LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN SURVEY ON THE INTERNATIONAL ISOTOPE FLOURINE PRODUCTS PROJECT SITE – 2011

Prepared for:

International Isotopes Inc.

Prepared by:

Nancy S. Cox

SORA
P O Box 6557
Albuquerque, NM 87197-6557
(505) 345-2385

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PURPOSE OF WORK

International Isotope Flourine Products (IIFP) has conducted a baseline or pre-construction survey for the lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) (LEPC) at the proposed IIFP facility near Hobbs, New Mexico (Lea County). This survey and report were conducted and generated by Sora. This report presents the methods and results of this survey.

METHODS

Surveys are designed to detect the sounds of courting males on leks during the lekking period. Each station is surveyed for five minutes. This follows accepted protocol for LEPC survey in New Mexico.

The baseline lesser prairie-chicken survey was conducted on April 6, 2011. The survey included eight listening stations (Table 1). These stations are located within Section 27, Township 46E, Range 18S, where the IIFP site is proposed to be located (Map 1). The stations are approximately 0.5 to 1.0 mile apart and are located within the general area in which the facility will be built.

Table 1. Survey station latitude and longitude in decimal degrees (WGS 84 datum).

Survey Station	Latitude	Longitude
LP01	32.72459	103.34386
LP02	32.72414	103.33399
LP03	32.71763	103.33485
LP04	32.71162	103.33459
LP05	32.71145	103.34276
LP06	32.71105	103.34886
LP07	32.71820	103.34912
LP08	32.71685	103.34329

All bird species encountered in this baseline survey area were recorded (Table 2). The survey began at 6:42 a.m. and ended at 8:52 a.m.

RESULTS

No LPCH were detected during this survey. Eight bird species were recorded. Table 2 presents the list of species encountered during the survey. No large flocks of any species were observed during this survey. All observed species are relatively common birds in New Mexico and could potentially nest within the area.

Map 1. Map of survey points used during the 2011 LEPC survey. Also shown are nest site locations found during this survey.

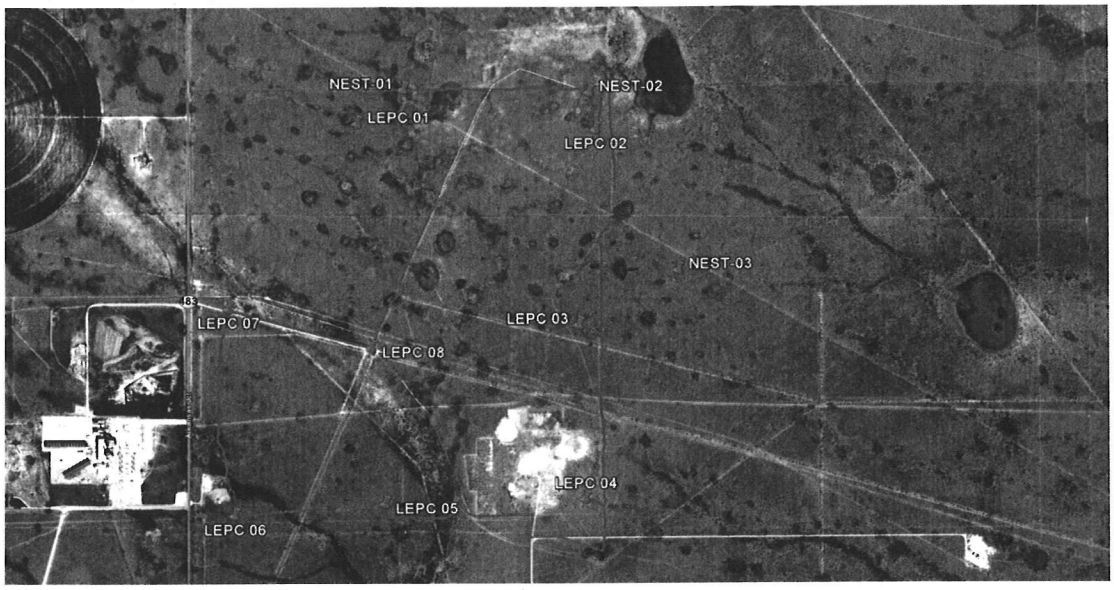

Table 2. Common and scientific names of bird species detected in the survey area during the 2011 lesser prairie-chicken survey of the IIFP facility near Hobbs, New Mexico.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Scaled quail	*Callipepla squamata*
Mourning dove	*Zenaida macroura*
Say's phoebe	*Sayornis saya*
Scissor-tailed flycatcher	*Tyrannus forficatus*
Chihuahuan raven	*Corvus cryptoleucus*
Horned lark	*Eremophila alpestris*
Lark bunting	*Calamospiza belli*
Eastern meadowlark	*Sturnella magna*

DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Lea County is historically known to have habitat for Lesser Prairie-Chickens, but the site is at the southern periphery of their range. There is potential habitat within the IIFP site (personal communication Grant Beauprez 2011) even though there was no shinnery oak or sagebrush. Removal of the vegetation and soil disturbance will likely destroy nesting substrates for many of the potential breeding species found in this area. However, the impacts are not likely to have population-level impacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, active nest surveys should be conducted if vegetation and soil disturbance are anticipated to take place between mid-March and late September.