



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Meeker Area Office
PO Box 1181
Meeker, CO 81641

May 2, 2019

Joshua Wayland
Surface Transportation Board
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA. 22031

RE: Docket No. FD 36284 Seven County Infrastructure Coalition - CPW Comments

Dear Mr. Wayland,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has reviewed the provided materials for the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition proposed railroad with a portion of one alternative line to be constructed in Moffat County, Colorado. We appreciate the opportunity to review this proposal and recommend measures to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife.

As you may be aware, CPW's statutory mission is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the State, to provide a quality State parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as strategic stewards of Colorado's natural resources. This mission is implemented through our 2015 Strategic Plan, and the goals it embraces which are designed to make CPW a national leader in wildlife management, conservation, and sustainable outdoor recreation for current and future generations.

Based on the location of the proposed Craig Route and the potential negative impacts to a variety of wildlife species, CPW recommends the proponent select one of the other two proposed routes (Indian Canyon or Wells Draw). If these routes are determined to be not feasible, then CPW would request the opportunity to review the Craig Route closely and make very specific recommendations. The proposed Craig Route would be developed within important wildlife habitats including: big-game (mule deer, elk and antelope) severe winter range and winter concentration areas; greater sage-grouse general habitat; high potential areas for active raptor nests; and other high priority habitats mapped by CPW.

Additionally, it is understood that the proposed route may require right-of-way access agreements across CPW-owned properties including the Bitterbrush State Wildlife Area. There are also several conservation easements on privately held properties in this area, which may prohibit new development per the terms of the conservation easement



agreements. Further discussions with CPW would be necessary to assess the potential overlap and possibility for agreements to be reached.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife appreciates the opportunity to review this project and provide comments. If there are any questions or needs for additional information, don't hesitate to contact NW Region Energy Liaison, Taylor Elm, at (970) 255-6180 or Area Wildlife Manager, Bill de Vergie, at (970) 942-8171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill de Vergie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Bill de Vergie,
Area Wildlife Manager

Cc. Garrett Smith, District Wildlife Manager
Darby Finley, Wildlife Biologist
Brian Holmes, Wildlife Biologist
Taylor Elm, NW Region Energy Liaison
File