Appendix A

Agency and Other Correspondence

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BAKERSFIELD TO SOLSTICE 345-KV TRANSMISSION LINE
FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES

FEDERAL

Mr. Kevin L. Solco
Southwest Regional Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
10101 Hillwood Parkway
Fort Worth, TX 76177

Mr. Tony Robinson
Region 6 Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
FRC 800 N. Loop 288
Denton, TX 76209-3698

Mr. Salvador Salinas
State Conservationist
NRCS Texas State Office
101 South Main Street
Temple, TX 76501

Ms. Anne Idsal
Region 6 Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202

Mr. Adam Zerrenner
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
10711 Burnet Rd., Ste. 200
Austin, TX 78758-4455

Lt. Col. James L. Booth
Commander
USACE - Albuquerque District
4101 Jefferson Plaza NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435

Mr. John Wessels
Intermountain Regional Director
National Parks Service
IMRextrev@nps.gov

Mr. Ron Tickle
Executive Director
U. S. Department of Defense Siting Clearinghouse
3400 Defense Pentagon, Room 5C646
Washington, DC 20301-3400

STATE

Ms. Laura Zebehazy
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

Ms. Lorinda Gardner
Regional Director
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
9900 W. IH-20, Ste. 100
Midland, TX 79706

Mr. David Fulton
Director, Department of Aviation
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Mr. Carlos Swonke, P.E.
Director, Environmental Affairs Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Mr. Peter Smith, P.E.
Director, Planning & Programming
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Mr. John R. Speed, P.E.
Odessa District Engineer
Texas Department of Transportation
3901 E. Highway 80
Odessa, Texas 79761

Mr. Mark Wolfe
Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711

Mr. Geroge P. Bush
Commissioner
Texas General Land Office
1700 N. Congress Ave., Suite 935
Austin, TX 78701-1495

Mr. Wei Wang
Executive Director
Railroad Commission of Texas
P.O. Box 12967
Austin, TX 78711-2967

Mr. Jeff Walker
Executive Administrator
Texas Water Development Board
P.O. Box 13231
Austin, TX 78711-3231

Ms. Terri Moore
Executive Director
Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission
P.O. Box 60660,
Midland, TX 79711-0660

Mr. Ernest Woodward
Chair
Pecos County Historical Commission
HC 73 Box
McCamey, TX 79752

POWER ENGINEERS, INC.
16825 NORTHCHASE DRIVE
SUITE 1200
HOUSTON, TX 77060 USA

PHONE 281-765-5500
FAX 281-765-5599

January 29, 2018
(Via Mail)

Mr. Ron Tickle
Executive Director
U. S. Department of Defense Siting Clearinghouse
3400 Defense Pentagon, Room 5C646
Washington, DC 20301-3400

Re: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County, Texas
POWER Engineers, Inc. Project No. 149604

Dear Mr. Tickle:

LCRA Transmission Services Corporation (LCRA TSC) and AEP Texas Inc. (AEP Texas) are jointly proposing to build and operate a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Pecos County, Texas. The proposed 345-kV line will extend between the existing LCRA TSC Bakersfield Substation located approximately six miles north of Interstate Highway (IH) 10 and one mile west of Farm-to-Market (FM) 1901 and the existing AEP Texas Solstice Substation located approximately 25 miles west of the City of Fort Stockton along IH 10. This entire project will be approximately 70 miles long, depending on the final route. LCRA TSC will construct, own, and operate the eastern half of the transmission line (connecting to the Bakersfield Substation) and AEP Texas will construct, own, and operate the western half of the transmission line (connecting to the Solstice Substation). The location of the study area is shown on the enclosed map.

POWER Engineers, Inc. (POWER) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Alternative Route Analysis for LCRA TSC and AEP Texas to support their joint application for an amendment to each of their existing Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs) from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC). POWER is gathering data on the existing environment and identifying environmental and land use constraints within the study area. LCRA TSC, AEP Texas, and POWER will identify potential alternative route segments that consider the data gathered regarding environmental and land use constraints.

We are requesting that your agency/office provide information concerning environmental and land use constraints or other issues of interest to your agency/office within the study area. Your input will be an important consideration in the evaluation of alternative routes and in the assessment of potential impacts of those routes. In addition, we would appreciate receiving information about any permits, easements, or other approvals by your agency/office that you believe could affect this project, or if you are aware of any major proposed development or construction in the study area. Upon approval of the application and identification of a final route for the proposed project by the PUC, LCRA TSC and AEP Texas will identify and obtain necessary permits, if required, from your agency/office.

January 29, 2018

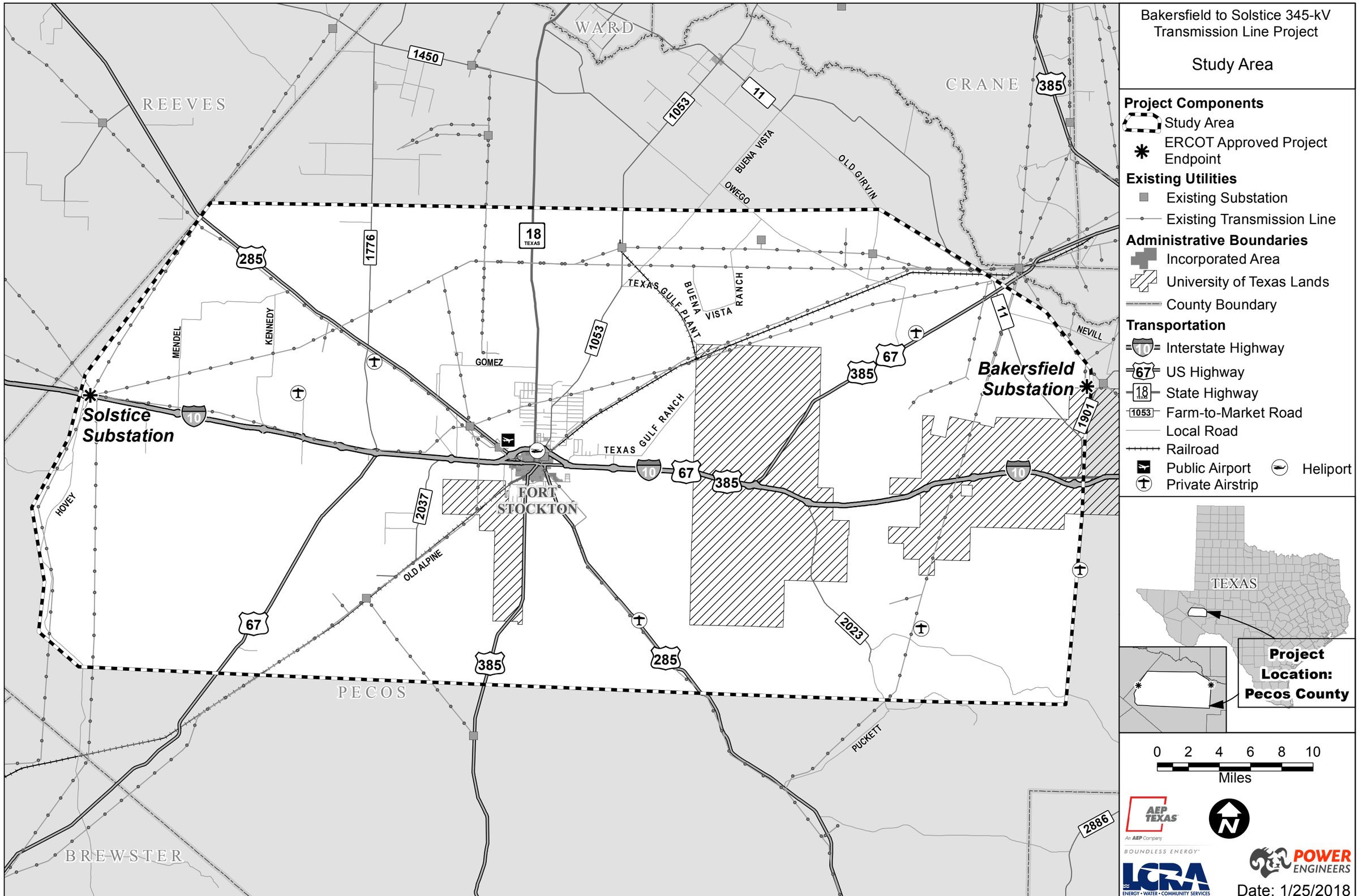
Thank you for your assistance with this proposed electric transmission line project. Please contact me by phone at 281-765-5507, or by e-mail at lisa.barko@powereng.com if you have any questions or require additional information. We would appreciate receiving your reply by February 23, 2018.

Sincerely,

Lisa Barko Meaux
Project Manager

Enclosure(s):
Preliminary Study Area Map

Sent Via Mail
ProjectWise 149604


Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Study Area
Project Components
Study Area
ERCOT Approved Project Endpoint
Existing Utilities
Existing Substation
Existing Transmission Line
Administrative Boundaries
Incorporated Area
University of Texas Lands
County Boundary
Transportation
Interstate Highway
US Highway
State Highway
Farm-to-Market Road
Local Road
Railroad
Public Airport
Heliport
Private Airstrip
Solstice Substation
Bakersfield Substation
REEVES
WARD
CRANE
PECOS
BREWSTER
FORT STOCKTON
TEXAS GULF PLANT
BUENA VISTA RANCH
TEXAS GULF RANCH
BUENA VISTA
OWEGO
OLD GIRVIN
NEVILL
MENDEL
KENNEDY
GOMEZ
HOVEY
OLD ALPINE
PUCKETT
TEXAS
Project Location: Pecos County
0 2 4 6 8 10
Miles
Date: 1/25/2018

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Bakersfield - Solstice_Public Generators

Organization	Formal Title	Prefix	Contact	Formal	Address 1	City	State	Zip
AEP	Wind Farm Operations Manager	Mr.	Jackie Oliver	Mr. Oliver	8135 East Highway 190	Iraan	TX	79744
NextEra Energy, Inc.	Manager, Business Management	Mr.	Hannes Grobler	Mr. Grobler	700 Universe Boulevard	Juno Beach	FL	33408
Sherbino I Wind Farm LLC; c/o BP Wind Energy North America Inc.	Asset Manager	Mr.	James Holly	Mr. Holly	700 Louisiana Street, 33rd Floor	Houston	TX	77002
East Pecos Solar, LLC; c/o First Solar	Supervisor, MOC	Mr.	Brian Penner	Mr. Penner	350 West Washington Street	Tempe	AZ	85281
Barrilla Solar c/o First Solar	Director, Project Management	Ms.	Kathryn Arbeit	Ms. Arbeit	135 Main Street, 6th Floor	San Franciso	CA	94105
BHE Renewables, LLC		Mr.	Joe Brannon	Mr. Brannon	1850 N. Central Ave. Suite 1025	Phoenix	AZ	85004
Recurrent Energy Development Holdings, LLC	Director, Asset Management	Mr.	Andrew Griffiths	Mr. Griffiths	300 California Street, 7th Floor	San Franciso	CA	94104
BHE Renewables, LLC	Project Manager	Mr.	Steve Wotruba	Mr. Wotruba	1850 N. Central Ave. Suite 1025	Phoenix	AZ	85004
Buckthorn Westex, LLC	Director, Project Development	Mr.	Scott Pryor	Mr. Pryor	700 Lavaca Street, Suite 1430	Austin	TX	78701
Duke Energy Renewables Solar, LLC	Director, System Interconnection Services	Mr.	Graham Furlong	Mr. Furlong	550 South Caldwell Street, Mail Drop NAS06	Charlotte	NC	28202
Midway Solar LLC; c/o Hanwha Q Cells USA Corp.	Director, Interconnection and Land Develo	Mr.	Brison R. Ellinghaus	Mr. Ellinghaus	300 Spectrum Center Drive, Suite 1250	Irvine	CA	92618

Bakersfield - Solstice_Utilities

Organization	Formal Title	Prefix	Contact	Formal	Address 1	City	State	Zip
Rio Grande Electric Co-Op	General Manager/CEO	Mr.	Daniel Laws	Mr. Laws	778 E. US Hwy 90	Bracketville	TX	78832
Texas New Mexico Power Co	President	Mr.	Neal Walker	Mr. Walker	577 N Garden Ridge Blvd.	Lewisville	TX	75067
City of Fort Stockton Utilities	Public Works Director	Mr.	Aaron Ramos	Mr. Ramos	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
AEP Texas Inc.	President & COO	Ms.	Judith Talavera	Ms. Talavera	539 North Carancahua	Corpus Christi	TX	78401
Southwest Texas Electric Cooperative	General Manager	Mr.	William Whitten	Mr. Whitten	P.O. Box 677	El Dorado	TX	76936

Bakersfield - Solstice_ISDs

Organization	Formal Title	Prefix	Contact	Formal	Address 1	City	State	Zip
Fort Stockton ISD	President	Mr.	Billy Espino	Mr. Espino	1500 W 18th	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	Vice President	Mr.	Flo Garcia III	Mr. Garcia	101 West Division Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	Secretary	Mr.	Freddie Martinez	Mr. Martinez	4123 North Orient	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	Assistant Secretary	Mr.	Anastacio Dominguez	Mr. Dominguez	1608 N. Rio	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	School Board Member	Ms.	Sandra Marquez	Ms. Marquez	101 West Division Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Tom Ezell	Mr. Ezell	109 North Colpitts	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Andy Rivera	Mr. Rivera	101 W. Division Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	Superintendent	Mr.	Ralph Traynham	Mr. Traynham	101 West Division Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Fort Stockton ISD	Assistant Superintendent	Ms.	Paula Traynham	Ms. Traynham	101 West Division Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Buena Vista ISD	President	Mr.	Cruz Gomez	Mr. Gomez	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	Vice President	Ms.	Veronica Mandujano	Ms. Mandujano	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	Secretary	Mr.	Cody Alford	Mr. Alford	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Jacob Heritage	Mr. Heritage	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Paul Bruce Ivey	Mr. Ivey	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Roger Tarango	Mr. Tarango	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Buena Vista ISD	Superintendent	Mr.	Mark Dominguez	Mr. Dominguez	404 West Highway 11	Imperial	TX	79743
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	President	Ms.	Gail Box	Ms. Box	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	Vice President	Mr.	Randy Graham	Mr. Graham	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	Secretary	Ms.	Bertha Natividad	Ms. Natividad	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	Assistant Secretary	Mr.	Clay McKinney	Mr. McKinney	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Sam Contreras	Mr. Contreras	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	School Board Member	Ms.	Crissy Meza	Ms. Meza	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	School Board Member	Ms.	Angelica Valenzuela	Ms. Valenzuela	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	Superintendent	Mr.	Jim Haley	Mr. Haley	1301 South Eddy Street	Pecos	TX	79772
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	President	Ms.	Margaret G. Holmes	Ms. Holmes	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	Vice President	Mr.	Steve Garlock	Mr. Garlock	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	Secretary	Mr.	Basiliso Ramirez	Mr. Ramirez	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	John Graham	Mr. Graham	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Joe Sconiers	Mr. Sconiers	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Tory Cox	Mr. Cox	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	School Board Member	Mr.	Roy Burks	Mr. Burks	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744
Iraan-Sheffield ISD	Superintendent	Mr.	Kevin Allen	Mr. Allen	P.O. Box 486	Iraan	TX	79744

Organization	Prefix	Contact	Formal	FormalTitle	Address1	City	State	Zip
Texas House of Representatives	The Honorable	Poncho Nevarez	Representative Nevarez	State Representative	P.O. Box 2910	Austin	TX	78768
Texas House of Representatives	The Honorable	Poncho Nevarez	Representative Nevarez	State Representative	1995 Williams St.	Eagle Pass	TX	78852
Texas Senate	The Honorable	Carlos I. Uresti	Senator Uresti	State Senator	P.O. Box 12068	Austin	TX	78711
Texas Senate	The Honorable	Carlos I. Uresti	Senator Uresti	State Senator	3315 Sidney Brooks Dr., Ste. 100	San Antonio	TX	78235
United States House of Representatives	The Honorable	Will Hurd	Representative Hurd	United States Representative	317 Cannon House Office Building	Washington	DC	20515
United States House of Representatives	The Honorable	Will Hurd	Representative Hurd	United States Representative	103 West Callaghan	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
United States Senate	The Honorable	John Cornyn	Senator Cornyn	United States Senator	517 Hart Senate Office Building	Washington	DC	20510
United States Senate	The Honorable	John Cornyn	Senator Cornyn	United States Senator	221 West Sixth Street, Suite 1530	Austin	TX	78701
United States Senate	The Honorable	Ted Cruz	Senator Cruz	United States Senator	404 Russell	Washington	DC	20510
United States Senate	The Honorable	Ted Cruz	Senator Cruz	United States Senator	300 East 8th Street, Suite 961	Austin	TX	78701

Bakersfield - Solstice_Public Officials

Organization	Formal Title	Prefix	Contact	Formal	Address 1	City	State	Zip
Pecos County	County Judge	The Honorable	Joe Shuster	Judge Shuster	103 W. Callaghan	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Pecos County	Commissioner Precinct 1	The Honorable	Tom Chapman	Commissioner Chapman	P.O. Box 1624	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Pecos County	Commissioner Precinct 2	The Honorable	Lupe Dominguez	Commissioner Dominguez	P.O. Box 220	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Pecos County	Commissioner Precinct 3	The Honorable	Mickey Jack Perry	Commissioner Perry	P.O. Box 456	Iraan	TX	79744
Pecos County	Commissioner Precinct 4	The Honorable	Santiago Cantu, Jr.	Commissioner Cantu	P.O. Box 10	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Pecos County Chamber of Commerce	President	Ms.	Jeanette Milam	Ms. Milam	1000 Railroad Avenue	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
Pecos County Chamber of Commerce	Executive Vice President	Ms.	Arna McCorkle	Ms. Corkle	1000 Railroad Avenue	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	Mayor	The Honorable	Chris Alexander	Mayor Alexander	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	Mayor Pro Tem	The Honorable	Billy Jackson	Mayor Pro Tem Jackson	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	City Councilman	The Honorable	Ruben Falcon	Council Member Falcon	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	City Councilman	The Honorable	Dino Ramirez	Council Member Ramirez	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	City Councilman	The Honorable	Mike Ureta	Council Member Ureta	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	City Councilman	The Honorable	James Warnock	Council Member Warnock	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	City Manager	Mr.	Frank Rodriguez III	Mr. Rodriguez	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
City of Fort Stockton	Assistant City Manager	Ms.	Shera Lee Davis	Ms. Davis	121 W. 2nd Street	Fort Stockton	TX	79735
The Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel	Public Counsel	Ms.	Michelle Gregg	Ms. Gregg	1701 N. Congress Ave., Suite 9-180	Austin	TX	78711

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February 8, 2018

«Prefix» «Contact»
«Formal_Title»
«Organization»
«Address_1»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Re: Proposed LCRA TSC & AEP Texas Bakersfield-Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project, Pecos County, Texas

Dear «Formal»:

LCRA Transmission Services Corporation (LCRA TSC) and AEP Texas, Inc. (AEP Texas) propose to add electric transmission line infrastructure in Pecos County, Texas. The proposed infrastructure will help to improve the reliability of the Far West Texas portion of the ERCOT interconnected transmission system and accommodate future load and generating capacity growth in this region. An initial step in the state-regulated transmission line routing process is to solicit input about the study area from local elected officials and public agencies. ***Please review the study area on the enclosed map and provide us with any information that may assist us in developing potential locations of the future transmission infrastructure.***

Project Description

LCRA TSC and AEP Texas are jointly proposing to build and operate a new 345-kilovolt (kV), double-circuit-capable transmission line in Pecos County. The new line will extend between AEP Texas' existing Solstice Substation located along I-10 approximately 25 miles west of the City of Fort Stockton to LCRA TSC's existing Bakersfield Substation located approximately six miles north of I-10 and one mile west of FM 1901. LCRA TSC will construct, own and operate the eastern half of the transmission line (connecting to the Bakersfield Substation) and AEP Texas will construct, own and operate the western half of the transmission line (connecting to the Solstice Substation). The proposed transmission line will be approximately 70 miles long, depending on the final route approved by the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC).

Reliability

Transmission utilities that own and operate facilities within the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), including LCRA TSC and AEP Texas, plan and operate their transmission facilities in close coordination with ERCOT's directives. ERCOT conducted studies on the load, resource and transmission constraint data for the Far West Texas region and concluded there are reliability and long-term needs to improve the transmission system in the area. ERCOT recommended the Bakersfield to Solstice Transmission Project to address those needs. The proposed infrastructure will help to improve the reliability of the Far West Texas portion of the interconnected ERCOT transmission system.

Your Input in the Regulatory Process

The PUC regulates transmission line routing in Texas. As part of that process, transmission companies routinely solicit input from local elected officials and surrounding agencies that may know of potential impacts in the study area that could impact a transmission route. Your input is important in evaluating alternative routes and assessing potential impacts of those route alternatives. ***LCRA TSC and AEP Texas request that your office provide any information that could affect potential transmission line routes in this area***.

Specifically, we ask you to consider any impacts that involve:

- Environmental and land use constraints
- Current or planned land development projects
- Construction projects
- Other areas of interest within the study area

Additionally, we would appreciate receiving information about any of the following conditions that you believe could affect this project:

- Permits
- Easements
- Other required approvals by your agency/office

If the PUC approves and selects a route for the project, LCRA TSC and AEP Texas will then proceed to obtain any necessary permits from your agency/office for the approved route.

Next Steps in the Regulatory Process

The consultant for this project, POWER Engineers, Inc. (POWER), is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Alternative Route Analysis for LCRA TSC and AEP Texas' joint application to amend each party's existing Certificate of Convenience and Necessity from the PUC. As part of the Environmental Assessment, POWER is gathering data on the project study area and identifying environmental and land use constraints as part of the Environmental Assessment. LCRA TSC, AEP Texas and POWER will use this information to identify potential alternative route segments that take into account these constraints.

Once POWER identifies preliminary alternate route segments for the project, we will invite you and potentially affected landowners to an open house to review the environmental and land use constraints maps as well as many other exhibits.

Please note the enclosed PUC Certification Process for Transmission Lines. We hope this chart will provide you with an understanding of the regulated process we must follow and your role in it. In addition, we will post and update project information on LCRA's website at www.lcra.org/baksol.

We appreciate your assistance with this project. Please send your input by mail, telephone or email to either:

Sonya Strambler
Regulatory Case Manager
Lower Colorado River Authority
P.O. Box 220, Mailstop D-140
Austin, Texas 78767-0220
(512) 578-1856
sonya.strambler@lcra.org

Randal Roper
Regulatory Case Manager
AEP Texas
400 W 15th St., Suite 1520
Austin, Texas 78701-1677
(512) 481-4572
reroper@aep.com

Please contact Sonya Strambler or Randal Roper if you have any questions. A response by March 8, 2018, is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sonya M. Strambler

Randal Roper

Sonya Strambler
Regulatory Case Manager
Lower Colorado River Authority

Randal Roper
Regulatory Case Manager
AEP Texas

Enclosures

cc: Lisa Barko Meaux (POWER Engineers, Inc.)

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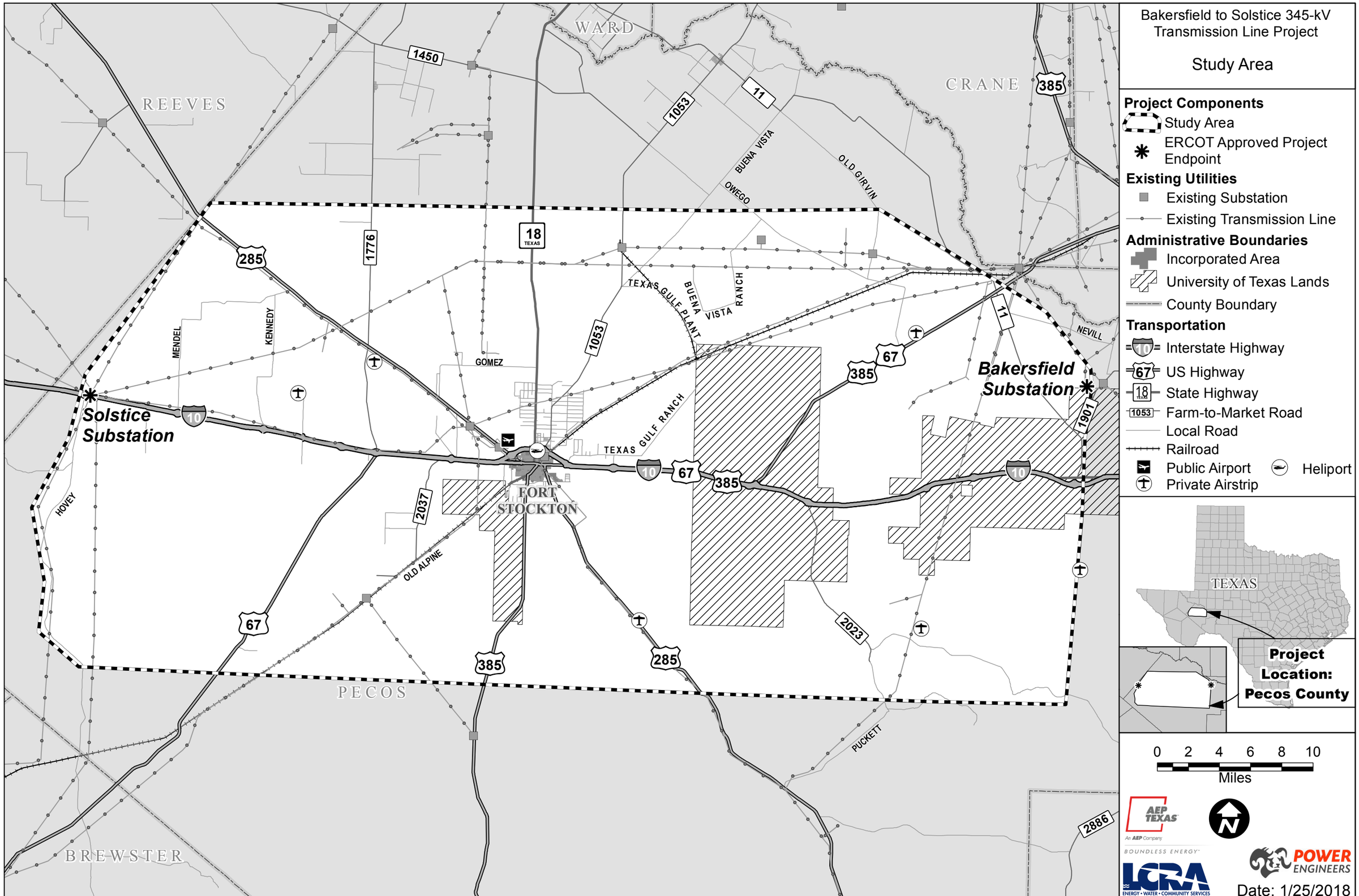
Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Study Area
Project Components
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Existing Transmission Line
Administrative Boundaries
Incorporated Area
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Public Airport
Heliport
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Bakersfield Substation
REEVES
WARD
CRANE
PECOS
BREWSTER
FORT STOCKTON
TEXAS GULF PLANT
BUENA VISTA RANCH
TEXAS GULF RANCH
BUENA VISTA
OWEGO
OLD GIRVIN
NEVILL
MENDEL
KENNEDY
GOMEZ
HOVEY
OLD ALPINE
PUCKETT
TEXAS
Project Location: Pecos County
0 2 4 6 8 10
Miles
Date: 1/25/2018

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PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Electric Utility Defines Project

- Conduct research and review studies to determine need.
- Identify needed facilities and end points of the project.

Electric Utility Conducts Environmental Assessment and Routing Analysis

- Establish study area based on project definition.
- Gather data about study area and map environmental and land use constraints in study area.
- Determine preliminary transmission line segments.
- Hold open house to gather public input.
- Analyze data and feedback from the public to develop primary transmission line routes, including multiple alternatives.
- Prepare an Environmental Assessment Report.

Electric Utility Applies for CCN Amendment

- Submit application to the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) to amend Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN).
- Send notices to landowners whose properties may be crossed or who own a habitable structure within 500 feet of route alternatives at the time CCN application is filed.
- Send notices to municipalities and electric utilities within five miles of the project and to local government entities where the project will potentially be located.

Public Participation

- After the CCN application is filed, people who are potentially impacted by the project have an opportunity to participate in the application proceeding at the PUC by filing a request to participate (intervene) within 45 days.
- If no parties intervene in the proceeding, the PUC staff conducts a review and issues a recommendation to the PUC.
- If parties have intervened in the proceeding, testimony may be filed, an administrative hearing may be held, and an administrative law judge will prepare a recommendation to the PUC regarding the application.

PUC Decision

- Within 12 months of the CCN application filing, the PUC will approve or deny the application, or approve it with modifications.
- PUC approval directs the electric utility to build the new transmission line along the route selected by the PUC.

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Southwest Region
10101 Hillwood Parkway
Fort Worth, TX 76177

FEB 14 2018

Lisa Meaux
Power Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northchase Drive
Suite 1200
Houston, TX 77060

Dear Ms. Meaux:

This is in response to your January 29, 2018 correspondence concerning a proposed new 345-kilovolt transmission line in Pecos County, Texas. You requested information concerning environmental and land use constraints or other issues within the study area. You also requested information regarding any permits, easements, or other approvals by the agency that may affect the project.

As stated in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 77, Objects that Affect the Navigable Airspace, the prime objectives of the FAA are to promote air safety and the efficient use of the navigable airspace.

To accomplish this mission, aeronautical studies are conducted based on information provided by the proponents on FAA Form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration. If your organization is planning to sponsor any construction or alterations which may affect navigable airspace, you must file FAA Form 7460-1 electronically via https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp.

For future reference, you may contact the Obstruction Evaluation Group at 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Fort Worth, Texas 76177 or (817) 222-5934.

Sincerely,

FOR

Terry L. Biggio
Regional Administrator,
Southwest Region

CC: Obstruction Evaluation Group, AJV-15

U. S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA Region 6
800 North Loop 288
Denton, TX 76209-3698

FEMA

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
REGION 6
MITIGATION DIVISION

RE: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project Pecos County, Texas
POWER Engineers, Inc. Project No. 149604

NOTICE REVIEW/ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION

☒ We have no comments to offer. ☐ We offer the following comments:

REVIEWER:

Colleen Sciano
Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch
Mitigation Division
(940) 898-7527

March 6, 2018

POWER ENGINEERS, INC.
16825 NORTHCHASE DRIVE
SUITE 1200
HOUSTON, TX 77060 USA

PHONE 281-765-5500
FAX 281-765-5599

18-1-43239

Date Rec'd: 1/31/18		
Rec'd by:		
	Action	Info
RA		X
Deputy RA		X
XA		
Analyst		
RES		
REC		
MIT	X	
MSO		
NP		
Grants		
File		X
Suspense Date: 2/14/18		

January 29, 2018
(Via Mail)

Mr. Tony Robinson
Region 6 Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
FRC 800 N. Loop 288
Denton, TX 76209-3698

Re: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County, Texas
POWER Engineers, Inc. Project No. 149604

Dear Mr. Robinson:

LCRA Transmission Services Corporation (LCRA TSC) and AEP Texas Inc. (AEP Texas) are jointly proposing to build and operate a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Pecos County, Texas. The proposed 345-kV line will extend between the existing LCRA TSC Bakersfield Substation located approximately six miles north of Interstate Highway (IH) 10 and one mile west of Farm-to-Market (FM) 1901 and the existing AEP Texas Solstice Substation located approximately 25 miles west of the City of Fort Stockton along IH 10. This entire project will be approximately 70 miles long, depending on the final route. LCRA TSC will construct, own, and operate the eastern half of the transmission line (connecting to the Bakersfield Substation) and AEP Texas will construct, own, and operate the western half of the transmission line (connecting to the Solstice Substation). The location of the study area is shown on the enclosed map.

POWER Engineers, Inc. (POWER) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Alternative Route Analysis for LCRA TSC and AEP Texas to support their joint application for an amendment to each of their existing Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs) from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC). POWER is gathering data on the existing environment and identifying environmental and land use constraints within the study area. LCRA TSC, AEP Texas, and POWER will identify potential alternative route segments that consider the data gathered regarding environmental and land use constraints.

We are requesting that your agency/office provide information concerning environmental and land use constraints or other issues of interest to your agency/office within the study area. Your input will be an important consideration in the evaluation of alternative routes and in the assessment of potential impacts of those routes. In addition, we would appreciate receiving information about any permits, easements, or other approvals by your agency/office that you believe could affect this project, or if you are aware of any major proposed development or construction in the study area. Upon approval of the application and identification of a final route for the proposed project by the PUC, LCRA TSC and AEP Texas will identify and obtain necessary permits, if required, from your agency/office.

January 29, 2018

Thank you for your assistance with this proposed electric transmission line project. Please contact me by phone at 281-765-5507, or by e-mail at lisa.barko@powereng.com if you have any questions or require additional information. We would appreciate receiving your reply by February 23, 2018.

Sincerely,

Lisa Barko Meaux

Lisa Barko Meaux
Project Manager

Enclosure(s):
Preliminary Study Area Map

Sent Via Mail
ProjectWise 149604

Meaux, Lisa

From: Meaux, Lisa
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2018 11:25 AM
To: 'justin.criggs@usace.army.mil'
Cc: Williams, Denise; Innes, Emily
Subject: RE: Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project

Good morning Mr. Riggs,

We have not seen a response to this submittal. Have we missed it or is it in progress? If we need to resent the attachments we can certainly do that as well or answer any questions you may have.

Kindly please confirm receipt of this email.

Thank you in advance,
Lisa

LISA BARKO MEAUX
PROJECT MANAGER
ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT MANAGER
16825 Northchase Drive, Suite 1200
Houston, Texas 77060

281-765-5507 direct
713-962-8476 cell
lisa.barko@powereng.com

POWER Engineers, Inc.
www.powereng.com

From: Meaux, Lisa
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2018 12:38 PM
To: justin.criggs@usace.army.mil
Cc: Williams, Denise (denise.williams@powereng.com)
Subject: Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project

Mr. Riggs,
Thank you for your call on February 13, 2018. As requested, attached is a copy of the letter and map that was sent to Lieutenant Booth in Albuquerque, New Mexico on January 29, 2018. Thank you for your interest in the Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project. If you have any questions after reviewing the letter please give me a call at 281-765-5507.
Thank you,
Lisa

<< File: Bakersfield_Solstice_AgencyContact_USACE Alb. District_2018-02-15.pdf >> << File: Bakersfield_Solstice_AgencyContact_11x17_20180125.pdf >>

LISA BARKO MEAUX
PROJECT MANAGER
ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT MANAGER

16825 Northchase Drive, Suite 1200
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281-765-5507 direct
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POWER Engineers, Inc.
www.powereng.com

USDA
United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

State Office

101 S. Main Street
Temple, TX 76501
Voice 254.742.9800
Fax 254.742.9819

February 8, 2018

POWER Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northchase Dr., Suite 1200
Houston, Texas 77060

Attention: Lisa Barko Meaux, Project Manager

Subject: LNU-Farmland Protection
Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
NEPA/FPPA Evaluation
Pecos County, Texas

We have reviewed the information provided in your correspondence dated January 29, 2018 concerning the proposed transmission line project located in Pecos County, Texas. This review is part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluation for the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC). We have evaluated the proposed site as required by the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA).

The proposed project site may involve areas of Prime Farmland; however, we now consider the installation of transmission lines to be a minimal impact that will have no effect on productive agricultural lands. Due to these reasons, the proposed project is exempt from provisions of FPPA and no further consideration for protection is necessary.

Please find the attached Custom Soil Resources Report. The soil physical and chemical properties are presented, along with additional restrictions or interpretations for the project area.

Along the project area, several concerns should be considered, including limitations to depth of restrictive layer, slope gradient, and erosion potential. We have included these reports as attachments to the soils report.

The proposed site does not involve USDA-NRCS floodwater retarding structures (FRS) or Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) conservation easements on or near the project area. We recommend that the entities developing these areas continue coordination with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to avoid adverse impacts to wetland ecosystems and habitats.

We strongly encourage the use of acceptable erosion control methods during the construction of this project.

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

If you have further questions, please contact me at 254.742.9836 or by email at Carlos.Villarreal@tx.usda.gov (Preferred).

Sincerely,

CARLOS VILLARREAL

Digitally signed by CARLOS VILLARREAL
Date: 2018.02.08 12:38:52 -06'00'

Carlos J. Villarreal
NRCS Soil Scientist

Attachment: **Custom Soil Resource Report for Pecos County, Texas**

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Austin Ecological Services Field Office
10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200
Austin, TX 78758-4460
Phone: (512) 490-0057 Fax: (512) 490-0974
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/EndangeredSpecies/lists/

In Reply Refer To: August 16, 2018
Consultation Code: 02ETAU00-2018-SLI-1395
Event Code: 02ETAU00-2018-E-02717
Project Name: Bakersfield to Solstice Transmission Line Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location, and/or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that *may* occur within the county of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Please note that new information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Also note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq*.), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of federally listed as threatened

or endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect these species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

While a Federal agency may designate a non-Federal representative to conduct informal consultation or prepare a biological assessment, the Federal Agency must notify the Service in writing of any such designation. The Federal agency shall also independently review and evaluate the scope and content of a biological assessment prepared by their designated non-Federal representative before that document is submitted to the Service.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by a federally funded, permitted or authorized activity, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. The following definitions are provided to assist you in reaching a determination:

- *No effect* - the proposed action will not affect federally listed species or critical habitat. A “no effect” determination does not require section 7 consultation and no coordination or contact with the Service is necessary. However, if the project changes or additional information on the distribution of listed or proposed species becomes available, the project should be reanalyzed for effects not previously considered.
- *May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect* - the project may affect listed species and/or critical habitat; however, the effects are expected to be discountable, insignificant, or completely beneficial. Certain avoidance and minimization measures may need to be implemented in order to reach this level of effect. The Federal agency or the designated non-Federal representative should consult with the Service to seek written concurrence that adverse effects are not likely. Be sure to include all of the information and documentation used to reach your decision with your request for concurrence. The Service must have this documentation before issuing a concurrence.
- *Is likely to adversely affect* - adverse effects to listed species may occur as a direct or indirect result of the proposed action. For this determination, the effect of the action is neither discountable nor insignificant. If the overall effect of the proposed action is beneficial to the listed species but the action is also likely to cause some adverse effects to individuals of that species, then the proposed action “is likely to adversely affect” the listed species. The analysis should consider all interrelated and interdependent actions. An “is likely to adversely affect” determination requires the Federal action agency to initiate formal section 7 consultation with our office.

Regardless of the determination, the Service recommends that the Federal agency maintain a complete record of the evaluation, including steps leading to the determination of effect, the qualified personnel conducting the evaluation, habitat conditions, site photographs, and any other related information. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at: http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF.

Migratory Birds

For projects that may affect migratory birds, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements various treaties and conventions for the protection of these species. Under the MBTA, taking, killing, or possessing migratory birds is unlawful. Migratory birds may nest in trees, brushy areas, or other areas of suitable habitat. The Service recommends activities requiring vegetation removal or disturbance avoid the peak nesting period of March through August to avoid destruction of individuals, nests, or eggs. If project activities must be conducted during this time, we recommend surveying for nests prior to conducting work. If a nest is found, and if possible, the Service recommends a buffer of vegetation remain around the nest until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

For additional information concerning the MBTA and recommendations to reduce impacts to migratory birds please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Birds Office, 500 Gold Ave. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102. A list of migratory birds may be viewed at https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/migratory-bird-treaty-act-protected-species.php. Guidance for minimizing impacts to migratory birds for projects including communications towers can be found at: https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/guidance-documents/communication-towers.php. Additionally, wind energy projects should follow the wind energy guidelines

https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/guidance-documents/wind-energy.php) for minimizing impacts to migratory birds and bats.

Finally, please be aware that bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 et seq.), and projects affecting these species may require development of an eagle conservation plan https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/guidance-documents/eagles.php.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Austin Ecological Services Field Office
10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200
Austin, TX 78758-4460
(512) 490-0057

Project Summary

Consultation Code: 02ETAU00-2018-SLI-1395

Event Code: 02ETAU00-2018-E-02717

Project Name: Bakersfield to Solstice Transmission Line Project

Project Type: TRANSMISSION LINE

Project Description: Bakersfield to Solstice Transmission Line Project

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/place/30.90836250139582N102.83896500786192W

Counties: Pecos, TX

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 13 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 3 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

---

1. NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* Population: interior pop. No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: ▪ Wind Energy Projects Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8505	Endangered
Mexican Spotted Owl *Strix occidentalis lucida* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8196	Threatened
Northern Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis septentrionalis* Population: Wherever found, except where listed as an experimental population No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1923	Endangered
Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* Population: [Atlantic Coast and Northern Great Plains populations] - Wherever found, except those areas where listed as endangered. There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: ▪ Wind Energy Projects Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039	Threatened
Red Knot *Calidris canutus rufa* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: ▪ Wind Energy Projects Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1864	Threatened

Fishes

NAME	STATUS
Leon Springs Pupfish *Cyprinodon bovinus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1135	Endangered
Pecos Gambusia *Gambusia nobilis* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/460	Endangered

Snails

NAME	STATUS
Diamond Tryonia *Pseudotryonia adamantina* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5401	Endangered
Gonzales Tryonia *Tryonia circumstriata (=stocktonensis)* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5611	Endangered
Pecos Assiminea Snail *Assiminea pecos* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4519	Endangered

Crustaceans

NAME	STATUS
Pecos Amphipod *Gammarus pecos* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4290	Endangered

Flowering Plants

NAME	STATUS
Lloyd's Mariposa Cactus *Echinomastus mariposensis* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5992	Threatened
Pecos (=puzzle, =paradox) Sunflower *Helianthus paradoxus* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7211	Threatened

Critical habitats

There are 6 critical habitats wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction.

NAME	STATUS
Diamond Tryonia *Pseudotryonia adamantina* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5401#crithab	Final
Gonzales Tryonia *Tryonia circumstriata (=stocktonensis)* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5611#crithab	Final
Leon Springs Pupfish *Cyprinodon bovinus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1135#crithab	Final

NAME	STATUS
Pecos (=puzzle, =paradox) Sunflower *Helianthus paradoxus* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7211#crithab	Final
Pecos Amphipod *Gammarus pecos* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4290#crithab	Final
Pecos Assiminea Snail *Assiminea pecos* https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4519#crithab	Final

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3400 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3400

ENERGY,
INSTALLATIONS
AND ENVIRONMENT

May 23, 2018

Lisa Barko Meaux
Project Manager
Power Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northchase Dr
Suite 1200
Houston, TX 77060
281-765-5507
lisa.barko@powereng.com

Dear Ms. Meaux,

As requested, the DoD Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse coordinated within the DoD, an informal review of the Bakersfield to Solstice Transmission Line project. The results of our informal review indicated that the proposed transmission line project located in Pecos County, TX, as proposed, will have minimal impact on military operations conducted in the area.

Please note that this informal review by the DoD Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse does not constitute an action under 49 United States Code Section 44718 and that the DoD is not bound by the conclusion arrived at under this informal review. Please contact me at steven.j.sample4.civ@mail.mil or at 703-571-0076 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Sample
Deputy Director
Military Aviation and Installation
Assurance Siting Clearinghouse

From:	Meaux, Lisa
To:	justin.criggs@usace.army.mil
Cc:	Williams, Denise
Subject:	Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Date:	Thursday, February 15, 2018 12:38:22 PM
Attachments:	Bakersfield_Solstice_AgencyContact_USACE Alb. District_2018-02-15.pdf Bakersfield_Solstice_AgencyContact_11x17_20180125.pdf

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Mr. Riggs,

Thank you for your call on February 13, 2018. As requested, attached is a copy of the letter and map that was sent to Lieutenant Booth in Albuquerque, New Mexico on January 29, 2018. Thank you for your interest in the Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project. If you have any questions after reviewing the letter please give me a call at 281-765-5507.

Thank you,

Lisa

Lisa Barko Meaux

Project Manager

Environmental Department Manager

16825 Northchase Drive, Suite 1200

Houston, Texas 77060

281-765-5507 direct

713-962-8476 cell

lisa.barko@powereng.com

POWER Engineers, Inc.
www.powereng.com

From:	Morgan, David
To:	Williams, Denise; Severud, Kirsten
Cc:	Huebel, Kenneth
Subject:	FW: TXNDD Request for the proposed Bakersfield – Solstice Transmission Line Project
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 4:37:55 PM
Attachments:	morgan_20180117b.zip

FYI

DAVID MORGAN
BIOLOGIST II

512-735-1818

POWER Engineers, Inc.
www.powereng.com

Go Green! Please print this email only when necessary.
Thank you for helping POWER Engineers be environmentally responsible.

From: Texas Natural Diversity Database [mailto:TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 2:52 PM
To: Morgan, David
Cc: Teta, Sairah; Severud, Kirsten
Subject: RE: TXNDD Request for the proposed Transmission Line Project

Mr. Morgan,

The Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD) staff provides the following information in response to your request for data. Please read this entire message for important information regarding your request, additional data sources, and project review.

****Your information request area contains known ecologically significant stream segments and federally designated critical habitat for Leon Springs pupfish, Pecos sunflower, Pecos assiminea snail, Diamond tryonia, Pecos amphipod, and Gonzales tryonia. Use the links below to obtain these data.****

Data
The TXNDD includes federal and state listed and tracked Threatened, Endangered, and Rare species. Please note that **areas where Element Occurrence (EO) data are absent should not be interpreted as an absence of Threatened, Endangered, and Rare species.** *Given the small proportion of public versus private land in Texas, the TXNDD does not include a representative inventory of rare resources in the state. Data from the TXNDD do not provide a definitive statement as to the presence, absence, or condition of special species, natural communities, or other significant features within your project area. These data cannot substitute for an on-site evaluation by qualified biologists.*

Attached documents
The attached .zip file contains several documents that will guide you in appropriate use, restrictions, and interpretation of TXNDD data as well as a reporting form for submitting data to the TXNDD. The .zip file also includes additional supplemental documents. Below is a list of the files in the attached folder:

- **Shapefile** (*eo_[last name of requestor]_yyyymmdd.zip*) of the Threatened, Endangered and Rare species Element Occurrences made from information the TXNDD presently has available for

the requested quad(s) (or within the requested county, by requested species when applicable).

- **EO Report** (*eoreport_[last name of requestor]_yyyymmdd.pdf*) of the EOs in the shapefile mentioned above. The **EO Report** includes more detailed information about each EO than what is contained in the attribute table of the shapefile. Link the information in the shapefile to the information in the **EO Report** by *EO ID*. Note that if the number of records in your request area is large, this report may not be included; however, if, in this circumstance, you would like more detailed information about a particular EO, species, or smaller geographic area, you may request those data.

- **EO List** (*eolist_[last name of requestor]_yyyymmdd.pdf*) for those requests made by USGS 7.5 minute quadrangles. The **EO List** is a list of species for which we have records in the database in the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangles *surrounding* your request area The **EO List** is to inform you of federal and state listed and tracked Threatened, Endangered, and Rare species in the area. Note that the EO list is not included in county requests.

- **County List FAQ** (*County_lists_FAQ_20150415.pdf*) produced by the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program.

- **TXNDD Information** document (*txndd_information.docx*) that includes a background of the TXNDD, a description of past and current spatial methodology employed, and an explanation of interpretation of the data. Global and subnational (state) conservation ranks are also explained in this document as are the shapefile attributes and EO report sections.

- **TXNDD Reporting Form** (txndd_reporting_form.doc) for reporting observations of tracked elements to the Texas Natural Diversity Database. To submit data, fill out this form and send it to TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov. Note that you can also submit data in the form of an Excel spreadsheet or written report.

Project Review, Rare Species County Lists, Project Planning, and BMPs
This email cannot substitute for an environmental review of your project by TPWD. For information on project review and to access the county lists of protected species and species of greatest conservation need with potential to occur in the county, please visit the Wildlife Habitat Assessment (WHAB) website at http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/habitat_assessment/. The WHAB website includes several resources to consider while planning your project to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife resources, including information /guidelines on Wind Energy projects, Transmission Line projects, Communication Towers, and Karst Zones (Travis, Williamson, and Bexar Counties).

Ecologically Significant Stream Segments
If your information request area contains known ecologically significant stream segments, the data can be obtained at
http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/conservation/water_resources/water_quantity/sigsegs/index.phtml

Critical Habitat
If your information request area contains federally designated critical habitat, the data can be obtained at http://ecos.fws.gov/crithab/.

TPWD Managed Areas
We are no longer providing Managed Area shapefiles and associated Managed Area Reports. To

obtain shapefiles for Wildlife Management Areas and State Park Boundaries, please visit the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department GIS Data Download page (https://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/data/).

Sincerely,

Bob Gottfried
Texas Natural Diversity Database Administrator
Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
4200 Smith School Rd
Austin, TX 78744
512-389-8744
TXNDD Information

From: david.morgan@powereng.com [mailto:david.morgan@powereng.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 4:16 PM
To: Texas Natural Diversity Database <TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov>
Cc: sairah.teta@powereng.com; kirsten.severud@powereng.com
Subject: TXNDD Request for the proposed Transmission Line Project

Texas Natural Diversity Database,
POWER Engineers Inc. is requesting a TXNDD review for the proposed Bakersfield – Solstice Transmission Line Project on behalf of the Lower Colorado River Authority and American Electric Power. The proposed project study area is within **Pecos County, TX** and is within or near the following USGS 7.5 minute quadrangles:

BAKERSFIELD
BELDING
BELDING NE
BELDING NW
BELDING SW
BOOTLEG CANYON
BUENA VISTA
BUENA VISTA NE
BUENA VISTA SW
CAVE MESA NE
CHANCELLOR
COYANOSA
COYANOSA NW
COYANOSA SE
COYANOSA SW
DEEP WELL RANCH
DEEP WELL RANCH NW
DEEP WELL RANCH SE
DIAMOND Y SPRING
DIAMOND Y SPRING NE
DIAMOND Y SPRING NW
DIAMOND Y SPRING SE
EAST MESA

EAST MESA SW
EAST OF BARRILLA DRAW NORTH
FIVEMILE MESA
FORT STOCKTON EAST
FORT STOCKTON WEST
GIRVIN
GIRVIN NW
GIRVIN SE
HACKBERRY DRAW NE
HACKBERRY DRAW NW
HOVEY NE
LEONCITA RANCH
NORTH OF TUCKER HILL
OWEGO
PANTHER BLUFF
ROCK HOUSE DRAW NE
ROCK HOUSE DRAW NW
SADDLE BUTTE
SHERBINO MESA
SIERRA MADERA NE
SIERRA MADERA NW
SKYSCRAPER PEAK
TUCKER HILL
TWELVEMILE MESA

The TXNDD data review is relevant for the routing study and environmental assessment for the project. The review deliverable should include an ArcGIS file of element occurrences, Element Occurrence Record List and EOR Report for each of the USGS quadrangles listed.

Thank you,

DAVID MORGAN
BIOLOGIST II

512-735-1818

POWER Engineers, Inc.
www.powereng.com

Go Green! Please print this email only when necessary.
Thank you for helping POWER Engineers be environmentally responsible.

Meaux, Lisa

From: Jessica Schmerler <Jessica.Schmerler@tpwd.texas.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 9:26 AM
To: Meaux, Lisa
Subject: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project, Pecos County

Hi Lisa,

Could you send me the study area shapefile and substation locations shapefile for the above-referenced project? Please send the files unzipped as our system kicks back zipfiles.

Thanks!
Jessica

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March 9, 2018

Ms. Lisa Barko Meaux
Project Manager
POWER Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northcase Drive, Suite 1200
Houston, TX 77060

RE: LCRA Transmission Services Corporation and AEP Texas Inc. Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kilovolt Transmission Line Project; Pecos County, Texas

Dear Ms. Meaux:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) received the preliminary information request regarding the above-referenced proposed transmission line project. TPWD staff has reviewed the information provided and offers the following comments concerning this project.

Please be aware that a written response to a TPWD recommendation or informational comment received by a state governmental agency may be required by state law. For further guidance, see the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Section 12.0011. For tracking purposes, please refer to TPWD project number 39291 in any return correspondence regarding this project.

Project Description

LCRA Transmission Services Corporation (LCRA TSC) and AEP Texas Inc. (AEP Texas) are jointly proposing to build and operate a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Pecos County, Texas. The proposed 345-kV line will extend between the existing LCRA TSC Bakersfield Substation located approximately six miles north of Interstate Highway (IH) 10 and one mile west of Farm-to-Market (FM) 1901 and the existing AEP Texas Solstice Substation located approximately 25 miles west of the City of Fort Stockton along IH 10. This entire project will be approximately 70 miles long, depending on the final route. LCRA TSC will construct, own, and operate the eastern half of the transmission line (connecting to the Bakersfield Substation) and AEP Texas will construct, own, and operate the western half of the transmission line (connecting to the Solstice Substation).

POWER Engineers, Inc. (POWER) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Alternative Route Analysis for LCRA TSC and AEP Texas to support their joint application for an amendment to each of their existing Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs) from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC). POWER is gathering data on the existing environment and identifying environmental and land use constraints within the study area. LCRA TSC, AEP

Texas, and POWER will identify potential alternative route segments that consider the data gathered regarding environmental and land use constraints.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends using existing facilities whenever possible. Where new construction is the only feasible option, TPWD recommends routing new transmission lines along existing roads, pipelines, transmission lines, or other utility rights-of-way (ROW) and easements to reduce habitat fragmentation. By utilizing previously disturbed, existing utility corridors, county roads, and highway ROW, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources would be mitigated by avoiding and/or minimizing the impacts to undisturbed habitats. Please see the attached *TPWD Recommendations for Electrical Transmission/Distribution Line Design and Construction*. Please review the recommendations and incorporate these measures into design and construction plans.

Conservation Easements

There is one conservation easement (known to TPWD) within the study area (Diamond Y Spring Macrosite Easement – Nature Conservancy). A map showing this conservation easement is attached for your reference. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or governmental agency that permanently limits uses of the land (including future fragmentation) to protect and conserve the land's natural values such as fertile soils, mature trees, and wildlife habitat. Lands with conservation easements protect existing wildlife habitat from future fragmentation and therefore have greater environmental integrity than comparable lands without conservation easements. Potential fragmentation of wildlife habitat from transmission line construction on properties where conservation agreements serve to protect the state's natural resources now and in the future is of concern to TPWD.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends properties protected by conservation easements be identified in the constraints analysis and avoided during development of alternative routes. Data sources for the location of these properties include online databases such as the Protected Areas Data Portal and the National Conservation Easement Database, as well as available county records. If properties protected by conservation easements would be affected, TPWD recommends the length of routes through these properties be included in any accounting of alternative route impacts presented in the EA.

Managed Areas

The following publicly managed areas tracked by TPWD are present within the study area. A map showing these managed areas is attached for your reference.

Diamond Y Spring Preserve (The Nature Conservancy)
City Park (City of Fort Stockton)
Lannom Park (City of Fort Stockton)
James Rooney Memorial Park (City of Fort Stockton)
Name Unknown Park (City of Fort Stockton)
Name Unknown Park (City of Fort Stockton)

Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code provides that a department, agency, political subdivision, county, or municipality of this state may not approve any program or project that requires the use or taking of public lands unless it holds a public hearing and determines that there is "no feasible and prudent alternative to the use or taking of such land", and the project "includes all reasonable planning to minimize harm to the land…resulting from the use or taking." If TPWD Park Grant funds were used for any of the above-listed parks, then coordination with the Grants-In-Aid Branch of TPWD and local park administrators is necessary to prevent conversion of grant assisted lands to other than public outdoor recreation use – as prohibited by Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends avoiding route placement in or near public recreation areas. TPWD is concerned with the placement of transmission lines in close proximity to these sites and the potential for visual impacts to the view shed. Therefore, TPWD recommends considering route alternatives that avoid managed areas.

Water Resources

Federal Law: Clean Water Act

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a federal program to regulate the discharge of dredged and fill material into the waters of the United States, including wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Environmental Protection Agency are responsible for regulating water resources under this act. Although the regulation of isolated wetlands has been removed from the USACE permitting process, both isolated and jurisdictional wetlands provide habitat for wildlife and help protect water quality.

As seen on the attached water resources map, several water crossings, wetlands, and springs are located within the study area. Notable features located within the study area include Comanche Springs, Diamond Y Draw, and Diamond Y Springs.

Recommendation: If the proposed project would impact waterways or associated wetlands, TPWD recommends consulting with the USACE for

potential impacts to waters of the United States including jurisdictional determinations, delineations, and mitigation. All waterways and associated floodplains, riparian corridors, springs, and wetlands, regardless of their jurisdictional status, provide valuable wildlife habitat and should be protected to the maximum extent possible. Natural buffers contiguous to any wetlands or aquatic systems should remain undisturbed to preserve wildlife cover, food sources, and travel corridors. During construction, trucks and equipment should use existing bridge or culvert structures to cross creeks, and equipment staging areas should be located in previously disturbed areas outside of riparian corridors.

Destruction of inert microhabitats in waterways such as snags, brush piles, fallen logs, creek banks, pools, and gravel stream bottoms should be avoided, as these provide habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife species and their food sources. Erosion controls and sediment runoff control measures should be installed prior to construction and maintained until disturbed areas are permanently revegetated using site-specific native vegetation. Measures should be properly installed in order to effectively minimize the amount of sediment and other debris entering the waterway.

Ecologically Significant Stream Segment

The study area contains Diamond Y Springs and Diamond Y Draw (Leon Creek) which have been designated as an Ecologically Significant Stream Segments (ESSS) from the confluence with Leon Creek in Pecos County to its headwaters in Pecos County for Diamond Y Springs and from the confluence with the Pecos River in Pecos County upstream to its headwaters in Pecos County for Diamond Y Draw (Leon Creek). The designation is based on:

Diamond Y Springs:

- Threatened or endangered species/unique communities - Pecos gambusia (Fed.E/St.E); Leon Springs pupfish (Fed.E/St.E); Pecos sunflower (Fed.T/St.T), only known location of Pecos assiminea snail (Fed.E/St.E), Diamond tryonia (Fed.E), and Gonzales tryonia (Fed.E).

Diamond Y Draw (Leon Creek):

- Threatened or endangered species/unique communities - Leon Springs pupfish (Fed.E/St.E), Pecos gambusia (Fed.E/St.E); Pecos sunflower (Fed.T/St.T)

TPWD has identified ESSSs throughout the state to assist regional water planning groups in identifying ecologically unique stream segments under Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Title 31 357.43 and 357.8. Until approved by the legislature this is not a legal designation. The stream segments are identified through extensive review by TPWD staff and are determined to be ecologically important. Information regarding criteria for designation as an ESSS can be found on the TPWD website.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends avoiding impacts to Diamond Y Springs and Diamond Y Draw (Leon Creek) due to their ecological significance. TPWD generally recommends avoiding routing transmission lines over streams and avoiding construction in and near riparian areas when possible.

Migratory Birds

Federal Law: Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits taking, attempting to take, capturing, killing, selling/purchasing, possessing, transporting, and importing of migratory birds, their eggs, parts and nests, except when specifically authorized by the Department of the Interior. This protection applies to most native bird species, including ground nesting species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Migratory Bird Office can be contacted at (505) 248-7882 for more information on potential impacts to migratory birds.

As discussed above, several water crossings, wetlands, and springs are located within the study area. Please note that birds typically establish flight corridors along and within river and creek drainages. There is potential for electrocution and collision of large-bodied waterfowl and avian predators with electrical wires near these water features.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends routing the transmission line to avoid crossing or disturbing water resources in the project area to the extent feasible. Lines that cross or are located near rivers, creeks, springs, drainages, and wetlands should have line markers installed at the crossings or closest points to the drainages to reduce potential collisions by birds flying along or near the drainages.

For additional information, please see the guidelines published by the USFWS and the Avian Power Lines Interaction Committee (APLIC) in the updated guidance document *Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines: State of the Art in 2012*. This manual, released on December 20, 2012, identifies best

practices and provides specific guidance to help electric utilities and cooperatives reduce bird collisions with power lines. A companion document, *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines*, was published by APLIC and the USFWS in 2006. For more information on both documents, please visit the APLIC website.

Recommendation: If migratory bird species are found nesting on or adjacent to the project area, they must be dealt with in a manner consistent with the MBTA. TPWD recommends excluding vegetation clearing activities during the general bird nesting season, March 15 through September 15, to avoid adverse impacts to breeding birds. If clearing vegetation during the migratory bird nesting season is unavoidable, TPWD recommends surveying the area proposed for disturbance, as close to the date of construction as possible, to ensure that no nests with eggs or young will be disturbed by operations. TPWD recommends that a 150-foot buffer of vegetation remain around any nests that are observed prior to disturbance. Any vegetation (such as trees, shrubs, and grasses) or other open areas where occupied nests are located should not be disturbed until the eggs have hatched and the young have fledged.

Federally-listed Species

Federal Law: Endangered Species Act

Federally-listed animal species and their habitats are protected from "take" on any property by the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Take of a federally-listed species can be allowed if it is "incidental" to an otherwise lawful activity and must be permitted in accordance with Section 7 or 10 of the ESA. Federally-listed plants are not protected from take except on lands under federal/state jurisdiction or for which a federal/state nexus (i.e., permits or funding) exists. Any take of a federally-listed species or its habitat without the required take permit (or allowance) from the USFWS is a violation of the ESA.

Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD) records within and adjacent to the study area are shown on the attached TXNDD map for your reference. USFWS Designated Critical Habitat located within the study area is shown on the attached USFWS Designated Critical Habitat map for your reference as well.

The TXNDD is intended to assist users in avoiding harm to rare species or significant ecological features. Given the small proportion of public versus private land in Texas, the TXNDD does not include a representative inventory of rare resources in the state. Absence of information in the database does not imply that a species is absent from that area. Although it is based on the best data available to

TPWD regarding rare species, the data from the TXNDD do not provide a definitive statement as to the presence, absence or condition of special species, natural communities, or other significant features within your project area. These data are not inclusive and **cannot be used as presence/absence data**. This information cannot be substituted for on-the-ground surveys. The TXNDD is updated continuously based on new, updated and undigitized records; for questions regarding a record, please contact TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov.

TPWD notes that there are TXNDD records for the following federally-listed species within the study area:

Pecos sunflower (*Helianthus paradoxus*)* (6 TXNDD records) – Federally- and State-listed Threatened
Pecos gambusia (*Gambusia nobilis*) (3 TXNDD records) – Federally- and State-listed Endangered
Diamond tryonia (*Pseudotryonia adamantina*)* (1 TXNDD record) – Federally-listed Endangered
Leon Springs pupfish (*Cyprinodon bovinus*)* (3 TXNDD records) – Federally- and State-listed Endangered
Gonzales tryonia (*Tryonia circumstriata*)* (1 TXNDD record) – Federally-listed Endangered
Pecos assiminea snail (*Assiminea pecos*)* (1 TXNDD record) – Federally- and State-listed Endangered
Comanche Springs pupfish (*Cyprinodon elegans*) (1 TXNDD record) – Federally- and State-listed Endangered

*USFWS Designated Critical Habitat also located within the study area for this species

The Pecos sunflower is restricted to saline, calcareous, heavy-textured soils around cienegas. This species is usually most abundant on perennially wet soils of subirrigated terraces just above the wettest sites. The Pecos sunflower flowers from August to November.

The Pecos gambusia is known to inhabit the Pecos River and tributaries. This species can be found in shallow margins of clear, vegetated spring waters high in calcium carbonate, as well as in sinkhole habitats.

Diamond tryonia is an endemic, aquatic snail, only known from a spring system and associated outflows in Pecos County. This species is found on mud substrates on the margins of small springs and seeps, and marshes in flowing water associated with sedges and cattails.

The Leon Springs pupfish is endemic to the Leon Creek watershed in the Pecos River system. This species inhabits margins of spring-fed marsh pools, mostly away from vegetation.

Gonzales tryonia is an endemic, aquatic snail, only known from a spring system and associated outflows in Pecos County. This species is found on mud substrates on the margins of small springs and seeps, and marshes in flowing water associated with sedges and cattails.

Pecos assiminea snails are usually found on moist ground or beneath emergent plants within a few centimeters of flowing water.

The Comanche Springs pupfish inhabits freshwater springs and associated marshes and canals. Spawning occurs in various sites ranging from fast-flowing water (spring outflows) to standing water. This species has also been known to inhabit Toyah Creek in addition to Comanche Springs.

> **Recommendation:** As previously mentioned, TPWD recommends taking measures to avoid impacts to aquatic and riparian habitats, which would minimize impacts to the above-listed federally-listed species. Waterways in the project area should be spanned, and care should be taken to avoid multiple crossings of creeks and rivers or installing lines parallel to waterways and therefore removing large sections of riparian habitat. River and creek crossings should be located in previously disturbed areas to avoid further fragmentation of the riparian corridors associated with these waterways. TPWD recommends contacting the USFWS for species occurrence data, guidance, permitting, survey protocols, and mitigation for these federally-listed species if they have the potential to be impacted by the proposed project.

State-listed Species

State Law: Parks and Wildlife Code, Section 68.015

Section 68.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code regulates state-listed species. Please note that there is no provision for the capture, trap, take, or kill (incidental or otherwise) of state-listed species. A copy of *TPWD Guidelines for Protection of State-Listed Species*, which includes a list of penalties for take of species, is attached for your reference. State-listed species may only be handled by persons with authorization obtained through TPWD. For more information, please contact the Wildlife Permits Office at (512) 389-4647.

Trans-Pecos black-headed snake (*Tantilla cucullata*) – State-listed Threatened

There is one TXNDD record for the Trans-Pecos black-headed snake located within the study area. This species can be found in steep-sided rocky canyons with pinyon pine, oak, and juniper; hilly grassland with juniper and cholla; streamside woodland with creosotebush, acacia, yucca, and grasses; and low hills of arid grassland with creosotebush, yucca, ocotillo, and agave. This secretive, fossorial snake is usually under cover, underground, or in crevices and may travel on the surface at night during the summer when surface moisture is present.

> **Recommendation:** Snakes are generally perceived as a threat and killed when encountered during clearing or construction. Therefore, TPWD recommends that personnel involved in clearing and construction be informed of the potential for the Trans-Pecos black-headed snake to occur in the project area. Personnel should be advised to avoid impacts to this snake as it is non-venomous and poses no threat to humans. TPWD recommends a permitted biological monitor be present during construction to try to relocate protected species if found (to an area that is nearby with similar habitat). TPWD recommends that any translocations of reptiles be the minimum distance possible no greater than one mile, preferably within 100 to 200 yards from the initial encounter location. If the presence of a permitted biological monitor during construction is not feasible, state-listed species observed during construction should be allowed to safely leave the site.

Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) – State-listed Threatened

While there are no TXNDD records for this species within the study area, suitable habitat for this species may be present. The Texas horned lizard inhabits open, arid and semi-arid regions with sparse vegetation, including grass, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees and soil may vary in texture from sandy to rocky. If present in the project area, the Texas horned lizard could be impacted by ground disturbing activities from construction. A useful indication that the Texas horned lizard may occupy the site is the presence of harvester ant (*Pogonomyrmex barbatus*) nests since harvester ants are the primary food source of Texas horned lizards. Texas horned lizards may hibernate on-site in loose soils a few inches below ground during the cool months from September/October to March/April. Construction in these areas could harm hibernating lizards. Horned lizards are active above ground when temperatures exceed 75 degrees Fahrenheit. If horned lizards (nesting, gravid females, newborn young, lethargic from cool temperatures or hibernation) cannot move away from noise and approaching construction equipment in time, they could be affected by construction activities.

> **Recommendation:** TPWD recommends having a permitted biologist survey the project area for any Texas horned lizards that may be in the area that is proposed for disturbance. As previously mentioned, a useful indication that the

Texas horned lizard may occupy the site is the presence of harvester ant nests. The survey should be performed during the warm months of the year when the horned lizards are active. If horned lizards are found on-site, TPWD recommends relocating them off-site to an area that is close-by and contains similar habitat. As previously mentioned, TPWD recommends that any translocations of reptiles be the minimum distance possible no greater than one mile, preferably within 100 to 200 yards from the initial encounter location. After horned lizard removal, the area that will be disturbed during active construction and project specific locations should be fenced off to exclude horned lizards and other reptiles.

a. The exclusion fence should be constructed with metal flashing or drift fence material.
b. Rolled erosion control mesh material should not be used.
c. The exclusion fence should be buried at least 6 inches deep and be at least 24 inches high.
d. The exclusion fence should be maintained for the life of the project and only removed after the construction is completed and the disturbed site has been revegetated. Any open trenches should be covered over night or inspected every morning to ensure no horned lizards or other reptiles have been trapped.

Recommendation: If the project area is found to contain unavoidable habitat of the Texas horned lizard, then TPWD recommends a permitted biological monitor be present during clearing and construction activities to relocate Texas horned lizards encountered during construction. TPWD also recommends providing contractor training where feasible. Because the biological monitor cannot oversee all construction activity at the same time, it's important for the contractor to be able to identify protected species and to be on the lookout for them during construction. TPWD also recommends avoiding impacts to harvester ant mounds where feasible. TPWD understands that ant mounds in the direct path of construction would be difficult to avoid, but contractors should be mindful of these areas when deciding where to place project specific locations and other disturbances associated with construction. If the presence of a biological monitor during construction is not feasible, state-listed species observed during construction should be allowed to safely leave the site.

Rare Species

In addition to state and federally-protected species, TPWD tracks special features, natural communities, and rare species that are not listed as threatened or endangered. These species and communities are tracked in the TXNDD, and TPWD actively promotes their conservation. TPWD considers it important to

evaluate and, if necessary, minimize impacts to rare species and their habitat to reduce the likelihood of endangerment and preclude the need to list these species as threatened or endangered in the future.

There are TXNDD records for the following rare plants located within the study area:

Bigelow's desert grass *(Blepharidachne bigelovii)* – 2 TXNDD records
Cienega false clappia-bush *(Pseudoclappia arenaria)* – 1 TXNDD record
Wright's trumpets *(Acleisanthes wrightii)* – 5 TXNDD records
Alkali spurge *(Chamaesyce astyla)* – 2 TXNDD records
Bushy wild-buckwheat *(Eriogonum suffruticosum)* – 1 TXNDD record
Correll's green pitaya *(Echinocereus viridiflorus var correllii)* – 1 TXNDD record
Havard trumpets *(Acleisanthes acutifolia)* – 1 TXNDD record
Tharp's blue-star (*Amsonia tharpii)* – 1 TXNDD record
Leafy rock-daisy *(Perityle rupestris var. rupestris)* – 1 TXNDD record
Longstalk heimia *(Nesaea longipes)* – 5 TXNDD records
Grayleaf rock-daisy (*Perityle cinerea*) – 3 TXNDD records
White column cactus (*Escobaria albicolumnaria*) – 1 TXNDD record
Leoncita false foxglove *(Agalinis calycina)* – 2 TXNDD records
Rayless rock-daisy *(Perityle angustifolia)* – 1 TXNDD record
Wright's water-willow *(Justicia wrightii)* – 1 TXNDD record

Recommendation: TPWD recommends surveying the project area for the above-listed rare plant species where suitable habitat may be present, prior to construction. The survey should be performed by a qualified biologist at the time of year when these species are most likely to be found, usually during their respective flowering periods. If any of these species are present, plans should be made to avoid adverse impacts to the greatest extent possible. If plants are found in the path of construction, including the placement of staging areas and other project related sites, this office should be contacted for further coordination and possible salvage of plants and/or seeds for seed banking. Plants not in the direct path of construction should be protected by markers or fencing and by instructing construction crews to avoid any harm.

Roundnose minnow *(Dionda episcopa)*
Ironcolor shiner *(Notropis chalybaeus)*

There are three TXNDD records for the roundnose minnow and one TXNDD record for the ironcolor shiner located within the study area. The roundnose minnow is found within the Pecos River system and inhabits spring-influenced headwater streams. The ironcolor shiner inhabits small to medium sized clear spring-fed streams with an abundance of aquatic vegetation.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends avoiding construction during the spawning period of the roundnose minnow (summer) and the ironcolor shiner (March through December) if feasible. Avoiding construction during a species' spawning period may reduce the potential for adverse impacts to water quality and the habitat of these species.

Black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*)

There is one TXNDD record for prairie dogs and one TXNDD record for a prairie dog town within the study area. Black-tailed prairie dogs inhabit dry, flat, short grasslands with low, relatively sparse vegetation, including areas overgrazed by cattle. The black-tailed prairie dog is a keystone species that provides food and/or shelter for rare species tracked by TPWD such as the ferruginous hawk and the western burrowing owl, as well as many other wildlife species.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends surveying the project area for prairie dog towns or burrows and species that depend on them. If prairie dog towns or burrows are found in the study area, TPWD recommends avoiding these areas during construction and installing exclusion fence to keep prairie dogs from entering the project area. If prairie dog burrows will be disturbed as a result of the proposed project, TPWD recommends non-harmful exclusion methods be used to encourage the animals to vacate the area prior to disturbance and discourage them from returning to the area during construction. If prairie dogs are encountered on the project site, TPWD recommends contacting a prairie dog relocation specialist. If impacting a portion of a larger colony, time relocation efforts and/or humane removal immediately before construction to discourage recolonization of the project area. Prairie dogs can be encouraged to move away from a project area by mowing overgrown adjacent areas. Conversely, prairie dogs can be discouraged from utilizing areas by not mowing and allowing grass or other tall vegetation to grow or by scraping all vegetation off the project site and leaving soil exposed.

Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)

While there are no TXNDD records for this species within the study area, suitable habitat for this species may be present. The western burrowing owl is a ground-dwelling owl that uses the burrows of prairie dogs and other fossorial animals for nesting and roosting. When natural burrows are limited, this species will breed in urban habitats which may lead to problems for the owls or their young. The owls opportunistically live and nest in road and railway ROWs, parking lots, baseball fields, school yards, golf courses, and airports. They have also been found nesting on campuses, in storm drains, drainage pipes, and cement culverts, on banks, along irrigation canals, under asphalt or wood debris piles, or openings under concrete

pilings or asphalt. The western burrowing owl is protected under the MBTA, and take of these birds, their nests, and eggs is prohibited. Potential impacts to the western burrowing owl could include habitat removal as well as displacement and/or destruction of nests and eggs if ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season.

> **Recommendation:** TPWD recommends that the project area be surveyed for mammal burrows or any urban structures that may provide suitable habitat for burrowing owls. If mammal burrows or any urban structures that may provide suitable habitat would be disturbed as a result of the proposed project, TPWD recommends the burrows or structures be surveyed for burrowing owls. If nesting owls are found, disturbance should be avoided until the eggs have hatched and the young have fledged.

Pecos River muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus ripensis*)

There are two TXNDD records for the Pecos River muskrat located within the study area. This species is found near creeks, rivers, lakes, drainage ditches, and canals and prefers shallow, fresh water with clumps of marshy vegetation, such as cattails, bulrushes, and sedges.

Kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*)

There are four TXNDD record for the kit fox located within the study area. This species primarily inhabits open desert, shrubby or shrub-grass habitat.

Western hog-nosed skunk (*Conepatus leuconotus*)

There are four TXNDD records for the western hog-nosed skunk located within the study area. The western hog-nosed skunk inhabits a wide variety of habitats within its range, including woodlands, grasslands, deserts, brushy areas, and rocky canyons in mountainous regions. Dens are in rock crevices, hollow logs, underground burrows, caves, mine shafts, woodrat houses, or under buildings.

Western spotted skunk *(Spilogale gracilis)*

There is one TXNDD record for the western spotted skunk within the study area. The western spotted skunk can be found in open fields, prairies, croplands, fence rows, forest edges, and woodlands.

> **Recommendation:** If during construction the project area is found to contain the rare species listed above, TPWD recommends that precautions be taken to avoid impacts to them.

Recommendation: Please review the TPWD county list for Pecos County, as rare species in addition to those discussed above could be present, depending upon habitat availability. The USFWS should be contacted for species occurrence data, guidance, permitting, survey protocols, and mitigation for federally-listed species.

Determining the actual presence of a species in a given area depends on many variables including daily and seasonal activity cycles, environmental activity cues, preferred habitat, transiency and population density (both wildlife and human). The absence of a species can be demonstrated only with great difficulty and then only with repeated negative observations, taking into account all the variable factors contributing to the lack of detectable presence. If encountered during construction, measures should be taken to avoid impacting all wildlife.

Vegetation

Based on a review of the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (also known as the Texas Ecological Systems Classification Project), the following ecological systems are found within the study area:

- Barren
- Edwards Plateau: Ashe Juniper Motte and Woodland
- Edwards Plateau: Barren or Grassy Cliff/Bluff
- Edwards Plateau: Deciduous Semi-arid Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Deciduous Semi-arid Slope Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Juniper Semi-arid Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Juniper Semi-arid Slope Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Riparian Ashe Juniper Forest
- Edwards Plateau: Riparian Ashe Juniper Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Riparian Deciduous Shrubland
- Edwards Plateau: Riparian Hardwood – Ashe Juniper Forest
- Edwards Plateau: Riparian Hardwood Forest
- Edwards Plateau: Semi-arid Grassland
- Edwards Plateau: Wooded Cliff/Bluff
- Native Invasive: Juniper Shrubland
- Native Invasive: Juniper Woodland
- Native Invasive: Mesquite – Creosotebush Shrubland
- Native Invasive: Mesquite Shrubland
- Non-native Invasive: Giant Reed
- Non-native Invasive: Saltcedar Shrubland

- Open Water
- Rolling Plains: Mixedgrass Prairie
- Row Crops
- Southwest: Tobosa - Mesquite Grassland
- Southwest: Tobosa Grassland
- Trans-Pecos: Cliff and Outcrop
- Trans-Pecos: Creosotebush Scrub
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Cienega Marsh
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Pavement
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Wash Barren
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Wash Evergreen Shrubland
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Wash Grassland
- Trans-Pecos: Desert Wash Shrubland
- Trans-Pecos: Hill and Foothill Grassland
- Trans-Pecos: Loamy Plains Grassland
- Trans-Pecos: Marsh
- Trans-Pecos: Mixed Desert Shrubland
- Trans-Pecos: Riparian Barren
- Trans-Pecos: Riparian Shrubland
- Trans-Pecos: Riparian Woodland
- Trans-Pecos: Salty Desert Scrub
- Trans-Pecos: Sparse Creosotebush Scrub
- Trans-Pecos: Succulent Desert Scrub
- Urban High Intensity
- Urban Low Intensity

A map of the ecological systems in the study area is attached for your reference. Additional information about the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas, including a link to download digital data, can be found at on the TPWD GIS Gallery website.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends minimizing impacts to native vegetation to the extent feasible during project design and construction. Unavoidable loss of native vegetation should be mitigated by revegetating areas disturbed by project activities with site-specific native species. A list of native plant species suitable for use in the project area can be developed to fit your specific site needs using the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Native Plant Database.

Texas Natural Diversity Database

Recommendation: To aid in the scientific knowledge of a species' status and current range, TPWD encourages reporting all encounters of rare, state-listed, and federally-listed species to the TXNDD according to the data submittal instructions found on the Texas Natural Diversity Database website.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide preliminary input on potential impacts related to this project, and I look forward to reviewing the EA and alternative routes analysis. Please contact me at (512) 389-8054 or Jessica.Schmerler@tpwd.texas.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jessica E. Schmerler
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

JES:39291

Attachments (8)

cc: Ms. Karen Hubbard, PUC (w/out attachments)

TPWD Recommendations for Electrical Transmission/Distribution Line Design and Construction

Construction of the line should be performed to avoid adverse impacts not only to the environment but the local bird populations and to restore or enhance environmental quality to the greatest extent practical. In order to minimize the possible project effects upon wildlife, the following measures are recommended.

TPWD recommends that each electrical company develop an Avian Protection Plan to minimize the risks to avian species that are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Avian Electrocution Risks

Birds can be electrocuted by simultaneously contacting energized and/or grounded structures, conductors, hardware, or equipment. Electrocutions may occur because of a combination of biological and electrical design. Biological factors are those that influence avian use of poles, such as habitat, prey and avian species. The electrical design factor is most crucial to avian electrocutions is the physical separation between energized and/or grounded structures, conductors, hardware, or equipment that can be bridges by birds to complete a circuit. As a general rule, electrocution can occur on structures with the following:

- Phase conductors separated by less than the wrist-to-wrist or head-to-foot (flesh-to-flesh) distance of a bird;
- Distance between grounded hardware (e.g. grounded wires, metal braces) and any energized phase conductor that is less than the wrist-to-wrist or head-to-foot (flesh-to-flesh) distance of a bird (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006).

To protect raptors and eagles, procedures should be followed as outlined in:

Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006. by Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 2006. Distributed by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC).

Mitigating Bird Collisions with Power Lines: the State of the Art in 1994.
Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 1994. Edison Electric Institute. Washington D.C.

Line alterations to prevent bird electrocutions should not necessarily be implemented after such events occur, as all electrocutions may not be known or documented. Incorporation of preventative measures along portions of the routes that are most attractive to birds (as indicated by frequent sightings) prior to any electrocutions is much preferred.

Preventative measures include: phase covers, bushing cover, arrester covers, cutout covers, jumper wire hoses, and covered conductors. In addition, perch discouragers may be used to deter birds from landing on hazardous (to birds) pole locations where isolate, covers, or other insulating techniques cannot be used (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006).

Use wood or non-conducting cross arms, for distribution lines, to minimize the possibility of electrical contact with perching birds.

When possible, for distribution lines, install electrical equipment on the bottom cross arm to allow top cross arm for perching.

TPWD recommends using nest management strategies which include installing nesting platforms on or near power structures to provide nesting sites for several protected species while minimizing the risks of electrocution, equipment damage, or outages (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006).

Avian Collision Risks

Birds typically establish flight corridors along and within river and creek drainages. Transmission lines that cross or are located very near these drainages should have line markers installed at the crossings or closest points to the drainages to reduce the potential of collisions by birds flying along or near the drainage corridors.

If transmission lines are located in an area with tall trees, the height of the transmission line should not be taller than the trees to reduce collision risks.

Transmission lines should be located to avoid separating feeding and nesting areas. If this cannot be avoided lines should be clearly marked to minimize avian collisions with the lines (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 1994).

Transmission lines should be buried, when practical, to reduce the risks of avian collisions.

Habitat Impacts

Construction should avoid identified wetland areas. Coordination with appropriate agencies should be accomplished to ensure regulatory compliance. Construction should occur during dry periods.

Construction should attempt to minimize the amount of flora and fauna disturbed. Reclamation of construction sites should emphasize replanting with native grasses and leguminous forbs.

Existing rights-of-way should be used to upgrade facilities, where possible, in order to avoid additional clearing and prevent adverse impacts associated with habitat loss and fragmentation of existing blocks of wooded habitat.

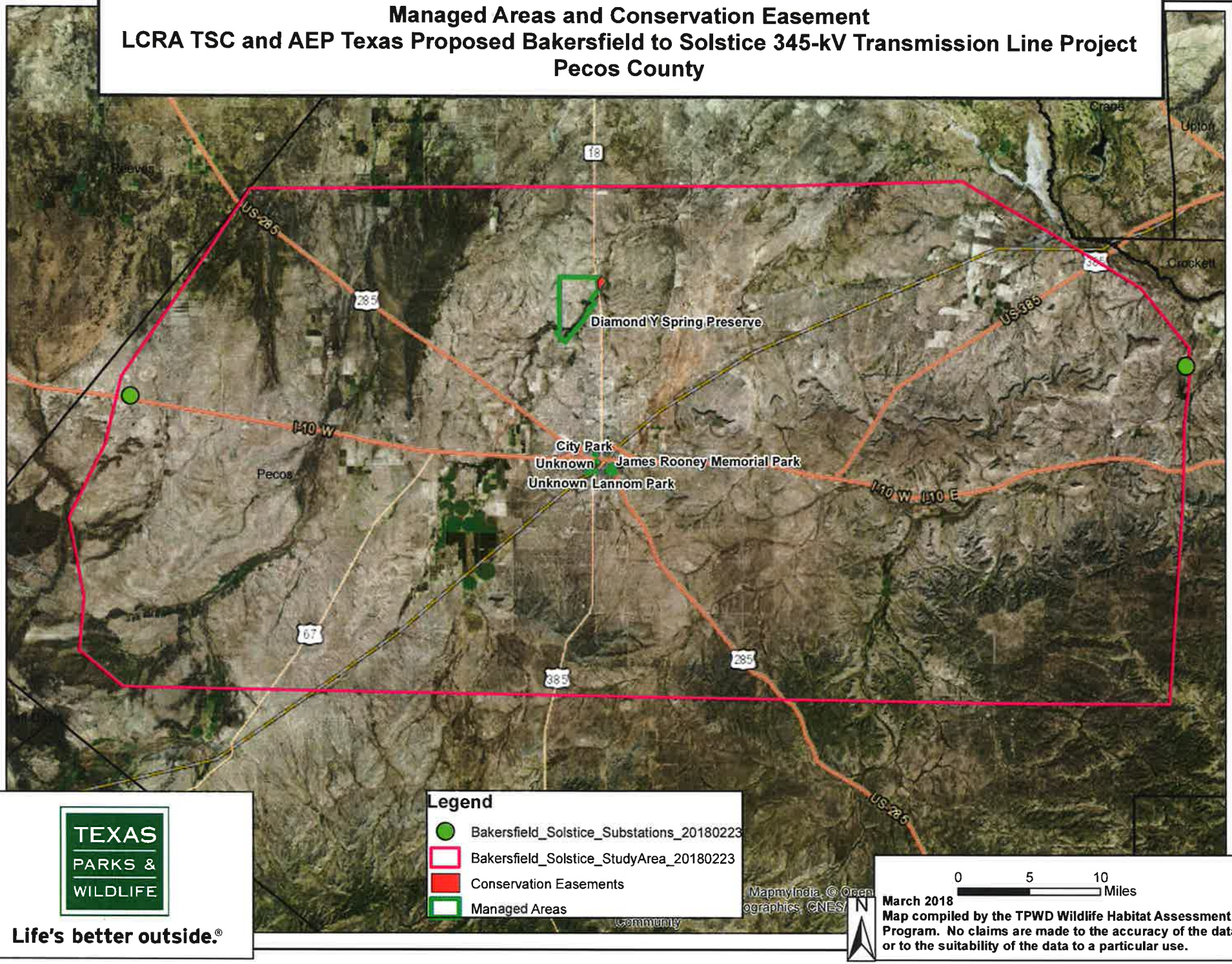
Forest and woody areas provide food and cover for wildlife, these cover types should be preserved. Mature trees, particularly those which produce nuts or acorns, should be retained. Shrubs and trees should be trimmed rather than cleared.

Transmission lines should be designed to cross streams at right angles, at points of narrowest width, and/or at the lowest banks whenever feasible to provide the least disturbance to stream corridor habitat.

Implementation of wildlife management plans along rights-of-way should be considered whenever feasible.

All pole design should be single phase (without arms), where possible, to preserve the aesthetics of the area.

Managed Areas and Conservation Easement
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

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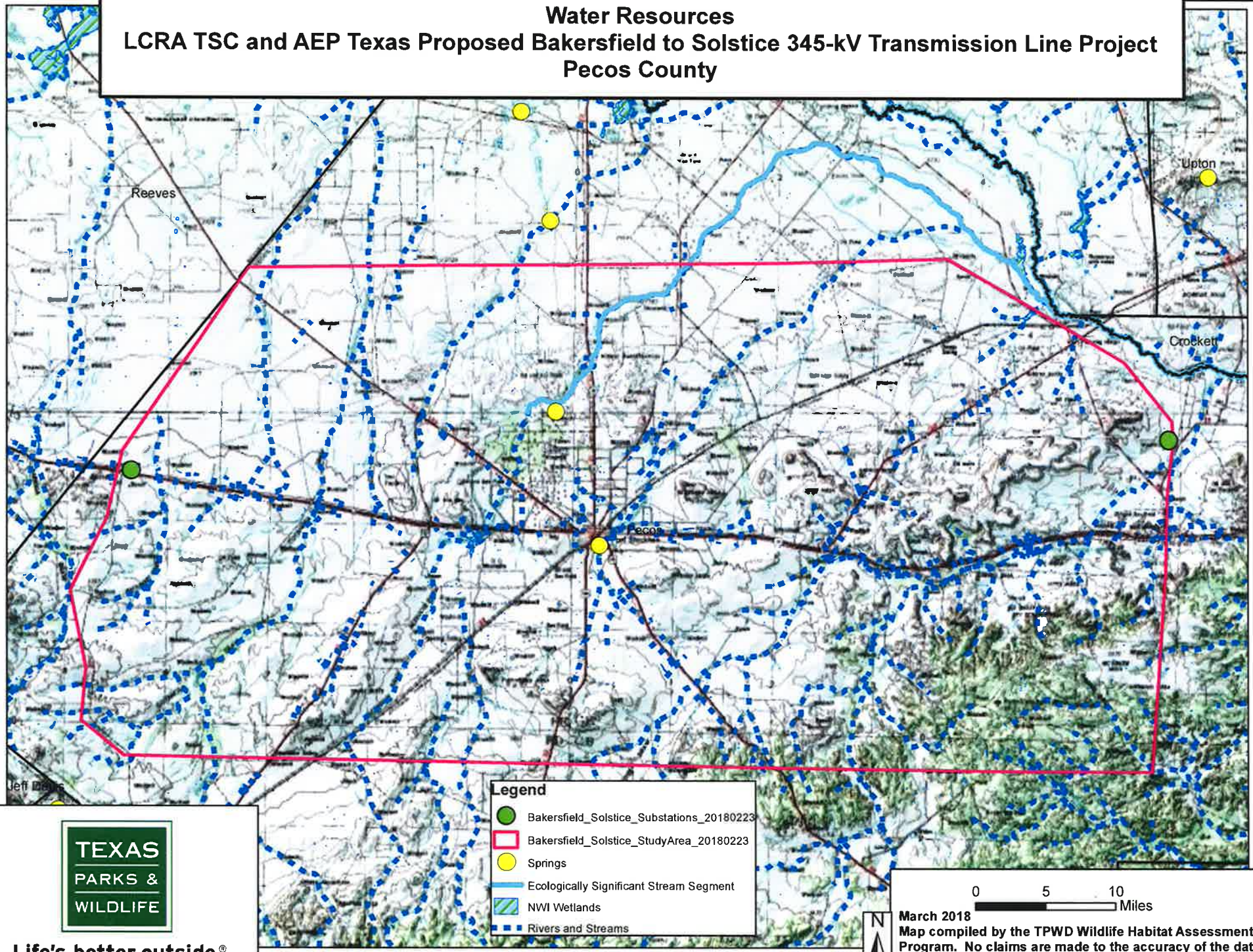
March 2018

Map compiled by the TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program. No claims are made to the accuracy of the data or to the suitability of the data to a particular use.

Water Resources
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



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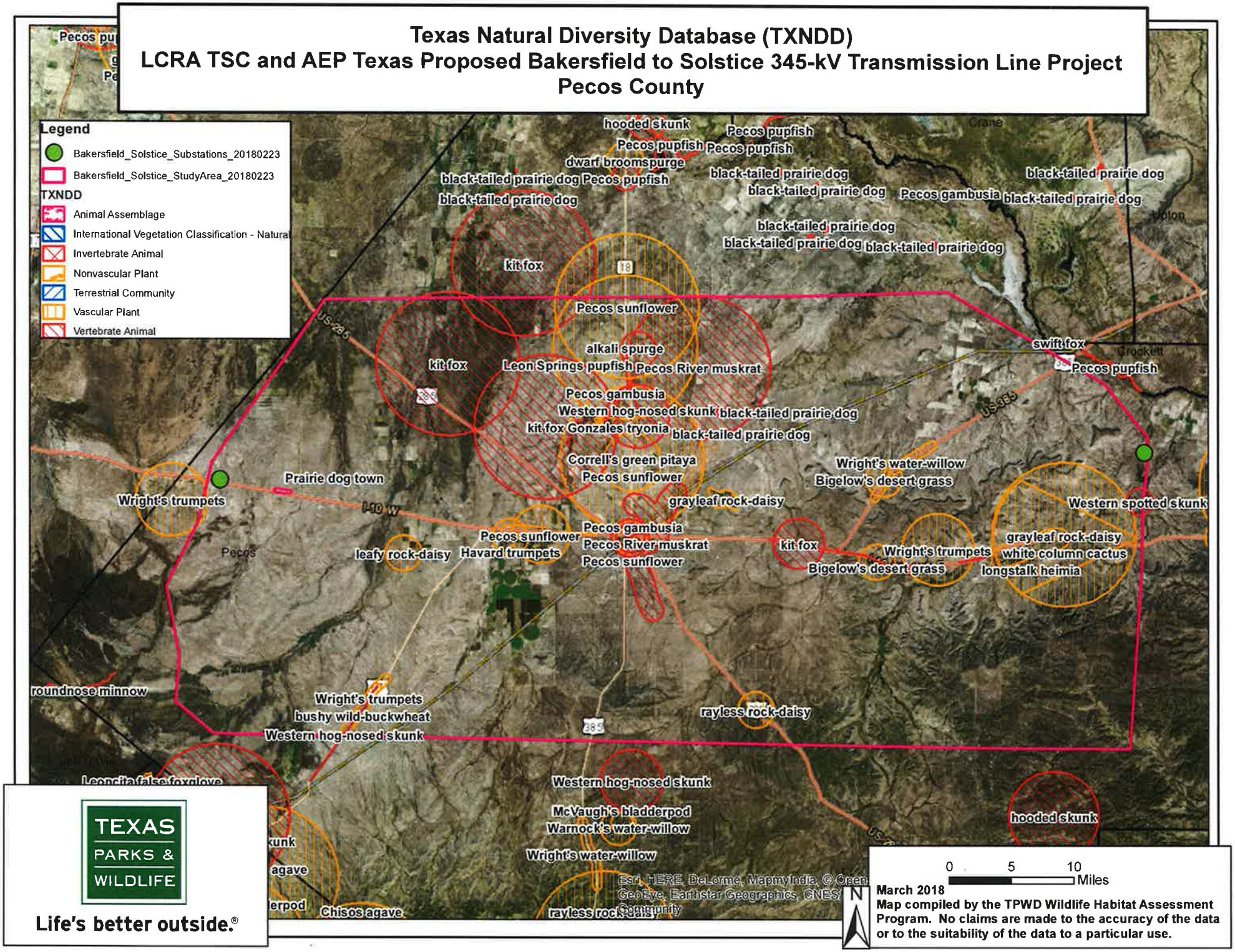
Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD)
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



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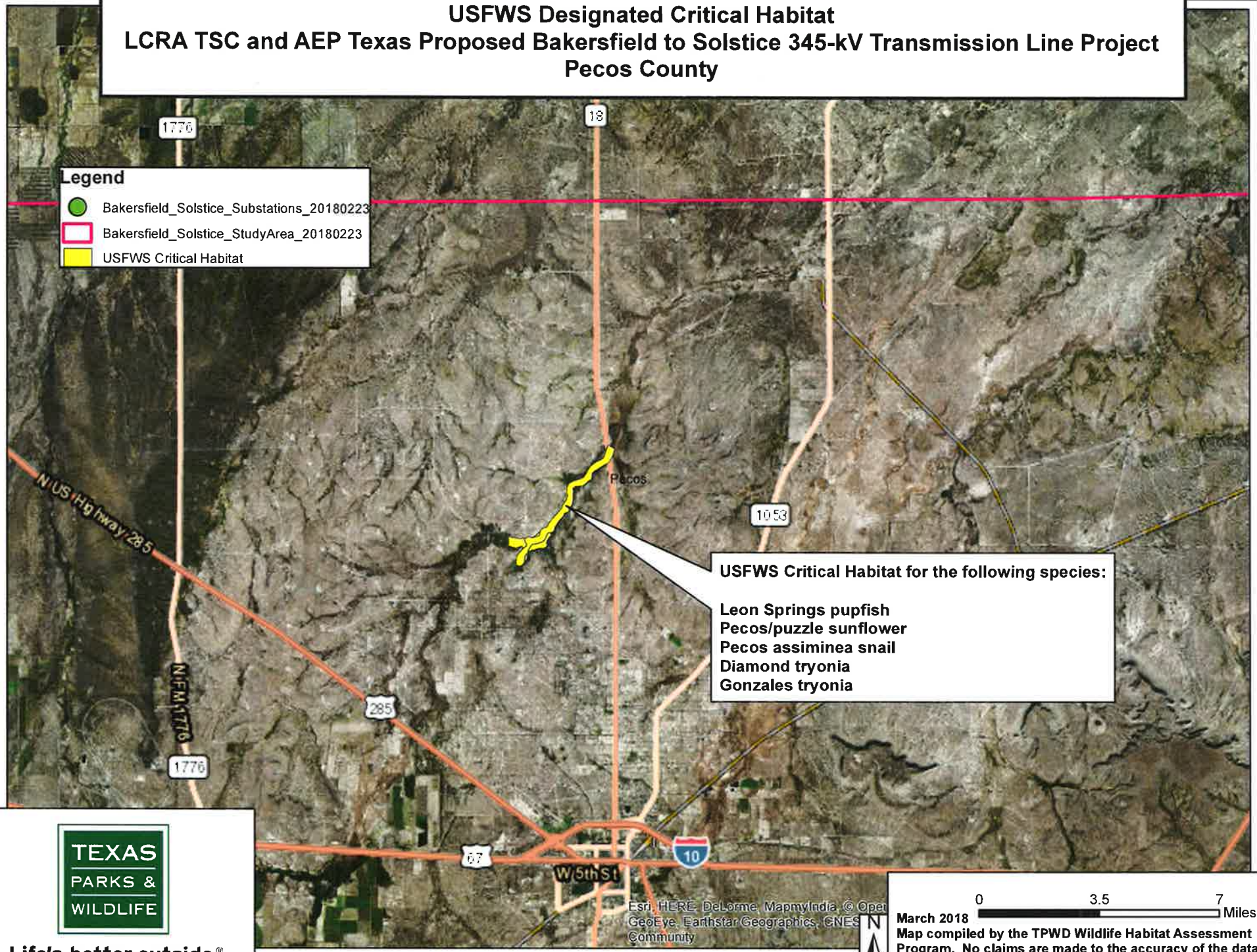
USFWS Designated Critical Habitat
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



USFWS Critical Habitat for the following species:

Leon Springs pupfish
Pecos/puzzle sunflower
Pecos assiminea snail
Diamond tryonia
Gonzales tryonia

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Protection of State-Listed Species
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Guidelines

Protection of State-Listed Species

State law prohibits any take (incidental or otherwise) of state-listed species. State-listed species may only be handled by persons possessing a **Scientific Collecting Permit** or a **Letter of Authorization** issued to relocate a species.

- **Section 68.002 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Code** states that species of fish or wildlife indigenous to Texas are endangered if listed on the United States List of Endangered Native Fish and Wildlife or the list of fish or wildlife threatened with statewide extinction as filed by the director of Texas Park and Wildlife Department. Species listed as Endangered or Threatened by the Endangered Species Act are protected by both Federal and State Law. The State of Texas also lists and protects additional species considered to be threatened with extinction within Texas.

- **Animals -** Laws and regulations pertaining to state-listed endangered or threatened animal species are contained in **Chapters 67 and 68 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Code** and **Sections 65.171 - 65.176 of Title 31 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC).** State-listed animals may be found at **31 TAC §65.175 & 176.**

- **Plants -** Laws and regulations pertaining to endangered or threatened plant species are contained in **Chapter 88 of the TPW Code and Sections 69.01 - 69.9 of the TAC.** State-listed plants may be found at **31 TAC §69.8(a) & (b).**

Prohibitions on Take of State Listed Species

Section 68.015 of the TPW Code states that no person may capture, trap, take, or kill, or attempt to capture, trap, take, or kill, endangered fish or wildlife.

Section 65.171 of the Texas Administrative Code states that except as otherwise provided in this subchapter or **Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapters 67 or 68**, no person may take, possess, propagate, transport, export, sell or offer for sale, or ship any species of fish or wildlife listed by the department as endangered or threatened.

"Take" is defined in **Section 1.101(5) of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code** as:

> *"Take," except as otherwise provided by this code, means collect, hook, hunt, net, shoot, or snare, by any means or device, and includes an attempt to take or to pursue in order to take.*

Penalties

The penalties for take of state-listed species (**TPW Code, Chapter 67 or 68**) are:

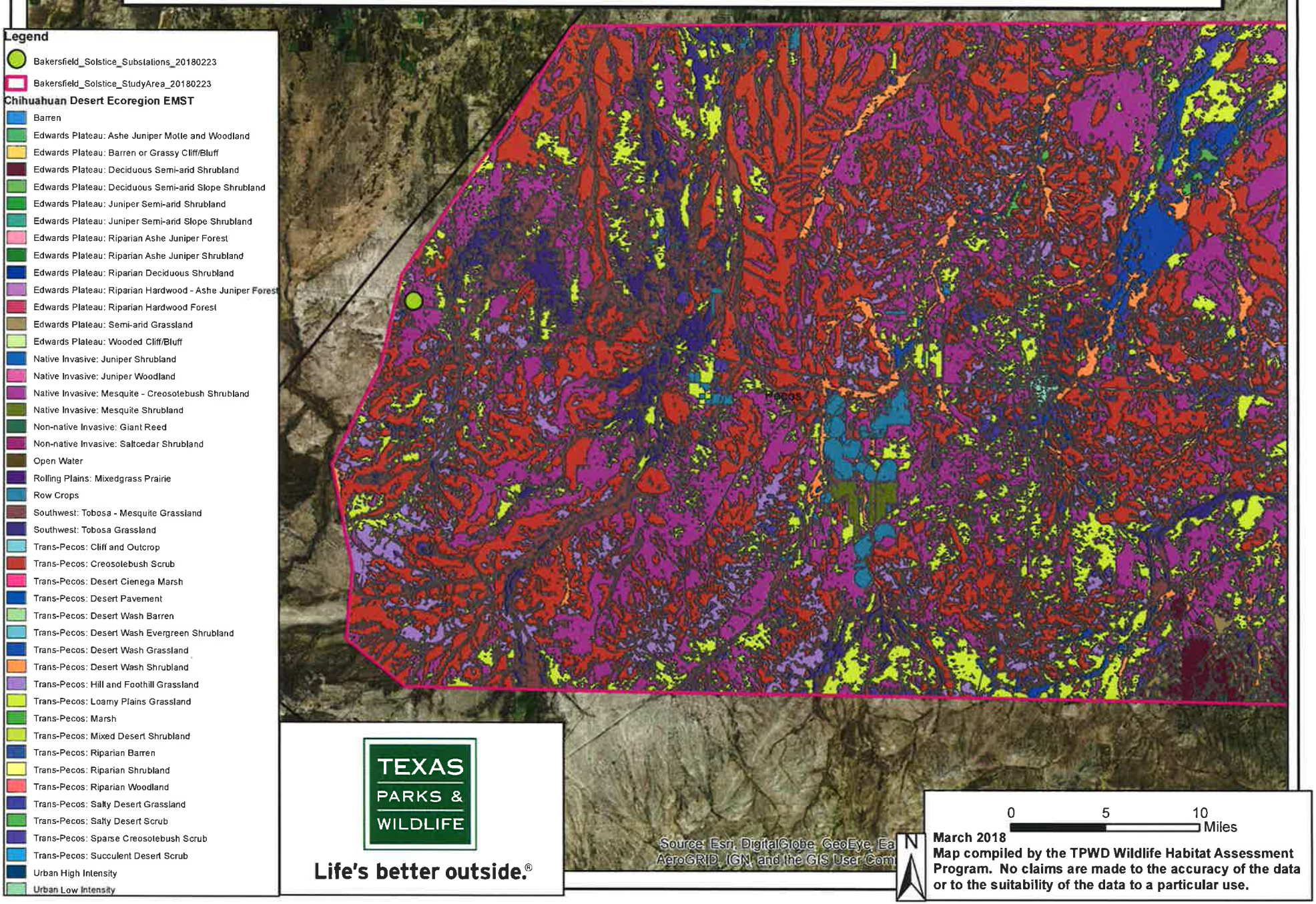
- 1ST Offense = Class C Misdemeanor:
  $25-$500 fine

- One or more prior convictions = Class B Misdemeanor
  $200-$2,000 fine and/or up to 180 days in jail.

- Two or more prior convictions = Class A Misdemeanor
  $500-$4,000 fine and/or up to 1 year in jail.

Restitution values apply and vary by species. Specific values and a list of species may be obtained from the TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program.

Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (EMST) - Sheet 1 of 2
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



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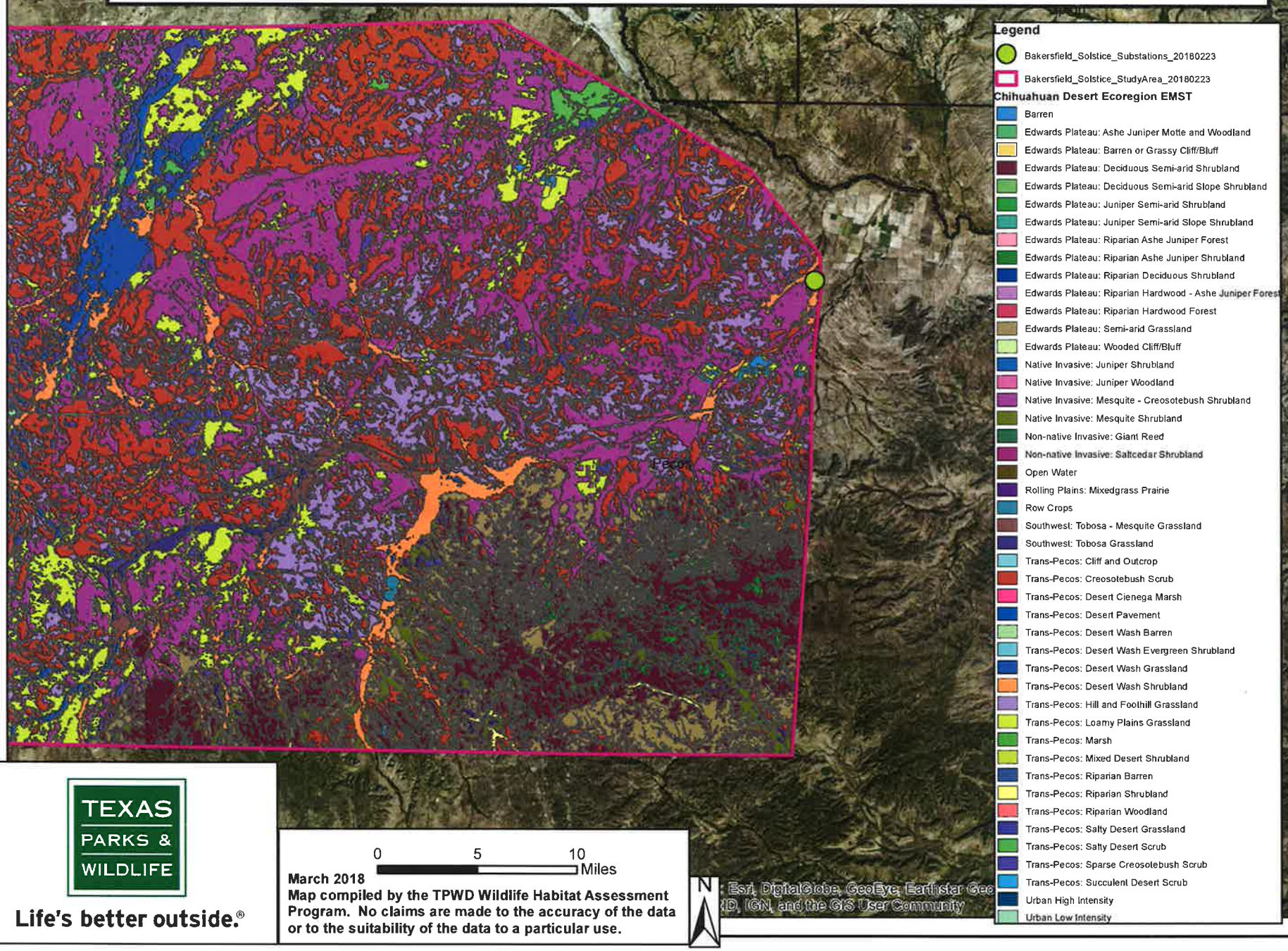
Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (EMST) - Sheet 2 of 2
LCRA TSC and AEP Texas Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County



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Meaux, Lisa

From: Vickie Mclean <vickie.mclean@tceq.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2018 9:49 AM
To: Meaux, Lisa
Cc: Vickie Mclean
Subject: Project 149604

TCEQ Region 7 does not conduct Environmental Assessments for this type of project.

Vickie McLean, Work Lead
Midland Region 7 TCEQ
432-570-1359

Texas Department of Transportation

3901 E HIGHWAY 80, ODESSA, TEXAS 79761 | 432.498.4697 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

February 1, 2018

Lisa Barko Meaux
Project Manager
POWER Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northchase Dr., Ste. 1200
Houston, TX 77060

Re: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project, Pecos County, Texas, POWER Engineers, Inc. Project No. 149604

Dear Ms. Barko Meaux:

The Odessa District of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has completed its review of the proposed project information received on January 31, 2018 concerning the above transmission line project.

POWER Engineers, Inc. (POWER) should be aware that TxDOT right of way contains ecologically sensitive areas, labeled with "non mow area" signs in the field, on US 67 approximately 6 miles north of IH 10, and on SH 18 approximately 10 miles north of Fort Stockton. These areas should be avoided.

Due to lack of specific project information, the Odessa District can only speculate as to the additional potential environmental and land use issues and impacts within the broad corridor shown and, as such, no additional comments are offered. However, POWER should be advised of potential required coordination with other state, federal and local entities.

POWER should also be made aware that utility installation requests are required for accommodation of utility facilities on the state highway right of way (ROW). All requests must be submitted through the TxDOT Utility Installation Review (UIR) System found at https://apps.dot.state.tx.us/apps/UIRPROv2/.

Additionally, driveway/access permits are required for access connections to the state highway system. TxDOT Form 1058 - Permit to Construct Access Driveway Facilities on Highway Right of Way, coupled with the Commercial and Industrial Driveway Access Request Form shall be completed and submitted to TxDOT for consideration of each proposed access/driveway location.

Thank you for affording TxDOT the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. If you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact me at (432) 498-4772 or robert.ornelas@txdot.gov.

Sincerely,

, P.E.

Robert Ornelas, P.E.
Director of Transportation
Planning and Development
Odessa District

Meaux, Lisa

From: Becki Perkins <Becki.Perkins@txdot.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 05, 2018 3:39 PM
To: Meaux, Lisa
Subject: Transmission Line

Hello Ms. Meaux,

I am the environmental specialist for the San Angelo TxDOT district. I am writing in response to your letter regarding the mountain home transmission project. Kimble county is in our district, but I don't know of any protected resources out that way that you wouldn't find on the IPaC list or the Texas Parks and Wildlife species list. We haven't surveyed the portion of Kimble county in your project area much, so I can't speak to the historical or archeological resources. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best regards,
Becki Perkins

Environmental Specialist
Texas Department of Transportation
San Angelo District
Becki.perkins@txdot.gov
(325) 947-9261

February 12, 2018

Lisa Barko Meaux
Power Engineers
16825 Northchase Drive, Suite 1200
Houston, Texas 77060

Re: Project review under the National Historic Preservation Act and the Antiquities Code of Texas: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line, Pecos County (Public Utilities Commission and LCRA; Track # 201806392)

Dear Ms. Barko Meaux:

Thank you for your correspondence describing the above referenced project. This letter serves as comment on the proposed undertaking from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission.

The review staff, led by David Camarena Garcés, has examined our records. After reviewing the documentation and our maps, there are numerous previously recorded archeological sites recorded within the Area of Potential Effects. Much of the area, however, has never been surveyed by a professional archeologist and is likely to contain additional historic and archeological resources. The general area of the APE is located on a landform that has moderate to high probability of containing cultural resources. Therefore, once the transmission line route has been selected, the project area will need to be surveyed by a professional archeologist prior to initiating any ground disturbance in order to demonstrate a good faith effort to identify historic properties that may be adversely affected by these activities as defined in 36 CFR 800. We recommend consulting with a professional archeologist early in the project process to perform a records search in order to avoid previously recorded archeological sites.

This cultural resource survey should include a pedestrian survey that conforms to the "Archeological Survey Standards for Texas" (available online at: http://www.thc.state.tx.us/project-review/statutes-regulations-rules). If the survey is being performed on public land or within a public easement your contract archeologist must obtain an Antiquities Permit from our office before any investigations are undertaken. An Antiquities Permit can be issued as soon as we have a completed permit application. A report of the investigations should be produced in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and submitted to this office for review.

Thank you for your cooperation in this federal review process, and for your efforts to preserve the irreplaceable heritage of Texas. **If you have any questions concerning our review or if we can be of further assistance, please contact David Camarena Garcés at 512/463-6252 or david.camarena@thc.state.tx.us.**

Sincerely,

for
Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

February 2, 2018

Lisa Barko Meaux
Power Engineers, Inc.
16825 Northchase Drive, Suite 1200
Houston, TX 77060-6012

Re: Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project
Pecos County, Texas
POWER Engineers, Inc. Project No. 149604

Dear Ms. Meaux:

On behalf of Commissioner Bush, I would like to thank you for your letter concerning the above-referenced project.

Using your map depicting the project's study area, it does not appear that the General Land Office will have any environmental issues or land use constraints at this time.

When a final route for this proposed project has been determined, please contact me and we can assess the route to determine if the project will cross any streambeds or Permanent School Fund (PSF) land that would require an easement from our agency.

In the interim, if you would like to speak to me further on this project, I can be reached by email at glenn.rosenbaum@glo.texas.gov or by phone at (512) 463-8180.

Again, thank you for your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Glenn Rosenbaum

Glenn Rosenbaum
Manager, Right-of-Way Department
Leasing Operations

Meaux, Lisa

From: Virginia Belew <virginia.belew@pbrpc.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 10:35 AM
To: Meaux, Lisa
Subject: PBRPC Regional Review- Proposed Pecos County, TX, Transmission Line Project
Attachments: Regional Review and Comment. Power Engineers.Proposed Pecos County, TX.Transmission Line Project.022018.pdf

Attached you will find a letter in response to your request for a Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission regional review, regarding the Pecos County transmission line project proposed by Power Engineers.

Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Virginia Belew

Regional Services Director
PERMIAN BASIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
POB 60660, Midland, TX 79711
(432) 563-1061 | (432) 563-1728 – Fax
http://www.pbrpc.org

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Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission
P.O. BOX 60660 • 2910 LAFORCE BOULEVARD • MIDLAND, TEXAS 79711-0660 • (432) 563-1061 • FAX (432) 563-1728

TERRI MOORE
Executive Director

February 22, 2018

Ms. Lisa Barko Meaux, Project Manager
Power Engineers, Inc.
16825 Nortchchase Dr, Suite 1200
Houston, TX 77060

RE: Intergovernmental Review, Proposed Bakersfield to Solstice 345-kV Transmission Line Project, Pecos County Texas

Dear Ms Meaux:

Thank you for your letter and detailed map of the proposed project line for a transmission line in the Pecos County area.

This office has reviewed the information provided, and hereby offers no comment regarding land use or other environmental concerns. The PBRPC supports the importance of your office in notifying the chief elected officials representing the affected area as follows.

County Judge Joe Shuster, 103 W. Callaghan, Fort Stockton, TX 432-336-2792
Mayor Chris Alexander, POB 1000, Fort Stockton, TX 432-336-9300

The PBRPC supports the development of the utility and energy infrastructure of the Permian Basin and wishes Power Engineers complete success. Please let me know if I may be of service to your office.

Thank you again for you your letter and information provided.

Sincerely,

Virginia Belew
Regional Services Director

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