



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1875 Century Boulevard
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R4/DH NRDAR

February 18, 2014

Memorandum

To: Field Supervisor, Panama City Ecological Services Office

From: Deputy Deepwater Horizon, Department of the Interior Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR), Case Manager *Deborah L. McClellan*

Subject: Informal Consultation and Conference Request for the Proposed Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp Project, Florida

As you are no doubt aware, on or about April 20, 2010, the mobile offshore drilling unit *Deepwater Horizon* experienced an explosion, leading to a fire and its subsequent sinking in the Gulf of Mexico (the Gulf). These events resulted in the discharge of millions of barrels of oil into the Gulf over a period of 87 days. In addition, various response actions were undertaken in an attempt to minimize impacts from spilled oil. These events are hereafter collectively referred to as the Oil Spill.

The Department of the Interior (DOI), acting through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) and other Bureaus, is a designated natural resource trustee agency authorized by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) and other applicable federal laws to assess and assert a natural resource damages claim for this Oil Spill. DOI is only one of several Trustees, including agencies of the State of Florida, so authorized. Consistent with their federal and state authorities, the Trustees are investigating the resource injuries and losses that occurred as a result of the Oil Spill and have initiated restoration planning to identify the actions that will be needed or appropriate to restore injured resources and to make the public whole for the injuries and losses that occurred. This process is known as a Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA).

On April 20, 2011, DOI, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Trustees for the five Gulf states affected by the Oil Spill entered into an agreement with BP, a responsible party for the Oil Spill, under which BP agreed to provide \$1 billion for early restoration projects in the Gulf to address injuries to natural resources caused by the Oil Spill. The subject project is being evaluated by the Trustees as a potential early restoration project. The early restoration project has been proposed in a draft early restoration plan that was released for public comment and review on December 6, 2013. If the Trustees select the project after consideration of public comment and a stipulated agreement is reached with BP, the early restoration project will be implemented by the State of Florida. DOI, acting through the Service, will be a co-Trustee for the project, if it is selected and implemented.

The above facts lead us to the conclusion that consultation and conference under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), is required for the

proposed project and we wish to engage in such consultation. Accordingly, we have reviewed the proposed Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp, Florida project for potential impacts to listed, candidate, and proposed species and designated and proposed critical habitats in accordance with Section 7 of the ESA. We determined the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, West Indian manatee, piping plover, Perdido Key beach mouse, and red knot (if listed) and have provided our analysis in the attached Biological Evaluation. Further, we determined that the proposed project will not adversely modify or destroy critical habitat for piping plover or the Perdido Key beach mouse. We have also reviewed the proposed project for impacts to bald eagles and migratory birds in accordance with the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) of 1940 (16 U.S.C. 668-668c) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712), respectively. Consultation will also be initiated with National Marine Fisheries Service for species where ESA regulatory authority is shared and in regards to Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1461 *et seq.*).

We request your review of and concurrence with the attached intra-Service Section 7 Biological Evaluation form describing the proposed project, potential effects, conservation measures and justifications for our determinations. If you have questions or concerns regarding this request for consultation, please contact Holly Herod, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at 404-679-7089 or holly_herod@fws.gov.

Attachment

**SOUTHEAST REGION
INTRA-SERVICE SECTION 7
BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION FORM**

Originating Person: Holly Herod; prepared by David Mills (representing the State of Florida Natural Resource Trustees – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)
Telephone Number: Holly Herod: 404-679-7089; Dave Mills 303-381-8248
E-Mail: holly_herod@fws.gov; dmills@stratusconsulting.com
Date: February 13, 2014

PROJECT NAME (Grant Title/Number): Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp Project

I. Service Program:

- NRDAR**
- Ecological Services**
- Federal Aid**
 - Clean Vessel Act**
 - Coastal Wetlands**
 - Endangered Species Section 6**
 - Partners for Fish and Wildlife**
 - Sport Fish Restoration**
 - Wildlife Restoration**
- Fisheries**
- Migratory Birds**
- Refuges/Wildlife**

II. State/Agency: Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

III. Station Name: DOI Deepwater Horizon Case Management Team, USFWS Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia 30345

IV. Location (attach map): See Figure 1 at the end of this document for a map indicating the proposed project area.

A. Ecoregion Number and Name: Southeast Region

B. County and State: Escambia County, Florida

C. Section, township, and range (or latitude and longitude): See Figures 1 and 2

D. Distance (miles) and direction to nearest town: see map (Figure 1)

V. Description of Proposed Action (attach additional pages as needed):

The proposed Big Lagoon State Park project would involve enhancing an existing boat ramp and surrounding facilities in the Big Lagoon State Park in Escambia County (see Figure 1 for general

project location). The proposed improvements would include adding an additional lane to the boat ramp, expanding boat trailer parking, and improving traffic circulation at the boat ramp by reconfiguring the launch/tow out area to accommodate two vehicles at the same time. Figure 2 provides a more detailed view of the boat ramp and project work area and Figure 3 provides a view looking down the existing ramp from the launch/tow area. In addition, work on this project would construct a new restroom facility that would connect the park to the Emerald Coast Utility Authority (ECUA) regional sanitary sewer collection system. As part of this work, which will require establishing water/wastewater connections to the site, electrical utility access may also be upgraded and reconfigured during construction based on final design needs and opportunities.

Detailed construction methods and plans have not yet been developed and would be subject to the final design and contractor approach and associated permitting and review activities. Most of the project would involve terrestrial construction vs in-water work. Standard best management practices (BMPs) for this type of construction with limited in-water work would be used to minimize impacts (e.g., fencing in in-water areas, use of hay bales and other devices to limit potential runoff of material from the construction area into the water).

Mechanical excavation would occur on land and in the nearshore area (subtidal waters) during boat ramp lane construction. Some of the in-water portion of the existing ramp would be removed to allow for excavation and construction of the new ramp. The direct in-water portion of the proposed work would be limited to the renovation of the portion of the existing boat ramp that extends into the water and the equivalent portion of the new ramp to be constructed. Mechanical excavation may involve equipment such as an excavator, a backhoe, and a bobcat; some additional hand digging may occur. Ramp construction would likely require excavation in an area of approximately 500 square meters, of which a small portion would be in the subtidal area. Disturbed areas would be excavated to an average depth of 2 feet. Materials planned for removal may include soil, sand, rubble, and asphalt. Posts may be temporarily placed as part of the construction effort (e.g., to secure concrete forms). These posts would generally be driven and have a narrow whole width (i.e., 1/4- to 1/2-inch consistent with a rebar or spike-type anchor). Construction-related materials such as sand, gravel, and concrete forms may be staged on the surface of the site in developed areas (e.g., part of the existing paved parking area – see Figure 2) to avoid additional surface disturbance.

Standard construction materials would be used for the boat trailer parking expansion and restroom facility construction. The parking expansion is expected to incorporate a mix of asphalt for primary areas and gravel for secondary parking areas. Sidewalks and landscaped areas would be determined as part of the final design; however, it is anticipated that both would be installed to ease pedestrian travel and improve safety. No new lighting is proposed. For the expansion of the boat trailer parking lot and installation of the sewer line, minimal spoil or borrow areas for fill would be needed. Borrow or fill would either come from an on-site source or a permitted off-site, commercial source as needed. A mix of heavy equipment and specific equipment for various activities would be required (e.g., backhoe/excavator, paving equipment, and compacting equipment).

Construction could occur at any time but would ideally take place during the time of year when recreation use is lowest to minimize impacts to boat ramp users. Construction work is expected to take up to 1 year to complete.

VI. Description of the Project Area and Habitat (attach additional pages as needed):

Big Lagoon State Park is located at 12301 Gulf Beach Highway, approximately 10 miles southwest of the city of Pensacola in Escambia County, Florida. The Park is on the northern shoreline and west end of Big Lagoon, just east of the Gulf Beach Highway (State Highway 292) and south of County Route 292A (see Figure 1) (Florida Department of Environmental Protection [FDEP], 2013). Big Lagoon is part of the Pensacola Bay system.

The Park separates the mainland from Perdido Key and the Gulf of Mexico, and consists of approximately 655 upland acres and two bodies of water (the freshwater Long Pond and the saltwater Grand Lagoon Lake). It contains beaches, shallow bays, open woodlands, an observation tower, boardwalks, nature trails, camping areas, picnic areas, an amphitheater, and the boat ramp (see Figure 2) that provides easy access to Big Lagoon (FDEP, 2013). The Park preserves a natural area along the north shoreline of Big Lagoon and the Intracoastal Waterway, providing general wildlife and plant habitat and preserving large wetland expanses.

The boat ramp is in the west portion of the Park, along West Beach. Boats that launch from this site are typically small motorboats (e.g., approximately 10-20 ft) generally expected to fish and recreate in Big Lagoon, though Gulf access is available. The defined project, see Figure 2, is limited to habitat that has been impacted by previous development of park amenities and work would be implemented in this affected area.

VII. Species and Critical Habitat:

A. Complete the following table:

Table 1, provided at the end of this document, provides a summary of the different species that were identified and initially considered for the project's potential impacts. The information in this table was adopted from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Panama City office website: <http://www.fws.gov/panamacity/specieslist.html> which provides a county-based list of federal threatened, endangered, and other species of concern likely to occur in the Florida Panhandle.

VIII. Determination of Effects:

A. Explanation of effects of the action on species and critical habitats in item VII.A (attach additional pages as needed):

Table 2 presents a summary of the potential species/critical habitat that could be impacted from the proposed boat ramp project. The species/critical habitat in Table 2 were identified after considering where there was potential overlap from information on identified natural communities in Table 1 with the potential locations where the project could be implemented and areas adjacent to the immediate project locations.

Table 2. Potential Impacts to Species/Critical Habitats

SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT	SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT IMPACTS
Green turtle ^a , Hawksbill turtle ^a , Kemp's ridley turtle; Leatherback turtle ^a , Loggerhead turtle	<p>Any potential affects to in-water sea turtles will be evaluated by National Marine Fisheries Service.</p> <p>Sea turtle nesting is not expected in the project area because of its shoreside location within the Big Lagoon portion of Pensacola Bay and lack of suitable nesting habitat. Rather the turtles use the beaches directly along the Gulf Coast for nesting. Therefore, no effects to sea turtles in terrestrial habitats are expected.</p> <p>No proposed or designated critical habitat for sea turtles occurs within the action area; including the limited area of in-water work, therefore, none will be adversely modified or destroyed.</p>
West Indian manatee	<p>Escambia county is not part of the 36 Florida counties that are identified as being counties where manatees regularly occur in coastal and inland waters (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2011). However, manatees could be present in the project waters.</p> <p>The main risk to manatees during implementation and use of this project would come from collisions with any vessel/equipment during construction or visitor use. Because of the conservation measures described below, we have determined the risk of potential effects to manatees from the proposed project is insignificant and discountable.</p>
Piping plover	<p>The main risk to piping plovers during construction and use of the ramp is from human disturbance while resting or foraging in habitats adjacent and near the project area. The proposed project could result in short term increases in noise which could startle nearby individuals, though we would expect normal activity to resume within minutes or cause the plovers to move to a nearby area. Because other foraging/resting habitats, including critical habitat, are nearby (less than two miles) we would expect this temporary displacement to be within normal movement patterns and consider this effect insignificant and discountable. In addition, conservation measures below are expected to minimize the risk of disturbance from visitors boating from the ramp to nearby locations, such as Perdido Key, to the piping plover such that effects are insignificant and discountable.</p> <p>Piping plover critical habitat is not designated in the action area but is approximately 1,600 meters from the action area. If plovers were using the action area during construction, we would expect them to move to the nearby critical habitat which is more suitable for foraging and resting. The primary constituent elements (PCEs) of wintering piping plover critical habitat include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Intertidal flats with sand or mud flats (or both) with no or sparse emergent vegetation. 2) Adjacent unvegetated or sparsely vegetated sand, mud, or algal flats above high tide are also important, especially for roosting piping plovers. Such

SPECIES/CRITICAL	SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT IMPACTS
	<p>sites may have debris, detritus, or microtopographic relief (less than 50 cm above substrate surface) offering refuge from high winds and cold weather.</p> <p>3) Important components of the beach/dune ecosystem include surf-cast algae, sparsely vegetated back beach and salterns, spits, and washover areas.</p> <p>4) Washover areas are broad, unvegetated zones, with little or no topographic relief, that are formed and maintained by the action of hurricanes, storm surge, or other extreme wave action.</p> <p>Project construction will not adversely modify or destroy critical habitat for piping plover because the construction work will not be taking place in any of the habitats listed above nor are temporary construction impacts expected to alter any of the PCEs..</p>
Red knot	<p>As of October 2, 2013, no bird observations (ebird.org) have reported from Big Lagoon State Park; however, red knots have been observed using Gulf Islands National Seashore which is approximately 2,000 meters from Big Lagoon (across the lagoon). The main risk to red knots is from human disturbance from construction or use of the ramp while red knots are resting and foraging in habitats adjacent or near the project area. The proposed project could result in short term increases in noise which could startle individuals, though we would expect normal activity to resume within minutes or cause the red knots to move to a nearby area. Because other foraging/resting habitats are nearby (less than two miles) we would expect this temporary displacement to be within normal movement patterns and consider this effect insignificant and discountable. In addition, conservation measures below are expected to minimize the risk of disturbance from visitors boating from the ramp to nearby locations, such as Perdido Key, to the red knot such that effects are insignificant and discountable.</p>
<p>Perdido Key beach mouse</p> <p>Perdido Key beach mouse critical habitat</p>	<p>Neither Perdido Key beach mouse or its critical habitat occurs within Big Lagoon State Park. Both occur on Perdido Key across the lagoon from the project site. Mice or their habitats could be disturbed if visitors travel to Perdido Key from the ramp. Conservation measures below are expected to minimize the risk of disturbance such that effects are insignificant and discountable.</p> <p>Primary constituent elements (PCEs) for the Perdido Key beach mouse critical habitat are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A contiguous mosaic of primary, secondary scrub vegetation, and dune structure, with a balanced level of competition and predation and few or no competitive or predaceous nonnative species present, that collectively provide foraging opportunities, cover, and burrow sites; 2) Primary and secondary dunes, generally dominated by sea oats that, despite occasional temporary impacts and reconfiguration from tropical storms and hurricanes, provide abundant food resources, burrow sites, and protection from predators; 3) Scrub dunes, generally dominated by scrub oaks, that provide food resources and burrow sites, and provide elevated refugia during and after intense flooding due to rainfall and/or hurricane induced storm surge; 4) Functional, unobstructed habitat connections that facilitate genetic exchange, dispersal, natural exploratory movements, and recolonization of locally extirpated

SPECIES/CRITICAL	SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT IMPACTS
	<p>areas; and</p> <p>5) A natural light regime within the coastal dune ecosystem, compatible with the nocturnal activity of beach mice, necessary for normal behavior, growth and viability of all life stages.</p> <p>Project construction will not adversely modify or destroy critical habitat for the Perdido Key beach mouse because the construction work will not be taking place in any of the habitats listed above nor are temporary construction impacts expected to alter any of the PCEs.</p>
Gulf sturgeon	NMFS is providing consultation for Gulf sturgeon and its Critical Habitat in the estuarine environment. As a result, Gulf Sturgeon will not be considered in the consultation with the USFWS.

^a Critical habitat areas for these species are identified at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/GISDataandMaps.htm>

B. Table 3. Explanation of actions (Conservation Measures) to be implemented to reduce adverse effects:

SPECIES	CONSERVATION MEASURES TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS
Green turtle, Hawksbill turtle, Kemp's ridley turtle, Leatherback turtle, Loggerhead turtle	To minimize risks in the aquatic environment, all construction conditions identified in the <i>Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Construction Conditions</i> (NOAA, 2006) would be implemented and adhered to during project construction to minimize the risk of collisions. NMFS will complete consultation for sea turtles in their estuarine and marine environments.
West Indian manatee	All construction conditions identified in the <i>Standard Manatee Conditions for In-water Work</i> (USFWS, 2011) would be implemented and adhered to during project construction. Signage will be posted at the ramp to remind visitors that marine mammals may be present and boating precautions may be necessary.
Piping plover	The presence of additional suitable habitat nearby and the infrequent nature of the construction noise or workers and equipment will minimize project risks during construction. Signage will be posted at the ramp to remind visitors that measures to protect listed species may be necessary if they are boating to Perdido Key.
Red knot	The presence of additional suitable habitat nearby and the infrequent nature of the construction noise or workers and equipment will minimize project risks during construction. Signage will be posted at the ramp to remind visitors that measures to protect listed species may be necessary if they are boating to Perdido Key.
Perdido Key Beach Mouse and critical habitat	Signage will be posted at the ramp to remind visitors that measures to protect listed species and associated critical habitat may be necessary if they are boating to Perdido Key.
Gulf sturgeon	See note in Table 2 above about the review of potential Gulf sturgeon impacts being coordinated through NMFS instead of through the USFWS.

VIII. Table 4. Effect Determination and Response Requested:

Species	Species Impacts					Response Requested
	NE	NLAA	MAA	JP	JC	
Green turtle	X					Concurrence – Terrestrial Habitats Only; Consultation with NMFS for Estuarine/Marine habitats
Hawksbill turtle	X					Concurrence – Terrestrial Habitats Only; Consultation with NMFS for Estuarine/Marine habitats
Kemp’s ridley turtle	X					Concurrence – Terrestrial Habitats Only; Consultation with NMFS for Estuarine/Marine habitats
Leatherback turtle	X					Concurrence – Terrestrial Habitats Only; Consultation with NMFS for Estuarine/Marine habitats
Loggerhead turtle	X					Concurrence – Terrestrial Habitats Only; Consultation with NMFS for Estuarine/Marine habitats
West Indian manatee		X				Concurrence
Piping plover		X				Concurrence
Piping plover critical habitat	No adverse modification					Concurrence
Red knot		X				Conference
Perdido Key beach mouse		X				Concurrence
Perdido Key beach mouse critical habitat	No adverse modification					Concurrence
Gulf sturgeon ^a	---	---	---	---	---	n/a – see table note a

^a NMFS is providing consultation for Gulf sturgeon and its CH in the estuarine environment so this species will not be considered in the consultation with the USFWS.

X. Bald Eagles

Are bald eagles present in the action area? No Yes

If “Yes,” can you implement the conservation measures below? Yes No

1. If bald eagle breeding or nesting behaviors are observed or a nest is discovered or known, all activities (walking, camping, cleanup, use of a UTV, ATV, or boat) should avoid the nest by a minimum of 660 feet. If the nest is protected by a vegetated buffer where there is *no* line of sight to the nest, then the minimum avoidance distance is 330 feet. This avoidance distance shall be maintained from the onset of breeding/courtship behaviors until any eggs have hatched and eaglets have fledged (approximately 6 months).
2. If a similar activity (like driving on a roadway) is closer than 660 feet to a nest, then you may maintain a distance buffer as close to the nest as the existing tolerated activity.
3. If a vegetated buffer is present and there is no line of sight to the nest and a similar activity is closer than 330 feet to a nest, then you may maintain a distance buffer as close to the nest as the existing tolerated activity.
4. In some instances activities conducted within 660 feet of a nest may result in disturbance, particularly for the eagles occupying the Mississippi barrier islands. If an activity appears to cause initial disturbance, the activity shall stop and all individuals and equipment will be moved away until the eagles are no longer displaying disturbance behaviors.

If not, contact the Service’s Migratory Bird Permit Office to determine how to avoid impacts or if a permit may be needed.

XI. Migratory Birds

- A. Identify the species anticipated in the project area and behaviors (breeding, roosting, foraging) anticipated during project implementation.

SPECIES	BEHAVIOR	SPECIES/HABITAT IMPACTS
Shorebirds and songbirds	Loafing/Foraging	Construction noise and increased human disturbance during construction and then during use of the boat ramp may cause birds to temporarily stop foraging or loafing or cause them to temporarily relocate. We expect that birds using habitat around the existing boat ramp are likely habituated to human activity and would not experience more than short-term impacts.
Seabirds	Resting, roosting, nesting	Seabirds forage in water and rest/roost in terrestrial habitats. Any startle effect will likely cause foraging or resting birds to move further down the shoreline within the park. Roosting should not be impacted because all

SPECIES	BEHAVIOR	SPECIES/HABITAT IMPACTS
		work will occur during the day.

B. If species or habitat impacts could occur, identify avoidance and minimization measures to prevent incidental take. Incidental take of Migratory Birds cannot be authorized.

SPECIES/SPECIES GROUP	CONSERVATION MEASURES TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS
Shorebirds and songbirds	We expect foraging and resting birds would be able to move to another nearby location to continue foraging and resting. If project activities occur during shorebird nesting season (February 15 to August 31), the FWC will be contacted to obtain the most recent guidance to protect nesting shorebirds or rookeries and their recommendations will be implemented.
Seabirds	Care will be taken to minimize noise and physical disruptions near areas where foraging or resting birds are encountered. All disturbances will be localized and temporary. The general behavior of these birds is to mediate their own exposure to human activity when given the opportunity, which they will have. Roosting should not be impacted because the project will occur during daylight hours only. Nesting should not be impacted because the project will not occur near nesting habitats.

XII. Signatures from the station preparing the Intra-Service Biological Evaluation:

/s/ Holly N. Blalock-Herod

Signature (originating station - preparer)

January 30, 2014

date

ESA Coordinator, Duff Case Management Office

Title

Rebecca M. C. C.

Signature (originating station)

Deputy Case Manager

2/18/14

date

This analysis resulted in a determination that no “take” of a federally listed species would occur. If any of the following occur, then there must be reinitiation on this action:

- (1) any unforeseen circumstances arise or incidental take occurs**
- (2) new information reveals effects of the Service’s action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this opinion;**
- (3) the Service’s action is later modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species or critical habitat not considered in this opinion; or**
- (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action.**

In instances where any incidental take occurs, the operations causing such take must cease until reinitiation.

If reinitiation is required, contact the Panama City Ecological Services Field Office about the action.

US Fish and Wildlife Service
1601 Balboa Avenue
Panama City, FL 32405
Tel: 850-769-0552

XIII. Reviewing Ecological Services Office Evaluation:

A. Concurrence _____ Nonconcurrence _____

B. Formal consultation required _____

C. Conference required _____

D. Informal conference required _____

E. Remarks (attach additional pages as needed):

Signature **date**

Field Supervisor **office**

References

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2013. Big Lagoon State Park. Division of Recreation and Parks, Florida State Parks website. Available at <http://www.floridastateparks.org/biglagoon/default.cfm>. Accessed September 24, 2013.

NOAA. 2006. Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions. <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/endangered%20species/Sea%20Turtle%20and%20Smalltooth%20Sawfish%20Construction%20Conditions%203-23-06.pdf> Accessed July 16, 2013.

USFWS 2011. Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work. http://www.fws.gov/northflorida/Manatee/Manate_Key_Programmatic/20130425_gd_Appendix%20B_2011_Standard%20Manatee%20Construction%20Conditions.pdf



Figure 1. General location of envisioned Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp Project.



Figure 2. Detailed view of Big Lagoon State Park boat ramp, docks, and parking area.



Figure 3. Detailed view of Big Lagoon State Park boat ramp and docks from launch tow-out area.

Table 1. Listed species of concern in the counties where activity for the Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp project could occur

Resource category	Common name	FWS status	State status	Natural communities	Species impacts (NE, NLAA, MAA)	Justification
Amphibians	Reticulated flatwoods salamander	E (CH)		Palustrine: wet Flatwoods, dome swamp, basin swamp, Terrestrial: mesic flatwoods (reproduces in ephemeral wetlands within this community).	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Arctic peregrine falcon	ce	E	Terrestrial: various, ruderal; winters along coasts.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Bald eagle	BGEPA		Estuarine: marsh edges, tidal swamp, open water; Lacustrine: swamp lakes, edges Palustrine: swamp, floodplain Riverine: shoreline, open water Terrestrial: pine and hardwood forests, clearings.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Least tern		T	Terrestrial: beach dune, ruderal. Nests common on rooftops.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Piping plover	T (CH)	T	Estuarine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Marine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Terrestrial: dunes, sandy beaches, and inlet areas. Mostly wintering and migrants.	NLAA	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Birds	Red knot	P		Estuarine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Marine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Terrestrial: dunes, sandy beaches, and inlet areas. Mostly wintering and migrants.	NLAA	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Birds	Red-cockaded woodpecker	E		Terrestrial: mature pine forests.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Southeastern kestrel	ce	T	Terrestrial: open pine forests, clearings, ruderal, various.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Southeastern snowy plover	ce	T	Estuarine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Marine: exposed unconsolidated substrate Terrestrial: dunes, sandy beaches, and inlet areas.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Stoddard's yellow-throated warbler	ce		Terrestrial: wooded habitats with Spanish moss, various.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Birds	Wood stork	E	E	Estuarine: marshes Lacustrine: floodplain lakes, marshes (feeding), various Palustrine: marshes, swamps, various.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat

Table 1. Listed species of concern in the counties where activity for the Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp project could occur

Resource category	Common name	FWS status	State status	Natural communities	Species impacts (NE, NLAA, MAA)	Justification
Fish	Crystal darter	ce	T	Riverine: alluvial stream.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Fish	Gulf sturgeon	T (CH)	SSC	Estuarine and Marine: sandy sediments for foraging and resting. Riverine: alluvial and blackwater streams.	---	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Mammals	Florida black bear	ce	T	Palustrine: titi swamps, floodplains Terrestrial: pine and hardwood forests.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mammals	Perdido Key beach mouse	E (CH)	E	Terrestrial: beach dune, coastal scrub.	NLAA	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Mammals	Santa Rosa beach mouse	ce		Terrestrial: beach dune, coastal scrub.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mammals	Southeastern big-eared bat	ce		Palustrine: various, floodplains Terrestrial: pine and hardwood forests, ruderal, various.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mammals	West Indian manatee	E	E	Estuarine: submerged vegetation, open water Marine: open water, submerged vegetation Riverine: alluvial stream, blackwater stream, spring-run stream.	NLAA	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Mussels	Choctaw bean	E (CH)		Riverine: Small to large creeks and rivers in sand to silty-sand substrates with moderate current. Panhandle drainages: Escambia, Yellow, and Choctawhatchee Rivers.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mussels	Fuzzy pigtoe	T (CH)		Riverine: small to medium-sized creeks and rivers with slow to moderate currents in sand and sand with some silt. Panhandle drainages: Escambia, Yellow, and Choctawhatchee Rivers.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mussels	Narrow pigtoe	T (CH)		Riverine: small to medium-sized creeks and rivers in stable substrates of sand, sand and gravel, or silty sand, with slow to moderate current. Panhandle drainages: Escambia and Yellow Rivers.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Mussels	Round ebonyshell	E (CH)		Riverine: medium-size drivers in stable substrates of sand, small gravel, or sandy mud in slow to moderate current. Panhandle drainages: restricted to the main channel of the Escambia River.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat

Table 1. Listed species of concern in the counties where activity for the Big Lagoon State Park Boat Ramp project could occur

Resource category	Common name	FWS status	State status	Natural communities	Species impacts (NE, NLAA, MAA)	Justification
Mussels	Southern sandshell	T (CH)		Riverine: found in small to medium-sized creeks and rivers in sandy substrates sometimes with some silt in slow to moderate current. Panhandle drainages: Escambia, Yellow, and Choctawhatchee Rivers.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Baltzell's sedge	ce	T	Terrestrial: slope forest, moist sandy loam; moist sandy loam.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Buckthorn	ce	E	Palustrine: hydric hammock, floodplain swamp.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Chapman's butterwort	ce	T	Palustrine: wet flatwoods, seepage slopes, bog, dome swamp, ditches; in water.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Cruise's golden-aster	ce	E	Terrestrial: coastal dunes, coastal strand, coastal grassland; openings and blowouts.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Curtiss' sandgrass	ce	T	Palustrine: mesic and wet flatwoods, wet prairie, depression marsh Terrestrial: mesic flatwoods.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Decumbant pitcher plant		T	Palustrine: Bogs.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Florida anise		T	Palustrine: floodplain forest, baygall Riverine: seepage stream bank Terrestrial: slope forest, seepage slope.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Florida pondweed	ce		Riverine: blackwater stream.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Gulf coast lupine	ce	T	Terrestrial: beach dune, scrub, disturbed areas, roadsides, blowouts in dunes.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Harper's yellow-eyed grass	ce	T	Palustrine: seepage slope, wet prairie, bogs.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Heartleaf		T	Riverine: seepage stream bank Terrestrial: slope forest.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Hummingbird flower		E	Palustrine: seepage slope, dome swamp edges, floodplain swamps Riverine: seepage stream banks Terrestrial: seepage slopes.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat

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Resource category	Common name	FWS status	State status	Natural communities	Species impacts (NE, NLAA, MAA)	Justification
Plants	Large-leaved jointweed	ce	T	Terrestrial: scrub, sandpine/oak scrub ridges.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Mountain laurel		T	Riverine: seepage stream bank Terrestrial: slope forest, seepage stream banks.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Orange azalea		E	Palustrine: bottomland forest Riverine: seepage stream bank Terrestrial: slope forest, upland mixed forest.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Panhandle lily	ce	E	Palustrine: baygall, dome swamp edges, mucky soil, seepage slope, edges of titi bogs, Riverine: banks.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Parrot pitcher plant		T	Palustrine: wet flatwoods, wet prairie, seepage slope.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Primrose-flower butterwort		E	Palustrine: bogs, pond margins, margins of spring runs.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Red-flowered pitcher plant		T	Palustrine: bog, wet prairie, seepage slope, wet flatwoods Riverine: seepage stream banks.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Silky camellia		E	Palustrine: baygall Palustrine: slope forest, upland mixed forest, Terrestrial: slope forest, upland mixed forest; acid soils.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Southern red lily		T	Palustrine: wet prairie, wet flatwoods, seepage slope Terrestrial: mesic flatwoods, seepage slope; usually with grasses.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Spoon-leaved sundew		T	Lacustrine: sinkhole lake edges Palustrine: seepage slope, wet flatwoods, depression marsh Riverine: seepage stream banks, drainage ditches.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Sweet shrub		E	Terrestrial: upland hardwood forest, slope forest, bluffs Palustrine: bottomland forest, stream banks, floodplains.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Trailing arbutus		E	Terrestrial: bluff, slope forest, mixed hardwood forest.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	West Florida cow-lily	ce		Riverine: shallow, clear, or tannic-acid tinted (blackwater) waters, often rooted in sandy substrate.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat

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Resource category	Common name	FWS status	State status	Natural communities	Species impacts (NE, NLAA, MAA)	Justification
Plants	White-top pitcher plant	ce	E	Palustrine: wet prairie, seepage slope, baygall edges, ditches.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Yellow fringed orchid		T	Palustrine: bogs, wet flatwoods Terrestrial: Bluff.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Plants	Yellow fringeless orchid	ce	E	Palustrine: wet prairie, seepage slope Terrestrial: mesic flatwoods.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Reptiles	Alligator snapping turtle	ce	SSC	Estuarine: tidal marsh Lacustrine: river floodplain lake, swamp lake Riverine: alluvial stream, blackwater stream.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Reptiles	Eastern indigo snake	T	T	Estuarine: tidal swamp Palustrine: hydric hammock, wet Flatwoods Terrestrial: mesic flatwoods, upland pine forest, sand hills, scrub, scrubby flatwoods, rockland hammock, ruderal.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Reptiles	Florida pine snake	ce	SSC	Lacustrine: ruderal, sandhill upland lake Terrestrial: flatwoods, xeric hammock, ruderal.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Reptiles	Gopher tortoise	C	SSC	Terrestrial: sandhills, scrub, scrubby flatwoods, xeric hammocks, coastal strand, ruderal.	NE	Listed natural community is inconsistent with the project habitat
Reptiles	Green turtle	E	E	Marine: open water; Terrestrial: sandy beaches; nesting.	NE	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Reptiles	Hawksbill turtle	E	E	Marine: open water; no nesting.	NE	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Reptiles	Kemp's ridley turtle	E	E	Marine: open water; Terrestrial: sandy beaches; nesting.	NE	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Reptiles	Leatherback turtle	E	E	Marine: open water; Terrestrial: sandy beaches; nesting.	NE	See Table 2, 3, and 4
Reptiles	Loggerhead turtle	T	T	Marine: open water; Terrestrial: sandy beaches; nesting.	NE	See Table 2, 3, and 4
BGEPA = Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, C = candidate, ce = consideration encouraged, CH = critical habitat, E = endangered, P = proposed, SSC = species of special concern, T = threatened.						
Source: This table reflects the information available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Panama City office website: http://www.fws.gov/panamacity/specieslist.html which provides a county-based list of federal threatened, endangered, and other species of concern likely to occur in the Florida Panhandle. Information downloaded March 13, 2013.						