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Ian Loveless
SnoPass Lofts LLC
401 North 36th Street, Suite 201
Seattle, Washington 98103

Kittitas County CDS

RE: Tunnel Creek Stream Delineation & Reasonable Use Justification
Ski Acres Estates Lots 6-11
Kittitas County, Washington
SWC Job #21-202

Dear Ian,

This report describes our observations and delineation of Tunnel Creek through or near Ski Acres Estates Lots 6-11 (Parcels#418135, 408135, 398135, 368135, 388135, & 378135), in the Snoqualmie Pass area of unincorporated Kittitas County, Washington (the "site").

The site consists of six (6) abutting single family lots to be accessed off Tanner Way with a total area of 1.6 acres located within the SW ¼ of Section 9, Township 22 North, Range 11 East of the W.M.

Methodology and Observations

Ed Sewall of Sewall Wetland Consulting, Inc. inspected the site on December 3, 2021. The ordinary high water mark of the creek through the site was flagged with blue flagging labeled starting on the west and going east with flags N1-N10 and S1-S10. The stream enters the site from an off-site culvert under Tanner Way, and flows easterly through the site in a well defined channel before entering two, 36" cmp culverts which pass under the Silver Firs ski area parking lot before discharging into a channel on the east side of the parking lot off-site.

The stream consists of boulder, cobble and gravel bottomed channel with well defined banks. Heavy spring flows from snowmelt create a large channel which is only partially wetted throughout the year except in the spring.

The buffer area is vegetated with a mix of mountain hemlock, silver fir, devils club, stink current, huckleberry, deer fern and sword fern. There are areas of open bare soils and disturbed ground in portions of the buffer, particularly on the downstream end on Lots 10 & 11.

This stream has been reviewed by WDFW and determined to meet the criteria of a Type F water. According to Table 17A.04.030-4 of the Kittitas County Municipal Code, Type F waters within the “Cascade Ecoregion” have a 150’ buffer (RMZ) measured from the OHWM.

4. Standard Riparian Management Zones for Waters of the State.

**Table 17A.04.030-4 Standard RMZ Widths
 Kittitas County Nonshoreline Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Ponds
 (does not include building setback [KCC 17A.01.090.5])**

Stream Type	Riparian Management Zone Widths ^{1,2}	
	Cascade Ecoregion (feet)	Columbia Plateau Ecoregion (feet)
Type S (Shoreline)	See the SMP	See the SMP
Type F	150	100
Type Np	100	65
Type Ns	50	40

Proposed Project

The proposed project is the construction of an access road off Tanner Way to access the 6 existing single family lots. The proposed project is also to grade and prepare the lots for the eventual construction of single family home on each parcel with associated driveway (see attached site plan).

The 150’ buffer of the Type F water covers almost the entire access road from Tanner Way to each of the existing lots. This buffer also covers nearly all of Lot 9, all of Lots 10 and 11, and a small portion of Lots 6, 7 & 8.

The access road is required to allow access to the existing parcels on the site. Because the road must be located as shown on the attached site plan due to the locations of the lots, it cannot avoid being in the stream buffer. The total area of impact to the buffer from the roads and proposed driveways is 8,105sf. The total area of impact from the proposed building pads in the buffer is 3,652sf.

KCMC 17A.04.030.6 provides the criteria to do buffer averaging for impacts to the buffer/RMZ of the stream. However, there is not sufficient area on the existing lots to average the buffer and leave building sites for the home.

The proposed building pads are located on existing single family parcels giving each lot the ability to have a single family home on it. However, all 6 of the lots contain stream buffer which for Lots 9, 10 & 11 has no area where buffer averaging could be accomplished as they are all or nearly all buffer. Lots 6, 7 & 8 have enough area to average the buffer impacts for the home and driveway on they parcels, however, the construction of the access road will separate those parcels from contiguous buffer areas of the streams, making their function low to non-existent. Therefore, buffer averaging cannot work for the home son the lots.

As a result, the use of Reasonable Use as described in KCMC 17A.01.060 will be required to construct the access road and single family home pads on this project. This portion of the code states;

17A.01.060 Exceptions

2. Reasonable Use. If the application of this Title would deny all reasonable economic use of the subject property, the County shall determine if the property owner may apply for an exception pursuant to the following:

a. Exception Request and Review Process. An application for a reasonable use exception shall be made to the County and shall include a critical areas report, as described in KCC 17A.01.080, including mitigation plan, if necessary; and any other related project documents, such as permit applications to other agencies, special studies, and environmental documents prepared pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW and rules thereunder in Chapter 197-11 WAC).

The application shall follow the administrative project permit review process outlined in KCC 15A.03. In determining what is considered reasonable use of an undeveloped parcel, the Director may consider additional information such as zoning, and comparable structure sizes and land uses of the surrounding area.

b. Director Review. The Director shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request based on the proposal's ability to comply with all the reasonable use exception criteria in Subsection 2(c).

The following describes the criteria for the Reasonable Use review;

c. Reasonable Use Review Criteria. Criteria for review and approval of reasonable use exceptions include:

i. The application of this Title would deny all reasonable economic use of the property;

Response: The existing 6 parcels are zoned for a single family home on each. To not allow the construction of a home on each parcel, as well as an access road to access each parcel would deny the legal all reasonable economic use of the property.

ii. No other reasonable economic use of the property has less impact on the critical area and its buffer;

Response: There is no other use of these parcels other than for a single family home with less impact on the stream buffer than is proposed on the existing attached site plan.

iii. The proposed impact to the critical area is the minimum necessary to allow for reasonable economic use of the property;

Response: The proposed access road is the minimal needed to service the existing parcels and meet all standards such as fire access and county minimum widths. The home sizes have been kept minimal with average footprints of 1,250sf in size which is approximately 20% smaller than the average footprint for recently permitted houses in the neighborhood based upon recent building permit documents.

iv. The inability of the applicant to derive reasonable economic use of the property is not the result of actions by the applicant after the effective date of this Title;

Response: The existing single parcels existed prior to the enactment of the stream buffers which now require this reasonable use, which went into effect in December of 2021. These parcels existed prior to the effective date of this Title and is not a result of any action taken by the owner of these parcels.

v. The proposal does not pose an unreasonable threat to the public health, safety, or welfare on or off the development proposal site;

Response: The proposed access road and single family home building pads does not pose any threat to public health, safety or welfare on or off the development site.

vi. The proposal will result in no net loss of critical area functions and values consistent with the best available science;

Response: The proposed cumulative impacts from the access road and single family home pads totals of 12,082sf of existing buffer. In addition, an area of 4,940sf of temporary impacts to the buffer will be required due to existing topography and the requirement to flatten out some of these areas for building pads and the access road.

To compensate for the 12,082sf of permanent impact to the buffer from the homes and road, a total of 9,924sf of existing buffer will be enhanced through removal of any trash and the replanting of degraded buffer areas with native trees and shrubs to include mountain hemlock, silver fir, douglas fir, vine ample and huckleberry. In addition, large woody debris will be placed within the buffers and along the stream utilizing trees removed from the building areas to enhance some wildlife habitat

The proposed temporary impacts will be mitigated through replanting with a mix of native trees and shrubs to restore the buffer functions temporarily impacted during construction.

The proposed buffer enhancement and restoration will result in no net loss of buffer function to the stream, and utilizes best available science.

vii. The proposal is consistent with other application regulations and standards.

Response: The proposal is consistent with other applicable regulations and standards.

Conclusion

The proposed buffer impacts and mitigation areas are conceptually shown on the attached site plan. Once this concept is approved, a detailed buffer mitigation plan will be prepared and submitted to the county for review and approval.

If you have any questions in regards to this report or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (253) 859-0515 or at esewall@sewallwc.com .

Sincerely,
Sewall Wetland Consulting, Inc.



Ed Sewall
Senior Wetlands Ecologist PWS #212

Attached: Site Plan

REFERENCES

Cowardin, L., V. Carter, F. Golet, and E. LaRoe. 1979. Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FWS/OBS-79-31, Washington, D. C.

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USDA NRCS & National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils, September 1995. Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States - Version 2.1

Photographs of the site and Tunnel Creek 12-3-21



*Above: Creek discharges from culvert under Tanner Road upstream of site.
Below: Tunnel Creek on west side of site.*





*Above: Two 36" metal culverts where creek leaves the site on the east and passes under the Silver Fir parking lot to the east
Below: Tunnel Creek upstream of two 36" culverts on east side of site.*





Above: Looking northerly towards the site. Tunnel Creek passes under the parking lot and land on east side of small lodge located off-site to south.