

UASI215-003 Referral Comments and Responses

Referral Agency

Referral Agency Comments

Applicant's Response

Arapahoe County Assessor	No Comments	
Arapahoe County Public Health		
Arapahoe County Building Division	N/A	
Arapahoe County Road and Bridge	No Comments	
Town of Bennett	Any application or activity that includes truck/overweight vehicle activity on the Town of Bennett Roads is subject to town assessment and review	Noted
CDOT	Working from or within the CDOT ROW will require a utility/special-use permit. This includes, but is not limited to, survey, landscaping, signal, or utility work.	Noted
CDPHE	Provided general comments.	Noted.
Colorado Geological Survey	The Colorado Geological Survey has no comment and no objection to approval of UASI25-003, Remora Pipeline Gathering Line Use by Special Review.	
<u>Colorado Natural Gas</u>	N/A	Noted.
<u>CORE</u>	CORE Electric Cooperative has no comments.	Noted.

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Colorado Parks and Wildlife	<u>Mule Deer Migration Corridor High Priority Habitat</u> Mule Deer Migration Corridors are key sites for animal migration, and loss would alter routes. In the Project area, these corridors run along Kiowa Creek and the watershed. CPW recommends specific measures during construction in areas crossing these corridors.: ● CPW recommends avoiding any ground disturbance or work activities within the mapped migration corridor to the maximum extent possible in order to maintain the migration corridor along the river as free of human disturbance as possible. <u>Fencing</u> CPW worries about the safety of Mule deer, White-tailed deer, and Pronghorn Antelope for the project. To support migration, CPW recommends wildlife-friendly fencing or no fencing. If fencing is necessary, it should enable free wildlife passage and avoid woven wire or spiked fences that trap or block big game, including deer and pronghorn. Such fencing could hinder movement. CPW suggests three or four-strand smooth-wire fencing, 17 inches high at the bottom and 42 inches at the top, with double stays. For security fencing, an 8-foot game fence without barbed wire is advised. See CPW's "Fencing with Wildlife in Mind" brochure for details.	The approximate 2-mile pipeline route within Arapahoe County crosses lands within Agricultural areas. The local land use plans for the A-1 zone district (agricultural) do not directly relate to the proposed Project. However, the project will comply with all land use provisions. The underground pipeline avoids existing structures and will have no direct impact on surface land use along the right-of-way. The Project is aligned along Interstate 70 in an area with existing infrastructure and oil and gas development, outside the CPW-mapped High Priority Habitat (HPH). The closest HPH is a Pronghorn Winter Concentration Area about 0.2 miles south. Since the pipelines will be buried and no permanent facilities or fencing are planned in
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Trenching

Open trenches pose wildlife entrapment risks. CPW recommends building segments one at a time and keeping trenches open no longer than five days. If longer, add escape ramps and fencing. Check trenches daily for trapped wildlife..

Wildlife Escape Ramps

During open-pit or open-trench mining, CPW recommends backfilling escape ramps in steep slopes to allow wildlife to exit safely if trapped.

Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range High Priority Habitat

Mule Deer Winter Concentration Areas are parts of the winter range with densities at least 200% higher than surrounding areas during the same period, based on an average of five winters out of ten. Mule Deer Severe Winter Ranges are areas where 90% of the population is during peak snowpack and/or low temperatures in the worst two winters out of ten. These areas are vital for wintering deer, offering ideal forage, vegetation, and topography. Winter remains the most stressful season for ungulates due to forage scarcity. Kiowa Creek and the watershed are a Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area and a Severe Winter Range HPH. For zones crossing these areas, CPW recommends building outside December 1st to April 30th to reduce impact on Mule Deer, or starting outside winter if not possible.

Pronghorn Winter Concentration Area High Priority Habitat

CPW defines Pronghorn Winter Concentration Areas as zones with pronghorn densities at least 200% higher than surrounding winter ranges during the same period, based on an average of five winters out of ten. The Pronghorn Winter Concentration HPH is in the southern half of the proposed project area. CPW recommends that for areas crossing Pronghorn Winter Concentration HPH,

Arapahoe County, the Project is unlikely to cause long-term habitat fragmentation or barriers to wildlife movement.

Construction involves phased open trenching for pipeline installation, typically not lasting five days. Wildlife escape ramps or exclusion fencing will be used when possible to reduce entrapment risk. SWCA surveys in 2025 found no prairie dog colonies or burrows for burrowing owls or swift foxes in the Project area. If additional wildlife features are found during construction, the applicants will work with CPW to implement avoidance or minimization measures.

Potential migratory bird nesting habitat exists within the Project area. To reduce impacts during the nesting season (January 15–August 31),

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Construction should avoid winter (Jan 1-Apr 30). If unavoidable, schedule outside winter to reduce impacts.

Aquatic Native Species Conservation Waters High Priority Habitat

Aquatic Native Species Conservation Waters are outlined in Colorado's 2025 SWAP, supporting native fish and aquatic species like amphibians, crustaceans, and mollusks (including CPW Tier 1 and 2 SWAP Species). These waters are crucial habitats for native aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, such as mammals, birds, and reptiles. In the Project area, sensitive aquatic species (fish, amphibians, invertebrates) may exist in Kiowa Creek. CPW advises no surface or ground disturbance within 500 feet of the high water mark and recommends stormwater and sediment controls. CPW also provides guidelines for other species in grassland prairie and shrublands, encouraging consideration of those listed below.

Swift Fox Potential Denning Habitat

The swift fox (*Vulpes velox*), a State Special Concern species in Colorado, inhabits areas within the proposed Project zone. CPW recommends pre-construction surveys for active dens and avoiding human activity within 0.25 miles of maternal dens from March 15 to June 15 to protect high-quality habitat.

Burrowing Owls

Burrowing Owl, listed as State Threatened, nest in prairie dog or other wildlife burrows. Protected by the MBTA, it's crucial to avoid impacts to owls, nests, and eggs. CPW recommends measures to minimize effects on Burrowing Owls in the project area.

preconstruction surveys will be conducted per CPW guidelines. If active nests are found, buffers will be set until nesting ends. No raptor nesting habitat was found within the project, but suitable habitat is within 0.50 miles. During the raptor nesting season (February 1–July 31), preconstruction surveys will be done. If an active raptor nest is detected, CPW's buffer and seasonal guidelines will be followed.

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- If development is proposed to occur in a prairie dog colony that has been active within the past 10 years, CPW recommends conducting surveys consistent with CPW's Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol.

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- CPW recommends targeted surveys for activities causing ground disturbance from March 15th to October 31st. No human encroachment within 200 meters of Burrowing Owl nests from March 15th to August 31st if owls are present. If Owls occupy the site, delay earthmoving until late fall after migration. Avoid seismic work during nesting to prevent disturbing dens.

Songbirds

If site construction occurs between January 15 and August 31, CPW advises the contractor's biologist to survey for ground, shrub, and tree-nesting songbirds to ensure compliance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If active nests are found, establish a buffer over 150 meters until young are independent. Refer to the local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more details. CPW recommends vegetation reclamation options for managing noxious weeds and native plants.

Noxious Weed Management

CPW suggests eradicating noxious weeds and planning weed control and re-vegetation after ground disturbance, favoring native plants to stabilize soil and support wildlife.

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Native plant management

Soil disturbance from gravel extraction can lead to invasive plants, degrade habitat, reduce forage, and raise fire risk. Proper reclamation stabilizes soil and encourages diverse native plant communities vital for wildlife. CPW suggests revegetating with native species, managing weeds, and long-term monitoring to ensure success.

Impacts from Noise:

CPW advises reducing noise during pipeline construction to protect wildlife, as noise can disturb habitats, alter behavior, and cause long-term loss, especially in winter ranges and corridors. The project will produce continuous noise from traffic, machinery, and equipment, potentially disrupting wildlife and causing stress and displacement.

Large game noise fragments habitats, disrupting migration, wintering, and calving grounds. Raptors and migratory birds may experience impaired communication, navigation, and foraging, lowering nesting success and causing habitat avoidance. Bats, sensitive to noise and light, risk disruptions in roosting and feeding, reducing biodiversity. CPW advises following impact avoidance and minimization measures.

- Time high-noise construction activities outside of critical winter and breeding seasons.
- Incorporate sound-dampening design features into facilities, including acoustic shielding, mufflers on equipment, and vegetation buffers where feasible.

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	● Install perimeter sound walls or acoustic barriers along property boundaries to reduce noise propagation into adjacent wildlife habitats. Northern and Southern development perimeters are strongly advised, as identified in the Big Game section above, to limit disruption of wildlife use of wildlife crossing areas. ● Use of vegetated earthen berms as natural acoustic buffers, providing dual benefits of noise attenuation and visual screening through the establishment of native vegetation. ● Incorporate native evergreen and dense shrub plantings within landscaped buffer zones to enhance year-round acoustic and habitat benefits. ● To the extent feasible, limit operational noise during nighttime hours, such as reducing delivery activities, vehicle idling, and mechanical equipment operations when wildlife activity is typically heightened.	
Arapahoe County Road and Bridge	No comments.	Noted.
Sheriff – Office of Emergency Management	No Comments.	Noted.
Sheriff – Public Bureau Chief	No Comment	Noted.
Sheriff - Community Resource Unit	No comment	Noted.
Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue	No Objections	Will comply with fire district requirements.
Xcel Energy	No Apparent Conflict	Noted

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Staff sent referrals to the following agencies and did not receive a response:

- Arapahoe County Assessor-Commercial
- Arapahoe County Public Works Weed Control
- Arapahoe County/PWD Eng/Traffic Ops
- East Arapahoe County/Advisory Planning Commission
- Reap -I-70 Corridor Regional Advancement Partnership
- Arapahoe County Post Office-Co/Wy
- Deer Trail & East Adams Conservation District
- CenturyLink Network Real Estate Department
- Arapahoe County/Sheriff/Crime Prevention Unit