

From: [Downes, Scott G \(DFW\)](#)
To: [Kelly Bacon \(CD\)](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Johnston](#); [Torrey, Elizabeth M \(DFW\)](#)
Subject: RE: Notice of Application - CU-20-00005 Hidden Point
Date: Wednesday, December 30, 2020 10:22:41 AM
Attachments: [WDFW comments on CU-20-00005 Hidden Point to CDS.pdf](#)

Kelly,

Please send WDFW comments on this proposal. Our main request is that a wildlife species and habitat report be completed prior to evaluating this proposal. There is significant potential risk to a suite of priority wildlife species with this proposal and there is not adequate information in the proposal to determine the impacts and whether those impacts can be mitigated or not.

Let me know if you have questions on our letter and we look forward to further review of that report on this project.

Scott

Scott Downes

Fish & Wildlife Habitat Biologist
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From: Kelly Bacon (CD) <kelly.bacon.cd@co.kittitas.wa.us>

Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2020 9:31 AM

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<jeremy.johnston@co.kittitas.wa.us>; Rachael Stevie (CD) <rachael.stevie.cd@co.kittitas.wa.us>

Subject: Notice of Application - CU-20-00005 Hidden Point

This message has originated from an External Source. Please use caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email. Contact your desktop support or IT security staff for assistance and to report suspicious messages.

Good morning,

Kittitas County CDS is requesting comment on the Conditional Use application CU-20-00005 Hidden Point.

The proposed project is for a "Guest Ranch or Guest Farm" providing overnight lodging, dining and recreational facilities in a rural setting. All application documents can be found at the links below. I have also attached the SEPA Checklist for recording. CDS is using the optional DNS process for this application. Please let me know if you have any issues accessing the materials. Please submit any comments for this application by 5pm on Monday, January 4, 2021. If CDS does not receive comments by this date, we will assume your agency has no interest in the application.

[CU-20-00005 Hidden Point Internal](#)

[CU-20-00005 Hidden Point External](#)

Thank you,

Kelly Bacon

Planner I

Kittitas County Community Development Services

411 N. Ruby Street, Ste 2

Ellensburg, WA 98926

Office: (509) 962-7539

kelly.bacon.cd@co.kittitas.wa.us

Please Note: In an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and the Governor's "Safe Start" reopening plan, Kittitas County Community Development Services is currently in Phase 3 and is open to the public in a limited capacity. At this time many of us are on a rotating schedule working from home and in the office; during this time I will do my best to respond to you as promptly as possible.

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State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

South Central Region • Region 3 • 1701 South 24th Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902-5720
Telephone: (509) 575-2740 • Fax: (509) 575-2474

December 30, 2020

Kelly Bacon
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby Street, Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON CU-20-00005 HIDDEN POINT

Dear Ms. Bacon,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the CU-20-00005 Hidden Point application concerning the construction of a Guest Ranch on Emerick Road, east of Cle Elum (“the project”). The proposal states that development initially would include four bunkhouses, with potential future phases adding up to 20 additional bunkhouses (24 total), a pool, and a kitchen encompassing 34 acres. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application and supporting documents. Our comments are in regard to the project’s impact on priority fish and wildlife habitats.

The project is in an area which is documented by multiple sources to be of high importance to wildlife. The proposed project area is within mapped Mule Deer and Elk winter areas as part of WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database. In the statewide wildlife connectivity analysis, the area is mapped as potential migration areas for various wildlife including Mule Deer, Black Bear and Western Gray Squirrel. Further, there are a suite of non-game species that might be present on the property given potential habitats in the area including Pileated Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker, Ring-necked Snake and Sharp-tailed Snake. Pileated Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker, and Sharp-tailed Snake are all candidate species for listing in the state. Ring-necked Snake is a priority species. These mapped potential occurrences of wildlife are reinforced by wildlife observations from neighboring residents in the area that they have shared with WDFW, particularly Mule Deer, Elk, Black Bear, Western Gray Squirrel, Pileated Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker and White-headed Woodpecker. The SEPA application for this proposal does not include any of the above information, except a vague reference to Swauk Prairie under the question on migration route. Thus, WDFW requests that the SEPA checklist be revised to include the above information on Priority Habitats and Species under Section B.5 of the checklist.

Development in these priority habitat areas have a high potential to impact a species’ use of the habitat, either through direct habitat removal (clearing) or indirect impacts through more intensive use of the property which could result in disturbance and displacement for the wildlife. These potential impacts on priority wildlife species and their habitats, are part of Kittitas County Critical Area Ordinance under Kittitas County Code Title 17A, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation

Areas. To be able to properly assess the impact of this development on these priority species, WDFW requests a Critical Areas Report, specifically a wildlife species and habitat management plan be completed by a qualified professional before evaluating whether this conditional use could be approved or not. That critical areas report should address the priority species listed above, the habitats on the property, and any other known or documented wildlife on the property. The report should be conducted by a professional with a wildlife background (“qualified professional”) and should outline if the proposal were to go forward, measures that the applicant can demonstrate on how to mitigate for the impacts to the priority species. As a technical expert in this critical area, WDFW requests that it be presented with a copy of the report and allowed to provide comments to Kittitas County on whether the measures outlined in the report are sufficient to mitigate the impact to species and habitats prior to considering approval for this Conditional Use permit.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and look forward to reviewing the habitat assessment and discussing this project further with the county and the applicant. Please contact me at 509-607-3578 or Scott.Downes@dfw.wa.gov with concerns or questions regarding the above comments.

Sincerely,



Scott Downes
Area Habitat Biologist

Cc:

Elizabeth Torrey, WDFW
Jeremy Johnson, Kittitas County CDS