

Wildlife Report

Property: Parcel 6115010031

Location: Highway 83 and Pinehurst Circle, El Paso County, Colorado (MA Subdivision tract)

Executive Summary

This parcel lies within the northern El Paso County along the Palmer Divide, an ecologically diverse transition zone between Colorado's Front Range foothills and eastern plains. The area supports mixed grassland, shrubland, ponderosa pine woodland, and riparian habitats associated with the West Cherry Creek watershed. These habitat types are known to support a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, and pollinators. The subject property does not contain any wetlands or protected species.

The property has a high likelihood of regular wildlife use, particularly by mule deer, small mammals, raptors, songbirds, and mesopredators such as foxes and coyotes.

Habitat Overview

Vegetation Communities

Based on the location near Highway 83 and the Palmer Divide region, expected habitat types include:

- Mixed grass prairie
- Gambel oak and shrub communities
- Ponderosa pine woodland
- Seasonal drainage corridors
- Disturbed open fields and edge habitat

These habitat communities support mammals, birds, reptiles, and pollinators.

Wildlife Communities

Large mammals on the property are typical of shortgrass prairie habitats in Colorado, consisting of ungulates such as mule deer, carnivores such as coyote, and red fox. Small mammals include rodents such as voles, northern pocket gopher, and squirrels. There are no open water or wetland areas onsite.

Seasonal Wildlife Movements

The Highway 83 corridor and Palmer Divide region function as an important movement area for wildlife traveling between Front Range forests, foothill habitats, and lower-elevation winter ranges.

Winter (November to March)

Mule Deer

- Mule deer typically migrate from higher-elevation summer range into lower-elevation winter habitats.
- Deer concentrations generally increase around Monument, Black Forest, and the Highway 83 corridor during severe winter conditions.

Elk

- Seasonal elk movement through northern El Paso County is common, particularly during winter when animals descend from higher elevations.

Spring (March to May)

Spring migration results in:

- Increased deer and elk movement.
- Nest establishment by raptors.
- Arrival of migratory songbirds.
- Increased activity by pollinators and amphibians.

Summer (June to August)

Wildlife use is dominated by:

- Breeding birds.
- Resident deer populations.
- Small mammals.
- Raptors utilizing thermals and open hunting areas.
- Pollinator activity associated with native flowering vegetation.

Fall (September to November)

Fall typically produces:

- Southbound bird migration.
 - Increased deer movement associated with breeding season.
 - Seasonal dispersal of young mammals.
 - Increased black bear activity during hyperphagia (pre-denning feeding period).
-

Threatened, Endangered & Sensitive Species Assessment

No federally listed threatened or endangered species habitat occurs onsite.

Federally Threatened Species

Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse

(Zapus hudsonius preblei)

Federal Status: Threatened

Suitable habitat includes:

- Stream corridors
- Dense riparian vegetation
- Wet meadow systems

The species has documented occurrence within portions of the Monument Creek watershed and northern El Paso County. The closest occupied habitat range is located near Forest Drive and Highway 105, approximately 2.25 miles to the west. The site does not contain any suitable habitat for Preble's Mouse Jumping Mouse.

Federally Endangered Species

Whooping Crane

(Grus americana)

Federal Status: Endangered

Whooping Crane habitat is typically unvegetated, wide river channels with area of shallow, slow moving water and sand for nesting. No critical habitat is known on the parcel.

State Species of Concern and Sensitive Wildlife

Burrowing Owl

(Athene cunicularia)

Potential habitat:

- Open grasslands
- Prairie dog colonies
- Shortgrass prairie ecosystems

There are no prairie dog colonies onsite at this time. However, a burrowing owl occupancy surveys may be warranted prior to commencement development activities.

Ferruginous Hawk

(Buteo regalis)

Potential seasonal occurrence:

- Large open grasslands
- Hunting habitat over prairie systems

There are no known nests onsite today. The parcel may provide foraging habitat during migration and winter use periods.

Golden Eagle

(Aquila chrysaetos)

Potential use:

- Winter hunting habitat
- Migration corridor
- Perching and hunting over open grasslands

Golden eagles are occasionally observed throughout northern El Paso County.

Summary

The proposed development site does provide habitats for songbirds and rodents, and year-round range for mule deer. The site also provides potential habitat for raptors, however, no

existing nest sites have been found. The site also contains foraging habitat for predators such as coyote and fox. There are no wetlands or riparian areas onsite. The site does not contain any potential habitat for the federally threatened PMJM or other critical habitat for any federal, state, or local threatened, endangered or sensitive species.