

# New Mexico Department of Transportation National Environmental Policy Act On-Call Services

New Mexico, Statewide

## CLIENT

New Mexico Department of Transportation Environmental Bureau

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Completed more than 50 task orders
- Biological evaluations
- T&E species surveys and monitoring
- Archaeological and historical architectural surveys
- Bat remediation
- NEPA evaluations
- Reporting in accordance with regulatory guidelines
- Restoration
- Monitoring

A wholly owned subsidiary of Geo-Logic Associates, Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Inc. (DBS&A) is supporting the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) Environmental Bureau by providing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation, natural and cultural resource inventories, and other environmental services as assigned by the Bureau, and has completed more than 50 task orders.



Biologists implementing the Willow Creek Riparian Restoration Plan.

Over the course of our on-call contracts, DBS&A's natural resources and cultural resources team has assisted the Bureau with tasks for NMDOT roadways, bridges, and rights-of-way throughout the State of New Mexico. Our natural resource experts, with their knowledge and experience of biological resources in New Mexico, assist the NMDOT by efficiently performing biological evaluations, wetland delineations, riparian restoration, threatened and endangered species (T&E) surveys and monitoring. DBS&A oversees the cultural resources team member, Okun Consulting Solutions, responsible for conducting cultural resource inventories and reports, including archaeological and historic architecture evaluations and linear surveys, cultural resources monitoring and archival research cultural overviews. We also assist with the preparation of Categorical Exclusions (CEs) to comply with NEPA requirements of the Federal Highway Administration. Representative, completed or nearly completed tasks include:

### Willow Creek Riparian Restoration Plan, Implementation, and Monitoring

DBS&A developed a restoration plan for the revegetation of a site on Willow Creek near Pecos, New Mexico, after the creek banks were impacted by an NMDOT action. The plan contained mitigation measures, performance standards, and monitoring guidelines to be implemented for a two-year period following revegetation. DBS&A conducted the riparian plantings and the first year monitoring of the site. The plan was approved by the site's jurisdictional agencies (i.e., New Mexico Environment Department [NMED] and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish [NMDGF]). Due to the success rate of revegetation, the monitoring event was moved up with the approval of the NMED; the monitoring event was completed in the same year and no further corrective measures were required.

### Proposed Drainage Structure Replacements on Highway 344 in Santa Fe County

As part of a federally funded project, DBS&A conducted a Biological Evaluation (BE) for three wooden drainage structures. NMDOT's proposed project included replacement of the

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structures, the addition of guardrail, minor paving of structure approaches and reconstruction of the existing right-of-way fence as needed. As part of a state funded maintenance project, erosion repairs were proposed at a concrete culvert outfall located at milepost 14.64.

The BE included data gathering, a 100% pedestrian survey of the project footprint that included water resources evaluation for wetland features and the presence of an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), and a report detailing the findings, evaluation of impacts and mitigation recommendations. Cultural resources were documented separately by a DBS&A team member.

### **Bridge Replacement on N.M. Highway 337, Chilili, Bernalillo County**

As part of a federally funded project, DBS&A conducted a Public Involvement Meeting, BE, and CE for the Bridge #5548 replacement project located in the Town of Chilili. One public meeting was held that was well attended by members of the community and surrounding area. The BE included data gathering, including results from a bat survey at the bridge by a DBS&A subconsultant, a 100% pedestrian survey of the project footprint that included water resources evaluation for wetland features, and a report detailing the findings, evaluation of impacts and mitigation recommendations. The CE has been prepared per NMDOT requirements and is near completion pending the cultural resources survey report for the project.

### **NM 500 (Rio Bravo Blvd) Bridge #6224 emergency repairs in Albuquerque, Bernalillo County**

DBS&A responded quickly to the NMDOT need for a Biological Assessment (BA) in response to emergency repairs after a critical issue was discovered at the bridge. Repairs to the bridge required a river diversion around Pier 3 in order to raise spans 3 and 4. The NMDOT was required to provide a BA to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) within 30 days of completing the bridge repair. DBS&A conducted a 100% pedestrian survey of the project footprint and prepared the BA as required with "information sufficient to conduct formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)." Critical habitat for the Rio Grande silvery minnow (*Hypognathus amarus*) and proposed critical habitat for the Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) were determined to be within the Project Area and Action Area. Effect determinations for the Rio Grande silvery minnow and the Yellow-billed cuckoo were prepared as part of the BA. The BA was in compliance with requirements of the USACE, and the emergency repairs were completed with no delays.

### **US180 Bridge #8385 over Whitewater Creek, Glenwood, Catron County**

DBS&A was tasked with providing a BA; hydrologic modeling, flood risk analysis and field validation; and expert report in support of litigation. This work supports a channel excavation project to return the US180 bridge (Bridge 8385) over Whitewater Creek to the as-built clearance of 9 feet and the slope of the channel bottom to 1.75% upstream and  $\geq 0.75\%$  upstream. The draft BA has been completed and submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in support of formal consultation being initiated. At least one federally listed species, the Loach Minnow (*Tiaroga cobitis*), has been documented within the project footprint. DBS&A provided hydrologic modeling and flood risk analysis and field validation using the USACE's Hydrologic Engineering Center's Hydrologic Modeling System (HEC-HMS) or AutoDesk's Storm and Sanitary Analysis (SSA) to determine the runoff hydrograph in Whitewater Creek at the bridge for the 100-year, 24-hour storm. The modeling and analysis determined the flood risk for four maintenance scenarios for the existing bridge. In close consultation with the NMDOT, DBS&A prepared an expert opinion report on the flood risk for Bridge #8385 for the modeled scenarios.