



The primary purpose of our SPECIEZnm partnerships is to provide environmental consultants with the specific information needed for appropriate environmental compliance, as it pertains to the special-status species in New Mexico. This mission is the foundation for all decisions concerning our data acquisition, correlation, verification, and the final design and format in which they are presented.

Materials and Methods

County Tables for Special Status Species in New Mexico

This document contains four sections:

1. Materials
2. Methods
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Materials

There are a variety of agencies that must be consulted to determine the listing status of species within the state of New Mexico. Through multiple contacts from February through July of 2006 (prior to launch of the site), SPECIEZnm obtained our baseline materials and subsequent personal communications from the following entities:

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF)

Conservation Services Division (CSD)

Jan Ward, Assistant Chief CSD *pers.comm.*

Chuck Hayes, Assistant Chief CSD *pers.comm.*

Brian Lang, Invertebrate Biologist *pers.comm.*

Biota Information System of New Mexico on-line database

<http://www.BISON-M.org>

[New Mexico] Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

Forestry and Resources Conservation Division (FRCD)

Robert Sivinsky, Botanist *pers.comm.*

New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council (NMRPTC)

<http://nmrareplants.unm.edu/county.php>

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Region 2

New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office (ES)

Santiago Gonzales, Fish and Wildlife Biologist *pers.comm.*

<http://www.fws.gov/ifw2es/NewMexico/>

“All Listed and Sensitive Species in New Mexico by County”

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Methods

BASELINE DATA:

SPECIEZnm received an Excel spreadsheet from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) Conservation Services Division, on 17 February, 2006. This dataset of “New Mexico Wildlife of Concern” (NMWOC) contained a full listing of all species in New Mexico (except plants) that carried any listing status for both the Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), including notation of critical habitat designations. From these data, SPECIEZnm generated a separate table for each county in New Mexico (N=33). Identical to agency reports, the first two columns of our County Tables show the Common Name and the Scientific Name of special-status species. To indicate importance level, the rest of the columns were re-ordered in the following manner:

Critical Habitat¹ USFWS status² NMDGF status³ EMNRD status⁴

- ¹ Critical Habitat can have major implications for project planning, impact assessment, and mitigation, so it is included as the first column of information.
- ² USFWS status carries the primary legal implications because all federally listed species, regardless of state-level status, receive protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Service lists all aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates and invertebrates, as well as plant species.
- ³ NMDGF status focuses the listing status on state populations, including subspecies. Only state-endangered species receive full protection under Title 19 (19 NMAC 33.2). The Department may list as threatened or endangered any native (terrestrial or aquatic) vertebrate, mollusk, or crustacean.
- ⁴ EMNRD status is the source for state-listed endangered plants. Only state-endangered plant species receive full protection under Title 19 (19 NMAC 21.2.8).

FEDERAL DATA:

Federally listed species for New Mexico were obtained through the Services’ Region 2, New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office. It is the responsibility of Region 2 ES staff to fine-tune the Service’s special status list to only those federally listed species that actually occur in New Mexico: “All Listed and Sensitive Species in New Mexico by County” (obtained 7 March 2006 at <http://www.fws.gov/ifw2es/NewMexico/>). Our baseline tables were then verified to ascertain federal species information that varied from the NMDGF (NMWOC) dataset. This included species that: (1) needed to be added to a given county; (2) needed to be removed from a given county; (3) reflected a different status; or (4) revealed differences in nomenclature.

STATE WILDLIFE DATA:

The initial data found in the NMWOC dataset were updated by the NMDGF and posted on the revised BISON-M which launched on 21 June 2006 (<http://www.BISON-M.org>). All changes were incorporated into SPECIEZnm County Tables. On 23 October 2006 tables were further revised to reflect status changes from the Department’s 2006 Biennial Review; effective date 16 October 2006. Two species were downlisted from Endangered to Threaten; four species were uplisted from Threatened to Endangered.

STATE PLANT DATA:

A complete listing of endangered plants in New Mexico was obtained (April 2006) from Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) via the official legal document Title 19 (19 NMAC 21.2.8). This statute does not delineate county(ies) of occurrence; therefore locational data were obtained from the New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council (NMRPTC) on-line database via a county query (obtained 23 April 2006 at <http://nmrareplants.unm.edu/county.php>). All resulting data were added to each county table. In October, 2006 it was determined that the NMRPTC did not show any county locations for several state-endangered plants. These data were then obtained from the New Mexico Heritage Program online database at http://nhnm.unm.edu/data/free_info.html (all County Tables were revised on 23 October 2006).

Via personal communication with Robert Sivinski, Botanist at EMNRD, status changes were codified by amendment of Title 19 NMAC 21.2. R. Sivinski requested that two plant species be removed from the County Tables; this was done on 24 October 2006.



VERIFICATION OF DATA DISCREPANCIES:

During each step detailed above, all discrepancies were recorded in a spreadsheet that included information from all pertinent agencies. These data were then sent to each agency in order to obtain resolution on both intra- and inter-agency discrepancies. Through personal communication with agency staff (see Methods), all necessary corrections were then made to each county table. In addition, agreement was achieved concerning which authority to use for nomenclature differences (see “Cut to the Chase”).

ON-GOING STATUS REVISIONS:

The most recent revision date always appears in the title of each County Table. Major revisions within the tables, the revision date, responsible agency, and bibliographic reference(s), are color-coded. Major changes are tracked by this color-coding throughout the calendar year; all colors revert to black on January 1 of each year. **SPECIEZnm provides a detailed data source list that is updated each time a legal revision occurs: Please download our “DATA AUTHORITIES” file from the left-hand browse menu of our Home Page.**

“Cut to the Chase” Interpretation of the data

NOMENCLATURE:

By nature, common and scientific names will show variation when data are obtained from state and federal listing sources. Some reasons include:

- ◆ If the USFWS list is obtained on-line from TESS (Threatened and Endangered Species System), federally listed species are generally named at only the genus/species level (and may not actually occur in New Mexico). The Regional Ecological Service offices use their expertise to focus the list on those federal species that are known to occur in New Mexico. However;
- ◆ Federal nomenclature is based upon each species’ legal status as posted in the Federal Register (FR). If species/subspecies distinctions require revision, said nomenclature is not official at the federal level until new documents appear in the FR. Therefore, the list provided by regional offices must maintain original common and scientific nomenclature until changes are legally codified in the FR.
- ◆ The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is responsible for state-level management. They must apply federal concerns to distinctly local species – which includes awareness of the subspecies that should be protected under the broader federal levels. Their intimate knowledge at the state level also allows them to list state species or subspecies (which may contain locally endemic populations) that have not (and may not) achieve federal status.

Environmental compliance on New Mexico projects must be at the greatest possible level of detail:

For this reason, SPECIEZnm provides the common and scientific nomenclature of the NMDGF (rather than the Service) because it affords the greatest possible state-level detail of potentially impacted species.

SPECIES versus SUBSPECIES:

In our County Tables, the first line in the ‘scientific name’ column provides Genus/species level.

State populations of subspecies described by the NMDGF (or other authorities) are indented underneath.

CRITICAL HABITAT:

Critical habitat for any given species may be legally “designated” or currently “proposed.” However, neither are “across the board” designations; e.g. the designated critical habitat for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher does NOT apply to every county transected by the Rio Grande or other riparian zones that provide suitable habitat for the species.

Therefore, SPECIEZnm only lists the appropriate critical habitat within the counties to which it applies. Absence of data in the Critical Habitat (CH) column does NOT indicate that CH has not been designated for the species — only that it does not apply to that particular county.

UNUSUAL STATUS ISSUES:

Yellow-billed cuckoo populations east of the Rio Grande are doing better than those found west of the river.

Therefore, County Tables will show a ‘Candidate’ (C) status in some counties and a ‘Species of Concern’ (SOC) in others. This is not a mistake; it is the only state species currently divided in its listing status.

If you have any questions about our Materials, Methods, or “Cut to the Chase” decisions, please let us know by email or telephone (see CONTACT US at SPECIEZnm.org).





References

- 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531et seq. Endangered Species Act of 1973. 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531-1544.;
Pub. L. No. 93-205, 87 Stat. 884.
- 19 NMAC 21.2.8. 2001. New Mexico Endangered Plants. Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources;
Forestry and Resources Conservation Division. NMAC 19.21.2 1985; now in Subsections A and B of 19.21.2.8,
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- 19 NMAC 33.6.8. 1996. Natural Resources and Wildlife; Endangered and Protected Species.
List of Threatened and Endangered Species. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. [1-31-96; 11/30/00]
- [BISON-M] Biota Information System of New Mexico. 2006 (June 21). New Mexico Department of Game
and Fish. BISON-M home page: <http://www.bison-m.org>. (Accessed 21 June 2006)
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- EMNRD. 2006b. Robert Sivinski pers. comm. 23 October 2006; EMNRD Forestry Department.
- NMDGF. 2006. Threatened and Endangered Species of New Mexico, 2006 Biennial Review.
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- NMNH. 2006. New Mexico Natural Heritage Program, University of New Mexico Museum of Southwestern Biology.
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- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2006. All Listed and Sensitive Species in New Mexico by County.
USFWS Region 2, New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office. (website revised 5 and 28 June 2006,
and 5, 17, and 18 July 2006).