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## Centennial Coal Mine- Kenilworth Addition- DWR Comments for Greater Sage-grouse.

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Lisa Reinhart <lreinhart@utah.gov>

Mon, Apr 18, 2016 at 11:26 AM

To: Daniel Eddington <danieleddington@utah.gov>

Cc: Makeda Hanson <makedatrujillo@utah.gov>, Suzanne Steab <suzannesteab@utah.gov>

Hi Daniel,

The Centennial Coal Mine has submitted an amendment to their mining permit to our Division. The amendment is to add the Kenilworth lease to their permitted area. You can get all the info on our website but I will give you a summary of pertinent info. Pursuant to the Governors Executive Order for implementing the Utah Conservation plan for Greater Sage-Grouse, I am initiating consultation with UDWR because the permit area overlaps with the Carbon County Sage-Grouse Management Habitat Boundary.

In 1981, the mine consulted with DWR on wildlife species that could potentially be impacted from mining operations. That's what the current operations and reclamation plan is based on. Since several new sensitive species have been added to the list, I am currently asking that they (Karin Madsen with Andalex Resources) update the list of sensitive species that occur in the area. I gave her a list of the ones I knew about but you could be hearing from her directly. For your convenience, I have attached a draft species list that I put together during my review. The list contains the species that need to be analyzed and their habitat requirements. I have asked Karin at Andalex to perform the analysis to determine if the mining operation could impact the species. She may try to tackle it herself or have their consultant do it.

Over the years, they have acquired and relinquished several leases and at this point, they want to add the Kenilworth lease back into their mining area. Adding the Kenilworth lease to their permit does not create additional surface disturbance as they will access the coal from existing underground workings. There is the potential that in the future Gob Vent Holes may be required to facilitate underground workings. However, if that were to be the case they would need to amend their permit for that surface disturbance and we would evaluate impacts for those specific locations.

Please provide DWR management recommendations for this project, specifically for Greater Sage-grouse. Please phrase your comments to include any future disturbance should the need to install Gob Vent Holes arise. Although the addition of the Kenilworth Lease does not include any surface disturbance, it is prudent to address any monitoring or mitigation that should be implemented if future disturbance should be proposed.

You can access any coal files from our website here:

<http://linux3.ogm.utah.gov/WebStuff/wwwroot/coal/filesbypermit.php?C0070019>

Feel free to respond back if you have any questions or require clarification on anything. In the past, Makeda has made her comments and then she forwarded them to PLPCO. PLPCO then sends us a letter directly. I have also logged the consultation into the database for Agency coordination.

Our deadline to respond to the application is May 20, 2016. Please let me know your results by then.

Thanks,

Lisa Reinhart  
Environmental Scientist  
Utah Coal Program  
Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining  
(801) 538-5437, (801) 359-3940 (Fax)

Web site: <http://ogm.utah.gov>

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**TES.Evaluation.Kenilworth.xlsx**

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## Threatened, Endangered, & Sensitive Species

### Mammals

Western Red Bat

(*Lasiurus blossevillii*)

State Sensitive

White-Tailed Prairie-Dog

(*Cynomys leucurus*)

State Sensitive

### Amphibians

Western (Boreal) Toad

(*Bufo boreas*)

State Sensitive

### Birds

Golden Eagle

(*Aquila chrysaetos*)

Federal Protection

Bald Eagle

(*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Federal Protection

Mexican Spotted Owl  
(*Strix occidentalis lucida*)  
Threatened

Southwestern Willow flycatcher  
(*Empidonax traillii extimus*)  
Endangered  
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo  
(*Coccyzus americanus*)  
Threatened

Greater Sage grouse  
(*Centrocercus urophasianus*)  
State Sensitive

Ferruginous Hawk  
(*Buteo regalis*)  
State Sensitive

Northern Goshawk  
(Accipiter gentilis)  
State Sensitive

Burrowing Owl  
(Athene cunicularia)  
State Sensitive

Fish

Bonytail chub

Colorado pikeminnow

Humpback chub

Razorback sucker

Colorado River Cutthroat Trout  
(*Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus*)  
State Sensitive

Bluehead Sucker  
(*Catostomus Discobolus*)  
State Sensitive

## Candidate and State Sensitive Species for Kenilworth Lease Habitat Requirements

Western red bats are normally found near water, often in wooded areas. Some individuals may hibernate during cold times of year, but most members of the species migrate south to warmer climates for the winter.

Similar to other prairie-dogs, white-tailed prairie-dogs form colonies and spend much of their time in underground burrows, often hibernating during the winter. The species breeds in the spring, and young can be seen above ground in early June.

It occurs throughout most of Utah, and can be found in a variety of habitats, including slow moving streams, wetlands, desert springs, ponds, lakes, meadows, and woodlands. The western toad, which is inactive during cold winter months, may either dig its own burrow in loose soil or use the burrows of other small animals.

It feeds mainly on small mammals, especially rabbits, marmots, and ground squirrels, but it also eats insects, snakes, birds, juvenile ungulates, and carrion. Nests are constructed on cliffs or in large trees. Pairs are monogamous and often use the same nest in consecutive years, but some pairs may use alternate nests some years. Eggs are laid from late February to early March in Utah. Most often two eggs are laid, but clutches may contain one egg, three eggs, or rarely four eggs. The eggs are incubated mostly by the female and hatch after 43 to 45 days. Young can fly after 60 to 77 days and are cared for by the parents for at least 30 days after fledging. The young may remain with the parents for several months. Birds first breed at an age of 4 or 5 years.

Nests are almost always in tall trees and commonly near bodies of water where fish and waterfowl prey are available. Nests are constructed of sticks and are very large, typically five or six feet, but up to twelve feet, in diameter. Incubation duties are shared by the parents, and eggs hatch after about five weeks. In many cases, the second young to hatch dies before reaching the fledgling stage. Young first fly after ten to twelve weeks, but may remain around the nest for several weeks after fledging. Generally these birds do not breed until they are five or six years old. Even then, they may not nest every year. During non-breeding periods, especially during winter, bald eagles are relatively social and roost communally in sheltered stands of trees. Wintering areas are commonly associated with open water, though other habitats may be used if food resources, such as rabbit or deer carrion, are readily available. In general, bald eagles avoid areas with nearby human activity and development.

Often found in canyon habitat dominated by vertical-walled rocky cliffs within complex watersheds. Most nest sites are natural tree cavities, although Mexican spotted owls also use caves, potholes in cliff ledges and stick nests built by other birds.

The southwestern willow flycatcher is found most frequently in riparian habitats, especially in areas of dense willow.

Nesting habitat is classified as dense lowland riparian characterized by a dense sub-canopy or shrub layer (regenerating canopy trees, willows, or other riparian shrubs) within 100 m (333 ft) of water. Over story in these habitats may be either large, gallery-forming trees (10-27 m [33-90 ft]) or developing trees (3-10 m [10-27 ft]), usually cottonwoods. Nesting habitats are found at low to mid-elevations (750-1820 m [2500-6000 ft]) in Utah. Cuckoos may require large tracts (40-80 ha [100-200 ac]) of contiguous riparian nesting habitat; however, cuckoos are not strongly territorial and home ranges may overlap during the breeding season. Nests are usually 1.2-2.4 m (4-8 ft) above the ground on the horizontal limb of a deciduous tree or shrub, but nest heights may range from 1-6 m (3-20 ft) and higher.

These birds inhabit sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant of quality habitat. Where there is no sagebrush, there are no Sage-Grouse. A good understory of grasses and forbs, and associated wet meadow areas, are essential for optimum habitat.

During breeding, flat and rolling terrain in grassland or shrub steppe is most often used. Ferruginous hawks avoid high elevations, forests, and narrow canyons, occurring in grasslands, agriculture lands, sagebrush/saltbush/greasewood shrub lands, and at the periphery of pinion-juniper forests. Because of a strong preference for elevated nest sites, cliffs, buttes, and creek banks are usually present (Olendorff 1993). During winter, ferruginous hawks use open farmlands, grasslands, deserts, and other arid regions where lagomorphs, prairie dogs, or other major prey items are present (Olendorff 1993).

The northern goshawk prefers mature mountain forest and riparian zone habitats. Nests are constructed in trees in mature forests; often nests previously used by northern goshawks or other bird species are re-used. Females lay and then incubate a single clutch of two to four eggs; eggs hatch in 32-34 days. Young are able to fly at about five to six weeks of age, but they are still dependent on their parents for food until they reach about ten weeks of age. Northern goshawks cruise low through forest trees to hunt, and may also perch and watch for prey. Major prey items include rabbits, hares, squirrels, and birds.

In Utah, it is uncommon during summer in proper habitat throughout the state. Its habitats are open grassland and prairies, but it also utilizes other open situations, such as golf courses, cemeteries, and airports.

Bonytail chub prefer backwaters with rocky or muddy bottoms and flowing pools, although they have been reported in swiftly moving water. They are mostly restricted to rocky canyons today, but were historically abundant in the wide downstream sections of rivers.

Found in the upper Colorado River system or Green River system. The Colorado pikeminnow is adapted to warm rivers and requires uninterrupted passage and a hydrologic cycle characterized by large spring peaks of snowmelt runoff and lower, relatively stable base flows.

The known historic distribution of the humpback chub includes portions of the mainstream Colorado River and four of its tributaries: the Green, Yampa, White, and Little Colorado rivers. Humpback chub habitat preferences are not well understood. The humpback chub have been associated with a variety of habitats ranging from pools with turbulent to little or no current; substrates of silt, sand, boulder, or bedrock; and depth ranging from 1 meter to as deep as 15 meters. Spawning season is from May to July when water temperatures are between 14 ° and -24 ° C.

Found historically throughout the Colorado River Drainage, this fish has become very rare above the Grand Canyon. In Colorado, recent specimens have been taken only from the lower, mainstream Colorado, Gunnison, lower Yampa and Green rivers. The species is listed as an endangered species in Colorado and less than 70 specimens have been collected in the state since 1979.

This is a large river species not found in smaller tributaries and headwater streams. Found in water from 4-10 feet in depth, adults are associated with areas of strong current and backwaters. Many specimens taken in recent years are from off-stream impoundments and reservoirs. The razorback sucker eats both invertebrates and algae. Ripe adults have been observed in Colorado at several locations in late May and early June (Wick et al. 1981), although exact habitat requirements for successful spawning are unknown.

Native to the upper Colorado River drainage of Utah, Colorado River cutthroat trout are now very rare throughout their historic range because of habitat loss/alteration, predation by and competition with nonnative fishes, and hybridization with nonnative trout, such as the rainbow trout. In fact, pure Colorado River cutthroat trout now naturally occur only in isolated high-elevation headwater streams.

Fast flowing water in high gradient reaches of mountain rivers has been identified as important habitat for bluehead sucker.

**(No Effect, No Adverse Effect, Negative Effect)**

[Redacted]

Potential exists for bats to habitat mine cavities.

Potential exists for this species to occupy disturbed and undisturbed lands that meet the habitat criteria.

[Redacted]

Since there are no perennial or intermittent water sources, there is no potential for habitat to exist.

[Redacted]

Nest could potentially be located within the escarpments or in large trees. Raptor surveys are conducted within the escarpments prior to undermining in an effort to locate any nests. If nests are located, take permits will be acquired and timing stipulations will apply.

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Rocky cliffs within complex watersheds are not found within the permit area.

The project area does not contain riparian habitats.

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May Affect. Most of the project area is within the Carbon County Sage-grouse Management Area. Any surface disturbance will require sage-grouse surveys to determine the necessity for monitoring and mitigation.

May Affect. Ferruginous hawks have been located in the area of the project area. Since the mine has been operating for many years, any presence of the species near operational facilities would be a sign of acceptance. Any future surface disturbance would require surveys to determine the potential impact to the species. Annual raptor surveys are conducted in areas of mining subsidence and would allow time to determine appropriate monitoring and mitigation.

May Affect. Northern Goshawks have been located in the area of the project area. Since the mine has been operating for many years, any presence of the species near operational facilities would be a sign of acceptance. Any future surface disturbance in heavily forested areas would require surveys to determine the potential impact to the species. Annual raptor surveys are conducted in areas of mining subsidence and would allow time to determine appropriate monitoring and mitigation.

Potential exists for this species to occupy disturbed and undisturbed lands that meet the criteria.

No effect. There are no perennial or intermittent waters within the permit or mining areas. The water depletion rate is calculated to be approximately 47.61 A.F. Therefore, pursuant to the Colorado Fish Recovery Program and the Windy Gap Process, the one-time fee is not required.

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