

**FY2025 Wildlife
Habitat Restoration
Project Opportunity**

**Wildlife Habitat
Connectivity**



Photo by Mark Watson

Wildlife Habitat Connectivity

- Net-wire impedes wildlife movement, impacting their ability to utilize resources:
 - affects wildlife movement behavior
 - limits access to habitat
 - poses an entanglement threat
 - risk of separating young from mother
- BLM, NMDGF, and many other organizations have contributed significantly to achieving netwire conversion on a landscape scale in Taos Plateau and Macho areas, yet significant work remains in both landscapes as well as the NM Bootheel region
- Conversion to wildlife friendly fence is recommended as an important management action in New Mexico's State Action Plan and S.O. 3362 Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors

Project Contacts: (MACHO) Danica Cooke-Roswell BLM-dcooke@blm.gov; (TAOS) Herb Chavez-Taos BLM-HChavez@blm.gov & Brock Lorenzen-NMDGF-Brock.Lorenzen@dgf.nm.gov; (LAS CRUCES) Juan Gamon-Las Cruces BLM-jgamon@blm.gov & Jennifer D'Annibale-NMDGF-Jennifer.DAnnibale@dgf.gov

Proposed Management Action

- NMDGF will contract the conversion of netwire and non-wildlife friendly fence to wildlife-friendly fence within priority landscapes identified collaboratively by NMDGF and BLM.
- The goal is to accomplish approximately 5.5-7 miles of conversion in each landscape with habitat stamp funds
- This effort would be an extension of ongoing efforts on the Taos Plateau and Macho Landscapes, as well as the initiation of a new effort in the Bootheel landscape. In total, hundreds of miles of fence have already been converted to wildlife friendly fencing, which has enhanced wildlife movement and access across tens of thousands of acres.
- Estimated rate is \$ 30,000-35,000 / mile, and estimated project cost of \$200,000 per landscape (Macho, Bootheel, Taos Plateau)
- **Budget Estimate: \$600,000 (\$200,000 per region)**

Project Name:

Project relation to CAC advice or priorities:

Project Specific Details:

Historical Data:

Itemized Use of Funds:

Comprehensive Project Analysis:

Monitoring Plan/ Strategy:

Project Emphasis Species:

Wildlife Habitat Connectivity

Improve habitat connectivity in
three diverse regions
of New Mexico



Macho (SE)



**Taos Plateau
(Northern)**



Bootheel (SW)

Wildlife Habitat Connectivity

Project Contacts



MACHO

Danica Cooke

Roswell BLM

dcooke@blm.gov



TAOS

Herb Chavez

Taos BLM

hchavez@blm.gov



LAS CRUCES

Juan Gamon

Las Cruces BLM

jgamon@blm.gov



Caitlin Ruhl (All)

Caitlin.Ruhl@dgf.nm.gov



Jenn D'Annibale (Las Cruces)

Jennifer.DAnnibale@dgf.nm.gov



Brock Lorenzen (Taos)

Brock.Lorenzen@dgf.nm.gov

Wildlife Habitat Connectivity

CHALLENGE?

Fences impact landscape connectivity for wildlife

GOAL?

Increase landscape permeability by converting net-wire and non-wildlife friendly fence → wildlife friendly fence



Photo: Joe Riis

Background

- Net-wire and non-wildlife friendly fence challenge
 - impact wildlife movements
 - limit access to habitat
 - pose an entanglement threat
 - risk separation of young from mother
- Secretarial Order 3362 Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors and NM State Action Plan repeatedly recommends conversion to wildlife friendly fence
- Collaborative history and trajectory





Photo: Sheridan Community Landtrust

Background-Macho

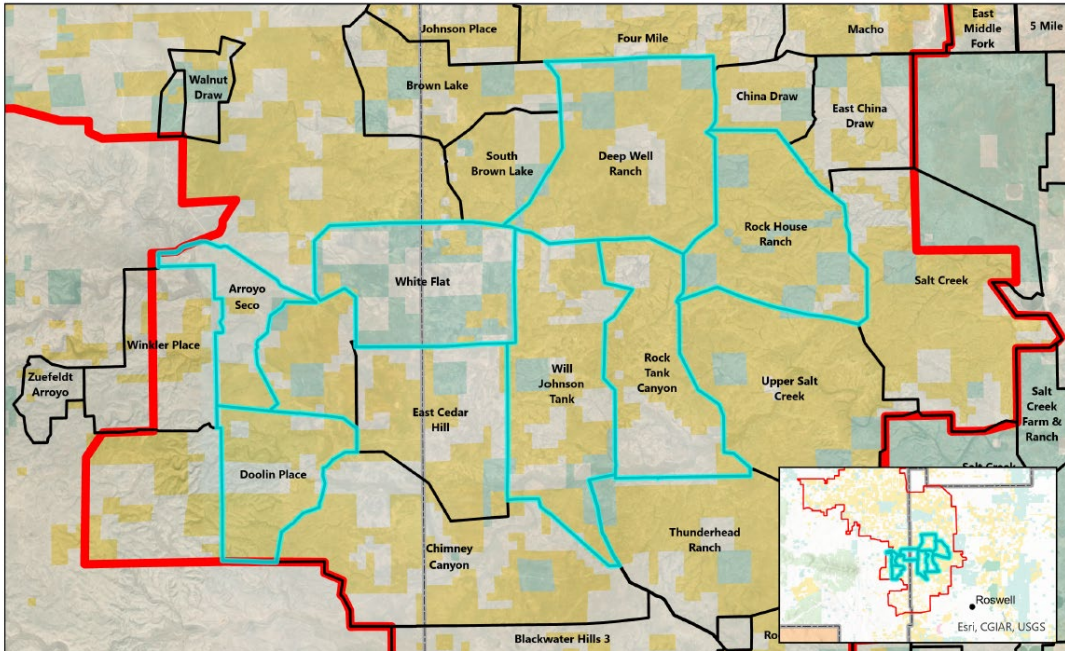
- 188 Pronghorn have been translocated to Macho since 2014
- Important unfragmented area in SE NM
- Since 2012-144 miles converted, Since 2018 – 85 miles converted...>200 miles remain
- NM STATE ACTION PLAN 2023, Southeastern plains, Priority #1
 - “Deer and pronghorn in this area are thought to make movements to take advantage of seasonal weather patterns. These movements are critical for the animals to meet energetic demands and complete their annual lifecycles. If their ability to move is impeded, they may not be able to acquire the necessary resources and their fitness, ability to rear young, and survival may be reduced”
- Pecos District BLM received \$1 million dollars from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to go towards fence work in the next two years, with more funds being contributed by local soil and water conservation districts this year.



Map-Macho

Currently, the BLM has 48 signed cooperative agreements on ranches in the Macho, meaning that there is potential to connect over 950,000 acres of habitat between all 48 ranches. New agreements are signed every year, increasing this total acreage.

2025 Macho Fence



Bureau of Land Management
Roswell Field Office

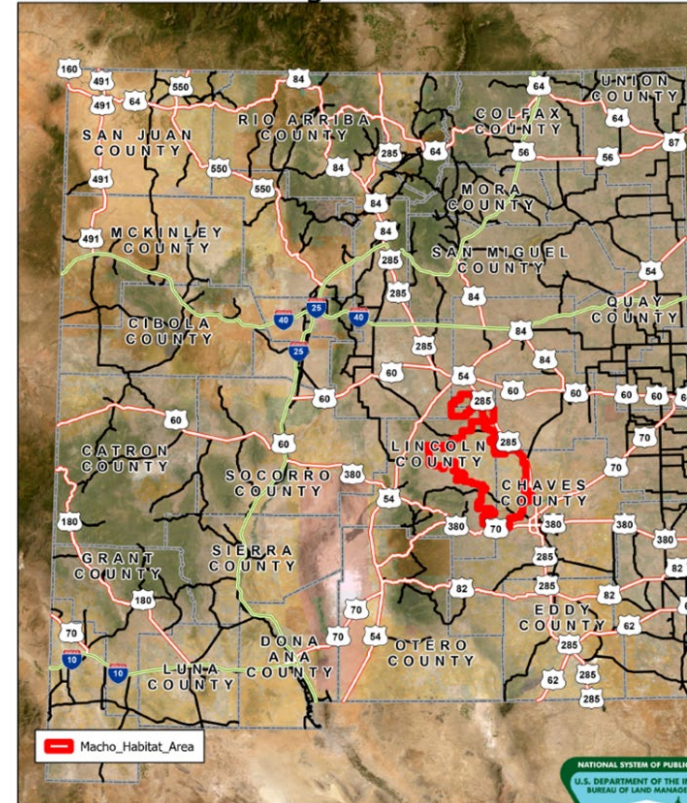
0 2.75 5.5 Miles



No warranty is made by the BLM as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by BLM. Spatial information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards.



2024 Macho Big Game Pass Allotments



Bureau of Land Management
Roswell Field Office

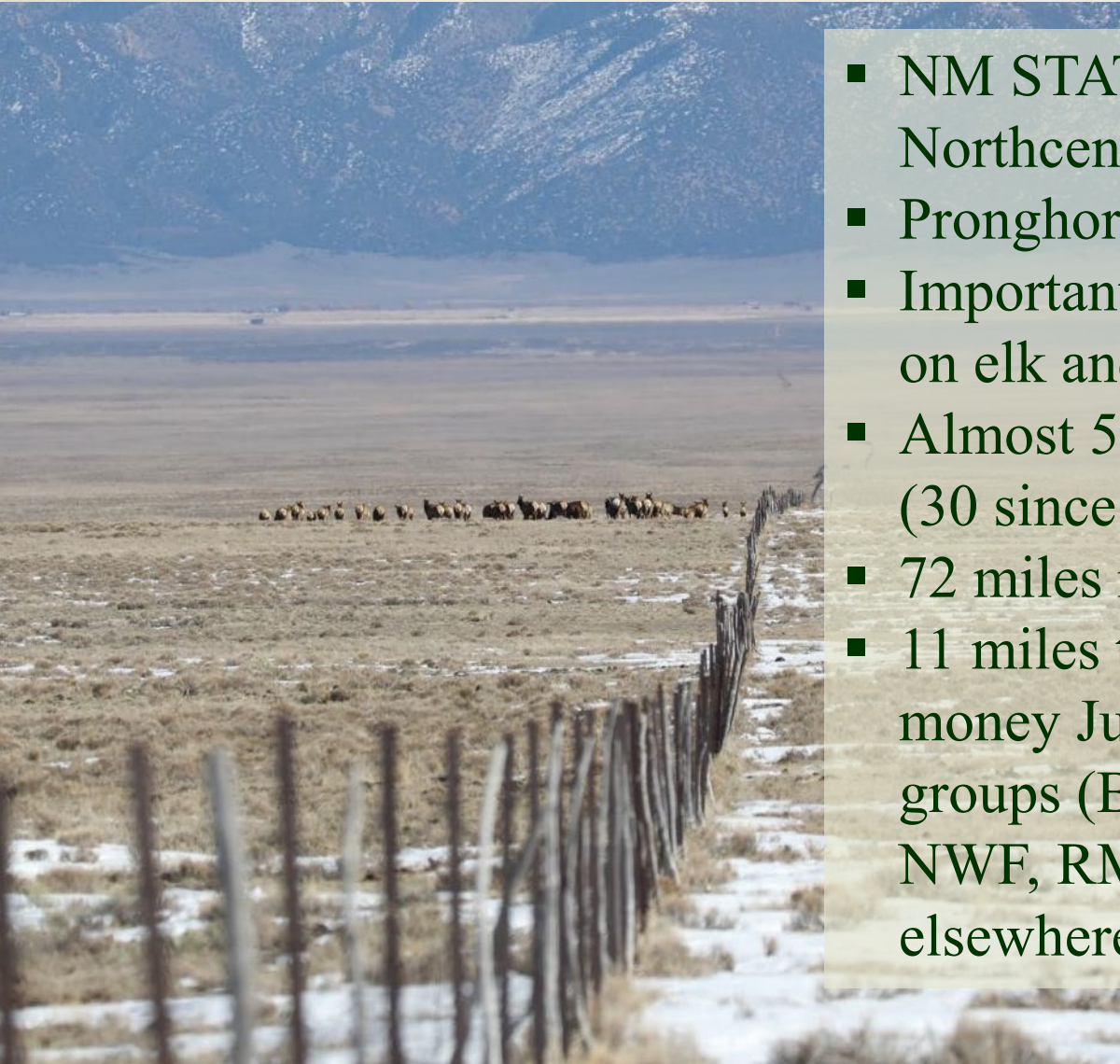
0 15 30 60 Miles



No warranty is made by the BLM as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by BLM. Spatial information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards.

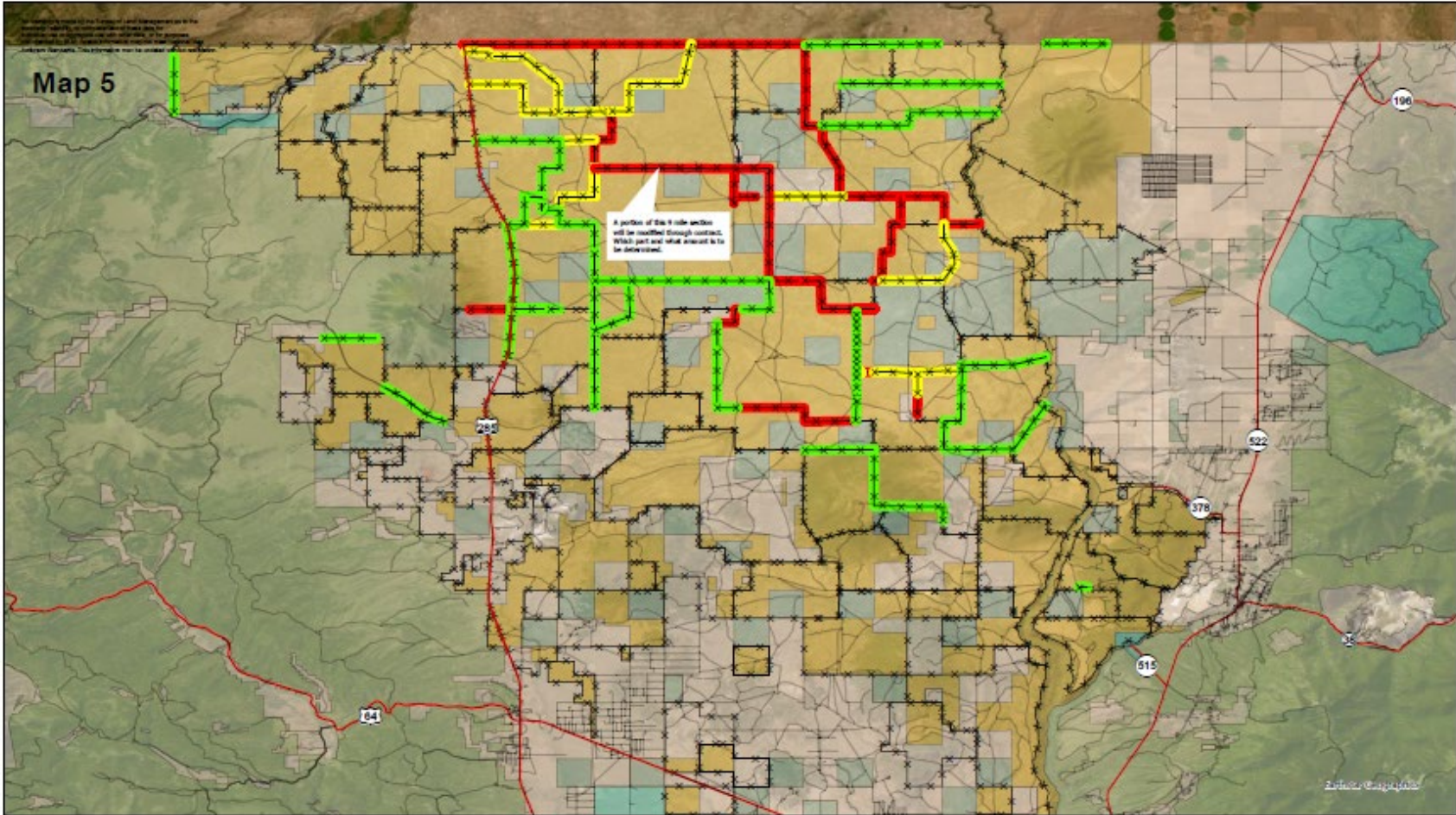


Background-Taos Plateau



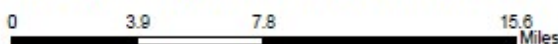
- NM STATE ACTION PLAN 2023, Northcentral Landscape Priority #3
- Pronghorn, elk, deer, bighorn sheep
- Important winter range--GPS collars on elk and pronghorn
- Almost 50 miles of fence converted (30 since 2020)
- 72 miles remain
- 11 miles to be converted with stamp money June 2024 plus several other groups (BHA, Pheasants Forever, NWF, RMEF) supporting conversion elsewhere

Map-Taos Plateau



Approximately 44.9 miles netwire
 Approximately 27.7 miles wire-strand non-wildlife friendly
 For a total of 72.6 miles of fence line that require modification

2024 Taos Plateau Fence Modification Status



- Fence Status**
- Proposed Modification
 - Non Wildlife Friendly
 - Netwire
 - Modified
- Taos Plateau Roads
 Grazing Pasture Polygons

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by BLM. Spatial information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This information may be updated without notification.

Date Exported: 2/16/2024 9:56 AM

Background-Bootheel



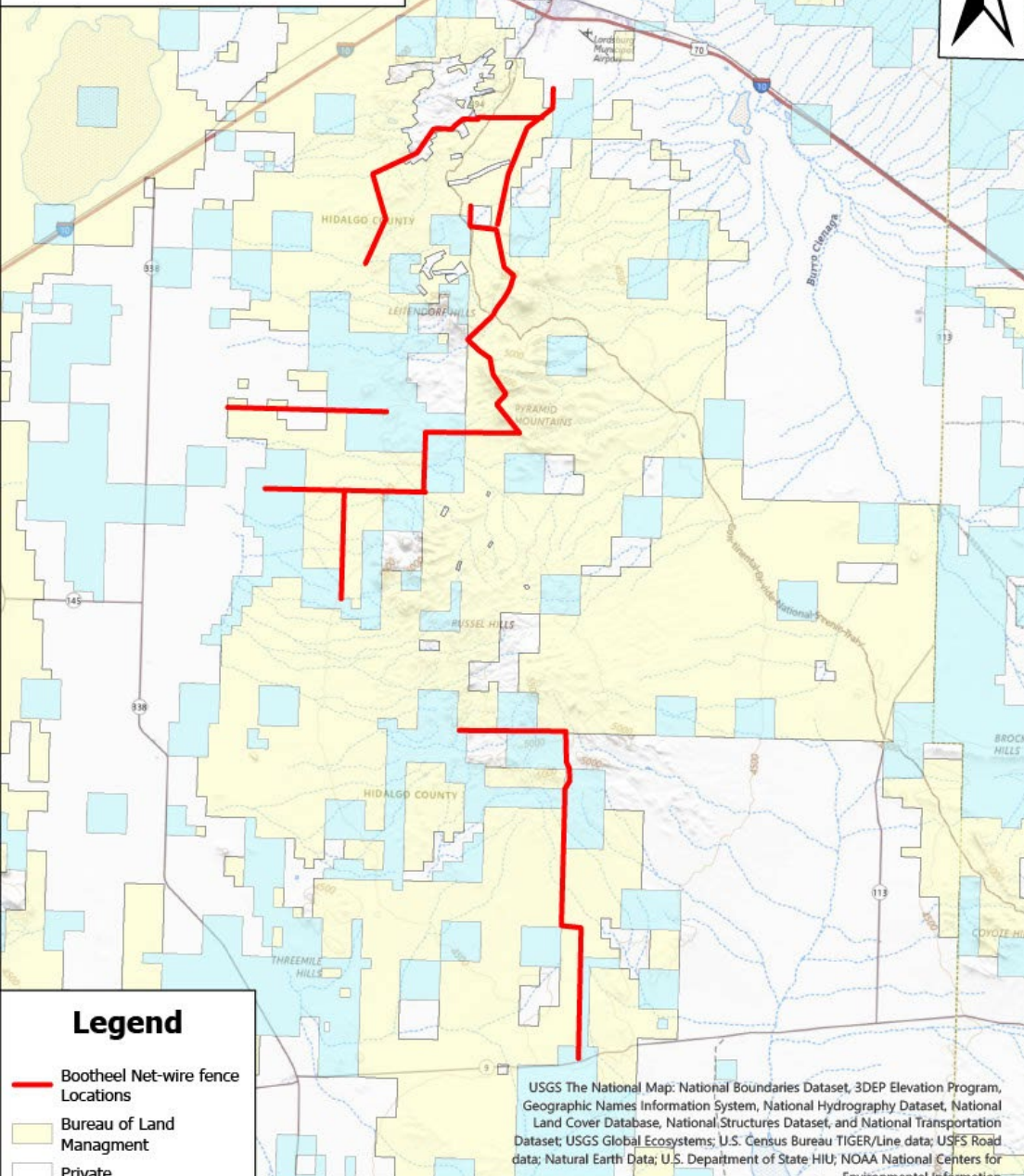
- Net-wire and non-wildlife friendly fence challenge
 - impact wildlife movements
 - limit access to habitat
 - pose an entanglement threat
 - risk separation of young from mother
- Converting net-wire and non-wildlife friendly fence within the Las Cruces BLM district office is a priority for the office.
- Around 40 miles of priority net-wire are identified within in the Pyramid Mountains south of Lordsburg.
 - There are collared pronghorn to the east and north of the Pyramid Mountains.
 - The Pyramids are also great habitat for deer and javelina

Photo: Orrin Duvuvuei

Bootheel Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Map



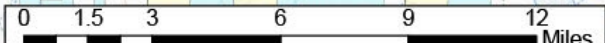
Map-Bootheel



Legend

- Bootheel Net-wire fence Locations
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State Land Office

USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HIU; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information



History of Partnership

- BLM
- NMDGF
- NFWF
- NWF
- BHA
- NMDOT
- RMEF
- MDF
- TSWCD
- NMSU
- USGS
- Pheasants Forever
- Quail Forever



Photo: Mark Watson

Project Funding



- 5.5-7 miles of fence conversion in Macho, Bootheel, and Taos Plateau landscapes to enhance habitat connectivity for wildlife
- Estimated rate \$30-35,000/mile
- Total estimated cost

Macho → \$200,000

Taos Plateau → \$200,000

Bootheel → \$200,000