



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Central Region Office

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September 8, 2022

Kelly Bacon
Kittitas County Planner I
411 N. Ruby St. Suite 2
Ellensburg WA 98926

RE: 202204061, RZ-22-00005, CP-22-00005

Dear Kelly Bacon,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Pre-Threshold Consultation for the Mardee Lake Rezone & Comprehensive Plan Amendment. We have reviewed the environmental checklist and have the following comment.

SHORELANDS

Thank you for providing the Department of Ecology (Ecology) an opportunity to review and comment on the Mardee Lake rezone and comprehensive plan amendment. Ecology's Shorelands and Environmental Assistance (SEA) Program would like to provide the following comments for consideration.

Coal Creek, Mardee Lake, Lake Keechelus, and the nearby Gold Creek are Shorelines of the State. Therefore any work proposed within the County's designated Shoreline jurisdiction must meet the purposes and intent of the County's Shoreline Master Program (SMP). It is strongly encouraged to adhere to all buffer requirements established within the County's SMP (including Shoreline buffers and those designated for the stream and wetland critical area buffers).

A large wetland complex surrounds Mardee Lake. Wetlands are considered a water of the State and are regulated by the local government, the Department of Ecology, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (If determined to be a Water of the United States). Therefore any work proposed within a wetland would require review and authorization from the previously mentioned agencies.

Ecology strongly encourages the use of mitigation sequencing and the avoidance of all wetland impacts. Those impacts that can not be avoided must be minimized and the impacted functions and values of the wetland compensated for.

Currently, the area is largely undeveloped. The lack of development has benefits in linking the shoreline, stream, and wetland buffers together, creating a large wildlife corridor. The importance of the buffer and linking them together to form a corridor has numerous benefits in protecting the functions and values of the riverine wetlands and stream: such features provide pathways for animals to move between areas (it is the habitat score of a wetland that drives our widest buffers); screens light, dust, noise pollution; creates roughness to filter stormwater runoff, pesticides, reduce wind erosion; provides structure and mast for animals to forage, loaf, and nest; and generates nutrient inputs to maintain wetland and stream biochemistry. For these reasons we strongly encourage the existing corridor to remain intact.

Please contact the appropriate SEA Program Regional Specialist by contacting Amber Johnson (Amber.johnson@ecy.wa.gov) with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Lucila Cornejo
SEPA Coordinator
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