



# COLORADO

## Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Area 14  
4255 Sinton Rd.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907  
P 719.227.5200

April 8, 2022

El Paso County  
ATTN: Ryan Howser  
2880 International Circle, Suite 110,  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Re: Walden Preserve 2 Filing No. 5 Final Plat

Dear Ryan Howser,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has reviewed the Final Plat for the Walden Preserve 2 Filing No. 5 located on the southeast corner of US State Highway 83 and US State Highway 105. This area included within the Development boundaries will sustain numerous wildlife species including deer, elk, black bear, pronghorn, coyote, mountain lion, fox, raptors, songbirds, and numerous small mammals. CPW makes the following recommendations.

CPW has commented on other previous filings for this general project and area, and would like to reiterate a few items.

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 was not much description of what the design for the open space was in Letter of Intent or in the Natural Features Report. A more detailed plan of the open space area would be appreciated. For general design recommendations for the open space areas in the project, CPW recommends a 100 foot buffer zone be permanently placed around the creeks and ponds. If a trail is constructed near the creek or ponds, it should be a minimum of 100 feet from the edge. This buffer zone will offer wildlife utilizing the creek and ponds less disturbance by development and decrease the likelihood of human and wildlife encounters. The existing native riparian vegetation around the creeks, the ponds and in the drainage ways should be kept intact for wildlife habitat and to increase ground stabilization.



If trails are placed too close to areas utilized by wildlife it creates disturbances resulting in reduced wildlife viewing opportunities. CPW recommends constructing trails on the outer edges of open space areas. This minimizes wildlife disturbance and creates increased wildlife viewing opportunities. Trails near creeks and drainage areas should cross perpendicular rather than run parallel to these critical wildlife habitat areas. Crossings should occur in areas that have the least usage by wildlife in order to have minimal impacts on wildlife.

Suitable habitat for nesting raptors and migratory birds may also exist within the project area. It is noted in the natural features report that there were no nests discovered in El Paso County from a study conducted in 1997, however CPW recommends the use of preconstruction surveys to identify raptor nests within the project area and implement appropriate restrictions. 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. Active and potential nest sites and winter night roosts should be considered when evaluating disturbance during construction.

Further along in the process, when fences are designed into the project, CPW recommends the developers consult our publication *Hanophy, Wendy* "Fencing with Wildlife in mind." (CPW.state.co.us. 2009). Fences can cause many problems for wildlife, including death, entanglements, and barriers to movements. 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 and pronghorn are known to occur. This type of fencing typically ensnares deer and pronghorn 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.

Other interactions with wildlife should be considered after the project is completed. The following is a list of general recommendations the CPW would like to be taken into consideration with the residential side of this development in order to avoid nuisance conflicts with wildlife. Many times these conditions can be enforced through the local Homeowner's Association or through covenants.

Pets should not be allowed to roam free and fences should be installed to decrease or eliminate this problem. It is strongly encouraged that dog kennels have a top enclosure, regardless of the height of the kennel. Dogs and cats chase or prey on various wildlife species. One benefit to keeping animals under control is that they are less likely to bother other people, be in roadways or become prey for coyotes, foxes, eagles, hawks or owls.

Feeding of all wildlife is prohibited, with the exception of songbirds. The use of bird feeders, suet feeders, and hummingbird feeders are discouraged. However, if feeders are used, they should be placed so they are inaccessible to black bears, raccoons or skunks and other wildlife species that might cause damage or threaten human safety. It is illegal to feed big game including black bear, deer, elk, and pronghorn.

Major conflicts between black bears and humans are most often attributed to attractants left by humans, whether inadvertent or on purpose. This usually leads to conflicts that negatively impact the bear more than the humans involved. Bears are not extremely common in this area, but have been known to occasionally visit the Black Forest area, and most often stick around due to attractants.

Trash should be kept indoors until the morning of trash pickup. Black bears, skunks, raccoons, and other scavenging wildlife are attracted to garbage and do become habituated. Pet food is also attractive to scavengers, so pets should be fed inside. If pets are fed outside, feeding should occur only for a specified period of time and food bowls returned afterwards to a secure site for storage. Pet food left outside attracts various wildlife species which in turn attracts predators. Barbecue grills should be placed in a secure area when not in use.

When landscaping lots, it is strongly recommended that native vegetation be used, as wildlife can be attracted to ornamental and floral landscaping features. Planting of trees and shrubs that are attractive to native ungulates (deer, elk, and pronghorn) should incorporate the use of materials that will prevent access and damage (fencing, tree guards, trunk guards, etc.).



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 and somewhat cursive.

Tim Kroening  
Area Wildlife Manager

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

