



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Southeast Region
4255 Sinton Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
P 719.227.5200

January 28, 2023

El Paso County
ATTN: Nina Ruiz

2880 International Circle,
Colorado Springs, CO 80132

Re: CDR CSU Gas Line Loch Fyne / Marksheffel

Dear Kari Parsons,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has reviewed the preliminary plan for CDR CSU Gas Line Loch Fyne / Marksheffel in El Paso County. This area included within the Development boundaries will sustain numerous wildlife species including deer, pronghorn, turkey, coyote, fox, raptors, songbirds, and numerous small mammals. CPW makes the following recommendations for work on this project.

CPW recommends that any construction of the gas or other construction occurs near wetland areas, we would request that all areas of disturbance and exposed soils above the ordinary high water mark be re-vegetated with a native seed mix. This will contribute to the replacement of lost riparian vegetation values and minimize establishment of noxious weeds. The placement of willow sprigs or bare root stock should also be considered along the banks, especially in those areas which have been disturbed. We recommend planting of vegetation along the bank to help reduce and control erosion and contribute to bank stability over the long term. The site should be monitored for a period of at least two growing seasons. Any stands of noxious weeds that become established should be controlled with appropriate mechanical and/or chemical methods suitable for the proposed location. CPW recommends using a clean fill material, if needed, that would be conducive to growing native vegetation that will help stabilize the banks. Non-native vegetation can overrun native vegetation and can become problematic. A seed mixture of native grasses is also recommended to provide a good support system in the soil.

CPW further recommends crossing riparian corridors and streams at a perpendicular angle, in order to reduce impacts to natural resources, as well as spanning the corridors with structures located outside the riparian and stream zone. CPW recommends avoiding treed areas of cottonwood and willow, as these areas provide bird and wildlife habitat. During construction, stream crossing by construction vehicles should be avoided. CPW requests that any new



service roads that are proposed for construction in conjunction with the project avoid crossing creeks or stream beds to avoid impacts to wildlife and habitat. If any new access or maintenance roads will be constructed that cross stream habitat, CPW would like to be consulted on best management practices and options for construction to minimize impacts. A construction design for any new or reconstructed riparian crossing that actively minimizes barriers to fish passage at all water levels and mitigates any existing barriers where possible would minimize the negative impact of the project on native fish species.

CPW further recommends the following Best Management Practices when working in or near aquatic habitats.

- Use existing road crossings and existing stream crossings for vehicles and other construction equipment instead of building new roads and stream crossings
- The width of construction should be minimized within the 100-year floodplain,
- Stream bank, wetland restoration/improvement should be performed, where necessary
- Vehicle and equipment crossing of creeks/streams should be made in locations that will cause the least erosion of banks and sedimentation.

As for more general construction protocols, CPW recommends low speeds for construction vehicles to avoid wildlife collisions. Where new roads are required, CPW recommends that these single-purpose roads are gated to reduce traffic disruptions to wildlife. If any temporary (e.g., construction) or permanent fencing is proposed, CPW recommends that it is the wildlife-friendly fencing that allows young to cross, and does not include high-tensile hogwire.

There is suitable habitat on the site for nesting raptors and migratory birds. CPW recommends the use of a preconstruction survey to identify raptor nests within the project area and implement appropriate restrictions. CPW recommends adherence to the recommended buffer distances and timing stipulations identified in the attached document “Recommended Buffer Zones and Seasonal Restrictions for Colorado Raptors”. Removal or relocation of any active raptor or migratory bird nest will require consultation with CPW and US Fish and Wildlife Service prior to disturbance. Both active and potential nest sites, winter night roosts should be considered when evaluating disturbance during construction.

Care should be taken to avoid the destruction of active dens and nests while constructing structures, ponds, and trails. Possible dens or nests should be monitored for species activity. CPW would be concerned if trees and snags were removed for the development. The main concern with removal of trees is that these trees may be currently

occupied or historic nest sites. Please take care to avoid removal of trees with occupied nests. For raptors, an active nest is any nest that is frequented or occupied by a raptor during the breeding season or which has been active in any of the five previous breeding seasons. Many raptors use alternate nests in various years; therefore, a nest may be active even if it is not occupied in a given year. Removal or relocation of any active raptor or migratory bird nest will require consultation with CPW and US Fish and Wildlife Service prior to disturbance. Both active and potential nest sites, winter night roosts should be considered when evaluating disturbance during construction. The best way to avoid impacts on the nesting efforts of migratory birds is to focus construction activities outside of the breeding season. For the majority of species that breeding season would be within the time frame April 1 to August 31. If construction must occur during the breeding season, CPW recommends surveys for active nests be conducted prior to ground disturbance.

CPW appreciates being given the opportunity to comment. Please Feel free to contact District Wildlife Manager Aaron Berscheid at 719-439-9601 or aaron.berscheid@state.co.us should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Kroening". The signature is stylized with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Tim Kroening
Area Wildlife Manager

Cc: SE regional files
Area 14 files
Aaron Berscheid, DWM