



Janna Brown &lt;janna.brown@bonnercountyid.gov&gt;

**[EXT SENDER] RE: Agency Project Review - File S0003-23 - Subdivision**

1 message

**Horsmon, Merritt** <merritt.horsmon@idfg.idaho.gov>  
To: Bonner County Planning Department <planning@bonnercountyid.gov>

Thu, Feb 8, 2024 at 10:36 AM

Hi Jenna,

Please find corresponding Idaho Department of Fish and Game comments attached.

FYI clicking the red letters at the top of the page didn't work for me.

Thank you,

**Merritt Horsmon**

Regional Technical Assistance Manager

Panhandle Region

2885 W. Kathleen Ave.

Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

208.769.1414 office

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[merritt.horsmon@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:merritt.horsmon@idfg.idaho.gov)**From:** Bonner County Planning Department <planning@bonnercountyid.gov>**Sent:** Monday, February 05, 2024 11:55 AM**To:** Army Corps of Engineers <CENWW-RD-CDA@usace.army.mil>; Assessors Office Group <assessorsgroup@bonnercountyid.gov>; Avista Copr - Jay West <jay.west@avistacorp.com>; Bay Drive Recreation District <kirbymc45@gmail.com>; Bayview Water & Sewer <bwsd637@gmail.com>; BC Airport Manager Dave Schuck <dave.schuck@bonnercountyid.gov>; BC EMS Jeff Lindsey <jeff.lindsey@bonnercountyid.gov>; Bonner Sheriff

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**Cc:** Tyson Lewis <[tyson.lewis@bonnercountyid.gov](mailto:tyson.lewis@bonnercountyid.gov)>; Jacob Gabell <[jake.gabell@bonnercountyid.gov](mailto:jake.gabell@bonnercountyid.gov)>; Travis Haller <[travis.haller@bonnercountyid.gov](mailto:travis.haller@bonnercountyid.gov)>  
**Subject:** Agency Project Review - File S0003-23 - Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Agency comments can also be submitted on the file page by clicking the red text at the top of the page.

The above-named application has been submitted to the Bonner County Planning Department for processing.

Please review the application relative to your agency's area of expertise and include any recommended conditions of approval and supporting code sections. Please see attached for details.

Thank you,

**Jenna Crone, Hearing Coordinator**

**Bonner County Planning Department**

**208-265-1458 ext - 1277**



**BC\_S0003-23\_RiverRanch.pdf**

240K



**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

PANHANDLE REGION  
2885 West Kathleen Avenue  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83815

Brad Little / Governor  
Jim Fredericks / Director

February 7, 2024

Tyson Lewis, Planner II  
Bonner County Planning Department  
1500 Highway 2, Suite 208  
Sandpoint, ID 83864

REFERENCE: S0003-23 – River Ranch Subdivision

Dear Mr. Lewis:

We have reviewed the above-named application requesting to plat one (1) 51.870-acre parcel into nineteen (19) lots ranging from 2.50-acres to 2.76-acres. The area is Zoned Suburban and is separated from the Pend Oreille River by railroad tracks. The purpose of these comments is to assist the decision-making authority by providing technical information that can be used to minimize fish and wildlife impacts.

Each new subdivision displaces wildlife, fragments habitat, restricts animal movements, and permanently reduces the capability of Bonner County to support future wildlife populations. The following suggestions, if implemented and included in covenants where applicable, will reduce but not ameliorate impacts to wildlife from this proposal. Unfortunately, other proposals in this area will likely follow in the future, leading to additional cumulative impacts to the County's wildlife populations.

There are no waterways or wetlands on the property, and the southern boundary of the parcel is separated from the Pend Oreille River by an approximately 300-foot-wide railroad right of way.

Deer and turkey may remain in the area and may be problematic to residents. The area is residentially developed but a few large tracts of timber in the area still provide habitat. Moose, elk, black bear, and mountain lion may occasionally pass through. The Department will not be responsible for losses of domestic animals (dogs, cats, livestock), ornamental plants, or private property.

As the amount of suburban development in the area continues to grow, we have seen an increase in the number of deer and elk caught in fencing. Wrought-iron fences have proven particularly hazardous to deer in suburban areas, with adults impaled on fence spikes and fawns trapped between bars. This can be disturbing to residents, may damage property, and creates an undue

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burden on IDFG staff resources. If perimeter fencing cannot be avoided, we recommend wildlife-friendly fencing (such as post and rail) that allows animals to move through unrestricted. Woven wire and chain link fencing result in entanglement and injury to deer and elk. Exclusion fencing (e.g., chain link with slats, wood slat) is recommended for smaller areas, such as gardens or pet runs. Wildlife friendly fencing guides are available online.

Idaho Fish and Game recommends that all buildings on the southern lots (lots 1-9) build on the flatter northern portion and avoid the steep slopes to prevent erosion in the Pend Oreille River. Additionally, leaving as much of the existing natural vegetation as possible on those slopes will help prevent erosion.

IDFG recommends that all BMPs for erosion and sedimentation be adhered to, and that a suitable stormwater plan be implemented.

The following are general wildlife considerations for residential development:

- 1) **Avoid storing residential garbage outside, bear-proof dumpsters should be used**, and an adequate garbage collection system should be designed and implemented.
- 2) Due to several recent incidences of big game mortality due to the ingestion of yew, Idaho Fish and Game strongly discourages the planting of any toxic yew species in the proposed subdivision. Four types of yew or their hybrids are commonly found in residential and commercial landscapes across the west. Japanese yew is the most common type planted in Idaho. All four are toxic to a variety of animals including domestic livestock, horses, wild ungulates (deer and elk), dogs, cats and humans:
  - **Japanese yew** (*Taxus cuspidate*)—native to Japan and neighboring regions; many varieties are widely planted in the US; a shrub or small tree, with some varieties reaching 40 feet tall.
  - **English yew or European yew** (*Taxus baccata*)—native to Eurasia; many varieties are widely planted in the US; a shrub or small tree, with some varieties reaching 50 feet tall.
  - **Chinese yew** (*Taxus chinensis*, *T. sumatrana*, *T. celebica*)—native to Asia; a few varieties of these three species are sometimes planted in the US; a shrub or small tree.
  - **Canadian yew, Northern yew** (*Taxus canadensis*)—native to eastern North America; a few varieties are planted in the US; a low-growing shrub to 5 feet tall.
- 3) Residents should be informed on how to avoid attracting bears, raccoons, and skunks. For instance, cleaning barbecue grills frequently, to avoid leaving pet food outside, not distributing bird feed on the ground, and protecting compost piles and fruit trees.
- 4) Purposely feeding wild animals creates an unnatural situation and may cause local population increases, which may create an unwanted nuisance for neighboring residents, and eventually, the resident that is providing the food. An increase in the local deer population creates a hazard for motorists and animals. Many animals are hit by cars when moving from one feeding area to another. Additionally, when being chased by dogs, deer can become tangled in garden fences, run through picture windows, or dart into oncoming

traffic. Also, concentrating large numbers of animals in a small area can facilitate local disease outbreaks and/or attract predators, such as mountain lions.

- 5) **DO NOT FEED BEARS.** Bears that obtain human food, garbage or pet foods lose their natural fear of humans and can become dangerous. Bears that are habituated to these unnatural food sources can damage vehicles, tear into tents, cabins, or barns, or aggressively approach people looking for food. Bears that continue to seek human food may require trapping and euthanization. Bears displaying behavior dangerous to people will require euthanization. This is an undesirable situation, as it is labor intensive and an unnecessary waste of wildlife.
- 6) Bird seed or corn distributed on the ground may attract wild turkeys, waterfowl, and **bears**. This unnatural situation often increases the local waterfowl and turkey population, which frequently causes damage to private property and leads to human/wildlife conflicts. IDFG will not be responsible for property damage caused by waterfowl or wild turkeys, nor will the Department trap and remove birds that have become accustomed to being fed by residents. Bird feeders should be routinely cleaned to prevent the spread of disease.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Carson Watkins  
Panhandle Regional Supervisor

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