



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 30, 2024

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON RZ-24-00001GIBSON

Dear Mr. Ayling,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rezone of Parcel 280533 located at 5125 Parke Creek Road from Agriculture 20 to Forest and Range. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has read through the application and is familiar with the location and site conditions. WDFW submits the following comments regarding critical areas on the parcel that are part of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA) under the Kittitas County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO).

The parcel is mapped by WDFW under our Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) program as shrubsteppe habitat. Kittitas County CAO adopted PHS as the basis for FWHCA and thus shrubsteppe is a FWHCA under the Kittitas County CAO. To ensure that impacts for shrubsteppe associated with the application are minimized and for those that cannot be avoided or minimized, compensatory mitigation is applied, WDFW requests a habitat management plan as a condition of approval if this application is approved. Further, WDFW would like to be part of the review and development of the plan.

The habitat management plan should include both any plans for future expansion of the operation and their impact on the shrubsteppe, but also plans for habitat restoration once the current mining areas are completed. WDFW can assist with appropriate restoration plans along with assisting Kittitas County with potential appropriate mitigation ideas. WDFW would recommend a site visit with the county and the applicant prior to writing the habitat management plan to help further define the necessary components in the plan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please contact Jennifer Nelson at 509-962-3421 or Jennifer.Nelson@dfw.wa.gov if you have comments or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Downes", is written in dark ink.

Scott Downes
Regional Land Use Lead

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Cc: Jennifer Nelson, WDFW