



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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November 2, 2017

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Kittitas County CDS

Dusty Pilkington  
Kittitas County Community Development Services  
411 N. Ruby St., #4  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RE: Ecology and Kittitas County site visit to The Commons at Dry Creek

Dear Mr. Pilkington:

Thank you for providing the opportunity to meet with you onsite on September 19, 2017, for review of the proposed Commons at Dry Creek project site conditions. The Commons at Dry Creek is located west of W Dry Creek Road, near Ellensburg in Kittitas County. A formal wetland delineation was not conducted by the Department of Ecology (Ecology), however the findings of the site visit identified below contradict those provided in the July 29, 2014, wetland delineation report prepared by The Wetland Corps.

In July of 2014, The Wetland Corps dug four sample plots and provided a single data form listing the occurrence of only four herbaceous species on the project site: *Poa annua* (FAC), *Bromus tectorum* (NI), *Elytrigia repens* (NL), *Equisetum* sp. (NL) (Lichavar et al, 2016). Ecology did not prepare a comprehensive list of species present on the project site at the time of our site visit. However, the following herbaceous, shrub and tree species were identified in potential wetland areas during Ecology's site visit: *Juncus effusus* (FACW), *Carex* sp. (NL), *Rumex crispus* (FAC), *Agrostis* sp. (NL), *Lamium purpureum* (NL), *Crataegus douglasii* (FAC), *Elaeagnus angustifolia* (FAC), *Equisetum hyemale* (FACW), and *Equisetum arvense* (FAC). Additional species exist outside of these potential wetland areas and plant species may not have been identified in potential wetland areas due to seasonal senescence of some plant species. Ecology identified a more diverse plant community on the project site and plant species that are typically found in wetlands and either prefer wetter conditions (FACW) or are found in both wet and dry conditions (FAC).

Large, dense patches of sedges (*Carex* sp.), a species typically found in wetlands and wetter growing conditions, were noted within topographic features near the center, northwest, eastern, and southern boundaries of the project site. Topographic and elevational changes were noted by Ecology staff, with topographic depressions and a topographic swale extending from the western



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boundary towards the south-southwest project boundary, situated centrally through the project site.

Currier Creek is located offsite and near the western project site boundary. Ecology observed the stream corridor to contain mature forested riparian habitat. Aspen trees were noted within the riparian habitat. The presence of aspen, species that are typically found in wetter growing conditions, suggest water is present and wetland habitat may be present along the stream corridor. Wetland buffers regulated by Kittitas County may exceed stream buffer setbacks and extend onto the subject property. Ecology recommends a wetland delineation and rating of identified wetlands along the Currier Creek corridor near the project boundary, to determine potential buffer overlay onto the project site.

Prior to further review of proposed site development plans by Kittitas County, Ecology recommends a wetland delineation be conducted of the project site and adjacent Currier Creek corridor by a qualified professional using methodology according to the US Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (1987) and the Arid West Regional Supplement (Version 2.0).

Ecology looks forward to providing Kittitas County with technical assistance and expertise in the future. If you have any questions or would like to discuss my comments, please email me at [lori.white@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:lori.white@ecy.wa.gov) or give me a call at (509) 575-2616.

Sincerely,



Lori White  
Wetland/Shoreline/Federal Permit Specialist

#### References

Lichvar R.W., D.L. Banks, W.N. Krichner, and N.C. Melvin. 2016. The National Wetland Plant List: 2016 wetland ratings. Published 28 April 2016. ISSN 2153 733X.