



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Southeast Region
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Colorado Springs, CO 80907
P 719.227.5200

December 18 2024

Kari Parsons
El Paso County Dev. Services Department
2889 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910-6107

RE: Venture on Venetucci Fil No 1

Dear Mrs. Parsons,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Venture on Venetucci Fil No 1 in El Paso County. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has a statutory responsibility to manage all wildlife species in Colorado; this responsibility is embraced and fulfilled through CPW's mission to protect, preserve, enhance, and manage the of Colorado for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of the State and its visitors. CPW has reviewed the proposal and would like to offer the following comments on potential impacts to wildlife.

The project site is approximately 16.23-acres and is located north of S. Academy Blvd, and west of Venetucci Blvd., in southwest El Paso County. The site is surrounded by residential development to the west, vacant undevelopable land to the north, vacant residential land and developed commercial land within the City of Fountain to the east and developed commercial land within the City of Fountain to the south. The proposal includes 336 rental units, 10 multi-family units, garages, a clubhouse, and fitness center. Area access to the development will be provided by Interstate 25, US-85, and Academy Blvd. Primary access is provided by Venetucci Blvd, with direct access provided by one full movement access in alignment with Sams Heights and one at the existing round-about at the north end of the site. There will be no connectivity or access to adjacent properties to the north, west or south.

The following is a list of general recommendations the CPW would like to be taken into consideration with the development in order to avoid conflicts with wildlife.

Some Colorado wildlife species often adapt to urban environments such as black bears, deer and mountain lions posing concerns for this area. Other wildlife species, such as coyotes, foxes, raccoons, and skunks, are also found in the area and can be considered a nuisance by residents. CPW recommends establishing expectations and protocols as part of normalized life and operations by incorporating these best management practices to reduce or prevent unnecessary conflicts between people, pets, and wildlife.

Fences can cause many problems for wildlife, including death, entanglements, and barriers to movements. CPW recommends the developers consult our publication Hanophy, Wendy "Fencing with Wildlife in mind." CPW.state.co.us. 2009 when considering the design of fences within the development. 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, elk, and black bear are known to occur. This type of fencing typically ensnares deer and elk 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.

The following is a list of general recommendations the CPW would like to be taken into consideration to avoid nuisance conflicts with wildlife. Due to the potential presence of black bears in the area, CPW recommends several measures to reduce the potential for human/bear conflicts. First, we recommend that the owner invests in bear-proof trash containers. Centralized trash collection sites are a good option when used in conjunction with bear proof dumpsters that employees, residents, and the trash service provider would have access to. It is recommended that a bear proof mechanism that locks the dumpsters is used, or that the enclosure excludes access to bears in some fashion. Often, failure of “bear-proof” trash containers is related to human error or negligence in re-securing the mechanism after use. Designs that incorporate locking mechanisms that are automatic upon closing reduce the human caused failure of locking mechanisms. Any other trash containers within the site should be stored in a solid locked storage shed/building until the morning of trash collection during those months when bears are most active (April - November).

Finally, CPW recommends that feeding of all wildlife should be 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 bears, raccoons or skunks and other wildlife species that might cause damage or threaten human safety. It is illegal to feed big game including deer, elk, antelope, moose, bear and lion. A copy of a brochure entitled, “living with wildlife in bear country” is available for reference upon request from CPW.

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



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.).

Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse:

US Fish and Wildlife Service should be consulted on any Federally-listed Endangered and Threatened Species that might be present at the location. CPW recommends consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when permitting any permanent or temporary activity within known or potentially occupied habitat Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat.

CPW appreciates being given the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact District Wildlife Manager Demetria Wright at 719-439-9640 or Demetria.wright@state.co.us should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Tim Kroening

Tim Kroening
Area Wildlife Manager

CC: Demetria Wright, DWM
SE Region File
Area 14 File

