- inspecting open trenches every morning to ensure no wildlife has been trapped,
- following a site-specific Noxious Weed Management Plan to prevent and control the spread of noxious weeds, and
- restoring the site to natural contours and revegetating with native plant species.

3.4.3.4 Black Bear

The black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is mostly found in the Chisos, where higher elevation pinyon-oak forests dominate, but is occasionally sighted in desert scrub of the southern trans-Pecos and Edwards Plateau in juniper-oak habitat (TPWD 2025). Although the Project area does contain desert scrub, black bears in the Trans-Pecos are found much farther south than the proposed Project area. Additionally, there are no TXNDD occurrence records of this species within 5 miles of the Project area (TPWD 2025) Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" on the black bear.

3.4.3.4 Gypsum Scalebroom

Gypsum scalebroom (*Lepidospartum*) is found in the gypsum dune system in the salt basin west of the Guadalupe Mountain range and east of Dell city, in sparsely vegetated areas which usually consist of unstable or shifting dunes (TPWD 2025). The Project area does not contain any gypsum dunes that would serve as possible habitat for the gypsum scalebroom. Additionally, there were no individuals observed during the December 2025 survey effort. Therefore, due to lack of potential habitat, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No impact*" on the gypsum scalebroom.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the USFWS IPaC (USFWS 2025b) generated lists of T&E species for Hudspeth County, TX two (2) federally endangered species, three (3) federally threatened species, and one (1) federally proposed threatened species have the potential to occur within the Project area.

Federally Listed T&E Species

Based on the desktop habitat assessment and in-field survey conducted in December 2025 for federally listed species with the potential to occur in the Project area, it is Tetra Tech's professional opinion that development of the proposed Project:

- ***No effect*** on the federally endangered aplomado falcon, the federally threatened piping plover, federally threatened rufa red knot, federally threatened yellow-billed cuckoo, the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, and the federally proposed threatened monarch butterfly.

Bald or Golden Eagles

No bald eagle or golden eagles or their nests were observed during the December 2025 survey within the proposed Project area. Additionally, no suitable nesting habitat or foraging habitat for bald or golden eagles was observed in or adjacent to the proposed Project area. Therefore, it is Tetra Tech's opinion that development of the proposed Project will have "*No effect*" on bald eagles or golden eagles.

Migratory Birds

Suitable nesting habitat for migratory birds is present throughout the Project area. Should vegetation disturbance or clearing activities be required for the Project and need to occur within the migratory bird

breeding season (mid-March through late August in Texas), USFWS and TPWD recommend that a migratory nesting bird survey be conducted no more than one (1) week prior to areas proposed for ground disturbance and/or vegetation clearing activities.

State Listed T&E Species

According to the TPWD T&E Species list for Hudspeth County (TPWD 2025), seven (7) state listed T&E species have the potential to occur within the Project area. Based on the desktop habitat assessment and in-field observations from December 2025 for state listed species with the potential to occur in the Project area, it is Tetra Tech's professional opinion that the Project:

- ***May impact but is not likely to adversely impact*** state threatened Texas horned lizard. TPWD consultation as well as mitigation protocols (*e.g.,* construction crew training, on-call biologists, and/or biological monitors) may be required in order to minimize and/or prevent any "take" of this species.
- ***Will have no impact*** on the state threatened mountain short-horned lizard, the state threatened American peregrine falcon, the state threatened white-face ibis, the state threatened black bear, that state threatened gypsum scalebroom or the state endangered southwestern willow flycatcher .

Informal coordination with TPWD is recommended to determine the potential impacts/affects that Project development may have on the state listed species identified within this habitat assessment.

5.0 REFERENCES

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Appendix A: FIGURES

Appendix B:
USFWS OFFICIAL SPECIES LISTS (IPaC)

Appendix C:
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE (TPWD) T&E SPECIES LIST FOR HUDSPETH COUNTY, TEXAS

Appendix D:
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Appendix E:
USDA-NRCS SOIL REPORT

ATTACHMENT B

DKey Results and Concurrence Letter

PERMIAN WEST EXPANSION PROJECT
Docket No. CP26-156-000

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Austin Ecological Services Field Office
1505 Ferguson Lane
Austin, TX 78754-4501
Phone: (512) 937-7371

In Reply Refer To: 03/02/2026 19:10:33 UTC
Project code: 2026-0056184
Project Name: Permian West Expansion Project

Subject: Concurrence letter for 'Permian West Expansion Project' for specified federally threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitat that may occur in your proposed project area consistent with the Texas Statewide Determination Key (Texas DKey) for project review and guidance for federally listed species.

Dear Levi Sparks:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received on **March 02, 2026** your effects determination for the 'Permian West Expansion Project' (the Action) using the Texas DKey for project review and guidance for federally-listed species within the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system. The Service developed this system in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Based on your answers and the assistance of the Service's Texas DKey, you made the following effect determination(s) for the proposed Action:

Species	**Listing Status**	**Determination**
Northern Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*)	Endangered	No effect
Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)	Threatened	No effect
Rufa Red Knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*)	Threatened	No effect
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)	Endangered	NLAA
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)	Threatened	NLAA

Natural Gas Act: You have indicated your project falls under the Natural Gas Act administered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Please note that the determinations above only apply to projects under this specific program. Additionally, any concurrence for "not likely to adversely affect" determinations provided under the DKey are for the purposes of informal consultation with FERC or its designated non-federal representative(s)

The Service will notify you within 14 calendar days if we determine that this proposed Action does not meet the criteria for a NLAA determination for the species listed above. This verification period allows the Texas Ecological Services Field Office to evaluate any supplemental material provided in your responses in the key (e.g., survey reports). The Texas Ecological Services Field Office may request additional information to verify the effects determination reached through the key. If we do not notify you within that timeframe, this concurrence letter confirms that you may rely on effect determinations provided in the Texas DKey to satisfy agency consultation requirements under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. No further consultation for this project is required for these species if we do not contact you within the 14-day timeframe. Your agency has met consultation requirements by informing the Service of the "No Effect" determinations. No further consultation for this project is required for species with "No Effect" determinations.

Other Species and Critical Habitat that May be Present in the Action Area

This letter only covers the listed species in the above table. The following species may also occur in the Action area:

- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened

If you determine your project may affect additional listed or proposed listed species not covered by the Texas DKey, please contact our Austin Ecological Services Field Office(ESFO) at esaustininfo@fws.gov or your Service point of contact in the Austin ESFO to discuss methods to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects to those species.

The Service recommends that your agency contact the ESFO or re-evaluate the Action in IPaC if: 1) the scope, timing, duration, or location of the Action changes, 2) new information reveals the Action may affect listed species or designated critical habitat, or 3) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated. If any of the above conditions occurs, additional consultation with the Service should take place before project changes are final or resources committed.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA):

The following resources are provided to project proponents and consulting agencies as additional information. Bald and golden eagles are not included in this section 7(a)(2) consultation and this information does not constitute a determination of effects by the Service. The Service developed the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines to advise landowners, land managers, and others who share public and private lands with bald eagles when and under what circumstances the protective provisions of the BGEPA may apply to their activities. The guidelines should be consulted prior to conducting new or intermittent activity near an eagle nest. This document may be downloaded from the following site: https://www.fws.gov/media/national-bald-eagle-management-guidelines-0.

Action Description
You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

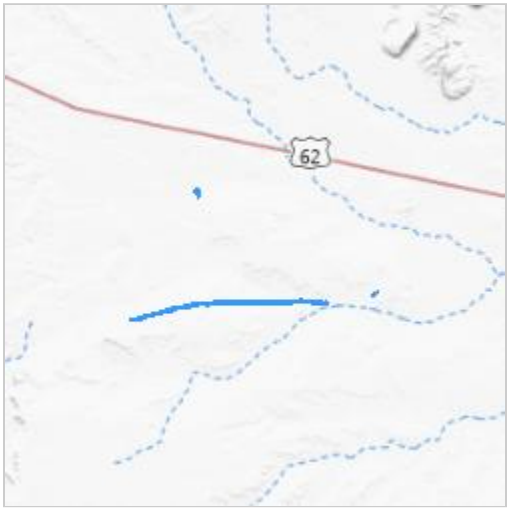
Permian West Expansion Project

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Permian West Expansion Project':

> Extension of an approximately nine (9) miles pipeline between compressor stations located in Hudspeth County, Texas. The extension is designed to alleviate a capacity constraint that exists and generate approximately 82,229 Dekatherms per day (Dth/d) of additional firm transportation capacity for delivery to the California/Arizona border.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@31.6887899,-105.64439243816419,14z



QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. This determination key is intended to assist the user in evaluating the effects of their actions on federally listed species. It does not cover other prohibited activities under the Endangered Species Act (e.g., for wildlife: import/export, Interstate or foreign commerce, possession of illegally taken wildlife, etc.; for plants: import/export, reduce to possession, malicious destruction on Federal lands, commercial sale, etc.) or other statutes.

   Click **'yes'** to acknowledge that you must consider other prohibitions of the ESA or other statutes outside of this determination key.

   Yes

2. Does the proposed project involve research or other actions that include the collection, capture, handling, or harassment of any individual federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species?

   No

3. Does the proposed project involve the use of manned or unmanned aircraft (e.g., airplanes, helicopters, drones, balloons)?

   No

4. Is the action authorized, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency?

   Yes

5. Are you the Federal agency or designated non-federal representative?

   No

6. Is the project a communications tower licensed or regulated by the Federal Communications Commission?

   No

7. Is the lead federal agency for the project Housing and Urban Development?

   No

8. Is this a broadband internet project funded by a National Telecommunications and Information Administration grant?

   No

9. Is this project funded through the Texas Water Development Board under the Texas Drinking Water or Texas Clean Water State Revolving Funds?

   No

10. Is the lead federal agency for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)?

    Yes

11. Is FERC reviewing the proposed action under the Natural Gas Act, in whole or in part?

    Yes

12. Is this a wind energy project?

    No

13. Is this a solar energy project?

    No

14. Will the proposed project involve human disturbance or ground disturbance (such as foot traffic, vehicles, tracked equipment, excavating, grading, placing fill material, etc.)?

    Yes

15. Will the project result in impacts or changes to wetland hydrology?

    Note: This include but is not limited to the following examples; stream dewatering, groundwater pumping, dikes, impoundments, canals, altered freshwater inflows, tidal barriers, sediment consolidation water withdrawals, water development projects that alter flows in rivers and streams, alteration of drainage patterns into rivers/streams (such as the removal of vegetation which can increase sheetflow and sedimentation)?

    No

16. Does the project intersect the piping plover species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

17. Does the project intersect the red knot species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

18. Does the project intersect the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

19. Does the action consist of either fire management, grazing, haying, mowing and/or other mechanical treatment activities within riparian habitat?

    No

20. Will the proposed project be conducted during the **Southwestern Willow Flycatcher** spring migration season (late April to early June) or the fall migration periods (late July to early October)?

    Yes

21. Will the project involve the removal, modification, or degradation to **Southwestern Willow Flycatcher** foraging and/or roosting habitat (patches of riparian habitats (cottonwood/willow and tamarisk vegetation) and/or semi-open brushy areas located near a river or stream)?

    No

22. Does the project intersect the Northern Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*) species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

23. Does the action area contain Northern Aplomado Falcon preferred habitat?

    No

24. Does the project intersect the yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

25. Does the action area contain yellow-billed cuckoo suitable habitat?

    No

26. Do you want to evaluate project for bald eagle impacts?

    No

27. Do you have additional supporting documents you would like to upload to support your project review (e.g., Biological Evaluation, Habitat Assessment, Environmental Report, photos, maps, etc.)?

    If Yes, upload document(s)

    No

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Private Entity
Name: Levi Sparks
Address: 1500 CityWest Blvd
City: Houston
State: TX
Zip: 77042
Email levi.sparks@tetratech.com
Phone: 3252361166

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that I have this day caused a copy of the foregoing documents to be served upon each person designated on the official service list compiled by the Commission's Secretary in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of Section 385.2010 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado as of this 20th day of May 2026.

/s/
Francisco Tarín

Two North Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
(719) 667-7517