



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
COLORADO FIELD OFFICE/LAKEWOOD
P.O. BOX 25486, DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
DENVER, COLORADO 80225-0486

IN REPLY REFER TO:
ES/CO: CDOT
TAILS: 06E24000-2015-I-0270

Jeff Peterson
Colorado Department of Transportation
4201 East Arkansas Avenue, Shumate Building
Denver, Colorado 80222

Dear Mr. Peterson:

Based on the authority conferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the Service reviewed your December 22, 2014, report regarding placing epoxy pavement markings on I-70 from milepost 0.0 to 213.5 in Mesa, Garfield, Eagle, and Summit Counties, Colorado, and its potential effects on the threatened Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), the threatened Gunnison Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*), and the candidate Greater Sage-grouse (*C. urophasianus*). No critical habitat will be affected by the project.

The proposed project will involve grinding the existing markings and replacing them with the epoxy as described in your report. The process can cover approximately 4 miles/day and is anticipated to begin in mid-April and continue through mid-October. Some night work is expected, and it will be limited to a maximum of four nights followed immediately by a minimum of three nights without work. All work will be on the existing roadway and no vegetation will be removed. No additional lighting or pavement is included in the project.

Elevation at the project site ranges from 4,450 feet to 12,000 feet and a variety of habitats will be crossed. The vegetation type most affected by the project will be roadside grasses and weeds, but the amount affected is expected to be very small. Impacts from the project are expected to be limited to a temporary increase in the barrier effect of the highway during construction. Pre-construction conditions are expected to return shortly after completion of the work; therefore, impacts are expected to be discountable and insignificant.

Given your habitat and project descriptions, the Service finds the report acceptable and concurs with your determination that the impacts resulting from the proposed project are not likely to adversely affect the continued existence of the Canada lynx or the Gunnison Sage-grouse, or to jeopardize the continued existence of the Greater Sage-grouse.

Please note that should project plans change or if additional information regarding listed or proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered under the ESA. If the proposed project has not commenced within one year, please contact the Colorado Field Office to request an extension.

We appreciate your submitting this report to our office for review and comment. If the Service can be of further assistance, please contact Alison Deans Michael of my staff at (303) 236-4758.

Sincerely,

Seth L. Willey
Acting Colorado Field Supervisor

ec: Michael

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