



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
1875 Century Boulevard
Atlanta, Georgia 30345



July 11, 2024

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Clearance to Proceed with Federally-Insured Loan and Grant Project Requests

Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the lead Federal agency charged with the protection and conservation of Federal Trust Resources, including threatened and endangered species and migratory birds, in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA) (87 Stat. 884; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, (16 U.S.C. 668-668d) (Eagle Act), and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (40 Stat. 755; 16 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).

Many Federal agencies have active programs that result in an increased consumer demand to initiate projects through federally-backed loans and grants, all of which require those same Federal agencies or their designees to comply with Section 7 of the ESA. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of requests for review of these government-backed loan and grant projects. These include, but are not limited to:

1. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Neighborhood Stabilization and Community Development Block Grant programs;
2. U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy program;
3. U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Housing Assistance and Rural Development Loan and Grant Assistance programs;
4. U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulatory airport and runway modifications;
5. U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance program; and
6. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund.
7. U.S. Department of Commerce's (DOC) National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Grant programs

In order to fulfill the ESA's statutory obligations in a timely and consistent manner, and to assist Federal agencies, State and local governments, and consultants in addressing Section 7 of the ESA and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental impact review requirements, we provide the following guidance and clearance relative to the criteria stated below for federally insured loan and grant project requests. This guidance applies to projects in all cities and unincorporated areas within the jurisdiction of participating Service field offices¹. Participating field offices are included in Attachment A and may include additional requirements or exclusions.

¹. While the Florida Ecological Services Field Office is a participating field office, the following guidance and clearance relative to the criteria stated below for federally insured loan and grant project requests is applicable in all cities and unincorporated areas throughout Florida, with the *exception* of **Monroe County**. Projects occurring within Monroe County, Florida should contact the Florida Ecological Services Vero Beach Branch Office for additional assistance.

Species Lists:

To acquire an official species list for the area where the project is proposed, please access the Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) website (<https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>). After defining a project, a user can “Start Review” and request an “Official Species List” of the project action area. The “Official Species List” report contains a list of federally listed threatened and endangered species, critical habitats, migratory birds, wildlife refuges, fish hatcheries, and/or wetlands located in the project footprint, and can help identify trust resources in the general area of the subject property. The “Official Species List” will generate a unique Project Code that should be included in any correspondence associated with the respective project.

Description of Projects Covered:

1. Any federally-insured loan or grant request for existing commercial, industrial, and residential structures (including multi-family and single-family housing), and various utilities projects (including, but not limited to, demolition, rehabilitation, renovations, and/or rebuilding of various utility and infrastructure projects such as water and wastewater treatment facilities, sewer or power line repair, telecommunications upgrades, etc.), provided:
 - a. The proposed project can be completed without additional clearing of undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, agricultural areas, pasture, etc.) beyond the original footprint of the existing project in order to complete the action request;
 - b. There are no federally endangered or threatened species using the existing structures or within the project area;
 - c. The project is not within designated critical habitat (DCH) for any federally listed species (by rule, DCH does not include already developed parcels); and
 - d. Specific Service field office requirements and exclusions are met for the state within which the project is located (Attachment A).
2. Any Federal loan transfer where the original lending or mortgage institutions for existing projects are no longer holding the loans and the properties are being transferred via federally-backed loans.
3. Any federally-insured loan or grant for the purchase of new equipment or vehicles.

Clearance to Proceed – The Service believes these types of activities will generally have no effect on species protected under the ESA, based on the criteria referenced above. Therefore, for ALL projects that meet the criteria described above, NO further coordination with the Service is necessary. Use this letter to document your consideration of endangered species and bald eagles.

Additional Considerations for non-federally listed species:

Bald Eagles: If any of the above-referenced activities (rehabilitation, demolition, or rebuilding) are proposed to occur within 660 feet of an active or alternate bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest during the nesting season (October 1 through May 15), we recommend the applicant or their designated agent coordinate with the agency responsible for managing wildlife in their state. For additional information, please visit the Service's regional web page: <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management/eagle-incident-disturbance-and-nest-take-permits>

Migratory Birds: If any native birds are using the structures for nesting, actions should be taken to avoid disturbing adults, nests, eggs, or chicks as this could lead to a potential violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If nests are present or any birds are using the structures regularly for roosting purposes, we recommend the applicant or their designated agent coordinate with the Service's Field Office and visit the Service's Migratory Bird Program website at <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-disturbance-and-nest-take-migratory-birds> for recommendations on how impacts can be avoided and minimized.

For projects that do not meet the criteria specified above, and/or meet any of the following conditions, please contact the appropriate Service office for additional assistance:

1. The project occurs within designated critical habitat;
2. The project involves new construction;
3. The project requires disturbance of undeveloped areas; and/or
4. The project is in close proximity to federally listed species, bald eagle nests, and/or migratory bird roosts.

Reinitiation of consultation may be necessary if: (1) the project is modified in a manner not considered by this assessment; (2) a new species is listed or critical habitat is determined that may be affected by the project; or (3) new information indicates that the project may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact one of our staff at 706- 613-9493.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE
PHILLIPS
CZARNECKI

 Digitally signed by CATHERINE
PHILLIPS CZARNECKI
Date: 2024.07.30 08:49:10 -04'00'

Catherine T. Phillips, Ph.D.
Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services

ATTACHMENT A

Participating Service Field Offices

This clearance letter applies to the following field offices, with additional applicable exclusions or restrictions as noted.

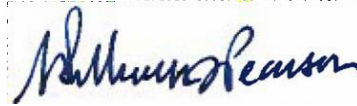
July 11, 2024

Clearance to Proceed with Federally-Insured Loan Project Requests

5

Alabama Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above. There are no additional applicable exclusions or restrictions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "William J. Pearson", enclosed in a rectangular box.

William J. Pearson
Field Supervisor

Florida Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above with the, exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- While the Florida Ecological Services Field Office is a participating field office, the following guidance and clearance relative to the criteria stated for federally insured loan and grant project requests is applicable in all cities and unincorporated areas throughout Florida, with the *exception* of **Monroe County**. Projects occurring within Monroe County, Florida should contact the Florida Ecological Services Vero Beach Branch Office for additional assistance.

LAWRENCE
WILLIAMS

Digitally signed by LAWRENCE
WILLIAMS

Date: 2024.07.03 10:47:30 -04'00'

Larry Williams

State Supervisor for Ecological Services

July 11, 2024

Clearance to Proceed with Federally-Insured Loan Project Requests

7

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above. There are no additional applicable exclusions or restrictions.

PETER

MAHOLLAND

Peter Maholland
Field Supervisor

Digitally signed by PETER
MAHOLLAND
Date: 2024.07.01 13:51:54 -0400

Kentucky Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- Some federally listed plants are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following plants, and your project would disturb undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, agricultural areas, pasture, etc.) or occur within an established right-of-way, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Short's goldenrod (*Solidago shortii*)
 - Price's potato-bean (*Apios priceana*)
 - Kentucky glade cress (*Leavenworthia exigua* var. *laciniata*)

**VIRGIL
ANDREWS**

Digitally signed by VIRGIL
ANDREWS
Date: 2024.07.03 13:05:01
-04'00'

Virgil Lee Andrews, Jr.
Field Supervisor

Mississippi Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above. There are no additional applicable exclusions or restrictions.

**JAMES
AUSTIN** Digitally signed by
JAMES AUSTIN
Date: 2024.06.20
12:47:16 -05'00'

James Austin

Field Supervisor

Asheville Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/ or restrictions:

- If your project includes work in wetlands, further coordination with the Service is necessary
- Please notify the Service and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission if bats are discovered during work on buildings.

**JANET
MIZZI**

Janet Mizzi
Field Supervisor

Digitally signed by
JANET MIZZI
Date: 2024.06.13
10:49:01 -0400

Raleigh Ecological Services Field Office (North Carolina)

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this Field Office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- Some federally listed bat species may be found roosting in above-ground and underground man-made structures, such as buildings, bridges, culverts greater than 36 inches in diameter, stormwater and sewer infrastructure, and mines. Therefore, if the species list for your project includes the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) or northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and your project proposes modifications or removal of above-ground or underground structures, those structures must be surveyed for evidence of use by bats. Evidence of bat use may include presence of bat individuals, guano, or staining. If there is evidence of bat use, further coordination with the Service is necessary.

For helpful information about assessing structures for bat use, see the bat structure assessment guide at this link:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/appendix-d-bridge-culvert-bat-assessment-form-guidance-february-2021.pdf>.

- Some federally listed plants are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and other vegetated areas. The consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following plants, and your project will disturb suitable habitat for those species (see <https://www.fws.gov/office/eastern-north-carolina-ecological-services/species>), further coordination with the Service is necessary:

- Cooley's meadowrue (*Thalictrum cooleyi*)
- Golden sedge (*Carex lutea*)
- Michaux's sumac (*Rhus michauxii*)
- Rough-leaf loosestrife (*Lysimachia asperulaefolia*)
- Schweinitz's sunflower (*Helianthus schweinitzii*)
- Sensitive joint-vetch (*Aeschynomene virginica*)
- Smooth coneflower (*Echinacea laevigata*)

**JENNIFER
ARCHAMBAULT**

Digitally signed by
JENNIFER ARCHAMBAULT
Date: 2024.06.27 14:31:38
-04'00'

for Pete Benjamin
Field Supervisor

South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above. There are no additional applicable exclusions or restrictions.

**PATRICIA
JOHNSON-
HUGHES**

Christy Johnson-Hughes
Project Leader

Digitally signed by
PATRICIA JOHNSON-
HUGHES
Date: 2024.06.24
12:52:56 -04'00'

Tennessee Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

Some federally listed plants are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following plants, and your project would disturb undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, agricultural areas, pasture, etc.) or within rights-of-way, further coordination with the Service is necessary:

- Large-flowered skullcap (*Scutellaria montana*)
- Leafy prairie-clover (*Dalea foliosa*)
- Morefield's leather flower (*Clematis morefieldii*)
- Price's potato-bean (*Apios priceana*)
- Pyne's ground-plum (*Astragalus bibullatus*)
- Short's bladderpod (*Physaria globosa*)
- Spring Creek bladderpod (*Lesquerella perforata*)
- Tennessee yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris tennesseensis*)
- White fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integrilabia*)
- Whorled sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)

DANIEL
ELBERT
Digitally signed by
DANIEL ELBERT
Date: 2024.06.20
15:37:21 -05'00'
Field Supervisor

Yreka Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- Some federally listed plants and vernal pool species are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following species, and your project would disturb undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, serpentine soils, vernal pools, etc.) or occur within an established right-of-way, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Yreka phlox (*Phlox hirsuta*)
 - Gentner's fritillary (*Fritillaria gentneri*)
 - Slender orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*)
 - Greene's tuctoria (*Tuctoria greenei*)
 - McDonald's rock cress (*Arabis macdonaldiana*)
 - Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*)
 - Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)
 - Vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*)

**JENNY
ERICSON**

Jenny Ericson
Field Supervisor

Digitally signed by
JENNY ERICSON
Date: 2025.03.12
11:56:50 -0700

Kansas Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, (including conversions to tribal trust status) with the exception of the following exclusions and or restrictions:

- Some federally listed bat species may be found roosting in man-made structures, such as buildings, bridges, culverts greater than 36 inches in diameter, stormwater and sewer infrastructure, and mines. Therefore, if the species list for your project includes the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), or northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalist*) and your project proposes modifications or removal of above-ground or underground structures, those structures must be surveyed for evidence of use by bats. Evidence of bat use may include presence of individual bats, guano, or staining. If there is evidence of bat use, further coordination with the Service is necessary. For helpful information about assessing structures for bat use, see the bat structure assessment guide at this link:
<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/appendix-d-bridge-culvert-batassessment-form-guidance-february-2021.pdf>.
- Some federally listed plants, the American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*), and the lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following species, and your project would disturb undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, agricultural areas, pasture, etc.) or occur within an established right-of-way, further coordination with the Service is necessary. The Kansas Ecological Services Office recommends using the existing American Burying Beetle Determination Key to evaluate effects on that species.
 - American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*)
 - Lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*)
 - Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*)
 - Western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*)

**DRUE
DEBERRY** Digitally signed by
DRUE DEBERRY
Date: 2025.03.20
11:40:46 -06'00'

Acting as Project Leader

Wyoming Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and /or restrictions:

- Some federally listed species are found within or near riparian habitats, rights-of-way, and other vegetated areas and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following species or your project would disturb vegetated areas, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
 - Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)
 - Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)
 - North American wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*)
 - Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*)
- Additional considerations for non-federally listed species:
 - Take steps to conserve and protect imperiled pollinator species. Habitat for pollinators proposed for listing under the ESA may be present within the project area. Please refer to pollinator resources (e.g., <https://www.fws.gov/initiative/pollinators/monarchs>; <https://xerces.org/publications/guidelines/best-management-practices-for-pollinators-on-western-rangelands>) and consider conservation measures that minimize impacts to pollinators and flowering nectar resources.

TYLER ABBOTT Digitally signed by TYLER ABBOTT
Date: 2025.04.25 11:27:06 -06'00'

Tyler A. Abbott
Field Supervisor

Montana Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and or restrictions:

- Some federally listed species are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Because your species list includes one of these listed species, and your project will disturb undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, agricultural areas, pasture, etc.) within rights-of-way, further coordination with the Service is necessary.
 - Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*)
 - Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*)
 - Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)
 - Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)
 - North American wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*)
 - Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
- Some federally listed species are regularly found within or near wetlands, stream systems, or riparian vegetation or processes and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Because your species list includes one of these listed species, and your project will disturb wetlands, stream systems, or riparian vegetation or processes, further coordination with the Service is necessary.
 - Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*)
 - Pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*)
 - White sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*)

AMITY
BASS

Digitally signed by
AMITY BASS
Date: 2025.04.25
13:35:17 -06'00'

Amity Bass
Field Supervisor

Reno Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- The project footprint (including construction, staging, access, and maintenance activities) must be 1.0 acre or less in size.
- The project cannot disturb undeveloped land (e.g., native habitat) or impact wetlands, spring or seep habitat, stream systems, or riparian buffers.
- The project cannot include well drilling or prescribed burning.
- Some federally listed plants are regularly found within or near rights-of-way and other vegetated areas and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following plants, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Steamboat buckwheat (*Eriogonum ovalifolium* var. *williamsiae*)
 - Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*)

**JUSTIN
BARRETT**

Digitally signed by
JUSTIN BARRETT
Date: 2025.04.25
13:27:17 -0700

Justin Barrett
Acting Field Supervisor

Southern Nevada Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria as described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- The project footprint (including construction, staging, access, and maintenance activities) must be 1.0 acre or less in size.
- The project cannot disturb undeveloped land (e.g., native habitat) or impact wetlands, spring or seep habitat, stream systems, or riparian buffers.
- The project cannot include:
 - Construction of access roads, staging areas, or associated infrastructure (e.g., utility lines, road pull-outs, storm drainages, etc.) that will create initial ground-disturbance or require ongoing maintenance.
 - Well drilling such that surface or sub-surface or groundwater may be impacted.
- Some federally listed species are narrow endemics or are regularly found within or near rights-of-way, wetlands, stream systems, or riparian vegetation or processes and the consequences of a proposed action may be negative or positive depending on how the species responds to disturbance, if at all. Therefore, if the species list for your project contains any of the following plants, insects, desert fishes, or birds, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Amargosa niterwort (*Nitrophila mohavensis*)
 - Ash Meadows blazingstar (*Mentzelia leucophylla*)
 - Ash Meadows gumplant (*Grindelia fraxinipratensis*)
 - Ash Meadows ivesia (*Ivesia kingii* var. *eremica*)
 - Ash Meadows milk-vetch (*Astragalus phoenix*)
 - Ash Meadows sunray (*Enceliopsis nudicaulis* var. *corrugate*)
 - Spring-loving centaury (*Centaurium namophilum*)
 - Ash Meadows naucorid (*Ambrysus amargosus*)
 - Mount Charleston blue butterfly (*Icaricia (Plebejus) shasta charlestonensis*)
 - Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish (*Cyprinodon nevadensis mionectes*)
 - Ash Meadows speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus nevadensis*)
 - Bonytail (*Gila elegans*)
 - Big Spring spinedace (*Lepidomeda mollispinis pratensis*)
 - Devils hold pupfish (*Cyprinodon diabolis*)
 - Hiko White River springfish (*Crenichthys baileyi grandis*)
 - Moapa dace (*Moapa coriacea*)
 - Pahranaagat roundtail chub (*Gila robusta jordani*)
 - Pahrump poolfish (*Empetrichthys latos*)
 - Virgin River chub (*Gila seminuda* (=robusta))
 - Warm springs pupfish (*Cyprinodon nevadensis pectoralis*)

- White River spinedace (*Lepidomeda albivallis*)
- White River springfish (*Crenichthys baileyi baileyi*)
- Woundfin (*Plagopterus argentissimus*)
- Yuma Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus yumanensis*)

**BRIAN
CROFT**

Brian Croft
Field Supervisor

 Digitally signed by BRIAN
CROFT
Date: 2025.05.12
08:40:54 -0700

Carlsbad Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria described above, with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- If your project involves diversion or capture of water that could otherwise provide habitat for federally listed species, further coordination with the Service is necessary.
- If your project is located within or adjacent to habitat for federally listed species and will create noise or other indirect disturbance above the baseline, further coordination with the Service is necessary.
- If the species list for the project contains any of the following listed species, further coordination with the Service is necessary:
 - Delhi Sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*)
 - Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus wootoni*)
 - San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandegonensis*)
 - San Diego button-celery (*Eryngium aristulatum* var. *parishii*)
 - Spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*)
 - California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*)
 - San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*)
 - Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiscula*)
 - San Diego ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumela*)

JONATHAN
SNYDER

Digitally signed by
JONATHAN SNYDER
Date: 2025.04.24
15:19:10 -07'00'

Jonathan Snyder
Acting Field Supervisor

Colorado Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of the [Colorado Ecological Services Field Office](#) that meet the criteria as described above.

In addition to the “Additional Considerations for Non-Federally Listed Species” above, we recommend considering implementing conservation measures that protect and enhance pollinator species and their habitats. We encourage you to consult the following resources for assistance in supporting pollinators and flowering nectar resources:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Pollinator Initiative:
<https://www.fws.gov/initiative/pollinators>
- Xerces Society Best Management Practices for Pollinators on Western Rangelands:
<https://xerces.org/publications/guidelines/best-management-practices-for-pollinators-on-western-rangelands>

We appreciate your consideration of threatened and endangered species during your project planning.

Sincerely,

LAUREL HILL

Digitally signed by LAUREL
HILL
Date: 2025.05.28 10:36:08
-06'00'

Laurel Hill
Acting Colorado Project Leader

Nebraska Ecological Services Field Office

This clearance letter is applicable for all projects within the jurisdiction of this field office that meet the criteria described above, (including conversions to tribal trust status) with the exception of the following exclusions and/or restrictions:

- Some federally listed bat species may be found roosting in man-made structures, such as buildings, bridges, culverts greater than 36 inches in diameter, stormwater and sewer infrastructure, and mines. Therefore, if the species list for your project includes the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) or northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and your project proposes modifications or removal of above-ground or underground structures, those structures must be assessed for evidence of use by bats. Evidence of bat use may include presence of individual bats, guano, or staining. If there is evidence of bat use, further coordination with the Service is necessary. For helpful information about assessing structures for bat use, see the bat structure assessment guide at this link: <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/appendix-d-bridge-culvert-batassessment-form-guidance-february-2021.pdf>. The Nebraska Ecological Services Office recommends using other applicable Determination Keys for northern long-eared bats and tricolored bats to further evaluate species impacts.
- The American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*) and Salt Creek tiger beetle (*Cicindela nevadica lincolniana*) may experience adverse impacts as a result of soil disturbance. Therefore, if your project is within the species list area of either of these two species, and your project would disturb soil in undeveloped areas (e.g., native habitat, grasslands, pasture, saline wetlands, etc.) further coordination with the Service is necessary. The Nebraska Ecological Services Office recommends using the existing American Burying Beetle Determination Key to further evaluate species impacts.

**MARK
PORATH**

Digitally signed by
MARK PORATH
Date: 2026.02.27
13:34:38 -06'00'

Mark Porath

Project Leader/Nebraska Field Office Supervisor

Mountain-Prairie Region, Ecological Services