

From: [Gardiner, Dawn](#)
To: [Combs, Brett A](#)
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] Request for wildlife damage assessment and decibel reading during SpaceX 2/10/23 static fire testing
Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 1:47:48 PM

From: Gardiner, Dawn <dawn_gardiner@fws.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 11:15 AM
To: Mary Angela Branch <txfinder@att.net>
Cc: Reyes, Ernesto <ernesto_reyes@fws.gov>; Perez, Chris <chris_perez@fws.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Request for wildlife damage assessment and decibel reading during SpaceX 2/10/23 static fire testing

Chris had a good summary of what was recorded, in the box below. An issue is figuring out the decibel reading any closer because meters we have access to max out around 130.

Ok, so those readings were taken from exactly 3 miles away from the source. Highest reading 110db. Ok, so for perspective, this is equivalent to a jackhammer or power saw but below a thunder clap.



From: Mary Angela Branch <txfinder@att.net>
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2023 5:39 PM
To: Gardiner, Dawn <dawn_gardiner@fws.gov>
Cc: Reyes, Ernesto <ernesto_reyes@fws.gov>; Perez, Chris <chris_perez@fws.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Request for wildlife damage assessment and decibel reading during SpaceX 2/10/23 static fire testing

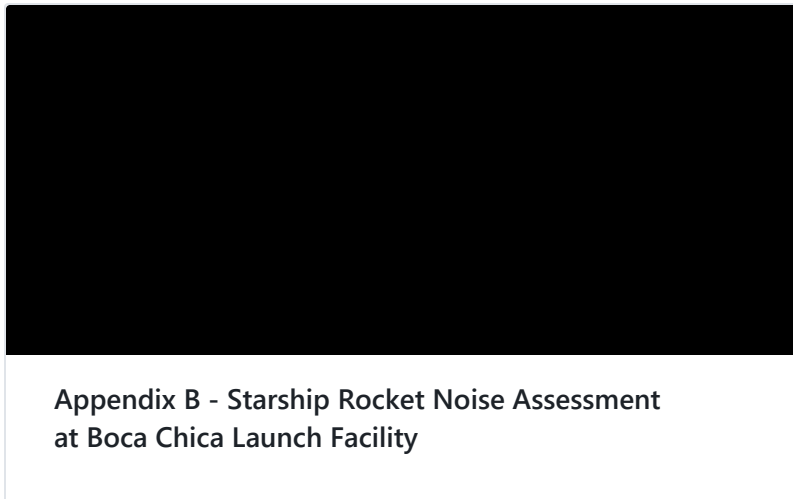
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Hello Dawn,

Thank you so much for speaking with me Friday morning. I wanted to follow up on our conversation and ask if the Service has the information on the above referenced subject yet? For your further edification, I have copied the video URL below at about 1 minute prior to the static firing (approx. 3:12:30 p.m. CST as seen in the upper

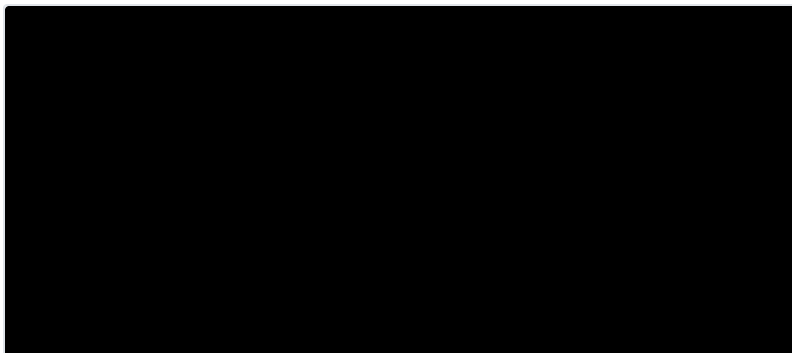
corner of the video) where you will note the disturbance to the birds, the comments of the moderators on the wildlife reactions, including fish that were witnessed as 'freaking out' 5 miles north. This can be viewed and heard through approx. 3:15:36 p.m. CST of the video. Per the FAA's sound modeling charts in the Final EA FONSI/ROD, decibel levels would reach 140 db or over at the launch pad. Though there is a question whether these sound modeling charts were based on the Super Heavy or much smaller rockets as the dates on the charts are dated 2019. If that is so, then what is witnessed here could be at even greater sound levels and the noise assessments were incorrect.

See Appendix B, of the Final EA FONSI//ROD, pages 4-11. [Appendix B - Starship Rocket Noise Assessment at Boca Chica Launch Facility](#)



Video at time stamp:

[SpaceX 33-Engine Static Fire of Booster 7](#)



SpaceX 33-Engine Static Fire of Booster 7

To excerpt KRGV TV's coverage of this event:

The new SpaceX booster tested Thursday at Boca Chica packs more engines and the capacity for more force than ever before. The anticipated sound waves are enough to damage hearing and rattle bones, according to an audiologist.

The 33 Raptor engines fired at Boca Chica beach amounted to more than a doubling of the previous static fire tests. Thursday afternoon, the sound could be heard clearly five miles away at Isla Blanca Park on South Padre Island.

"Listening to a rocket launch... is exceeding 180 decibels," said Dr. Bria Collins, an audiologist with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. "Being near that sound source within seconds, you can risk permanent hearing loss."

Residents were nowhere near the blast zone Thursday. An evacuation zone blocked road access some 15 miles away on Highway 4. Onlookers at Isla Blanca Park were among the closest, watching from 5 miles away.

But native wildlife around the launch site stayed in place. The launch pad is surrounded on four sides by protected lands. The area is considered range for endangered species such as the Kemp's ridley sea turtle, aplomado falcon and ocelot.

"Animals tend to have more sensitive ears than humans," Collins said.

"So you definitely have some animals that if they're in close range to this rocket launch are at risk for, in addition to hearing loss, they may be having some dizziness or vertigo because that sound pressure is so great."

Waves may even cause bone fractures on smaller animals, Collins said.

A projected range of the decibel levels for a launch that was conducted by the FAA as part of a recent environmental review showed decibel labels as high as 140 in the launch zones.

Full KRGV video here:

[Record SpaceX booster big enough to deafen life around it](#)





Record SpaceX booster big enough to deafen life around it

The new SpaceX booster tested Thursday at Boca Chica packs more engines and the capacity for more force than eve...

I would appreciate hearing from the Service on this matter, and any other cooperating or regulatory organization you can refer, that can assist in my query with a full assessment. Perhaps reaching out to TCEQ and TPWD would also be of benefit.

Concerns are that nesting season has begun for birds, and next month will be Kemp's Ridley nesting season. I know you are fully aware of the many more species in this habitat that are of concern as well, and three major migratory paths converge on this area seasonally. Therefore, I trust the Service can assess the full impact of this event on our wildlife, as well as future events that will be of even greater magnitude and frequency.

Thanking you in advance,

Mary Angela Branch

A resident of:

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and,

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Austin, TX 78727

Full video of the static test launch from Nasa SpaceFlight:

[SpaceX 33-Engine Static Fire of Booster 7](#)



SpaceX 33-Engine Static Fire of Booster 7

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