

July 16, 2004

NEF#04-027

ATTN: Document Control Desk
Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Louisiana Energy Services, L. P.
National Enrichment Facility
NRC Docket No. 70-3103

Subject: Transmittal of Bird Survey for National Enrichment Facility Site

- References:
1. Letter NEF#03-003 dated December 12, 2003, from E. J. Ferland (Louisiana Energy Services, L. P.) to Directors, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards and the Division of Facilities and Security (NRC) regarding "Applications for a Material License Under 10 CFR 70, Domestic licensing of special nuclear material, 10 CFR 40, Domestic licensing of source material, and 10 CFR 30, Rules of general applicability to domestic licensing of byproduct material, and for a Facility Clearance Under 10 CFR 95, Facility security clearance and safeguarding of national security information and restricted data"
 2. Letter NEF#04-002 dated February 27, 2004, from R. M. Krich (Louisiana Energy Services, L. P.) to Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NRC) regarding "Revision 1 to Applications for a Material License Under 10 CFR 70, "Domestic licensing of special nuclear material," 10 CFR 40, "Domestic licensing of source material," and 10 CFR 30, "Rules of general applicability to domestic licensing of byproduct material"

By letter dated December 12, 2003 (Reference 1), E. J. Ferland of Louisiana Energy Services (LES), L. P., submitted to the NRC applications for the licenses necessary to authorize construction and operation of a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment facility. Revision 1 to these applications was submitted to the NRC by letter dated February 27, 2004 (Reference 2). Section 3.5, Ecological Resources, was included as part of the applications in the National Enrichment Facility (NEF) Environmental Report (ER). ER Section 3.5 discusses the future performance of site-specific avian surveys.

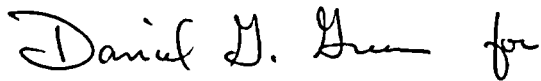
LES recently conducted a breeding season bird survey for the NEF site. The survey was performed in May 2004 and supplements the ongoing collection of environmental data for the NEF site. The survey report is included in the Enclosure, "Bird Surveys on the National Enrichment Facility Proposed Project Site."

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If you have any questions, please contact me at 630-657-2813.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel D. Green" followed by a small "for" written in a similar style.

R. M. Krich
Vice President – Licensing, Safety, and Nuclear Engineering

Enclosure:
Bird Surveys on the National Enrichment Facility Proposed Project Site

cc: T.C. Johnson, NRC Project Manager (w/o Enclosure)
M.C. Wong, NRC Environmental Project Manager

ENCLOSURE

Bird Surveys on the National Enrichment Facility Proposed Project Site

BIRD SURVEYS
ON THE NATIONAL ENRICHMENT FACILITY
PROPOSED PROJECT SITE

Prepared for:

GL Environmental, Inc.
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Rio Rancho, NM 87124

Prepared by:

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14 June 2004

Purpose of Work

The purpose of this project was to conduct a baseline survey for bird species in the proposed National Enrichment Facility (NEF) site near Eunice, New Mexico (T21S, R38E, Section 32).

Methods

A bird survey was conducted by walking through the survey area and recording all bird species seen or heard in or along the edge of the survey area. The survey was conducted on 21 May 2004. The survey began at 6:20 and continued through 10:50 in the morning. Nests located during the course of the survey were marked with a Garmin geographic positioning system (GPS) in differential correction mode and are shown in the Figure.

Results

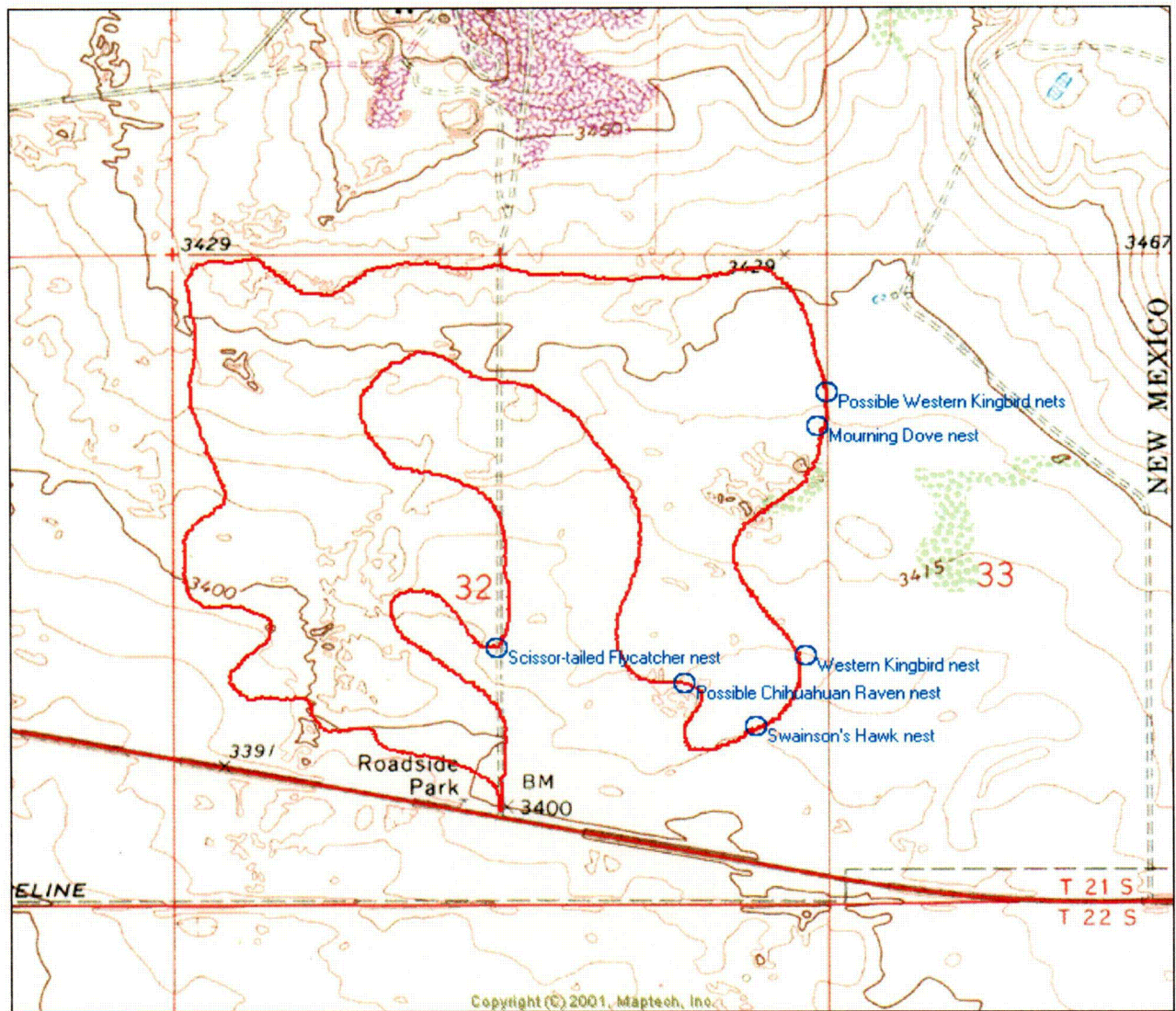
All bird species detected in the survey area were recorded and are listed in the Appendix. Most species found in the survey area commonly occur in New Mexico. Western Kingbirds, Northern Mockingbirds, Scaled Quail, and Loggerhead Shrikes were abundant on the site. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Northern Bobwhite are generally restricted to the eastern parts of New Mexico and were found on the site. The Northern Bobwhite called from about 20-30 m west of the northwestern boundary of section 32 (in section 31).

Active nests of Swainson's Hawk, Western Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and Mourning Dove were found. All nests appeared to be in the incubation phase of the nesting cycle, and all were located in honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) trees. Two other possible nests were located, including that of a Chihuahuan Raven and another Western Kingbird, both in mesquite trees (Figure).

Potential Impacts

In the project area, potential negative impacts to bird species include disruption of nesting activity during the spring and summer and loss of nesting habitat due to construction. The alteration and removal of vegetation during facility construction will likely destroy nesting substrates for some pairs of birds. However, as most species in the study area are common, these impacts are not likely to have population-level impacts.

Figure. Map of the survey area showing approximate route (red line) walked through the NEF project site (T21S, R38E, section 32) during the bird inventory on 21 May 2004. From USGS 7.5 minute quad Eunice, N. Mex.



Appendix. Common and scientific names of bird species detected in the survey area.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Breeding Status
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Pair formed
Swainson's Hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Nest found
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	Unknown
Scaled Quail	<i>Callipepla squamata</i>	Pair formed
Northern Bobwhite	<i>Colinus virginianus</i>	Unknown
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	Pair formed
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Nest found
Common Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	Unknown
Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>	Unknown
Western Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	Nest found
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>	Nest found
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	Pair formed
Chihuahuan Raven	<i>Corvus cryptoleucus</i>	Possible nest found
Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>	Unknown
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thyromanes bewickii</i>	Unknown
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Minimus polyglottos</i>	Pair formed
Crissal Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma crissale</i>	Unknown
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Unknown
Pyrrhuloxia	<i>Cardinalis sinuatus</i>	Unknown
Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>	Pair formed
Cassin's Sparrow	<i>Aimophila cassinii</i>	Unknown
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>	Unknown
Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>	Pair formed
Lark Bunting	<i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i>	Wintering only
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Unknown
Bullock's Oriole	<i>Icterus bullockii</i>	Pair formed
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	Unknown
Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	Unknown
House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	Unknown