COLORADO
Parks and Wildlife
Department of Natural Resources

Southeast Regional Office
4255 Sinton Rd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

January 7, 2020

El Paso County
ATTN: Nina Ruiz

2880 International Circle,
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Re: Rolling Hills PUDSP

Dear Nina Ruiz

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has reviewed the plans for the Rolling Hills PUDSP east of Rex road. This area included within the development boundaries can sustain numerous wildlife species including deer, pronghorn, coyote, fox, raptors, songbirds, and numerous small mammals. CPW makes the following recommendations.

CPW requests clarification on the Natural Features Report, which states, "The property contains no features of natural or geographical significance." It is clearly visible in the satellite pictures of the site location within the reports provided that there is a creek drainage that cuts in and out of the proposed site on the northeast side, and a drainage on the southwest side of the site. The drainages were also visible upon physical inspection of the site by CPW. CPW recommends consultation with the Army Crop of Engineers to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act due to the identification of possible jurisdictional wetlands on the site. CPW will comment on specific plans for wetland-related issues as part of that 404 permitting process but there are some general recommendations to be considered during the development of the wetland mitigation plan prepared as part of Section 404 permitting.

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.

Also of importance, are revegetation of disturbed soils and the control of noxious weed species through the development of a noxious weed management plan prior to initiating construction activities. CPW recommends all disturbed soils be monitored for noxious weeds and noxious weeds should be actively controlled until native plant revegetation and reclamation is achieved in any vegetated areas. Care should be taken to avoid the spread of noxious weeds, and all construction equipment should be cleaned prior to leaving the site.

US Fish and Wildlife Service should be consulted on any Federally-listed Endangered and Threatened Species that might be present at the location. CPW recommends consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when permitting any permanent or temporary activity within known or potentially occupied habitat Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat.

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. Fences can cause many problems for wildlife, including death, entanglements, and barriers to movements. CPW recommends the developers consult our publication *Hanophy, Wendy* "Fencing with Wildlife in mind." *CPW.state.co.us. 2009* when considering the design of fences within the development. The publication is available on our website and we would be happy to provide a link to the PDF specifically. The use of privacy fencing, chain link fencing, and other exclusionary fencing should be at least 6 feet high and should be restricted to the immediate area surrounding the buildings or within the designated building envelope and should not be used as a method to designate boundaries of larger lot sizes (> 1 acre). Fencing outside the immediate building envelope or area surrounding the buildings on larger lots within the known range of elk, deer and pronghorn should be a maximum top height of 42" with at least 12" spacing between the top two wires or rails and a bottom wire or rail at least 16" above the ground to allow passage of juvenile animals and pronghorn antelope. It is also recommended that the top and bottom wires be a twisted barbless type or smooth wire or rail construction. Construction of ornamental wrought iron fencing with closely spaced vertical bars (<12") and sharp projections extending beyond the top horizontal bar should be strongly discouraged in areas where deer, elk, and black bear are known to occur. This type of fencing typically ensnares deer and elk by the hips when trying to squeeze through and impales animals attempting to go over the top. It should be noted that it is very distressing to find wildlife in or impaled on fences.

Trash should be kept indoors until the morning of trash pickup. The CPW recommends using locking trash containers. Skunks, raccoons, and neighborhood dogs are attracted to garbage and do become habituated.

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,

Frank McGee
Area Wildlife Manager

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