



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

1250 West Alder Street • Union Gap, Washington 98903-0009 • (509) 575-2490

March 22, 2021

Kelly Bacon
Kittitas County Community Development
411 N. Ruby St., Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Re: SEPA Register 202101165, CU-21-00002

Dear Kelly Bacon:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the Optional Determination of Non Significance process for the Sweetwater Ranch Event Facility. Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has reviewed the documents and has the following comments.

SHORELANDS/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE

Upon conducting a desk review of the project area, reviewing the Critical Areas Report by Sewall Wetland Consulting Inc., and the site plan Ecology staff have some concerns with the proposed location of Parking Area B.

Ecology staff noted the wetland delineation was conducted outside the growing season, in November 2019, and the precipitation preceding the site investigation was not provided. Several areas of concern were observed on current and historical aerial imagery. Ecology would like to request a joint site visit to investigate the areas of concern and confirm the wetland boundary.

In addition, to the areas of interest and requested site visit, Ecology requests the County revisit the required wetland buffer for Category II associated wetlands under the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The wetlands located on the parcel would be regulated under the Counties Shoreline Master Program (SMP). Per table 5.2-1, Wetland Buffers for Wetlands in Shoreline Jurisdiction, Category II wetlands in an area of high landuse intensity require a 200 foot wide buffer to properly protect the high functioning wetland. An event center with multiple parking needs, pedestrian foot traffic, etc. would be considered to be high intensity landuse and not low or moderate.

Please contact **Lori White** at lori.whaite@ecy.wa.gov or (509) 575-2616 and **Chelsea Benner** at cheb461@ecy.wa.gov to schedule a joint site visit to investigate the areas of concern and verify the proposed wetland boundary prior to issuing the Determination of Non-significance. Please contact Lori White with any questions you may have regarding the above comments. We look forward to continuing to provide the County with wetland technical assistance.

WATER QUALITY

Project with Potential to Discharge Off-Site

If the project anticipates disturbing ground with the potential for stormwater discharge off-site, the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit is recommended. This permit requires that the SEPA checklist fully disclose anticipated activities including building, road construction and utility placements. Obtaining a permit may take 38-60 days.

The permit requires that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (Erosion Sediment Control Plan) shall be prepared and implemented for all permitted construction sites. These control measures must be able to prevent soil from being carried into surface water and storm drains by stormwater runoff. Permit coverage and erosion control measures must be in place prior to any clearing, grading, or construction.

In the event that an unpermitted Stormwater discharge does occur off-site, it is a violation of Chapter 90.48 RCW, Water Pollution Control and is subject to enforcement action.

More information on the stormwater program may be found on Ecology's stormwater website at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/construction/>. Please submit an application or contact **Lloyd Stevens, Jr.** at the Dept. of Ecology, 509-574-3991 or email lloyd.stevensjr@ecy.wa.gov, with questions about this permit.

WATER RESOURCES

In Washington State, prospective water users are highly recommended to reach out to the Department of Ecology in order to learn more about state regulations. Water availability in the proposed project area is very limited, and obtaining a water right is difficult. Ecology recommends that no new water uses be established unless suitable mitigation is provided. It is highly encouraged that the applicant consult with the Water Resources Program at the Central Regional Office with any further water right proposals.

If you have any questions or would like to respond to these Water Resources comments, please contact **Christopher Kossik** at (509) 454-7872 or email at christopher.kossik@ecy.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Gwen Clear

Environmental Review Coordinator
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