

Peregrine Falcon habitat, prey, and protective buffers

Prepared: September 23, 2026 at 5:47 PM MST (UTC-7)

Submitted by: Maria Summerlin, authorized representative of the Sweetwater Lake Working Group

To the responsible official, White River National Forest:

Please place this comment and Exhibits P-1 and P-2 in the Sweetwater Lake Recreation Management and Development Project file and public record. I submit this issue on behalf of the Sweetwater Lake Working Group for consideration before the Forest Service selects an alternative.

On August 14, I requested the project's Peregrine Falcon baseline surveys, wildlife specialist reports, biological evaluations, prey and hunting-habitat data, GIS layers and maps for nest buffers and seasonal closures, and coordination with wildlife biologists, including CPW (Exhibit P-1). The Forest Service acknowledged receipt on August 18 and assigned FOIA case **2026-FS-R2-06641-F** (Exhibit P-2). **As of September 23, 2026 (MST), I have received no responsive records or final determination on that request.** This does not establish that the requested records do not exist.

Specific DEIS issue. The alternatives must account for both disturbance near Peregrine Falcon nesting areas and effects on the prey and foraging habitat those birds use. The public needs to know what site-specific surveys, prey or foraging information, and mapped buffer and closure recommendations the Forest Service and CPW used; where they appear in the Draft EIS and supporting materials; and how any recommendations carry through to the proposed activities and long-term management.

Requested action. Identify and make available the underlying surveys, biological evaluations, GIS maps, wildlife-biologist correspondence, and buffer or seasonal-closure recommendations before deciding. Show on project maps where relevant nesting, hunting, and prey habitat intersects proposed construction and recreation. Explain which CPW raptor buffer and seasonal restrictions would apply under a CPW partnership alternative, and make selected protections enforceable in the Record of Decision and any special-use permit. If the necessary site-specific analysis has not been done, complete and disclose it and allow meaningful comment on material new information before a decision.

Please identify any responsive records later produced in FOIA case 2026-FS-R2-06641-F that bear on this issue and place them in the project file. I will separately submit relevant responsive documents when received so the Forest Service can consider them before a final decision.

Exhibits: P-1 - August 14 FOIA request (1 page); P-2 - August 18 acknowledgment (1 page). Each original scanned page follows a labeled divider. The source screenshots do not state a time zone for their clock times; those times have not been converted.

EXHIBIT P-1

August 14, 2026 FOIA request - Peregrine Falcon habitat and prey

Source file: 20260814_FOIA_Request_Peregrine_Falcon_Request_red.pdf

1 original scanned page follows.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – NEPA Administrative Record Data for Sweetwater Lake Project (Peregrine Falcon Habitat and Prey Analysis)

From [REDACTED]
Date Fri 8/14/2026 2:48 PM
To sm.fs.r2foia@usda.gov <sm.fs.r2foia@usda.gov>

Dear FOIA Officer,

I am requesting copies of records that comprise or inform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Administrative Record for the Sweetwater Lake Recreation Management and Development Project (White River National Forest, Project PALS #64047).

Specifically, I am requesting all baseline data, wildlife specialist reports, biological evaluations, resource inventories, and agency correspondence (including inter-agency communications with Colorado Parks and Wildlife) regarding peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) nesting, prey habitat, and hunting/foraging habitat.

To narrow the scope of this request under the NEPA analysis framework, I am seeking:

1. All baseline resource surveys, population data, and wildlife specialist reports used to evaluate impacts on peregrine falcon prey bases and hunting habitats within the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) scoping documents.
2. Technical reports, GIS spatial data layers, and maps utilized to establish raptor buffer zones, cliff-nesting protections, or seasonal area closures for the project alternatives.
3. Comments, internal briefing papers, and coordination notes regarding peregrine falcon foraging dynamics between the U.S. Forest Service and state/federal wildlife biologists.

Timeframe: Please limit the search for records from January 1, 2022, through the present date.

Format: I prefer to receive these records in an electronic format (such as PDF, spreadsheet files, or GIS shapefiles) sent via email or a downloadable portal link.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Maria Summerlin

Sweetwater Lake Working Group

0600 Sweetwater Road

Gypsum, CO 81637

EXHIBIT P-2

August 18, 2026 FOIA acknowledgment - 2026-FS-R2-06641-F

Source file: 20260814_FOIA_Request_Peregrine_Falcon_Request_Rcpt_red.pdf

1 original scanned page follows.

FOIA Acknowledgement

From misty.desalvo@usda.gov <misty.desalvo@usda.gov>

Date Tue 8/18/2026 9:25 AM

To 

August 18, 2026

2026-FS-R2-06641-F

Dear Maria Summerlin:

Thank you for your recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region (R2). This email acknowledges receipt of your FOIA request dated August 14, 2026 which was received in the R2 office on August 14, 2026. You requested:

Information related to Sweetwater . . . including all baseline data, wildlife specialist reports, biological evaluations, resource inventories, and agency correspondence (including inter-agency communications with Colorado Parks and Wildlife) regarding peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus) nesting, prey habitat, and hunting/foraging habitat

Timeframe: January 1, 2022, through the present date.

Your FOIA request is among numerous other requests that the R2 Office receives. We are diligently working to process each request in the order in which it was received. Please be assured that every attempt will be made to respond to your request within 20 working days (excluding weekends and holidays) from the date of our receipt of your request. If you do not receive a response by that cut off please feel free to submit a query via email to misty.desalvo@usda.gov for an update, please reference your assigned case number, 2026-FS-R2-06641-F.

Your patience is greatly appreciated.

Thank You,
U.S. Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
1617 Cole Boulevard, Building 17
Lakewood, CO 80401-3305