



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 6, 2024

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON PF-24-00003 WSDOT WEIGH STATION

Dear Mr. Pedersen,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on PF-24-00003 regarding WSDOT's proposal to construct a new weigh station, truck parking facility, and Virtual Weigh-in-Motion system near milepost 80 on eastbound I-90. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application and supporting documents on file. We are submitting the following comments to be considered in review of the proposal.

The permanent encroachment into the identified wetland buffers and removal of the forested habitats on site will have an impact to wildlife and habitats in the area and mitigation to compensate for the loss of habitat may be appropriate, after minimization measures have been incorporated.

We recommend limiting the amount of clearing and grading to only the amount needed for the project footprint; existing habitat structures such as shrubs, logs and snags can and do provide immense wildlife benefit even in developed settings. Further, minimizing the impervious surfaces associated with the project to reduce the likelihood of changes to wetland hydrology, and/or additional native plantings around the wetlands will aide in maintaining existing habitat.

Once minimization measures have been exhausted, some compensatory mitigation may still be necessary to offset the impacts. Potential mitigation measures for consideration may include donating the trees that need to be removed to an aquatic habitat restoration project. WDFW works with several partners conducting aquatic habitat restoration in the general area and would be happy to coordinate between the applicant and potential partner, if the applicant is interested in this option.

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.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with the County and WSDOT 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