PROTECTING THREATENED PLANT SPECIES

Healthy and diverse ecosystems offer many important benefits to our environment, our company, our employees and the communities where we operate. As part of our planning, development, construction and decision-making process, we work hard to reduce impacts on biodiversity.

We take great care to minimize impacts on the environment where we work and operate. Our plans and procedures are designed to meet or exceed established standards that protect environmentally sensitive areas, such as water bodies, wetlands and endangered species habitats. This includes our efforts to help preserve and protect the Tobusch Fishhook Cactus by collecting these plants within the Gulf Coast Express Pipeline Project right-of-way and providing plants for biodiversity research.

TOBUSCH FISHHOOK CACTUS

- Federally listed threatened species
- State of Texas listed endangered species
- Known or believed to occur in only ten counties in Texas, including Bandera, Edwards, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Medina, Real, Uvalde, and Val Verde counties

PROJECT CONNECTION

The Tobusch Fishhook Cactus habitat and plants were identified within portions of the Gulf Coast Express Pipeline Project right-of-way in Texas during the project’s pre-construction environmental survey. We consulted with local agency biologists to develop a conservation program for the species. We took additional steps to work with a state university to support its research on the plant.

SURVEY AND COLLECTION PROCESS

- Initial Tobusch Fishhook Cactus surveys were conducted during the plant's flowering season from January to April.
- Surveys conducted outside of the flowering period included counting the radial spines unique to the cactus. This allowed additional plants to be identified beyond the flowering period.
- Qualified biologists returned to the project right-of-way prior to construction and safely collected the previously identified plants.
- Approximately 130 plants were collected and transported to a state university that is conducting reintroduction research to increase knowledge about the species' biology.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Instead of simply relocating the plants adjacent to the project right-of-way, the Gulf Coast Express Pipeline Project went further to improve the long-term viability of the Tobusch Fishhook Cactus by supporting research being conducted by a state university. The university agreed to house and care for the collected plants as part of the reintroduction research, which will include assessing suitable sites for the plants and long-term monitoring to determine the health and reproductive success of each cactus. Research efforts are aimed at the recovery and delisting of the cactus from the State of Texas endangered and federally designated threatened species lists.