



State of Washington  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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May 1, 2026

Zach Torrance-Smith  
Community Development Services  
Kittitas County  
411 N. Ruby Street, Suite 2  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

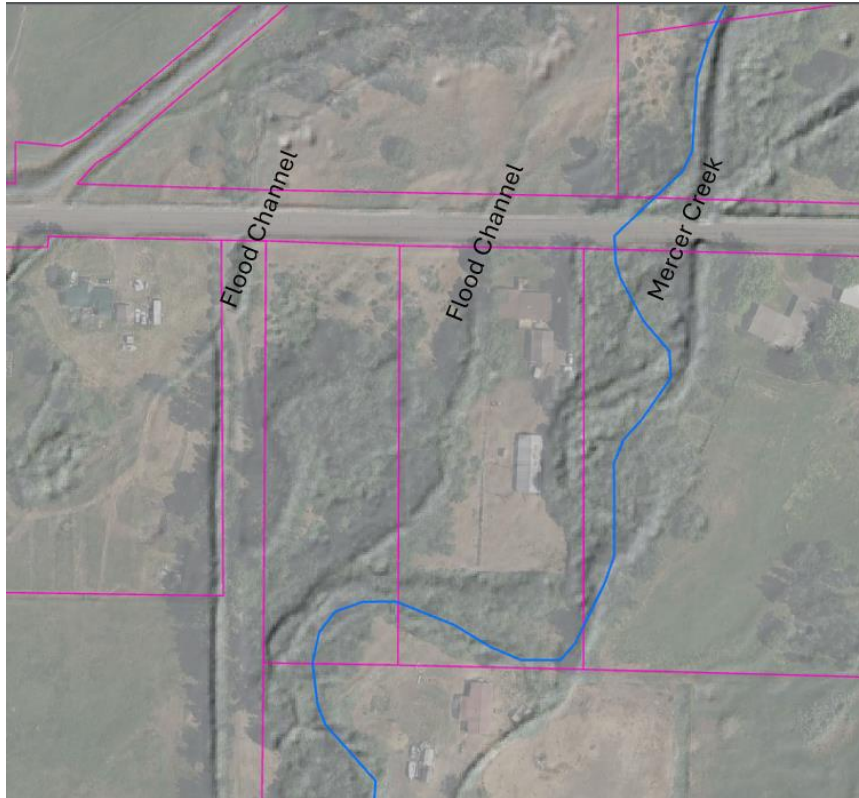
**SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON JENTGES CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CU-26-00001)**

Dear Mr. Torrance-Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the conditional use permit for the Jentges small scale agricultural event facility proposed at 730 Alford Road, parcel numbers 474234 and 414234. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application materials available on file, and we have specialized knowledge of the wildlife and critical areas surrounding the project area. As an agency of expertise, we offer the following comments to be considered as part of this review and determination process.

While we appreciate the critical areas map that was provided with the online materials, there does not seem to be a detailed critical areas report associated with this application to evaluate potential impacts to critical areas. Mercer Creek is a fish bearing stream and a distributary stream of Wilson Creek on the Wilson-Naneum Alluvial Fan. Native fish and freshwater mussels are present throughout Mercer Creek. The site plans provided with the application accurately show the main channel of Mercer Creek as "Stream", but they do not identify the two nearby high flow or flood relief channels that also convey flood waters (see Figure 1).

The application materials reference removal of underbrush to increase usable land, but few details exist as to where this will occur relative to the Riparian Management Zone associated with Mercer Creek in the County's Critical Areas Ordinance (KCC 17A.04.030). We understand that some structures already exist on site and that some new uses are proposed. What is not clear is how the critical areas have been identified and how they will be protected with approval of this conditional use permit.



**Figure 1.** This image shows Mercer Creek flowing north to south near the eastern boundary of the project area and two flood channels west of the main channel.

To further understand the impacts to critical areas, particularly Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, WDFW requests a site visit with the applicant and the County. A mitigation, monitoring, and restoration plan should be prepared in consultation with WDFW as a condition of approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for the County's commitment to protecting critical areas. Please let me know if there are any questions about our comments and we look forward to working together on this project. I can be reached by phone at (509) 961-6639 or email at [Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

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

Jennifer Nelson  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist