

Thomas Dixon

ECOLOGIST/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST

Thomas Dixon is an FNI Ecologist and Project Manager. He has more than 10 years of experience with emphasis on wildlife habitat management, coastal and wetland ecology, southeastern U.S. plant community ecology, predictive statistical modeling, and ecological processes and functions. Prior to FNI, he conducted research and provided habitat management recommendations regarding federally-listed species for the energy industry (birds) and the U.S. Navy (mammals). His main contracts involve work with the federal and state agencies, municipalities, energy sectors (e.g., oil and gas, wind), linear projects (e.g., transportation, transmission lines, pipelines), and coastal restoration. Duties include vegetation surveys, preliminary jurisdictional determinations and delineations, threatened and endangered species surveys, ecological functional, and the production of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents (e.g., categorical exclusions [CE], environmental assessments [EA], environmental impact statements [EIS], etc.), reports and regulatory permits, which require working knowledge of various ecological concepts, and regulations like NEPA, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, Rivers and Harbors Act, and Coastal Zone Management Act.

Experience Prior to joining FNI:

District of the Army Permit Investigations, Districtwide, USACE Galveston District. Mr. Dixon performed over 200 Section 404 Clean Water Act and Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act permit compliance investigations for the Galveston District. Investigations evaluated mitigation approaches, vegetation establishment, and other components of compensatory mitigation and success. Facts are summarized into a report format USACE used for potential internal decision making and further actions, such as enforcement on violations of the Clean Water Act.

Ocean Drive Roadway Flood Improvement Project, Calhoun County and Texas General Land Office. Mr. Dixon managed the submission of an individual permit for a roadway expansion that impacted tidal wetlands. Efforts included field delineations, compensatory mitigation plan development, threatened and endangered species evaluations, and agency coordination. Funding was part of a Disaster Relief Program grant from TXGLO. The project is also one facet of a much larger marsh restoration plan in Old Town Lake near Magnolia, TX.

Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project EIS, Brazoria County, TX; USACE, Galveston District. Mr. Dixon was the task lead and lead scientist responsible for assisting with the project EIS, Coastal Management Zone compliance, 404(b) Guideline compliance, biological assessment, and cumulative impacts analyses. The main project components include dredging, wetland impacts, beneficial uses of material, mitigation, and restoration of the severely eroding coastline. The project study area is located on the mid- to upper-Texas coast in Brazoria County, extending from approximately three miles offshore at the 60-foot depth contour in the Gulf of Mexico, through the jettied Freeport Harbor Entrance Channel upstream to the Stauffer Channel Turning Basin.

Half Moon Reef Restoration Project, Matagorda Bay, TX. Mr. Dixon assisted in preparation of a Pre-Construction Notification for a reef restoration project that



Experience

10 years

Education

M.S., Wildlife Ecology, Texas A&M University

B.S., Wildlife Ecology, Texas A&M University

Permits

USFWS Section 10(A)

Permit TE36656A-0

Piping Plover

Black-capped Vireo

Golden-cheeked

Warbler

Northern Aplomado

Falcon

Red-cockaded

Woodpecker

Interior Least Tern

TPWD Scientific Research Permit SPR-0508-071

TxDOT Precerts

2.3.1 Wetland

Delineation

2.4.1 Nationwide

Permits

2.4.2 Individual

Permits

2.6.1 Protected

Species Determination

(Habitat)

2.6.2 Impact

Evaluation

Assessments

2.6.3 Biological

Surveys

Training

First Aid

CPR

MSHA – experienced

miner

encompassed 90 acres of bay bottom. The project was successfully permitted under Nationwide Permit 27, Aquatic Habitat Establishment, Enhancement and Restoration Activities.

Clear Creek General Reevaluation Study, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Harris Counties, TX; USACE Galveston District. Mr. Dixon assisted with project EIS, Coastal Management Zone compliances, 404(b) Guideline compliance, BA, cumulative impacts analyses, etc. Main project components include flood impact reductions (primarily within downstream portions) and floodplain restoration and improvements.

Sabine-Neches Waterway Improvement Project EIS, Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana; USACE, Galveston District. Mr. Dixon was the senior ecologist and task lead responsible for assisting with the project EIS, Coastal Management Zone compliance, 404(b) Guideline compliance, biological assessment, and cumulative impacts analyses. He assisted USACE, Galveston District in preparing an EIS that addresses potential impacts associated with the proposed channel improvements that are intended to improve the efficiency of the deep-draft navigation system while protecting the area's environmental resources. The project study area is located on the upper Texas/lower Louisiana coast. Improvements to the channel include deepening to Beaumont and extending the Sabine Bank Channel an additional 13.2 miles, tapering the Sabine Bank Channel, deepening and widening Taylor Bayou channels and turning basins, and constructing new anchorage/turning basins on the Neches River. This project included the preparation of an ocean-dredged material disposal site designation EIS, which was appended to the final EIS.

Port of Gulfport Expansion Project EIS, Gulfport, MS; Mississippi State Port Authority (MSPA). Mr. Dixon was the senior ecologist and task lead responsible for Section 404(b)1 analysis and compliance, state water quality compliance, and Coastal Zone Act compliance. He assisted the USACE in preparing an EIS that addresses potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of a project proposed by MSPA. The proposed project involves impact of up to 400 acres of open-water bottom in the Mississippi Sound; the construction of wharfs, bulkheads, terminal facilities, container storage areas, intermodal container transfer facilities, and dredging and dredged material disposal and infrastructure; and construction of a breakwater of approximately 4,000 linear feet. The proposed expanded port facility will be elevated 25 feet above sea level to provide protection against future tropical storm surge events. The EIS will evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project, connected actions, and alternatives.

Port of Pascagoula Bayou Casotte Harbor EIS, Jackson County, MS; USACE, Mobile District. Mr. Dixon was the senior ecologist and task lead responsible for wetland and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) impact analysis. Project involves providing the environmental services needed to complete/prepare the draft and final EIS including circulating the draft EIS for public review, responding to comments on the draft EIS, determining the potential direct and secondary impacts, the potential adverse environmental impacts associated with threatened and endangered species, the potential for beneficial impacts, cumulative impacts, mitigation, filing and circulating the final EIS for public comment, and preparing the ROD. Project involves providing the environmental services needed to complete/prepare the draft and final EIS for a proposed navigation channel widening project in the Mississippi Sound at the Port of Pascagoula. This project is being prepared under an expedited schedule.

Energy Transfer Co., Various Pipelines, Various Locations, Texas and Louisiana. Project Scientist, Mr. Dixon performed all environmental surveys for environmental clearances relating to Section 404 permit requirements along 400+-mile pipeline (i.e., linear project) from Central Texas, through East Texas, and into bordering Louisiana. He led field crews and functioned as a liaison with various interested parties (e.g., right-of-way [ROW] agents, landowners, subcontractors, etc.). He also assisted in the preparation of Section 404 PCN permit application, and preparation of FERC Resource Reports.

Facility Siting, Design, and Affected Environmental Services, Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) and the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) Project. Mr. Dixon performed all field investigations, file reviews, analyses, etc. associated with the preliminary jurisdictional determination of a controversial and complex interbasin transfer project. He was responsible for downstream of site and assessing the potential effects of reduced freshwater inflow into estuarine communities in Matagorda Bay. Specific efforts included generation of predictive statistical models regarding estuarine vegetation.

EAs for Various City-Funded Projects, City of Austin. Mr. Dixon performed all environmental surveys in compliance with the City of Austin ECM. He surveyed project sites for critical environmental features (CEFs), and prepared the project EAs. Projects include flood improvements, watershed restoration, pipeline installation, and wastewater improvement projects.

Various Projects, City of San Antonio. Mr. Dixon performed field investigations, prepared NEPA documents, and other deliverables for flood improvement projects, threatened and endangered species mitigation, and water supply projects.

USACE Galveston District, Calhoun County Navigation District's Proposed Matagorda Ship Channel Improvement Project, Calhoun and Matagorda Counties, TX. Mr. Dixon assisted with project environmental impact statement (EIS) production, Coastal Management Zone Act compliance, 404(b) Guideline compliance, biological assessment (BA), cumulative impacts analyses, etc. Main project components include dredging, oyster impacts, beneficial uses of material, mitigation, etc.

Select Publications

- Randel, C. J., T. P. Dixon, H. O. Clark, and D. P. Newman. 2011. Environmental Impact Assessments and Habitat Conservation Plans in Techniques for Wildlife Investigations and Management, N. J. Silvy, editor. Seventh Edition. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, USA.
- Dixon, T.P., R.L. Lopez, M. J. Peterson, R. A. McCleery, and N.J. Silvy. 2008. Field-level spatial factors and dickcissel nesting ecology on reclaimed surface-mined lands in Texas. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 86:60-65
- Dixon, T.P. 2004. Nesting ecology of dickcissels on reclaimed surface mined lands in Freestone County, Texas. M. S. Thesis. Texas A&M University.
- Kasner, A.C. and T.P. Dixon. 2003. Aerial foraging of great egrets and snowy egrets. *Wilson Bulletin* 115(3):199-200.