



*Commissioner Joe O'Leary*

*Commissioner Shan Rowbotham*

*Commissioner Rick Catlin*

RE: Kittitas Public Utility District #1 Headquarters SEPA Application (SE-26-00003)

Kittitas PUD truly values the opportunity for public engagement and would like to thank the County and community members who took the time to review the project and provide thoughtful feedback. This document represents the District's response to those comments.

The District has reviewed the Tribal comments regarding the need for a Cultural Resources Study. Given the prior ground disturbance associated with historic agricultural use of the site, it is unlikely that intact cultural resources would be identified through a standard archaeological investigation. In lieu of a full Cultural Resources Study, the District proposes to implement an Inadvertent Discovery Plan during ground-disturbing activities to ensure that any unexpected findings are appropriately managed.

The project is a permitted use under the AG-20 zoning designation as an electrical utility, pursuant to the "use determination document" issued by KCCDS. As proposed, the project does not meet the definition of an industrial or commercial use under Kittitas County Code and does not establish precedent for such uses. The sole purpose of the project is to support KPUD's electric transmission and distribution functions. The siting of facilities for electric transmission and distribution throughout the county, including in rural areas, is specifically addressed in the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan under Section 5.25 (Siting Public Facilities) and Section 6.3 (Utility Policies), Policy U-P20.

There are no landscaping or open space requirements for AG-20 zoning; any references to landscape buffering in the Conditional Use Permit process do not apply as this project is a permitted use that does not require a CUP application. However, KPUD is voluntarily landscaping the frontage along Kittitas Highway and portions of the property boundary abutting the neighboring residences.

Comments related to surface water have been reviewed. The District is aware of the drainage ditch located within the public right-of-way along the south edge of the site. A topographic survey obtained by the PUD in May 2025 indicates a depression along the east property line, which the Cascade Irrigation District has confirmed is not used to convey irrigation water. Neither feature is considered "Surface Water" for the purposes of SEPA determinations. There are no wetlands or streams identified on the subject parcel. Two wetlands identified on the Kittitas County COMPAS exist more than 380 feet away from the PUD-owned parcel, exceeding the 250 foot distance requirement for consideration in the SEPA process.

Site drainage and stormwater systems are being engineered to follow the Washington State 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington, as required by Kittitas County Code, Chapter 12.06. A grading and stormwater permit is required, and will be obtained for the project through Kittitas County Public Works.



A Transportation Impact Analysis is currently in progress for the project, as required by Kittitas County Public Works following their review of the initial Traffic Memorandum. Similarly, construction traffic will follow requirements provided by KCPW through the building and grading permit process.

With respect to hazardous materials, the District's operations at the proposed facility do not involve the long-term storage or processing of hazardous materials. In the event that regulated materials are present on-site, they would be limited in quantity, and temporary in duration. Any such materials would be staged only as necessary and would be managed, handled, and transported in full compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations governing their use and disposal. The site would not be used for permanent storage, treatment, or disposal of hazardous materials.

The District is not required to have coverage under the Washington State Industrial Stormwater General Permit, as its functions are not listed among the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups stipulated in "Table 1: Activities Requiring Permit Coverage and the Associated NAICS Groups" as published by the Department of Ecology in Section S1.A. "Facilities Required to Seek Coverage Under This General Permit" of the Industrial Stormwater General Permit.

The project is proposed as a single project. It is not a phased development, nor is there planned expansion. The PUD may increase the number of employees working in the facility at a future date (up to 16 employees), so the water system is engineered to maximize the 275 gallons per day allocated by the water right acquired from the County to accommodate those additional employees if needed. Any future development on the site would be a separate project requiring a subsequent SEPA determination.

Site lighting for the storage yard will be off after business hours and will only be lit by motion sensors when staff are present in the event of outages and or other required off-hours operational activities. In addition, the light poles will be fixtures with sharp cut off optics. This means all exterior fixtures direct the light down with no light going up. Though not a County requirement, the PUD will comply with Ellensburg ordinances and dark sky best practices. The parking lot and exterior building lights will be set to 20% capacity after business hours, and only fully illuminated with motion sensors when people are present for safety and security.

Conforming with recorded easement requirements is not part of the SEPA Checklist process. However, the proposed project does not impede on the 30-foot easement on the PUD-owned site.



Kittitas County  
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1  
*Providing Safe and Reliable Electric Service*

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120,000 gallons of fire suppression water is part of the proposal. The water will be in galvanized metal tanks similar to those on many of the agricultural sites in the area. The amount of water is prescribed by NFPA requirements and the Kittitas County Fire Marshal. This figure did not change after the SEPA application, both proposed tank options accommodated the same volume—the change from three smaller tanks to two slightly larger ones was driven by pricing and procurement issues not governed by SEPA.

The project does not directly impact the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail as it does not abut the trail. The proposed storage yard is over 750' from the trail and the buildings are more than 1200' away. Several warehouses, small storage, and production facilities in the area are in closer proximity to the trail.