

## Example “No Effect” Determination Documentation<sup>1</sup>

MEMO

TO: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

FROM: Dave Woods, Senior Project Engineer

DATE: August 25, 2024

RE: Section 7 Endangered Species Act Consultation – Stewart Branchline Extension - BT Project No: 555; IPaC Project Code: 2024-0001768

Big Tree Oil Company operates natural gas pipelines in California by authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and is in the process of completing a NEPA Checklist for the Stewart Branchline Extension Project (BT Project Number: 555) in Sacramento County, California.

The Stewart Branchline Extension consists of construction of 800 additional feet of 10-inch pipe. The project footprint includes an area approximately 10 feet by 800 feet with an additional 100-foot by 200-foot temporary workspace. Project construction is scheduled in October or November 2024.

Big Tree carefully reviewed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website on January 14, 2024, for federally listed species and critical habitats. According to the official species list, four species are listed and may be present in the project area: California tiger salamander, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle, El Dorado bedstraw, and monarch butterfly.

The action area for the proposed project is made up almost entirely of agricultural row crop, however approximately 25 feet will bisect the southeast corner of the 100-acre Pretty Prairie.

On July 15, 2024, a survey for potential habitat for above species was performed within Pretty Prairie by consulting botanist, Joy O. Nature. Three individual El Dorado bedstraw plants were found within 50 feet of the pipeline alignment. No other listed species were found.

To avoid any direct or indirect effects to the El Dorado bedstraw in Pretty Prairie, Big Tree will install the pipeline at least 6 feet deep under the prairie extending 50 feet on both sides using directional drilling. Big Tree has concluded that by using these drilling techniques the El Dorado bedstraw will not be exposed to project impacts.

For these reasons, we conclude the Stewart Branchline Extension Project will have no effect on listed species, their habitats, or proposed or designated critical habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not provide concurrence with “no effect” determinations. Therefore, documentation of a “no effect” determination does not need to be submitted to the Ecological Services Field Office.