



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Southeast Region
4255 Sinton Road
Colorado Springs, 80907
P 719.227.5200 | F 719.227.5264

November 6, 2023

Ryan Howser - Project Manager
El Paso County Planning
2880 International Circle Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO. 80910

RE: Jimmy Camp Creek DBPS

Dear Ryan Howser,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has received the request to review the application for the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin Plan in El Paso County. The site is located east of Falcon down to Fountain generally located east of Powers. This project proposal includes the development of drainage alternatives to address potential solutions for current and future flooding and channel stability issues. CPW is familiar with the project area and has the following comments.

CPW has a statutory responsibility to manage all wildlife species in Colorado; as such we encourage protection for Colorado's wildlife species and habitats through responsible energy development and land use planning. Protection of core wildlife areas, quality fisheries and habitat, big game winter range and seasonal migration corridors, and raptor nesting locations are of extreme importance. CPW recommends that all proposed projects be assessed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to sensitive wildlife habitats and species. That includes species of concern as well as Federal and/or State listed species, big game wildlife (migration corridors, winter range, and parturition areas), breeding and nesting habitats for sensitive ground-nesting birds, and nests of raptors sensitive to development in order to prevent loss of habitat or fragmentation of habitat. US Fish and Wildlife Service should be consulted on any Federally-listed Endangered and Threatened Species that might be present at the location.

Aquatics:



CPW has documented Arkansas Darter, a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, at numerous sites on Jimmy Camp Creek. Their known distribution within the Jimmy Camp Basin is about 0.5 miles north of the Ohio Avenue river crossing to the confluence with Fountain Creek. CPW recommends that if any stream work is proposed within the Arkansas Darter range that fish passages are included in the plans. CPW is happy to work with El Paso County to assist in determining the location and design of any fish passages.

On page 2.28, paragraph 1 (Basin Characteristics Report), it states that the creek is intermittent all the way until the confluence with Fountain Creek. This statement is incorrect as this section of river always has flowing water, since the United States Geological Survey (USGS) installed the gauge on Ohio Ave in 1981.

Raptors and Migratory Birds:

There is suitable habitat for nesting raptors and migratory birds on the proposed project area. Consultation with USFWS is recommended to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Act. The best way to avoid impacts on the nesting efforts of migratory birds is to focus construction activities outside of the breeding season, March 15th - August 31st. If construction must occur during the breeding season, surveys for active nests should be conducted prior to groundbreaking. All migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and removal or disturbance of any migratory bird nest would require consultation with CPW and USFWS prior to disturbance.

CPW also recommends the use of preconstruction surveys to identify raptor nests within the project area and the implementation of appropriate restrictions. CPW recommends adherence to the recommended buffer distances and timing stipulations identified in the CPW document “Recommended Buffer Zones and Seasonal Restrictions for Colorado Raptors” available on the CPW website.

Invasive and Nuisance Species:

CPW recommends the development of a Noxious Weed Management Plan. CPW prefers that native vegetation be retained on site during the operational lifespan of the project, both as habitat for wildlife and to ensure successful reclamation of the project area. Proper reclamation, from a wildlife perspective, involves not only stabilizing the soil and establishing ground cover, but fostering plant communities with a diversity of species and plant types -grasses, woody plants, and broadleaf forbs- which will fully serve the nutritional needs of wildlife. Strict adherence to the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) recommendations is advised. CPW

would appreciate the opportunity to review the project's Noxious Weed Management Plan prior to the start of construction.

CPW also strongly encourages, to prevent the spread of invasive and/or nuisance species, that heavy equipment be cleaned prior to and after construction. Heavy equipment should be disinfected with a heated pressure washer at 140° Fahrenheit or higher.

CPW appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on this proposed project. Please feel free to contact, Land Use Coordinator, Cassidy English, should you have any questions or require additional information at 719-828-4877, or via email at cassidy.english@state.co.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Kroening". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tim Kroening
Area 14 Wildlife Manager

CC: SE regional files
Area 14 files