



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

South Central Region • Ellensburg District Office • 201 N. Pearl St, Ellensburg, WA 98926
Telephone: (509) 962-3421 • Fax: (509) 575-2474

December 1, 2017

Dusty Pilkington
Kittitas County
Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby Street; Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RE: WDFW comments on LP-17-00007 Swauk Valley Ranch Long Plat Application

Dear Mr. Pilkington,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed long plat (LP-17-00007 Swauk Valley Ranch). The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has some concerns with the proposed long plat that we've outlined below. As you're aware, Swauk Creek and its tributaries are important streams that produce ESA listed steelhead and are productive spawning and rearing areas for coho salmon and lamprey, and productive rearing habitat for Chinook salmon. Bull trout (ESA listed) have also been documented in lower Swauk Creek. The property owners have been proactive in implementing conservation and restoration actions on the property to enhance fish and wildlife habitat; we are hugely supportive of these efforts. The upland areas have excellent wildlife habitat for a number of priority habitats and species as well. Shrub steppe habitat, oak woodlands, and a robust riparian forest are all present on this property; adding to the species richness and diversity present. Protection of these fish and wildlife habitat values should be considered as the new lots are developed to ensure no loss of function to these critical areas.

The maps attached with this land use action do not seem to reflect the recent boundary line adjustment (BL-16-00012), making it difficult to determine where the new parcels will actually be as they seem to be north of the mapping shown. We have done our best to determine approximate new lot lines as they will pertain to fish and wildlife resources, but request updated mapping showing the proposed lot lines and their relation to critical areas, shorelines, channel migration zones, and priority habitats for a better analysis.

An unnamed tributary stream flows from the west toward Swauk Creek through the northern portions of the new lots; particularly lot 2. Both lots 2 and 4 may have portions within the Shoreline buffer of Swauk Creek and its channel migration zone. Please clearly show where the buildable areas will be within the new lots (including septic) prior to approval. Buildable areas should take into consideration the current critical area and shoreline buffers and setbacks, knowing that buffer widths may change in the future, and the buildable areas could change as

well. Protecting the shoreline and stream from additional encroachment and habitat damage is one of our primary concerns.

We strongly urge a revised site plan that shows the buffer and setbacks areas associated with all of the critical areas and Shoreline of Swauk Creek in order to evaluate future buildable areas prior to approval of this short plat. We'd also like to see a wetland delineation and critical areas report to ensure there are no other critical areas within the proposed short plat that would be impacted by future development, including the installation of septic systems and potential impacts on water quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I look forward to working with you on this project. Please feel free to contact me at (509) 962-3421 or Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov if you have any questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Nelson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name and title.

Jennifer Nelson
Area Habitat Biologist