



Control Number: 38230



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7887 U.S. Hwy. 87 N.
San Angelo, TX 76901-9714
26 September 2010

Public Utilities Commission of Texas – Central Records

Attn: Filings Clerk

1701 N. Congress Avenue

PO Box 13326

Austin, TX 78711-3326

Case No. 38230-802

To Whom It May Concern:

Please refer to documents submitted on 27 July (Case 38230-802) as to the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch's sentiments as a possible alternate route "a" (AC1) for the 345 kV transmission line as it extends through Fisher County. The RPQRR is on record opposing alternate route "a" (see item no. 802).

As we await the decision by the PUC on the final route selection, recent data collected on the RPQRR has relevance to your decision, specifically as it relates to the Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) (hereafter, "THL"). The THL is a "state-threatened" species; see attached notes including references to Texas Parks and Wildlife's classification and definitions associated therewith.

Beginning in 2009, herpetologists from the Dallas Zoo, and more recently Texas Christian University, have collected data on abundance of THLs. Their findings (see note attached from K. Karsten, TCU) indicate that the RPQRR has a very high, possibly record, abundance of THLs. During their most recent 4-day sampling effort, they captured, marked, and subsequently re-released 179 THLs. Given the THL's status as the official state reptile, we are quite proud of these findings.

Accordingly, we believe that the THL population on RPQRR is deserving of special attention, and protection, as these routes are deliberated. One more reason why we **oppose** siting the transmission line on alternative route "a" (AC1).

Respectfully,

Dale Rollins, Professor

Executive Director

Attachment

1569

Notes relating to abundance of Texas Horned Lizards on RPQRR:



From: "Karsten, Kristopher" <k.karsten@tcu.edu> Wednesday - August 25, 2010 12:32 PM

To: Dale Rollins <d-rollins@tamu.edu>, "LMLaCoste@ag.tamu.edu" <LMLaCoste@ag.tamu.edu> CC: "ruston17@yahoo.com" <ruston17@yahoo.com>, "Williams, Dean" <dean.williams@tcu.edu>, "Hale, Amanda" <a.hale@tcu.edu>, "Ferguson, Gary" <g.ferguson@tcu.edu>

Subject: Summary of samples from Rolling Plains Attachments: Karsten samples - RPQRR 25 Aug 2010

Please find attached a summary of the data we collected at RPQRR. Please let me know if you need any details of GPS settings (e.g., datum, projection) or have any other questions regarding the data. Also feel free to contact the project PIs, Dean Williams and Amanda Hale, if you have any other questions about the project.

Thanks again for letting us work with this population. I've never seen anything like it before. *It is just unreal how dense they are there.* (emphasis added - DR)

Relevant notes on biology/status of THL (*source:*
<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/species/thlizard/>)

Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*)

Other Names

Horny Toad

Texas Status

Threatened

Description

The Texas horned lizard or "horny toad" is a flat-bodied and fierce-looking lizard. The head has numerous horns, all of which are prominent, with two central head spines being much longer than any of the others. This lizard is brownish with two rows of fringed scales along each side of the body. On most Texas horned lizards, a light line can be seen extending from its head down the middle of its back. It is the only species of horned lizard to have dark brown stripes that radiate downward from the eyes and across the top of the head.

Habitat

They can be found in arid and semiarid habitats in open areas with sparse plant cover. Because horned lizards dig for hibernation, nesting and insulation purposes, they commonly are found in loose sand or loamy soils.

Distribution

Texas horned lizards range from the south-central United States to northern Mexico, throughout much of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and New Mexico.

Other

The Texas horned lizard currently is listed as a threatened species in Texas (federal category C2).

Regulations concerning T & E species in TX:

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/species/endang/regulations/texas/index.phtml>

State of Texas Threatened and Endangered Species Regulations

Animals

In 1973 the Texas legislature authorized the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to establish a list of endangered animals in the state. **Endangered species** are those species which the Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has named as being "threatened with statewide extinction". **Threatened species** are those species which the TPW Commission has determined are likely to become endangered in the future. Laws and regulations pertaining to endangered or threatened animal species are contained in Chapters 67 and 68 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Code and Sections 65.171 - 65.176 of Title 31 of the Texas Administrative Code (T.A.C.).