



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: City of Truth or Consequences Water Meter Replacement

Project Type: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

Latitude/Longitude (DMS): 33.137068 / -107.255105

County(s): SIERRA

Project Description: The City of Truth or Consequences' CDBG Water Meter Replacement project will consist of the design and construction related to the replacement of aged and deteriorated water meter assemblies. The current manual read water meters will be replaced with new advanced metering infrastructure radio read meters. The meter replacements will take place throughout the municipal water system service area which includes the City of TorC and Village of Williamsburg. The condition and location of the meter assemblies varies widely throughout the service area and therefore the location of the assemblies and surface improvements to be replaced will vary as well. In locations where the existing meter assemblies have failed and are located within the sidewalks, the improvements will also include the replacement of the meter setters, meter cans, lids, plus the removal and replacement of the sidewalk section as needed to complete the installation. The full scope of the project will include the replacement of approximately 981 meters, 98 meter assemblies and 88 square yards of sidewalk removal & replacements. The general scope of work is the same for the full and phased projects, with the only difference for the phased approach being a reduction in quantity. The state of the inflated construction costs will be the deciding factor for the overall completion of the intended project. The best-case scenario will involve reasonable bids for the completion of the work that will allow the City to replace all 981 water meters and accompanying appurtenances. The worst-case scenario will involve inflated bids, reducing the number of meters that can be replaced and therefore require a ranking and/or prioritization of replacing those meters that are in the worst condition first.

REQUESTOR INFORMATION

Project Organization:

Contact Name: Tiffany Goolsby

Email Address: tigooolsby@sccog-nm.com

Organization: South Central Council of Governments

Address: PO Box 297, Mesilla NM 88012

Phone: 5757402926

OVERALL STATUS



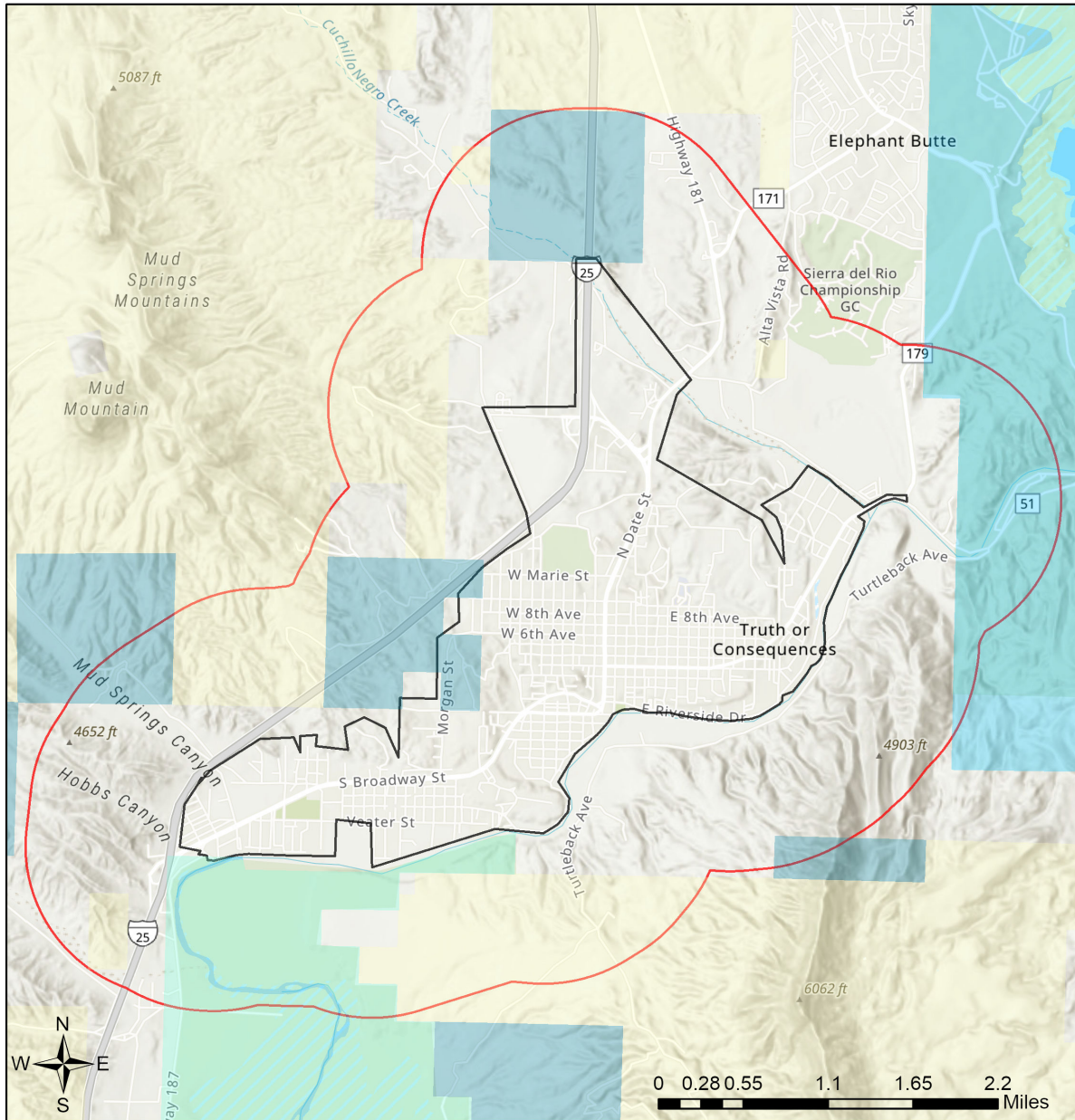
The information contained within this report comprises the recommendations of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) for management and mitigation of proposed project impacts to wildlife and habitat resources; see the Project Recommendations section below for further details. No further consultation with the Department is required based on the project's location and, with implementation of mitigation measures described in the Project Recommendations section below, no adverse effects to wildlife or important habitats are anticipated. However, a Department biologist may be in touch within 30 days if they determine that further review is required.

About this report:

- This environmental review is based on the project description and location that was entered. The report must be updated if the project type, area, or operational components are modified.
- This is a preliminary environmental screening assessment and report. It is not a substitute for the potential wildlife knowledge gained by having a biologist conduct a field survey of the project area. Federal status and plant data are provided as a courtesy to users. The review is also not intended to replace consultation required under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), including impact analyses for federal resources from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) using their [Information for Planning and Consultation tool](#).
- The New Mexico Environmental Review Tool (ERT) utilizes species observation locations and species habitat suitability models, both of which are subject to ongoing change and refinement. Inclusion or omission of a species within a report cannot guarantee species presence or absence within your project area. To determine occurrence of any species listed in this report, or other wildlife that may be present within your project area, onsite surveys conducted by a qualified biologist during appropriate, species-specific survey timelines may be necessary.
- The Department encourages use of the ERT to modify proposed projects for avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of wildlife impacts. However, the ERT is not intended to be used in a repeatedly iterative fashion to adjust project attributes until a previously determined recommendation is generated. The ERT serves to assess impacts once project details are developed. The [New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool](#) is the appropriate system for advising early-stage project planning and design to avoid areas of anticipated wildlife concerns and associated regulatory requirements.



City of Truth or Consequences Water Meter Replacement



- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Buffered Project Boundary | Department of Energy | State Land Office | U.S. Department of Agriculture |
| Project Boundary | NM Department of Game & Fish | State of New Mexico | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service |
| Bureau of Land Management | NM State Forestry Division | Tribal Land | U.S. Forest Service |
| City Land | NM State Parks | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| County Land | National Park Service | U.S. Bureau of Reclamation | |
| Department of Defense | Private | | |

USGS, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), Natural Heritage New Mexico (NHNM), and USDA Forest Service,

Compiled by Richard Norwood of NHNM over the period 2020 to 2021.

Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastysreisen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community



Special Status Animal Species Potentially within 1 Miles of Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	USFWS (ESA)	NMDGF (WCA)	NMDGF SGCN/SERI
Arizona Toad	Anaxyrus microscaphus			SGCN
Mountain Treefrog	Hyla wrightorum			SGCN
Barking Frog	Craugastor augusti			SGCN
Chiricahua Leopard Frog	Lithobates chiricahuensis	LT		SGCN
Northern Leopard Frog	Lithobates pipiens			SGCN
Eared Grebe	Podiceps nigricollis			SGCN
Clark's Grebe	Aechmophorus clarkii			SGCN
Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus		T	SGCN
American Bittern	Botaurus lentiginosus			SGCN
Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus		T	SGCN
Aplomado Falcon	Falco femoralis		E	SGCN
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus		T	SGCN
Snowy Plover	Charadrius nivosus nivosus			SGCN
Mountain Plover	Charadrius montanus			SGCN
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus	LT		SGCN
Elf Owl	Micrathene whitneyi			SGCN
Western Burrowing Owl	Athene cunicularia hypugaea			SGCN
Common Nighthawk	Chordeiles minor			SGCN
Lewis's Woodpecker	Melanerpes lewis			SGCN
Red-Headed Woodpecker	Melanerpes erythrocephalus			SGCN
Olive-Sided Flycatcher	Contopus cooperi			SGCN
Bank Swallow	Riparia riparia			SGCN
Pinyon Jay	Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus			SGCN
Juniper Titmouse	Baeolophus ridgwayi			SGCN
Pygmy Nuthatch	Sitta pygmaea			SGCN
Western Bluebird	Sialia mexicana			SGCN
Mountain Bluebird	Sialia currucoides			SGCN
Bendire's Thrasher	Toxostoma bendirei			SGCN
Sprague's Pipit	Anthus spragueii			SGCN
Loggerhead Shrike	Lanius ludovicianus			SGCN
Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii		T	SGCN
Gray Vireo	Vireo vicinior		T	SGCN
Lucy's Warbler	Leiothlypis luciae			SGCN
Black-Throated Gray Warbler	Setophaga nigrescens			SGCN
Red-Faced Warbler	Cardellina rubrifrons			SGCN
Painted Redstart	Myioborus pictus			SGCN
Black-Chinned Sparrow	Spizella atrogularis			SGCN
Vesper Sparrow	Poocetes gramineus			SGCN



Special Status Animal Species Potentially within 1 Miles of Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	USFWS (ESA)	NMDGF (WCA)	NMDGF SGCN/SERI
Thick-billed Longspur	Rhynchophanes mccownii			SGCN
Chestnut-Collared Longspur	Calcarius ornatus			SGCN
Evening Grosbeak	Coccothraustes vespertinus			SGCN
Rainbow Trout	Oncorhynchus mykiss			SERI
Channel Catfish	Ictalurus punctatus			SERI
Spotted Bat	Euderma maculatum		T	SGCN
Pale Townsend's Big-Eared Bat	Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens			SGCN
Mule Deer	Odocoileus hemionus			SERI
Desert Bighorn Sheep	Ovis canadensis mexicana			SERI
Big Bend Slider	Trachemys gaigeae			SGCN
Gray-Checkered Whiptail	Aspidoscelis tessellata		E	SGCN
Rock Rattlesnake	Crotalus lepidus			SGCN
Desert Massasauga	Sistrurus catenatus edwardsii			SGCN

ESA = Endangered Species Act, WCA = Wildlife Conservation Act, SGCN = Species of Greatest Conservation Need, SERI = Species of Economic and Recreational Importance, C = Candidate, E = Endangered, LE = Listed Endangered, LT = Listed Threatened, T = Threatened, XN = Non-essential Experimental Population, for other ESA codes see this website: <https://nhnm.unm.edu/node/1378928>.

Special Status Plant Species Potentially within 1 Miles of Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	USFWS (ESA)	NMAC	NMRPCS
Duncan's Corycactus	Escobaria duncanii		E	SS

NMAC = New Mexico Administrative Code, NMRPCS = [New Mexico Rare Plant Conservation Strategy](#), SS = NM Rare Plant Conservation Strategy Species, E = Endangered

Project Recommendations

With implementation of the applicable mitigation or avoidance measures included in the project description, and incorporation of the guidance listed below, the Department does not anticipate significant impacts to wildlife or sensitive wildlife habitats from the proposed project activities. See the "OVERALL STATUS" section above to determine the likelihood that your project will be reviewed further based on its location. If a Department biologist determines that additional conservation measures are needed, then you should expect to receive notification and/or any additional project recommendations within 30 days of your project submission.

Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) may occur within your project area. Burrowing owls are protected from take by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and under New Mexico state statute. Before any ground disturbing activities occur, the Department recommends that a preliminary burrowing owl survey be conducted by a qualified biologist using the Department's [burrowing owl survey protocol](#). Should burrowing owls be documented in the project area, please contact the Department or USFWS for further recommendations regarding relocation or avoidance of impacts.



The proposed project occurs near an important bat area. This area may contain important bat roosting resources, such as caves or mines, that potentially could be affected by certain project activities. Follow the guidelines below to minimize disturbance to roosting bats.

- Avoid use of pesticides, firearms, open-flame torches, or heavy smoke-producing equipment, especially from April through September.
- If artificial lighting is needed, use only light sources powered by batteries, or cyalume glow/light sticks. Keep the site clean by picking up refuse or materials from project lighting or operations whenever they are shut down.
- For any surface disturbing activities, the project footprint (including a 350 foot buffer) should avoid potential roost sites such as caves or mines, especially from April through July. Tree clearing activities and prescribed burns should include a minimum 0.5 mile buffer from any such features.
- If caves, mines, bridges, or other man-made structure suitable as potential bat roosts are encountered within the project area, they should not be entered during any time of year, and no roosting or hibernating bats should be contacted or disturbed. Report any dead or injured bats to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, who can facilitate contacts with other appropriate personnel.

Your project area intersects an Important Plant Area (IPA) that contains one or more species of plants listed as threatened or endangered by the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) under New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA) 75-6-1 or by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the federal Endangered Species Act. Although IPAs have no legal designation, they have been identified as areas that support either a high diversity of sensitive plant species or contain the last remaining locations of New Mexico's most endangered plants. The Department recommends that you consult with EMNRD's [Endangered Plant Program Coordinator](#) regarding any state-listed plants and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPAC\)](#) system for any federally-listed plants and reaching out to the appropriate federal species lead(s) with the [New Mexico Ecological Services Office of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#). The Department does not have any authority to designate or advise on state- or federally-listed plants.

The proposed project occurs within or near a riparian area. Because riparian areas are important wildlife habitats, the project footprint should avoid removing any riparian vegetation or creating ground disturbance either directly within or affecting the riparian area, unless the project is intended to restore riparian habitat through non-native plant removal and replanting with native species. If your project involves removal of non-native riparian trees or planting of native riparian vegetation, please refer to the Department's habitat handbook guideline for [Restoration and Management of Native and Non-native Trees in Southwestern Riparian Ecosystems](#).

Your proposed project occurs within an area where springs or other important natural water features occur. This may result in the presence of a high use area for wildlife relative to the surrounding landscape. To ensure continued function of these important wildlife habitats, your project should consider measures to avoid the following.

- Altering surface or groundwater flow or hydrology,
- Disturbance to soil that modifies geomorphic properties or facilitates invasion of non-native vegetation.
- Affecting local surface or groundwater quality.
- Creating disturbance to wildlife utilizing these water features. Disturbance to wildlife can be reduced through practices including clustering infrastructure and activity wherever possible, avoiding large visual obstructions around water features, and limiting nighttime project operations or activities.

Department biologists are available for site-specific consultation regarding measures to assist with management and conservation of these habitat resources.



Your project could affect important components of wildlife habitat, including fawning/calving or wintering areas for species such as deer and elk, or general high wildlife movement and activity areas for large mammals. Mitigation measures should focus on high use sites and movement areas based on collar data and expert knowledge of Department of Game and Fish and land management agency personnel. Management recommendations within these areas may include the following.

- Restrictions on noise-generating activities during wintering and calving/fawning seasons, specific timing of which may vary throughout the state. These activities would include oil and gas well pad development and operations that expose wildlife to loud noises from drilling, compressors, and pumping stations within 400 feet of the source.
- Modifying fences along high use areas to make them wildlife friendly and facilitate large animal movement.

Disclaimers regarding recommendations:

- The Department provides technical guidance to support the persistence of all protected species of native fish and wildlife, including game and nongame wildlife species. Species listed within this report include those that have been documented to occur within the project area, and others that may not have been documented but are projected to occur within the project vicinity.
- Recommendations are provided by the Department under the authority of § 17-1-5.1 New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978, to provide "communication and consultation with federal and other state agencies, local governments and communities, private organizations and affected interests responsible for habitat, wilderness, recreation, water quality and environmental protection to ensure comprehensive conservation services for hunters, anglers and nonconsumptive wildlife users".
- The Department has no authority for management of plants or Important Plant Areas. The [New Mexico Endangered Plant Program](#), under the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department's Forestry Division, identifies and develops conservation measures necessary to ensure the survival of plant species within New Mexico. Plant status information is provided within this report as a courtesy to users. Recommendations provided within the ERT may not be sufficient to preclude impacts to rare or sensitive plants, unless conservation measures are identified in coordination with the Endangered Plant Program.
- Additional coordination and/or consultation may also be necessary under the federal ESA or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Further site-specific mitigation recommendations may be proposed during ESA consultation and/or NEPA analyses or through coordination with affected federal agencies.