



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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April 29, 2013

Andrew Kottkamp, Hearing Examiner
Kittitas County
411 N Ruby St, Ste 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

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KITTITAS COUNTY
CDS

RE: CU-12-00002 Canyon River Ranch

Dear Mr. Kottkamp:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on CU-12-00002, Canyon River Ranch. After reviewing the file, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is concerned that the applicant has not accounted for an adequate water supply for the expansion.

Kittitas County Code 17.60A.010(2)(1) states that, "The Board of Adjustment shall determine that the proposed use at the proposed location will not be unreasonably detrimental to the economic welfare of the county and that it will not create excessive public cost for facilities and services by finding that (1) it will be adequately serviced by existing facilities such as highways, roads, police and fire protection, irrigation and drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewers, and schools."

It does not appear this project will be adequately serviced by existing facilities for water because Canyon River Ranch does not have a legal water right to support the additional facilities. Any ground water development proposal that will withdraw water in excess of 5,000 gallons per day (gpd) for single or group domestic supply, or for industrial purpose, or for the irrigation of more than a ½ acre of lawn or non commercial garden requires a permit from the Department of Ecology.

The application materials did not provide documentation on the current or projected water use for the facility. Our experience has shown that similar facilities generally require more than 5,000 gpd for daily operation.

Canyon River Ranch is located within the Yakima River Basin. In September 2011, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) released its final report on the 12-year Yakima Basin Groundwater Study.¹ The USGS study confirms that groundwater and surface water are directly connected. It also demonstrates that withdrawing groundwater in the basin reduces streamflows. Any new consumptive water uses add to the existing water deficit in the basin.

¹ To view the Yakima Basin Groundwater Study visit <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2011/5155/>.



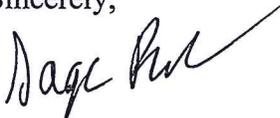
Ecology requests that the CU-12-00002 be permitted with the following conditions on the water use:

1. The applicant shall demonstrate that the water use does not exceed 5,000 gallons per day.
2. If water use does exceed 5,000 gallons per day, the applicant shall secure a mitigated permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology to offset groundwater use.

If these conditions are not acceptable then Ecology recommends denial of CU-12-00002.

If you have any questions related to these comments, please feel free to contact me at 509-454-7647, sage.park@ecy.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Sage Park
Operations and Permitting Unit Supervisor
Water Resources Program/CRO

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