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February 7, 2023

Attn: Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office
17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211, Houston, TX 77058

NMERT-2404

RE: Initiation of 5-Year Status Reviews of 31 Species in the Southwest

To whom it may concern:

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide information as part of the 5-year status review for 31 species in the Southwest, including Texas hornshell *Popenaias popeii*, as identified in the January 11th, 2023 Federal Register notice. We provide the following information to assist the Service in review of the status for this species.

The Department has conducted conservation work for Texas hornshell for decades. Much of the work has included inventory and monitoring of the mussel and its host fishes. In addition to the monitoring efforts, recently the Department and our contractors have conducted age and growth studies for Texas hornshell, as well as contributed to the development of an eDNA marker for the mussel and its host fishes. The data collected during these sampling events, as well as the work of our contractors, is reported in our annual Section 6 reports to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The reports from 2018-2021 are attached with this letter.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding this 5-year review for Texas hornshell. We look forward to continued partnership with the Service. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Daniel Trujillo at (505) 476-8108 or daniel.trujillo@state.nm.us.

Sincerely,

Kirk A. Patten
Chief, Fisheries Management Division