



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources
Northeast Regional Office
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 9, 2022

TO: Fletcher Jacobs, State Trails Program Manager

FROM: Mark Leslie, Northeast Regional Manager

Subject: Wildlife Impacts Review, 2023 Non-Motorized Trail Grant Cycle

There are a total of sixteen (16) non-motorized grant applications within the Northeast Region requesting funding from the State Trails Program for the 2023 grant cycle process. These applications were distributed to CPW Area Field Staff (Area Wildlife Managers, District Wildlife Managers, and Biologists) for review and comment. In addition, the comments were reviewed by Northeast Region Staff including Regional Manager Mark Leslie, Deputy Regional Manager Shannon Schaller, and Regional Trails Coordinator Luke Svare. Below is a list by application name with a summary of our comments and concerns.

Construction Grant Applications:

- Virginia Canyon Mountain Park Phase 2
 - Seasonal closures - The biggest concern for CPW is the impact to bighorn sheep movements and lambing. Trail use during critical times, plus the inclusion of dogs, could have a large negative impact on bighorn if not mitigated. The following dates are seasonal closure dates CPW typically uses: Production Areas (lambing) 04/15 - 06/30 and Winter Range 11/01 - 04/30.
 - Production Areas - It appears that currently the lambing areas are not located within the actual boundaries of the proposal but are nearby. We would ask to try and limit all heavy construction (lift construction) activities away from these areas during this time period.
 - Winter Range - We know this is a long closure period (6 months) for the operation on a south facing slope, where the snow can and will burn off. But this is also a reason why it is important for bighorn sheep winter use. We are hoping that the applicant will be willing to close trails from at least 12/01 - 03/31.
 - Dogs - CPWs preference is to not allow any dogs on the property. Dogs have a major negative impact on bighorns. The City of Idaho Springs will require dogs to be on a leash at all times. If it is determined that users are not obeying the leash

Heather Dugan, Acting Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

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requirement, it is our recommendation for Idaho Springs to then restrict dogs from the property at all times.

- Personnel - We suggest that in order for the seasonal closures and dogs on leash at ALL times to be followed, it would be best to hire employees to patrol trails. These employees would be similar to "ski patrol" employees on the ski slopes. They are there to keep the users safe, provide medical care for injuries and to keep users on trails and in areas they are allowed to be using. Our concern is that if there is no presence from staff on the trails, some users will not abide by regulations. Such as, dogs being released off the leash once a short distance away from the base area or starting area crowd; users taking shortcuts off the established trails, creating more social trails in places they should not be, expanding the impacts into wildlife habitat. All of these behaviors will impact sheep.
- Bear Resistant Trash Containers - This needs to be mandatory at the recreation site.
- Evaluation Meetings - Yearly stakeholder (Idaho Springs, CPW, and other involved groups) meeting to evaluate use, issues and improvements to reduce impacts to wildlife and improve facilities.
- Kiowa Creek Trail Improvement Project
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Dutch Creek Regional Trail
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Tabor Lake Trail
 - No significant wildlife impacts

Maintenance Grant Applications:

- Trail Conservation Services Maintenance Team
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- South Park Ranger District Maintenance
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Evergreen Lake North Trail
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Colorado 14ers Statewide Maintenance
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Partnership for Stewardship 2023
 - No significant wildlife impacts

Planning Grant Applications:

- 59th Ave. Trailhead for Poudre River & Sheep Draw Trails

- CPW does recognize that additional trailhead access is necessary for this highly utilized trail system. CPW recommends the preferred site for a new trailhead be site #1 as it would have the least amount of impact on wildlife as all of the current recreation access is also on the south side of the river.

Support Grant Applications:

- Empowering Mountain Communities
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Training, Tools and Leaders 2023
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Trail Training Expansion
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Continental Divide Trail Coalition Field Instructors
 - No significant wildlife impacts

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Applications:

- Fall River Trail Project Phase 4
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Wright Park Redevelopment
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Westwood Via Verde
 - No significant wildlife impacts
- Bear Creek Park Phase 1
 - CPW would like to stress the need for an environmental assessment to review any sensitive habitat needs and habitat protections that may need to be implemented either temporarily or permanently to preserve and enhance the corridor while also offering necessary protections to the local wildlife.