

Impacts of Data Centers on Wildlife



Wildlife Resources

Data centers

- Similar to other forms of commercial development, the impacts of data centers are:
 - Site specific
 - Tied to the location and size of the project
- They use large amounts of undeveloped land, mostly in rural areas near power stations.



Image courtesy of Hanwha Data Centers

What is the DWR's regulatory authority?

- The DWR serves the people of Utah as trustee and guardian of the state's protected wildlife.
- The DWR does **not** regulate development.
- We consult with developers and regulatory agencies, providing recommendations to help them voluntarily reduce the impacts of development on wildlife.



What impacts can data centers have on wildlife?

- **Mortality**
- Loss of habitat at project site
- Fragmentation and degradation of surrounding habitats



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DWR Impact Analysis Program

- There are five regional biologists and one program coordinator.
- The program evaluates projects and provides recommendations to **avoid, minimize** and **mitigate** wildlife impacts.
- We have provided recommendations on **98 projects** throughout the state this year.



Wildlife Habitat Analysis Tool (WHAT)

- Free tool for evaluating project locations
- Developers can enter a project boundary, and the tool will identify important/sensitive species and habitats in the project area
- Released in 2024



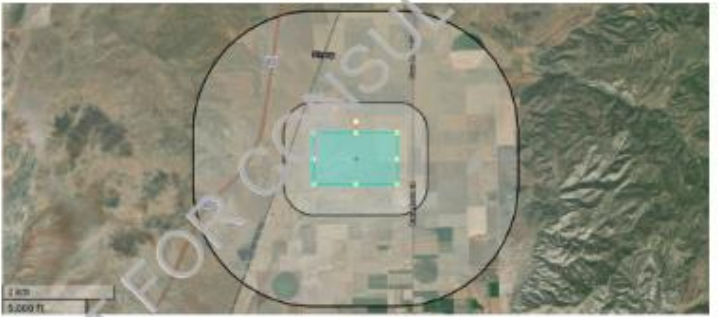
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Test

Location: Test
Description: Test



Project Area of Interest with a half-mile and two-mile radius.

Two-Mile Radius

Species Name	Scientific Name	UWAP Status	ESA Status	Last Reported Date	SDHM
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	None	None	2006-05-18	

How do we grow responsibly as a state?

- H.B. 16 and H.B. 412 require owners/operators of utility-scale renewable energy facilities to consult with the DWR about potential impacts to wildlife.
 - Both bills went into effect on May 6, 2026.
- What the bills did **not** do:
 - Grant the DWR authority to approve or deny any permits
 - Require facility owners and operators to implement the DWR's recommendations



Thank you!



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