



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

South Central Region • Region 3 • 1701 South 24th Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902-5720
Telephone: (509) 575-2740

April 1, 2025

Zach Torrance-Smith
Planner
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby Street; Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

SUBJECT: WDFW COMMENTS ON SV-25-00001 Allen Shoreline Variance

Dear Mr. Torrance-Smith,

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has reviewed the application materials associated with the proposed Shoreline Variance and we've visited the parcel with Mr. Allen in September 2024.

The Yakima River is a Shoreline of Statewide significance and is home to numerous native fish, including ESA listed steelhead and bull trout as well as Spring Chinook and Coho salmon within this reach. The Yakima River is also home to freshwater mussels, with one of the largest known in Washington State just down river from the Allen property. Riparian and Shoreline vegetation helps to stabilize stream banks, provide shade and leaf litter, and helps to filter pollutants before they enter the river. Native shoreline vegetation also helps protect the riverbanks from erosion, providing value not only to fish and wildlife, but to people as well.

The proposed project will expand the deck by 179 square feet into the Shoreline buffer along the Yakima River and proposes planting 20 livestakes along the bank as mitigation. The proposed mitigation is insufficient as proposed and WDFW recommends a more robust planting plan for the shoreline that includes monitoring, maintenance, reporting, and permanent protections to ensure the additional encroachment into the buffer does not negatively impact aquatic resources. WDFW recommends 1) that the mitigation planting area be at least as big as the area of encroachment (179 square feet), 2) that the newly vegetated area have at least 80% survival after three years, and 3) that there are permanent protections on the mitigation area associated with the proposed permanent encroachment into the buffer.

WDFW would be pleased to work with the County and applicants to review the riparian management plan prior to approval to assist in finding mutually agreeable riparian species. Please feel free to contact me at (509) 961-6639 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". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jennifer Nelson
Area Habitat Biologist