



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 25, 2026

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

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON SCHULTZ SHORT PLAT (SP-26-00007)

Dear Mr. Torrance-Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the four-lot Short Plat proposed on Ellensburg Ranches Road, parcel number 847834. 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.

The parcel proposed for this short plat contains shrubsteppe habitat, is Mule Deer winter range habitat, and is located within a Biodiversity Area and Corridor; all are identified in WDFW's Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) program and are designated Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas under Kittitas County's Critical Areas Ordinance (KCC 17A.04).

WDFW recommends that these critical areas be included in the Critical Areas Map provided with the application materials and/or as part of the final plat approval. Providing clarity now on the critical areas present will help ensure all future development proposals are aware of these critical areas and the appropriate mitigation measures will be applied to address any potential impacts to shrubsteppe habitat. We would encourage conservation platting to create buildable envelopes on each new parcel with the buildable areas clustered together to minimize disturbance of the critical areas. We would recommend that these building envelopes and impacts on the critical areas be determined prior to final approval of the plat to be consistent with mitigation sequencing in the Critical Areas Ordinance. WDFW is willing to meet with the applicant to provide suggestions on the clustering of the building envelopes to minimize impacts to the critical areas, particularly wildlife movement. All future development on these lots should follow mitigation sequencing to minimize disturbance and mitigate for the unavoidable impacts.

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. I can be reached by phone at (509) 961-6639 or email at Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov and would be happy to discuss these with the landowners as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Nelson". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jennifer Nelson
Fish and Wildlife Biologist