



State of Washington  
**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
South Central Region • Region 3 • 1701 South 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902-5720  
Telephone: (509) 575-2740 • Fax: (509) 575-2474

June 27, 2024

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

**SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON SE-24-00020 MAJESTIC GROUP SEPA**

Dear Mr. Gasawski,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Majestic Group LLC's proposed project on parcel 778834, near Lake Easton and Interstate 90's Exit 70. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is familiar with the project area and we've reviewed the application materials available on file. The SEPA checklist and Notice of Application mention the need for a Forest Practice Application (FPA) as well as grading and fill associated with an access road, but there are no site plans or specific information available to evaluate the project for environmental impacts.

Based on information in the SEPA checklist, it appears there may be plans to subdivide the property and/or further develop the lot, but the SEPA is not clear that this is part of an overall phased approach. WDFW is concerned that the entire proposal has not been presented such that we can provide a complete review of possible impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats. Future actions associated with or dependent upon this access road should be included in this environmental review per [WAC 197-11-060 \(3\)\(b\)](#). Questions A.6. and A.7. within the SEPA checklist describe future plans while also stating there are no future plans. The checklist also leaves open the chance that this proposal may include a short plat process. With no site plans or specific information, it is nearly impossible to review the project for all environmental impacts as is intended in the State Environmental Policy Act.

WDFW offers the following recommendations so we can provide adequate review of this proposal:

- Provide an overall site plan for a complete project, including phased developments and actions.
- Provide the Drainage Report referenced in Question A.8. of the SEPA checklist. The application materials indicate that there are no developments on the property, and later state that an existing storm drain system (referenced in Question B.3.c.1) is sufficient to handle runoff. WDFW is concerned about potential impacts to Lake Easton and the fish life present if surface water runoff and/or groundwater interactions could impact the water quality as property is in a Type 1 Critical Aquifer Recharge Area.

- Complete a critical areas study to evaluate the property for all critical areas so they can be properly identified and protected or mitigated for per KCC 17A. WDFW's PHS online mapper clearly shows the project area is within designated Elk Winter Range, a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area. Clearing nearly the entire lot may negatively impact elk and other wildlife present on or near the site, which requires mitigation per KCC 17A.01.100. Any future developments are also likely to have impacts to elk winter range.
- The project site is near the easternmost I-90 Connectivity Emphasis Area (CEA) identified to enhance ecological connectivity as part of the WSDOT I-90 East Project. Understanding the proposed project as a whole will be important for evaluating how it may impact wildlife connectivity through this CEA and the ability for wildlife to migrate through the area.

The project, as presented in the materials available online for review, is not well defined enough to provide meaningful environmental review or site-specific recommendations to ensure no net loss of critical areas functions and values.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for the County's commitment to protect critical areas. Please let me know if there are any questions about our comments; we look forward to working together on this project and would welcome the opportunity for a site visit. I can be reached by phone at (509) 961-6639 or email at [Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Nelson".

Jennifer Nelson  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist