

Hello, Kari Parsons -

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the documents associated with the Pike Solar 1041 Submittal project located just east of Fountain, Colorado and east of Calhan Reservoir in El Paso County. The Service has no concerns with this project resulting in impacts to species listed as candidate, proposed, threatened, or endangered.

We recommend that you review the Service's migratory bird guidance on [avoiding and minimizing impacts](#), and our [nationwide standard conservation measures](#).

We also recommend use of wildlife-safe materials for erosion control and site restoration throughout the project area. We do **not** recommend the use of erosion control products containing plastic mesh netting or other similar material that could entangle wildlife, even if the plastic netting is described as degradable, photodegradable, UV-degradable, oxo-degradable, or oxo-biodegradable (including polypropylene, nylon, polyethylene, and polyester). Wildlife safe materials are those that are 100 percent biodegradable **and** use a loose weave (often called leno weave) that allows animals to wiggle free. To minimize wildlife entanglement and plastic debris pollution, we recommend choosing temporary erosion and sediment control products that either do not contain netting, or that contain netting manufactured from 100 percent biodegradable non-plastic materials such as jute, sisal, or coir fiber. All netting materials used should have a wildlife-safe, loose-weave design with movable, non-welded joints between the horizontal and vertical twines, allowing the twines to move independently and thus reducing the potential for wildlife entanglement. We recommend avoiding the use of silt fences reinforced with metal or plastic mesh. When no longer required, we recommend prompt removal of temporary erosion and sediment control products.

To minimize the potential of spreading existing noxious weeds during construction, and to prevent the establishment of new weed species in the project area, we recommend implementing the following measures:

1. Inspect and clean equipment prior to on-site arrival, and before leaving the site
2. Implement pre- and post-emergent herbicide application where needed
  - a. Limit herbicide use to those with low toxicity to wildlife and non-target plant species
3. Inspect results of weed treatment
4. Use only foot traffic within any stream/wetland areas

We request that technicians and staff that visit the area [report wildlife mortalities or injuries, specifically birds and bats](#). Although we do not anticipate significant potential for wildlife impacts from solar facility operations, there have been reports of birds mistaking solar panels for water surfaces in certain conditions.

We also recommend incorporating [wildlife-friendly mowing practices](#) to benefit pollinators.

We appreciate your efforts to ensure the conservation of threatened and endangered species. Thank you for contacting us and please let me know if you have any further questions. I can be reached at 303-236-4758 or at [jen\\_williams@fws.gov](mailto:jen_williams@fws.gov).

Reference: Projects\EL PASO COUNTY\PIKE SOLAR 1041 SUBMITTAL\2021-TA-0759

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