



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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KITTITAS COUNTY
CDS

September 17, 2008

Kari Braniff
Kittitas County Community Development
411 N Ruby Street, Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA. 98926

Dear Ms. Braniff:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the optional determination of nonsignificance process for the Star View division of approximately 20.00 acres into 4 lots, proposed by Anne Watanabe and Lynn Hatcher [SP 08-00039]. We have reviewed the documents and have the following comments.

Water Resources

Any ground water withdrawals in excess of 5,000 gallons per day or for the irrigation of more than ½ acre of lawn or noncommercial garden will require a permit from the Department of Ecology.

Chapter 173-150 WAC provides for the protection of existing rights against impairment, i.e. interruption or interference in the availability of water. If water supply in your area becomes limited your use could be curtailed by those with senior water rights.

The Attorney General's Opinion, (AGO 1997 No. 6) regarding the status of exempt ground water withdrawals, states that a group of wells drilled by the same person or group of persons, at or about the same time, in the same area, for the same purpose or project should be considered a single withdrawal and would not be exempt from the permitting requirement contained in RCW 90.44.050, if the total amount withdrawn for domestic use exceeds 5,000 gallons per day or if a total of more than .5 acre of lawn and garden are irrigated.



The Attorney General's opinion suggests that caution should be used in finding developments to be exempt from needing a water right permit if the possibility exists that the development of the project will result in the ultimate withdrawal of water in excess of 5,000 gallons per day or the irrigation of more than .5 acre of lawn and garden.

With the Supreme Court's guidance on the limitations of groundwater exemptions, all lots within this proposed subdivision would be covered by a single groundwater exemption provided this development is not part of a larger project.

To comply with the 5,000 gallon per day limit, Ecology recommends metering the wells for this development. Water use data should be recorded by the property owner of the well monthly. Department of Ecology personnel, upon presentation of proper credentials, shall have access at reasonable times, to the records of water use that are kept to meet the above conditions, and to inspect at reasonable times any measuring device used to meet the above conditions. For metering information, please contact Ken Schuster at (509) 454-4263.

To comply with irrigating up to 0.5 acre of lawn and garden, Ecology recommends requiring property covenants for each lot to limit the amount of the lawn and garden to be irrigated so it adds up to the maximum allowable acreage.

There is a concern about irrigation with a single groundwater exemption, which only allows up to ½ acre. With the proposed lot sizes, irrigation could easily be over ½ acre. If irrigation water is available through an irrigation district, know that the water purveyor is responsible for ensuring that the proposed use(s) are within the limitations of its water rights. If the proposal's actions are different than the existing water right (source, purpose, the place of use, or period of use), then it is subject to approval from the Department of Ecology pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 and RCW 90.44.100. However, if irrigation water is not available through an irrigation district, Ecology encourages the use of covenants to help property owners stay within the groundwater exemption criteria until a valid water right is obtained for irrigation. For metering information, please contact Ken Schuster at 509-454-4263. The key element will be to obtain valid irrigation rights.

Water Quality

Dividing or platting of a piece of property is often the first step in a proposed development. If a subsequent individual or common plan of development exceeds 1 acre of disturbed ground in size an NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit may be required. Ground disturbance includes

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all utility placements and building or upgrading existing roads. The process requires going through SEPA, developing a stormwater pollution prevention plan, submitting an application and a 30 day public notice process. This may take 45-60 days. A permit and a stormwater plan are required prior to beginning ground-breaking activities. Please contact Lynda Jamison with the Department of Ecology, (509) 575- 2434, with questions about this permit.

Sincerely,



Gwen Clear
Environmental Review Coordinator
Central Regional Office
(509) 575-2012