

Silver Ridge Ranch

182 Silver Ridge Ranch Road
Easton, WA 98925
Kraig & Ann Marie McLeod (831-601-6940)
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Bradley Gasawski, Permit Coordinator

Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby St., Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926
bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us

RE: Written Objection — SE-26-00001, Easton Travel Center, Parcel #778834 Majestic Group LLC / Matt Stalder — Conditional Use / SEPA Review

Dear Mr. Gasawski and Members of the Kittitas County Community Development Services,

The undersigned are the owners and operators of Silver Ridge Ranch, located at 182 Silver Ridge Ranch Road, Easton, Washington 98925 (Palmero Partners LLC & Daisy SRR LLC, Parcels 798834, 788834, 954042, 954043, 954045, 954044, 954331, 954333, 954332).

We submit this formal written objection to the above-referenced application for the proposed Easton Travel Center by Majestic Group LLC (File No. SE-26-00001). We respectfully request that the Kittitas County Community Development Services deny the conditional use permit, require a full Environmental Impact Statement under SEPA, and at minimum impose substantial protective conditions prior to any further approvals.

Silver Ridge Ranch has operated continuously as a campground, equestrian facility, lodging, and event venue since approximately 1976 — predating the current applicant's proposed use by decades. We purchased and expanded the ranch in 2021, completed a major 7,000-square-foot lodge renovation in 2022, and constructed a new Red Barn Event Center in 2023. Our 2026 booking calendar represents our highest revenue year to date, with 18 confirmed events including weddings, family reunions, church retreats, and corporate gatherings — representing 100% year-over-year growth. The proposed Travel Center threatens to cause irreparable, documented harm to this established business and the natural environment that sustains it.

Supporting maps and photographs are attached hereto as Exhibits A, B, and C.

I. INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE AND ADVERSE IMPACT ON ADJACENT PROPERTY

Kittitas County's conditional use permit standards require a finding that the proposed use will not adversely affect adjacent properties or the general welfare of the community. The Easton Travel Center cannot meet this standard. Silver Ridge Ranch's primary uses — outdoor wedding ceremonies, equestrian activities, overnight camping, and nature-based lodging — are fundamentally incompatible with a 24-hour travel center serving commercial semi-trucks and passenger vehicles.

Specific incompatibilities include:

- **Noise:** Commercial truck stops generate continuous noise from diesel engine idling, refrigerated trailer units ("reefer" units) that operate 24 hours per day, fuel delivery trucks, and high-traffic ingress/egress. Overnight camping guests, equestrian riders, lodge guests, church retreats, and outdoor wedding ceremonies require a quiet natural environment that cannot coexist with this level of industrial noise.
- **Light Pollution:** Travel center canopy lighting operates continuously at intensities that would eliminate the dark-sky conditions essential to our glamping, stargazing, and overnight lodging offerings, and would materially degrade outdoor wedding photography and ceremony ambiance.
- **Air Quality:** Diesel particulate matter and fuel vapors from a high-volume fueling facility would directly impact the health and comfort of overnight camping guests, lodging guests, equestrian participants, and wedding attendees on our adjacent property.
- **Equestrian Safety:** Our property operates as an active horse ranch with corrals, riding areas, containing 3 pastures and 36 horse corrals, and equestrian camping throughout the property (documented on our certified site plan, DTR Design and Consultation Services LLC, Sheet SP-2 and SP-3, dated 3/8/2024). There are three horse pastures, and 36 active horse corrals. Horses are acutely reactive to diesel noise, truck air brakes, and heavy vehicle traffic. The proximity of large commercial vehicles sharing our access corridor creates serious animal welfare and rider safety concerns.
- **Wildlife Displacement:** Our property serves as active habitat for elk, deer, and other wildlife, which constitute an integral part of our guest experience and marketing. The noise, light, fuel odors, and 24-hour activity of a travel center will permanently displace this wildlife. **See attached photo** of Elk adjacent to proposed Truck Center, on Silver Ridge Property .

II. SHARED ACCESS ROAD — SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL CONFLICT

The proposed Travel Center accesses the site via West Sparks Road / East Sparks Road, the same road corridor that provides the sole access to Silver Ridge Ranch Road and our property. This shared entrance creates an unacceptable safety conflict. On any given weekend, Silver Ridge Ranch hosts wedding parties, horse trailers, RV campers, families with children, church retreats, corporate events, family reunions, and pedestrian guests all traveling the same access road that would simultaneously serve commercial semi-trucks, fuel tankers, and high-volume travel center traffic.

The applicant's own site plan (Kittitas Co CDS, received 02/18/2026) shows the truck circulation loop and fueling canopy oriented toward the shared road boundary. We request that the County conduct a full traffic impact analysis addressing sight distances, weight limits, turning radii for semi-trucks, and the combined traffic load of both properties on this rural road corridor before any approval.

III. SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS — SILVER CREEK AND 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

Our certified site plan (DTR Design and Consultation Services LLC, Sheets SP-4 and SP-5) documents that Silver Creek and its 100-year floodplain traverse our southern property. The applicant's site plan acknowledges stormwater collection requirements, yet the proposed development involves large impervious surfaces, multiple fueling positions, and significant quantities of petroleum products in close proximity to this watershed.

We request that the County require the following under SEPA review:

- A full spill prevention, control, and countermeasure (SPCC) plan demonstrating that fuel releases, whether from routine operations or equipment failure, cannot reach Silver Creek or its tributaries during rain or snowmelt events.
- Hydrogeological analysis of groundwater flow between the proposed fueling facility and Silver Creek, including surface drainage patterns during the rain and snow seasons.
- Documentation that proposed stormwater collection systems meet or exceed Washington State Department of Ecology standards for petroleum-contaminated stormwater from fueling facilities.
- Evaluation of cumulative impacts to the 100-year floodplain on our property and downstream riparian areas.

We assert that these environmental concerns, taken together, should require preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement rather than a Mitigated DNS, consistent with WAC 197-11-330 and WAC 197-11-340. The probable significant adverse environmental impacts to a named creek, a mapped 100-year floodplain, and adjacent operating businesses have not been adequately evaluated in the SEPA checklist as submitted.

IV. CONFLICT WITH KITTITAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAMIRD DESIGNATION

The Notice of Application states the subject parcel carries a LAMIRD (Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development) land use designation. The Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan provides that LAMIRD designations are intended to accommodate commercial uses that are compatible with and supportive of rural character and a cottage industry. A large-scale truck stop and travel center serving interstate commercial traffic is not a rural-supportive use — it is an intensive commercial use that would alter the rural character of the Easton area and set a precedent inconsistent with the purposes of the LAMIRD designation.

By contrast, Silver Ridge Ranch represents exactly the type of rural tourism and nature-based recreation enterprise the Comprehensive Plan seeks to protect and encourage. We have operated on this property since approximately 1976, invested substantially in its improvement, and demonstrated measurable economic growth in rural tourism. The proposed Travel Center would undermine this existing, Comprehensive Plan-consistent use in favor of a highway-commercial use that belongs in an urban or industrial zone.

V. DOCUMENTED ECONOMIC HARM TO AN ESTABLISHED PRIOR USE

Silver Ridge Ranch has operated as a campground and lodging facility since approximately 1976, predating the applicant's proposed use by approximately 50 years. The prior existing use doctrine recognizes that long-established businesses have a legitimate expectation of protection from incompatible new development.

The concrete economic harm to our business includes:

- **2026 Event Calendar:** We have 18 confirmed bookings for 2026, representing our highest revenue year and 100% year-over-year growth. Weddings specifically are booked based on the pastoral, natural character of this property. Approval of an adjacent truck stop would trigger cancellations, refund obligations, and reputational harm that cannot be reversed.
- **Capital Investment at Risk:** We invested \$1,200,000 in a complete renovation of our 7,000-square-foot lodge in 2022 and constructed a new Red Barn Event Center in 2023 specifically to develop our wedding and event business. These investments were made in reasonable reliance on the rural and natural character of this location.
- **Guest Experience Destruction:** Our marketing, booking platform listings, and guest reviews are built entirely on the quiet, natural, mountain setting of Silver Ridge Ranch. A truck stop visible, audible, and odor-detectable from our adjacent property would make our advertised guest experience impossible to deliver.
- **County-Approved Expansion (2025):** In 2025, Kittitas County approved a conditional use permit for Silver Ridge Ranch's own expansion, including 4 additional guest cabins, expanded parking, and a permanent amphitheater. This county approval confirms that Silver Ridge Ranch is a recognized, conforming, and county-sanctioned use in this location — one the County itself determined was appropriate for continued investment and growth. The proposed Easton Travel Center would directly impede this approved expansion and render the associated capital investment financially unviable. Guests booking cabins, attending amphitheater events, or utilizing expanded parking would be subjected to the noise, light, diesel fumes, and truck traffic of an adjacent 24-hour travel center — conditions fundamentally incompatible with the rural hospitality experience the County approved Silver Ridge Ranch to provide. Approving an adjacent truck stop that undermines a use the County itself sanctioned just one year prior would be internally inconsistent and would expose the County to scrutiny for contradicting its own recent land use decisions.

VI. REQUESTED ACTIONS

Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request that Kittitas County:

- DENY the conditional use permit application SE-26-00001 on the grounds of incompatible land use, adverse impact to adjacent established businesses, and inconsistency with the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.
- In the alternative, require a full Environmental Impact Statement under SEPA before any threshold determination is issued, given the probable significant adverse environmental impacts to Silver Creek, the 100-year floodplain, and adjacent operating businesses.
- Require a full Traffic Impact Analysis addressing safety conflicts on the shared West Sparks Road / Silver Ridge Ranch Road access corridor.
- Schedule a public hearing and provide timely notice to Silver Ridge Ranch as an adjacent property owner with standing to participate.

We are prepared to provide additional documentation, economic data, and expert testimony in support of this objection. We respectfully request confirmation that this written comment has been received and will be made part of the official record for File SE-26-00001.

Respectfully submitted,

Kraig and Ann Marie McLeod

In Conjunction with of Friends of Easton

Palmero Partners LLC & Daisy SRR LLC (Silver Ridge Ranch)

182 Silver Ridge Ranch Road, Easton, WA 98925

831-601-6940, kraigmcleod@msn.com, anmariemcleod@msn.com

CC: Kittitas County Commissioners | Kittitas County Prosecuting Attorney's Office | [Your Land Use Attorney]

Attachments: Silver Ridge Ranch Site Plan (DTR Design, SP-1 through SP-5, dated 3/8/2024); Silver Ridge Ranch Campground Map (2026); 2026 Event Booking Documentation

Exhibit A: Site Location Maps

SE-26-00001 Easton Travel Center — Kittitas County GIS Shoreline Map

SE-26-00001 Easton Travel Center

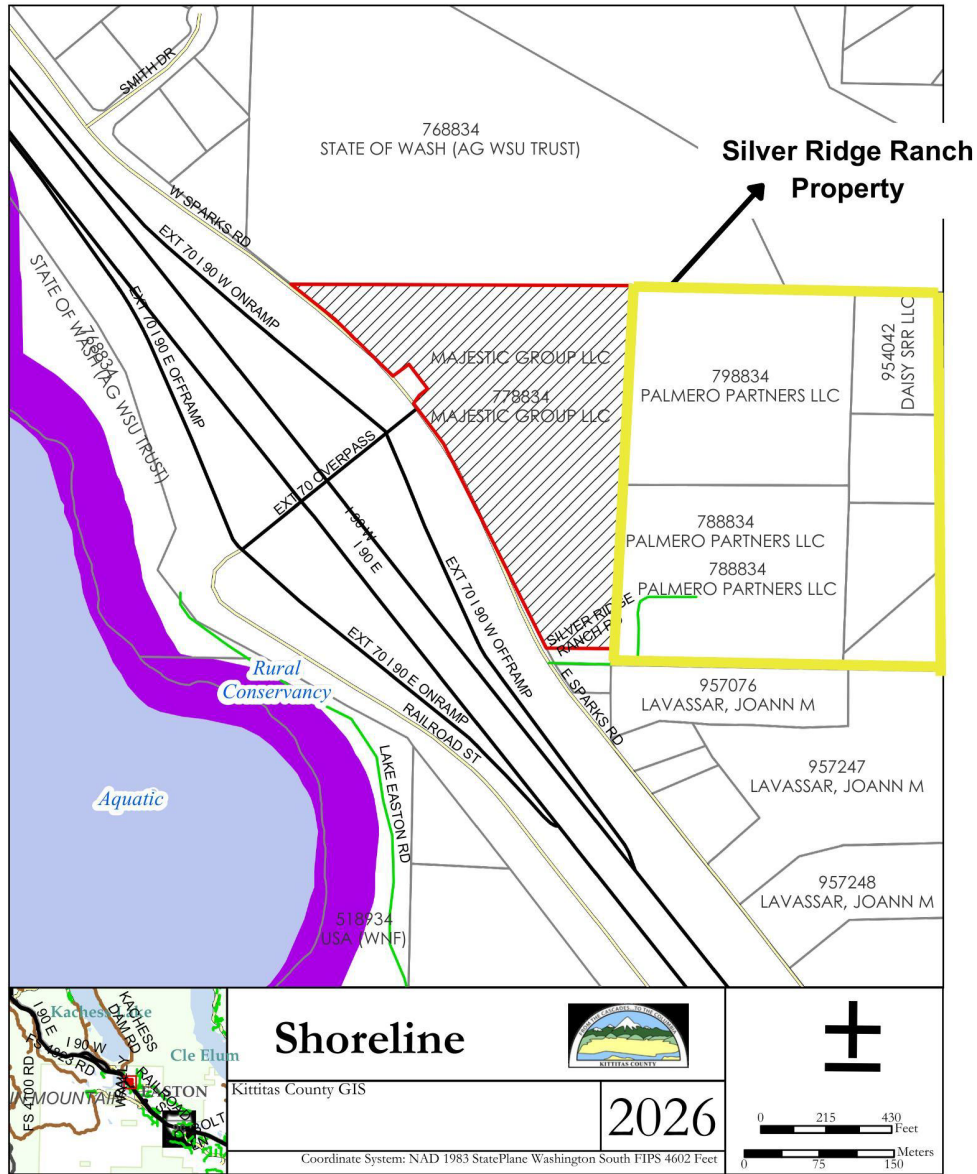


Exhibit B: Silver Ridge Ranch — Property Photos

Equestrian activity at Silver Ridge Ranch

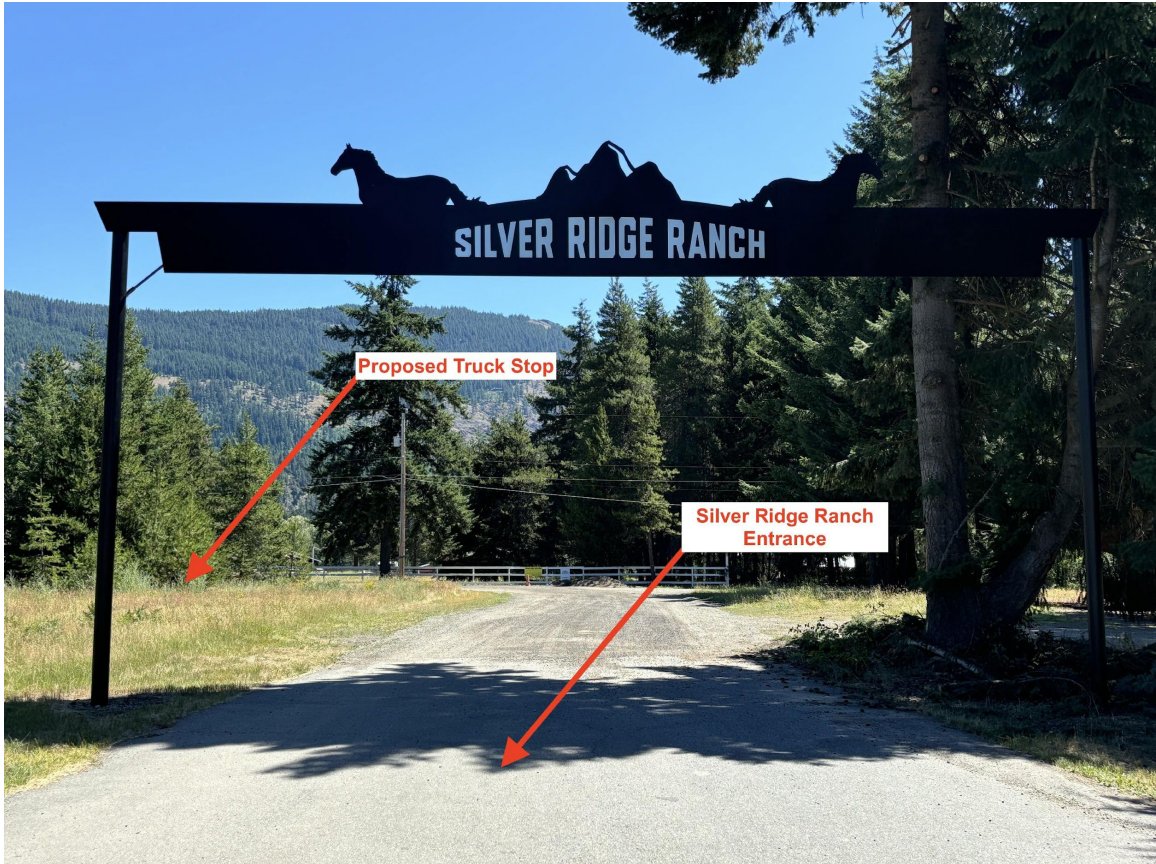


Elk on Silver Ridge Ranch property adjacent to proposed truck stop location



Exhibit C: Proximity of Proposed Truck Stop to Silver Ridge Ranch

View from Silver Ridge Ranch entrance — proposed truck stop location visible directly adjacent



Guests riding horses on Silver Ridge Ranch property with proposed truck stop location indicated

