



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

South Central Region • Ellensburg District Office • 201 N. Pearl St, Ellensburg, WA 98926
Telephone: (509) 962-3421 • Fax: (509) 575-2474

January 19, 2017

Dusty Pilkington
Kittitas County
Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby Street; Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RE: WDFW comments on SP-16-00005 Double K. Ranch Short Plat along Badger Creek

Dear Mr. Pilkington,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed short plat (SP-16-00005 Double K. Ranch) to divide the existing parcel into two lots. Badger Creek flows through the property and Wippel Wasteway borders the northern portion of the property. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) primary concern with this proposal is to protect the fish and wildlife resources in and around these water bodies.

Badger Creek through the property is upstream of the major canal deliveries, flows year round and is fish bearing. Mid-Columbia Steelhead have been documented in Badger Creek and they are currently federally listed as threatened on the endangered species list and are a state candidate species. They could also be present in Wippel Wasteway, which flows into Badger Creek to the west of the Double K. Ranch. Both waterbodies provide valuable habitat for fish and wildlife.

Wippel Wasteway is the property boundary for these parcels on the north and Badger Creek forms the southwestern boundary between proposed Lots 1 and 2. Streams naturally meander and their use as a property border becomes increasingly complicated as natural processes occur. These natural processes and stream meanders are not only good for fish and fish habitat, but also reduce velocities and therefore reduce flood impacts during high flow events. The Badger Creek Watershed is quite large (~30 square miles upstream of Fourth Parallel Road) and the 100 year flood event is estimated to be nearly 1,000 cubic feet per second. Protecting these streams and planning for large events not only protects fish and wildlife habitat but increases public safety and minimizes impacts to infrastructure.

A Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) will be required from WDFW for any work that will use, divert, obstruct, or change the flow or bed of Badger Creek. Common projects that require an HPA in this area include irrigation diversions from the creeks, culverts or bridges over the creeks, or streambank repairs. Access for future development of Lot 2 may require new a new stream crossing of Badger Creek; an HPA will be required for such work. Any changes or repairs to the existing crossings may also need an HPA. Additionally, future building sites should be located outside of the riparian areas for Wippel Wasteway and Badger Creek.

WDFW has a few specific requests related to this proposal:

- The name Badger Wasteway be changed to Badger Creek on the surveys to reflect the natural water course
- A critical areas buffer and setback be shown on the survey for Wippel Wasteway and Badger Creek

- Consider alternatives to using Badger Creek as the property boundary along the southwestern border
- Consider changing the configuration of the lot line on the northern part of the property such that Lot 1 does not have a long narrow strip of riparian buffer along Wippel Wasteway. Much of this “strip” should remain protected to function as a critical area buffer with wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat
- Early consultation with WDFW prior to development of Lot 2 and/or further development of Lot 1

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and work with the proponents to meet their needs. Please feel free to contact me at (509) 962-3421 or Jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov if you have any questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

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

Jennifer Nelson
Area Habitat Biologist