



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

• Visitor Services

• Open Lands

• Weed Management & Forestry

1800 South County Road 31

Loveland, CO 80537

(970) 679-4570/ (970) 679-4574 FAX

www.larimer.org/naturalresources

December 15, 2011

Tim Snowden
Environmental Protection Specialist - WAPA
P.O. Box 3700
Loveland, CO 80539-3003

Re: Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Snowden:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line. We are submitting comments as the fee owners of Chimney Hollow Open Space and the managing entity for recreation at Pinewood Reservoir County Park. Our primary concerns are related to the environmental, cultural, recreational and scenic impacts of the line.

Chimney Hollow Open Space was acquired by Larimer County for its high natural and scenic resource values and with the intent to develop access for future public recreation. . Specifically, we are concerned with the location and extent of permanent roads that may be proposed to be built on both these parcels in conjunction with the project. We request that any proposed access roads on these two parcels be minimized to the extent possible, not surfaced, and developed as 2-track roads where possible. We would like to walk the proposed road alignments with WAPA prior to construction to evaluate alignment options so as to minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources and future/current recreation amenities. We ask that WAPA adopt the existing Larimer County Department of Natural Resources Revegetation Standards for restoration of any non-permanent roads and other areas where ground disturbance takes place. Currently, a comprehensive cultural resource evaluation has not been completed for Chimney Hollow Open Space and we would request that this be performed by WAPA in the powerline easement boundary as part of the EA for the project and that any cultural sites be avoided.

Similarly, at Pinewood Reservoir County Park, there are known cultural sites in the general vicinity of the existing powerline as well as the Besant Point Trail and ask that these cultural sites be avoided and that poles not be placed any closer than the current distance of the wooden poles to the trail. An osprey nest is also located at the southern end of Pinewood Reservoir, on a power pole and platform. This nest has been active for many years and produced three chicks in 2011. In order to protect this nest, we ask that access and construction activities of the F-PH segment through Pinewood Reservoir County Park occur only when the nest is inactive (July-December), unless we determine the nest to be inactive throughout the year.

Finally, since we manage these properties in part for their scenic value, we'd like to select poles that blend into the site and request the use of rust-colored poles in a forested viewshed and silver poles in a skyline viewshed. Please let us know when pole location is being finalized and provide us the opportunity for input.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Meegan Flenniken
Resource Program Manager
1800 S. County Road 31
Loveland, CO 80537