



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

South Central Region • Region 3 • 1701 South 24th Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902-5720
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August 7, 2024

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON CU-24-00006 Silver Ridge Ranch

Dear Mr. Pedersen,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on CU-24-00006, Silver Ridge Ranch's proposal to amend CU-2-07 to include use of an amphitheater and approval for conversion of a storage barn to be utilized as an event space. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application and supporting documents on file. Upon review, we noted discrepancies between the project narrative, site plans and SEPA Checklist. We are submitting the following comments to be considered in review of the proposal prior to making a final determination.

The project narrative mentions using 7 vacant parcels – 954042, 954043, 954044, 954045, 954331, 954332, 954333 – for parking during special events. However, in the SEPA Checklist, the applicant's response to section 3b(2) states "New development of 7 eastern lots will propose individual OSS systems as needed with public health" and section 9a states "7 one per LOT..." in response to housing units. It is unclear whether this proposal includes housing development on these parcels and whether they are part of the conditional use proposal for the event space.

Parcels 954043, 954044, 954333 and 954332 all have portions mapped within the 100-year regulatory floodway of Silver Creek, a fish bearing tributary to the Yakima River and is a Shoreline stream for much of its length through the property. These parcels are mapped as Rural Conservancy and any proposed development should be reviewed for consistency with Kittitas County's Shoreline Master Plan and Critical Areas Ordinance.

The site plans on file show existing access roads that are not evident on recent aerial photography. For example, the site plans show an existing cul-de-sac style access road on the 7 eastern parcels, which is not apparent on aerial photography.

The project site is near the easternmost I-90 Connectivity Emphasis Area (CEA) identified to enhance ecological connectivity as part of the Washington State Department of Transportation's I-90 East Project and is located within the Domerie Flats Elk Winter Concentration Area. Understanding the proposed project as a whole will be important for evaluating how it may impact the ability for wildlife to migrate through the area.

To lessen the impact on nocturnal wildlife movement, we request that all outdoor lighting be facing the ground. Lighting geared towards the sky can have attractancy issues for nocturnal flying wildlife, including birds. We appreciate that quiet hours begin at 10pm and the lights will be turned off at this time, as stated in the SEPA.

While we appreciate the applicant has committed to not removing any trees or vegetation as part of the proposal, with the lack of clarity around the proposed project and site plan, and presence of known Shorelines and critical areas within the project area, WDFW recommends a full critical areas report be completed to identify all critical areas and ensure any impacts to them can be adequately mitigated for in the final project determination.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with the County and the applicant on this project. Please contact me at (509) 406-3206 or Cassandra.Weekes@dfw.wa.gov if you have any questions or concerns regarding these comments.

Sincerely,



Cassandra Weekes
Area Habitat Biologist