

How to obtain a species list for New Mexico from the Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPAC) and evaluate your project's effects

Under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) a Federal agency or its designated representative needs to determine whether their proposed action (project) may affect threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitat. The first step in this determination is to obtain a list of federally listed species for your project area. A species list review and determination is most important if there is a Federal nexus (Federal funding, authorization, or permitting) but also is valuable to State and local governments, businesses, and individuals who want to avoid impacts to federally listed species.

First go to the IPAC website. <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>

Select GET STARTED button.

Project Location.

1. Find Location - If you have an address or latitude and longitude (in decimal degrees) for your project enter these in the Find Location box.

Or zoom in on your location with map tool.

2. Define Area – Once you have found your project location on the map use the drawing tool to draw the boundary of your project.

Upload shape file – If you have a shape file (GIS file) of your project area you can upload by selecting “Upload shape file” button

Select by County - If you are uncertain of your specific project location you can obtain a species list for the county the project would occur in. Use the map tool to zoom into New Mexico this should display the ”Select by county” button on the lower left.

Select the button and enter one or more counties in the box to obtain a species list for those counties. For multiple counties enter all names in box before selecting “OK.”

3. Confirm – verify the area where the project activities will occur.
If the map is correct select “Continue.”
If the map is not correct select “Change Area.”

Tasks Page

There are three task boxes on this page. Also there is contact information (telephone and web page) for our office on the right side.

Review potentially impacted resources

You can get a resource report in this box. This is satisfactory for planning purposes but not adequate to complete ESA review.

Request an official species list

You should select “Request an official species list” to obtain an official species list to complete ESA review. The species list is good for 90-days because there may be changes to federally listed species or designated critical habitat

If needed you can update your species by selecting “Need an updated species list?” on the first page. You will need the consultation number (code) and email address used to request the original species list. The number and email address are listed in the official letter. You will get an updated species list under the same consultation code that makes project tracking easier.

When requesting technical assistance from the Service the first question we will ask is what the is consultation number and check to see if an official letter request was logged into the system. This is essential to proceed with the ESA consultation process.

Analyze the impacts of your project

We are currently working on conservation measures that are specific to a project type. This project-type specific information may not be currently available for your area but should be in the near future. We recommend checking this box for each project.

Making a determination

Once you obtain your species list you should continue to the second phase of the ESA review: making a determination. We recommend you make a table with three columns: species, determination, and rationale for your determination for each species. For example,

Species	Determination	Rationale
Rio Grande silvery minnow	No effect	no suitable habitat
southwestern willow flycatcher	No effect	suitable habitat in area but not affected by the project
northern aplomado falcon	No effect	suitable habitat in area; not observed or reported from area

Larger projects can become complex very quickly. For these proposed actions, we recommend a person knowledgeable in the ESA review the project and determination(s).

There are two basic categories of determination, no effect and may affect.

No Effect

The appropriate determination when the proposed action will not affect listed species or critical habitat is No Effect. For example, if no federally listed species or designated critical habitat occurs in the area, then a “no effect” determination may be appropriate.

If you make a no effect determination for each species on your list, you can use the official species list letter and your determination table as documentation that you completed the ESA review.

The Service does not provide written concurrence with no effect determinations. No further consultation with the Service is required.

In most cases reviewed by the Service this is the appropriate determination.

May affect

If you have designated critical habitat or if a federally listed species occurs in or adjacent to the project area, then a may affect determination may be appropriate.

In many cases, you can avoid or minimize impacts to federally listed species by avoiding occupied areas or designated critical habitat, by making minor adjustments to the project design and incorporating conservation measures. Please contact the Service for more information on possible conservation measures.

If you make a “may affect” determination for any species or designated critical habitat, you should submit your official species list letter and determination(s) to the Service for further review.

If impacts cannot be avoided but are not likely to adversely affect the species or designated critical habitat, the Service will review your determination for possible concurrence.

You can expedite your review by electronically submitting your request to nmesfo@fws.gov and the project will be assigned to a biologist.

What is “suitable habitat?” Many species have very specific habitat requirements. If suitable habitat is not present, then project area is unlikely to be occupied. Habitat can be unsuitable due to past clearing of native vegetation or to the proximity to human development. Land cleared of native vegetation and adjacent to human development is less likely to support federally listed species.

You can obtain information on species habitat needs through the Service’s Species Reports at http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/.

We recommend contacting an environmental consultant with ESA experience for further advice on how to make a determination or see the Service’s Section 7 Handbook <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/index.html#consultations> for a detailed discussion on determinations. You can also contact the Service at 505-346-2525 or email nmesfo@fws.gov.