



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Brazfield Ranch
Project Type: (NO PROJECT REVIEW) SPECIES LIST ONLY
Latitude/Longitude (DMS): 34.085277 / -106.462400
County(s): SOCORRO
Project Description: A landowner and land trust are in the process of due diligence to investigate the feasibility of a conservation easement. This includes determining the conservation values for tax purposes and alignment with the mission of the land trust. The Property consists of significant/relatively natural habitat, the protection of which will add to the larger body of relatively unfragmented natural habitat that is being protected as part of large buffer area surrounding the nearby White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), part of the largest contiguous analyzed "Large Natural Area" in the state of New Mexico spanning 133 miles from near the Rio Grande almost to Roswell. The property and surrounding area are comprised primarily of native grasslands that are interspersed with a mix of piñon and juniper trees, which collectively provide habitat for a variety of wildlife including mule deer, pronghorn, mountain lion, bobcat, fox, oryx, coyote, and golden eagles.

REQUESTOR INFORMATION

Project Organization:
Contact Name: Traci Burnsed
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Organization: New Mexico Land Conservancy
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OVERALL STATUS

This report contains an initial list of recommendations regarding potential impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitats from the proposed project; see the Project Recommendations section below for further details. Your project proposal is being forwarded to a New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) biologist for review to determine whether there are any additional recommendations regarding the proposed actions. A Department biologist will be in touch within 30 days if there are further recommendations regarding this project proposal.

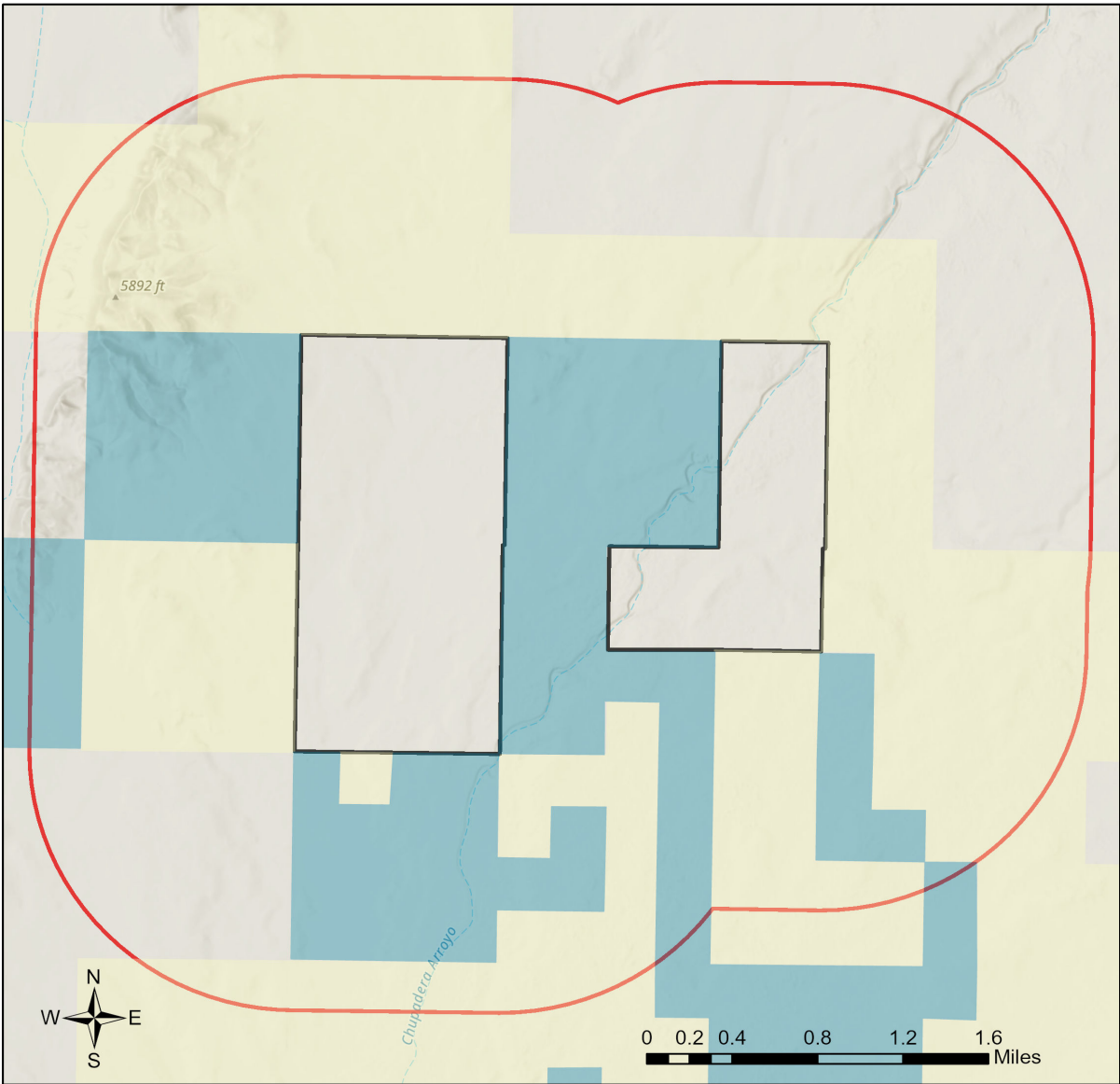


About this report:

- 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](#).
- This report contains information on wildlife species protected under the ESA and the [Wildlife Conservation Act \(WCA\)](#), [Species of Greatest Conservation Need \(SGCN\)](#), and Species of Economic and Recreational Importance (SERI). Species listed under the ESA are protected from take at the federal level and under the WCA are protected from take at the state level. SGCN are identified in the [State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\) for New Mexico](#); all of these species are considered to be of conservation concern but not all of them are protected from take at the state or federal level. The harvest of all SERI is regulated at the state level. The Department has no authority to designate critical habitat for species listed under the WCA; only the USFWS can designate critical habitat for species listed under the ESA.
- 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](#), the data layers from which are included in the ERT, is the appropriate system for advising early-stage project planning and design to avoid areas of anticipated wildlife concerns and associated regulatory requirements.



Brazfield Ranch



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

NHNM, USGS, USFS, US Census Bureau, NMDGF
Texas Parks & Wildlife, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS



Special Status Animal Species Potentially within 2000 Meters of Project Area

| Common Name | Scientific Name | USFWS (ESA) | NMDGF (WCA) | NMDGF SGCN/SERI | USFS | USFS SCC | BLM |
|--|---|-------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Boreal Chorus Frog | Pseudacris maculata | | | SGCN | | | |
| Plains Leopard Frog | Lithobates blairi | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| American Bittern | Botaurus lentiginosus | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Aplomado Falcon | Falco femoralis | | E | SGCN | | | |
| Mountain Plover | Charadrius montanus | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM WATCH |
| Long-Billed Curlew | Numenius americanus | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Elf Owl | Micrathene whitneyi | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Western Burrowing Owl | Athene cunicularia hypugaea | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Common Nighthawk | Chordeiles minor | | | SGCN | | | |
| Lewis's Woodpecker | Melanerpes lewis | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Williamson's Sapsucker | Sphyrapicus thyroideus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Olive-Sided Flycatcher | Contopus cooperi | | | SGCN | | | |
| Bank Swallow | Riparia riparia | | | SGCN | | | |
| Pinyon Jay | Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Clark's Nutcracker | Nucifraga columbiana | | | SGCN | | | |
| Pygmy Nuthatch | Sitta pygmaea | | | SGCN | | | |
| Western Bluebird | Sialia mexicana | | | SGCN | | | |
| Mountain Bluebird | Sialia currucoides | | | SGCN | | | |
| Bendire's Thrasher | Toxostoma bendirei | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Sprague's Pipit | Anthus spragueii | | | SGCN | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Loggerhead Shrike | Lanius ludovicianus | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Black-Chinned Sparrow | Spizella atrogularis | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Thick-billed Longspur | Rhynchophanes mccownii | | | SGCN | | | BLM SENSITIVE |



Special Status Animal Species Potentially within 2000 Meters of Project Area

| Common Name | Scientific Name | USFWS (ESA) | NMDGF (WCA) | NMDGF SGCN/SERI | USFS | USFS SCC | BLM |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Chestnut-Collared Longspur | Calcarius ornatus | | | SGCN | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Cassin's Finch | Haemorhous cassinii | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Evening Grosbeak | Coccothraustes vespertinus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Spotted Bat | Euderma maculatum | | T | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Pale Townsend's Big-Eared Bat | Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Black-Tailed Prairie Dog | Cynomys ludovicianus | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Mountain Lion | Puma concolor | | | SGCN | | | |
| Elk | Cervus canadensis | | | SGCN | | | |
| Mule Deer | Odocoileus hemionus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Pronghorn | Antilocapra americana | | | SGCN | | | |
| Rock Rattlesnake | Crotalus lepidus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Desert Massasauga | Sistrurus catenatus edwardsii | | | SGCN | | | |

Common Name hyperlink takes you to species account in [bison-m.org](https://www.bison-m.org/); Scientific Name hyperlink takes you to information in [NatureServe Explorer](#); ESA = Endangered Species Act, C = Candidate, LE = Listed Endangered, LT = Listed Threatened, XN = Non-essential Experimental Population, for other ESA codes see this [website](#); WCA = Wildlife Conservation Act, E = Endangered, T = Threatened; SERI = Species of Economic and Recreational Importance; SGCN = Species of Greatest Conservation Need; USFS = U.S. Forest Service, Sensitive Species = A species likely to occur on USFS lands that is of concern for a potential reduction in population viability; SCC = Species of Conservation Concern; BLM = Bureau of Land Management, BLM SENSITIVE = A species that occurs on BLM lands and whose viability is at risk, BLM WATCH = Species that may be added to the sensitive species list in future pending new information regarding species status.



Project Recommendations

This report includes a preliminary species list that may be used during early stages of project or conservation planning. Even if this report indicates that your proposed project location would require a custom review from a biologist, **no review will be returned** until additional project details are provided. **To obtain a project review**, please submit additional details regarding the **type** of project, project **objectives**, anticipated project **duration**, **timing** of project construction, the composition and dimensions/quantities of **materials** that will be utilized for project implementation, any **equipment** that will be used, anticipated **ground disturbance** that will occur, wildlife surveys or observations that have occurred on or near the project site, and **any other relevant details** regarding potential effects of project activities on wildlife or wildlife habitat. **Photographs** of the project site are especially useful.

Although this project report may include management recommendations based on the project location, additional conservation measures may be needed. The Department can not fully assess potential effects and associated management recommendations until a **project type and description** have been submitted and an appropriate **impact buffer** for that project type has been applied. Also, the species list within this report represents an estimation of special status species that could be present at the site of a small-scale project. Species lists for projects that occur across **broader geographic scales** (e.g., one or more counties, multiple habitat types) are more appropriately obtained from the **Department's Biota Information System of New Mexico (BISON-M) database**. Species lists generated by the ERT may contain modeled species distributions in order to predict species occurrences within areas that lack previous wildlife inventories or surveys. This list can be refined using occurrence-based information within BISON-M regarding wildlife-habitat relationships and biological needs for species that might be present within the project footprint.

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.

Prairie dog colonies may occur within the vicinity of your project area. Both black-tailed prairie dogs (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) and Gunnison's prairie dogs (*Cynomys gunnisoni*) are designated as New Mexico SGCN, and their colonies provide important habitat for other grassland wildlife. Wherever possible, occupied prairie dog colonies should be left undisturbed, and all project activities should be directed off the colony. Any burrows that are located on the project site should be surveyed by a qualified biologist to determine whether burrows are active or inactive and whether burrowing owls may be utilizing the site. Colonies within the range of the black-tailed prairie dog can be surveyed by a qualified biologist diurnally, year-round using binoculars. Colonies within the range of the Gunnison's prairie dog can be surveyed by a qualified biologist diurnally, using binoculars during the warmer months from April through October and by searching for fairly fresh scat and lack of cobwebs or debris at the mouths of burrows during the cold months (November through March). If ground-disturbing activities cannot be relocated off the prairie dog colony, or if project activities involve control of prairie dogs, the Department recommends live-trapping and relocation of prairie dogs. The Department can provide recommendations regarding suitability of potential translocation areas and procedures.



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.

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.