

LETTER OF OPPOSITION



Kittitas County CDS

December 28, 2023

Kittitas County Community Development Services

411 N. Ruby Suite 2

Ellensburg, Wa. 98926

RE: CU-23-00001 3BR Custom Cuts

To whom it may concern:

We are Dan & Christy Bowers, Residents living at 3322 Wilson Creek Rd. Ellensburg, Wa. 98926.

We are writing our third letter to express our opposition to the proposed #CU-23-0001 3BR Custom Cuts bordering our property to the south. Being proposed is a Meat processing facility including slaughter. We have lived at our location for 46 years and have enjoyed a peaceful, country life with our neighbors.

Below is a list of some of our deep concerns regarding this business.

- **Future Expansion:** New Sepa report addresses a Smokehouse for Curring meats that was not mentioned in the 1st Sepa report. This will add a whole new level of air pollution. In fact, the owners are planning a Beef to Table Subscription Service coming in 2024 on their website. The New aerated water treatment pond is a huge concern. This "small" pond measured 240'x212'. The 240' wide is on a piece of land measuring 330' across. This is not a small pond.
- **Air:** Proposal says once completed "no emissions". We cannot accept this as fact. Where penned animals are involved there are going to be emissions. You're looking at dirty air, Fugitive Dust and Fugitive Particles. The Air pollution from the newly mentioned Smokehouse can drift for miles. What kind of smell is going to come from this aerated pond? I can only think of the flies and mosquitos it could draw.
- **Odor:** Report says, No onsite odors. Again, where penned animals are delivered and in holding there are going to be odors. Temperatures in Kittitas County can exceed 110 degrees in the summer and we can have stagnant air in the valley for weeks.
- **Water:** Report says Domestic well will also be used to wash down facilities which is

bound to include manure, urine, blood and oils, etc... The new Project Narrative says they expect to use about 400 gallons of water per head per day= 12,000 gallons for the washdown and cleaning. Will this amount of commercial water usage risk the neighboring residential wells to run dry? This will be drained into a standard septic system and pond. Septic systems can't break down blood and oils. We do understand they are now including additional methods for catching wastewater and offall but this does not guarantee the potential for contamination. As a matter of fact, they are proposing using the aerated pond water to irrigate. What kind of contaminants are left over?

- **Water Runoff/Stormwater:** Report says not anticipated. Groundwater is going to flow during floods & irrigation through holding pens, etc. to the closest ditch which flows into the irrigation ditch down Wilson Creek Rd. This is surface water. There are many residents that use this ditch to water their lawns. When the snow runoffs come this water actually floods several properties south of here. No one can control runoff! As you can see from the attached pictures this has already happened with the spring runoff overflowing the Wilson Creek Ditch. All this water eventually runs into the Yakima River. Another concern they say is not an issue is Lyle Creek. It certainly looks like diversion has already happened in Lyle Creek from pictures with a backhoe in it.
- **Well:** They have already dug a well. They said that water would not be an issue but as you can clearly see the water backed up very close to the well head. They are now proposing a class B commercial well. Again, We have to be concerned about the neighbors residential wells running dry or being contaminated. Huge concern.
- **Animal:** There are many animals that are indigenous to this area. They include Deer, Coyotes, Eagles, Hawks, Owls, Raccoons, etc.
- **Environment:** Chemicals will be used. Wastewater from the pens and kill floor contain Nitrates and Phosphorous which can contaminate the groundwater and possibly neighboring wells. Report says the land has well graded gravel on it, but it is only pasture grass, no gravel. Report says approx. 3% of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces, but if you figure the 14.90 acres this is more like 30%.
- **Noise:** Report says no Long-Term noise. Facts are you have the cries of animals confined in delivery truck and in holding pens. These sounds are different from grazing cattle. These could be arriving at all hours. The trucks picking up waste could be arriving at any hour of the day or night after business hours. We actually don't know what the noise level will be until its too late.
- **Light:** We are within 100' of this proposed building and are concerned with the

Lighting/Glare. We will be directly affected by these 24 hour lights. Who needs a landing strip in their backyard?

- Historical/Cultural: The Colville Tribe letter said they wanted to be consulted before any groundbreaking. They have already dug a well and several ditches.
- Land/Shoreline Use: The Toland's home is at the complete opposite end of this 15 acres and this facility can't even be seen from their home. In fact this facility is being Planted right in the middle of rural residential homes, but not theirs. So the fact that they have a 25 acre parcel adjacent means nothing. Report says the neighbors will not be affected. Wrong! The facts are, resident property values will go down. Noise, Visual, Smell/Odor and Traffic will be affected. Studies have shown property values have been reduced as much as 40%. This will affect the county tax base. Many of our neighbors have invested their life savings to live in a rural country environment. Over the years there has been an increase of small acreage homes on Wilson Creek Rd. This would disrupt the life style as well as safety. There has already been a Full Cash Offer on a home listed for sale that was recinded when informed of this proposal. Two local realtors have attested to this.
- Aesthetics: Our mountain and country view would now include a slaughterhouse and a huge retention pond. This monstrosity gets bigger with each Sepa report. There is simply no buffer zone for the neighborhood. Who wants to look at that. Even with the new building proposed, you can't put lipstick on a Pig.
- Recreation: Our backyard activities with family and friends should not have to include the visual, odor and noise of this type of business. Again, this negatively affects our lifestyle.
- Transportation: There will be increased traffic as Wilson Creek Rd. is already a well traveled/main road. The number of vehicular trips has doubled since the first Sepa. Now it's up to 50 trips a day. What's to prevent this from increasing over time? School Buses and Children, Logging Trucks and more resident traffic already use the road. What about the excrements that leak out of the trucks going down the road? There needs to be a Traffic/Transportation study done. We would respectfully ask the Public Works Dept. to reconsider a traffic study.

Some of the Sepa Report responses are vague and don't answer the questions adequately.

In closing, we respectfully ask that this Conditional Land Use proposal **NOT** be approved. Since the zoning of Ag5 was originally set there has been a boom of small residential acreages. Therefore, to make an exception to allow approval makes no sense. There are too many potential and probable negative effects. This would definitely be negative to the surrounding

character of the rural neighborhood. Many homeowners living in the area have worked hard and invested their life savings into their properties. When the time comes to sell property values will take a huge hit, if you can even find a buyer. It might take years for the repercussions to surface. Hopefully it won't be a major health catastrophe.

The statement that there are no other businesses in the county that can be used is a fallacy. In fact there is one right now applying for a CUP just to upgrade to USDA from state inspected whose been in business for 10 years. I understand there are about 5 custom cut businesses in the county now. So much for this being a niche outfit.

Simple Solution: There are many other wide-open range lands, non-residential locations in the valley that would be suitable for this type of business, not a 5 acre parcel in the middle of homes.

We need to be notified of every step in this process.

Sincerely yours,

Dan & Christy Bowers