



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

July 28, 2023

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON SP-23-00005 Craig

Dear Mr. Pederson,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SP-23-00005 Craig application concerning the dividing of the property into one 10.09 acre lot and one 59.19 acre lot. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application and supporting documents. Our comments are regarding the project's impact on priority fish and wildlife habitats, particularly shrubsteppe and riparian habitats. Further, WDFW previously commented on these parcels when they were the subject of the Sweetwater Conditional Use permit.

While WDFW has no substantive objections to the short plat, we do want to comment on the potential impact of any future building on these parcels and their impacts to Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA) under the Kittitas County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO). In the northwest of the parcel is priority shrubsteppe habitat which is used by a variety of priority wildlife species, including but not limited to mule deer. In the eastern part of the parcel is Naneum Creek and its associated riparian area. Naneum Creek is an important fish-bearing stream and its associated riparian area supports a wide diversity of wildlife for breeding, wintering, and migration. Naneum Creek in this vicinity has characteristics of a Channel Migration Zone (CMZ) and the unnamed tributary referenced in the report is likely a side channel of Naneum Creek.

If the short plat is approved, WDFW would request that before any future building is approved in these critical areas that a review of these FWHCA be identified and either avoided or mitigated for as described in the Kittitas County CAO. WDFW would request to review such plans in an effort to help Kittitas County administer their CAO for FWHCA of which WDFW has extensive technical knowledge.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and look forward to discussing this further with the county and the applicant if future development is planned on these parcels. Please contact me at 509-607-3578 or Scott.Downes@dfw.wa.gov to discuss these concerns.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Downes".

Scott Downes
Area Habitat Biologist

Cc:

Elizabeth Torrey, WDFW
Jamey Ayling, Kittitas County CDS