



State of Washington

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

South Central Region • Region 3 • 1701 South 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902-5720

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**THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RESPONSE COMMENTS TO THIS LETTER FROM THE  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

**By Pat Deneen**

August 30, 2024

Jamey Ayling  
Kittitas County Community Development Services  
411 N. Ruby Street, Suite 2  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Mr. Ayling – In our review of the public comments we missed these comments from the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and I apologize for that. I have commented item by item throughout the comment letter from WDFW. Each of my responses begin with >>>> and are in red. I have also attached 3 maps that show the reduction of the size of the proposed map amendment and the screen shots of the Kittitas County Compass mapping system as they are described below. If you have any questions, please contact me. In addition, I have sent these comments to Jennifer Nelson of WDFW.

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON RZ-24-00002 Spring Tree Ranch Rezone

Dear Mr. Ayling,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rezone of Parcels 376334, 386334, 396334 located at 1890 Nelson Siding Road currently zoned as Agriculture 5 to a Planned Unit Development. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has read through the application and is familiar with the general location and site conditions. WDFW submits the following comments regarding potential critical areas on the parcel that could be part of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA) under the Kittitas County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO).

>>>> The original boundary of the proposed Kittitas County Comprehensive Map Amendment from Ag 5 to Planned Unit Development has been modified. Please see attachment titled Revised Springtree Ranch Master Plan – Site Plan which shows the revised boundary.

While WDFW appreciates that a critical areas report was conducted for parcels 376334 and 396334, >>>> This was done as the Kittitas County Compass Map showed two wetlands on the property. Neither one of these wetlands are there on the property. Please see attachment titled Kittitas County Compass Map #1 and #2. Please see attachment titled Kittitas County Compass Map #1 and #2. it appears that the report did not cover parcel 386334 nor did it cover all areas of parcel 396334.

>>>>The area of review was limited to the areas where the Kittitas County Compass Map showed wetlands and no other critical areas. Please see attachment titled Kittitas County Compass Map #1 and #2.

The report appeared to focus on the northern area of the application, but the master site plan shows future development in areas outside of the area covered under the critical areas report.

>>>>True. The area of review was limited to the areas where the Kittitas County Compass Map showed wetlands and no other critical areas. Please see attachment titled Kittitas County Compass Map #1 and #2.

Further, the critical areas report does not discuss whether the shrubsteppe habitat mapped within WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) maps exists or not.

>>>>True. The area of review was limited to the areas where the Kittitas County Compass Map showed wetlands and no other critical areas. The WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) was not reviewed prior to the Critical Area Review of the property. That was our mistake.

WDFW requests that prior to approval, a revised critical areas report be updated to include coverage of the entire that is under consideration for development by this proposal, including report on both potential wetlands and shrubsteppe.

>>>>There is no shrubsteppe on the property which can be clearly seen on the areal photo. In addition, it is highly unlikely that there is any shrubsteppe located in this part of Upper Kittitas County. The WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) has not been ground checked, so it contains many errors. We do not believe that it is necessary to increase the critical areas mapping for the proposed project.

WDFW would appreciate the opportunity to review the findings of the updated critical areas report.

>>>>We are not proposing to do any addition critical area review as there is no shrubsteppe within the project site.

In addition to the request for an updated critical areas report, WDFW is aware of the potential to make improvements for fish screening on the diversion site from the Little Creek irrigation ditch.

>>>>This is a non-project rezone and is not proposing any work in or around Little Creek.

This issue should be resolved by a site visit with WDFW. WDFW asks that this also be placed as a condition of approval, should the application be granted.

>>>>There I no need for a site visit by WDFW regarding this project nor the diversion at Little Creek and should not be included as a condition of approval for a Non-Project Map Amendment.

Attachments:

Revised Springtree Ranch Master Plan

Kittitas County Compass Map #1

Kittitas County Compass Map #2.

Page 2

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please contact Jennifer Nelson at 509-962-3421 or [Jennifer.Nelson@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Nelson@dfw.wa.gov) if you have comments or questions.

Sincerely,

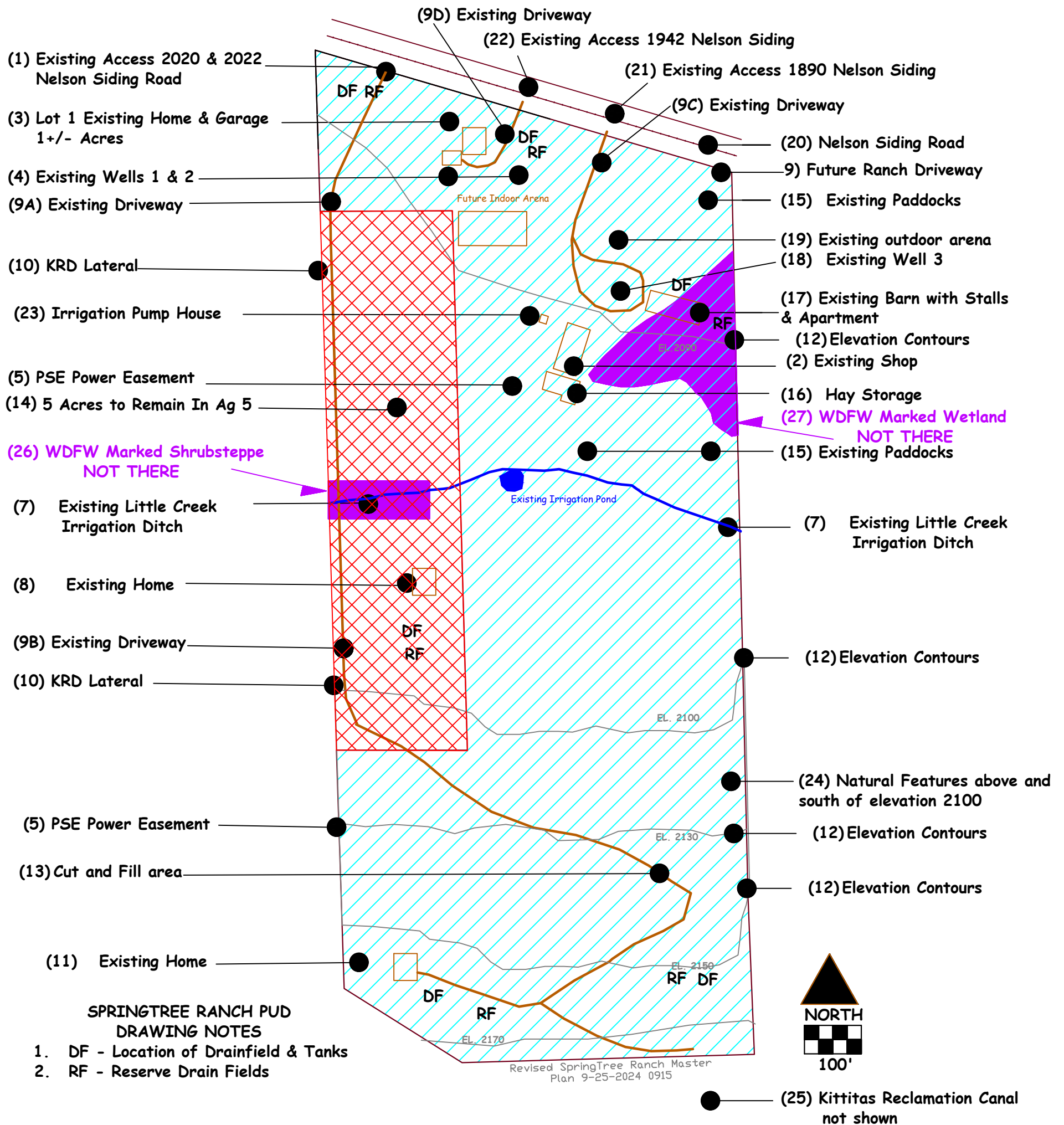


Scott Downes  
Regional Land Use Lead

Cc: Jennifer Nelson, WDFW

# REVISED SPRINGTREE RANCH MASTER PLAN - SITE PLAN

**OCTOBER 12, 2024 1031 - PHS UPDATE**





▶ ☒ Wetlands

NIEDOPYTALSKI/KENNEDY  
SP 03-28





Search Tasks

Tasks	Results
Property Info	
Critical Areas Info	
Districts Info	

Kittitas County Compas  
Online Map #2  
Showing

DWF Priorty Habitat Species **UN**-Checked  
Wetland Investigation Area **UN**-Checked  
Wetlands **UN**-Checked  
Tax Parcel-Checked



Layer List

- ☐ DFW Priority Habitat Species
- ☐ DNR Water Type
- ☐ Shoreline Master Plan
- ☐ Floodway-Floodzone
- ☐ Channel Migration Zones
- ☐ Critical Area Aquifer Recharge
- ☐ Zoning
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Wetland Investigation Area
- ☐ Wetlands