

## STERLING RANCH FILING 3 FINAL PLAT

### LETTER OF INTENT

**AUGUST 2021, REVISED DECEMBER 2021**

**OWNER/APPLICANT:**

SR Land  
20 Boulder Crescent St. Suite 102  
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

**CONSULTANT:**

N.E.S. Inc.  
619 N. Cascade Ave. Suite 200  
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

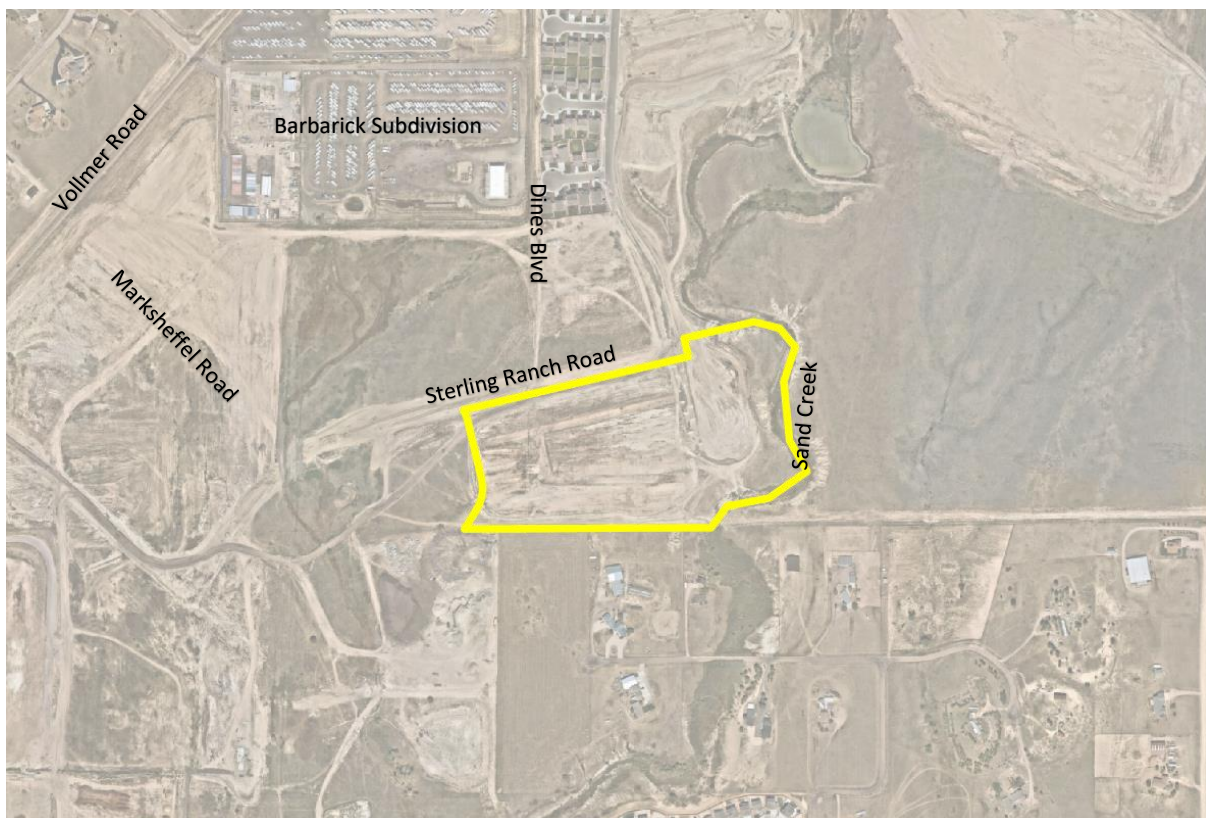
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### REQUEST

SR Land, LLC. requests approval of a Final Plat for Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 on 20.9116 acres, including 63 Single Family Lots, 3 tracts and rights of way. A finding of water sufficiency was issued with the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan, of which the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is part, thus it is requested that this Final Plat be approved administratively.

### LOCATION

Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 is located generally in the southwest portion of Sterling Ranch, west of Sand Creek, south of Sterling Ranch Road and east of Marksheffel Road.



## **PROJECT CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION**

**Context:** The Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan for 5,225 dwelling units on 1,444 acres was approved November 13, 2008. A rezone of 243.14 acres from RR-5 and I-3 to RS-5000 was approved March 24, 2015. A Preliminary Plan for Phase 1 on 182.26 acres of the RS-5000 zoned parcel was approved May 26, 2015. Sterling Ranch Phase 2 Preliminary Plan is currently under review and covers the remaining part of the 243 acres zoned RS-5000. The Phase 2 Preliminary Plan contains 212 single-family lots and tracts for landscaping, drainage, and utilities to be completed in multiple filings.

This request is for Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat on 20.9116 acres of the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan area. The Final Plat includes 63 Single Family Lots, 3 tracts and rights of way.

**Utilities:** The property is located within the boundaries of Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2. Water, wastewater, storm water and park/recreational services will be provided by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1 pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement with Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2.

The February 2021 Water Resources Report for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan identified an existing 300-year water supply available to the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District of 371.47-acre-feet/year. 255.96-acre-feet/year is committed to Phase 1, leaving 115.51 acre feet for future development. Phase 2 proposes 212 single-family lots which will generate a water demand of 75.719-acre-feet/year and there is sufficient water available to serve this number of lots with the remaining 115.51 acre feet per year. The Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1 has issued a commitment letter to provide Phase 2 with the required 75.71-acre-feet/year. Both the State Engineer's Office and the County Attorney's Office have issued findings of water sufficiency and dependability for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan, of which the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is part.

Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District #1 will serve water and sewer to Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 which includes approximately 63 single family lots or 22.239 acre-feet/year. The annual water committed is 22.239 acre-feet/year. The expected wastewater loads are 10,836 gallons/day on an average daily-maximum monthly basis.

Mountain View Electric Association, Inc. will supply electricity service and Colorado Springs Utilities will supply natural gas.

**Buffers, Trails and Open Space:** The Plat includes approximately 7.5 acres of interconnected trails, open space, and buffers, including open space along Sand Creek providing a regional trail connection. This system of trails and open space is intended to provide a comprehensive off-street pedestrian circulation system to supplement the standard sidewalks along streets. The 3 tracts containing trails and open space will be maintained by the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District. The part of Tract B adjacent to the south boundary includes an approximately 75-foot landscape buffer area to the 5-acre County lots to the south. This exceeds the 50-foot buffer required in the Sketch Plan. There will also be a 100-foot building setback along the southern boundary as required by the Sketch Plan.

**Traffic:** A Transportation Memorandum (*Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Transportation Memorandum, September, 2021*) has been prepared in support of Filing No. 3. The Memorandum identifies all required off-site road improvements. Road improvements for Filing No. 3 interior roadways will be constructed to the most current El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual.

**Drainage:** The drainage improvements associated with Phase 2 and Filing No. 3 are consistent with the Master Development Drainage Plan and Preliminary Drainage Report for Sterling Ranch Phase One. The drainage improvements are designed to the most current El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual, the Sand Creek Drainage Basin Study, the City of Colorado Springs/El Paso County Drainage Criteria Manual, and the Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual.

**Geologic Hazards:** The Geohazard Evaluation Report for Sterling Ranch Filing 3 prepared by Entech Engineering Inc., dated February 2022, found the site to be suitable for development with proper mitigation techniques. Geologic conditions will impose some constraints on development. These include areas of potentially expansive soils, potentially unstable slopes, and floodplain areas. Artificial fill is associated with recent grading and fill stockpiles. Hydrocompaction is associated with wind-blown sand deposits. Areas of seasonal and potentially seasonal shallow groundwater occur in a drainage in the western portion of the site and in southern areas of the site. The floodplain and adjacent potentially unstable slopes are associated with Sand Creek along the eastern boundary of the site and will be avoided by development. A map of the hazard areas and proposed mitigation measures can be found in the Geohazard Evaluation Report.

**Floodplain:** The eastern portion of Filing No. 3 (Tracts B and C) along Sand Creek, is mapped within Zone A of the FEMA Floodplain Map No. 08041C0533G, dated December 7, 2018. The remainder of the Filing area is within Zone X, which is determined to be outside the 500-year floodplain. There are no lots shown within the floodplain. The area of lots depicted on preliminary plan in floodplain have been depicted in Tract C until LOMR is completed.

**Wetlands:** The Sand Creek drainageway and jurisdictional wetlands were identified on the original 2008 Sketch Plan and preserved as a natural feature. The corridor is incorporated as part of the open space system and an extension of the Sand Creek Trail. The August 2021 Permitting Memo issued by Bristlecone Ecology for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan clarifies that the Filing No. 3 area does not affect wetlands in Sand Creek or in the minor tributary to the west.

**Wildlife:** Wildlife that has been viewed on the site and surrounding areas include prairie dogs, coyotes, pronghorn antelope, western meadowlarks, sparrow and several species of hawks including red tail. Prairie voles, mice and prairie dogs are the typical rodent population in the area. As development occurs within Sterling Ranch, care will be taken to minimize human and wildlife conflicts within reasonable limits.

**Wildfire:** The primary wildland fuel type is grassland with scattered trees. The Colorado State Forest Service has determined a low wildfire hazard potential and no specific fire mitigation plans or other actions are necessary.

**Districts Serving the Property:**

- Academy School District 20
- Mountain View Electric
- City of Colorado Springs Utilities – Gas
- Black Forest Fire Protection District
- Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1
- El Paso County Conservation District
- Pikes Peak Library District

## **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

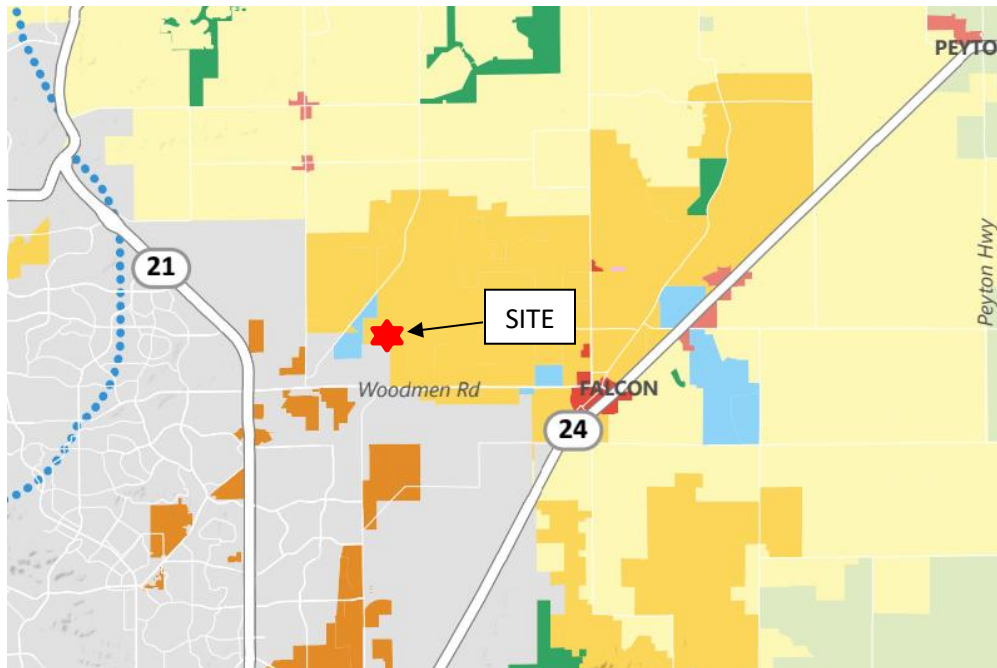
### **a. Consistency with Approved Sketch Plan**

A detailed analysis of the relationship of the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan and the goals and objectives of these plans were previously provided with the Sketch Plan, Zoning and Preliminary Plan submittals with findings of consistency having been made by the respective Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. These include the provision of adequate buffers and transitions from lower, rural density residential development, the provision of adequate urban services by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District, an interconnected system of trails, open spaces and neighborhood parks, and the preservation of open space. Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 is consistent with the approved Sketch Plan, Zoning and Preliminary Plan. This plan incorporates the 50-foot buffer and a 100-foot minimum building setback along the southern boundary as specified on the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan.

### **b. County Master Plan Compliance**

Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 is identified in the County Master Plan Place-Based approach as a Suburban Residential Placetype and as an area for New Development on the Areas of Change Map. Suburban Residential Placetypes is characterized by predominantly residential areas with single-family detached housing as the primary land use, generally with a density up to five units per acre. With 63 units on 20.9 acres, the density of Filing No. 3 is three units per acre, which is consistent with the Suburban Residential Placetype.

As such Filing No. 3 complies with the Master Plan Placetypes and Areas of Change Maps. It is also consistent with the Core Principles and Goals for Housing and Communities Priority Development Areas to meet the housing needs of existing and new residents with a diversity and variety of housing type, size, and location.



c. Consistency with Water Master Plan

The project is located within Region 3, Falcon Area, containing 4 growth areas projected to be completed by 2040, three areas to be completed by 2060, and two other growth areas located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon. Specifically, the Water Master Plan states:

*“Region 3 contains four growth areas west of Falcon projected to be completed by 2040. Other areas of 2040 growth are projected for the north-central part of the region west of Highway 24 extending from Falcon to 4-Way Ranch. North of Falcon along Highway 24, growth is projected by 2060 on both sides of the highway. Just west of Falcon, another small development is projected by 2060 on the north and south sides of Woodmen Road. On the east side of Highway 24, three separate areas of growth are projected for development by 2060, with the largest of the three spanning from south of Judge Orr Road to east of Peyton Highway into Region 4c. This development will likely consist of 35-acre lots that will require individual wells to use Denver Basin groundwater. The other two growth areas will be located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon. See Figure 5.5 for Region 3 growth map projections.”*

Region 3 has a current water supply of 7,164-acre feet per year and a current demand of 4,494-acre feet per year. The 2040 water supply is projected to be 7,921-acre feet per year and the project demand is 6,403-acre feet. The 2060 water supply is projected to be 8,284-acre feet per year and the projected demand is 8,307-acre feet. The Sterling Ranch System is expected to serve 3,710 single-family equivalent (SFE) homes in the year 2040 requiring 1,310 annual acre-feet. In the year 2060 the system is expected to serve 7,310 single-family equivalent homes requiring 2,580-acre feet per year.

The February 2021 Water Resources Report for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan identified an existing 300-year water supply available to the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District of 371.47-acre-feet/year. 255.96-

acre-feet/year is committed to Phase 1, leaving 115.51 acre feet for future development. Phase 2 proposes 212 single-family lots which will generate a water demand of 75.719-acre-feet/year and there is sufficient water available to serve this number of lots with the remaining 115.51 acre feet per year. The Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1 has issued a commitment letter to provide Phase 2 with the required 75.71-acre-feet/year. Both the State Engineer's Office and the County Attorney's Office have issued findings of water sufficiency and dependability for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan, of which the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is part.

The policies relevant to the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat are as follows:

- *Goal 1.1 – Ensure an adequate water supply in terms of quantity, dependability and quality for existing and future development.*  
An finding of water sufficiency and dependability was issued for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan.
- *Goal 3.1 – Promote cooperation among water providers to achieve increased efficiencies on infrastructure.*  
The Sterling Ranch system has opportunity to connect with both the Cherokee Metro District and Woodmen Hills Metro District storage and delivery facilities.
- *Goal 3.2 – Promote cooperation among water providers to achieve increased efficiencies on treatment.*  
Sterling Ranch wastewater is discharged into the Meridian System which in turn has potential to convert some reusable flows to available physical supplies.
- *Goal 3.7 – Encourage the interconnection of infrastructure owned by water providers and projects that will have access to more than one water source, both to foster conjunctive use and to better accommodate water supply emergencies.*  
The Sterling Ranch system has opportunity to connect with both the Cherokee Metro District and Woodmen Hills Metro District storage and delivery facilities.
- *Goal 5.1 – Identify the potential water supply gap at projected full development build-out (2060).*  
In order to meet future demands, contractual arrangements have been made to obtain additional legal and physical supply including contracts with McCune Water SR Water LLC. And the Bar X Water. In addition to adding off-site sources, additional priority is to acquire and invest in additional renewable water supplies. Future supply has been contracted for and implementation is under way. A substantial amount of Not Non-tributary water is available on the Sterling Ranch site and is the purpose of a pending augmentation plan.
- *Goal 5.4 – Promote the long-term use of renewable water.*  
As noted above, Sterling Ranch wastewater is discharged into the Meridian System, which in turn has potential to convert some reusable flows to available physical supplies.
- *Goal 6.0 – Require adequate water availability for proposed development.*  
Both the State Engineer's Office and the County Attorney's Office have issued findings of water sufficiency and dependability for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan, of which the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is part.

- *Policy 6.0.11– Continue to limit urban level development to those areas served by centralized utilities.*

The suburban level development proposed by Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 is served by centralized utilities provided by Sterling Ranch metropolitan District No. 1.

d. Consistency with Plat Approval Criteria

The Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is in substantial compliance with the approved preliminary plan and is consistent with the County's subdivision design standards and regulations. All areas of the proposed subdivision that may involve soil or topographical conditions presenting hazards or requiring special precautions have been identified and the proposed subdivision is compatible with such conditions. Adequate drainage improvements are proposed that comply with State Statute C.R.S. 30-28-133 (3)(c)(VIII) and the requirements of the Land Development Code and the Engineering Criteria Manual. Necessary services, including police and fire protection, recreation, utilities, and transportation systems, are or will be made available to serve the proposed subdivision. A finding of water sufficiency and dependability was issued for the Phase 2 Preliminary Plan, of which the Sterling Ranch Filing No. 3 Final Plat is part.

The final plans provide evidence to show that the proposed methods for fire protection comply with Chapter 6 of the Land Development Code. Necessary off-site improvements have been evaluated through the various reports submitted with the Final Plat, as well as the previously approved Preliminary Plan, and will mitigate the impacts of the subdivision in accordance with the applicable requirements of Chapter 8 of the Land Development Code. All public facilities and infrastructure reasonably related to the Final Plat have either been constructed or are financially guaranteed through the Subdivision Improvements Agreement so the impacts of the subdivision will be adequately mitigated. The extraction of any known commercial mining deposit will not be impeded by this subdivision.