



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Dixon BLM/SLO RDOF Fiber Optic Installation Project
Project Type: (NO PROJECT REVIEW) SPECIES LIST ONLY
Latitude/Longitude (DMS): 36.182459 / -105.840796
County(s): RIO ARRIBA
Project Description: Installation of an aerial fiber optic system on existing utility in Dixon, NM

REQUESTOR INFORMATION

Project Organization:
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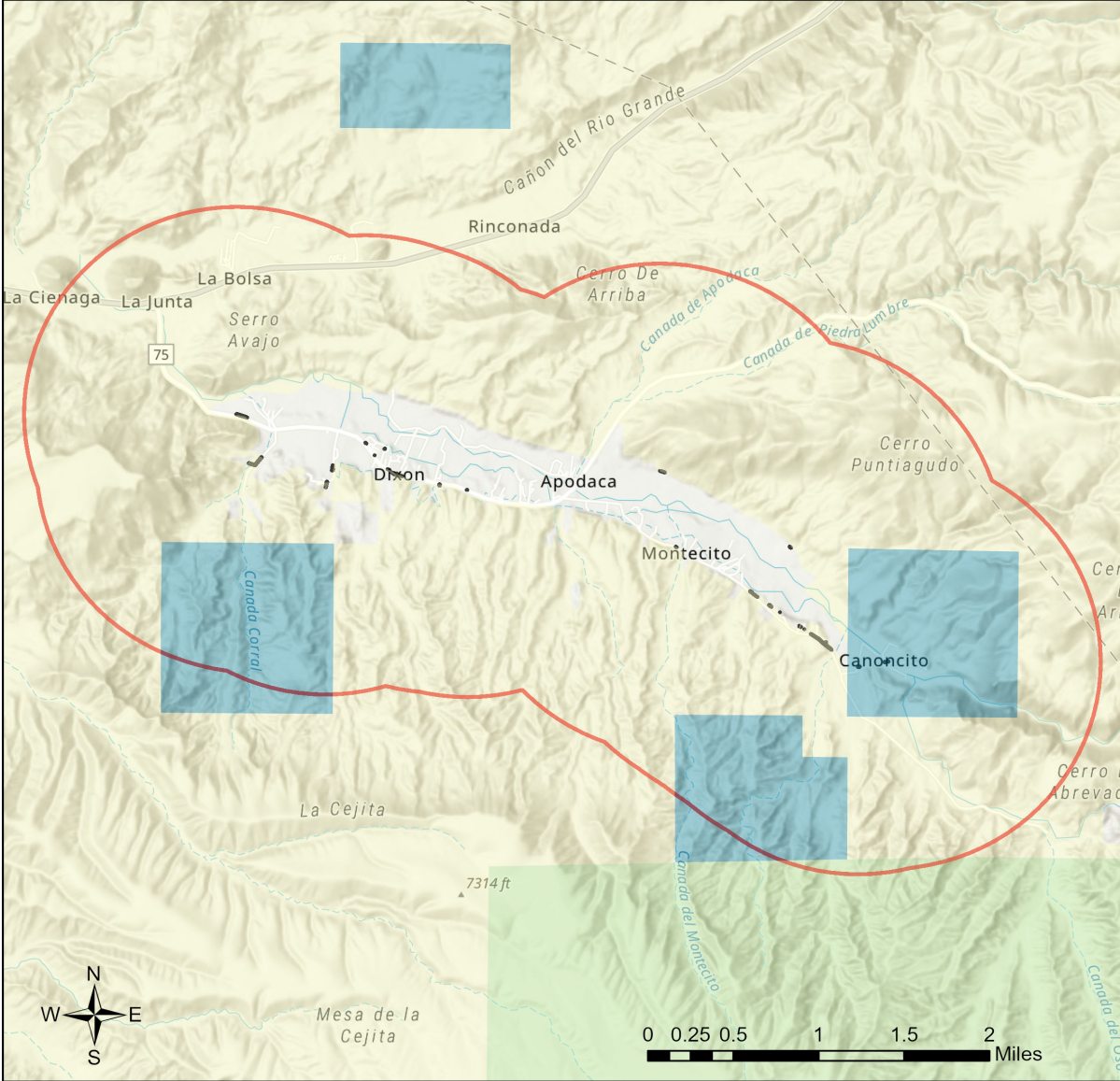
OVERALL STATUS

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 Wildlife (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 \(SGCN\)](#) (page 18, table 5), 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.

Dixon BLM/SLO RDOF Fiber Optic Installation Project



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|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Buffered Project Boundary | NM Department of Game & Fish | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| Project Boundary | NM State Forestry Division | U.S. Bureau of Reclamation |
| Bureau of Land Management | NM State Parks | 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 | |
| National Park Service | 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 |
| Northern Leopard Frog | Lithobates pipiens | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Clark's Grebe | Aechmophorus clarkii | | | SGCN | | | |
| American Bittern | Botaurus lentiginosus | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Bald Eagle | Haliaeetus leucocephalus | | T | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Peregrine Falcon | Falco peregrinus | | T | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Mountain Plover | Anarhynchus montanus | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM WATCH |
| Yellow-Billed Cuckoo | Coccyzus americanus | LT | | SGCN 2025 | | | |
| Flammulated Owl | Psiloscops flammeolus | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Western Burrowing Owl | Athene cucularia hypugaea | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Common Nighthawk | Chordeiles minor | | | SGCN | | | |
| Black Swift | Cypseloides niger | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | |
| Lewis's Woodpecker | Melanerpes lewis | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Red-Headed Woodpecker | Melanerpes erythrocephalus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Williamson's Sapsucker | Sphyrapicus thyroideus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Olive-Sided Flycatcher | Contopus cooperi | | | SGCN | | | |
| Southwestern Willow Flycatcher | Empidonax traillii extimus | Endangered | E | SGCN | | | |
| Bank Swallow | Riparia riparia | | | SGCN | | | |
| Pinyon Jay | Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Clark's Nutcracker | Nucifraga columbiana | | | SGCN | | | |
| Juniper Titmouse | Baeolophus ridgwayi | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Pygmy Nuthatch | Sitta pygmaea | | | SGCN | | | |

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 |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Western Bluebird | Sialia mexicana | | | SGCN | | | |
| Mountain Bluebird | Sialia currucoides | | | SGCN | | | |
| Bendire's Thrasher | Toxostoma bendirei | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Loggerhead Shrike | Lanius ludovicianus | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Gray Vireo | Vireo vicinior | | T | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Virginia's Warbler | Leiothlypis virginiae | | | SGCN | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Black-Throated Gray Warbler | Setophaga nigrescens | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Grace's Warbler | Setophaga graciae | | | SGCN | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Vesper Sparrow | Poocetes gramineus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Chestnut-Collared Longspur | Calcarius ornatus | | | SGCN | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Cassin's Finch | Haemorhous cassinii | | | SGCN | | | BLM WATCH |
| Evening Grosbeak | Coccothraustes vespertinus | | | SGCN | | | |
| Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout | Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis | | | SGCN 2025 | | USFS R3 SCC | BLM WATCH |
| Rainbow Trout | Oncorhynchus mykiss | | | SERI | | | |
| Brown Trout | Salmo trutta | | | SERI | | | |
| Rio Grande Chub | Gila pandora | | | SGCN 2025 | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Rio Grande Sucker | Pantosteus plebeius | | | SGCN 2025 | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Smallmouth Bass | Micropterus dolomieu | | | SERI | | | |
| Spotted Bat | Euderma maculatum | | T | SGCN | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Black-Tailed Prairie Dog | Cynomys ludovicianus | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Gunnison's Prairie Dog | Cynomys gunnisoni | | | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | 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 |
|--|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------|---------------|
| New Mexican Meadow Jumping Mouse | Zapus hudsonius luteus | LE | E | SGCN | Sensitive Species | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Black Bear | Ursus americanus | | | SERI | | | |
| Mountain Lion | Puma concolor | | | SERI | | | |
| Elk | Cervus canadensis | | | SERI | | | |
| Mule Deer | Odocoileus hemionus | | | SERI | | | |
| Pronghorn | Antilocapra americana | | | SERI | | | |
| Bighorn Sheep | Ovis canadensis | | | SERI | | | |
| Desert Massasauga | Sistrurus catenatus edwardsii | | | SGCN | | | |

Common Name hyperlink takes you to species account in 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.

Special Status Plant Species Potentially within 2000 Meters of Project Area

| Common Name | Scientific Name | USFWS (ESA) | NMAC | NMRPCS | USFS | USFS SCC | BLM |
|---|--|-------------|------|--------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Taos Springsparsley | Cymopterus spellenbergii | | E | SS | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Cyanic Milkvetch | Astragalus cyaneus | | | SS | | | BLM WATCH |
| Taos Milkvetch | Astragalus puniceus var. gertrudis | | | SS | | | BLM SENSITIVE |
| Arizona Willow | Salix arizonica | | | | Sensitive Species | USFS R3 SCC | |
| Great Plains Lady's Tresses | Spiranthes magnicamporum | | E | SS | | | |

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

Your project area intersects a Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) as identified in the [SWAP](#) for New Mexico. These areas contain high numbers of SGCN as identified in the SWAP and therefore represent areas where implementing conservation actions, including restoration projects intended to benefit wildlife, has higher potential to benefit a diversity of species. Within COAs, the Department encourages project proponents to consider (during project planning and design) and mitigate (during project implementation) potential adverse effects to non-federally listed SGCN and their habitats. State-listed and federally-listed species are protected from take by the New Mexico WCA and ESA, respectively, and migratory birds are protected from take by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Your project area intersects designated critical habitat for one or more species that are listed under the federal ESA. The Department recommends that you confirm this using the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPAC) system (<https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>) and then reach out to the appropriate species lead(s) with the [New Mexico Ecological Services Office of USFWS](#). The USFWS has authority to designate critical habitat for species listed under the ESA. The Department has no authority to designate critical habitat for species listed under the WCA or ESA. If there are any federally-listed plants within your project area and your project has a federal nexus, you may find these recommendations from the USFWS useful: [Recommendations for Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultations Involving Plants in New Mexico](#); [Standards for Conducting and Reporting Consultation Surveys for Federally-Listed, Proposed, and Candidate Plants in New Mexico](#).

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.
- If the use of permanent outdoor lights cannot be avoided, design all outdoor lighting in accordance with the New Mexico Night Sky Protection Act, which requires that outdoor lighting be fitted with shielding that directs light downward, rather than upward or laterally, to prevent sky glow and associated impacts to bats.
- 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 miles 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 Department, which 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 USFWS under the federal ESA. 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 USFWS'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 USFWS](#). The Department does not have any authority to designate or advise on state- or federally-listed plants.

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.

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](#). The [New Mexico Riparian Habitat Map \(NMRipMap\)](#) may also provide useful information on local riparian habitat composition and structure.

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.
- Unless a project is marked as confidential in the title or description by the project proponent and if a ERT-generated report is the only response that the project proponent receives from the Department, then the report will be made publicly accessible via the [Public Comment Letters](#) page on the ERT website.