



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

August 3, 2022

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON SE-22-00059 OWENS ACCESS ROAD

Dear Ms. Stevie,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project to build an access road near Bettas Road. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application materials and has the following comments for consideration to ensure adequate protection of all Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.

The four parcels within the project area contain shrubsteppe habitat and provide important habitat for mule deer and elk as well as several other birds and reptiles. WDFW's online Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) map has accurately mapped portions of the project area as shrubsteppe habitat, as mule deer winter range habitat, and as a biodiversity area and migration corridor. More information about the PHS species and habitats can be found at this [website](#).

While we appreciate that actions are proposed to minimize impacts, the project as currently proposed will result in a net loss of shrubsteppe habitat and its associated species. The road and subsequent development may also impact migration of animals through this corridor. WDFW recommends mitigation for these impacts. WDFW would welcome the opportunity to meet on site to begin conversations on how best to achieve this mitigation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and please let me know if there are any questions about our comments. I can be reached by phone at (509) 961-6639 or email at Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Nelson".

Jennifer Nelson
Fish and Wildlife Biologist