



**GG Environmental, LLC**

WETLANDS • FISH • WILDLIFE

Geoffrey Gray, MA, PWS  
151 Poulin Rd. Selah, WA 98942  
509-426-5645 mobile/text  
gg@gg-env.com | www.gg-env.com

December 6, 2022

Patrick Nolan  
Easton Adventure Properties LLC (dba Cabin Creek Lodge)  
6912 220th St. SW, Suite 200 | Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043  
203-823-5833 | nolpatrick@gmail.com

**RE: Critical areas evaluation for an existing propane tank installation.**

Mr. Nolan,

GG Environmental, LLC (Geoffrey Gray, MA, PWS) was retained by Easton Adventure Properties LLC (dba Cabin Creek Lodge), represented by Patrick Nolan (Client), to complete a wetland and stream critical areas investigation, as required Kittitas County (county), to issue a permit for the existing installation of two 1,000-gallon propane tanks on a concrete pad (project) near the Cabin Creek Lodge (lodge).

#### **Project Location**

The lodge is located at 3003 Cabin Creek Rd (NF 4823 / U-Fish Rd) Easton, WA 98925, within parcel #746136, in unincorporated Kittitas County, Washington (**Figure 1**).

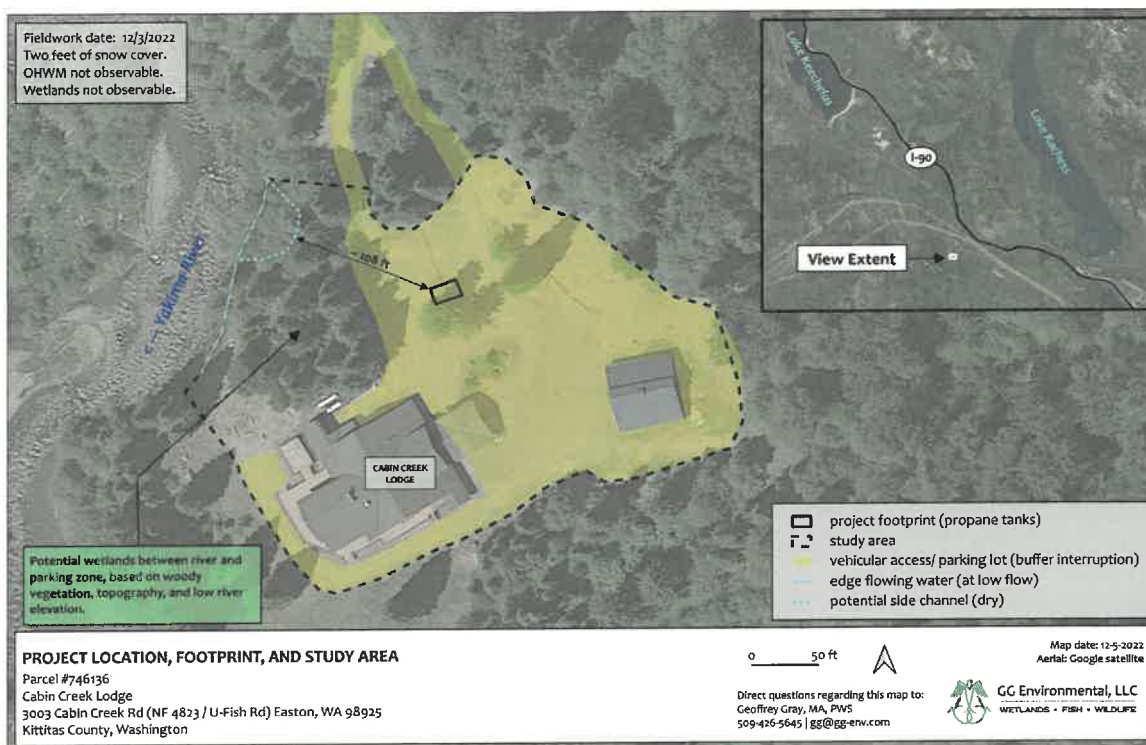
The project is located within 200 feet (ft) of the Yakima River, positioned in the center of an existing, legally-established, unpaved vehicular access area/parking lot (parking lot) associated with the lodge (**Figure 1**).

At approximately 2,274 feet in elevation, the project is located within the SW ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 36, Township 21 North, Range 12 East, and at latitude 47°15'54.25" North and longitude 121°16'59.94" West (WGS84).

#### **Methods**

A field visit was conducted on December 3, 2022 by GG Environmental, LLC (Geoffrey Gray, MA, PWS). It had recently snowed approximately 24 inches prior to the site visit, and the soils surface/herbaceous vegetation was obscured (**Figure 2**). Features documented in the field were geospatially surveyed with a Motorola G Stylus mobile phone, running the Mapit Spatial GIS application paired via Bluetooth® with a Juniper Systems Geode™ Multi-Global Navigation Satellite System (Multi-GNSS) receiver capable of sub-meter horizontal accuracy.

**Figure 1. Project Location, Footprint, and Study Area**



The project footprint is limited to the concrete pad upon which the two 1,000-gallon propane tanks are installed. Given the deep snow cover, combined with extremely dense surrounding vegetation, the study area (Figure 1) was limited to the parking lot and forested zone between the parking lot and river.

Although the county requires all areas within a 300-foot (ft) radius of a project footprint to be investigated per Kittitas County Code (KCC) 17B.05.020F, the surrounding parking lot serves to isolate the project footprint from any potential adjacent critical areas, thereby interrupting, consistent with KCC 17B.05.050.B.3, any potential impact the project may have had on any adjacent critical areas. Accordingly, the study area, as documented in this report, is deemed sufficient for the purpose of this evaluation.

Wetlands were investigated in reference to routine methods described in the *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual* and *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region* (Version 2.0).

**Figure 2. Propane tanks in the middle of the parking lot.**



Since the project footprint falls within 200 feet<sup>1</sup> of the Yakima River any wetlands present within the project footprint would be regulated under KCC Title 17B (Shorelines).

Since snow obscured low-growing herbaceous vegetation, the vegetation survey was limited to woody trees and shrubs. Dominant trees surrounding the parking lot include red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) (FAC<sup>2</sup>), grand fir (*Abies grandis*) (FACU<sup>3</sup>), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) (FACU). Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) (FAC) is rooted along the river's edge. Woody shrubs along the river are dominated by vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) (FAC) with pockets of red-osier dogwood (*Cornus alba*) (FACW<sup>4</sup>).

No soil or hydrology data were collected. Rather, the potential for wetlands was determined based on visual observation of woody vegetation and topography relative to the river elevation.

<sup>1</sup> KCC 17B.01.020

<sup>2</sup> (Facultative Wetland Plants)—Occur in wetlands and nonwetlands.

<sup>3</sup> FACU (Facultative Upland Plants)—Usually occur in non-wetlands, but may occur in wetlands.

<sup>4</sup> (Facultative Wetland Plants)—Usually occur in wetlands, but may occur in non-wetlands.



The main channel of the Yakima River forms the western boundary of the parcel. Listed by the county as a Shoreline of Statewide Significance (KCC 17B.01.020) with a Rural Conservancy designation<sup>5</sup>, the county assigns a buffer of 100 ft (KCC 17B.05.050-1) plus an additional building setback of 15 ft per KCC 17B.05.020(C) (115-ft total buffer radius). Due to snow cover and low flow in the river, it was not possible to identify the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). However, the observed edge of flowing water was marked, as well as a potential side channel, as mapped in **Figure 1**.

### Determination

No wetlands or streams are present within the project footprint because the propane tanks were constructed within a legally-established, maintained, and active parking lot. The area is leveled and xeric as evidenced in historic satellite imagery (**Figure 3**).

**Figure 3.** Satellite image from 2021<sup>6</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Kittitas County COMPAS. Available at:

<https://kitcogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8bcc146d9c2847acb2e9aa239187c25e>

<sup>6</sup> Google Earth. Available at: <https://www.google.com/earth/about/versions/>

According to the Client, no woody vegetation was removed during installation of the propane tanks because the footprint was formerly a car parking space. Although the OHWM could not be definitively marked, the propane tanks appear to be located over 100 ft from the potential side channel as indicated in **Figure 1**.

The parking area surrounding the project footprint serves to interrupt any potential adverse effect of the propane tank installation on any adjacent critical areas, including wetlands, streams or their respective regulatory buffers, consistent with KCC 17B.05.050.B.3. As such, it is determined that the project has not resulted in any measurable adverse effect to critical areas or loss of shoreline functions.

### **Limitations**

The data presented herein reflect site conditions encountered on December 3, 2022. Work was performed in accordance with accepted standards for professional wetland biologists and applicable and current federal, state, and local ordinances. Although this report is accurate and complete to the best of available scientific knowledge, it should be considered a preliminary determination, with no warranty, express or implied, until it has been reviewed, and approved in writing, by appropriate jurisdictional authorities.

Cheers,



Geoffrey Gray, MA, PWS  
GG Environmental, LLC