

Central Avenue Bridge Project Nesting Bird and Bat Survey

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Client

City of Albuquerque

Highlights

- ◆ Performed biological survey services
- ◆ Developed mitigation measures
- ◆ Verified mitigation ensuring compliance

The City of Albuquerque is installing intelligent transportation systems (ITS) throughout the City as part of transportation congestion solutions. Prior to commencing construction of the conduit across the Central Avenue Bridge at the Rio Grande, DBS&A conducted a nesting survey to provide environmental clearance to the contractor. DBS&A inspected the conduit corridor for the potential presence of avian nests and/or bat colonies located within the area of construction, reported the results, and developed mitigation measures for the project.



Active MBTA-protected barn and cave swallow nests, and active bat colonies were documented in the biological survey.

The purpose of the survey was to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), an international law enacted to aid in the protection of migratory birds. Many bat species are known to occupy and utilize bridges for habitat, so DBS&A and other team members also conducted a survey for bats during the nesting survey. Documenting the presence of bats was important due to the ecological significance of the species, in addition to worker safety.

The DBS&A team conducted the pedestrian survey of the bridge and documented the presence of active barn and cave swallow nests and noted that while active bat colonies were in the bridge, none were within the project corridor. Following the survey, research was conducted to note the active nesting season of the swallows and the results were documented along with photographs and maps marked with locations in relation to the proposed conduit. Because swallows are a species covered under the MBTA, DBS&A researched and developed mitigation measures in cooperation with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and developed a construction schedule that would avoid impacting the active nests. Construction began after the nesting season ended, maintaining compliance with the MTBA. At the end of the anticipated nesting period, DBS&A followed up with two additional surveys to verify that the swallows had finished nesting.

