



Montaño • Freeman • Sinor • Thompson P.C.

Lucas O'Brien, Esq.
lobrien@troutlaw.com
303.339.5825

1120 Lincoln Street • Suite 1600
Denver, Colorado 80203-2141
303.861.1963
www.troutlaw.com

April 30, 2026

El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department
2880 International Circle, Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Re: Ellicott Sand and Gravel Site Development Plan – Phase 2

El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department:

This firm represents the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Ground Water Management District (the “UBSC District”), a formed and operating ground water management district with the powers enumerated in the Colorado Ground Water Management Act, C.R.S. § 37-90-101 *et seq.* The UBSC District has reviewed the Ellicott Sand and Gravel Site Development Plan – Phase 2 (the “Project”) submitted by Ellicott Sand and Gravel LLC/Perry Hasting (“Applicant”) for approval to initiate Stage 2 of a dry mining operation where mining related equipment will remove and process sand and gravel for sale in the local economy and provides the following comments for your review and consideration:

1. Management and Use of Designated Groundwater.

The Colorado Ground Water Management Act of 1965, C.R.S. § 37-90-101 *et seq.*, created the Colorado Ground Water Commission (“Commission”) and provided for the formation of groundwater management districts within designated basins. Together, the Commission and the local groundwater management district administer designated groundwater in a coordinated manner.

Under the 1965 Act, the Commission, not the water court, has jurisdiction to determine the right to withdraw designated groundwater. The Commission has promulgated rules and regulations, the “Designated Basin Rules,” 2 CCR 410-1, for the management and control of designated groundwater and are binding on all users of designated groundwater. Groundwater management districts may also establish rules for the management and control of designated groundwater that are applicable to the withdrawal and use of designated groundwater. For example, within the boundaries of a groundwater management district, the district has the authority to administer designated groundwater priorities, issue curtailment orders, and further limit withdrawals.

The UBSC District is a groundwater management district formed and operating under the Colorado Ground Water Management Act. Pursuant to its statutory authority, the UBSC

District has established rules, regulations, and policies, available to view on the UBSC District's website.¹ Applicant should review all UBSC District rules, regulations, and policies.

2. Shallow Groundwater and Underdrains – Replacement Plan May Be Required.

Shallow groundwater exists throughout much of the UBSC Basin, including the area underlying this proposed development. Applicant should investigate the existence of shallow groundwater around the project site. Structures developed in areas with high groundwater often require underdrains to capture and drain water that would otherwise flood those structures. Under the Ground Water Commission's Designated Basin Rules, underdrains—or any similar device that pumps or moves designated groundwater—are considered large capacity wells and require a large capacity well permit. Any such large capacity well permit will require a replacement plan that meets the requirements of Designated Basin Rule 5.6, including by replacing evaporation and evapotranspiration associated with the exposure of groundwater caused by the underdrain.

3. Detention of Surface Flows.

The Project may not capture and detain surface flows within the UBSC Basin unless done so by a proper stormwater detention facility in accordance with Designated Basin Rule 5.11. Surface flows in a designated basin are “designated ground water” under the Groundwater Management Act and are subject to administration by the Ground Water Commission. *In Matter of Water Rights*, 361 P.3d 392, 396–97 (Colo. 2015); *see also* C.R.S. § 37-90-102(1) (stating that designated ground water may only be appropriated in the manner prescribed by the Groundwater Management Act). Accordingly, it is illegal to capture and detain such flows unless done so by a proper storm water detention facility in accordance with Rule 5.11, which includes (among several other requirements) as follows:

5.11.1 A “storm water detention and infiltration facility” means a facility that is operated solely for storm water management and:

Is owned or operated by a government entity or is subject to oversight by a governmental entity;

Continuously releases or infiltrates at least ninety-seven percent of all of the water from a rainfall event that is **equal to or less than a five-year storm** within seventy-two hours after the end of the rainfall event;

Continuously releases or infiltrates all of the water from a rainfall event **greater than a five-year storm** as quickly as practicable, but in all cases releases or infiltrates at least ninety-nine percent of all of the water from the rainfall event within one hundred twenty hours after the end of the rainfall event, and:

Operates passively and does not subject the storm water runoff to any active treatment process.

¹UBSC District, *Rules, Regulations and Statement of Policy*, https://upperblacksquirrelcreekwater.com/reg_rules.php.

4. Compliance with UBSC District Rules.

The Project is located within the UBSC District’s boundaries and therefore Applicant must comply with all UBSC District rules and regulations. Specifically, Applicant must comply with:

UBSC District Rule 18. Rule 18 imposes the following limits on withdrawals from large capacity wells located outside a subdivision or cluster development:

For residential use:

- (A) Production shall not exceed fifteen gallons per minute and withdrawals shall not exceed one acre foot per year.
- (B) A well shall not serve more than two residences on a single parcel.
- (C) Totalizing flow meters shall be installed on all wells and well owners shall keep accurate records of withdrawals and provide copies of such records to the UBSC District upon request.

Requests for irrigation use on the same parcel must be supported with a description of the place of use and the number of acres to be irrigated.

UBSC District Rule 19. Rule 19 imposes the following limits on withdrawals from large capacity wells for commercial use:²

- (A) Withdrawals shall be limited to the amount reasonably necessary to supply the present and future needs of the proposed Commercial Business, as established by the Board of Directors of the UBSC District in consultation with the Ground Water Commission.
 - Applicant must therefore provide a detailed water demand estimates for the commercial use and all other intended uses so the UBSC District Board of Directors may make its determination of the amount reasonably necessary to supply the present and future needs of the business.
- (B) Totalizing flow meters shall be installed on all wells and well owners shall keep accurate records of withdrawals and provide copies of such records to the UBSC District upon request.

Applicant is responsible for complying with all UBSC District rules and regulations, not just Rules 18 and 19.

² Rule 19 defines a commercial business as “a business that will a) be operated by the well owner and that will have its own books, bank accounts, checking accounts and separate tax returns; b) use water solely on the land indicated on the proposed permit for the purposes stated in the proposed permit; and c) will maintain its individual assets and will own or lease the property upon which the well is to be located.”

The UBSC District reserves the right to provide additional comments at a later date founded upon information not readily ascertainable from the above-referenced application.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "LOBi". The letters are stylized and connected, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lucas O'Brien
for
TROUT RALEY