



## COLORADO

### Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Steamboat Springs (Area 10) Service Center  
P.O. Box 775777 | 925 Weiss Drive  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487  
P. 970.870.3333

February 6, 2025

Alan Goldich  
Routt County Planning  
136 6th Street, Suite 200  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

RE: SUP Buckethead Ranch, 30857 CR 53, Hayden, CO 81639

Dear Mr. Goldich,

Buckethead Ranch proactively approached Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to review a draft proposal for commercial and recreational use on their property located at 30857 CR 53, Hayden, CO 81639. We understand that Buckethead Ranch plans to apply for a Special Use Permit (SUP) through Routt County, and wanted to take this opportunity to consult with CPW before filing their application.

#### General Information

Buckethead Ranch is approximately nine miles south and west of Hayden. It contains diverse habitat types and ecotones. During different periods of the year, a variety of species utilize the property, including Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, elk, mule deer, black bear, mountain lion, and numerous small mammals and raptors. The existing vegetation is predominantly mountain shrub, sagebrush, and grassland.

#### Potential Impacts

CPW staff reviewed the proposed plan for commercial and recreational activities on Buckethead Ranch. CPW staff visited with David Epstein from Buckethead Ranch to discuss the proposal's scope to gain better insight into the proposed activities on the property. The proposed increase in human activity and the associated disturbance have the potential to change wildlife use in the area. Buckethead Ranch realizes this and has designed its plan to minimize potential negative impacts on wildlife. Buckethead Ranch will utilize existing roads for their snowmobile tours and ATV trails. Utilizing existing roads when conducting tours should minimize conflict with wintering elk. The majority of proposed activities will occur at locations where historical ranch activities already occur and will have minimal impact on wildlife resources.

Black Bears are common on Buckethead Ranch. To minimize conflicts with bears, all trash containers should be IGBC-certified. All facilities should be locked and made bear-proof. Keeping a clean facility should help minimize black bears from entering structures for food.



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 · Tai Jacober · Jack Murphy · Gabriel Otero · Murphy Robinson · James Jay Tutchton · Eden Vardy

The owners and managers at Buckethead Ranch consider wildlife conservation as one of their primary tenants for managing this property. We appreciate the steps Buckethead Ranch has taken to contact CPW prior to formally applying for an SUP. The relationship CPW has with current ownership of Buckethead Ranch gives us confidence that they will consider our recommendations and take steps to protect sensitive habitats and species of wildlife that use the property during critical times of the year. If you have further questions regarding these comments, please contact District Wildlife Manager Justin Pollock at (970) 629-1247.

Sincerely

*Kris Middledorf*

Kris Middledorf  
Area Wildlife Manager  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Cc:

Justin Pollock, District Wildlife Manager - Area 10  
Jeanette Sawa, Administrative Assistant - Area 10  
David Epstein, Buckethead Ranch

