



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Parks and Wildlife
4255 Sinton Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
P 719.227.5200

July 8, 2019

Nina Ruiz, Project Manager
El Paso County Dev. Services Department
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910-6107

Re: Hale Sand Expansion in El Paso County

Dear Mrs. Ruiz,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the application for the Hale Sand, Site Development Plan in Peyton Colorado.

After reviewing the maps and documents for the proposed expansion, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) does not foresee significant impacts to wildlife, wildlife habitat, or aquatic resources. The proposed area of mineral development is characterized by short grass prairie. Native short grass prairies are highly valued for their ability to support obligate species. In El Paso County, native short grass prairies are critical habitat for Swift Fox and Pronghorn. It would be very important that any disturbed soil in this area be replanted in native grasses as soon as possible to minimize loss of top soil and the introduction of invasive noxious weeds. We would recommend using NRCS seeding guidelines for reclamation of any ground disturbance.

CPW would recommend identifying and avoiding all maternal swift fox den sites. Swift fox live here year-round, breed, during December, and raise their young into the next fall. Any disturbance or destruction of dens while pups are den dependent should be avoided. It is recommended that swift fox surveys include daylight searches for den areas and nighttime spotlight searches. CPW recommends no human encroachment, surface disturbance, or construction activity within 0.25-mile of an active den site from March 15 through June 15. Swift fox is a species of state and federal concern that lives in and around the proposed area.

Also of importance of revegetation of disturbed soils and the control of noxious weed species through the development of a noxious weed management plan prior to initiating construction activities. The Colorado Weed Management Association provides the booklet "Noxious Weeds of Colorado" that provides information on identification and management of noxious weeds in Colorado. 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 also 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.

Once again, we appreciate being given the opportunity to comment on the Hale Sand expansion project. Please feel free to contact our office at 719-227-5250 should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Frank McGee", written in a cursive style.

Frank McGee
Area Wildlife Manager

Cc: Sarah Watson, DWM
SE Regional Files
Area 14 Files