



STATE OF
COLORADO

Simmons - DNR, Leigh <leigh.simmons@state.co.us>

Notice of Application Consideration for Permit: M2025022

Hamous-Miller - DNR, Lexi <lexi.hamous-miller@state.co.us>

Mon, Aug 25, 2025 at 1:50 PM

To: Leigh Simmons - DNR <Leigh.Simmons@state.co.us>

Cc: Scott Murdoch - DNR <scott.murdoch@state.co.us>, Tim Woodward - DNR <tim.woodward@state.co.us>, Shannon Schaller - DNR <shannon.schaller@state.co.us>, Andrew Newman - DNR <andrew.newman@state.co.us>

Hello Leigh,

Thank you for including CPW in the review of this proposed project. I have attached CPW's comments to this email. Please let us know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

-Sincerely,

Lexi Hamous, MS ([She/Her](#))
Northeast Region Land Use Coordinator
Colorado Parks and Wildlife



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Lexi.Hamous-Miller@state.co.us

[CPW's Energy Webpage](#)



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2 attachments



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179K



M-2025-022 Ajax 1- CPW response.pdf
333K



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Area 1 - CPW
12102 South Elk Creek Road
Pine, CO 80470
P 303.291.7241 | F 303.291.7114

August 25, 2025

Leigh D. Simmons
Environmental Protection Specialist
Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety
1313 Sherman Street, Room 215
Denver, CO 80203
Leigh.Simmons@state.co.us

RE: CPW's Comments on the Ajax 1 Gold Mine, File No. M-2025-022

Dear Leigh,

Thank you for the opportunity for Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to comment on the proposed Ajax 1 gold mine Project. It is our understanding that this proposed project consists of mining 20 acres located in section 27 of township/range 2S 73W. It is our understanding that the mine area contains previously mined gold and silver ore, and the purpose of this permit will be to remove the historical ore pile, crush the rock to a fine consistency, and process it on a shaker table. We understand that the applicant has a plan for there to be zero introduction of any foreign chemicals, acids, or waste byproducts that are or could have damaging effects to the ecology or environment of the forest and that mining activity will only occur from May 31— October 1.

The mission of CPW 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 active stewards of Colorado's natural resources. CPW has a statutory responsibility to manage all wildlife species in Colorado, and to promote a variety of recreational opportunities throughout Colorado. One way we achieve this goal is by responding to referral comment requests, as is the case for this project.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Importance Of High Priority Habitats

Developers and permitting agencies can help avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to wildlife from their projects by working with CPW. High-priority habitats (HPH) are



Jeff Davis, Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Parks and Wildlife Commission: Richard Reading, Chair · James 'Jay' Tutchton, Vice-Chair · Eden Vardy, Secretary · Jessica Beaulieu · Frances Silva Blaney · John Emerick · Tai Jacober · Dallas May · Jack Murphy · Gabriel Otero · Murphy Robinson

defined as sensitive habitats where CPW has recent maps regarding sensitive wildlife use, plus scientifically backed best management practice (BMP) recommendations. HPHs are a subset of CPW's species activity maps that we collect and update for a variety of species and their particular habitats; we provide these maps to the public and regulatory agencies for environmental assessment and land use commenting on proposed development on a given parcel, and general scientific research.

Aquatic Species

CPW has identified Aquatic Native Species Conservation Waters within the State of Colorado's 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan. These streams provide critical habitat for native aquatic wildlife, such as amphibians and fish, while also providing crucial habitat for mammals, birds, and reptiles that utilize the habitat. There are sensitive aquatic native species (fish and amphibians) located within Silver Creek. CPW recommends no surface occupancy and no ground disturbance (year-round) within 500 feet of the ordinary high water mark of Silver Creek and to implement appropriate stormwater BMPs.

CPW recognizes that the applicant plans to implement proper BMPs to prevent runoff or sedimentation into Silver Creek. CPW also recognizes that to complete this work and remove this from the landscape that the applicant will have to complete the work within the 500-foot buffer. CPW agrees with the applicant's plan to implement BMPs to protect Silver Creek and remove the ore from the landscape.

Noxious Weeds and Native Re-seeding

Also of importance to CPW is the revegetation of disturbed soils and the control of noxious weed species through the development of a noxious weed management plan before initiating construction activities. The revegetation of disturbed areas and control of invasive weed species are important components of the project, and it is critically important that the site be restored to the native plant community that currently or previously existed on the site. CPW prefers that native vegetation be retained on-site during the operational lifespan of the project, both as potential habitat for wildlife and to ensure successful reclamation of the project area, as noxious weeds could spread to adjacent habitats outside the project area. CPW recommends that the applicant consult with the Gilpin County and Natural Resource Conservation Service (N.R.C.S) for the best noxious weed management practices.

Lighting

Nighttime artificial lighting has been documented to affect wildlife species of all sizes, from small macroinvertebrates to large mammals. These effects are often species-specific and, in some cases, may be beneficial to one species within a local ecological community, but detrimental to another species within the same ecological community. CPW recommends that all outdoor lighting be down-shielded to minimize disturbance areas and dim the lights as much as practicable.

Per the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommendations¹, all outdoor lighting should be limited to warmer colors with “longer wavelengths (>560 nm) and lower correlated color temperatures (CCT<3000 Kelvin degrees)” (“Threats to Birds: Collisions - Nighttime Lighting | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service”). Per the American Bird Conservancy, CCTs ranging from 2200 Kelvin Degrees to 2700 Kelvin Degrees is the preferred range of color. (Misguiding Light: The Role Artificial Light Plays in Bird Mortality from Collisions with Glass | Sheppard, PHD²) CPW recommends the latter range of lighting color options for implementation at the project site. CPW appreciates that there will be limited lighting on-site.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this development project. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the local District Wildlife Manager, Tim Woodward, at 303-829-2428 or at tim.woodward@state.co.us.

Sincerely,



Scott Murdoch
Area 1 Area Wildlife Manager
P 303.514.4998
scott.murdoch@state.co.us

Cc: Shannon Schaller, Deputy Regional Manager - CPW
Tim Woodward, Blackhawk District Wildlife Manager- CPW
Lexi Hamous, Land Use Coordinator, Northeast Region- CPW

¹ ⁴“Threats to Birds: Collisions - Nighttime Lighting | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.” *FWS.gov*, 4 May 2023, www.fws.gov/story/threats-birds-collisions-nighttime-lighting.

² Sheppard, PHD, Christine. *Misguiding Light: The Role Artificial Light Plays in Bird Mortality from Collisions with Glass*. American Bird Conservancy, 11 May 2022, [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ABC-lighting-collisions-position-statement-2022.pdf](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ABC-lighting-collisions-position-statement-2022.pdf).