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To: Richard Hubler  
Alamosa County Land Use and Building Department

Re: Special Use Permit for Justin Davis, Superior Hydraulics Parcel 528326200350

15 Feb 2023

The Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges is a non-profit organization established in 2000. We promote awareness of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Alamosa, Baca, and Monte Vista) through education, assisting in refuge projects, and supporting visitor services. We are writing to express our concerns about the proposed Campground and Concert Venue planned between the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge and Blanca Wetlands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

This development proposal is in a very important conservation corridor for a variety of wildlife species that live and migrate through the San Luis Valley. The western side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico and the San Luis Valley of Colorado are unique in the lower 48 for the expansive corridor (~200 miles) of conserved and protected public lands interspersed with rural private lands and very limited development. The landscape scale area of conserved lands in this corridor includes the Rio Grande Natural Heritage Area, Cielo Vista Ranch, the Trinchera and Blanca Ranch, Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), Blanca Wetlands, San Luis Lakes State Wildlife Area, Medano Ranch, Great Sand Dunes National Park, Baca National Wildlife Refuge, and BLM and U.S Forest Service lands to the summit of Poncha Pass. This corridor is very important to the wildlife that use the area and it is an important element of the quiet rural lifestyle for the people who call the area home.

The rural, private property between the ANWR and Blanca Wetlands where this proposal sits is within a very important buffer zone that protects and enhances the value of both ANWR and Blanca Wetlands. ANWR and Blanca Wetlands provide habitat for resident and migratory birds including waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, and the federally listed endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and threatened Western Snowy Plover that breed in the area. The light pollution from a night-time concert venue would also negatively impact bats, migratory birds, and star gazing enthusiasts in an area that is recognized by the International Dark Sky Association.

A camping and concert venue will bring a lot of traffic to the area in addition to nighttime sound and light pollution during the spring and fall migration season as well as the entire breeding season for migratory birds that utilize the conservation corridor. The concert and camping impact would negatively impact birds and wildlife and degrade the protected wildlife habitat in this corridor.

We urge you to reject this application due to the detrimental impact the project will have on birds and wildlife in addition to altering the dark, quiet, rural atmosphere of the area.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deb Calahan".

Deb Calahan  
President, Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges.