



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Steamboat Springs (Area 10) Service Center
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Routt County Planning Department
136 6th St., Suite 200
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487

May 17, 2024

RE: Application PL20240011; SOUTHERN SHORE ESTATES

Dear Mr. Goldich,

Thank you for consulting Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) on the proposed Southern Shores subdivision. CPW's statutory mission is to perpetuate 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 active stewards of Colorado's natural resources. CPW encourages Southern Shores Estates and Routt County to afford the highest protection for Colorado's wildlife species and habitats.

CPW understands that the proposed subdivision will create five 5+-acre lots, allowing for five single-family homes adjacent to the South Shores Subdivision and 10 acres of neighboring land at Stagecoach Reservoir. This subdivision will include building a road from Shoshone Way but will not include utilities, sewer, or water services to each lot.

High Priority Habitat

CPW Area Staff wildlife resources that may result from the subdivision of Southern Shores at Stagecoach. CPW has developed standardized, statewide wildlife recommendations for regulatory entities to utilize when reviewing and approving various land use proposals. This suite of species and seasonal habitats are collectively referred to as CPW's High Priority Habitats (HPH) and contain areas for which CPW has sound spatial data and science-based recommendations to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts resulting from anthropogenic disturbances. CPW recommends continued discussions with Routt County and CPW to analyze minimization or mitigation approaches if unavoidable impacts to wildlife are incurred. Southern Shores at Stagecoach proposed subdivision occupies areas within the following High Priority Habitats:



Jeff Davis, Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Parks and Wildlife Commission: Dallas May, Chair · Richard Reading, Vice-Chair · Karen Bailey, Secretary · Jessica Beaulieu
Marie Haskett · Jack Murphy · Gabriel Otero · Duke Phillips, IV · James Jay Tutchton · Eden Vardy

Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (CSTG) lek sites, production areas, winter range.

- Avoid surface occupancy from March 15th to July 30th within the production area or 1.25 miles of a lek, whichever is greater, and in the winter from November 15th to March 15th to protect winter range.

Aquatic Sportfish Management Waters

- No ground-disturbing activity (NGD) occurs year-round within 300 feet of the ordinary high water (OHW) of Stagecoach Reservoir, Little Morrison Creek, the Yampa River, and other water bodies.

Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Some Colorado wildlife species often adapt to mountain-urban environments like Southern Shores at Stagecoach, with black bears, moose, and mountain lions posing the biggest 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 at Tailwaters at Stagecoach by incorporating these best management practices to reduce or prevent unnecessary conflicts between people, pets, and wildlife.

- All outdoor garbage should be secured in IGBC-certified bear-resistant canisters, if possible, or stored in a structure that prevents black bear access. Trash should not be outside unsecured or in bags or standard canisters.
- No compost piles should be allowed on the property.
- Landscaping should not include fruit-bearing trees.
- Landscaping fabrics or erosion control materials should be constructed of natural materials and pose a low risk of entrapment or damage by wildlife.
- Prohibit backyard poultry, waterfowl, or beehives and the use of bird feeders.
- Prohibit placement of pet food outside.
- Avoid installing fencing, except in designated dog parks, which could prohibit wildlife passage. Where fencing is necessary, adhere to guidelines within CPW's [Fencing with Wildlife in Mind](#) Document.
- CPW strongly advises that dog runs be near units that allow pets to encourage use. A lack of fenced dog runs can lead to wildlife harassment by dogs, and improper fences in residential areas can entangle wildlife.
- Dogs should be leashed and under control unless in a fenced dog park. Roaming domestic animals can engage with wildlife, leading to potential injuries and



mortalities. Dogs and cats can chase, harass, and kill wildlife, including fawns, calves, small mammals, and songbirds.

- Outdoor cooking appliances should be cleaned and stored in a protected area.
- Lighting should be capped from above to help reduce night-sky light pollution, which inhibits nocturnal wildlife behavior.
- The HOA should prohibit wildlife feeding via salt blocks or other methods. Except for bird feeders, any type of feeding, baiting, salting, or other means of attracting wildlife is illegal. CPW may cite both homeowners and tenants for violations.
- Garage doors should remain closed when residents are not outside and in the immediate vicinity to prevent bears from entering and obtaining stored food rewards, such as freezer food, pet food, and trash.
- Raptors and other migratory birds are protected from take, harassment, and nest disruption at the state and federal levels. CPW recommends that a nest survey be performed in each project area (half-mile radius) no later than two weeks before initiating construction for each project to identify potential raptor and songbird nests, raptor perching and foraging areas, and winter roosting areas.
- The homeowners and tenants should be individually responsible for abiding by all wildlife conflict mitigation measures adopted by the county and project.
- For additional resources to reduce human-wildlife conflicts and minimize impacts on wildlife, please visit CPW's [Living with Wildlife](#) resource page.

Vegetation

CPW recommends developing a comprehensive weed management plan, incorporating wildlife-friendly vegetation and landscaping while controlling the spread of noxious weeds within the Tailwaters at Stagecoach development. Invasive plants endanger the ecosystem by disturbing natural processes and jeopardizing the survival of native plants and the wildlife that depend on them. CPW requests a review of all seed mixes to be utilized on the properties to minimize the use of seed species detrimental to wildlife and native habitats.

CPW appreciates being contacted early and often for input on the impacts that Southern Shores Subdivision at Stagecoach could impose on the wildlife and wildlife habitat in the area. This comment letter identifies concerns for both Stagecoach State Park and wildlife in the area. CPW looks forward to actively participating in a planning process and developing cooperative management plans that address these concerns. Contact CPW staff to discuss



these wildlife issues further and facilitate measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on wildlife.

- Kris Middledorf, Area Wildlife Manager: 970.819.3150, kris.middledorf@state.co.us
- Craig Preston, Stagecoach State Park Manager: 970.736.2516, craig.preston@state.co.us
- Molly West, Land Use Specialist: 970.250.3818, molly.west@state.co.us

Sincerely,



Kris Middledorf
Area Wildlife Manager



Craig Preston
Stagecoach State Park Manager

Cc:

Molly West, Land Use Specialist
Bill Atkinson, Aquatic Biologist
Libbie Miller, Terrestrial Wildlife Biologist
Eric Vannatta, Terrestrial Wildlife Biologist
Danielle Neumann, Land Use Specialist
Elijah Columbia, District Wildlife Manager
Jeanette Sawa, Administrative Assistant - Area 10

