

Appendix E – Ecology Report

East Central Georgia Reliability Projects- Walton, Morgan, Oconee,
and Putnam Counties, Georgia, Ecological Survey Report:
Ecological Solutions, Inc., Roswell, GA, June 2024.

Please note that Ecology Report Figures have been place in Appendix A

Ecology Survey Report



**East Central Georgia Reliability Projects
Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam Counties, Georgia**



GeorgiaTransmission

**Ecological
Solutions_{inc.}**

June 2024

**Ecology Survey Report
Georgia Transmission Corporation
East Central Georgia Reliability Projects
Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam Counties, Georgia**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Project Description/Location	6
Habitat Descriptions	6
Mixed Pine-Hardwood Forest	7
Floodplains and Low Terraces	7
Agricultural Land	7
Early Successional Habitat	7
Maintained Roadside/Maintained Transmission Line Easement	7
Planted Pine	7
Wetlands	8
Forested Wetland	8
Emergent Wetland	8
Scrub-Shrub Wetland	8
Aquatic Resources Studies	8
Methodology	8
Results	10
Wetland Communities	11
Forested Wetland Communities	11
Emergent Wetland Communities	11
Scrub-Shrub Wetland Communities	11
Water Communities	15
Perennial Streams	15
Intermittent Streams	15
Ephemeral Streams	15
Open Waters	15
Gully/Erosional Features	16
Existing Access Roads	26
Protected Species	26
Methodology	26
Results	28
Summary	32
Permitting Requirements	32
Section 404 Permitting Overview	32
Anticipated USACE Permit Requirements	33
NWP 57 Summary	33
Georgia EPD/State Waters Requiring a Buffer	33
Conclusion	34
References	34

List of Tables

Table 1. Summary of Proposed Transmission Line Projects	6
Table 2. Summary of Proposed Substation Projects/Expansions	6
Table 3. Field Data Collection Procedures	9
Table 4. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects	12
Table 5. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Substations/Expansion Projects.....	14
Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects	16
Table 7. Stream Data for Proposed Substation/Expansion Projects	24
Table 8. Federal and State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence in the Project Areas	27
Table 9. Tree Clearing Restrictive Seasons for Tricolored Bat in Georgia	30
Table 10. Summary of Federal Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*	31
Table 11. Summary of State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*	32

List of Project Figure Sets

Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line

Figures 1.00	Project Location
Figures 2.00	USGS Topography
Figures 3.00 – 3.12	Environmental Survey Findings

East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line

Figures 1.00	Project Location
Figures 2.00 – 2.04	USGS Topography
Figures 3.00 – 3.138	Environmental Survey Findings

East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line

Figures 1.00	Project Location
Figures 2.00	USGS Topography
Figures 3.00 – 3.21	Environmental Survey Findings

Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line

Figures 1.00	Project Location
Figures 2.00	USGS Topography
Figures 3.00 – 3.28	Environmental Survey Findings

East Walton 500/230 kV Substation

Figure 1.00	Project Location
Figure 2.00	USGS Topography
Figure 3.00	Environmental Survey Findings

Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station

Figure 1.00	Project Location
Figure 2.00	USGS Topography
Figure 3.00	Environmental Survey Findings

Rockville 500 kV Substation

Figure 1.00	Project Location
Figure 2.00	USGS Topography
Figure 3.00	Environmental Survey Findings

Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation

Figure 1.00	Project Location
Figure 2.00	USGS Topography
Figure 3.00	Environmental Survey Findings

Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation

Figure 1.00	Project Location
Figure 2.00	USGS Topography
Figure 3.00	Environmental Survey Findings

Representative Photographs

Protected Species Documentation

Executive Summary

Ecological Solutions Inc. (Ecological Solutions) was contracted by Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC) to conduct ecological surveys for the East Central Georgia Reliability (ECGR) project which includes four proposed transmission line projects, four proposed substation projects, and one proposed substation expansion project within Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam counties.

Field studies for the environmental surveys were conducted by Ecological Solutions staff during multiple field visits from July through October of 2023. Field studies for additional survey area was completed in February 2024, for the proposed Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line project. Field tasks included delineation of jurisdictional wetlands and streams, photographic documentation, GPS location of delineated environmental resources, and threatened and endangered species surveys (excluding aquatic and bat surveys). Wetland delineations were conducted in accordance with guidelines provided in the *1987 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement V 2.0*. State waters were determined in accordance with guidelines provided in the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) document: *Field Guide for Determining the Presence of State Waters that Require a Buffer*.

During field investigations of each proposed project, potentially jurisdictional waters and wetlands were identified within the survey areas, as well as non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features. The location of these features was field surveyed using GPS technology with advertised sub-meter accuracy. A summary of the findings for each project is provided in the table below.

Proposed Project	Waters*	Potentially Jurisdictional Wetlands	Potentially Non-jurisdictional Wetlands	Non-jurisdictional Gully/Erosional Features	State Waters Requiring a Buffer
Proposed Transmission Lines					
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	20	21	1	9	19
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line	120	38	7	44	103
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line	16	3	0	10	13
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	14	3	5	10	10
Proposed Substations/Substation Expansion					
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation	0	0	0	0	0
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station	3	1	0	1	3
Rockville 500 kV Substation	7	8	0	12	7
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation	8	2	3	0	5
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation	1	1	1	4	1

*Includes potentially non-jurisdictional ephemeral streams

A list of known protected species was compiled through an online search of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) database and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) quarter-quadrangle database for each of the ECGR projects. The IPaC reviews indicated the potential occurrence of five federal listed, proposed, or candidate species for the survey areas. These species include one candidate species, (monarch butterfly [*Danaus plexippus*]), three listed species, (Harperella [*Ptilimnium nodosum*], little amphianthus [*Amphianthus pusillus*], and mat-forming quillwort [*Isoetes tegetiformans*]), and one proposed endangered species tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*).

In addition, a search for known locations of federal and state listed species within the vicinity of each project (*i.e.*, USGS quarter-quadrangle) was conducted utilizing the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division (GWRD) Biodiversity Portal. These reviews identified three state listed species of potential occurrence, Altamaha shiner (*Cyprinella xaenura*), Oglethorpe oak (*Quercus oglethorpensis*), and pink lady slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), on the project quarter-quadrangles.

Georgia's Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources GIS (GNAHRGIS) online database was queried regarding listed species occurrences within three miles of each project area. The GNAHRGIS review identified two additional state listed species not identified in other queries, bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and sun-loving draba (*Draba aprica*). The following state or federal listed species are known from within three miles of the project areas:

- little amphianthus (federal and state) – approximately 1.6 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.6 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- mat-forming quillwort (federal and state) – approximately 1.7 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.7 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Harperella (federal and state) – approximately 1.7 miles north of Rockville Substation [Extirpated]; approximately 1.7 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- bald eagle (state only) – approximately 1.4 miles southeast of Rockville Substation; approximately
- sun-loving draba (state only) – approximately 1.5 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.5 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Oglethorpe oak (state only) – approximately 2.6 miles northeast of East Walton – Rockville transmission line [Extirpated]
- pink lady slipper (state only) – approximately 0.1 mile southwest of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Altamaha shiner (state only) – approximately 1.6 miles southeast of Bostwick – East Walton transmission line in Jacks Creek; approximately 1.4 miles southeast of Bostwick Switching Station in Jacks Creek; approximately 1.3 miles south of Bethabara Substation in Apalachee River; approximately 1.1 miles northwest and 1.3 miles southwest of Rockville Substation in Turkey Creek and Apalachee River, respectively; approximately 1.1 miles southwest in Apalachee River and approximately 0.9 mile northwest in Turkey Creek for Bethabara – East Walton transmission line; and 0.7 mile northeast of East Walton – Rockville transmission line in Hard Labor Creek, Apalachee River, and Jacks Creek, respectively.

Summary of Federal Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*				
Proposed Project	Species	Species Observed	Habitat Observed	Known Within 3-Mile Radius
Proposed Transmission Lines				
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, little amphianthus, mat-forming quillwort, Harperella, tricolored bat	No	Yes, monarch butterfly and tricolored bat	Yes, all except monarch butterfly
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Proposed Substation/Substation Expansion				
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Rockville 500 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, Harperella, tricolored bat	No	Yes, monarch butterfly and tricolored bat	
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	

*Includes IPAC, GNAHRGIS 3-mile radius, and USFWS coordination

Summary of State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*				
Proposed Project	Species	Species Observed	Habitat Observed	Known Within 3-Mile Radius
Proposed Transmission Lines				
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	Yes
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner, pink lady slipper, sun-loving draba, bald eagle, Oglethorpe oak	No	pink lady slipper, Altamaha shiner	Yes
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	Yes
Proposed Substations/Substation Expansion				
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	No	
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	Yes
Rockville 500 kV Substation	sun-loving draba, bald eagle	No	No	Yes, both
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	No	Yes

*Includes GWRD and GNAHRGIS 10-mile radius query results.

The entire project area was surveyed on foot. Predominant habitat types include mixed pine-hardwood forest, floodplains and low terraces, agricultural land, early successional habitat, maintained roadside/maintained transmission line easement, planted pine, and aquatic resources including wetlands, streams, and open waters. No protected species were observed within the survey areas.

Potential habitat for the monarch butterfly occurs within the following habitats identified within the proposed projects: maintained roadside easement, maintained transmission line easement, early successional, and/or agricultural land (pasture). No milkweed species (*Asclepias* spp.), necessary to monarch butterflies, were observed within the project survey areas. The surveys were conducted within the flowering periods of milkweed species. There will be no loss of overall foraging habitat due to project implementation and the project should have no effect on the monarch butterfly. It is likely that implementation of the transmission line projects will in the long-term increase the availability of monarch butterfly foraging habitat. Monarch butterfly is a federal candidate species not included in GNAHRGIS database; therefore, information on known locations within 3 miles of the project areas is not available.

Tricolored bat is a species being studied for potential listing by the USFWS. A discussion of this species is included in this report due to the probable listing prior to construction of the proposed projects. A survey for bat species was not conducted within the proposed project areas; however, in Georgia, the range of tricolored bat is statewide. The preferred habitat of this species is open forests with large trees and woodland edges. Tricolored bats typically roost in tree foliage within riparian areas in summer and hibernate in caves, mines, or bridges/culverts with high humidity in winter. No caves or mines were observed within or adjacent to the survey areas. Summer and winter roosting habitat is available for this species within the survey areas. It should be noted that multiple culverts and bridges are located under roadways paralleled by the proposed transmission line. Many bat species, including tricolored bat, are known to utilize culverts during various times of the year. Based on project specific communication with the USFWS, tricolored bats are known to utilize culverts along Interstate-20, which is crossed by the East Walton – Rockville Transmission Line.

Though not officially listed at this time, the USFWS is recommending that tree clearing for the region of the state where the projects are located be avoided from May 1 – July 31 (non-volant pup season) and from December 1 – February 28 (winter hibernation) for this species, should it be listed.

Based on coordination with the USFWS, GTC is preparing a Biological Assessment and conducting formal coordination with the USWS for the project in the event the tricolored bat becomes listed prior to or during implementation. Currently, no clearing of tricolored bat habitat is proposed during the recommended restricted clearing period. Through avoidance and minimization measures, the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the tricolored bat.

Potential habitat does not exist within any of the project survey areas for *Harperella*, mat-forming quillwort, little amphianthus, or sun-loving draba as there are no granite outcrops or cypress ponds within or adjacent to the survey areas.

The known location of Oglethorpe oak listed on the GNAHRGIS database within the East Walton – Rockville Transmission Line project area is listed as extirpated. The field survey was conducted in October which is within the typical survey season for this species. No suitable habitat was observed within the survey areas nor were any specimens observed within the survey areas.

Pink lady slipper is a state listed plant species potentially occurring within the survey area for the proposed East Walton – Rockville transmission line. No specimens of this orchid species were observed. Potential habitat for this species was observed within mixed pine-hardwood forest habitat for the project survey areas listed above.

The streams identified within the survey area are not large enough to be foraging habitat for the bald eagle. At its closest point, the survey area is within 0.5-mile of Lake Oconee, which does provide foraging habitat for the bald eagle. Trees adjacent to the lake could be used for roosting or nesting. No bald eagle nests or bald eagles were observed within the survey area.

An aquatic survey was not conducted. Streams large enough to be potential habitat for the Altamaha shiner were identified within the survey areas and include Jacks Creek, Apalachee River, Hard Labor Creek, Briar Creek, North Sugar Creek, South Sugar Creek, Little Sugar Creek, and other larger unnamed perennial streams. Jacks Creek and Apalachee River have known populations of the Altamaha shiner within a 3-mile radius of the survey areas. Should it be necessary to install a new culvert within a stream that provides habitat for the Altamaha shiner, guidelines provided in the *Georgia Stream Crossing Handbook* (Georgia Aquatic Connectivity Team, 2021). Project implementation should result in no effect to this species.

One inactive osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest was observed on an existing transmission line structure (#11) in the proposed Rockville Substation survey area. Though not a state or federal listed species, ospreys and their nests are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Project Description/Location

The East Central Georgia Reliability (ECGR) project consists of four proposed transmission line projects, four proposed substation projects, and one proposed substation expansion project within Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam counties. All ECGR projects are located within Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 03070101 of the Upper Oconee River Watershed. See Tables 1 and 2 below for a summary of project location information.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Project Name	Approximate Length (mi)	Counties	USGS Topo Maps
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV	5	Walton and Morgan	High Shoals, GA
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV	47	Walton, Morgan, and Putnam	High Shoals, Apalachee, Madison, Buckhead, Rock Eagle Lake, Harmony, Meda, and Rockville, GA
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV	7.5	Walton	Monroe and High Shoals, GA
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV	9.9	Oconee and Walton	Statham and High Shoals, GA

Table 2. Summary of Proposed Substation Projects/Expansions

Project Name	Approximate Area (ac)	County	USGS Topo Map
East Walton 500/230 kV	62	Walton	High Shoals, GA
Bostwick Switching Station 230 kV	40	Morgan	High Shoals, GA
Rockville 500 kV	107	Putnam	Rockville, GA
Jacks Creek 230 kV	108	Walton	Monroe, GA
Bethabara 230/115 kV	36	Oconee	Statham, GA

Each project has its own set of figures (attached). Each figure set consists of the project location shown on aerial imagery (Figure 1.00), the project shown on United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic map(s) (Figure 2.00 or Figure 2 series), and mapped locations of aquatic resources within the project area (Figure 3.00 or Figure 3 series with index). Refer to the attached representative photographs for photos of habitats and features identified within the survey areas.

Habitat Descriptions

Predominant habitat types within the survey areas include mixed pine-hardwood forest, floodplains and low terraces, agricultural land, early successional habitat, maintained roadside/maintained transmission line easement, planted pine, and jurisdictional systems including wetlands and streams. The topography within the survey area is gently to moderately sloping.

Mixed Pine-Hardwood Forest

Typically located on slopes, ridges, and hilltops, this is a relatively dry habitat dominated by hardwoods and pines. The density and dominance between hardwoods and pines varies depending on prior land use. Typical species include water oak (*Quercus nigra*), white oak (*Q. alba*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), and various hickories (*Carya* spp.). Understory species include Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*), catbrier (*Smilax* spp.), deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum*), and blackberry (*Rubus argutus*). Please refer to Photo 1 in the Representative Photographs section.

Floodplains and Low Terraces

These are lower lying areas within natural valleys and adjacent to streams. While subject to sporadic flooding, these areas are non-wetlands and are typically dominated by a variety of hardwood species including red maple, water oak, sweetgum, slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), box-elder (*Acer negundo*), and musclewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*). The herbaceous layer in many instances is dominated by slender wood oats (*Chasmanthium laxum*) and cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*). Please refer to Photo 2 in the Representative Photographs section.

Agricultural Land

These areas include lands actively managed for row crops and livestock production. The majority of the agricultural areas consists of maintained pasture utilized for cattle grazing and hay production. Please refer to Photos 3 and 4 in the Representative Photographs section.

Early Successional Habitat

Early successional habitat includes those previously disturbed areas that have begun to revegetate with a mix of pioneering species including broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*), black berry, and goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*). Portions of the survey area include an abandoned transmission line easement. Depending on current land use, in some areas this area is infrequently mowed and is in early successional stages. Portions of this abandoned easement are also utilized for hunting purposes as evidenced by maintained wildlife food plots and deer stands. Other examples of this habitat include areas that were recently harvested for timber. Please refer to Photo 5 in the Representative Photographs section.

Maintained Roadside/Maintained Transmission Line Easement

The maintained transmission line and roadside habitat is dominated by the following observed plant species: broomsedge, goldenrod, blackberry, Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), and fescue (*Festuca* sp.). Species density and height vary throughout this habitat dependent on maintenance including routine mowing. No mature woody canopy species are present within this habitat type. Please refer to Photos 6 and 7 in the Representative Photographs section.

Planted Pine

Large areas managed for planted pine are located within the various projects. These areas are dominated by loblolly pine. Management of these stands varies with some areas including open

understories and others having very dense understories including hardwood saplings, blackberry, and catbrier. Please refer to Photo 8 in the Representative Photographs section.

Wetlands

Ninety-four wetlands were identified within the proposed project survey areas. These wetlands include forested, emergent, and scrub-shrub systems which usually extend outside of the survey corridor. The location of these features within each proposed survey area is provided in the Figure 3 series for each project. Beaver activity was observed in several wetland systems.

Forested Wetland

Eighty-three wetlands identified within the survey areas are palustrine forested systems. One wetland was partially forested and partially emergent wetland. These wetlands are dominated by the following hardwood tree species: red maple, green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), river birch (*Betula nigra*), various oaks, and black willow (*Salix nigra*). Please refer to Photos 9 and 10 in the Representative Photographs section.

Emergent Wetland

Eleven emergent wetlands were identified within the survey areas. One wetland was partially emergent and partially forested. Dominant vegetation in these wetlands includes soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), false-nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*), climbing hempweed (*Mikania scandens*), shallow sedge (*Carex lurida*), and other various sedges. Please refer to Photos 11 and 12 in the Representative Photographs section.

Scrub-Shrub Wetland

Two scrub-shrub wetlands were identified within the survey areas. Dominant vegetation in these wetlands includes tag alder (*Alnus serrulata*), soft rush, marsh dewflower (*Murdannia keisak*), fowl manna grass (*Glyceria striata*), and shallow sedge. Please refer to Photo 13 in the Representative Photographs section.

Aquatic Resources Studies

Field studies were conducted within the survey areas. The purpose of the field studies was to identify wetlands, streams (perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral), open waters, and non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features.

Methodology

Ecological Solutions conducted ecological studies within the proposed project survey areas from July through October 2023. Studies were conducted utilizing the methodology outlined in the 1987 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement V 2.0. State waters were determined in accordance with guidelines provided in the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) document: *Field Guide for Determining the Presence of State Waters that Require a Buffer*.

Specific survey flagging was used to identify each type of environmental feature due to the variety of systems that are identified, field-flagged, and GPS-surveyed. Each feature was identified first by the project abbreviation followed by the feature number.

Project abbreviations:

BEW - Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line
 EWR - East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line
 EWJC - East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line
 BBEW - Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line
 EWSS - East Walton 500/230 kV Substation
 BSS - Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station
 RSS - Rockville 500 kV Substation
 JCSS - Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation
 BBSS - Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation

Wetlands – Wetlands were marked with orange, florescent flagging marked – “WETLAND BOUNDARY.” Wetlands were named according to the project abbreviation followed by the wetland number sequentially starting with WET 01 (example: JCSS WET 01).

Streams and Open Waters – The top of bank for either left or right stream bank was marked with blue and white striped flagging on larger streams. For smaller streams, the center channel of the stream was marked with flagging, and average width for each stream was recorded by field personnel. Ephemeral streams were marked with solid yellow flagging. Streams and open waters were named according to the project abbreviation followed by the water number sequentially starting with WAT 01 for each project (example: BEW WAT 05).

Non-jurisdictional Gully/Erosional Features –The centerline of non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features (G/EF) was marked with orange and white polka-dot flagging. Gully/erosional features were named according to the project abbreviation followed by the G/EF number sequentially starting with G/EF 01 (example: BSS G/EF 03).

Data for each feature was collected according to Table 3. Representative photographs were taken for each delineated feature.

Table 3. Field Data Collection Procedures

Feature	GPS Data	Feature Data	Flagging	Additional
Jurisdictional streams	Top of bank every 25 feet and at major meanders	Width, depth, substrate, vegetation in floodplain, classification	Blue and white striped	Soil data and geomorphic characteristics collected; transition points from one classification to another.
Wetland	Along perimeter	Soils, hydrology, vegetation	Orange wetland boundary	Drainage association noted if applicable; abutting/adjacent/isolated status; associated ponds flagged
Non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features	Top of bank every 25 feet and at major meanders	Width, depth, and length	orange and white polka dot (G/EF)	Soil data and geomorphic characteristics collected; Transition points from one classification to another (if applicable).

Results

During field investigations, 94 wetlands, 189 streams/open waters, and 90 non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features were identified within the survey areas. The location of all identified features is provided on the Figure 3 series for each proposed project. Please refer to the Representative Photographs section for example photos of identified feature types. Tables 4 through 7 provide a summary of delineated features. Tables 4 and 5 include the potential jurisdictional status (likely jurisdictional or likely non-jurisdictional) of the wetlands based on Ecological Solutions' understanding of current waters of the U.S. guidance described below.

On May 25, 2023, the Supreme Court issued a ruling on Sackett vs. EPA regarding jurisdiction. The ruling effectively removed the significant nexus test and determined that wetlands must be "indistinguishable" from other relatively permanent waters (RPW) including rivers, navigable waterways, and territorial seas.

The EPA issued a pre-publication version of an updated WOTUS rule on August 29, 2023, that incorporates the Sackett ruling. The rule became effective on September 8, 2024. The updated rule confirms that the significant nexus text will no longer be utilized and that jurisdictional wetlands must have a continuous surface connection to an RPW. These wetlands are referred to as adjacent wetlands; whereas wetlands that do not exhibit this connection are non-adjacent.

Among the other changes to the WOTUS definition was to features defined as tributaries. Tributaries is a catch-all term for streams, rivers, etc. The revised definition identifies tributaries as those features that – "*are relatively permanent, standing, or continuously flowing bodies of waters.*" By default, this definition excludes ephemeral waters as those features flow for only a short duration after precipitation or runoff events. Based on Ecological Solutions interpretation of the new WOTUS rule and correspondence with the USACE Savannah District, ephemeral streams are not jurisdictional. With the referenced public notice, the USACE has renewed consideration and issuance of Approved Jurisdictional Determination (AJD) requests.

Georgia was one 27 states that had filed a lawsuit and had been granted a stay regarding the pre-Sackett WOTUS. definition. According to the EPA, those 27 states fall under both the Sackett ruling and pre-2015 interpretation of WOTUS. Currently the USACE and EPA are relying on the presence of a continuous surface connection to determine if a wetland is jurisdictional. Based on direct coordination with the Savannah District USACE, a continuous surface connection is a discrete connection between waters such as an RPW (intermittent or perennial stream), ephemeral stream, ditch, or similar feature that provides a direct, continuous surface connection. Generally, overland flow through a swale or other non-defined feature is not sufficient to create a continuous surface connection.

Field studies were limited to the survey area and immediately adjacent areas which limits the ability to fully review potential hydrologic connections between identified wetlands and streams. Field observations were supplemented with review of aerial photography and LiDar data to assist with evaluating the potential jurisdictional status of identified aquatic resources.

Based on Ecological Solutions understanding of the Sackett ruling and current guidance, all identified perennial and intermittent streams are jurisdictional. All identified ephemeral streams are likely non-jurisdictional.

Several wetlands located within the various survey areas and one open water (EWR WAT 18) on the East Walton – Rockville Transmission Line are likely non-jurisdictional systems as they are either situated in depressed, topographic “bowls” and do not have a direct surficial outlet connection to other WOTUS.

Should proposed activities impact identified potential non-jurisdictional wetlands, streams, or open waters, it is recommended that an AJD request be submitted to the USACE as only the USACE is responsible for determining final jurisdiction.

Brief descriptions of delineated features are presented below.

Wetland Communities

The ninety-four delineated wetlands within the project area have typical hydrologic indicators such as saturated soils within 12 inches of the surface and/or drainage patterns. Additionally, all delineated wetlands exhibit hydric soil indicators such as depleted matrix or gleyed soils with distinct concentrations that are typical of alternating reducing and oxidizing conditions. Dominant vegetation has a wetland indicator status of facultative, facultative wetland, or obligate wetland. The water regime includes non-tidal wetlands that are commonly found in areas with abundant moisture. Representative wetland and upland data points were recorded to support the field studies.

Forested Wetland Communities

Eighty-three wetlands identified within the survey areas are classified as palustrine forested systems (PFO) (Cowardin 1979). These wetlands are mostly located within mixed pine-hardwood forest habitat. Indicators of wetland hydrology include drainage patterns and geomorphic position. Typical hydric soil indicators for these systems include a matrix of 10 YR 4/1, 10 YR 4/2, 10 YR 3/2, 10 YR 3/1, and 7.5 YR 5/1 (Munsell 2000) with redoximorphic concentrations of 7.5YR 5/6 within the soil matrix. Please refer to Photos 9 and 10 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Emergent Wetland Communities

Eleven wetlands identified within the survey area are classified as palustrine emergent systems (PEM) (Cowardin 1979). These wetlands are located within maintained transmission line easements, roadside habitat, or agricultural land. Indicators of wetland hydrology include drainage patterns and geomorphic position. Typical hydric soil indicators for these systems include a matrix of 10 YR 4/2, 10 YR 3/2, and 7.5 YR 5/1 (Munsell 2000) with redoximorphic concentrations of 7.5YR 5/6 within the soil matrix. Please refer to Photos 11 and 12 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Scrub-Shrub Wetland Communities

Two wetlands identified within the survey area are classified as palustrine scrub-shrub systems (PSS) (Cowardin 1979). Indicators of wetland hydrology include drainage patterns and geomorphic position. Typical hydric soil indicators for these systems include a matrix of 10 YR 4/2, 10 YR 3/2, and 7.5 YR 5/1 (Munsell 2000) with redoximorphic concentrations of 7.5YR 5/6 within the soil matrix. Please refer to Photo 13 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Jurisdictional Wetland	Cowardin Classification	Acreage in survey area	Drainage Association in survey area	Potential Jurisdictional Status
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line				
BEW WET 01	PFO	0.01	none	JD
BEW WET 02	PFO	0.12	none	JD
BEW WET 03	PFO	1.60	BEW WAT 02 – 04	JD
BEW WET 04	PFO	0.80	none	JD
BEW WET 05	PFO	1.76	BEW WAT 05	JD
BEW WET 06	PFO	0.04	none	JD
BEW WET 07	PEM	0.22	none	JD
BEW WET 08	PFO	2.40	none	JD
BEW WET 09	PFO	0.02	BEW WAT 08	JD
BEW WET 10	PFO	0.01	BEW WAT 08	JD
BEW WET 11	PFO	0.66	BEW WAT 08 and 09	JD
BEW WET 12	PFO	0.66	BEW WAT 12 and 13	JD
BEW WET 13	PSS	0.01	none	JD
BEW WET 14	PSS	0.00	none	JD
BEW WET 15	PFO	0.27	BEW WAT 15	JD
BEW WET 16	PFO	0.25	none	JD
BEW WET 17	PFO	0.12	none	JD
BEW WET 18	PFO	0.16	none	JD
BEW WET 19	PFO	0.26	BEW G/EF 07	Non-JD
BEW WET 20	PFO	0.19	none	JD
BEW WET 21	PFO	0.09	BEW WAT 18	JD
BEW WET 22	PFO	0.09	BEW WAT 20	JD
East Walton – Rockville 500kV Transmission Line				
EWR WET 01	PFO	0.09	EWR WAT 05	JD
EWR WET 02	PFO	0.88	EWR G/EF 04	JD
EWR WET 03	PFO	0.14	none	JD
EWR WET 04	PFO	0.96	none	JD
EWR WET 05	PFO	0.25	EWR WAT 43	JD
EWR WET 06	PFO	0.03	EWR WAT 43	JD
EWR WET 07	PFO	0.50	EWR WAT 45	JD
EWR WET 08	PFO	0.1	EWR WAT 46 (EPH)	Non-JD
EWR WET 09	PFO	0.07	EWR WAT 53	JD
EWR WET 10	PFO	0.07	EWR WAT 51	JD
EWR WET 11	PFO	0.09	EWR WAT 51 and 54	JD
EWR WET 12	PFO	0.14	WAT 55	JD

Table 4. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Jurisdictional Wetland	Cowardin Classification	Acreage in survey area	Drainage Association in survey area	Potential Jurisdictional Status
EWR WET 13	PFO	0.11	none	Non-JD
EWR WET 14	PFO	0.18	none	Non-JD
EWR WET 15	PFO	0.49	none	JD
EWR WET 16	PFO	3.87	EWR WAT 62	JD
EWR WET 17	PFO	0.02	EWR WAT 62	JD
EWR WET 18	PFO	0.63	none	JD
EWR WET 19	PFO	1.55	EWR WAT 66	JD
EWR WET 20	PFO	0.02	none	Non-JD
EWR WET 21	PFO	0.06	none	Non-JD
EWR WET 22	PFO	0.79	EWR WAT 68 and EWR 69	JD
EWR WET 23	PFO	0.08	EWR WAT 70	JD
EWR WET 24	PFO	0.28	none	JD
EWR WET 25	PFO	0.12	EWR WAT 76	JD
EWR WET 26	PFO	0.03	EWR WAT 80	JD
EWR WET 27	PFO	0.18	none	JD
EWR WET 28	PFO	0.58	none	JD
EWR WET 29	PFO	0.35	EWR WAT 88	JD
EWR WET 30	PFO	0.73	EWR WAT 89 and EWR 90	JD
EWR WET 31	PFO	0.37	none	JD
EWR WET 32	PFO	0.25	EWR WAT 94 and 95	JD
EWR WET 33	PFO	0.27	EWR WAT 98	JD
EWR WET 34	PFO	0.06	EWR WAT 99	JD
EWR WET 35	PFO	0.06	EWR WAT 99	JD
EWR WET 36	PFO	2.73	EWR WAT 105 and EWR 106	JD
EWR WET 37	PFO	0.09	EWR WAT 110	JD
EWR WET 38	PFO	0.01	none	JD
EWR WET 39	PFO	0.16	EWR WAT 115 (EPH)	Non-JD
EWR WET 40	PFO	0.43	EWR WAT 116	JD
EWR WET 41	PFO	0.62	EWR WAT 117	JD
EWR WET 42	PFO	0.27	EWR WAT 118 (EPH)	Non-JD
EWR WET 43	PFO	0.06	none	JD
EWR WET 44	PFO	0.18	none	JD
EWR WET 45	PFO	0.05	none	JD
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line				
EWJC WET 01	PFO	0.02	EWJC WAT 01	JD
EWJC WET 02	PFO	0.06	EWJC WAT 11	JD

Table 4. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Jurisdictional Wetland	Cowardin Classification	Acreage in survey area	Drainage Association in survey area	Potential Jurisdictional Status
EWJC WET 03	PFO	0.41	EWJC WAT 13	JD
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line				
BBEW WET 01	PFO	0.01	BBEW WAT 01 and 02	Non-JD
BBEW WET 04	PFO	0.002	BBEW WAT 09 (EPH)	Non-JD
BBEW WET 05	PFO	0.08	none	Non-JD
BBEW WET 06	PFO	0.11	none	JD
BBEW WET 07	PEM	0.03	none	JD
BBEW WET 08	PFO	0.69	BBEW WAT 15	JD
BBEW WET 09	PFO/PEM	1.18	BBEW WAT 16	JD
BBEW WET 10	PEM	0.04	BBEW WAT 16	JD

Table 5. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Substations/Expansion Projects

Jurisdictional Wetland	Cowardin Classification	Acreage within survey area	Drainage Association within survey area	Potential Jurisdictional Status
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation				
<i>No wetlands identified within the survey area.</i>				
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station				
BSS WET 01	PFO	1.7	BSS WAT 01 – 03	JD
Rockville 500 kV Substation				
RSS WET 01	PEM	0.06	RSS WAT 01	JD
RSS WET 02	PEM	0.02	RSS WAT 02	JD
RSS WET 03	PEM	0.01	RSS WAT 03	JD
RSS WET 04	PFO	0.03	RSS WAT 03	JD
RSS WET 05	PFO/PEM	1.46	RSS WAT 04, 05, 07	JD
RSS WET 06	PEM	0.02	RSS WAT 05	JD
RSS WET 07	PEM	0.03	RSS WAT 05	JD
RSS WET 08	PEM	0.04	RSS WAT 05	JD
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation				
JCSS WET 01	PFO	2.68	JCSS WAT 05	JD
JCSS WET 02	PFO	0.29	JCSS WAT 04	JD
JCSS WET 03	PFO	0.18	JCSS WAT 06 and 07 (EPH)	Non-JD
JCSS WET 04	PFO	0.26	JCSS WAT 07 (EPH)	Non-JD
JCSS WET 05	PFO	0.58	JCSS WAT 08 (EPH)	Non-JD

Table 5. Wetland Data Summary for Proposed Substations/Expansion Projects

Jurisdictional Wetland	Cowardin Classification	Acreage within survey area	Drainage Association within survey area	Potential Jurisdictional Status
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation				
BBSS WET 01	PFO	0.05	BBSS WAT 01	JD
BBSS WET 02	PFO	0.005	BBSS G/EF 04	Non-JD

Water Communities

There are no designated trout streams within the survey area. Identified non-wetland waters within the proposed projects include 99 perennial streams, 51 intermittent streams, 28 ephemeral streams, and 11 open waters.

Perennial Streams

Ninety-nine (99) streams within the survey areas are classified as perennial and were flowing at the time of the survey. These streams range from 1 to 70 feet in width with a substrate consisting of a combination of gravel, boulders, sand, and/or silt. In a normal climatic year, perennial streams flow year-round and have a base flow connection to groundwater. Perennial streams exhibit well-developed streambanks, riffle/pool complexes, sinuosity, fluctuating high water marks, headcuts, visible material sorting, and hydrophytic vegetation along stream banks. Named streams within the survey areas include Jacks Creek, Indian Creek, Bucks Creek, Long Branch, Hard Labor Creek, Briar, North Sugar Creek, South Sugar Creek, Little Sugar Creek, Weaver Branch, Denham Branch, Grubby Creek, Apalachee River, and Rocky Branch. Please refer to Photos 14 and 15 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Intermittent Streams

Fifty-one (51) streams in the survey areas are classified as intermittent and were flowing at the time of the survey. These streams range from 1 to 5 feet in width with a substrate comprised mostly of silt, sand, and/or gravel. Intermittent streams exhibit a well-defined channel that flows for only part of the year and tend to be dry during the summer and fall seasons in normal climatic years. Please refer to Photos 16 and 17 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Ephemeral Streams

Twenty-eight (28) ephemeral channels were identified during the field survey. These features range from 2 to 5 feet in width with a substrate of clay or sand. Please refer to Photos 18 and 19 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Open Waters

Eleven (11) open waters were identified during field surveys. These features range from 50 to 432 feet in width and consist primarily of small, man-made impoundments. Please refer to

Photos 20 and 21 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Gully/Erosional Features

Ninety (90) G/EFs were identified within the project areas. G/EFs are non-jurisdictional features that do not exhibit signs of groundwater contribution or hydric soils. Typically, these drainage features are hillside swales, roadside swales, erosional areas, or relict agricultural ditches and do not exhibit a continuous ordinary high-water mark or bed and banks. Please refer to Photo 22 in the Representative Photographs section. A summary of these features is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
Jurisdictional Streams			
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line			
BEW WAT 01	UT	perennial	5
BEW WAT 02	UT; BEW WET 03	perennial	3
BEW WAT 03	UT; BEW WET 03	perennial	3
BEW WAT 04	Jacks Creek; BEW WET 03	perennial	30
BEW WAT 05	UT; BEW WET 05	perennial	3
BEW WAT 06	UT	perennial	4
BEW WAT 07	Indian Creek	perennial	20
BEW WAT 08	Indian Creek; BEW WET 09 and 10, BEW WAT 09	perennial	15
BEW WAT 09	UT of BEW WAT 08	intermittent	3
BEW WAT 10	UT; BEW WET 11	ephemeral	3
BEW WAT 11	UT	perennial	4
BEW WAT 12	UT; BEW WET 12	perennial	3
BEW WAT 13	BEW WET 12	open water	50
BEW WAT 14	UT	perennial	4
BEW WAT 15	UT; BEW WET 15	perennial	5
BEW WAT 16	UT	intermittent	3
BEW WAT 17	UT	intermittent	3
BEW WAT 18	UT of BEW WAT 19	ephemeral	3
BEW WAT 19	UT; BEW WET 21	intermittent	2

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
BEW WAT 20	UT of BEW WAT 19; BEW WET 22	intermittent	2
East-Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line			
EWR WAT 01	UT	perennial	30
EWR WAT 02	UT	perennial	30
EWR WAT 03	UT; EWR WAT 04	perennial	5
EWR WAT 04	UT; EWR WAT 03	ephemeral	5
EWR WAT 05	Bucks Creek; WET 01	perennial	15
EWR WAT 06	UT; EWR WAT 07	perennial	12
EWR WAT 07	UT; EWR WAT 06	perennial	3
EWR WAT 08	none	open water	432
EWR WAT 09	none	open water	150
EWR WAT 10	UT	perennial	5
EWR WAT 11	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 12	UT	perennial	3
EWR WAT 13	UT; EWR WAT 14	perennial	7
EWR WAT 14	UT; EWR WAT 13	perennial	2
EWR WAT 15	UT	ephemeral	3
EWR WAT 16	UT	perennial	5
EWR WAT 17	UT	perennial	5
EWR WAT 18	none	open water	231
EWR WAT 19	Long Branch	perennial	10
EWR WAT 20	UT	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 21	UT	perennial	5
EWR WAT 22	UT	perennial	3
EWR WAT 23	UT; EWR WAT 24, 25, and 26	perennial	1.5
EWR WAT 24	UT; EWR WAT 23	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 25	UT; EWR WAT 23	intermittent	1.5
EWR WAT 26	UT; EWR WAT 23	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 27	UT	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 28	UT; EWR WAT 29	perennial	3

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
EWR WAT 29	UT; EWR WAT 28	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 30	UT; EWR WAT 31	intermittent	2.5
EWR WAT 31	UT; EWR WAT 30	perennial	3
EWR WAT 32	UT; EWR WAT 31	perennial	2.5
EWR WAT 33	Hard Labor Creek	perennial	55
EWR WAT 34	UT	ephemeral	4
EWR WAT 35	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 36	UT of EWR WAT 37	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 37	UT; EWR WAT 36	perennial	3
EWR WAT 38	UT	perennial	3
EWR WAT 39	Briar Creek	perennial	25
EWR WAT 40	UT	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 41	UT of EWR WAT 42	intermittent	5
EWR WAT 42	UT; EWR WAT 41, 43 – 45, EWR WET 06 and 07	perennial	5
EWR WAT 43	UT of EWR WAT 42; WET 05	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 44	UT of WAT 42	intermittent	5
EWR WAT 45	UT of EWR WAT 42; WET 07	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 46	UT; WET 08	ephemeral	3
EWR WAT 47	UT	ephemeral	2
EWR WAT 48	UT	ephemeral	4
EWR WAT 49	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 50	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 51	UT; EWR WAT 54, WET 10 and 11	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 52	UT; EWR WAT 51 and 53	ephemeral	2
EWR WAT 53	UT; EWR WAT 52, WET 09	intermittent	1
EWR WAT 54	UT; EWR WAT 51	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 55	UT; EWR WET 12	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 56	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 57	UT of EWR WAT 58	intermittent	4

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
EWR WAT 58	North Sugar Creek; EWR WAT 57	perennial	50
EWR WAT 59	South Sugar Creek; EWR WAT 60	perennial	25
EWR WAT 60	UT of EWR WAT 59	intermittent	5
EWR WAT 61	South Sugar Creek	perennial	25
EWR WAT 62	UT; WET 16 and 17	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 63	UT of EWR WAT 64	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 64	UT; EWR WAT 63	perennial	6
EWR WAT 65	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 66	UT; EWR WET 19	perennial	15
EWR WAT 67	Little Sugar Creek	perennial	40
EWR WAT 68	UT; EWR WET 22	perennial	4
EWR WAT 69	UT; EWR WET 22	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 70	UT; EWR WET 23	perennial	4
EWR WAT 71	UT; EWR WET 23	perennial	1
EWR WAT 72	UT	perennial	10
EWR WAT 73	UT	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 74	UT	intermittent	4
EWR WAT 75	UT	perennial	70
EWR WAT 76	UT; EWR WET 25	perennial	1
EWR WAT 77	UT	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 78	UT	perennial	2
EWR WAT 79	UT; EWR WAT 80	perennial	3
EWR WAT 80	UT; EWR WAT 79 and WET 26	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 81	none	open water	75
EWR WAT 82	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 83	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 84	UT	ephemeral	3
EWR WAT 85	UT	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 86	Weaver Branch; EWR WAT 87	perennial	8
EWR WAT 87	UT of EWR WAT 86	intermittent	2

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
EWR WAT 88	Denham Branch	perennial	6
EWR WAT 89	UT; EWR WET 30	ephemeral	2
EWR WAT 90	UT; EWR WET 30	perennial	6
EWR WAT 91	UT	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 92	UT; EWR WAT 93	perennial	10
EWR WAT 93	UT; WAT 92 and 94	perennial	5
EWR WAT 94	UT; EWR WAT 95	perennial	3
EWR WAT 95	UT; WAT 94 and WET 32	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 96	UT; EWR WAT 97	intermittent	5
EWR WAT 97	UT; EWR WAT 96	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 98	UT; EWR WET 33 and WAT 99	intermittent	2
EWR WAT 99	UT; EWR WAT 98, WET 34 and 35	perennial	5
EWR WAT 100	UT of EWR WAT 99	perennial	4
EWR WAT 101	UT of EWR WAT 102	perennial	4
EWR WAT 102	UT; EWR WAT 101	perennial	5
EWR WAT 103	none	open water	55
EWR WAT 104	UT	ephemeral	2
EWR WAT 105	UT; EWR WET 36	perennial	18
EWR WAT 106	UT; EWR WET 36	perennial	5
EWR WAT 107	UT	perennial	4
EWR WAT 108	UT	ephemeral	4
EWR WAT 109	UT	perennial	6
EWR WAT 110	UT; EWR WET 37	intermittent	3
EWR WAT 111	UT; EWR WAT 113, 114, and 115	perennial	5
EWR WAT 112	UT; EWR WAT 111	ephemeral	1
EWR WAT 113	UT; EWR WAT 111	intermittent	5
EWR WAT 114	UT; EWR WAT 111	ephemeral	1
EWR WAT 115	UT; EWR WET 39 and 40, WAT 116	ephemeral	1
EWR WAT 116	UT; EWR WET 40 and WAT 115	intermittent	1
EWR WAT 117	UT; EWR WET 41	perennial	5

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
EWR WAT 118	UT; EWR WET 42	ephemeral	3
EWR WAT 119	UT	ephemeral	3
EWR WAT 120	UT	perennial	5
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line			
EWJC WAT 01	UT; EWJC WET 01	intermittent	3
EWJC WAT 02	UT; EWJC WAT 03 and 04	perennial	3
EWJC WAT 03	EWJC WAT 02	open water	118
EWJC WAT 04	UT; EWJC WAT 02	ephemeral	1
EWJC WAT 05	UT	perennial	3
EWJC WAT 06	UT	ephemeral	3
EWJC WAT 07	UT; EWJC WAT 08	perennial	8
EWJC WAT 08	UT; EWJC WAT 07 and 09	perennial	4
EWJC WAT 09	UT; EWJC WAT 08 and 10	intermittent	4
EWJC WAT 10	UT; EWJC WAT 09	ephemeral	2
EWJC WAT 11	UT; EWJC WET 02	perennial	3
EWJC WAT 12	UT	perennial	9
EWJC WAT 13	UT; EWJC WET 03	perennial	20
EWJC WAT 14	Grubby Creek	perennial	20
EWJC WAT 15	Jacks Creek	perennial	20
EWJC WAT 16	Jacks Creek	perennial	10
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line			
BBEW WAT 01	unnamed pond; BBEW WET 01	open water	82
BBEW WAT 02	UT; BBEW WET 01	ephemeral	3
BBEW WAT 06	Apalachee River	perennial	50
BBEW WAT 07	UT of BBEW WAT 08	perennial	8
BBEW WAT 08	UT; BBEW WAT 07, 09, and 10	perennial	3
BBEW WAT 09	UT of BBEW WAT 08; BBEW WET 04	ephemeral	3
BBEW WAT 10	UT of BBEW WAT 08	ephemeral	3
BBEW WAT 11	Rocky Branch	perennial	10
BBEW WAT 12	Jacks Creek	perennial	25

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
BBEW WAT 13	UT	perennial	3
BBEW WAT 14	unnamed pond	open water	86
BBEW WAT 15	UT; BBEW WET 08	perennial	4
BBEW WAT 16	unnamed pond; BBEW WET 09 and 10	open water	100
BBEW WAT 17	UT	ephemeral	1
Non-jurisdictional Gully/Erosional Features			
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line			
BEW G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	4
BEW G/EF 03	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 05	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 06	N/A	Non-JD	2
BEW G/EF 07	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 08	N/A	Non-JD	5
BEW G/EF 09	N/A	Non-JD	4
East-Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line			
G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 03	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 05	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 06	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 07	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 08	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 09	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 10	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 11	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 12	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 13	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 14	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 15	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 16	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 17	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 18	N/A	Non-JD	5

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
G/EF 19	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 20	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 21	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 22	N/A	Non-JD	7
G/EF 23	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 24	N/A	Non-JD	5
G/EF 25	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 26	N/A	Non-JD	1
G/EF 27	N/A	Non-JD	1
G/EF 28	N/A	Non-JD	1
G/EF 29	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 30	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 31	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 32	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 33	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 34	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 35	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 36	N/A	Non-JD	4
G/EF 37	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 38	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 39	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 40	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 41	N/A	Non-JD	2
G/EF 42	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 43	N/A	Non-JD	3
G/EF 44	N/A	Non-JD	3
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line			
EWJC G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	3
EWJC G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	3
EWJC G/EF 03	N/A	Non-JD	2
EWJC G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	2
EWJC G/EF 05	N/A	Non-JD	3
EWJC G/EF 06	N/A	Non-JD	3
EWJC G/EF 07	N/A	Non-JD	3
EWJC G/EF 08	N/A	Non-JD	2
EWJC G/EF 09	N/A	Non-JD	2
EWJC G/EF 10	N/A	Non-JD	3

Table 6. Stream Data Summary for Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line			
BEW G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	2
BEW G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 05	N/A	Non-JD	4
BEW G/EF 06	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 07	N/A	Non-JD	1
BEW G/EF 08	N/A	Non-JD	2
BEW G/EF 09	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 10	N/A	Non-JD	3
BEW G/EF 11	N/A	Non-JD	1

UT = Unnamed Tributary; N/A = Not Applicable

Table 7. Stream Data for Proposed Substation/Expansion Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
Jurisdictional Streams			
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation			
<i>No streams were identified within the survey area</i>			
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station			
BSS WAT 01	Jacks Creek; BSS WET 01	perennial	15
BSS WAT 02	UT to BSS WAT 01; BSS WET 01	perennial	2
BSS WAT 03	UT to BSS WAT 01; BSS WET 01	perennial	1
Rockville 500 kV Substation			
RSS WAT 01	UT of RSS WAT 03; RSS WET 01	intermittent	1
RSS WAT 02	UT of RSS WAT 03; RSS WET 02	intermittent	1
RSS WAT 03	UT; RSS WAT 01, 02, and 04; RSS WET 03 and 04	intermittent	2
RSS WAT 04	UT; RSS WET 05	perennial	3
RSS WAT 05	UT; RSS WAT 06 and 07, RSS WET 05	perennial	8
RSS WAT 06	UT of RSS WAT 05	intermittent	3
RSS WAT 07	UT of RSS WAT 05; RSS WET 05	intermittent	2
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation			

Table 7. Stream Data for Proposed Substation/Expansion Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
JCSS WAT 01	Jacks Creek; JCSS WAT 02	perennial	10
JCSS WAT 02	UT of JCSS WAT 01	intermittent	5
JCSS WAT 03	UT	intermittent	3
JCSS WAT 04	JCSS WET 02	open water	204
JCSS WAT 05	UT of JCSS WAT 01	intermittent	2
JCSS WAT 06	UT; JCSS WET 03	ephemeral	4
JCSS WAT 07	UT; JCSS WET 03 and 04	ephemeral	5
JCSS WAT 08	UT; JCSS WET 05	ephemeral	4
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation			
BBSS WAT 01	UT; BBSS WET 01	perennial	3
Non-jurisdictional Gully/Erosional Features			
East Walton 500 kV Substation			
<i>No non-jurisdictional features were identified</i>			
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station			
BSS G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	2
Rockville 500 kV Substation			
RSS G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	1
JCSS G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	4
JCSS G/EF 03	N/A	Non-JD	3
JCSS G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	2
JCSS G/EF 05	N/A	Non-JD	2
JCSS G/EF 06	N/A	Non-JD	3
JCSS G/EF 07	N/A	Non-JD	2
JCSS G/EF 08	N/A	Non-JD	2
JCSS G/EF 09	N/A	Non-JD	1
JCSS G/EF 10	N/A	Non-JD	2
JCSS G/EF 11	N/A	Non-JD	3
JCSS G/EF 12	N/A	Non-JD	1
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation			
<i>No non-jurisdictional features were identified</i>			
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation			
BBSS G/EF 01	N/A	Non-JD	1

Table 7. Stream Data for Proposed Substation/Expansion Projects

Feature Name	USGS Stream Reference/ Associated Drainage	Flow Regime	Avg. Width Top of Bank (ft)
BBSS G/EF 02	N/A	Non-JD	3
BBSS G/EF 03	N/A	Non-JD	3
BBSS G/EF 04	N/A	Non-JD	2

UT = Unnamed Tributary; N/A = Not Applicable

Existing Access Roads

Access to the survey area is provided from many paved roadways in the vicinity that intersect with the project survey areas. Several of the transmission line survey areas included off right-of-way access roads that were incorporated into the survey areas. Existing access roads across wetlands and streams were field located and are shown on the Figure 3 series for each project.

Protected Species

Methodology

A list of known protected species was compiled through an online search of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) database and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) quarter-quadrangle database for each of the ECGR projects. The IPaC reviews indicated the potential occurrence of five federal listed or candidate species for the survey areas. These species include one candidate species, (monarch butterfly [*Danaus plexippus*]), three listed species, (Harperella [*Ptilimnium nodosum*], little amphianthus [*Amphianthus pusillus*], and mat-forming quillwort [*Isoetes tegetiformans*]), and one proposed endangered species (tricolored bat [*Perimyotis subflavus*]).

In addition, a search for known locations of federal and state listed species within the vicinity of each project (*i.e.*, USGS quarter-quadrangle) was conducted utilizing the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division (GWRD) Biodiversity Portal. These reviews identified three state listed species of potential occurrence, Altamaha shiner (*Cyprinella xaenura*), Oglethorpe oak (*Quercus oglethorpensis*), and pink lady slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), on the project quarter-quadrangles.

Georgia's Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources GIS (GNAHRGIS) online database was queried regarding listed species occurrences within three miles of the project area. The GNAHRGIS review identified two additional state listed species not identified in other queries, bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and sun-loving draba (*Draba aprica*). The following state or federal listed species are known from within three miles of the project areas:

- little amphianthus (federal and state) – approximately 1.6 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.6 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- mat-forming quillwort (federal and state) – approximately 1.7 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.7 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Harperella (federal and state) – approximately 1.7 miles north of Rockville Substation [Extirpated]; approximately 1.7 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line

- bald eagle (state only) – approximately 1.4 miles southeast of Rockville Substation; approximately
- sun-loving draba (state only) – approximately 1.5 miles north of Rockville Substation; approximately 1.5 miles north of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Oglethorpe oak (state only) – approximately 2.6 miles northeast of East Walton – Rockville transmission line [Extirpated]
- pink lady slipper (state only) – approximately 0.1 mile southwest of East Walton – Rockville transmission line
- Altamaha shiner (state only) – approximately 1.6 miles southeast of Bostwick – East Walton transmission line in Jacks Creek; approximately 1.4 miles southeast of Bostwick Switching Station in Jacks Creek; approximately 1.3 miles south of Bethabara Substation in Apalachee River; approximately 1.1 miles northwest and 1.3 miles southwest of Rockville Substation in Turkey Creek and Apalachee River, respectively; approximately 1.1 miles southwest in Apalachee River and approximately 0.9 mile northwest in Turkey Creek for Bethabara – East Walton transmission line; and 0.7 mile northeast of East Walton – Rockville transmission line in Hard Labor Creek, Apalachee River, and Jacks Creek, respectively

Refer to Table 8 below for a list of protected species of potential occurrence within the project survey areas, their state and federal status, and preferred habitat. Protected species documentation for each for each proposed project review is attached to this report and includes the IPaC database report and the GNAHRGIS database report for each proposed project.

Table 8. Federal and State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence in the Project Areas

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	Preferred Habitat
Faunal Species				
<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	monarch butterfly	C	--	open fields and meadows with milkweed
<i>Cyprinella xaenura</i>	Altamaha shiner	--	T	runs or pools over sand to gravel substrate in medium to large streams
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	--	T	nests and forages along coasts and near large rivers and lakes
<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	tricolored bat	PE	--	open forests with large trees and woodland edges; roost in tree foliage; hibernate in caves or mines with high humidity
Floral and Floral-like Species				
<i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	little amphianthus	T	T	vernal pools on granite outcrops
<i>Isoetes tegetiformans</i>	mat-forming quillwort	E	E	vernal pools on granite outcrops
<i>Ptilimnium nodosum</i>	Harperella	E	E	cypress ponds in the Coastal Plain and seeps at the edge of granite outcrops in the Piedmont

Table 8. Federal and State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence in the Project Areas

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	Preferred Habitat
<i>Quercus oglethorpensis</i>	Oglethorpe oak	--	T	Broad River bottomlands; upland seepage swamps over Iredell and Enon soils with seasonally wet clay beds
<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>	pink lady slipper	--	U	upland oak-hickory-pine forests; piney woods
<i>Draba aprica</i>	sun-loving draba	--	E	granite and amphibolite outcrops, usually in redcedar litter

E = Endangered; T = Threatened; C = Candidate; PE = Proposed Endangered; U = Unusual

Results

The entire project area was surveyed on foot. Predominant habitat types include mixed pine-hardwood forest, floodplains and low terraces, agricultural land, early successional habitat, maintained roadside/maintained transmission line easement, planted pine, and aquatic resources including wetlands and streams. No protected species were observed within the survey areas.

Potential habitat for the monarch butterfly occurs within the following habitats identified within the proposed projects: maintained roadside easement, maintained transmission line easement, early successional, and/or agricultural land (pasture). No milkweed species (*Asclepias* spp.), necessary to monarch butterflies, were observed within the project survey areas. The surveys were conducted within the flowering periods of milkweed species. There will be no loss of these habitats due to project implementation and the project should have no effect on the monarch butterfly. It is likely that implementation of the transmission line projects will in the long-term increase the availability of monarch butterfly foraging habitat. Monarch butterfly is a federal candidate species not included in GNAHRGIS database; therefore, information on known locations within 3 miles of the project areas is not available.

Potential habitat does not exist within any of the project survey areas for Harperella, mat-forming quillwort, little amphanthus, or sun-loving draba as there are no granite outcrops or cypress ponds within or adjacent to the survey areas.

The known location of Oglethorpe oak listed on the GNAHRGIS database within the East Walton – Rockville Transmission Line project area is listed as extirpated. The field survey was conducted in October which is within the typical survey season for this species. No suitable habitat was observed within the survey areas nor were any specimens observed within the survey areas.

Pink lady slipper is a state listed plant species potentially occurring within the survey area for the proposed East Walton – Rockville transmission line. No specimens of this orchid species were observed. Potential habitat for this species was observed within the mixed pine-hardwood forest within the proposed survey area.

The streams identified within the survey area are not large enough to be foraging habitat for the bald eagle. At its closest point, the survey area is within approximately 0.5-mile of Lake Oconee, which does provide foraging habitat for the bald eagle. Trees adjacent to the lake could be used for roosting or nesting. No bald eagle nests or bald eagles were observed within the survey area.

An aquatic survey was not conducted. Streams large enough to be potential habitat for the Altamaha shiner were identified within the survey areas and include Jacks Creek, Apalachee River, Hard Labor Creek, Briar Creek, North Sugar Creek, South Sugar Creek, Little Sugar Creek, and other larger unnamed perennial streams. Jacks Creek and Apalachee River have known populations of the Altamaha shiner within a 3-mile radius of the survey areas. Should it be necessary to install a new culvert within a stream that provides habitat for the Altamaha shiner, guidelines provided in the *Georgia Stream Crossing Handbook* (Georgia Aquatic Connectivity Team, 2021). Project implementation should result in no effect to this species.

Tricolored bat is a species being studied for potential listing by the USFWS. A discussion of this species is included in this report due to the probable listing prior to construction of the proposed projects. A survey for bat species was not conducted within the proposed project areas; however, in Georgia, the range of tricolored bat is statewide. The preferred habitat of this species is open forests with large trees and woodland edges. Tricolored bats typically roost in tree foliage within riparian areas in summer and hibernate in caves, mines, or bridges/culverts with high humidity in winter. No caves or mines were observed within or adjacent to the survey areas. Summer and winter roosting habitat is available for this species within the survey areas. It should be noted that multiple culverts and bridges are located under roadways paralleled by the proposed transmission line. Many bat species including tricolored bat are known to utilize culverts during various times of the year. Based on project specific communication with the USFWS, tricolored bats are known to utilize culverts along Interstate-20, which is crossed by the East Walton – Rockville Transmission Line.

Though not officially listed at this time, the USFWS is recommending that tree clearing for the region of the state where the projects are located be avoided from May 1 – July 31 (non-volant pup season) and from December 1 – February 28 (winter hibernation) for this species, should it be listed. Based on coordination with the USFWS, GTC is preparing a Biological Assessment (BA) and conducting formal coordination with the USWS for the project in the event the tricolored bat becomes listed prior to or during implementation.

The proposed substations sites vary from being entirely wooded to pasture areas with interspersed woodlands. For example, the proposed East Walton Substation is entirely wooded; whereas the proposed Jacks Creek Substation Site is predominantly maintained pasture with wood areas along Jacks Creek. The proposed transmission line corridors include maintained transmission line easement, mixed pine-hardwood forest, forest riparian corridors, open fields, roadside right-of-way (ROW), and residential and commercial properties. The majority of the transmission line corridors are wooded with many of the routes situated immediately parallel to existing roadways; however, portions of the transmission line routes do bisect existing wooded areas. Approximately 14 miles of the East Walton – Rockville Transmission line in Putnam County will be located within a former Georgia Power ROW. While this area has some regrowth, the majority of this area consists of early successional woods, maintained fields, wildlife plots, and other uses.

Below is an overview of coordination to date with the USFWS regarding the tricolored bat.

2/23/2024 – Teleconference held between GTC and USFWS

- USFWS detailed the three hibernation ranges for TCB within Georgia along with relevant tree clearing restriction timing associated with each hibernation range as shown in Table 9. The project is located within Zone 1.

Table 9. Tree Clearing Restrictive Seasons for Tricolored Bat in Georgia

Range Name	Location	Tree Clearing Restriction Dates	Additional Information
Zone 1 – Year-round Active	North-Central GA	Pup season: May 1- July 15 Winter: December 15 – February 15	
Zone 2 – Year-round Active	South GA	May 1 – July 15	
Zone 3 – Hibernating Range	North GA	May 1 – July 15	Blasting near known hibernacula restricted in winter months

- Putnam County – 14-mile early successional and other disturbances associated with former Georgia Power ROW in proposed action area (defined in Sections 3 and 5) will not have tree clearing restrictions imposed
- Along State Route (SR) 83 – The 25-30 ft TL ROW adjacent to the existing road will not require winter clearing restrictions but would require pup season restrictions
- Known culvert TCB roosts along Interstate 20 (I-20); however, the proposed project area that crosses I-20 does not contain culverts and/or streams at that point
- Formal consultation recommended by USFWS, and Biological Assessment/Biological Opinion/Conservation Opinion needed
- Additional conservation measures (*i.e.*, winter culvert surveys) needed for culverts that measure 23-25 feet long and 36 inches or greater in diameter and that will be disturbed as a result of project implementation

5/6/2034 – Teleconference held between GTC, Ecological Solutions, and USFWS to discuss mitigation and conservation measures

- GTC reported that the majority of tree clearing would be conducted outside of the tree clearing restriction time frames for Zone 1
- USFWS conveyed that forested habitat of concern was primarily large, contiguous patches of forest and not individual/isolated trees and/or roadside trees
- USFWS stated that at the time of the meeting, there were no mitigation options available for TCB; therefore, avoidance and minimization measures would suffice

for the BA/BO (or Conference Opinion [CO], should the TCB not yet be listed under the ESA)

- USFWS stated that the evaluation of take would be based on the acreage of tree clearing conducted within the tree clearing restriction time frame

Currently, no clearing of tricolored bat habitat is proposed during the recommended restricted clearing period. Through avoidance and minimization measures including the use of specific non-ground disturbing clearing in stream buffers, use of erosion and sediment control measures, avoiding work at night, and other measures outlined in the BA, the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the tricolored bat. Coordination will continue with the USFWS during completion of the BA and during construction as needed.

One inactive osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest was observed on an existing transmission line structure (#11) in the proposed Rockville Substation survey area. Though not a state or federal listed species, ospreys and their nests are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Tables 10 and 11 below summarize the federal and state listed species of potential occurrence by proposed transmission line project and substation project.

Table 10. Summary of Federal Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*

Summary of Federal Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*				
Proposed Project	Species	Species Observed	Habitat Observed	Known Within 3-Mile Radius
Proposed Transmission Lines				
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, little amphianthus, mat-forming quillwort, Harperella, tricolored bat	No	Yes, monarch butterfly and tricolored bat	Yes, all except monarch butterfly
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Proposed Substation/Substation Expansion				
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Rockville 500 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, Harperella, tricolored bat	No	Yes, monarch butterfly and tricolored bat	
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation	monarch butterfly, tricolored bat	No	Yes, both species	

*Includes IPAC, GNAHRGIS 3-mile radius, and USFWS coordination

Table 11. Summary of State Listed Species of Potential Occurrence*

Proposed Project	Species	Species Observed	Habitat Observed	Known within 3-mi radius
Proposed Transmission Lines				
Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	Yes
East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner, pink lady slipper, sun-loving draba, bald eagle, Oglethorpe oak	No	pink lady slipper Altamaha shiner	Yes
East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	
Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	Yes
Proposed Substations/Substation Expansion				
East Walton 500/230 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	No	
Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station	Altamaha shiner	N/A	Yes	Yes
Rockville 500 kV Substation	sun-loving draba, bald eagle	No	No	Yes, both
Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	Yes	
Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation	Altamaha shiner	No	No	Yes

Includes GWRD and GNAHRGIS 10-mile radius query results

Summary

No protected species were observed within the survey areas for the East Central Georgia Reliability Projects. Potential habitat was identified within the project survey areas for the monarch butterfly, tricolored bat, pink lady slipper, and Altamaha shiner. It is expected that the tricolored bat, currently a proposed endangered species, will be listed by the USFWS prior to the construction of the ECGR projects and GTC is preparing and coordinating a BA for this species with the USFWS. It is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect this species.

Permitting Requirements

Section 404 Permitting Overview

Streams, open waters, and wetlands are considered “waters of the United States.” The discharge of dredge or fill materials within waters of the U.S. are regulated by the USACE under the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Impacts to jurisdictional systems require authorization under the Clean Water Act. Depending on the extent of the activity, some minor impacts may be conducted without notification to the USACE; however, recent revisions to the permitting process require formal coordination with the USACE for the majority of regulated activities. The USACE has a variety of options to authorize impacts including Nationwide Permits (NWP), Regional Permits, Individual Permits (IP), and Letters of Permission. Minor impacts are typically authorized under the NWP program, which applies to a number of general activities that impact jurisdictional areas.

Certain types of minor impacts or fill activities may be eligible for permitting under the NWP program; however, applicable NWPs only allow up to 0.5 acre of jurisdictional waters/wetlands impacts and 0.05 acre of perennial and intermittent stream impacts for single and complete projects. Please be aware that the NWP thresholds are cumulative in nature; therefore, all impacts permitted under a NWP (*i.e.*, filling of wetlands and/or piping of streams) cannot exceed 0.5 acre of waters. Compensatory mitigation is required for a project that results in adverse impacts to 0.1 acre or more of wetlands and/or more than 0.01 acre of stream.

Most NWPs require the applicant to submit a Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) to the applicable USACE office. This notification must include the proposed project, proposed jurisdictional impacts, existing conditions, applicant contact information, a mitigation plan, if required, and a delineation of affected wetlands. The USACE will request a review of the PCN by other resource agencies such as the USFWS, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State Historic Preservation Office. The USACE has 45 days to review a PCN for completeness.

Anticipated USACE Permit Requirements

Should impacts to jurisdictional areas be unavoidable, the project should be eligible for a NWP depending on the type and extent of impacts. Potentially applicable NWPs include NWP 57 (electric utility line and telecommunications activities). However, final permit evaluation cannot be conducted until a final construction plan has been prepared for each project.

NWP 57 Summary

The USACE permits minor impacts to jurisdictional areas for utility line activities such as overhead utility lines, substations, access roads, and foundations for towers, poles, and anchors under this permit. Impacts typically authorized under this permit include construction, maintenance, repair, and removal of utility lines and associated facilities in waters of the U.S. and construction of utility line areas. Albeit not all inclusive, please note the following major requirements of NWP 57.

- A PCN is required for use of this permit if the following conditions are met:
 - A Section 10 permit is required
 - Activities that result in greater than 0.1 acre of impact to wetlands or 0.01 acre of stream
- Mitigation is required for impacts exceeding 0.1 acre of wetland or 0.01 acre of stream.

Georgia EPD/State Waters Requiring a Buffer

State waters are defined as “any and all rivers, streams, creeks, branches, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, drainage systems, springs, wells, and other bodies of surface or subsurface water, natural and artificial, lying within or forming a part of the boundaries of the State which are not entirely confined and retained completely upon the property of a single individual, partnership, or corporation, except as may be defined in O.C.G.A. 12-7-17(8).

No streams within the survey areas are designated trout streams. One hundred and sixty-one (161) identified intermittent streams, perennial streams, and open waters are state waters requiring a 25-foot buffer. The Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, as amended (Code Section 12-7-6(15)) prohibits land disturbing activities as horizontally measured within 25 feet of

state waters (warm waters) and within 50 feet of trout waters, unless a variance is obtained from the Director of the EPD for non-exempt activities. In many cases, EPD's authority for delineation of state waters is promulgated down to local issuing authorities (LIA), which administer the permitting process and issue Land Disturbance Permits (LDP's). Stream buffers are measured horizontally from the point where vegetation has been wrested by normal stream flow.

Should the project require non-exempt stream buffer disturbance activities, a stream buffer variance may be required. The stream buffer variance application process requires review of the completed Erosion, Sedimentation, and Pollution Control Plan for the project by EPD along with a comment/review period. Typical approval time for a non-controversial stream buffer variance is approximately 4.5 to 6 months.

Conclusion

Field studies were conducted within the East Central Georgia Reliability Project survey areas. During field investigations, 94 wetlands, 189 streams/open waters, and 90 non-jurisdictional gully/erosional features were identified within the survey areas.

No protected species were observed within the survey areas. Potential habitat was identified within the survey areas for the monarch butterfly, tricolored bat, pink lady slipper, and Altamaha shiner. It is expected that the tricolored bat, currently a proposed endangered species, will be listed by the USFWS prior to the construction of the ECGR projects and GTC is preparing and coordinating a BA for this species with the USFWS. It is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect this species.

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Munsell. 2000. Munsell Soil Color Charts, New Windsor, NY

East Central Georgia Reliability Projects

Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam Counties, Georgia

REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1 – Mixed Pine-Hardwood Forest



Photo 2 – Floodplain Habitat along Jacks Creek



Photo 3 – Agricultural Land – Active Hayfield



Photo 4 – Agricultural Land – Active Row Crop



Photo 5 – Early Successional Habitat



Photo 6 – Maintained Roadside and Transmission Line



Photo 7 – Maintained Transmission Line Easement



Photo 8 – Planted Pine



Photo 9 – Forested Wetland



Photo 10 – Forested Wetland



Photo 11 – Emergent Wetland



Photo 12 – Emergent Wetland



Photo 13 – Scrub-Shrub Wetland



Photo 14 – Perennial Stream – Jacks Creek

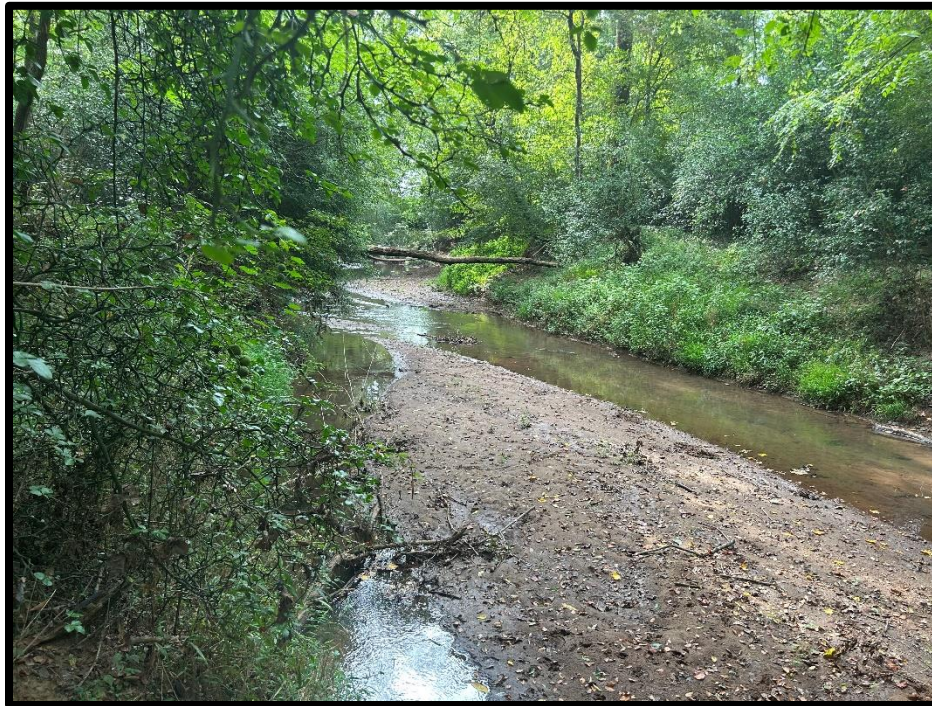


Photo 15 – Perennial Stream – Little Sugar Creek



Photo 16 –Intermittent Stream



Photo 17 – Intermittent Stream



Photo 18 – Ephemeral Stream



Photo 19 – Ephemeral Stream



Photo 20 – Open Water



Photo 21 – Open Water



Photo 22 – Gully/Erosional Feature



**Photo 23 – Osprey Nest on GTC Structure #11 – Rockville
Substation Survey Area**

East Central Georgia Reliability Projects

Walton, Morgan, Oconee, and Putnam Counties, Georgia

PROTECTED SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

Bostwick – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line

Walton and Morgan Counties, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:58:42 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0013903

Project Name: Bostwick - East Walton Transmission Line

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0013903

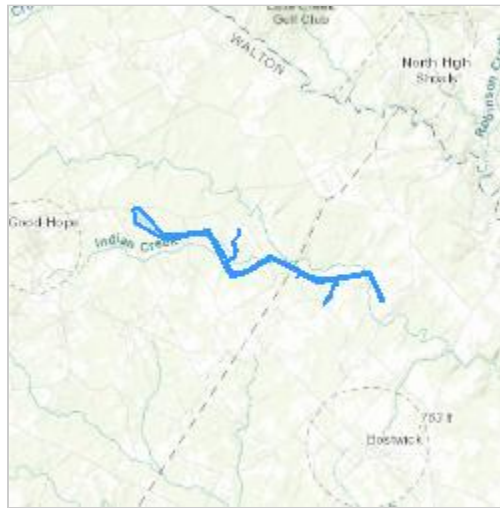
Project Name: Bostwick - East Walton Transmission Line

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: Transmission Line

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.790254000000004,-83.57817050341566,14z>



Counties: Morgan and Walton counties, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680	Breeds elsewhere

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

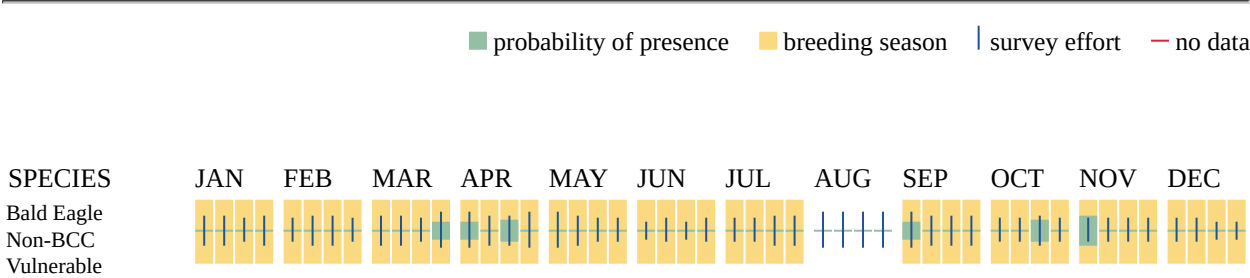
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Golden Eagle
Non-BCC
Vulnerable



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680	Breeds elsewhere
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<div>Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i></div> <div>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478</div>	Breeds elsewhere
<div>Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></div> <div>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431</div>	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

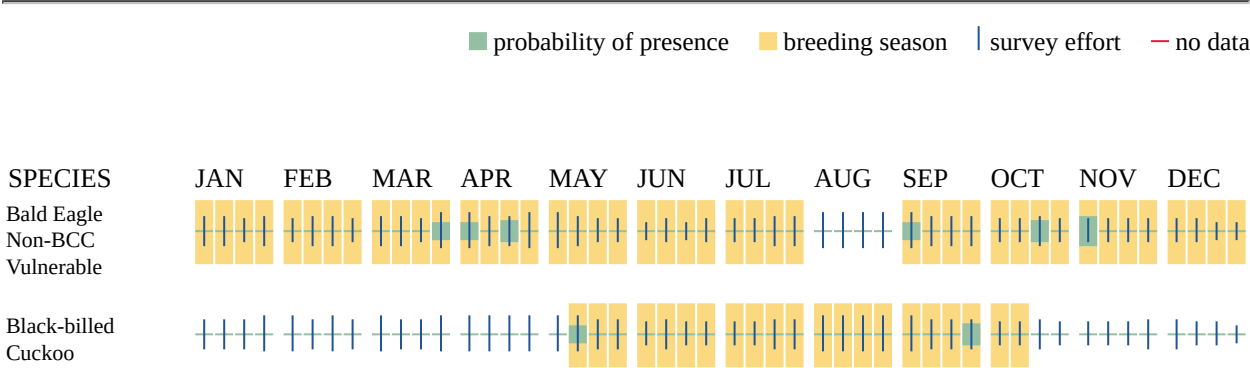
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



BCC Rangewide
(CON)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>

- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

FRESHWATER EMERGENT WETLAND

- PEM1Fb

RIVERINE

- R4SBC
- R2UBH
- R5UBH

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PSS1Fb
- PFO1A
- PFO1Cb
- PFO1C
- PSS1C

FRESHWATER POND

- PUBHh

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-159 Bostwick-E Walton TL in: Walton County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within d three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-159 Bostwick-E Walton TL Point 1 (Site Center: -83.538416, 33.779952 , WGS84)

- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 4.1 miles N of site in Turkey Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.2 miles N of site in Apalachee River
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 1.6 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.3 miles NE of site in Robinson Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

6.7 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 7.6 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

17.7 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Bare rock/lichens, pd granite outcrop (Granite Outcrop Rock/lichens)

2.7 miles N of site

Herbaceous veg., pd granite outcrop (Granite Outcrop Herb Community)

2.7 miles N of site

Shrub/scrub veg., pd granite outcrop (Granite Outcrop Shrub/scrub Community)

2.7 miles N of site

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 0.5 miles E of site

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 2.7 miles W of site

Nelson Park

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

East Walton – Rockville 500 kV Transmission Line

Walton, Morgan, and Putnam Counties, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:41:51 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0017875

Project Name: East Walton - Rockville Transmission Line

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 5 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Harperella <i>Ptilimnium nodosum</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3739	Endangered
Little Amphianthus <i>Amphianthus pusillus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6445	Threatened

FERNS AND ALLIES

NAME	STATUS
Mat-forming Quillwort <i>Isoetes tegetiformans</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/887	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider

implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680	Breeds elsewhere

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#), specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

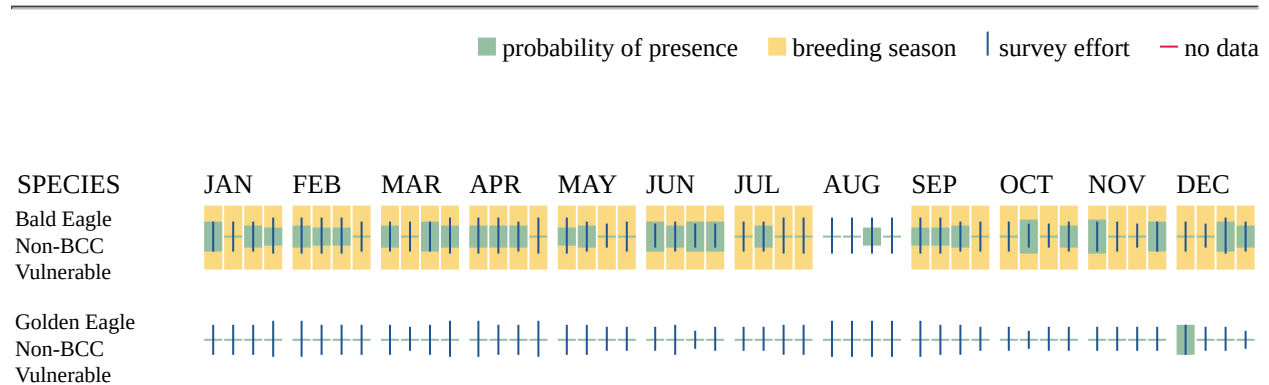
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

-
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Cerulean Warbler <i>Setophaga cerulea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2974	Breeds Apr 28 to Jul 20
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680	Breeds elsewhere
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Wood Thrush
BCC Rangewide
(CON)



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

RIVERINE

- R5UBH
- R2UBHx
- R2UBH
- R4SBC

FRESHWATER POND

- PUBHh
- PUBHb
- PUBHx

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PSS1Cb
- PSS1/3B
- PFO1C
- PSS1/EM1Fb
- PSS1F

- PSS1/EM1Cb
- PFO1A
- PSS1Fb

FRESHWATER EMERGENT WETLAND

- PEM1A
- PEM1Ad

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.
Name: Terri Ballard
Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200
City: Roswell
State: GA
Zip: 30075-3761
Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net
Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 18, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
Roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-161 East Walton - Rockville TL in Morgan County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 18, 2023. Within a three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-161 East Walton - Rockville TL Point 1 (Site Center: -83.372158, 33.551390 , WGS84)

Anguilla rostrata (American Eel) 10.7 miles SW of site in Hard Labor Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 0.5 miles E of site in Hard Labor Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 7.8 miles NW of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 0.9 miles NE of site in Apalachee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 0.7 miles NE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.7 miles NE of site in Robinson Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

0.5 miles E of site in Hard Labor Creek 0307010113

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

0.9 miles NE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 1.1 miles NE of site in Apalachee River

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) [HISTORIC]

14.3 miles S of site in Lake Sinclair of the Oconee River

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 10.7 miles SW of site in Hard Labor Creek

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

2.6 miles NE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 3.3 miles NE of site in Oconee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 1.8 miles E of site in Lake Oconee
Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 3.5 miles E of site in Lake Sinclair
 US *Amphianthus pusillus* (Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort) 1.9 miles NE of site
 GA *Cypripedium acaule* (Pink Ladyslipper) 0.1 miles SW of site
 GA *Draba aprica* (Sun-loving Draba) 1.9 miles NE of site
 GA *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (Bald Eagle) 2.1 miles SE of site
Hemidactylium scutatum (Four-toed Salamander) [HISTORIC] 1.4 miles NE of site
Hemidactylium scutatum (Four-toed Salamander) 1.7 miles SW of site
 US *Isoetes tegetiformans* (Mat-forming Quillwort) 2 miles NE of site
Perimyotis subflavus (Tricolored Bat) 2.7 miles NW of site
Perimyotis subflavus (Tricolored Bat) 2.3 miles SW of site
Perimyotis subflavus (Tricolored Bat) 0.2 miles N of site
Perimyotis subflavus (Tricolored Bat) [HISTORIC] 2.3 miles NE of site
 US *Ptilimnium nodosum* (Harperella) [EXTIRPATED] 2.1 miles NE of site
 GA *Quercus oglethorpensis* (Oglethorpe Oak) [EXTIRPATED] 2.6 miles NE of site

Rocky bank/shoal, brownwater stream () 0.8 miles NE of site

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 0.1 miles NE of site

2009007

2009073

2010007

2012012

2013033

2014002

Apalachee River Holdings

Athens Land Trust easement

Athens Land Trust easement

Athens Land Trust easement

Athens Land Trust Easement

Athens Land Trust Easement

Athens Land Trust Easement

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

B. F. GRANT WMA

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

GALT easement

GLT easement

Heritage Park

Mitchell

NALT easement

OCONEE WMA

OCONEE WMA

OCONEE WMA

REDLANDS WMA

REDLANDS WMA

REDLANDS WMA

REDLANDS WMA

REDLANDS WMA

REDLANDS WMA

Rock Eagle 4-H Center

Sam Mitchell

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

East Walton – Jacks Creek 230 kV Transmission Line

Walton County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:24:57 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0017877

Project Name: East Walton - Jacks Creek Transmission Line

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0017877

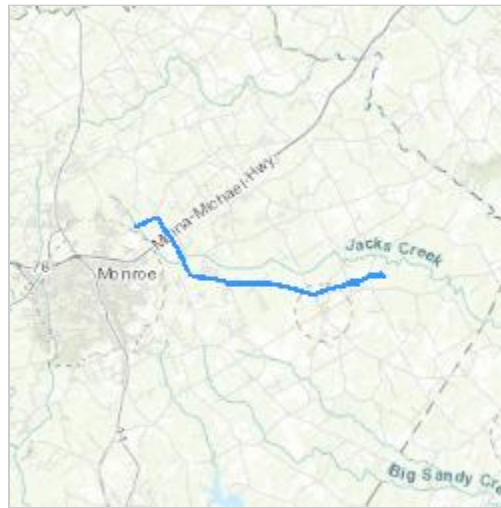
Project Name: East Walton - Jacks Creek Transmission Line

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: transmission line

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.8063559,-83.67460743399154,14z>



Counties: Walton County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

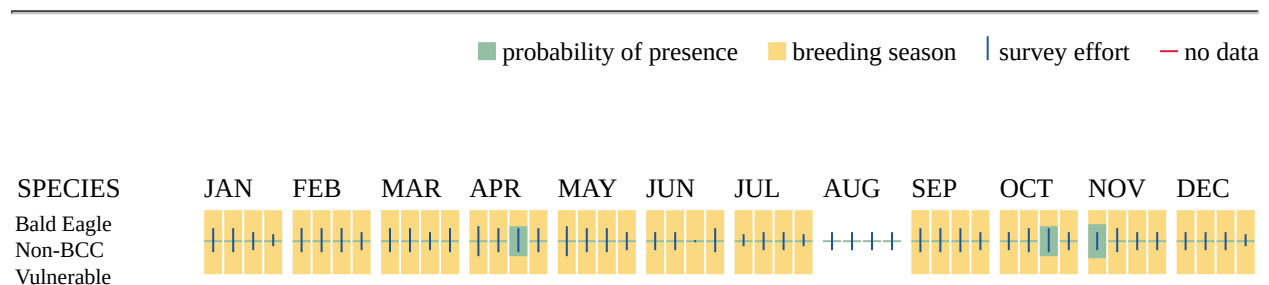
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>

- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental](#)

[Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

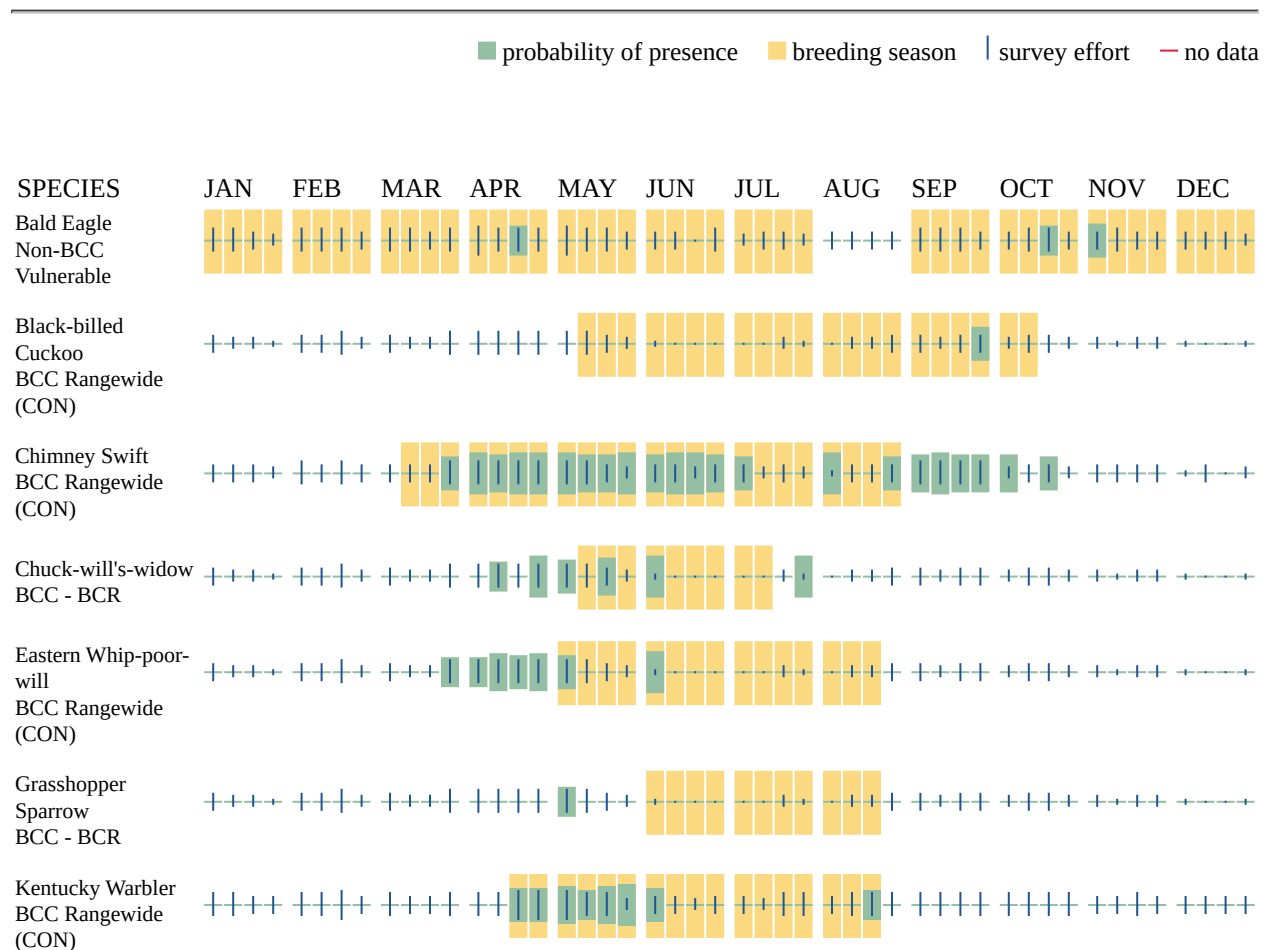
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

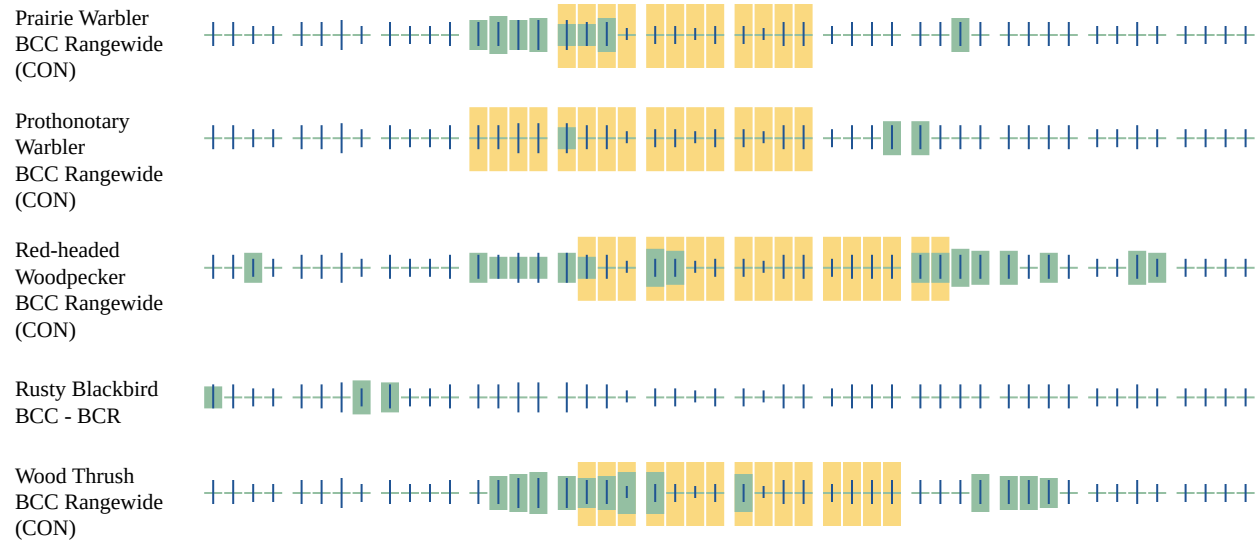
Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

RIVERINE

- R2UBHx
- R2UBH
- R4SBC
- R5UBH

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PSS3/FO1Ad
- PFO1A
- PSS3C

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.
Name: Terri Ballard
Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200
City: Roswell
State: GA
Zip: 30075-3761
Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net
Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 18, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
Roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-162 East Walton-Jacks Creek TL in: Walton County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 18, 2023. Within d three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-162 East Walton-Jacks Creek TL Point 1 (Site Center: -83.628021, 33.800642 , WGS84)

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.6 miles N of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 5.5 miles E of site in Apalachee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 7 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 6.9 miles E of site in Robinson Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

12 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 12.9 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

22.7 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Bombus fraternus (Southern Plains Bumble Bee) 1 miles S of site

Lampropeltis rhombomaculata (Mole Kingsnake) 0 miles SW of site

***Tyto alba* (Barn owl) on site, 33.812515, -83.656261**

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement
City of Monroe Greenspace I
greenspace program acquisition
greenspace program acquisition
Matthews Park
Nelson Park
Orion
0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee
(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

Bethabara – East Walton 230 kV Transmission Line

Oconee and Walton, Counties, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:16:23 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0065533

Project Name: Bethabara - East Walton Transmission Line 2024 Update

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISESCENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0065533

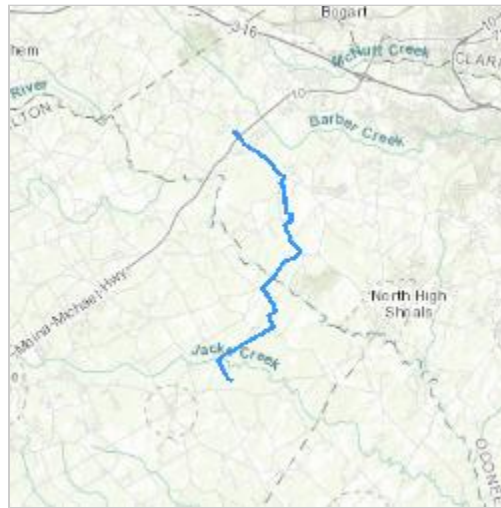
Project Name: Bethabara - East Walton Transmission Line 2024 Update

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: transmission line

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.84979575,-83.54626214474993,14z>



Counties: Oconee and Walton counties, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#), specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

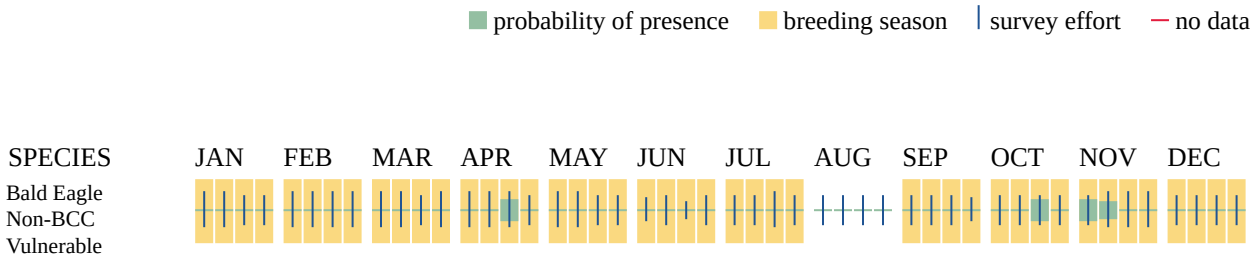
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



- Additional information can be found using the following links:
- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
 - Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidenta- take-migratory-birds>

- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental](#)

[Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

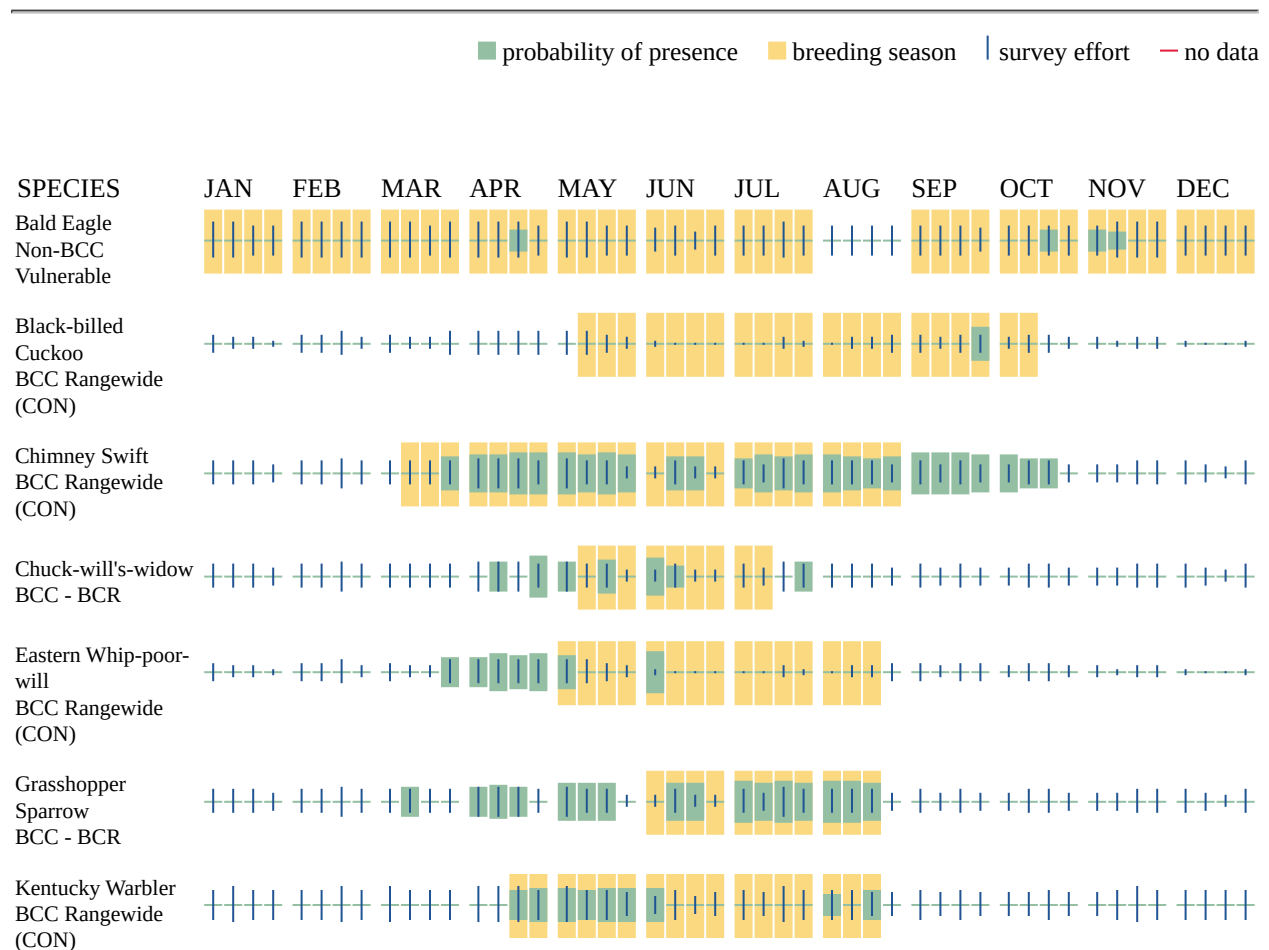
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

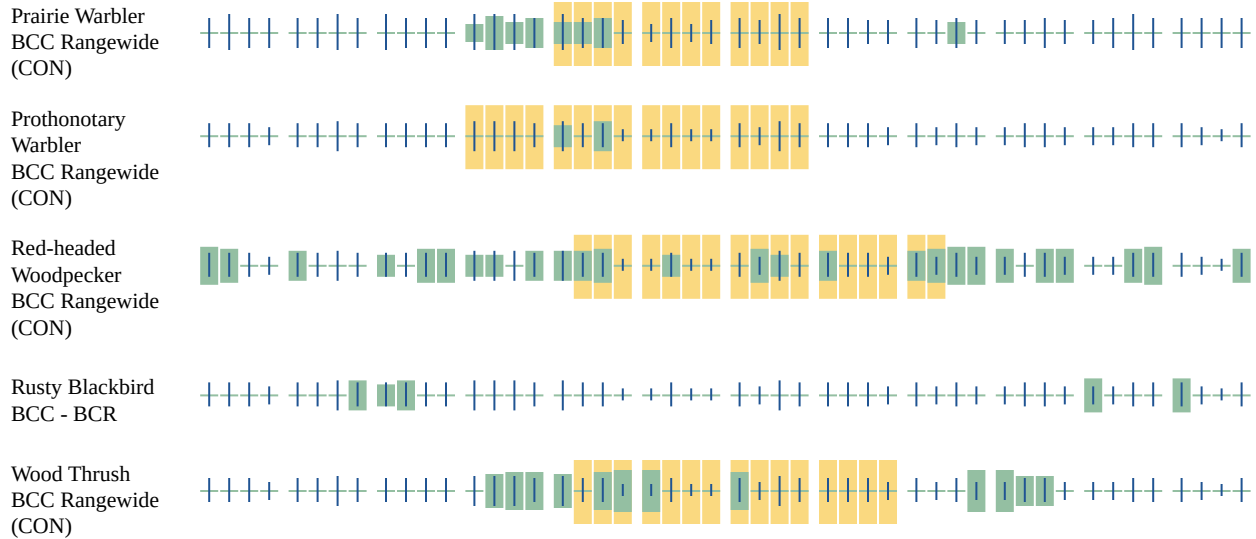
Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
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- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PFO1C
- PSS1C
- PFO1A

RIVERINE

- R2UBH
- R4SBC

FRESHWATER POND

- PUBHh

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
Roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-163 TL in: Walton County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within a three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-163 TL Point 1 (Site Center: -83.568371, 33.818516 , WGS84)

GA *Cambarus howardi* (Chattahoochee Crayfish)

11.8 miles E of site in Unnamed Middle Oconee River Tributary

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 9.7 miles E of site in McNutt Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 5.5 miles E of site in Barber Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 10.8 miles E of site in Calls Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 8 miles NE of site in Bear Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 8.7 miles NE of site in Middle Oconee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 1.1 miles NW of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 1.3 miles SW of site in Apalachee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 6.7 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 5.4 miles E of site in Robinson Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 10 miles NE of site in Turkey Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

11.8 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass) 7.6 miles NE of site in McNutt Creek

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 12.7 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 10 miles NE of site in Middle Oconee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

22.6 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Bombus fraternus (Southern Plains Bumble Bee) 0.1 miles SE of site

Bombus pensylvanicus (American Bumblebee) [HISTORIC] 1.2 miles E of site

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 2.2 miles W of site

2012108

2012112

2012112

BATH

DOVE CREEK

Nelson Park

restrictive covenant

restrictive covenant

restrictive covenant

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

0307010103 Middle Oconee River 1

(0307010103) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (

<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>

) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews

anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews

maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

DRAFT

East Walton 500/230 kV Substation

Walton County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:
Project Code: 2024-0013901
Project Name: East Walton Substation

05/28/2024 15:50:36 UTC

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0013901

Project Name: East Walton Substation

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: Substation

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.79614985,-83.58023553695354,14z>



Counties: Walton County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

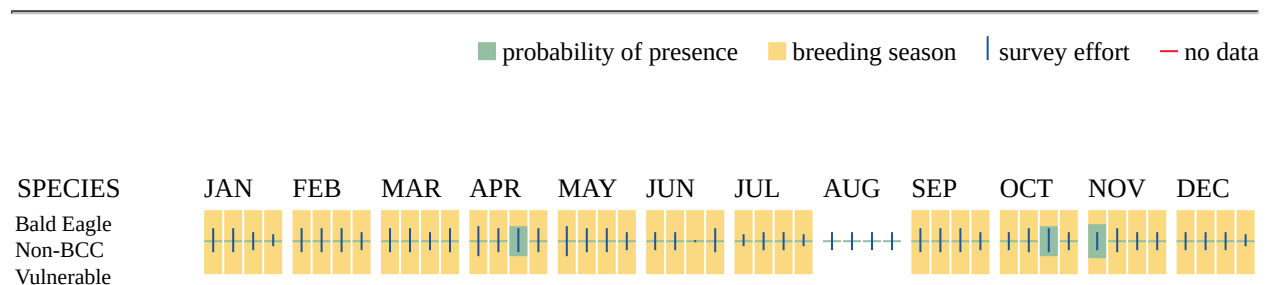
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>

- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental](#)

[Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

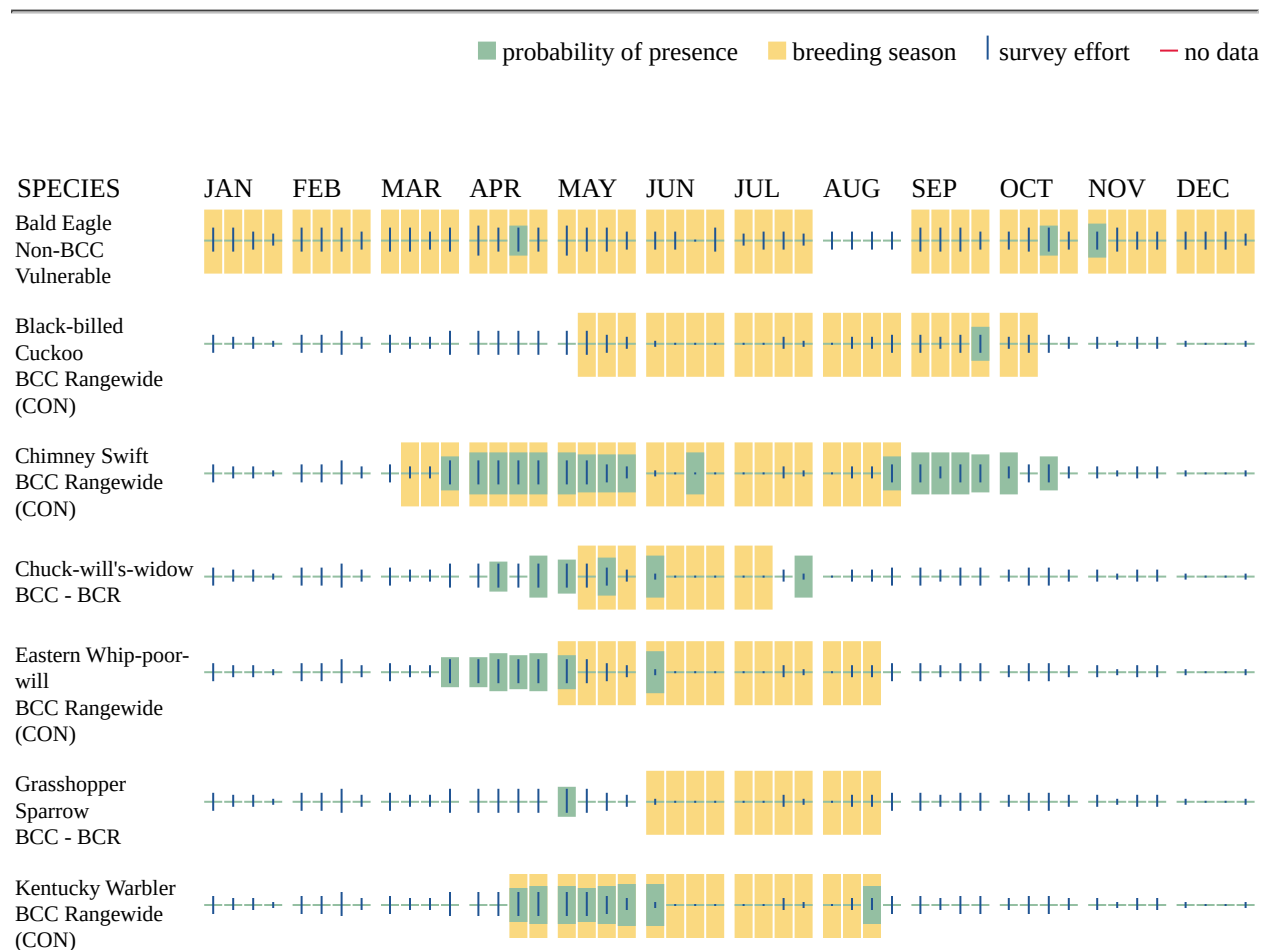
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

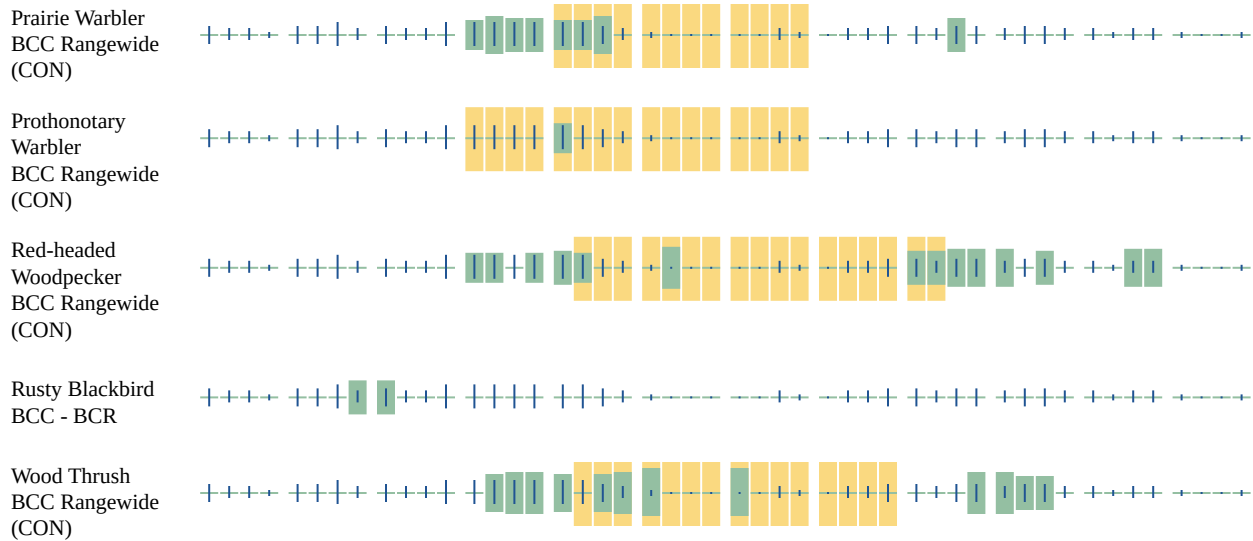
Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

THERE ARE NO WETLANDS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Georgia Transmission Corporation for Rural Utilities Service
Name: Heather Ahrens
Address: 2100 East Exchange Place
City: Tucker
State: GA
Zip: 30084
Email: heather.ahrens@gatransmission.com
Phone: 6783713358

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Department of Agriculture



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-158 in: Walton County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within a three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-158 Point 1 (Site Center: -83.580251, 33.796191, WGS84)

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.7 miles N of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 6.7 miles E of site in Robinson Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 6.6 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 5.3 miles E of site in Apalachee River

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

11.6 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 12.4 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

22.2 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 2.5 miles W of site

Nelson Park

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

Bostwick 230 kV Switching Station

Morgan County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:54:36 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0013910

Project Name: Bostwick Switching Station

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0013910

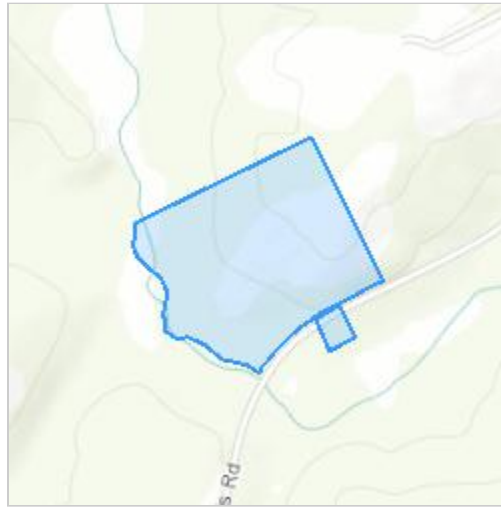
Project Name: Bostwick Switching Station

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: Switching Station

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.7696325,-83.51150947073492,14z>



Counties: Morgan County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<div>Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></div> <div>This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.</div> <div>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626</div>	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
<div>Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i></div> <div>This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.</div> <div>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680</div>	Breeds elsewhere

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

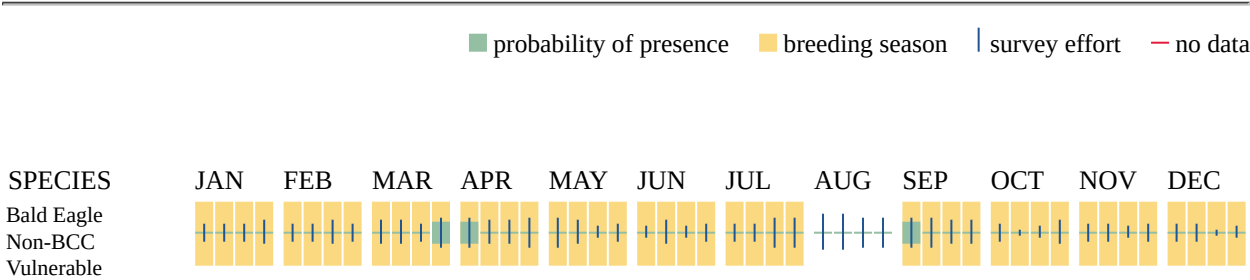
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Golden Eagle
Non-BCC
Vulnerable



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680	Breeds elsewhere
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<div>Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i></div> <div>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478</div>	Breeds elsewhere
<div>Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></div> <div>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431</div>	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

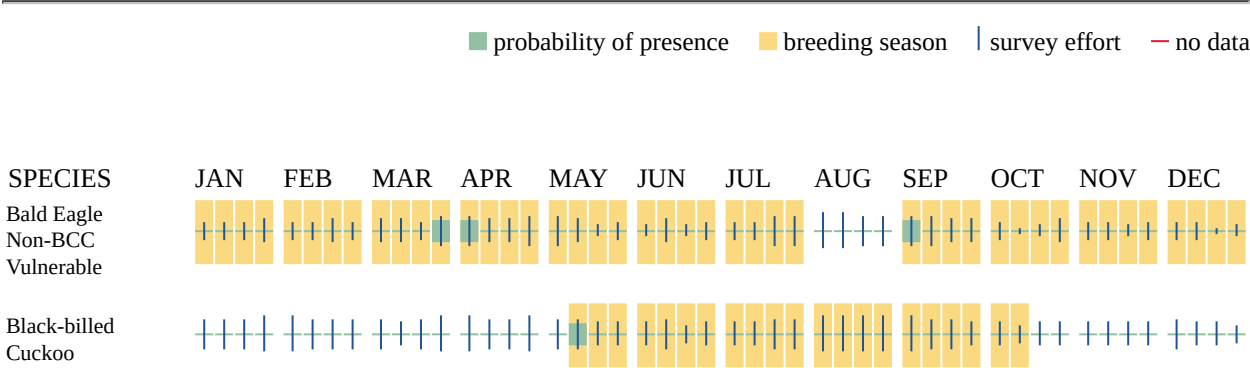
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



BCC Rangewide
(CON)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>

- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PFO1C

RIVERINE

- R2UBH

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-160 Bostwick SS in: Morgan County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within a three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-160 Bostwick SS Point 1 (Site Center: -83.511423, 33.769600 , WGS84)

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 7.5 miles NW of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.6 miles N of site in Apalachee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 1.4 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 3.6 miles NE of site in Robinson Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

6.5 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 7.3 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

17.4 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Tyto alba (Barn owl) 0.4 miles E of site

2013033

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

Rockville 500 kV Substation

Putnam County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:50:29 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0013915

Project Name: Rockville Substation

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISESCENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0013915

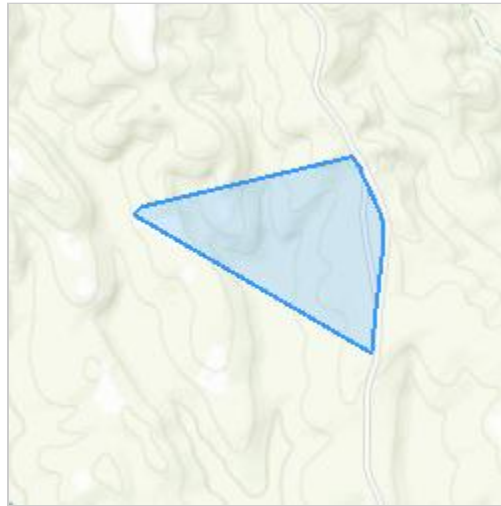
Project Name: Rockville Substation

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: Substation

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.326956800000005,-83.18795620799513,14z>



Counties: Putnam County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 3 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Harperella <i>Ptilimnium nodosum</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3739	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

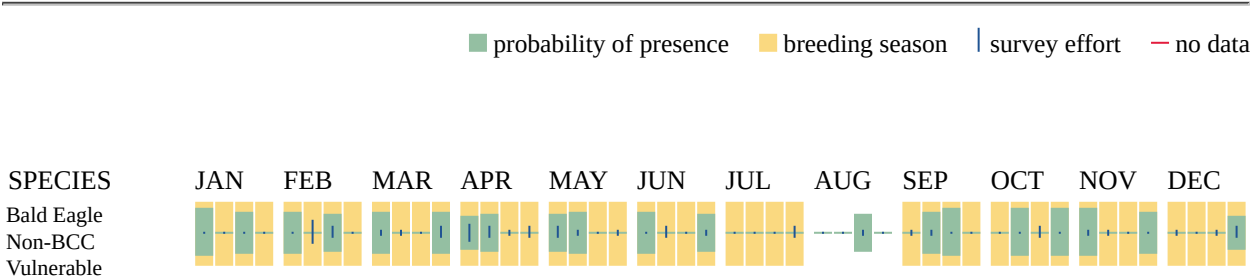
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

-
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

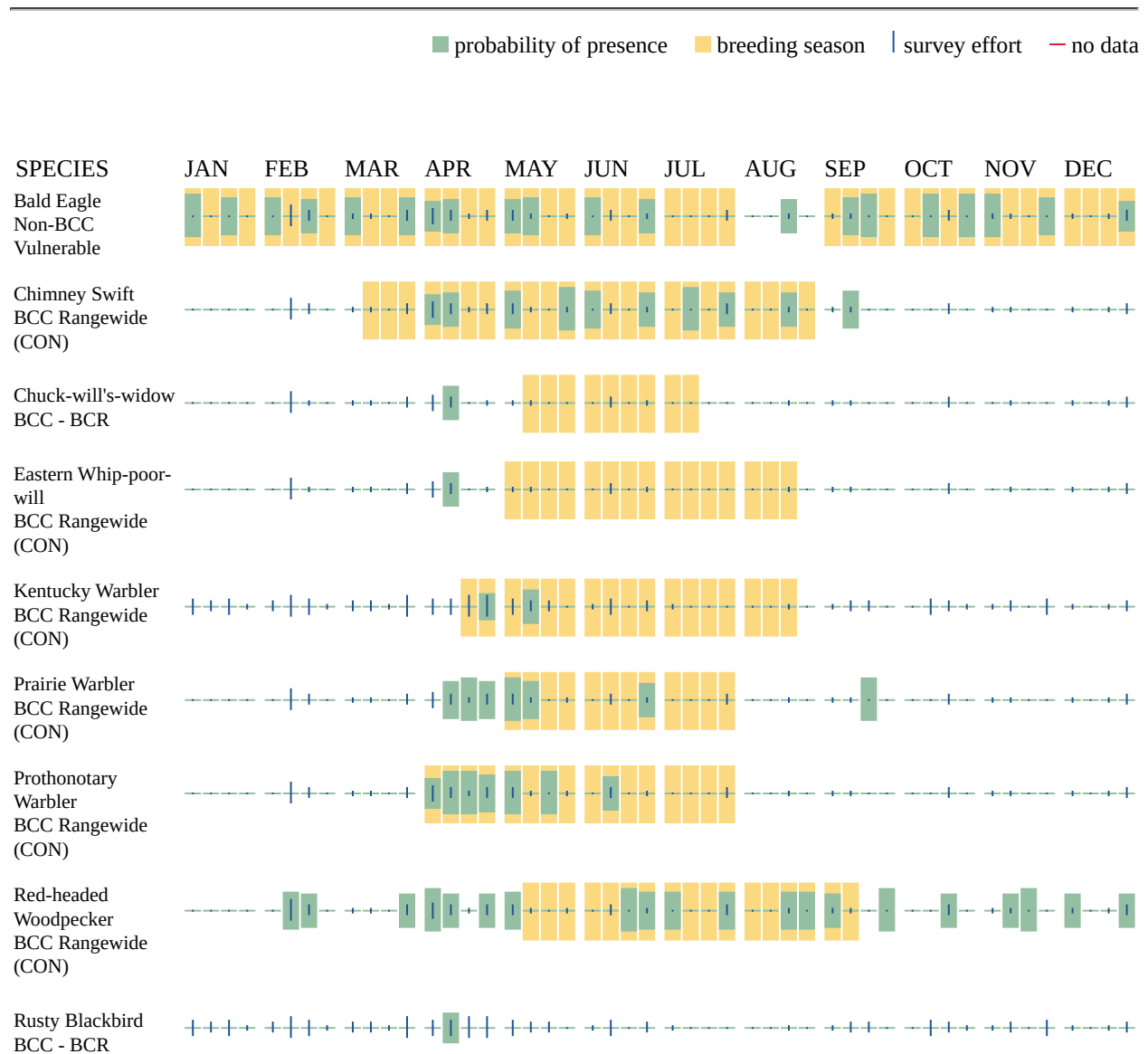
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Wood Thrush
BCC Rangewide
(CON)



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

RIVERINE

- R4SBC

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-161 Rockville SS in: Putnam County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within d three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-161 Rockville SS Point 1 (Site Center: -83.187944, 33.327494 , WGS84)

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) [HISTORIC]

13.9 miles S of site in Lake Sinclair of the Oconee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 2.7 miles NE of site in Oconee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 1.7 miles N of site in Lake Oconee

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater) 2.9 miles E of site in Lake Sinclair

US *Amphianthus pusillus* (Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort) 1.6 miles N of site

GA *Draba aprica* (Sun-loving Draba) 1.5 miles N of site

GA *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (Bald Eagle) 1.4 miles SE of site

US *Isoetes tegetiformans* (Mat-forming Quillwort) 1.7 miles N of site

US *Ptilimnium nodosum* (Harperella) [EXTIRPATED] 1.7 miles N of site

Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

OCONEE WMA

OCONEE WMA

OCONEE WMA

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

Jacks Creek 230 kV Substation

Walton County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:37:38 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0017876

Project Name: Jacks Creek Substation

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSÆTOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCEUS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0017876

Project Name: Jacks Creek Substation

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: substation

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.82277975,-83.69563113318685,14z>



Counties: Walton County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

THERE ARE NO BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES WITHIN THE VICINITY OF YOUR PROJECT AREA.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider

implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#), specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

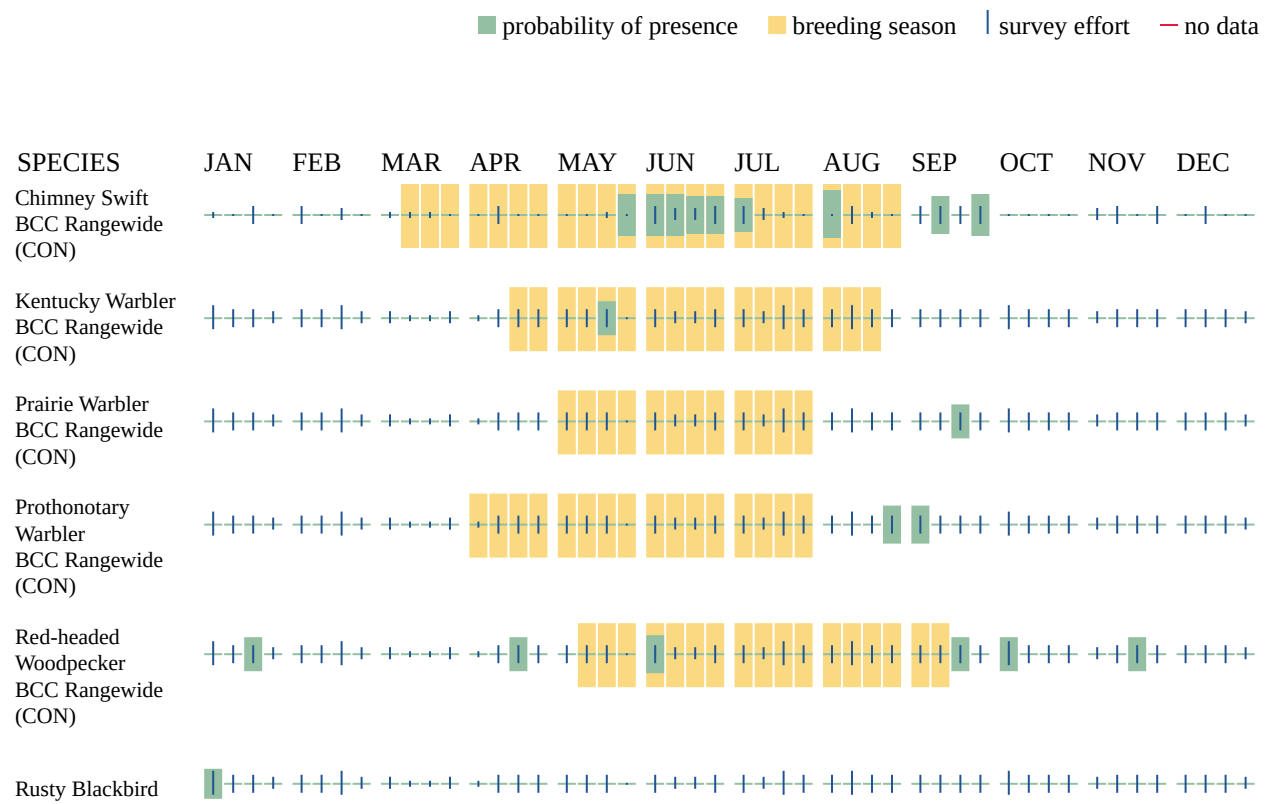
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

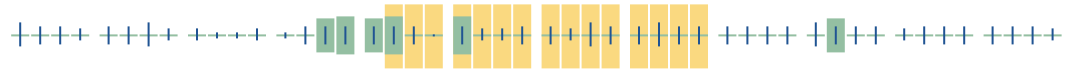
No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



BCC - BCR

Wood Thrush
BCC Rangewide
(CON)



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

FRESHWATER POND

- PUBHh

RIVERINE

- R4SBC
- R2UBHx
- R5UBH

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PSS1A

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 18, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
Roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-162 Jacks Creek SS in: Walton County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 18, 2023. Within a three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-162 Jacks Creek SS Point 1 (Site Center: -83.694788, 33.822220 , WGS84)

- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 7.7 miles E of site in Turkey Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 8.2 miles NE of site in Apalachee River
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 14.6 miles E of site in Jack's Creek
- GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 14.5 miles E of site in Robinson Creek
- Micropterus sp. 2* (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)
19.5 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109
- Moxostoma sp. 4* (Brassy Jumprock) 20.3 miles SE of site in Apalachee River
- Pyganodon gibbosa* (Inflated Floater)
29.6 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment
- Lampropeltis rhombomaculata* (Mole Kingsnake) 0.9 miles SE of site
- Tyto alba* (Barn owl) 0.2 miles E of site
- Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement
- Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement
- Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement
- Atlantic Coast Conservancy easement

City of Monroe Greenspace I
greenspace program acquisition
greenspace program acquisition
Matthews Park
Orion
0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee
(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.

Bethabara 230/115 kV Substation

Oconee County, Georgia

Protected Species Documentation



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Georgia Ecological Services Field Office
355 East Hancock Avenue
Room 320
Athens, GA 30601-2523
Phone: (706) 460-7161 Fax: (706) 613-6059



In Reply Refer To:

05/24/2024 00:46:32 UTC

Project Code: 2024-0013922

Project Name: Bethabara Substation

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for requesting information on federally listed species and important wildlife habitats that may occur in your project area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has responsibility for certain species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as amended (16 USC 701-715), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act as amended (16 USC 668-668c). We provide the following guidance for determining which federally imperiled species may occur within your project area and to recommend conservation measures to consider for your project if you determine those species or designated critical habitats may be affected by the project activities.

FEDERALLY-LISTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT

Attached is a list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in your project area. Your project area may not necessarily include all or any of these species. Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency, their designated non-Federal representative, or a project proponent to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit. If you need additional guidance to inform your effect determination, please contact the Service.

If you determine that your proposed action may affect federally listed species, please consult with the Service. Through the consultation (for projects seeking Federal funding or permitting) or technical assistance (for non-Federal projects) process, we will work with you to evaluate information contained in a biological assessment or equivalent documents that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a) (1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a Habitat Conservation Plan) may be necessary to exempt "take" of federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species when it cannot be avoided. For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's [Section 7 Consultation Library](#) and [Habitat Conservation Plans Library](#).

Action Area. The scope of ESA compliance includes direct and indirect effects of project activities (e.g., equipment staging areas, offsite borrow material areas, or utility relocations). The "action area" is the spatial extent of an action's direct and indirect modifications or impacts to the land, water, or air (50 CFR 402.02). Large projects may have effects to land, water, or air outside the immediate footprint of the project, and these areas should be included as part of the action area. Effects to land, water, or air outside of a project footprint could include things like lighting, dust, smoke, and noise. To obtain a complete list of species, the action area should be uploaded or drawn in IPaC rather than just the project footprint. Please note that a lead federal agency may consider an action area that excludes portions of the project footprint. In these cases, further coordination with our office may be required to ensure compliance with the ESA. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to coordinate with the lead federal agency to understand the action and action area being reviewed as part of ESA Section 7 consultation.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. An updated list may be requested through IPaC.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE

IF YOUR ACTION MAY AFFECT ANY FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND YOU WOULD LIKE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OUR OFFICE, PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE. A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE IS AVAILABLE BELOW AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES [PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review) PAGE ([HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/OFFICE/GEORGIA-ECOLOGICAL-SERVICES/PROJECT-PLANNING-REVIEW](https://www.fws.gov/office/georgia-ecological-services/project-planning-review)).

REQUESTS FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROJECT REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE USING THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW. ALL STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED TO ENSURE YOUR

PROJECT IS REVIEWED BY A BIOLOGIST IN OUR OFFICE AND YOU RECEIVE A TIMELY RESPONSE.

STEP 1. REQUEST AN OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH IPAC. YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED THIS STEP.

STEP 2. COMPLETE APPLICABLE DETERMINATION KEYS (DKEY'S, FOR SHORT)

STEP 3. SEND YOUR COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE TO GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV FOR REVIEW IF NO DKEY IS APPLICABLE OR CERTAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED (I.E. A SPECIES RETURNED BY IPAC DOES NOT HAVE A DKEY). A COMPLETE PROJECT REVIEW PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, INCLUDING ANY MEASURES INTENDED TO AVOID, MINIMIZE, OR OFFSET EFFECTS OF THE ACTION. THE DESCRIPTION SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT, SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION; DURATION AND TIMING OF THE ACTION; LOCATION (LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE); SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES INVOLVING DISTURBANCE TO LAND, WATER, AND AIR, AND HOW THEY WILL BE CARRIED OUT; CURRENT DESCRIPTION OF AREAS TO BE AFFECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE ACTION; AND MAPS, DRAWINGS, OR SIMILAR SCHEMATICS OF THE ACTION. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL AREAS OF A PROJECT AS ONE SINGLE SUBMISSION AND DO NOT SEPARATE INTO SMALLER COMPONENTS/SUBMISSIONS.**
- 2. AN UPDATED OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST AND DETERMINATION KEY RESULTS**
- 3. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (MAY INCLUDE HABITAT ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF LISTED SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA);**
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS OF THE ACTION ON SPECIES IN THE ACTION AREA AND, IF RELEVANT, EFFECT DETERMINATIONS FOR SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT;**
- 5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION RELEVANT TO ITS EFFECTS ON LISTED SPECIES OR DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT (E.G., MANAGEMENT PLANS RELATED TO STORMWATER, VEGETATION, EROSION AND SEDIMENT PLANS). VISIT THE [GEORGIA CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/STORY/CONSERVATION-TOOLS-GEORGIA\)](https://www.fws.gov/story/conservation-tools-georgia) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

6. IN THE EMAIL SUBJECT LINE, USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECT CODE FROM YOUR IPAC SPECIES LIST AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS LOCATED (EXAMPLE: PROJECT CODE: 2023-0049730 GWINNETT CO.). FOR GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS, PLEASE WORK WITH THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ECOLOGIST TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE USFWS TRANSPORTATION LIAISON.

THE GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FIELD OFFICE WILL SEND A RESPONSE EMAIL WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11988 AND 11990, FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MINIMIZE THE DESTRUCTION, LOSS, OR DEGRADATION OF WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS, AND PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL VALUES. THESE HABITATS SHOULD BE CONSERVED THROUGH AVOIDANCE, OR MITIGATED TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO NET LOSS OF WETLANDS FUNCTION AND VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY (NWI) MAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GROUND-TRUTHING TO IDENTIFY WETLANDS OCCURRING IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. THE SERVICE'S [NWI PROGRAM WEBSITE \(HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/NATIONAL-WETLANDS-INVENTORY\)](https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory) INTEGRATES DIGITAL MAP DATA WITH OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION. WE ALSO RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IF YOUR PROPOSED ACTION COULD IMPACT FLOODPLAINS OR WETLANDS.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

THE MBTA PROHIBITS THE TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS, NESTS, AND EGGS, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS PROGRAM \(HTTPS://FWS.GOV/PROGRAM/MIGRATORY-BIRDS\)](https://fws.gov/program/migratory-birds). TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO MIGRATORY BIRDS, WE RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OCCUR OUTSIDE THE GENERAL BIRD NESTING SEASON FROM MARCH THROUGH AUGUST, OR THAT AREAS PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION DURING THE NESTING SEASON BE SURVEYED, AND WHEN OCCUPIED, AVOIDED UNTIL THE YOUNG HAVE FLEDGED.

WE RECOMMEND REVIEW OF BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN TO FULLY EVALUATE THE EFFECTS TO THE BIRDS AT YOUR SITE. THIS LIST IDENTIFIES BIRDS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY THREATENED BY DISTURBANCE AND CONSTRUCTION. IT CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S [MIGRATORY BIRDS](#)

CONSERVATION LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/MIGRATORY-BIRD-CONSERVATION-DOCUMENTS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/migratory-bird-conservation-documents)).

INFORMATION RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES AND MIGRATORY BIRDS CAN BE FOUND AT THE SERVICE'S **AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS LIBRARY COLLECTION ([HTTPS://FWS.GOV/LIBRARY/ COLLECTIONS/AVOIDING-AND-MINIMIZING-INCIDENTAL-TAKE-MIGRATORY-BIRDS](https://fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds))**.

BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES

THE BALD EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS*) WAS DELISTED UNDER THE ESA ON AUGUST 9, 2007. BOTH THE BALD EAGLE AND GOLDEN EAGLE (*AQUILA CHRYSAETOS*) ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT (MBTA) AND BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT (BGEPA). THE BGEPA AFFORDS BOTH EAGLES PROTECTION IN ADDITION TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE MBTA, IN PARTICULAR, BY MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO “DISTURB” EAGLES. UNDER THE BGEPA, THE SERVICE MAY ISSUE LIMITED PERMITS TO INCIDENTALLY “TAKE” EAGLES (E.G., INJURY, INTERFERING WITH NORMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR SHELTERING BEHAVIOR NEST ABANDONMENT). FOR INFORMATION ON BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, WE RECOMMEND YOU REVIEW INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE SERVICE'S **BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE MANAGEMENT LIBRARY COLLECTION**.

NATIVE BATS

IF YOUR SPECIES LIST INCLUDES INDIANA BAT (*MYOTIS SODALIS*), NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT (*M. SEPTENTRIONALIS*), OR TRICOLORED BAT (*PERIMYOTIS SUBFLAVUS*) AND THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT FORESTED HABITAT, TREE CLEARING SHOULD OCCUR OUTSIDE OF THE PERIODS WHEN BATS MAY BE PRESENT AND MOST VULNERABLE. FEDERALLY LISTED BATS COULD BE ACTIVELY PRESENT IN FORESTED LANDSCAPES FROM SPRING THROUGH FALL OF ANY YEAR. IN MUCH OF GEORGIA, OUR WINTERS ARE MILD ENOUGH THAT TRICOLORED BATS ARE LIKELY ACTIVE ON THE LANDSCAPE TO SOME EXTENT YEAR-ROUND. PUPS ARE INCAPABLE OF FLIGHT AND VULNERABLE TO DISTURBANCE FROM THE SPRING TO SUMMER. OUR RECOMMENDED SEASONAL CLEARING RESTRICTION WINDOWS DEPEND ON SPECIES AND REGION IN GEORGIA. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US FOR GUIDANCE.

INDIANA, NORTHERN LONG-EARED, TRICOLORED, AND GRAY (*M. GRISCESENS*) BATS ARE ALL KNOWN TO UTILIZE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS IN GEORGIA. IF YOUR PROJECT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OR ANY OTHER MODIFICATION OR DEMOLITION TO TRANSPORTATION STRUCTURES, A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL SHOULD COMPLETE A SURVEY OF THESE STRUCTURES FOR BATS AND SUBMIT YOUR FINDINGS VIA THE

“GADNR BATS IN BRIDGES” FORM IN THE SURVEY123 APP, FREE ON APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE FINDINGS IN ANY BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION THAT IS SUBMITTED TO OUR OFFICE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR CONSULTATION.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' [CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOLBOX](#) AND [BAT CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGES.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

ON DECEMBER 20, 2020, THE SERVICE DETERMINED THAT LISTING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY (*DANAUS PLEXIPPUS*) UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS WARRANTED BUT PRECLUDED AT THIS TIME BY HIGHER PRIORITY LISTING ACTIONS. WITH THIS FINDING, THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BECOMES A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING. THE SERVICE WILL REVIEW ITS STATUS EACH YEAR UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO BEGIN DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL TO LIST THE MONARCH.

AS IT IS A CANDIDATE FOR LISTING, THE SERVICE WELCOMES CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THIS SPECIES. RECOMMENDED, AND VOLUNTARY, CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR PROJECTS IN GEORGIA CAN BE FOUND AT THE [MONARCH CONSERVATION IN GEORGIA](#) PAGE.

EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE

OUR OFFICE HAS PUBLISHED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS TO ASSIST PROJECT PROPONENTS IN AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE. THE [VISUAL ENCOUNTER SURVEY PROTOCOL FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\) IN GEORGIA](#) IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROJECT PROPONENTS OR THEIR DESIGNEES TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE AT A PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. THE [STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE \(*DRYMARCHON COUPERI*\)](#) INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TRAINING THAT CAN HELP PROTECT THE SPECIES BY MAKING STAFF WORKING ON A PROJECT SITE AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE AND TRAITS. IN GEORGIA, INDIGO SNAKES ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE STATE-LISTED GOPHER TORTOISE (*GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS*), A REPTILE THAT EXCAVATES EXTENSIVE UNDERGROUND BURROWS THAT PROVIDE THE SNAKE SHELTER FROM WINTER COLD AND SUMMER DESICCATION.

SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

THE [RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SITING AND DESIGN OF SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA](#) (PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2023) ARE

INTENDED TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR IN GEORGIA. FURTHERMORE, THE [GEORGIA LOW IMPACT SOLAR SITING TOOL \(LISST\)](#) IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A MAP LAYER IN IPAC (FIND IT IN THE "LAYERS" BOX > "ENVIRONMENTAL DATA") TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGERS WITH THE DATA TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT MAY BE PREFERRED FOR LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. THE TOOL SEEKS TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH LESS IMPACT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSES AT-RISK OR HIGH PRIORITY NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND IN THE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/WILDLIFEACTIONPLAN](https://georgiawildlife.com/wildlifeactionplan)), AT GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION BIODIVERSITY PORTAL ([HTTPS://GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM/CONSERVATION/SPECIES-OF-CONCERN](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern)), GEORGIA'S NATURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GIS PORTAL ([HTTPS://WWW.GNAHRGIS.ORG/GNAHRGIS/INDEX.DO](https://www.gnahrgis.org/gnahrgis/index.do)) PAGES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES. WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED AND SENSITIVE SPECIES IN YOUR PROJECT AREA. FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION ON YOUR PROPOSED ACTIVITY, PLEASE EMAIL GAES_ASSISTANCE@FWS.GOV AND REFERENCE THE PROJECT COUNTY AND YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TRACKING NUMBER.

THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES GEORGIA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES' GENERAL COMMENTS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Georgia Ecological Services Field Office

355 East Hancock Avenue

Room 320

Athens, GA 30601-2523

(706) 460-7161

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2024-0013922

Project Name: Bethabara Substation

Project Type: Distribution Line - New Construction - Above Ground

Project Description: Substation

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@33.901106049999996,-83.5776266158619,14z>



Counties: Oconee County, Georgia

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 2 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act¹ and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats³, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are likely bald eagles present in your project area. For additional information on bald eagles, refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#), specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

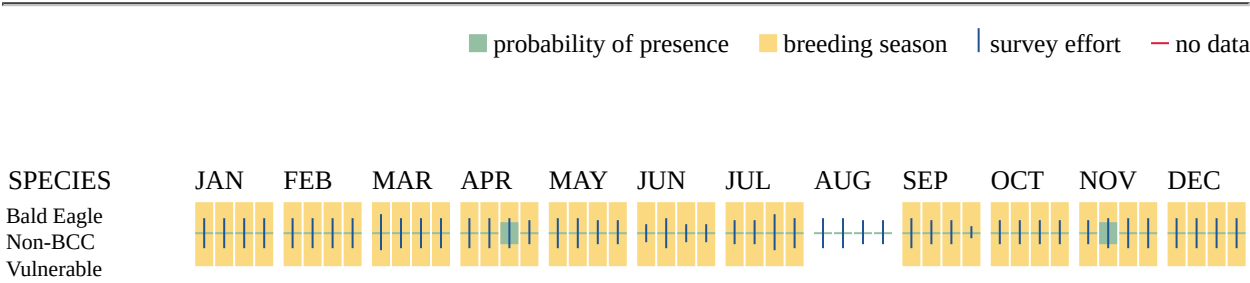
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



- Additional information can be found using the following links:
- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
 - Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidenta-take-migratory-birds>

- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats³ should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Kentucky Warbler <i>Geothlypis formosa</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9443	Breeds Apr 20 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

RIVERINE

- R4SBC

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Ecological Solutions, Inc.

Name: Terri Ballard

Address: 630 Colonial Park Dr Ste 200

City: Roswell

State: GA

Zip: 30075-3761

Email: terriballard@ecologicalsolutions.net

Phone: 7709987848



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

TED WILL
DIRECTOR

November 7, 2023

Mark Ballard

630 Colonial Park
200
Roswell, GA 30075

Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near 20245-163 Bethabara SS in: Oconee County, GA.

Dear Mark Ballard:

This is in response to your request of November 7, 2023. Within d three-mile radius of the project site, there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

20245-163 Bethabara SS Point 1 (Site Center: -83.577821, 33.901138 , WGS84)

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) [HISTORIC] Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 4.6 miles S of site in Turkey Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 1.3 miles S of site in Apalachee River

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 12.9 miles SE of site in Jack's Creek

GA *Cyprinella xaenura* (Altamaha Shiner) 10 miles SE of site in Robinson Creek

Micropterus sp. 2 (Altamaha) (Altamaha Bass)

17.8 miles SE of site in Apalachee River 0307010109

Moxostoma sp. 4 (Brassy Jumprock) 18.5 miles SE of site in Apalachee River

Pyganodon gibbosa (Inflated Floater)

29 miles SE of site in Lake Oconee -Apalachee River Impoundment

Bombus fraternus (Southern Plains Bumble Bee) 2 miles SE of site

2012108

2012112

2012112

DOVE CREEK

restrictive covenant

restrictive covenant

restrictive covenant

0307010109 Apalachee River 1, Lake Oconee

(0307010109) [SWAP High Priority Watershed]

Recommendations will be provided in completed letter.

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Wildlife Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>) or by contacting our office. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Anna Yellin, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3283

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Environmental Reviews
maggie.hunt@dnr.ga.gov, (706) 557-3228

Data Available on the Wildlife Conservation Section Website

- Georgia protected plant and animal profiles are available on our website. These accounts cover basics like descriptions and life history, as well as threats, management recommendations and conservation status. Visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern#rare-locations>.
- Rare species and natural community information can be viewed by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/>
- Downloadable files of rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county are also available. They can be downloaded from: <http://georgiabiodiversity.org/natels/natural-element-locations>.