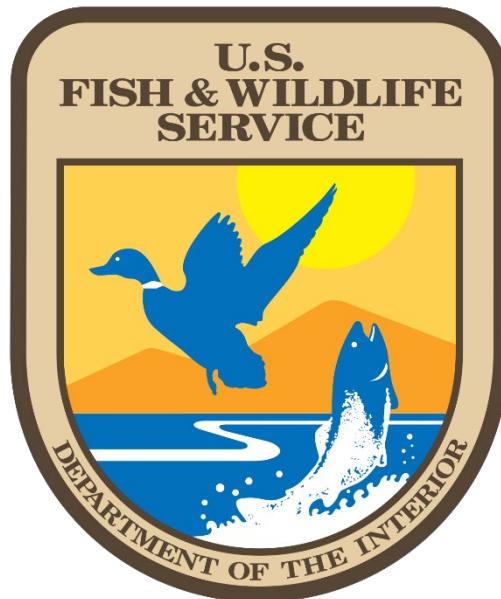


ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Southwest Regional Office Complex
Construction Project
Durango, La Plata County, Colorado



Submitted to:

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of Conservation Investment
1 Denver Federal Center, Building 53
Lakewood, Colorado 80225

On Behalf of:

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Southwest Region Office to evaluate the effects associated with the construction of a new office building to serve as the Southwest Regional Office (Proposed Action).

This EA complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations and policies. NEPA requires an examination of the effects of a proposed federal action on the natural and human environment.

2. PROPOSED ACTION

CPW is proposing to construct a new office building on the existing parcel of approximately 9 acres at CPW's current Southwest Region Durango Office and co-located fish hatchery at 151 East 16th Street in Durango, La Plata County, Colorado. The state of Colorado owns the parcel, and CPW operates and maintains the property. See Figure 1 for a site vicinity map. CPW is proposing to construct a 9,950-square-foot Southwest Regional Office Complex, with associated parking and drainage facilities, associated utility services (as well as relocating existing utilities), and improvements to the 16th Street access drive. See Figure 2 and Appendix A for an outline of expected buildings and project features. The project would take place on state land managed by CPW and would be federally funded (in whole or part) using Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C 669 et. seq.) funds granted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The proposed Southwest Regional Office Building (the building) is expected to be up to 35 feet tall above the ground surface. The project area is located on a low terrace above the Animas River and is surrounded by a well-developed urban area within the city limits of Durango. The Proposed Action design is described in more detail below in Section 6, Alternative B – New Regional Office Building (Proposed Action) section, and illustrated in Figure 2 and Appendix A.

The final Proposed Action may evolve slightly during the permitting and design process as CPW refines site, utility, and landscaping design and gathers feedback from the City of Durango. Therefore, the final Proposed Action may be slightly different from the proposal as described in this EA to comply with code and permitting requirements.

Figure 1. Vicinity Map.

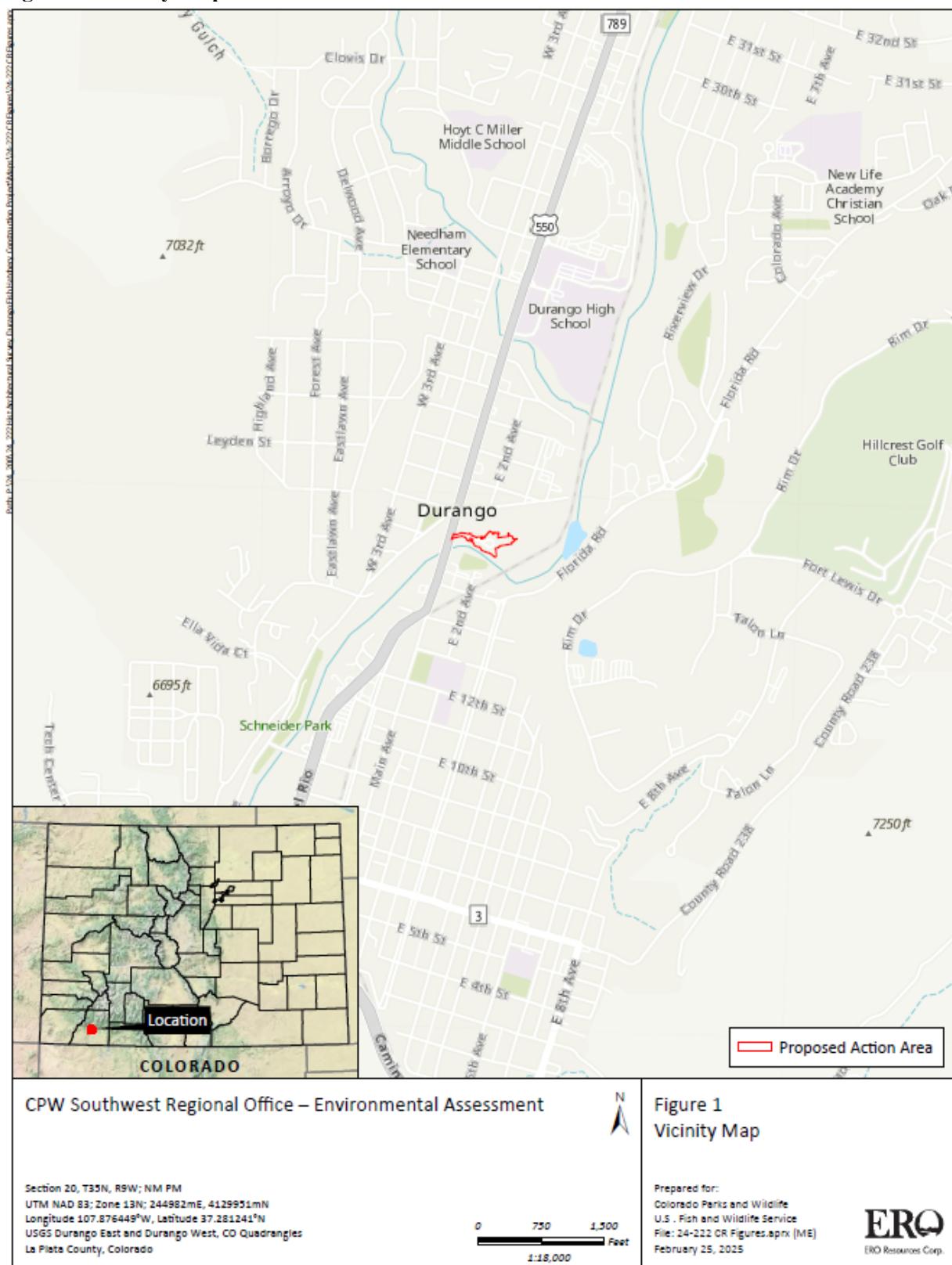


Figure 2. Proposed Building Design.



3. BACKGROUND

Over the last 40 years, CPW has proposed multiple locations and plans for an office upgrade to meet current staff and public needs. The current working areas for the CPW Durango Area 15 Office and Southwest Region staff are split into two locations, both of which have limited space and experience access issues.

The CPW Durango Area 15 Office currently runs operations out of the original fish hatchery superintendent residence located at 151 East 16th Street, Durango, Colorado. This building is only 1,000 square feet and currently accommodates 16 full-time staff plus seasonal hires in shared offices and converted hallways, resulting in space issues. A metal walkway and ramp were added to the office in 2007 to alleviate access issues and to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and while the ramp is functional, it is hard to maintain and is not aesthetically pleasing.

The Southwest Region staff moved out of these offices in 2004 into what was to be a temporary facility constructed in Bodo Park in Durango. An annex addition was constructed for this building in 2014 to accommodate additional space for staff and add meeting space. This facility serves 17 full-time employees and has 12 parking spaces, resulting in space issues for typical use and particularly during meetings that would accommodate non-region staff. In 2018 a lobby addition to the building was designed, but in 2021, planning and design for the co-located region and area office began instead. This office would be situated on the 9-acre property owned by the State of Colorado and would provide many functions for CPW, the public, and staff.

In 2021, CPW awarded Reynolds Ash + Associates Architecture and Engineering the contract to complete the preliminary design of the combined office space for CPW's Durango customer service center, area wildlife office, and regional CPW administrative staff. The footprint of the building would overlap existing parking spaces and some landscaping on the existing CPW property at 151 East 16th Street, Durango, Colorado.

4. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide CPW with a single office location that supports adequate space for customer service, the area wildlife office, and regional CPW staff. It would also allow for adequate meeting space, which is currently not available at any of the existing Durango CPW offices. Additional parking would also better meet the needs of staff and would provide public access to the customer service center in the new building and the existing museum and fish hatchery. Currently, staff are using the hatchery superintendent office and must share offices and work in hallways, while also sometimes renting space in other locations in Durango, and current facilities lack a permanent space for customers to purchase hunting and fishing licenses and to have game checked. The Proposed Action would create a single location with adequate space for the current staff needed for CPW operations in the Durango area, while allowing for better collaboration, less public confusion on office locations, and adequate access and parking for operations.

The Proposed Action would also meet CPW's mission, which 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” by providing ample working space, conditions, and a co-located building to provide educational and recreational information and opportunities.

This EA is being prepared because CPW plans to use federal USFWS Wildlife Restoration Act funds to construct this project. Issuing a grant is a federal action, for purposes of NEPA, requiring analysis of the potential effects of the action on the human and natural environment.

5. ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives were considered as part of the EA: Alternative A – No Action and Alternative B – construction of the Southwest Regional Office and associated features (Proposed Action and preferred alternative), which are described below. The Proposed Action has been developed over several years through internal discussions with CPW leadership, staff, and other key stakeholders, including the City of Durango and CDOT. CPW considered other properties and building options over many years; however, because the existing CPW hatchery property is large enough to support a new building and is previously disturbed with low-quality wildlife habitat, this site was the only alternative carried forward for analysis.

CPW developed the current site plan after completing site feasibility assessments for the 415 Turner Drive location in Bodo Park, as well as considering other locations. The Bodo Park site was not selected as a potential alternative during site design due to limited space on the property and existing infrastructure. Additionally, CPW did not move forward with site design at the Bodo Park site to limit impacts to the adjacent State Wildlife Area as well as numerous significant cultural resources. It was determined based on these issues that the current developed property in Bodo Park was not feasible as an alternative, and it was therefore dismissed from analysis in this EA. CPW also discussed purchasing an additional property for the purpose of the office building, and this potential alternative was dismissed due to economic and technical feasibility.

The office facilities being co-located with the Durango Wildlife Museum and the fish hatchery would also build a unified CPW campus for better internal collaboration and service to the public. The campus would create a unique opportunity for CPW to bring educational objectives forward through the museum and hatchery while being together with staff offices to create an intentional use space near the Animas River. Additionally, the site upgrades with the entrance driveway on 16th Street and utility upgrades would make the site safer and provide better access for staff, residents, and visitors.

Alternative A – No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices at both 151 East 16th Street and 415 Turner Drive in Durango, Colorado in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. The ability to meet CPW’s mission and provide services to the public would be increasingly difficult due to space restrictions and split office locations.

Alternative B – New Regional Office Building (Proposed Action)

Under the Proposed Action, CPW would construct a new office building and associated project components at 151 East 16th Street, Durango, Colorado, 81031 (Figure 1).

Building Components

CPW would design and construct an approximately 9,950-square-foot, two-story office building that would serve as CPW's Durango customer service center, the Durango Area 15 Wildlife Office, and the offices for Southwest Region staff (see the proposed building plan in Figure 2 and the site plan in Appendix A). The facility would accommodate a combined staff of over 30 people and additional seasonal hires under the following departments: Wildlife, Aquatics, Terrestrial and Conservation Biology, Administration, Land Use, Education/Volunteer Coordinator, Energy, Trails, Public Information, Department Regulatory Manager, Regulatory Manager and Assistant, Law Enforcement, Capital and Construction, and Property Technician. The installation of this building would require demolition of the current Durango Area Wildlife Office Building, historically the Superintendent's Residence, to ensure adequate space for the new building. The current Superintendent's Residence is a newer structure to the east of the current Durango Area Wildlife Office and will not be impacted by the Proposed Action.

Table 1 summarizes the components of the new facility and the footprint of each component.

Table 1. Proposed Action summary of components.

Interior Components	Purpose	Area (square feet)*	Percentage of Main Building Total (%)
Common Areas**	Customer service, conference rooms, restrooms, elevators, stairs, mechanical, electrical, shipping and receiving, break rooms, corridors, work areas, lobbies, etc.	5,497	55.25
Area and Division Wildlife Staff	Offices, storage	500	5.03
Education and Volunteering Staff	Offices, storage	138	1.39
Aquatics Staff	Offices, storage	237	2.38
Terrestrial and Conservation Biology Staff	Offices, storage	236	2.37
Administration/IT/Property Management	Offices, storage, IT	849	8.53
Additional Offices for Staff (Land Use, Energy, Trails, Public Information, Law Enforcement, Capital and Construction, etc.)	Offices, storage	2,493	25.05
Gross Building Total		9,950	100

Source: Site plans prepared by Reynolds Ash + Associated Architectural Engineering and SGM Inc. (January 2025).

*Area totals are approximate based on site plans available at the time and may not reflect exact measurements upon site completion. Totals may be off due to rounding.

**Common areas were calculated to not include outdoor decks and terraces but do include the covered entryway to best reflect gross total building area.

Exterior Components

The building site would also accommodate associated parking and drainage facilities, landscaping and outdoor common areas, associated utility services, and existing utility relocations as needed.

In addition to the building construction, the Proposed Action would include improvements to the nearby access roadway, specifically the 16th Street access drive (Figure 2). Removal of the current office building would allow for additional parking and space for construction.

The proposed building would feature a natural architectural design with design elements and features that would blend into or reflect the landscape as much as possible.

Utility improvements include locating and upgrading utilities as needed to serve the new building and infrastructure, which includes relocating one La Plata Electric Association pole. Relocating existing utilities includes drilling small (approximately 2 feet in diameter) potholes using a hydro-vac excavation truck to better locate positions and depths of utilities. This method is the least disturbing and is necessary to finalize construction design. Existing site plans provided in Appendix B outline existing utility information as provided by the utility operators. Additionally, utility locating and installation could include capping and abandoning existing utilities to reduce groundbreaking activities on the site and ensure proper utilities are provided on site, depending on what utilities are located, where they are located, and their condition.

Sustainability and Resiliency

The building would be constructed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for building sustainability under the U.S. Green Building Council (2025) rating system. CPW's goals for meeting LEED standards are at the Silver level (50 to 59 points earned), but certification is currently not a goal for the project due to timing and budget constraints.

The building location provides a more cohesive and sustainable working environment for staff members that have been spread across multiple locations for many years. This would provide a more long-term working environment and reduce additional off-site maintenance, building upgrades, or rebuilding needs in other locations.

Construction

Construction is expected to begin in August 2025 and take approximately 12 to 18 months to complete. Staging of construction equipment, construction materials, and the contractor administration office would be located on the existing CPW property, the proposed construction site. Roadway and access plans are being developed in coordination with CDOT and the City of Durango. No detours are needed for construction; however, lane closures on Main Street/U.S. Highway 550 during improvements for the 16th Street driveway may be required.

6. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND SCOPING

CPW began consultation with the City of Durango Community Development Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for design in October 2021; this

consultation is ongoing. CPW and the USFWS started consultation in the spring of 2023 with La Plata County, the City of Durango (City), the La Plata County Preservation Review Commission and Historical Society, the City of Durango Historic Preservation Board, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and Tribal liaisons representing 28 Tribes, and historical preservation groups. See Appendix B for a full consultation list.

CPW sought public engagement and input on the proposal from December 2024 through March 6, 2025 (CPW 2025a), on their website at <https://engagecpw.org/new-sw-region-durango-service-center>. The *Durango Herald* published an article on the project with the website information on February 12, 2025 (<https://www.durangoherald.com/articles/cpw-seeks-input-on-proposed-durango-office-along-animas-river/>). Positive comments submitted through these pages included support for the project and concept, approval of combining regional and area offices, support for the building design and selected location, and comments on the project being an asset to the public in the region.

Concerns about the Proposed Action included the following, some of which are not directly related to the Proposed Action:

- Removal of trees near the river,
- Installation of additional unnecessary asphalt parking spaces,
- Impacts on wildlife and loss of natural habitat,
- Building of new infrastructure,
- Project costs,
- Location selection,
- Transportation and access issues from Main Avenue,
- Drainage/runoff into the river,
- Lack of input from the public/City,
- Lack of input from utility operators such as sewer,
- Removal of steel structures with torn plastic coverings on site,
- Flooding due to building placement in the floodplain, and
- Lacking fish hatchery upkeep.

Additionally, preliminary building plans were submitted to the City and the Durango Historic Preservation Board for review, and comments were returned and will be addressed prior to construction. The following topics were commented on:

- Visual impacts such as removal of vegetation between the proposed building and the Animas River Corridor and offsets of landscaping from the river,
- Demolition of the current Durango Area Wildlife Office building,
- Compliance with City code for access road design,
- Communication of current utility plan sheets and compliance with modern utility standards,
- Inclusion of a non-motorized access to existing trails or paths,

- Building features reflecting natural settings of Durango,
- Inclusion of lighting plans, a floodplain development plan, and a consistent landscaping plan
- General comments on consistency for the design set.

This EA in draft form was available for public review and comment for 30 calendar days from June 6th, 2025, to July 5th, 2025, on the USFWS website at

<https://www.fws.gov/media/colorado-parks-and-wildlife-southwest-regional-office-complex-draft-environmental-assessment>. A paper copy was also made available at the CPW Regional Office at 415 Turner Dr., Durango, Colorado. An informational public meeting was held on June 16, 2025, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in the Eolus Room at the Durango Recreation Center, 2700 Main Avenue, Durango, CO, 81301. Five members of the public attended this meeting, where CPW and USFWS employees, along with contractors involved in project design and analysis, had information available about the project and were available to answer questions and share where official comments could be submitted.

Four comments regarding the Draft EA were received from private citizens during the comment period via email. Of these citizens, one was also present at the informational meeting on June 16th, 2025. These comments have been addressed in this EA in the relevant sections, and are also listed in Appendix C. Additionally, comments listed above collected through the *Durango Herald* article posting and the CPW Engage website are addressed in the relevant sections of the Final EA below.

7. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section is organized by affected resource categories and discusses both (1) the existing environmental and socioeconomic baseline in the project area or surrounding area for each resource and (2) the effects and impacts of the Proposed Action and any alternatives on each resource. The effects and impacts of the Proposed Action considered here are changes to the human environment, whether adverse or beneficial, that are reasonably foreseeable and have a reasonably close causal relationship to the Proposed Action or alternatives. This EA includes the written analyses of the environmental consequences for a resource only when the impacts on that resource could be more than negligible and it is therefore considered an “affected resource.” Any resources that would not be more than negligibly impacted by the action have been dismissed from further analyses, and the rationale for dismissal is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Resources identified and dismissed from further analysis and rationale for dismissal.

Resource Dismissed from Further Analysis	Rationale for Dismissal
Geology, Soils, Land Use	<p>Most of the project area has been previously disturbed by the construction of existing buildings, parking lots, and roads, and the remainder of this area is characterized by landscaping. Soil analysis of the project area through the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2025) shows the project area as being in the Harlan cobbly loam soil mapping unit. This unit exhibits moist soils between 1% and 3% slopes that contain cobbly alluvium or glacial outwash and that are well drained. Soil is not exposed and has been leveled for previous buildings, and it would not be exposed or greatly changed should the Proposed Action be implemented; project activities would not result in a major change to existing geology or land cover.</p> <p>Additionally, soil contamination in the area is primarily from uranium mining, currently contained in a disposal cell, or other forms of mining in the region (U.S. Department of Energy Legacy Management 2022). Other typical contaminants include heavy metals from industrial or mining activities, mechanical or household contaminants, or arsenic from natural or human activities. The Proposed Action would not introduce additional soil contaminants or interact with areas with existing contaminants.</p> <p>Therefore, the Proposed Action would result in negligible impacts on geology, soils, and land cover, and these resources were dismissed from further analysis.</p>
Agriculture/Prime and Unique Farmland	<p>The project area does not contain Prime and Unique Farmland according to the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2025). Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in impacts on Prime and Unique Farmland, and this resource was dismissed from further analysis.</p>
Noise and Light Pollution	<p>Existing noise sources in the project area include vehicular traffic on U.S. Highway 550/Main Street to the west of the project area and intermittent surrounding city road/street traffic on Florida Road, East 15th Street, and East Park Avenue surrounding the project area. Additional noise sources include the Animas River, the Animas River trail, the Silverton & Durango Narrow Gauge Railroad, and typical city sounds present in Durango. Construction activities from the Proposed Action would cause intermittent increased noise from the use of construction equipment and increased construction traffic, resulting in short-term noise impacts during the construction period. This noise would be limited to normal business hours and would not occur in the evenings or during weekends; all applicable Durango and La Plata County construction noise ordinances would be observed. After construction is completed, it is assumed that noise levels in the project area would return to preexisting levels, except for day-to-day CPW operations on the new site, which are anticipated to be minimal.</p> <p>CPW plans to use lighting design features to reduce light pollution at night, to be aware of and support the City's potential work toward a dark sky initiative and certification (City of Durango 2025). Dark sky initiatives are aimed at restoring natural nighttime environments by reducing light pollution (DarkSky International 2025).</p>

Resource Dismissed from Further Analysis	Rationale for Dismissal
	Therefore, the Proposed Action would result in negligible impacts on noise and light pollution, and these resources were dismissed from further analysis.
Paleontology	The project area is located within a disturbed area where topography and soils have been previously altered by construction, and the planned building footprint would be placed next to existing structures or overlapping existing disturbance, resulting in no additional impacts. Therefore, the Proposed Action would result in negligible impacts on paleontology.
Hazardous Materials/Public Health and Safety	<p>Construction activities would be designed to meet federal, state, and local safety requirements during activities in the project area. Risk assessment meetings were conducted during the planning phase to ensure potential risks involving hazardous materials or public health and safety were identified and mitigation planned. Staging areas on-site would follow applicable BMPs to avoid impacts on public health and safety. Asbestos testing and abatement would be conducted and completed prior to demolition of the existing office building to limit exposure to hazardous materials during the Proposed Action.</p> <p>Safety and access for the public and visitors would be increased under the Proposed Action due to site updates such as the driveway access being made to comply with city code to allow access for emergency vehicles. The proposed building would be ADA compliant.</p> <p>Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in the spread of hazardous materials or an increase in safety issues relating to public health, and these resources were dismissed from further analysis.</p>

7.1 Air Quality and Climate

Affected Environment

The Clean Air Act, last amended in 1990, requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six pollutants, known as “criteria” pollutants. The criteria pollutants are carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and lead. Concentrations of criteria pollutants in a particular region that are higher than the EPA standards are considered non-attainment areas. For each non-attainment area, the state is required to provide a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to the EPA that enforces, maintains, and implements measures to meet the NAAQS.

The project area is in Durango in La Plata County, which is not listed as a non-attainment area for 8-Hour Ozone as determined by the EPA (EPA 2015). La Plata County has lower ozone levels than metropolitan areas such as Denver Metro/North Front Range, Colorado, that are showing serious non-attainment as of December 2024. Ozone associated with the NAAQS is formed in the lower atmosphere by photochemical reactions involving hydrocarbons, nitrogen-containing gases, and sunlight. Fossil fuel combustion is a primary source of hydrocarbons and nitrogen-containing gases that form ozone in the lower atmosphere (EPA 2025).

The U.S. Climate Explorer under the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit and the National Integrated Drought Information System under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) were consulted for projected future trends for La Plata County in temperatures, precipitation, and flooding. La Plata County is seeing increased dry spells and decreased precipitation and is categorized as abnormally dry due to an increase in average temperature and a decrease in precipitation since the 1990s (U.S. Federal Government 2025; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information 2025).

Environmental Consequences

Based on regional and local air quality conditions, a qualitative (rather than quantitative) analysis of air quality impacts is provided for the project. The impact analysis compares the impacts of the No Action alternative and the Proposed Action and identifies mitigation measures as needed.

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. No changes to the project area would occur, and there would be no additional impacts on air quality or climate resources.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would generate short-term construction emissions during construction activities. Emissions of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen dioxide would be generated because of construction equipment, material haul trucks, and construction worker vehicles. Construction activities are anticipated to last approximately 12 to 18 months, during which construction emissions would vary day by day based on the types of construction activities occurring. Although construction of the Proposed Action would generate air quality emissions that contribute to cumulative regional levels, based on the magnitude of the proposed construction activities, it is not anticipated that annual volatile organic compounds or nitrogen dioxide construction emissions would exceed the applicable minimum thresholds. Therefore, the direct impact on regional air quality due to the construction period of the Proposed Action would be negligible.

Construction best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to control potential emissions of fugitive dust and reduce potential emissions from construction vehicles/equipment during construction (see Section 7.9 – Best Management Practices for additional measures).

In accordance with EPA guidelines under the Clean Air Act, new development can be established when the source does not cause or exacerbate a violation of NAAQS. The Proposed Action is not expected to cause or exacerbate a violation of NAAQS or further cause the area to reach non-attainment.

Thirty-year projections from the U.S. Climate Explorer indicate that while certain climate parameters, such as annual average daily maximum temperatures, may experience increases, other factors such as flooding are not expected to significantly change in La Plata County (U.S. Federal Government 2025). Because the climate is predicted to remain relatively similar to

current conditions over the next 30 years, amplification of emissions caused by climatic variables that would cause further violation of the SIP are not anticipated.

Because the building would be built to meet LEED Silver rated specifications, the emissions caused by operations of the Proposed Action would remain similar to the existing conditions due to innovative building design and materials that provide energy savings, water efficiency, reduced carbon emissions, and improved indoor air quality. BMPs implemented during construction would reduce potential emissions and limit fugitive dust. Additionally, building designs incorporate electric vehicle charging stations to further reduce emissions through supporting the move toward providing infrastructure to support electric vehicle use. Therefore, the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action on regional air quality align with the implementation and enforcement measures of the SIP and are not expected to negatively impact regional air quality or climate.

The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on regional air quality are anticipated to be negligible, aligning with the conclusion that the Proposed Action would not impact the ozone SIP or further exacerbate non-attainment status.

7.2 Biological Environment

7.2.1 Aquatic Fauna and Habitat

Affected Environment

The project area does not contain any wetlands or riparian areas according to the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2025a) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Durango West topographic quadrangle map overlapping the project area (USGS 2022). The fish hatchery ponds and Huck Finn Pond are directly to the east of the project area, and the Animas River is approximately 25 feet south of the project area.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. There would be no additional impacts on aquatic fauna and habitat from the No Action alternative.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

The project area does not contain any wetlands or surface water resources; therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in impacts on aquatic fauna and habitat.

The project area is located adjacent to the Animas River. However, based on the types of activities likely to be implemented as part of the development of the project area, there would be no water depletions and no impacts on aquatic fauna or habitat in the Animas River.

Additionally, erosion-control measures would be implemented to prevent sedimentation from reaching waterways (see Section 7.9 – Best Management Practices for additional measures).

7.2.2 Terrestrial Fauna and Habitat

Affected Environment

The project area exists in a developed environment. Limited remnants of native plant communities exist in the project area today due to various types of disturbance over many years. Existing vegetation that overlaps the proposed building footprint includes native species such as blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) and narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*), some of which were planted and some that are natural. Additionally, planted or invasive species such as Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) and crab apple trees are also present in the footprint. Some evergreen landscaping in the form of juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) and rabbitbrush (*Ericameria* spp.) shrubs and non-native and native grass species are present, along with landscaping rock and some larger boulders.

The project area provides minimal habitat for a variety of small mammals (cottontail rabbits [*Sylvilagus* spp.], deer mice [*Peromyscus maniculatus*], voles [*Microtus* spp.], various species of squirrel including ground squirrels, and pocket gophers [*Geomyidae* spp.]) that may use different habitat types in the project area for shelter, breeding, wintering, and foraging at various times of the year. Other animals such as mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), grey fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), various species of bats (Order Chiroptera), and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) may also pass through the area or use it for foraging. Additionally, various migratory birds use the area as foraging and potential nesting habitat. Riparian species impacted by the proposed project include narrowleaf cottonwood and blue spruce, of which approximately 5 individuals (1 spruce and 1 cottonwood within the building footprint and 1 cluster of 3 cottonwoods by the snow pond to the north of the proposed parking area) are planned to be removed and replaced during landscaping of the final building. This would result in the removal of potential nesting habitat for migratory birds.

Mule deer are commonly observed in Durango and on the property, which is within a resident population area and adjacent to severe winter range and winter concentration areas, which are outside of the City (Colorado Natural Heritage Program [CNHP] 2025). Mule deer have adapted to life in urban areas, as urbanization has reduced and fragmented mule deer habitat, although threats to the deer individuals living in urban areas include vehicle collisions and supplemental feeding leading to increased human-deer conflict (Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 2014).

The project area is unlikely to contain areas of concentration for nesting and migratory shorebirds and waterfowl due to the lack of nesting locations within the project footprint and level of existing activity and development. More nesting locations and habitat are directly adjacent to the project area along the Animas River. Additionally, the project area does not contain key nesting areas for birds that breed in or use riparian areas due to a lack of native vegetation from development.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. There would be no impacts on terrestrial fauna and habitat from the No Action alternative.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would impact approximately 1.98 acres of terrestrial habitat. Construction of the new office facility would require the removal of vegetation, which would directly impact fauna that uses existing vegetation for habitat. However, most vegetation in the project area has been previously disturbed by the construction of existing buildings and roads and is dominated by planted or non-native species. Noise during construction may also lead to behavioral avoidance of the project area by birds, small mammals, and other fauna. Existing trees within the project area, and particularly those along the southern edge of the project area, would be retained to the maximum extent possible and continue to provide habitat for nesting birds and bats, and to reduce the impact near the Animas River.

As with any human development, wildlife species sensitive to human disturbance are likely to decline in abundance or abandon the area during and following construction, while other wildlife species adapted to development, such as the local mule deer, raccoons, and red foxes, are likely to stay the same or increase in abundance following construction. Impacts would be minimized in areas where existing vegetation would be replaced or retained. Native grass species, deciduous and evergreen shrubs, and trees would be established around the building. The portion of the site to the south of the building toward the Animas River would be established with additional native vegetation to increase the green and vegetated space between the building and the Animas River (see Appendix A for the landscaping plan).

Overall, surrounding, and continuing development contributes to a decline in the number and diversity of wildlife species nearby and to a change in species composition to favor species that adapt better to human disturbance. The Proposed Action would result in minimal impacts on native vegetation and fauna during and following construction, with these impacts restricted to small patches of habitat that have mostly been previously developed. Native vegetation would be established surrounding the building to provide habitat for birds, insects, and other species likely to use the area, and impacts close to the Animas River would be minimized. BMPs would be followed to minimize disturbance to terrestrial resources (see Section 7.9) and a storm water management plan (SWMP), or other similar document would be produced at a later date to outline project specific BMPs.

7.2.3 Species and Habitats of Concern

Affected Environment

Federally Threatened and Endangered Species

Federally threatened and endangered species are protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1531 et seq.). Significant adverse effects on a

federally listed species or its habitat require consultation with the USFWS under Section 7 or 10 of the Endangered Species Act. Several threatened, endangered, and proposed species have the potential to occur within La Plata County (Table 3). A review of habitat requirements for each species and habitat characteristics in the project area indicates that there is potential habitat present for two species: monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*) and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus suckleyi*). A Biological Assessment was not required for the Proposed Action due to effects determinations being no effect for all listed species with the potential to occur in the project area (Horvath 2025).

Table 3. Federally threatened, endangered, and candidate species potentially found in La Plata County or potentially affected by projects in La Plata County from the Information for Planning and Consultation website.

Common Name <i>Scientific Name</i>	Status	Habitat	Habitat Present or Potential to Occur	Effects Determination
Gray wolf <i>Canis lupus</i>	EXPN	Can thrive in a wide range of habitats; highly adaptable as a species that occurs in temperate forests, mountains, and grasslands	No	No effect
New Mexico meadow jumping mouse <i>Zapus hudsonius luteus</i>	E	Shrub riparian/wet meadows	No	No effect
Mexican spotted owl <i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	T	Mixed conifer forests with closed canopies and steep rocky canyons	No	No effect
Southwestern willow flycatcher <i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	E	Riparian and wetland thickets, generally consisting of willow, tamarisk, boxelder, or Russian olive	No	No effect
Yellow-billed cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	T	Woodlands with low scrub vegetation, overgrown orchards, abandoned farmland, and dense thickets along streams and marshes	No	No effect
Colorado pikeminnow* <i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	E	Various habitat types in medium to large rivers of the Upper Colorado River basin	No	No effect
Razorback sucker* <i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	E	Mainstream river channels, reservoirs, turbid inflow areas, and floodplain wetlands	No	No effect
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus plexippus</i>	PT	Depends on milkweeds (<i>Asclepias spp.</i>) as host plants and forage on blooming flowers; a summer resident	Potential habitat; see below	No effect
Silverspot <i>Speyeria nokomis nokomis</i>	T	Occurs in streamside meadows fed by springs, marches, boggy streamside meadows, and open wetland/seepage areas with an abundance of violets between 5,200 and 8,500 feet in elevation	No	No effect

Common Name Scientific Name	Status	Habitat	Habitat Present or Potential to Occur	Effects Determination
Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee <i>Bombus suckleyi</i>	PE	Utilizes various habitats including prairies, grasslands, meadows, and woodlands between 6,000 and 10,500 feet in elevation where host species are present	Habitat present; not known to occur in state; see below	No effect

T = Federally Threatened Species; E = Federally Endangered Species; PT = Proposed Threatened; PE = Proposed Endangered; EXPN = Experimental Population, Non-essential.

*Water depletions in the Upper Colorado River basin adversely affect this species and its critical habitat. Therefore, while these species do not occur within the project area itself, effects of water depletions must be considered even outside of occupied range.

Source: USFWS 2025b.

Monarch Butterfly

The monarch butterfly is a species proposed for listing as endangered. The monarch butterfly occurs throughout much of North America and is segregated into eastern and western populations. Monarch butterflies are dependent on milkweeds (primarily *Asclepias* spp.) as host plants for egg-laying and larval development (USFWS 2025c). The project area is not within a designated migration corridor or breeding or overwintering area for this species, although some monarch butterflies migrate through Colorado in the summer (USFWS 2025d). This species may occasionally travel through the project area but is not likely to lay eggs because the numbers of host and forage plants are minimal. Individuals have been observed near Durango, but in areas with higher vegetation cover and extant milkweed plants relative to the project area (Western Monarch Milkweed Mapper 2025). Due to the lack of milkweed and limited observations in the area, a no-effect determination was made for this species.

Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee

The project area also provides potential suitable habitat for the Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee, newly proposed as endangered (USFWS 2024; 89 Federal Register 102074). Habitat for this species includes prairies, grasslands, meadows, and woodlands between 6,000 and 10,500 feet in elevation where host species of bumble bee (*Bombus* spp.) are present. Based on the best available information, only 10 Suckley's bumble bees have been observed in Colorado since 2010 (Dolan 2025, pers. comm.), and none since 2014 despite ongoing surveys. The Species Status Assessment shows recent observations (since 2018) occur only in northern latitudes, primarily in Canada (USFWS 2024). Based on this information, the USFWS considers the species extirpated in Colorado (Gissing and Salamack 2025, pers. comm.) resulting in a no-effect determination.

State Threatened and Endangered Species

The Colorado State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) was developed by CPW to document the status and knowledge of wildlife species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in Colorado. SWAP determines the state's SGCN, documents threats to the species and habitats, and articulates strategies that can be employed to lessen those threats. SGCN do not require protection via federal or state listing under SWAP, although some of the SGCN are also listed or protected by other statutes. SGCN are designated as Tier 1 or Tier 2 SGCN. Tier 1 species are

those that have the highest conservation priority in Colorado (CPW 2015). Additionally, species listed as state threatened or endangered (CPW 2025b) were analyzed (Table 4).

Species were removed from analysis if habitat was not present in the project area or if range did not extend to include the project area. Only species with the potential to utilize the project area were analyzed. All fish species listed as SGCN were removed from this analysis due to the lack of water depletion and impacts on aquatic habitats.

Table 4. State-listed species of concern potentially found in La Plata County or potentially affected by projects in La Plata County.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status ^{1,2}	Habitat	Presence in Project Area
Birds			
American peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Tier 2, SC	Prefer open spaces and favor cliffs in mountain ranges, overlooking rivers, and coastal areas. Nests on cliffs from and ledges of buildings.	The project area could provide foraging habitat, but no nesting habitat is present in the project area. Construction could temporarily deter peregrine falcons from using the project area for foraging.
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	SC, Tier 2	In Colorado, bald eagles are found throughout much of the state during both the summer and winter. They often occur near large reservoirs and along major rivers.	The project area is within CPW-mapped winter concentration and forage areas for the species, and active nests are mapped approximately 2 miles north of the project area along the Animas River (CNHP 2025).
Barrow's goldeneye <i>Bucephala islandica</i>	Tier 2	Winters in Colorado locations but rarely breeds in the state. Primarily associated with open rivers and lakes, often with rocky shores.	The project area is within the species winter range but would not utilize the area as breeding habitat. Construction could temporarily deter Barrow's goldeneye from using the adjacent Animas River as overwintering habitat.
Black rosy-finches <i>Leucosticte atrata</i>	Tier 2	Winters in open country at lower elevations and in mountainous areas during fair weather. During the nonbreeding season, they often move to lower elevations, especially when heavy snow covers foraging areas. Here they forage in open parks and valleys with little snow cover and visit feeders. When winter conditions are particularly harsh, they roost in crevices, caves, mineshafts, and wells.	The project area is within the species winter range but not the breeding range of the species. Individuals have been observed in the surrounding region (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025), but the species is less likely to use urban habitats.
Brewer's sparrow <i>Spizella breweri</i>	Tier 2	Found in shrubland/chapparal, and strongly associated with sagebrush habitats with scattered shrubs and short grass.	The project area is within breeding and non-breeding habitat, however limited shrubland is present and it is unlikely that breeding would occur in the project area. Construction could temporarily deter Brewer's sparrows from utilizing the project area for foraging habitat, but no removal of preferred habitat would occur.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status ^{1,2}	Habitat	Presence in Project Area
Broad-tailed hummingbird <i>Selasphorus platycercus</i>	Tier 2	Breeding habitat is scattered throughout Colorado and is primarily foothills, mountains, and montane valleys. Nest sites are located up to 10,500 feet.	The project area could provide nesting locations, but because tree removal would take place outside of breeding season, no direct impacts on nesting are expected. The proposed project would result in the removal of potential nesting sites.
Brown-capped rosy- finch <i>Leucosticte australis</i>	Tier 1	Nests in alpine habitats. Winters in open country at lower elevations.	The project area is not within an alpine or open habitat, although the species has been observed in the surrounding region (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025).
Cassin's finch <i>Haemorhous cassinii</i>	Tier 2	Generally breed in mature coniferous forests of interior west mountains but will also use moist subalpine forests, open sagebrush with scattered juniper, and logged areas.	The project area is within the year-round range for the species, but preferred nesting habitat is not present in the project area. However, the project area could be used for foraging or as less suitable nesting habitat, and construction in the project area would result in removal of potential nest trees and minimal loss of foraging habitat. Construction could temporarily deter Cassin's finch from using the project area as foraging habitat.
Juniper titmouse <i>Baeolophus ridgwayi</i>	Tier 2	Uncommon resident of oak-juniper and pinyon-juniper woodlands, but can wander into adjacent habitats to forage.	The project area does not contain pinyon-juniper or oak-juniper woodlands, but these communities can be found near the project area. Therefore, the project area may be used as foraging habitat, but nesting habitat is not present. Construction could temporarily deter juniper titmice from using the project area to forage.
Lazuli bunting <i>Passerina amoena</i>	Tier 2	Brushy hillsides, riparian areas, open scrub, thickets, wooded valleys, and gardens.	The project area is in the breeding range for the species and could provide suitable nesting habitat although dense vegetation close to the ground is typically more desirable. Removal of trees in the project area would reduce available nesting locations in the project area.
Lewis's woodpecker <i>Melanerpes lewis</i>	Tier 2	Open ponderosa pine forest, open riparian woodland dominated by cottonwood, and logged or burned pine forest. Nest in cavities in mature trees or snag trees.	The project area provides nesting habitat in the form of mature cottonwood trees bordering the Animas River. Removal of mature cottonwood trees with nest cavities would reduce available nesting locations in the project area.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	Tier 2	In Colorado it ranges during migration and summer from 4,000 to 9,000 feet with below 6,000 feet being the most common. It is a fairly common Colorado summer resident in western valleys but is rare to un-common in mountain parks and rare in mountains. Non-breeding habitat is typically more open country such as prairies, agricultural lands, and open montane meadows.	Although the project area is within the breeding range for the species, it is not likely to be common in the project area due to lack of preferred open habitats for foraging during the non-breeding season. Construction has the potential to temporarily deter loggerhead shrikes from using the project area, but no impacts are anticipated on breeding or nesting.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status ^{1,2}	Habitat	Presence in Project Area
Olive-sided flycatcher <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Tier 2	Coniferous and mixed-conifer forests; most often associated with forest edges and openings.	The project area and surrounding area provide sufficient mixed tree species to provide habitat, and the species has been observed in the surrounding area (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025).
Rufous hummingbird <i>Selasphorus rufus</i>	Tier 2	Migration habitat includes disturbed areas and montane and alpine meadows up to 12,600 feet in elevation.	The project area falls within the species migration range, and habitat is present surrounding the project area. Observations of this species are relatively common in the Durango area and surrounding region (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025).
Virginia warbler <i>Leiothlypis virginiae</i>	Tier 2	Uses many habitats including piñon-juniper, oak woodlands, coniferous forests, brushy cover alongside streams, shrubby vegetation near conifers, cottonwood, and willow.	The project area falls within the species breeding range, and habitat is present surrounding the project area. Observations of this species are relatively common in the Durango area and surrounding region (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025).
Mammals			
Botta's pocket gopher <i>Rubidus</i> spp.	SC, Tier 2	Varied habitats, including valleys and high mountain meadows and lower grasslands, usually not in forested areas. Found to burrow in variable soils including soft sands to friable loams and hard clays.	The project area could provide habitat for the species, although it is less likely because a majority of the project area exhibits soils with high rock content or parking lots that cover available soils for burrowing.
Fringed myotis <i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Tier 1	Coniferous forests and woodlands; roost in rock crevices, caves, mines, buildings, and trees. Maximum elevation of 7,500 feet.	Open areas along the Animas River may provide suitable foraging habitat, and trees, buildings, or bridges may provide roosting habitat. Roosting habitat would be removed in the form of one building and multiple trees. Because construction would happen during daylight hours, foraging should not be impacted.
Hoary bat <i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	Tier 2	Solitary tree roosting species that occurs in any treed habitat; present only from April through November in Colorado. Coniferous and aspen woodlands and riparian areas with willows provide foraging and day roosting habitat.	Trees along the Animas River may provide suitable roosting habitat, and foraging habitat is present in the surrounding area. Roosting habitat would be removed in the form of one building and multiple trees. Because construction would happen during daylight hours, foraging should not be impacted.
Little brown myotis <i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	Tier 1	Forested areas including riparian woodlands, mountains and valleys. Can be found in urban areas, woodlots, and belts of habitat. Roosts in tree hollows, under bark, and in or on buildings, bridges, and rock crevices.	Open areas along the Animas River may provide suitable foraging habitat, and trees, buildings, or bridges may provide roosting habitat.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status ^{1,2}	Habitat	Presence in Project Area
Townsend's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens</i>	SC, Tier 1	Occurs in a wide variety of habitats including semi-desert shrublands, piñon-juniper woodlands, coniferous forests, and riparian areas up to 10,800 feet in elevation. Typically found near caves, mines, and other structures for roosting. Often forage over water.	Open areas along the Animas River may provide suitable foraging habitat, and trees, buildings, or bridges may provide roosting habitat.

¹SC = State Species of Special Concern; Tier 1 or Tier 2 SGCN under SWAP.

²Additional sources: Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2025; CNHP 2025; NatureServe 2025; Colorado Bat Working Group 2025.

Raptors and Migratory Birds

Migratory birds, as well as their eggs and nests, are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The MBTA does not contain any prohibition that applies to the destruction of a bird nest alone (without birds or eggs), provided that no possession occurs during the destruction. While the destruction of a nest by itself is not prohibited under the MBTA, nest destruction that results in the unpermitted take of migratory birds or their eggs is illegal and fully prosecutable under the MBTA (USFWS 2003). The regulatory definition of a take is to pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect; or attempt to pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect (50 CFR 10.12).

Vegetation in the project area provides potential nesting habitat for migratory birds. However, the project area contains minimal nesting locations, and due to development is not an area of concentration for nesting or migration of shorebirds and waterfowl even though the project area is near the Animas River. Tree removal is limited, and suitable nesting trees are located both elsewhere on the property and in the surrounding area.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. There would be no impacts on species and habitats of concern from the No Action alternative.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would impact approximately 1.98 acres of potential habitat for threatened and endangered species, raptors, and migratory birds due to the removal of vegetation and noise from construction activities. However, existing habitat is limited to small areas of vegetation containing limited trees and shrubs between buildings and parking lots that could be used by the one proposed listed species with potential presence, the monarch butterfly, and no milkweed individuals for breeding or foraging are present. Therefore, the impact of habitat loss for the monarch butterfly would be low. Additionally, the site would be revegetated using native species, resulting in additional vegetation and habitat being replaced by the Proposed Action (Appendix A).

Raptors and migratory birds may avoid the project area during construction due to noise and increased human presence. Long-term impacts on raptor and migratory bird habitat from the

Proposed Action would be limited to the removal of small patches of existing habitat and removal of nesting trees on the property. However, these areas are only marginally suitable for many raptors due to the lack of connectivity with other suitable habitats, site location, and prior disturbance. Additionally, planting of native vegetation as part of the Proposed Action may enhance suitable habitat for migratory birds and result in long-term beneficial impacts. To avoid the destruction of potential migratory bird nests, vegetation removal should be conducted outside of the April 1 through August 31 breeding season and outside of the red-tailed hawk nesting season of February 15 through July 15 if individuals are observed nesting on site prior to construction (see Section 7.9).

Overall, the Proposed Action would result in short-term impacts during construction but would not have long-term impacts on species or habitats of concern. The direct effects on species and habitats of concern from the project would be negligible because of the low potential for occupancy and lack of habitat. Some beneficial impacts could occur from the use of native species for revegetation.

7.3 Cultural Resources

Affected Environment

The Proposed Action would require funding from the USFWS and therefore also requires compliance with Section 106 (54 U.S.C. § 306108) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA; 54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.). Section 106 of the NHPA requires that the lead federal agency consider potential effects on historic properties that may result from the proposed undertaking. Historic properties are those cultural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). ERO completed a pedestrian survey and associated report (ERO 2025) of the 9-acre hatchery property and a viewshed analysis and visual impact assessment within a 0.5-mile radius of the property to identify potential historic properties that may be visually impacted by the proposed project. The Physical Area of Potential Effects (P-APE) consists of the entire 9-acre property of the state-owned hatchery plus a 100-foot buffer surrounding the APE. This area includes modern and historic buildings, parking lots, and associated hatchery structures. The Visual APE (V-APE) includes a 0.2-mile or less visual radius from the project location; this distance was refined from a preliminary 0.5-mile viewshed.

In or overlapping the P-APE are 15 resources including the Durango Fish Hatchery Historic District (5LP3363), 13 associated buildings and structures, and a segment of the D&RG Western Railroad (Table 5). The district (5LP3363) is recommended not eligible for the listing in the NRHP. Three of the associated resources are eligible for listing in the NRHP (5LP12124, 5LP12125, and 5LP12128). The railroad segment (5LP302.11) is supporting of an NRHP-listed resource. Ten resources are not eligible for listing in the NRHP under any criteria (5LP3367, 5LP3368, 5LP12126, 5LP12127, 5LP12129, 5LP12130, 5LP12131, 5LP12132, 5LP12133, and 5LP12134). Of the resources within 5LP3363, three are contributing to the hatchery as a historic district (5LP12124, 5LP12125, and 5LP12128), and 10 are recommended noncontributing (5LP3367, 5LP3368, 5LP12126, 5LP12127, and 5LP12129 through 5LP12134). Four of these resources qualify as historic properties (5LP302.11, 5LP12124, 5LP12125, and 5LP12128).

Of the 41 previously and newly documented cultural resources in the V-APE, 32 are historic properties or potential historic properties that were carried forward for the visual impact analysis. Of these, six resources are historic properties (5LP302, 5LP1411, 5LP3363, 5LP6654, 5LP12124, and 5LP12125), and four have been or are recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP (5LP3752, 5LP12124, 5LP12125, and 5LP12128). Twenty-two are resources that have been recommended – but not yet determined – not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Table 5. Cultural resources and management recommendations.

Smithsonian Number	Resource Type/Name	NRHP Eligibility Recommendation	Management Recommendation
5LP302.11	Segment of the D&RG Western Railroad	Supporting/ listed in NRHP	No further work
5LP3363	Durango Fish Hatchery (Historic District)	Not eligible	No further work
5LP3367	Building/Assistant Manager's House	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP3368	Building/Assistant Manager's Garage	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12124 (5LP3363.1)	Building/Wildlife Museum and Visitors' Center	Eligible/contributing	Avoid all impacts on building
5LP12125 (5LP3363.2)	Building/San Juan Basin Area Office (historically known as the Superintendent Residence)	Eligible/contributing	Resolve adverse effect
5LP12126	Building/Current Superintendent's Residence	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12127 (5LP3363.4)	Building/Pump House	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12128	Structure/Fish Raceways and Nurse Basin	Eligible/contributing	Avoid all impacts on F1
5LP12129	Building/New Hatchery Building	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12130	Building/Maintenance Shop	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12131	Building/Recirculation Building	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12132	Lake/Huck Finn Pond	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12133	Building/Quarantine Hatchery	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work
5LP12134	Building/Spawn Shed	Not eligible/noncontributing	No further work

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. No effects would occur on historic properties from the No Action alternative.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, CPW would construct a new office building with associated parking and drainage facilities and utility services, as well as relocating existing utilities and improving the East 16th Street access drive. The construction of the proposed building would result in the demolition of the San Juan Basin Area Office (historically known as the Superintendent's Residence) (5LP12125), which is recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP and has been determined as a contributing resource to the Durango Fish Hatchery Historic District. The remaining three historic properties (5LP302.11, 5LP12124, and 5LP12128) will be altered or impacted by the Proposed Action. USFWS coordinated with the National Park Service (NPS) on impacts to the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad (5LP302.11); NPS concurred with the no adverse effect recommendation for this historic property.

The USFWS consulted with the Colorado SHPO and other potential consulting parties for determination of NRHP eligibility and project effects. The USFWS determined that the project would result in an “adverse effect to historic properties” pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5 of the NHPA for the proposed undertaking because of the proposed demolition of 5LP12125 under the Proposed Action. Both direct and indirect effects would result from the project. Colorado SHPO concurred with this determination on June 15, 2025. The USFWS executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6 (c). A final executed copy of this MOA may be found at <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/office-conservation-investment-nepa-documents>. Stipulations outlined in the MOA will be implemented before and during the proposed action.

The proposed project would have varying degrees of visual impacts on several historic properties or potential historic properties in the V-APE; however, there are more prominent impacts on the setting of the area, and the proposed project would include measures to decrease visual impacts. Mitigative measures include using muted, natural colors for the building and planting additional trees in the P-APE (see Section 7.7).

7.4 Recreation, Access, and Transportation

Affected Environment

Existing facilities located on the proposed project site provide recreational opportunities for the public. The Durango Wildlife Museum and Fish Hatchery provide access to visit the hatchery and tour the free museum aimed at wildlife education. The museum has over 50 species of animals on display and provides educational opportunities for children and the community. The fish hatchery is the oldest state-owned hatchery in the state and raises various trout species for Colorado's stocking program. The hatchery provides tours where visitors can feed the fish and learn about the process, with many tours being conducted for school field trips. CPW has recorded over 1,500 visitors to the hatchery and museum in peak seasons, which has resulted in parking issues at times, particularly when multiple school buses are on site. Traffic to the site is seasonal based on tourism and school trip activities to the museum and hatchery, and seasonal hunting information, purchasing licenses, game testing, and info for the public from the CPW offices.

The grounds, although owned and managed by CPW and property of the State of Colorado, are open to the public and often used for recreational access in the surrounding area. Current additional recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the project area include fishing in the Animas River (approximately 25 feet south of the project area) and Huck Finn Pond (about 500 feet southeast of the project area), birdwatching or hiking along the Animas River and the associated Animas River Trail, and visiting the Durango Public Library and Botanic Gardens approximately a ¼-mile walk up the Animas River Trail.

Access to the site is provided through the 16th Street driveway, which is steep and narrow in some spots, and social trails that branch off from the Animas River Trail.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. No impact on recreation would occur under the No Action alternative.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the new CPW facility would provide wildlife-dependent educational and recreational opportunities for the public that are currently less accessible at the Durango Office. Identified issues include public access to the current facilities, including restricted access to parking due to high traffic and use of the current facilities, limited parking space, and inadequate space for public outreach.

Overall, the Proposed Action would have long-term beneficial impacts on recreation availability and ADA accessibility within and in the vicinity of the project area after construction. The proximity to Main Avenue in Durango would make the facility readily visible and accessible to members of the public seeking information about outdoor recreational and wildlife-dependent opportunities in the area. The new CPW office facility would also provide increased parking as well as staff working and meeting capacity. The proposed building configuration would allow for enhanced public outreach space within the facilities, including a customer service desk to facilitate hunting and fishing license sales, education and sharing of information with the public, and a meeting space for public use or programs.

Short-term adverse impacts are expected during construction. The museum and current offices would be closed for the duration of work being performed on the site; hunting and fishing licenses would be sold at the Southwest Regional Office in Bodo Park for the duration of construction. Fish hatchery access to the public would be scheduled or rerouted through alternative entry points as possible, to maintain recreational opportunities and limit adverse effects during construction. Access to the on-site residences would be rerouted as necessary during construction to maintain access for residents.

7.5 Socioeconomic Resources

Affected Environment

U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Census) data for the year 2020 were collected at the tract level to identify population statistics (U.S. Census 2020). Additional surveys, American Community Surveys, are completed to help estimate changing population statistics and data. In this section, the most recent and relevant data is used to display comparisons. To identify populations, Census-tract-level data were compared to La Plata County and state-level data as reference communities. The project area sits in the center of Durango in Colorado, just within Census tract 9710, and just north of Census tract 9711. The Census tract covers a larger area than the defined project area, and inferences about the project area have been made from the tract data as compared to La Plata County data.

The population of Census tract 9710, which encompasses the project area, is 3,525. The population of La Plata County is 56,138, and that of the state of Colorado is 5,877,610 (U.S. Census 2023a). The unemployment rate in Census tract 9710 is higher than the county's but lower than the state's (U.S. Census 2023b) (Table 6). The poverty rate, as measured by the percentage of residents living below the poverty level, was higher for Census tract 9710 than in the county but lower than in the state (U.S. Census 2023c). Median household income for Census tract 9710 is greater than La Plata County's but lower than the state's (U.S. Census 2023d).

Table 6. U.S. Census economic characteristics in Census Tract 9710 and La Plata County, Colorado.

Location	Unemployment Rate*	Percentage Below Poverty Level**	Median Household Income***
Census Tract 9710, La Plata County, Colorado	3.50%	15.7%	\$87,768
La Plata County, Colorado	3.10%	12.4%	\$85,296
Colorado	3.80%	18.4%	\$92,911

Source: *U.S. Census 2023b; **U.S. Census 2023c; ***U.S. Census 2023d.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. Therefore, no changes to existing socioeconomic characteristics would occur.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Construction of the Proposed Action could result in direct and indirect short-term beneficial impacts on the local economy. These short-term effects would occur during construction and would be mostly limited to a slight increase in the construction workforce and beneficial impacts from associated spending in the immediate community. Construction would provide approximately 20 to 30 construction personnel temporary employment for approximately 12 to

18 months (contingent on weather and other scheduling constraints). No long-term population and housing effects are anticipated under the Proposed Action.

It is anticipated that workers would spend a portion of their income in the immediate communities on meals, resulting in an incremental beneficial effect on local businesses during construction. These impacts would be short-term and end after construction is completed.

The Proposed Action would result in temporary construction-related impacts on the overall community from increased dust, dirt, noise, traffic, and access disruptions during the construction process. Although impacts from construction would be adverse, they would be short-term and would be mitigated by maintaining access as possible and using BMPs to reduce noise and dust (see Section 7.9) and therefore mitigating impacts on the community and associated socioeconomics.

7.6 Water Resources

Affected Environment

The project area does not contain any wetlands or riparian areas according to the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2025a) and the USGS Durango West topographic quadrangle map overlapping the project area (USGS 2022). The fish hatchery ponds as well as Huck Finn Pond are directly to the east of the project area, and the Animas River is approximately 25 feet south of the project area below a retaining wall.

Surface Water and Groundwater Quality and Quantity

The Animas River is located just south of the project area, but no wetlands, riparian areas, or other water bodies are present within the project area where disturbance would be planned.

Cumulative impacts from increased urban infill development near the city could include increased runoff from paved surfaces and increased non-point-source pollutants entering the Animas River and its tributaries. The project area currently is primarily paved; additional vegetation would be added between the proposed building and the Animas River to reduce erosion and sediment transport in the long term.

Additional permitting through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is not expected. The contractor would provide a courtesy notification, as needed, to the USACE prior to construction and would avoid permanent impacts on surface waters, unless authorized under a permit issued by the USACE. Temporary impacts on surface waters during construction would be minimized to the greatest extent feasible, and the contractor would abide by all stipulations as required by the USACE and federal, state, and local entities. Stormwater- and erosion-control BMPs would be used during construction to prevent non-point-source water quality impacts, as further detailed in Section 7.9.

Floodplains

Under Executive Order 11988, “Floodplain Management,” federal agencies are required to evaluate and address potential effects of their actions on floodplains to avoid adverse impacts wherever possible to ensure that projects’ planning and budget reflect consideration of flood

hazards and floodplain management, and to prescribe procedures to implement the policies and procedures of Executive Order 11988.

The most recent Federal Emergency Management Agency floodplain maps (Map Nos. 08067C0494G and 08067C0492G, effective April 25, 2024) show a majority of the facility to be located in Zone AE within the 100-year floodplain, and another portion to be within Zone X (500-year flood), but just outside the regulatory floodway, where the base floodplain elevation for the 100-year flood has been determined (Figure 3). The elevation in this portion of the Animas River is about 6,512 feet above sea level, with the project area being approximately 6,520 feet above sea level.

The City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, which provides affordable flood insurance for properties subject to potential flood damage, and such insurance is mandatory in special flood zone areas (City of Durango 2025). City regulations are included in their Land Use and Development Code, which outlines requirements for building in the floodplain. These codes require the base elevation of the building to be at least 1 foot higher than the elevation of the floodplain. Updated Federal Emergency Management Agency maps from 2024 show that the elevation of the building would be at least 1 foot above the floodplain elevation and would additionally be built up from its current elevation, lowering potential flood risk and meeting city requirements.

The finished elevations of all new aeration basins and other project components would be at least 1 foot above the flood elevation of the adjacent floodway. Construction activities would be monitored, and erosion- and sediment-control BMPs would be implemented to minimize erosion and sediment movement toward the river (Section 7.9). Additionally, stormwater risk management best practices would be completed to ensure planning is done that would not result in impacts on the river if a flood event were to happen during construction, including storage of hazardous materials outside of the 100-year floodplain. The improvements are within the existing disturbance present on the site and would be located away from the Animas River as much as possible.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

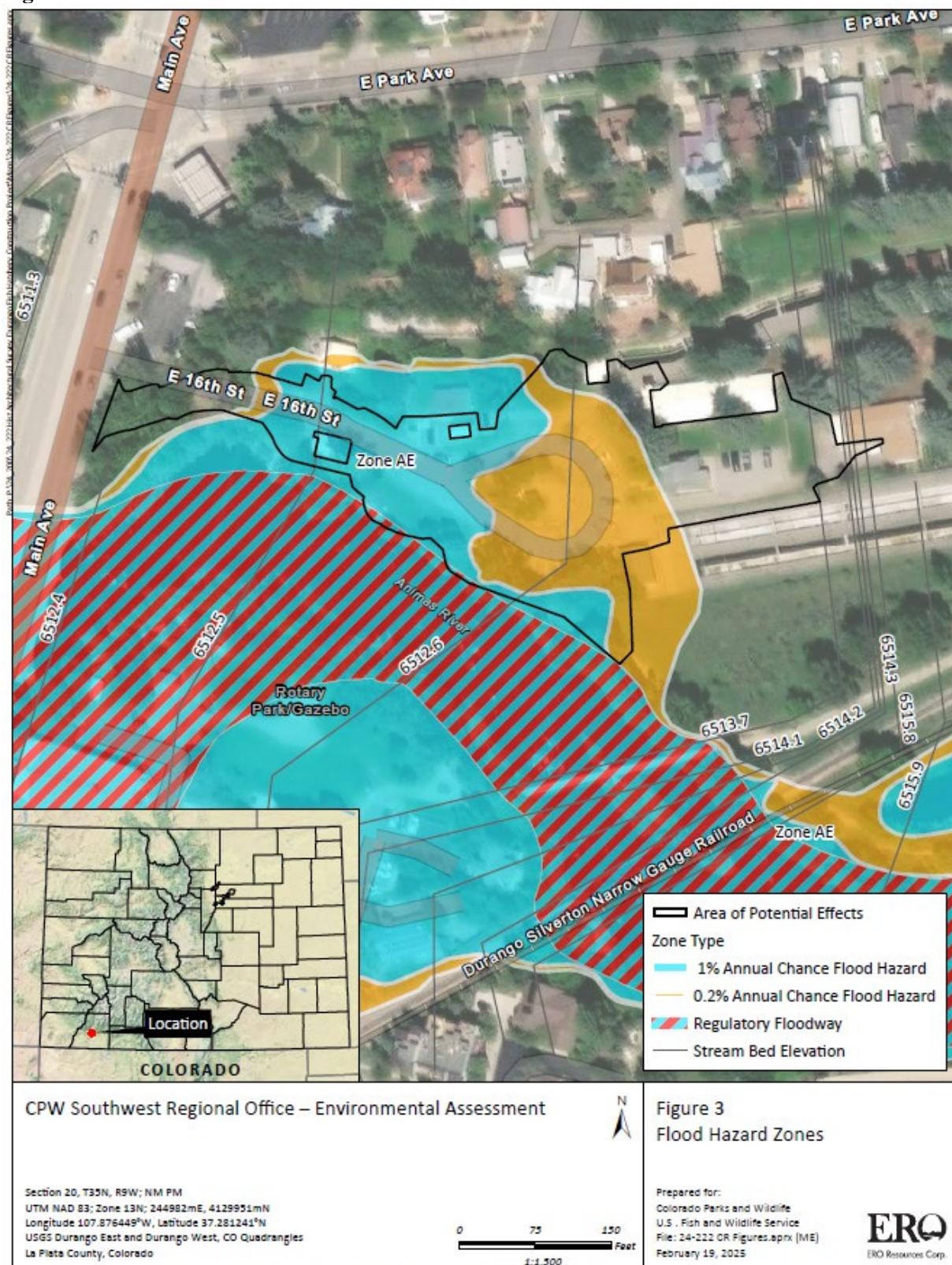
Alternative B: Proposed Action

Direct impacts on surface and ground water would be avoided to the extent possible through the Proposed Action BMPs (Section 7.9). Construction activities would result in ground disturbance and removal of vegetation that could result in erosion of soils and transport of sediment or hazardous materials into surface water during stormwater events throughout the construction process. However, a stormwater management plan would be created to outline mitigation measures during construction to limit transport of sediment into the Animas River during

construction activities. Construction activities have the potential to result in accidental spills or inadvertent leaks of vehicle fluid or other fluids, which would be mitigated and minimized through risk management practices and safe storage practices outside of the 100-year floodplain. As such, construction may result in temporary, minor, indirect water quality impacts due to sedimentation and fluid releases. To avoid these temporary indirect water quality impacts, BMPs such as installation silt fences, straw bales or wattles, sandbag barriers, sediment traps, erosion-control mats, concrete washout containers, filter berms, or additional common erosion-control measures would be implemented. These practices would be incorporated into a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit, if the Proposed Action alternative disturbs 1 acre of land or more.

Building and site design would minimize water quality impacts. Native grass species, deciduous and evergreen shrubs, and trees would be established around the building, and the existing trees on the southern side of the building would be retained to the maximum extent possible to reduce erosion and discharge to the river. Additionally, subsurface drains would be installed to intercept and convey groundwater, and outlet protection on storm drains would reduce erosion and flow velocities into receiving channels. Overall, the Proposed Action would have negligible long-term impacts on water resources due to mitigation measures during construction and operation and continued permitting through required state and local entities.

Figure 3. Water Resources and Flood Hazard Zones.



7.7 Visual Resources

Affected Environment

The project area is located off East 16th Street between Main Street and the Animas River in Durango, Colorado. Florida Road is to the east on the other side of the river. The visual setting is characterized by expansive and generally unobstructed valley views and rolling hill topography. Viewsheds of the surrounding topography include Smelter Mountain, Perins Peak, Missionary Ridge, and the mountains and ridges of the surrounding the San Juan and La Plata Mountains. The immediate area is urban in nature, with buildings, roads, and infrastructure located on both sides of the Animas River. Directly to the south and east is the Animas River, which flows generally southwest around the project area. Clusters of trees line the river and roads adjacent to the project area and are scattered throughout town to break up the view of buildings.

The project area sits on a low terrace above the Animas River and is lower in elevation than most of Durango; therefore, it is out of view for much of the surrounding area. The project area would be most visible from the Animas River Trail; Florida Road and the bike trail along Florida Road; the Rim Trail east across the Animas River on the edge of the mesa where Fort Lewis College is located; Rotary Park south across the river; trails on Raider's Ridge above the city to the east of Fort Lewis College; and Main Street/U.S. Highway 550 heading north for a short period while going over the Main Street bridge. Current building designs available at the time of this EA, designate the removal of two to three mature trees between the proposed building and the Animas River.

Additionally, the project area is located within the River Corridor Overlay Zone. The design criteria for this zone, according to the Durango Land Use and Development Code (City of Durango 2025), are intended to ensure the continuation and improvement of the special character of the Animas River corridor, to protect viewsheds and water quality of the Animas River, and to retain economic, aesthetic, and development conditions.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. There would be no changes to visual resources in the project area, and therefore, there would be no impacts on visual resources.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Construction and operation of the Proposed Action would change the visual resources in the project area in comparison to the existing landscape. A slight reduction in viewshed of the Animas River is anticipated for the surrounding residences due to the size of the Proposed Action (two stories and 9,950 square feet) as compared to the existing development, which has a smaller footprint. In addition, the area would be developed with an upgraded driveway, parking areas, sidewalks, walking paths, and landscaping that would impact the viewshed, but not drastically change the type of infrastructure from what is currently existing. The view of the

building from the Animas River and the trail would be limited due to its location and would primarily be visible from across the Animas River Trail in and near Rotary Park. Views of the proposed building are restricted due to the location along a curve on the Animas River, reducing the amount of time viewers have direct sight of the building location from the Animas River and associated trail. The current building design would also limit views of the parking lot and additional infrastructure that would negatively impact the viewshed through building placement and would introduce additional vegetation between the building and the river that would provide some visual screening. The existing two to three mature trees with the potential for removal under the Proposed Action do not provide a dense visual screen to block the current view of the existing parking lot and other hatchery infrastructure from the river, Animas River Trail, or Rotary Park, and ongoing site designs are being rearranged to the extent possible to maintain as many trees as possible. Landscaping plans will be designed to better screen the proposed building from the viewshed along the Animas River and will also include a walking trail for better access to Main St., and other native vegetation selected to better screen the building from the viewshed along the Animas River.

The building would be built with natural design elements to mimic natural elements and use more natural colors with a modern approach to blend in and complement the surrounding environment, and landscaping will be installed between the building and the Animas River to limit additional visual impacts.

During the construction phase, negative visual impacts are anticipated due to construction vehicles and the removal of some vegetation cover. Trees would be preserved during construction to the extent possible. Short-term effects resulting from construction activities associated with the Proposed Action would also include increased construction traffic, transportation of materials on local roads, and the presence of construction equipment and materials in the project area.

The Proposed Action would be constructed in an existing city development overlapping existing development within the City River Corridor Overlay Zone, which has a purpose of maintaining the viewshed to and from the Animas River by maintaining the aesthetic and ecological qualities that provide economic benefit in the City. Requirements are reviewed on a project basis but include screening requirements including not removing trees, setting infrastructure including paths and trails back from the river, minimizing reflective surfaces toward the river, and installing native and natural-looking landscaping. The Proposed Action shall adhere to the required standards as set by the City, would use natural design elements, and would install native landscaping; therefore, it is not anticipated to significantly negatively impact visual resources.

7.8 Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts

This EA describes the impacts, or environmental consequences, of the No Action alternative and the Proposed Action, and the potential impact of the reasonably foreseeable future trends and planned actions combined with the Proposed Action that could cumulatively impact specific resources evaluated in this EA following the requirements of 40 CFR 1502.15. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

The proposed project area is located in the center of the rapidly growing city of Durango. As the population grows, so does the need for residential and commercial development and road maintenance and improvement, and the demand for recreational opportunities. Several development projects are planned or currently under review by the City in the vicinity of the project area. These projects include the Police Department and City Hall consolidation project at the historic high school at 201 East 12th Street, the East 3rd Avenue Childcare Project, and various traffic and highway improvements by CDOT and the City. Additionally, numerous construction projects, new buildings, and infrastructure improvements are continuously happening and planned in the vicinity of the project area, including the new fire station on Main Ave. Ongoing residential and commercial development, including the Proposed Action, require road maintenance and improvement, which may have beneficial effects on socioeconomics through construction jobs and recreation resources through improved access, and adverse effects on biological resources, historic properties, and air quality.

When combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, the Proposed Action would have short-term negligible adverse effects on air quality and terrestrial wildlife species, and short-term minor adverse effects on terrestrial wildlife habitats. Short-term beneficial effects on socioeconomic resources would occur from the Proposed Action, as well as long-term beneficial effects on recreation resources and site access. No cumulative adverse impacts would occur for water resources or visual resources if BMPs, the stormwater management plan, and mitigation measures are followed. Adverse impacts on historic properties would occur as a result of the project, and cumulative impacts from the Proposed Action combined with the other new construction and infrastructure improvements could further impact the setting of the historic properties within and surrounding the proposed disturbance footprint. A MOA and the mitigation procedures outlined therein will be completed prior to construction. The Proposed Action would have no significant adverse cumulative effects on any other resources.

7.9 Best Management Practices

BMPs would be developed and implemented in accordance with La Plata County and state stormwater, sediment, and erosion-control regulations and requirements along with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Stormwater Construction Discharge Permit requirements. BMPs would be implemented to avoid or minimize impacts on project area resources, as follows:

- Air Quality BMPs may include, but are not limited to:
 - Apply water and chemical stabilizers in active construction areas and on haul roads if/as necessary to suppress dust.
 - Post speed limit signs and enforce speeds in active construction areas and on haul roads.
 - Water, perform soil compaction, and revegetate disturbed areas, as needed and appropriate for site conditions.
 - Cover haul trucks, as appropriate, to reduce dust.
 - Require the construction contractor to limit the idling equipment time.

- Vegetation removal remedial actions would include installing erosion-control structures; reseeding, conserving, and replacing topsoil or replanting the area; and controlling nonnative plant species.
- Erosion-control measures would contribute to avoiding sedimentation into waterways during construction and in final site design.
 - Examples include silt fences and straw wattles.
 - Construction activities would be performed using methods that prevent entrance or accidental spillage of solid matter, contaminants, debris, and other objectionable pollutants and wastes into the Animas River.
 - If stormwater or dewatering work for building or earthwork operations were to collect on-site, proper off-site disposal would be completed to prevent muddy water or eroded materials from entering watercourses.
 - Excavated materials would be properly stored to prevent washouts during high water or stormwater events.
 - Hazardous materials would be stored outside of the 100-year floodplain to avoid contamination of watercourses.
 - Suitable measures would be taken to stabilize disturbed areas when severe or successive storms are expected.
- Introduction of nonnative/noxious plant species would be minimized by:
 - Washing equipment prior to construction to prevent the introduction of invasive species seeds from earthmoving or hauling.
 - Minimizing soil disturbance.
- To avoid destruction of potential migratory bird nests, vegetation removal should be conducted outside of the April 1 through August 31 breeding season. Nest surveys would be conducted at least one week prior to construction.
- Project personnel would be prohibited from feeding or approaching wildlife.
- A storm water management plan (SWMP), or other similar document would be produced prior to any construction activities that outlines project specific BMPs.
- Mitigation of impacts to historic properties will follow the stipulations outlined in the MOA and will be completed prior to any construction activities proposed as part of the undertaking.
- The following measures would be taken to limit noise and disturbance from vehicles and equipment used on the project during construction:
 - Ensuring all motor vehicles and equipment have mufflers conforming to original manufacturer specifications that are in good working order and are in constant operation to prevent excessive or unusual noise, fumes, or smoke.
 - Limiting the use of air horns in the project area to emergencies only.

8. SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

The purpose of this EA is to briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement or a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Alternative A: No Action

As described above, under the No Action alternative, CPW would not construct a new office building and would continue to use and maintain the various offices in their current locations. The existing facilities would continue to be owned and operated by CPW. Therefore, there would be no changes or impacts on air quality and climate, the biological environment, cultural resources, recreation or access, socioeconomic resources, water resources, or visual resources.

The existing buildings and fish hatchery would continue to be owned and operated by CPW, and staff would use the additional building currently in use in Bodo Park. The ability to meet CPW's mission and provide services to the public would be increasingly difficult due to space restrictions and split office locations.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

As described above, Alternative B would have temporary adverse impacts on air quality, recreation, the biological environment, recreation and access, and visual resources. Long-term impacts to cultural resources will occur. If mitigation measures and BMPs are followed, minimal long-term impacts would be expected on cultural resources due to avoidance. The Proposed Action alternative may result in temporary, minor, indirect water quality impacts, but long-term it is expected that there would be negligible impact on water resources due to mitigation measures during construction and operation and continued permitting through required state and local entities. Impacts on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, and visual resources would be minimized through site design, mitigation, avoidance, and BMPs during construction and operation, and these resources would therefore experience negligible long-term impacts. The Proposed Action would have positive short-term impacts on regional socioeconomics but negligible impacts in the long term, and beneficial long-term impacts on recreation availability, site access for the public and CPW staff, and ADA accessibility.

The Proposed Action would meet the need for the project by increasing the capacity of CPW's current facilities to accommodate the current needs and future growth of the Durango Area and Southwest Regional Office and increase accessibility for public visitors. The Proposed Action would promote CPW's ability to follow their mission, improve collaboration spaces for staff, and provide ample space and opportunity to complete CPW's current services for the agency and the public.

9. LIST OF SOURCES, AGENCIES, AND PERSONS CONSULTED

Preparation of this EA is being coordinated with appropriate tribal, federal, state, and local interests, as well as other interested parties. See Appendix B for a full consultation list. Details of public outreach and applicable correspondence from the public and City of Durango are included in Section 5 and Appendix C. The following entities were contacted during project development:

- City of Durango Community Development Commission
- CDOT
- La Plata County
- USFWS

- La Plata County Preservation Review Commission and Historical Society
- City of Durango Historic Preservation Board
- SHPO
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
- 28 Tribes and some Tribal liaisons
- Local and regional historical preservation groups

10. LIST OF PREPARERS AND REVIEWERS

Name	Role/Title	Organization
Nathanael Bokelman	Southwest Region Project Manager (PM)	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
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Emily Ortiz	Architectural Historian	ERO
Justin Batista	Archaeologist	ERO
Marcus Espinosa	GIS Specialist/Laboratory and Records Manager	ERO
Kay Wall	Technical Editor	ERO

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A: Design Plans

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GENERAL FLOOR PLAN NOTES

- A. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO FACE OFF STUD AT INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR WALLS.
- B. LOCATE ALL DOORS WITH 4" FROM FACE OF JAMB TO ADJACENT WALL, UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.
- C. CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS, INCLUDING RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT FOR UTILITIES & TOWN OF LAKE CITY BUILDING PERMIT.
- D. SECURITY CAMERAS TO BE PROVIDED. REFER TO ELECTRICAL DRAWINGS.
- E. SLOPE ALL EXTERIOR SIDEWALKS AWAY FROM BUILDING, REFER TO CIVIL.
- F. ALL EQUIPMENT IN MECHANICAL + ELECTRICAL ROOMS TO MAINTAIN PROPER CLEARANCES + ACCESS.
- G. REFER TO SHEET A-402 FOR PARTITION TYPES. ALL INTERIOR WALLS TO GO TO UNDERSIDE OF STRUCTURE/TRUSS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
- H. PROVIDE BACKING AT ALL WALLS WHERE MONITORS + SCREENS, CASEWORK + EQUIPMENT TO BE PROVIDED.

KEYNOTE LEGEND

- 1 WATER FOUNTAIN/BOTTLE FILLER STATION
- 2 SOLID SURFACE COUNTERTOP W/ FLAM BASE CABINETS
- 4 LOBBY SOLID SURFACE COUNTERTOP W/ ADA COUNTERTOP
- 5 OTIS GEN3 EDGE ELEVATOR
- 6 SHOWER PAN
- 7 WALL MOUNTED LAVATORY W/ LEVER HARDWARE & INSULATED PIPE JACKET, SEE PLUMBING
- 11 FLAM LAVATORY COUNTERTOP, DROP IN SINK W/ LEVER HARDWARE & INSULATED PIPE JACKET, SEE PLUMBING
- 14 OFFICE DESK
- 24 STAINED TIMBER POST, SEE STRUCTURAL
- 48 CONCRETE SEAT WALL W/ STONE VENEER & PRECAST CAP
- 49 4" CONCRETE PATIO

GROSS SQUARE FOOTAGE

MAIN LEVEL	5410 SF
UPPER LEVEL	4599 SF
Grand total	9949 SF



REYNOLDS ASH + ASSOCIATES

ARCHITECTURE
ENGINEERING

564 EAST 2ND AV, STE. 201
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PROJECT TEAM:



COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL
OFFICE BUILDING

151 EAST 16TH STREET

DURANGO, COLORADO 81301

JOB. NO.: 21193
DATE: 2025-06-11
DRAWN BY: RA-A

ISSUE RECORD:

2025-01-09 MINOR SITE PLAN

REVISIONS:

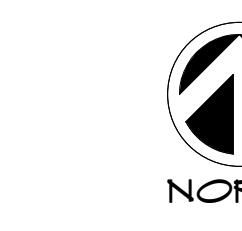
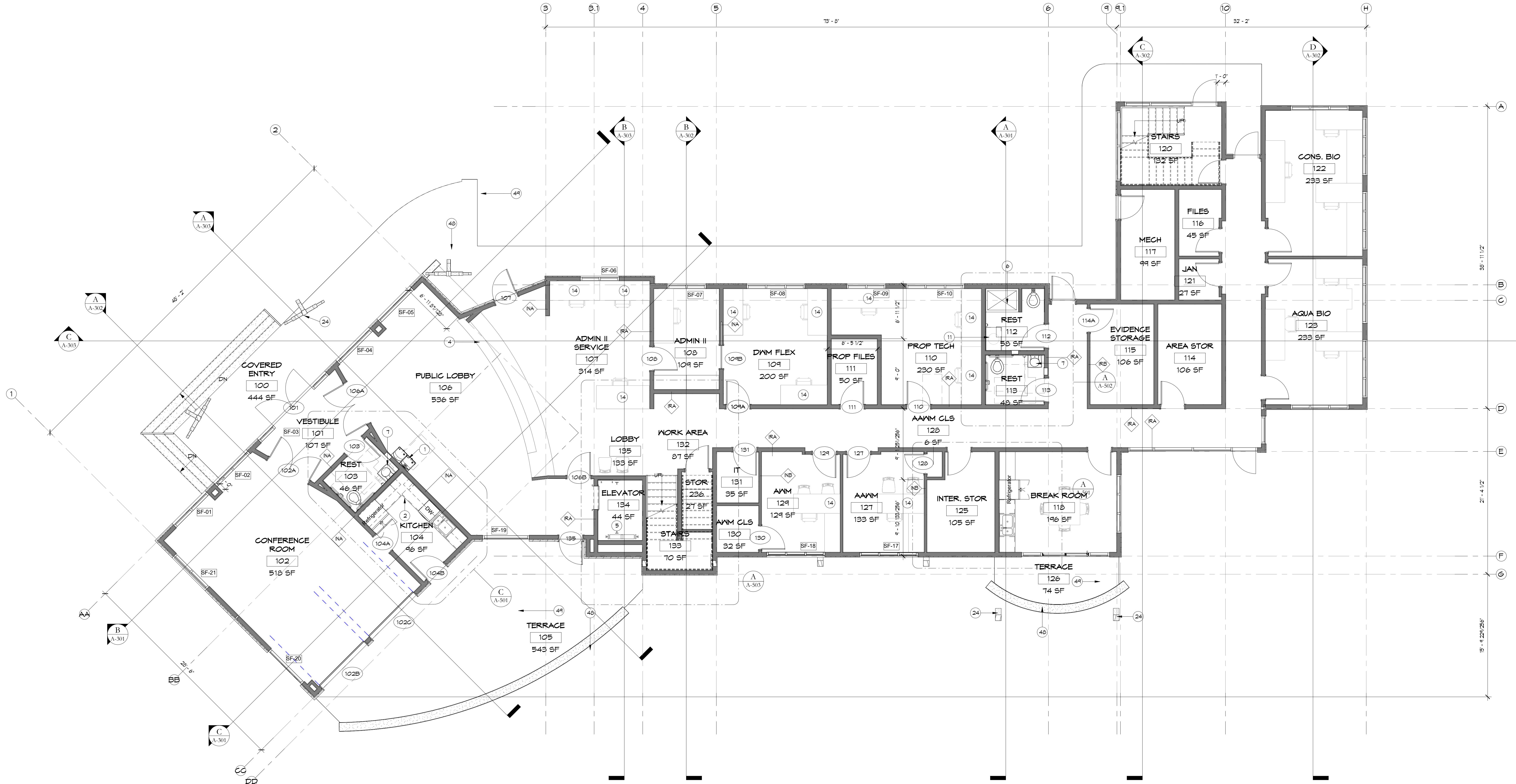
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WALL TYPE LEGEND

EXTERIOR WALL:
2X6 WOOD STUDS @ 16" O.C.
1/2" OSB SHEATHING 1" XPS FOAM INSULATION
5/8" BACKER BOARD
R-20 BATT INSULATION WITH VAPOR BARRIER
5/8" GYPSUM BOARD

INTERIOR WALL:
2X4 OR 2X6 WOOD STUDS @ 16" O.C.
SEE PLAN FOR LOCATION OF 2X6 WALLS
UNFACED SOUND BATT INSULATION
5/8" GYPSUM BOARD EA. SIDE



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

GENERAL FLOOR PLAN NOTES

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- H. PROVIDE BACKING AT ALL WALLS WHERE MONITORS + SCREENS, CASEWORK + EQUIPMENT TO BE PROVIDED.

KEYNOTE LEGEND

- 5 OTIS GEN. EDGE ELEVATOR
- 10 METAL RAILING
- 14 OFFICE DESK
- 25 COMPOSITE DECKING

GROSS SQUARE FOOTAGE

MAIN LEVEL
UPPER LEVEL
Grand total

5410 SF
4594 SF
9944 SF



REYNOLDS ASH + ASSOCIATES

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PROJECT TEAM:



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SOUTHWEST REGIONAL
OFFICE BUILDING
151 EAST 16TH STREET
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301

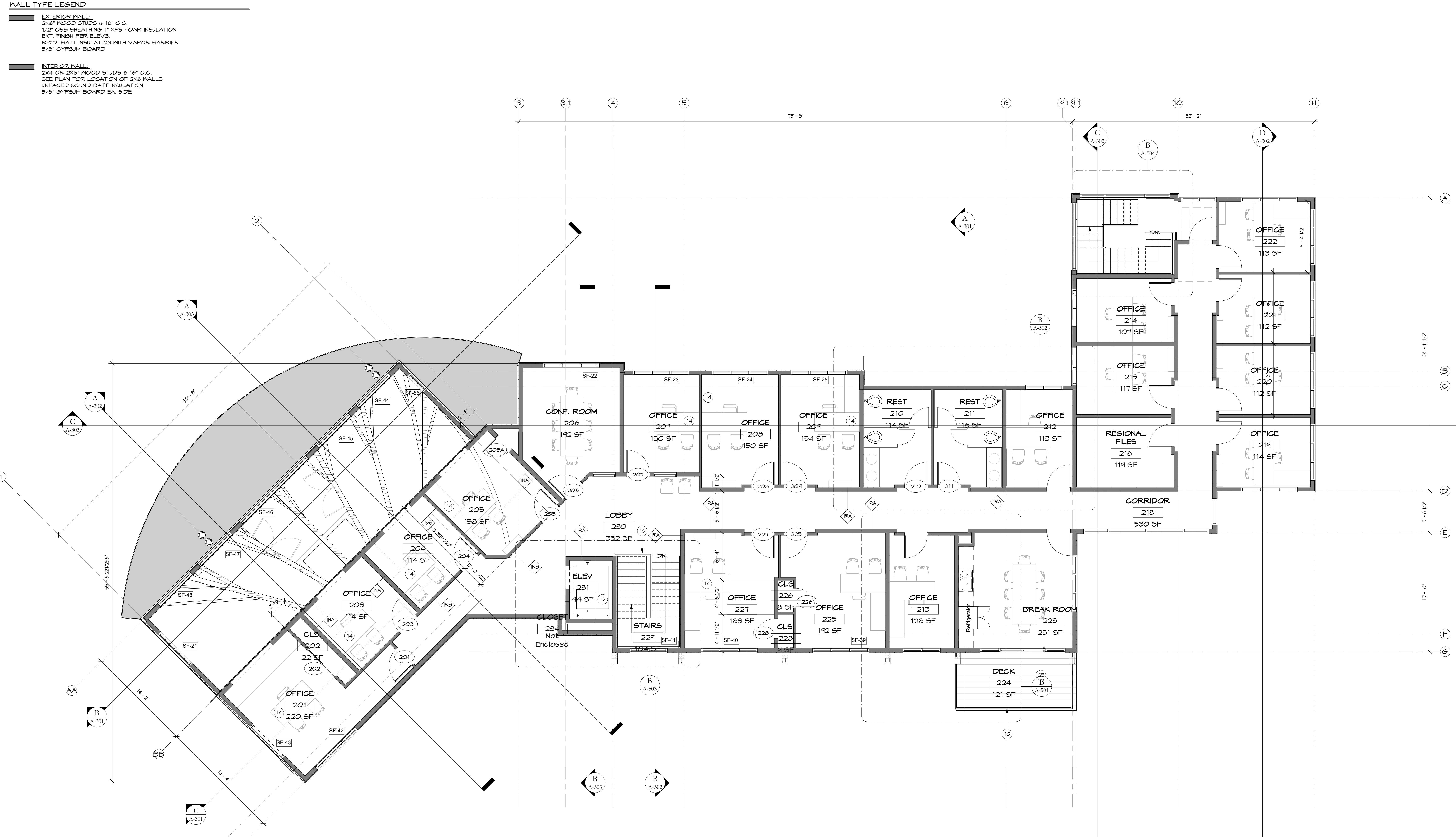
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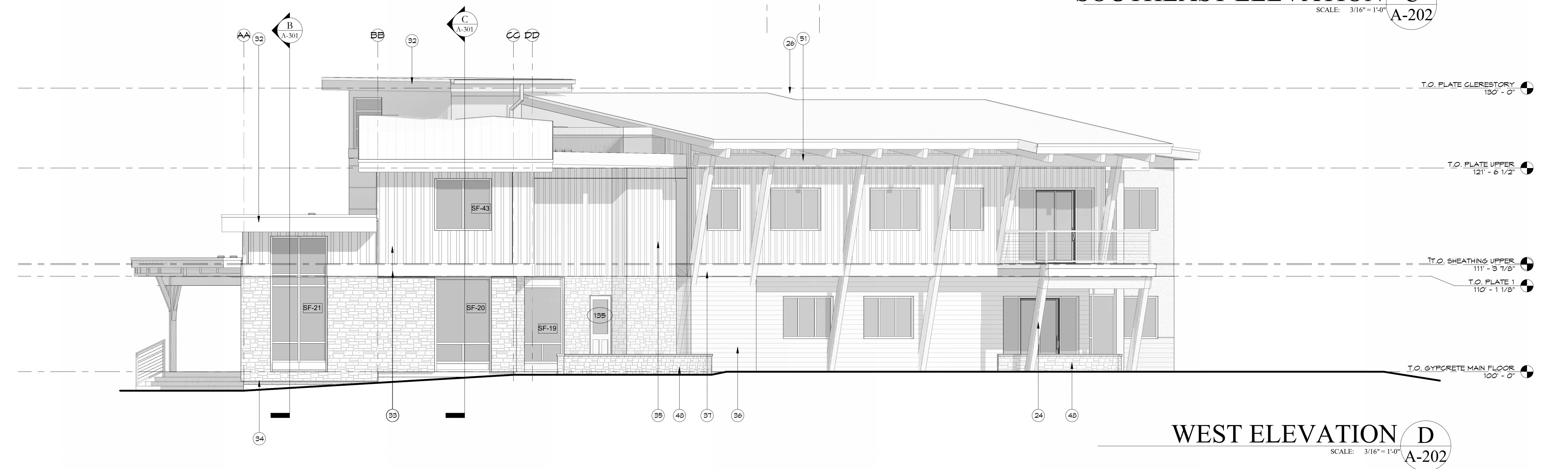
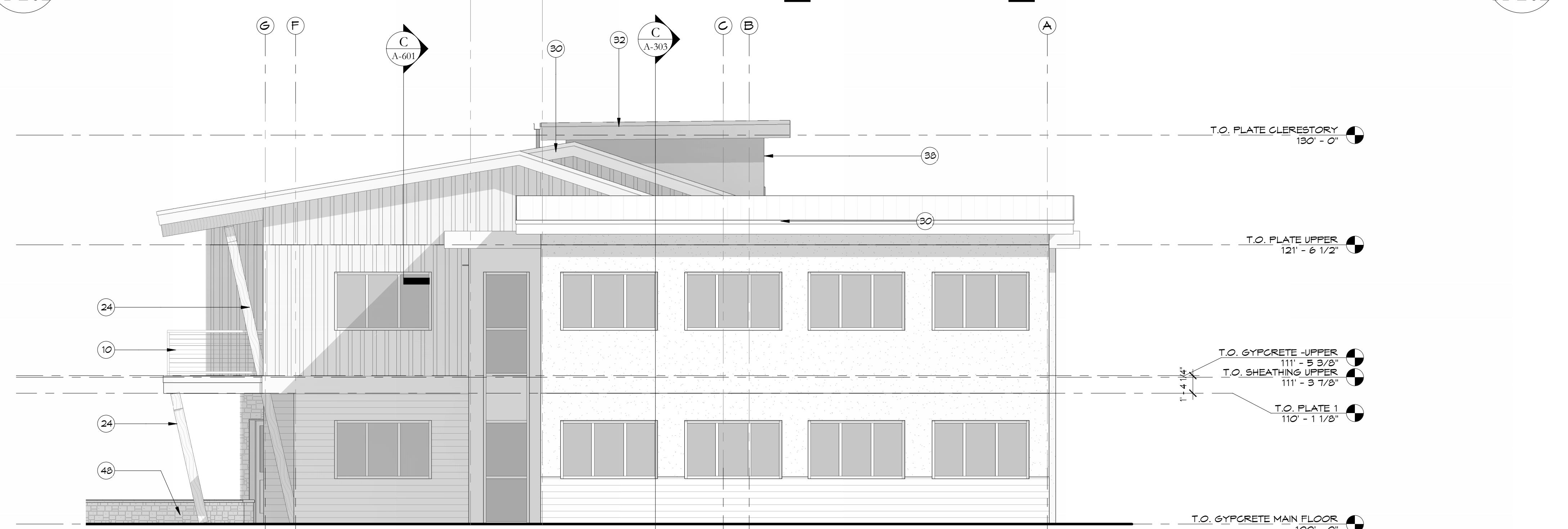
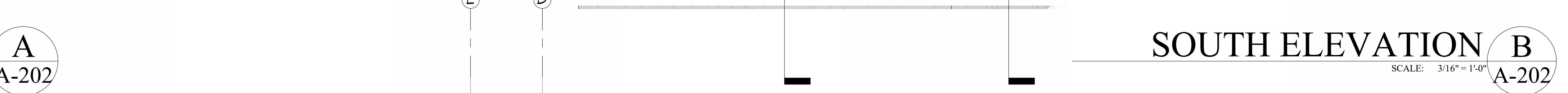
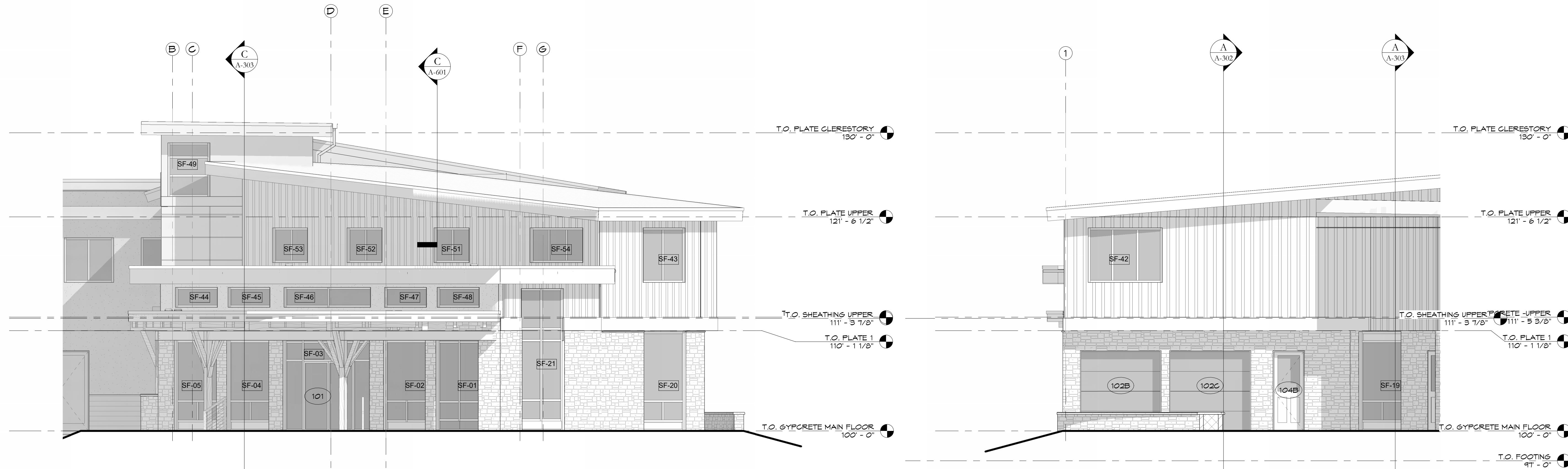
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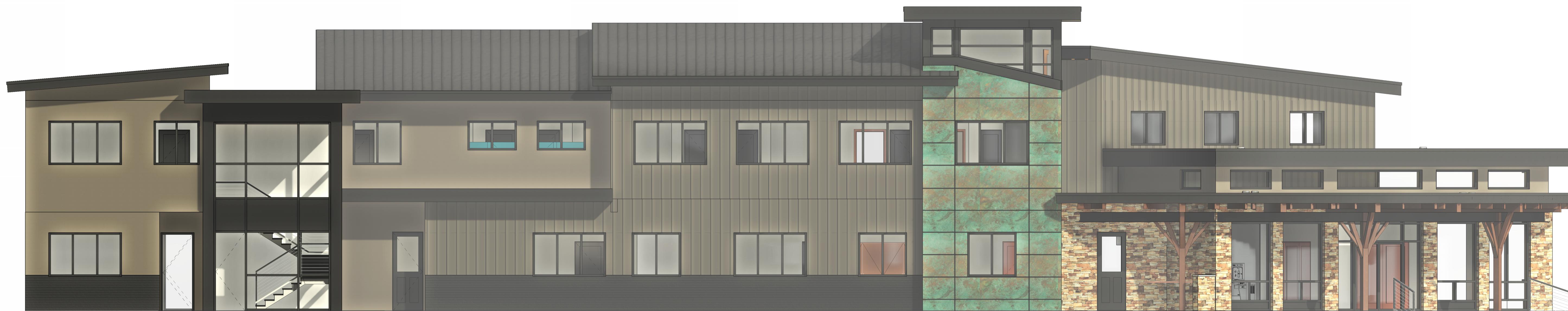
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UPPER FLOOR PLAN

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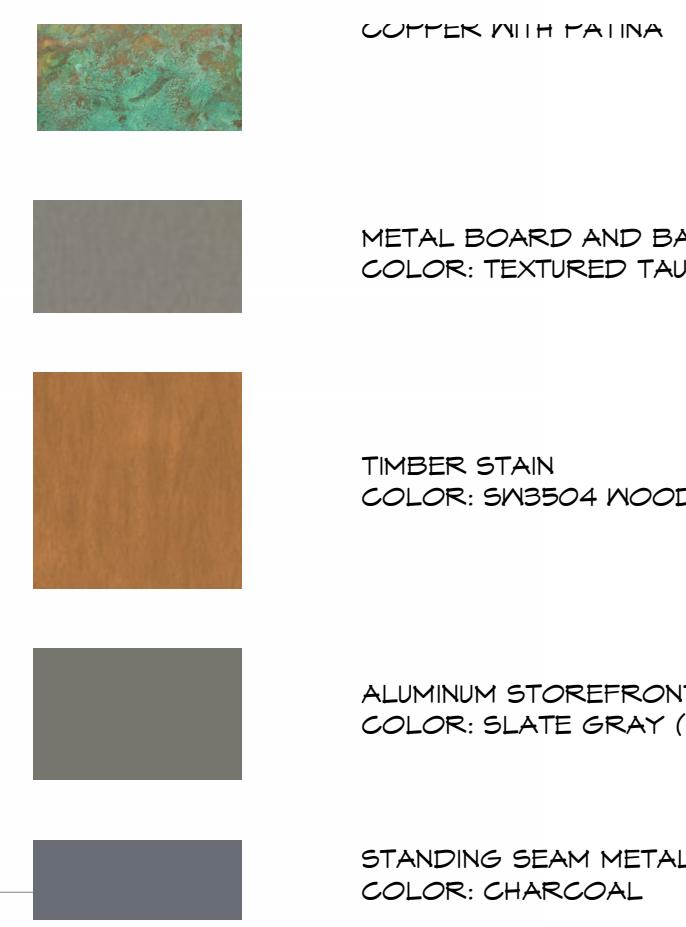






NORTHEAST ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



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PROJECT TEAM:



COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE
SOUTHWEST REGIONAL
OFFICE BUILDING
151 EAST 16TH STREET
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301

JOB. NO.: 21193

21193

DATE: 2025-06-11

2025-06-11

DRAWN BY: RA-A

RA-A

ISSUE RECORD:

2025-01-09 MINOR SITE PLAN

REVISIONS:



SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



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Appendix B: Consultation List

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Consultation List for Durango Complex Project: Southwest CPW Office	
Tribe	
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	
Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation, Utah	
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	
Apache Tribe of Oklahoma	
Fort Belknap Indian Community of the Fort Belknap Reservation of Montana	
Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah	
Jicarilla Apache Nation, New Mexico	
Hopi Tribe of Arizona	
Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Cochiti, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Isleta, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Jemez, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Laguna, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Nambe, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Picuris, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Pojoaque, New Mexico	
Pueblo of San Felipe, New Mexico	
Pueblo of San Ildefonso, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Sandia, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Santa Ana, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Santa Clara, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Taos, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Tesuque, New Mexico	
Pueblo of Zia, New Mexico	
Santo Domingo Pueblo	
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo	
Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation, New Mexico	
Certified Local Government	
City of Durango, Community Development Commission	
City of Durango, Community Development Commission	
County	
La Plata Historic Preservation Review Commission	
La Plata Historic Preservation Review Commission	
La Plata County	
La Plata County Historical Society	
Historic Commission	
City of Durango, Historic Preservation Board	
SHPO	
History Colorado	
ACHP	
Liason to FWS	

NPS
Intermountain Region Partnerships
Preservation
Colorado Preservation Incorporated
Colorado Council of Professional Archaeology
CDOT
COE, Albuquerque District

Appendix C: Public Comments and Scoping

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Appendix C. Public Comments and Scoping

This EA in draft form was available for public review and comment for 30 calendar days from June 6th, 2025, to July 5th, 2025, on the USFWS website at <https://www.fws.gov/media/colorado-parks-and-wildlife-southwest-regional-office-complex-draft-environmental-assessment>. A paper copy was also made available at the CPW Regional Office at 415 Turner Dr., Durango, Colorado. An additional informational public meeting was held on June 16, 2025, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in the Eolus Room at the Durango Recreation Center, 2700 Main Avenue, Durango, CO, 81301. Five members of the public attended this meeting, where CPW and USFWS employees, along with contractors involved in project design and analysis, had information available about the project and were available to answer questions and share where official comments could be submitted.

Four comments regarding the Draft EA were received from private citizens during the comment period via email. Of these citizens, one was also present at the informational meeting on June 16th, 2025. These comments have been addressed in this EA, and are listed below:

1. **Commentor:** Tom BonAnno
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025, 1:07 PM

Comment:

To whom this may concern:

I am writing to share several compelling reasons for why the CPW (Colorado Parks and Wildlife) building should not be built along the river at the Durango Fish Hatchery.

The CPW also owns 3 acres in Bodo Park that borders 2700+ acres of state land. The CPW already operates out of this property. The Bodo area (vs. the Hatchery property) is meant for commercial use and better fits the design and requirements of the CPW project.

Access to the Bodo property wouldn't have the same problems that the Durango Hatchery property does. The Durango Hatchery location's access has a 10%+ grade. During hunting seasons, large vehicles and RVs with trailers would need to safely access this location. Also, entering and exiting this location via Main Avenue would be dangerous. Fire trucks and first responders would have to deal with this unsafe driveway grade. To avoid this grade issue, a Hatchery employee residence would need to be demolished. Note that the plans already call for the original and historic superintendent's house to also be demolished to make room for a parking lot. These two houses could be used to house Hatchery employees and are part of the special character of the property.

The location the proposed CPW building would be highly visible from the Animas River, River Trail, and Rotary Park; the size of the building would intensify this visibility. The Animas River and River Trail are the gems of Durango. Once the CPW building would be built along the river, it would be there forever.

This Hatchery site is 1 foot above the flood plane and would be on ground that has historically flooded.

The project as planned now by RAA (Reynolds Ash + Associates) is 9,982 square feet. That is only 18 square feet short of meeting the threshold for major site review — this small difference is close to the size of a refrigerator! This project should respect the local community and be treated like it is over 10,000 sqft, especially given its sensitive location and its impact on the community and spirit of Durango. If this project intends to proceed at the hatchery location, please require it to go through a major site review. The community deserves the opportunity to be informed and involved.

The location of the building doesn't matter in regards to the benefits for the community and the building's functionality. Note that the DMV, Durango 9R District Office, Sheriff's Office, Clerk and Recorder, and Social Security Office all are located in Bodo, and citizens are able to easily access these places to get the services they need. People would still be able to get great service from the CPW in Bodo.

The 3 acres in Bodo better fit this large project as there is ample buildable space, less impact on the river and community, and is easily accessible. The area of disturbed land for the building and parking lot (according to RAA) is about 1.3 acres as planned; it's actually possible that the project would be less complicated in Bodo because of fewer constraints related to utilities, hatchery-related infrastructure, and grade issues, as well as the ability to build a more compact and traditional-shaped parking lot. This Bodo property could also share the space with the CPW maintenance facility that is on this site currently.

The hatchery space is home to an abundance of wildlife; we have witnessed baby deer born and Great Blue Herons and Red-tailed Hawks nesting on the hatchery grounds. While undoubtedly most employees would love to have their offices overlooking the river, the CPW office building does not need to be on the hatchery grounds. Durango should keep this property known as the Durango Fish Hatchery and Wildlife Museum — and just that.

Thank you for your consideration,
Tom Bonanno

Response:

Alternatives, including the Bodo Park location, were analyzed over many years and site studies were completed before dismissing the Bodo Park location as an official Alternative for the proposed project. Section 5 of the final EA discusses Alternatives and reasoning for dismissal.

CPW is working with the City of Durango to address issues such as acceptable grade, vegetation impacts, and site review based on property features and feasibility. Tree removal along the river corridor is going to be limited, and CPW is working with the City to meet code and maintain existing mature vegetation, as well as replace and enhance the viewshed from the Animas River Corridor and the River Trail. Working designs only have two to three mature trees planned for removal between the river and the proposed building, which would be replaced with native species, and removal could be avoided based on ongoing changes to the site design based on City input. CPW is aware that the

building would be in the floodplain and has worked with the contractor to ensure building plans accommodate this, and plans to continue to work with the City to meet code requirements and obtain the necessary permits for building in the proposed location. Informal consultation has been completed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and no additional permitting or requirements were identified for building on the site or in the floodplain outside of those required by the City of Durango. Section 7.6 of the EA addresses issues with the floodplain and Figure 3 shows that a majority of the impacted area is not within the 100-year floodplain and is also within a previously impacted area on the site.

Overall, final building design will be permitted through the City of Durango, and CPW has ongoing communications with the City to determine the needs for a major vs minor site review and therefore additional public input. As part of the NEPA process, a public comment period and an additional CPW-hosted public informational meeting were available for input from the public, in which the opportunity to comment on this EA were shared.

Wildlife resources and impacts on species and habitats were analyzed in Section 7.2 of the EA.

2. **Commentor:** Ryan Votta

Date: Monday, June 30, 2025, 3:16 PM

Comment:

Hi Amanda,

I was just scrolling through the EA draft for the office building, and I have a few questions in regards to table 4. As a resident of the property, and an avid birder, it seems to me that several species of concern are missing from this table. I pulled this data from CPW's 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan, so perhaps it has been updated since that time. Please correct me if I'm wrong, but I do not see the following species listed:

Lewis's Woodpecker (Tier 2) Known to be nesting very near the proposed construction site.

Cassin's Finch, Lazuli Bunting, Loggerhead Shrike, Peregrine Falcon, Juniper Titmouse, Barrow's Goldeneye, Brewer's Sparrow are all listed as tier two. They all frequent the fish hatchery property, although I do expect them to be nesting here. None of these species made the list.

Please consider adding this information to the EA. I am most concerned with the omission of the nesting Lewis's Woodpeckers. As you likely know, they require cavities for nesting, typically in mature cottonwood trees. Removal of existing cottonwood trees in the proposed construction site would decrease their nesting opportunities.

Thank you, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Ryan

Response:

Additional Tier 1 and Tier 2 species were added to the analysis of Wildlife Resources in Section 7.2.3 in Table 4. No mitigation or avoidance is required for Tier 1 or Tier 2 species, unless otherwise protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Construction and therefore nesting tree removal is planned outside of the typical migratory bird

breeding season and therefore should avoid removal of active nesting habitat for Tier 1 and Tier 2 species during breeding season.

3. **Commentor:** Heather Morris

Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 9:56 AM

Comment:

Hello Amanda. My name is Heather Morris, and I am reaching out to provide you with an additional public comment regarding the proposed CPW building at the Durango Fish Hatchery.

The area on the proposed location as well as surrounding it is important nesting habitat for many bird species as well as a relatively safe habitat for mammals that find themselves dependent upon this small natural area. I used to live on the hatchery property and have a unique perspective regarding the non human usage of this property. A brief list of the reproductive users are raccoons, skunks, mule deer, black bears, ground squirrels, little brown bats, Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, Chipping Sparrows, Clay-colored Sparrows, American Robins, Canada Geese, Black-capped Chickadees, and Lewis' Woodpeckers. All of these species are native to Colorado, and are important members of our ecosystem. In addition, Lewis' Woodpeckers are a Tier 2 species, and demand attention regarding this proposed building, as it would lead to loss of essential and important nesting trees.

The huge disruptions, destruction and important habitat loss that a building of this size should be more than enough to halt this proposal and move the building site from this critical habitat.

Thank you for taking your time to read my comments. I am more than willing to provide more details, examples or information to back them up.

Heather Morris

Response:

Additional Tier 1 and Tier 2 species were added to the analysis of Wildlife Resources in Section 7.2.3 in Table 4. If non-listed species mentioned in the comment were not already included in the terrestrial wildlife section, they were added to Section 7.2.2. as users of the project area. No mitigation or avoidance is required for Tier 1 or Tier 2 species, unless otherwise protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Construction and therefore nesting tree removal is planned outside of the typical migratory bird breeding season and therefore should avoid removal of nesting habitat for Tier 1 and Tier 2 species during breeding season.

Although federally threatened, endangered, or otherwise listed species were analyzed under this project, no critical habitat for federally listed species is present within the project area. Critical habitat is not designated for Colorado endangered, threatened, or Tier 1 or 2 species, and therefore is not present in the project area. Critical habitat is only designated for federally listed species, and is defined as those geographical areas on which are found physical or biological features essential to the conservation of a species and that may require special management considerations or protection ([U. S. Fish and](#)

[Wildlife Service Endangered Species Program 2017](#)). General impacts on terrestrial species are discussed in Sections 7.2.2. and 7.2.3.

4. **Commentor:** Scott Shine, City of Durango

Date: Friday, June 20, 2025 7:36 AM

Comment:

Hello Amanda,

The City of Durango appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed CPW Southwest Regional Office Complex at the Durango Fish Hatchery. Please reply to confirm receipt of these comments.

The summary of the EA findings on the project website states, "In the Draft EA, the Service concluded that the proposed disposal would not have impacts to wetlands, floodplains, or farmland, would not have any effect on threatened, endangered or candidate species, and would not have any effect on the vegetation in the area or on local fish and wildlife or their habitats." As you will see in the attached detailed comments, the City of Durango disagrees with this conclusion.

While we support the overall project concept of creating updated office space and public service areas for the region's CPW operations, we believe that the current design does not adequately respect nor preserve the river corridor's natural habitat and irreplaceable mature vegetation while also negatively impacting the community's experience of a key natural amenity in Durango. The site layout, which contemplates removal of many mature trees, and the obtrusive building placement on a steep bank of the Animas River are in conflict with the goals of the City's Animas River Corridor Overlay Zone. Additionally, the building footprint is very close to the FEMA Floodway for the Animas River near the top of an unstable, eroding bank and is largely within the 100-Year Floodplain. A floodplain permit application has not been submitted yet so the impacts have not been fully evaluated. The amount of new impervious (paved) area being proposed for vehicle parking and maneuvering is excessive.

As summarized in Chapter 6 of the EA, there are significant concerns about the project from other stakeholders besides the City of Durango. We urge USFWS, CPW, and the design team to explore ways to re-design the project to sincerely and meaningfully respond to these concerns. There are large portions of the Fish Hatchery property which are not in the floodplain and are better buffered from the River. These areas should be considered for the new office building. We are ready to work with CPW and the design team to achieve an improved, compliant design.

We urge you to update the Environmental Assessment to accurately capture the negative impacts that the proposed design will have on the floodplain, riparian vegetation, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and the aesthetics of the Animas River corridor. The EA should include other alternatives beyond just this currently proposed site layout and "no action". A revised site layout and building design should be explored to better comply

with the intent and standards of the National Environmental Policy Act and the City of Durango Land Use and Development Code.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information from us.

Sincerely,

Scott Shine

Scott Shine
Planner III
Community Development

Response:

Analysis for the following resources area addressed throughout the EA: wetlands (Table 2); floodplains (Section 7.6); farmland (Table 2); threatened, endangered or candidate species, wildlife, and habitat (Section 7.2); and vegetation (Section 7.2.2) in the project area. The impacts on these resources are discussed in their respective sections if applicable to the project, and ongoing communication and coordination on site design between CPW and the City of Durango are planned to address issues related to these resources.

Analysis of the property resulted in the current proposed building location, and although there are areas mostly outside of the 100-year floodplain elsewhere on the property, the current location is the least impactful due to existing disturbance and limited mature vegetation in the building footprint. Other potential building footprints on the property would remove more mature vegetation or other buildings and would result in additional impacts on vegetation, wildlife, and the visual resources.

The intent of NEPA is to require federal agencies to consider the impacts of federally funded projects on the environment, discuss alternatives, briefly discuss the impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, and list agencies and other persons consulted. The alternatives analyzed in the EA are those that are technically and economically feasible, and that meet the purpose and need of the proposal, as outlined in Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act ([Section 102\(2\)\(E\) of NEPA](#)). These standards are met in the Final EA, as only the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative were determined to be feasible and meet the purpose and need of the project. Section 5 discusses additional alternatives that were considered by CPW and dismissed, and the following sections discuss the potential impacts on the environment and related resources under the considered alternatives, as determined by coordination with the lead agency for the project, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Conservation Investment. The Final EA analyzes impacts on wildlife and vegetation and describes the level of impact as being non-significant as determined by the USFWS, after agency review.

The building design was modified as a result of coordination with the City. CPW looks forward to and plans on continued discussion and coordination with the City of Durango to finalize building design and meet code requirements.

Appendix D: Historic Property MOA

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**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONG
THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE,
COLORADO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER,
AND
REGARDING THE COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO**

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) provides federal funding to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) through the Wildlife Restoration Grant Program to conserve, protect, and enhance wildlife, their habitats, and the fishing opportunities they provide; and

WHEREAS, for purposes of enhancing public use of the property and accommodating the required increased capacity of the CPW Southwest Regional Office for both staff and the public, CPW proposes to construct a 9,950-square-foot Southwest Regional Office building with associated parking, demolish the existing San Juan Basin Area Office, relocate existing utilities, and improve the East 16th Street access drive at the 9-acre Durango Hatchery and Wildlife Museum in the city of Durango, located in La Plata County, Colorado (Undertaking); and

WHEREAS, the Undertaking is located on the Durango State Fish Hatchery and Wildlife Museum property, which is owned and managed by the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the Undertaking will be federally funded (in whole or part) using Pittman-Robertson funds granted by the Service's Office of Conservation Investment under Grant Agreement No. [CO F24AF00680 – W – 360-D-1], and as such, is subject to review in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA; 54 United States Code [U.S.C.] 306108) and its implementing regulations, 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800; and

WHEREAS, for the purposes of the Undertaking, the Service is the lead federal agency responsible for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA; and

WHEREAS, the Service, in consultation with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Tribal Nations, and other Consulting Parties, has defined the areas of potential effects (APEs), as defined by 36 CFR 800.16(d), for direct effects as consisting of the APE for Physical Effects and APE for Visual Effects, as shown in Appendix A; and

WHEREAS, the APE for Physical Effects consists of the entire 9-acre property of the state-owned hatchery plus a 100-foot buffer; and

WHEREAS, the APE for Visual Effects consists of a 0.2-mile or less visual radius from the project location that was refined from a preliminary 3-mile viewshed; and

WHEREAS, audible effects and atmospheric effects would only be associated with construction, and therefore, are temporary and will not be permanent or adverse; and

WHEREAS, the Undertaking will not result in indirect effects to historic properties; and

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WHEREAS, the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad National Historic Landmark is within the 0.2-mile visual radius from the project location and has been determined by the Service to not be adversely effected by this undertaking; and

WHEREAS, the Service, in consultation with the SHPO, has determined that cultural resources listed in Appendix B are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and

WHEREAS, the Service, in consultation with the SHPO, has determined that sites listed in Appendix C are not eligible for the inclusion in the NRHP; and

WHEREAS, the Service, in consultation with the SHPO, has determined that the Undertaking will have an adverse effect on the San Juan Basin Office (5LP12125), which is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion A and C; and

WHEREAS, the Service has determined that preservation in place is not tenable after careful consideration of alternatives to the Undertaking; and

WHEREAS, as the Applicant and potential grantee of federal funding who will play a crucial role in the implementation of this Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement), CPW has participated in consultation pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(c)(4) and is an Invited Signatory to this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Service recognizes the sovereignty of federally recognized Tribal Nations that may attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by the Undertaking and its government-to-government obligation to consult with these Sovereign Nations regarding their concerns under Section 106 of the NHPA; and

WHEREAS, the Service has consulted with the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; the Fort Belknap Indian Community of the Fort Belknap Reservation of Montana; the Hopi Tribe of Arizona; the Jicarilla Apache Nation, New Mexico; the Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico, & Utah; the Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Cochiti, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Isleta, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Jemez, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Laguna, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Nambe, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Picuris, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Pojoaque, New Mexico; the Pueblo of San Felipe, New Mexico; the Pueblo of San Ildefonso, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Sandia, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Santa Ana, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Taos, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Tesuque, New Mexico; the Pueblo of Zia, New Mexico; the Santo Domingo Pueblo; the Southern Ute Indian Tribe of the Southern Ute Reservation, Colorado; the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation, Utah; the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe; Ysleta del Sur Pueblo; and the Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation, New Mexico regarding the effects of the Undertaking to historic properties, and have invited these Tribal Nations to sign this Agreement as concurring parties; and

WHEREAS, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe; the Southern Ute Indian Tribe of the Southern Ute Reservation, Colorado; and the Pueblo of Pojoaque expressed interest and were consulted further regarding the Undertaking; and

WHEREAS, no federally recognized Tribal Nations elected to sign this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Service has consulted with the Certified Local Government of the City of Durango; the La Plata County Manager; the La Plata County Historic Society'; the City of Durango Historic Preservation Board; the Colorado Department of Transportation; the Intermountain Region Partnerships office of the National Park Service; Colorado Preservation Incorporated; the Colorado Council of Professional

Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Southwest Regional Office Construction Project in Durango, La Plata County, Colorado

Archaeologists; and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties and has invited them to sign this Agreement as concurring parties; and

WHEREAS, no invited concurring parties elected to sign this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.6(a)(1), the Service has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (AHP) of its adverse effect finding, and the AHP has chosen not to participate in the consultation pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.6(a)(1)(iii); and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Service, CPW, and SHPO agree that the Undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations in order to take into consideration the effect of the Undertaking on the historic properties. These stipulations shall govern the Undertaking and all of its parts until this Agreement expires or is terminated.

STIPULATIONS

The Service shall ensure that the following stipulations are implemented:

I. DOCUMENTATION

- A. The Service and CPW shall consent to the funding and completion of a Level II Historic Resource Documentation according to standards established by the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in History Colorado under Publication # 1595 (Appendix D).
- B. The Service will submit a Level II Historic Resource Documentation report with appropriate associated documentation to the SHPO within 2 years of execution of this Agreement. The SHPO shall have thirty (30) days to review and comment. The Service shall address any comments and update the documentation accordingly. The updated documentation will be provided to the SHPO.
- C. All work carried out pursuant to this Agreement shall meet the Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (As Amended and Annotated).
- D. The Service shall ensure that all work carried out pursuant to this Agreement shall be done by or under the direct supervision of historic preservation professionals who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (48 FR 44716, September 1983 and 62 FR 33708, June 20, 1997). For this Stipulation and all following Stipulations, a "qualified professional" is a person who meets the relevant standards outlined in the Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (As Amended and Annotated).
- E. Demolition of the site may occur after field documentation of the whole site has been completed and prior to Level II report submission to the SHPO.

II. 3-D MODELING OF 5LP12125 FOR DISPLAY IN THE DURANGO WILDLIFE MUSEUM

A qualified professional shall document the building using modeling software, such as Polycam. This documentation shall create a 3-dimensional model of the 5LP12125 and surrounding landscape that shall be exported in multiple file formats and shall be printed using a 3-dimensional printer along with architectural drawings of the structure to be displayed in the Durango Wildlife Museum (5LP12124).

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III. MONITOR OF GROUND DISTURBING ACTIVITIES

A qualified professional shall be on site during all ground disturbing activities related to this Undertaking to monitor work, record construction techniques, and document any diagnostic historic or precontact material uncovered during all activities that exceed 1-foot of disturbance, including but not limited to demolition of 5LP12125, the new building foundation construction, and grading. The monitoring shall not include the collection of any artifacts related to the 5LP12125 resource. Once the onsite monitoring recordation is completed, the results of this work, shall be written up and a report shall be provided to the Service, CPW, and SHPO for their review and approval.

IV. DURATION

This Agreement shall expire if Stipulation I and II are not carried out within two years from the date of the Agreement's execution; and if Stipulation III is not carried out within three years from the date of the Agreement's execution. Prior to such time, the Service may consult with other signatories to reconsider the terms of the Agreement and amend in accordance with the stipulations below. If the Service determines, in consultation with the SHPO, that the terms of the Agreement have been fulfilled in a satisfactory manner, the Service shall provide the SHPO written notice of this determination, and the Agreement will no longer be in force.

V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should any signatory to this Agreement object to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this Agreement are implemented the Service shall consult with the objecting party to resolve the objection. If the Service determines, within thirty (30) days, that the objection cannot be resolved, the Service shall forward all documentation relevant to the objection to the ACHP, including the Service proposed resolution to the objection. Within thirty (30) days after receipt of all pertinent documentation the ACHP shall:

1. Provide the Service with recommendations pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2 which the Service shall consider in reaching a final decision regarding the dispute; or,
2. notify the Service that it shall comment pursuant to 36 CFR 800.7(c) and proceed to comment. Any Council comment provided in response to such a request shall be taken into account by the Service in accordance with 36 CFR 800.7(c) (4) and Section 110 (1) of the NHPA; or
3. not provide comments. The Service may then render a decision regarding the dispute. In reaching its decision, the Service shall consider all comments regarding the dispute from the parties to the Agreement.

Any recommendation or comment provided by the ACHP shall be understood to pertain only to the subject of the dispute; the responsibility of the Service, CPW, and SHPO to carry out other actions pursuant to this Agreement that are not the subject of the dispute shall remain unchanged. The Service shall notify all parties of its decision in writing before implementing that portion of the undertaking subject to dispute under this stipulation. The Service decision shall be final.

VI. POST REVIEW DISCOVERY

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In the event that one or more cultural resources, other than 5LP12125, are discovered or that unanticipated effects on historic properties are found during the implementation of this Agreement, the monitor shall follow the procedure specified in 36 C.F.R. 800.13 and by CPW in Appendix E, by stopping work in a 100-foot (30-meter) area and notifying the Service and CPW of the discovery immediately. Within twenty-four (24) hours, the Service will notify the SHPO of the post-review discovery and consult according to 36 CFR 800.13. Any necessary archaeological investigations shall be conducted according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. No other access to this buffer zone or discovery location shall be permitted until written notification is provided by the Service.

VII. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Within thirty (30) days of any and all ground disturbing activities related to this Undertaking until this Agreement expires or is terminated, CPW shall provide all invited signatories to this Agreement a summary report detailing work undertaken pursuant to its terms. Such reports shall include any scheduling changes proposed, any problems encountered, and any disputes and objects received in efforts to carry out the terms of this Agreement.

VIII. AMENDMENTS AND NONCOMPLIANCE

If any signatory to this Agreement, including any invited signatory, determines that its terms cannot be fulfilled, or that an amendment to the terms of this Agreement must be made, that party shall immediately consult with the other parties to develop an amendment to this Agreement pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(c) (7-8). The amendment shall be effective on the date a copy signed by all of the original signatories is filed with the ACHP. If the signatories cannot agree to appropriate terms to amend the Agreement, any signatory may terminate the agreement in accordance with the stipulations below.

IX. TERMINATION

If the Agreement cannot be amended following consultation set out in the stipulations above, it may be terminated by any signatory or invited signatory. Within 30 days following termination, the Service shall notify the signatories if it shall initiate consultation to execute an Agreement with the signatories under 36 CFR 800.6(c) (1) or request the comments of the ACHP under 36CFR 800.7(a) and proceed accordingly.

Execution of this Agreement by all signatory parties, the submission of the documentation and filing of this Agreement with the ACHP pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b)(iv) prior to the Service' approval of this undertaking, and implementation of its terms is evidence that the Service has considered the effects of this undertaking on the historic properties and has afforded the ACHP a reasonable and good faith opportunity to comment.

X. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES OF SIGNATORIES

Each of the Signatories hereto represent and warrant that they each have received the requisite authority to enter into the Agreement on behalf of the party for whom they have each signed.

XI. COUNTERPARTS

This Agreement may be executed separately by the parties as counterparts. All such counterparts will be deemed to be originals, and upon completion of signatures will be combined to constitute

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one and the same instrument. The Service will ensure that, upon receipt of counterparts from the Signatories, a copy of the Agreement with combined signature page showing all signatures is provided to each of the Signatories.

EXECUTION of this Agreement by the Service and SHPO and implementation of its terms evidence that the Service has considered the effects of this undertaking on historic properties and afforded the ACHP an opportunity to comment.

Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Southwest Regional Office Construction Project in Durango, La Plata County, Colorado

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONG
THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE,
COLORADO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER,
AND
REGARDING THE COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO**

SIGNATORY:

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, REGION 6

MATTHEW HOGAN  Digitally signed by MATTHEW HOGAN
Date: 2025.11.24 12:15:16 -07'00'

Matthew Hogan
Regional Director, Region 6

Date

Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Southwest Regional Office Construction Project in Durango, La Plata County, Colorado

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
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THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
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COLORADO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER,
AND
REGARDING THE COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO**

SIGNATORY:

COLORADO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

Dawn DiPrince
State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Memorandum of Agreement Regarding the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Southwest Regional Office Construction Project in Durango, La Plata County, Colorado

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONG
THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE,
COLORADO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER,
AND
REGARDING THE COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO**

SIGNATORY:

COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Heath Kehm

 Digitally signed by Heath Kehm
Date: 2025.11.25 08:29:52 -07'00'

Heath Kehm
Southwest Deputy Regional Manager

Date