

Sewall Wetland Consulting, Inc.

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February 4, 2026

Zach Torrance-Smith
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N Rudy Street, Suite 2
Ellensburg, Washington 98926

RE: Response to WDFW Comments on RU-25-00004 Thomas
Parcel186635, Kittitas County, Washington
SWC Job #24-117

Dear Zach,

This letter is in response to the January 7, 2026 letter from Cassandra Weeks of WDFW to you regarding the Thomas property Reasonable Use Exception application for 4421 Kachess Lake Road (Parcel186635) in the Easton area of unincorporated Kittitas County, Washington (the "site").

The site contains a tributary of Lodge Creek and is considered a Type F water. Our July 15, 2025 critical Areas report depicted the stream with its associated 150' buffer that was in effect when the report was prepared.

The WDFW letter implies that the buffer would be 100' or the SPTH whichever is greater. Using their latest tree height data the letter stated that 212' was the tallest based upon the possibility of western white pine being present.

I have inspected the site and area around the site and there is no western white pine present. I have travelled much of the area and logging roads around this area of Lake Kachess for years (as I live in this area of the County) and the presence of western white pine in this area is generally rare, and none was observed in this area.

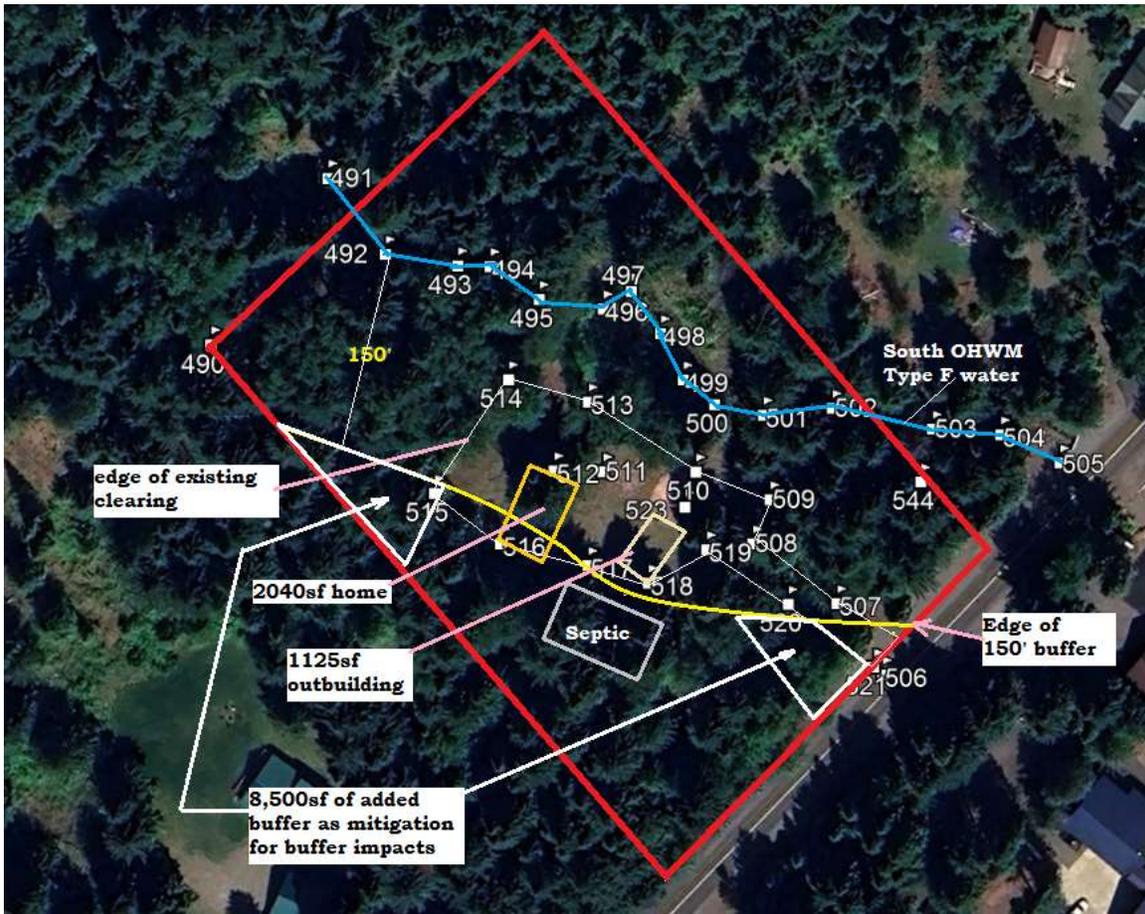
The site has douglas fir, mountain hemlock and black cottonwood. The letter states the SPTH for Douglas fir s 148', in line with the 150' buffer we utilized and which appears more appropriate.

The letter also states that the development proposed within the outer portion of the RMZ should be as far away from the stream possible. As we detailed in our CAR, the proposed home has been located as far from the stream as possible, and utilizes a currently degraded portion of the buffer so as to not incur any new buffer impacts. An argument could be made that the existing clearing already meets the criteria of an “interrupted buffer” in the code and any work in this area would avoid buffer impacts.

We believe the justification and proposed added buffer area at a 1:1 ratio for the new home will mitigate any impacts as the detailed by the code requirements.

The letter stated that WDFW did not see a plan showing where the buffer will be added. This was included in our July 15, 2025 CAR on page 15 clearly showing the added areas. We have included that image below from the originally submitted CAR. Since they did not review our proposed added buffer areas they were unaware we were showing the added buffer areas as mitigation for any functional buffer impacts to the Type F stream.

At this point we do not believe a “mitigation plan” with plantings is required to mitigate any buffer function impacts that are not being addressed by the added forested buffer areas for this project. The proposed buffer enhancement will result in no net loss of buffer function to the stream, will increase tree cover to the Type F stream, and utilizes best available science.



Above: Proposed site plan with added buffer as mitigation for buffer impacts.

If you have any questions in regards to this report or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (253) 859-0515 or at esewall@sewallwc.com.

Sincerely,
Sewall Wetland Consulting, Inc.

Ed Sewall
Senior Wetlands Ecologist PWS #212