City of Cle Elum
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WASHINGTON STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFCANCE
CITY OF CLE ELUM, WASHINGTON
August 14, 2025

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal for a mixed residential development on approximately 11.97 acres, to create 93 lots with a mix of single-family and common wall units developed over six phases. The applicant is also seeking approval of a Development Agreement that will establish the standards that are applicable to the development and other conditions that control the development, timeline and use of the property.

LOCATION:	1317 E Third Street (and abutting parcel to the east), Cle Elum, WA
PARCEL NUMBERS:	623134 and 063064
PROPONENT:	Wildwood Ranch LLC
PROPERTY OWNERS:	Wildwood Ranch LLC
LEAD AGENCY:	City of Cle Elum

FILE NUMBER: SEP#2024-004

THRESHOLD DETERMINATION: This MDNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.12C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after reviewing a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency and a public comment period which ended on December 20, 2024. This information is available to the public on request and can be found on the city website: https://cleelum.gov/city-services/administrative-services/public-notices/.

I. FINDINGS

A. Processing

1. The application for Environmental Review was received on October 11, 2023, revised on June 6, 2024 and revised again on November 14, 2024.
2. Based on submitted comments received during the Notice of Application, revised Environmental Documents were submitted on April 10 and 29, 2025 and June 5, 2025.
3. The application is being processed under the provisions of WAC 197-11-340 and CEMC Ch. 14.40 (Environmental Review).

4. **Public Notice:** Pursuant to CEMC 14.40.060 and 14.30.120, a Notice of Application was issued on November 21, 2024. The notice was provided in accordance with CEMC 14.30.240(B) and combined the required 15-day advance notice of a required comment period with the public comment period, allowing for a total of 30 days for public comments.

B. Review

1. Critical Areas

   A Critical Area Report was conducted by Sewall Wetland Consulting, Inc. on December 18, 2023 and a revised report submitted on April 10, 2025. The site was reviewed using methodology described in the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0*)(USACOE September 2008). The Critical Area Report identified a man-made pond in the southeast corner of the site as a fish bearing pond, and a stream off-site to the north depicted as a Type F water. The man-made pond off-site to the southeast of the site meets the criteria of the City of Cle Elum Code 18.01.030.G.7 for a critical area, and a 50' buffer is required from the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) as well as a 15' building set back line (BSBL). The buffer of the off-site pond is located within Tract CA-1.

2. Engineering

   a. **Stormwater**:

   All stormwater must be retained onsite consistent with the City's Construction Standards and 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. A stormwater drainage plan and report, prepared by a licensed engineer and registered in the state of Washington, shall be submitted for City review and approval consideration. Design calculations for peak flow and peak volume storage requirements shall be based on a design storm frequency of ten-year, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event. Design calculations for treatment shall be based on sixty-four percent of the two-year recurrence interval, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event.

   i. The plan shall provide for the on-site treatment and detention/retention of all increased runoff based on the design storm over the predevelopment conditions.

   ii. Treatment standards shall be based on best management practices identified in the Washington State Department of Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington or an equivalent manual deemed acceptable by the city. No untreated stormwater shall be discharged offsite or to critical areas on or adjacent to project site. The off-site man-made pond located to the southeast of the subject property shall be recognized as a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area pursuant to CEMC 18.01.030.G.7. Any potential discharges to the pond shall meet all applicable requirements and shall obtain any additional required approvals,

including but not limited to the City's critical areas regulations and Ecology and Fish and Wildlife requirements.

iii. The overflow of runoff in excess of the design storm quantities must be situated or directed to locations to where it would have discharged prior to development. Appropriate methods must be used to attenuate flows so that erosion or damage to downstream properties or critical area does not occur. The drainage plan shall include all calculations for the determination of the required size of the stormwater treatment and retention/detention system.

b. **Traffic**:

The Wildwood development will be served by transportation systems under the jurisdiction of the City of Cle Elum and Kittitas County Public Works. Vehicular access to the site will be provided by three new roadways—two connecting to E 3rd Street to the north and one primary access forming a new T-intersection at E 1st Street and Spanski Road. Twelve lots will have direct access onto Deer Meadow Drive. Deer Meadow Drive is located within City and Kittitas County's jurisdiction and is part of a 60-foot access easement (Q-3, AFN 518886) that serves multiple plats.

A Transportation Analysis was performed by Transportation Engineering Northwest (TENW, June 22, 2023 and revised on April 4, 2024) which considered 53 detached and 40 attached residential homes for the site. Vehicular access to the site will be provided by three new roadways—two connecting to E 3rd Street to the north and one primary access forming a new T-intersection at E 1st Street and Spanski Road. The purpose of the report was to identify potential significant and adverse traffic impacts resulting from the project and proposed where appropriate, outline programmatic and/or physical improvements to minimize or eliminate those impacts should be considered.

The analysis evaluated the effects of the development on the local transportation network. Existing roadway conditions were assessed, including E 1st Street, E 3rd Street, Spanski Road, SR 903, and Airport Road.

Traffic volume data collected in September 2022 showed that all study intersections currently operate at level of service (LOS) B or better during the weekday PM peak hour, meeting the City of Cle Elum's standard of LOS D. Based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, the project is expected to generate approximately 770 new weekday daily trips, including 53 trips during the AM peak hour and 70 during the PM peak hour. These trips are expected to primarily utilize SR 903, with 75 percent of traffic distributed to and from this corridor. An additional 10 percent will use E 1st Street, 10 percent will use E 3rd Street, and the remaining 5 percent will use Airport Road.

Projections for the year 2028 indicate that all intersections will continue to operate at acceptable levels of service even with the added project traffic. The intersection of SR 903 and Spanski Road is anticipated to operate at LOS C on the southbound approach, with an average delay of 15 seconds per vehicle, which remains within the city's acceptable threshold.

To mitigate the traffic impacts associated with the project, several measures are recommended. The project should include installation of stop control on the northbound approach of Spanski Road at the newly configured intersection with E 1st Street. Additionally, it is recommended that stop control be added to the westbound approach of Airport Road at its intersection with Spanski Road, supplementing the existing southbound stop control. Improvements at this intersection should also include new signage and channelization to clearly delineate the travel lanes from an adjacent commercial parking area. Furthermore, the applicant is expected to provide a proportional share contribution toward these improvements. At the Airport Road/Spanski Road intersection, the project will contribute approximately 27.5 percent of total anticipated 2028 vehicle trips, which forms the basis for the recommended cost-sharing calculation.

In summary, the Wildwood Ranch development is expected to generate moderate traffic volumes that do not significantly degrade intersection operations. With implementation of the recommended traffic controls and proportional mitigation, the project will be consistent with the City of Cle Elum's level of service standards and transportation planning objectives. However, the proposed Developers' Agreement is requesting a 15-year buildout of the 93-lot subdivision. Therefore, the TIA projected buildout period and subsequent mitigation recommendations needs to be revised to reflect the 15-year time frame requested in the Developer's Agreement period. The updated TIA should be submitted and approved by the City, along with any associated mitigation, prior to approval of Phase 1 civil plans.

Under the current TIA, the following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce or eliminate project impacts:

- The proposed project may have to provide proportional share contributions at the Airport Road and Spanski Road intersection, where additional intersection controls are warranted to provide proper traffic control and delineation between roadway and the adjacent commercial parking lot within the northeast quadrant of the intersection. Calculations of the proportional share is estimated as:
  - Airport Road/Spanski Road – TEV Baseline 148 by 2028 with 56 new Project trips. Proportional Share (148 + 56 = 204. 56/204 = 27.5%).
- Install signage and supporting channelization at the intersection of E 1st Street and Spanski Road is recommended.

Agency Comments:

During the public comment period, the following comments were submitted which have been summarized below. (Full comments can be found within the record.)

1. On November 22, 2024, the **Snoqualmie Indian Tribe** provided written comments, summarized below:

   a. As a signatory to the Treaty of Point Elliot, the Tribe specifically reserved among other things, the right to fish at usual and accustomed areas and the "privilege of hunting and gathering roots and berries on open and unclaimed lands" off-reservation throughout the modern-day state of Washington. Based on the information provided and our understanding of the project and its APE we defer to and support more proximate tribes relating to the above mentioned project. However, please be aware that if the scope of the project or the parameters for defining the APE change we reserve the right to modify our current position.

2. On November 26, 2024, the **Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation** provided written comments, summarized below:
   a. The project area falls within the Very High probability area according to the DAHP predictive model for Inadvertent Discovery Risk. The CCTR requests a cultural resource survey prior to any initial ground breaking activity and for this 12 acre parcel to be subsurface tested with shovel test probes at an appropriate interval to ensure the presence or absence of subsurface cultural materials within the project APE. We look forward to reviewing the findings in the subsequent cultural resource report.

3. On December 11, 2024, **Kittitas County Department of Public Works** provided written comments, summarized below:
   a. An approved access permit shall be required from the Kittitas County Department of Public Works prior to creating any new driveway access or road access to Deer Meadow. All addressing will be completed through the City of Cle Elum. Maintenance of driveway approaches shall be the responsibility of the owner whose property they serve. The County will not maintain access. The site plan shown in the TIA shows approximately 90 new parcels to be created. The private road "Deer Meadow" shall be upgraded to meet Kittitas County Design Standards as outlined in section 12.04.050 and Table 12.04-1 as a road with 31+ lots. The road will be to be recertified verifying these conditions. A grading permit from Kittitas County Public Works may be required for construction activities on Deer Meadow Road. Please consult with Kittitas County Public Works and KCC 14.005 prior to beginning work.

4. On December 12, 2024, the **Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation** (DAHP) provided written comments requesting a professional archeological survey with consultation with concerned Tribes.

5. On December 12, 2024, the **Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife** (WDFW) provided written comments, summarized below:
    a. Recommend the following, 1) identifying the exact location of the underground section of Deer Canyon Creek and ensuring the appropriate 50-foot riparian buffer (CEMC 18.01.070.C.1a.iii, Table 18.01-5) is applied along the creek, even where it is currently underground; 2) formal identification and protection of the pond and associated riparian habitat and the development of a habitat management plan to ensure no net loss of functions and values of this existing critical area.; 3) seasonal groundwater monitoring throughout the year to ensure the proposed treatment methods will meet state standards year-round and that the stormwater will not negatively impact water quality or quantity within the pond.

    Applicant provided the following response to WDFW on February 14, 2025, which has been summarized below:
    a. Following site review and coordination with WDFW, two sensitive areas were identified. A 50-ft buffer and 15-ft building setback are proposed around the borrow pit pond (a designated habitat area) in the southeast corner. Limited buffer enhancements and signage are planned. For Deer Canyon Creek (outside the site boundary), no additional plat conditions are proposed due to existing road separation and absence of flow into the site. Final plans will provide more detail on landscaping and protection measures.

6. On December 18, 2024, the **State of Washington Department of Ecology** (DOE) provided written comments, summarized below:
    a. If withdrawing or using any groundwater, a Request of Determination of Water Budget Neutrality or an Application for a New Water Right Permit must be applied for.

Public Comments

During the public comment period, the City received 21 comments which have been distilled down to the comment type and frequency for this report. (Full comments can found within the record.)

Comment Topic	**Frequency**
Traffic	17
Critical Areas/Wildlife Habitat	14
Infrastructure capacity (Water and Sewer)	12
Impervious Surfaces/Drainage/Runoff	11
Larger Lots/Decreased Density	11
Compatibility/Aesthetics/Property Values	10
Deer Meadow Drive Infrastructure/Access	9
Zoning deviations/Adhere to current codes	7
Construction timeline/phasing	5

Noise	5
Emergency services/Police and Fire capacity	5
Open Space dedication/On-site Parks	5
Flooding	4
Light Pollution/Glare	3
Lack of Parking	3
Energy usage	2
Infrastructure Maintenance (Road, SW, Streetlights, etc.)	2
Fence or buffer for existing homes	2
Would require existing homes to connect to water and sewer	2
Snow Removal	1
View Obstruction	1
Lack of affordable stores	1
Previous Alley Vacation	1
Avoid conflict with City Heights	1

II. CONCLUSIONS:

A. Environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) was required for this project because the proposed development exceeds thresholds for categorical exemptions outlined in CEMC 14.40 as this project proposes to construct 93-units.

B. A Notice of Application was issued on November 21, 2024. Six (6) agency comments were received, and twenty-two (22) comments from the general public.

C. As mitigated, this proposal will have no significant adverse environmental impacts.

D. Project-specific analysis will be included in the Staff Report for SUB-2023-003, DA-2024-001, and additional project-specific conditions may be imposed on the project as part of the City's review.

III. REQUIRED MITIGATION MEASURES:

This Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS) is hereby conditioned upon following mitigated measures, as authorized under WAC 197-11-660 and Cle Elum Municipal Code CEMC 14.40, and the Cle Elum Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, which contains goals, policies, and regulations which provide substantive authority to require mitigation under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

1. In coordination with the Colville Tribe, a Cultural Resource Survey shall be completed and an Inadvertent Discovery Plan shall be implemented prior to any ground disturbing activity.
2. In coordination with the Kittitas County Department of Public Works, an approved access permit shall be permitted prior to creating any new driveway access or road access to Deer Meadow.
3. Deer Meadow Drive shall be upgraded to meet Kittitas County Design Standards as outlined in section 12.04.050 and Table 12.04-1.
4. In coordination with the Kittitas County Department of Public Works, a grading permit may be required for construction activities on Deer Meadow Drive prior to beginning work.

5. In coordination with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, seasonal groundwater monitoring throughout the year is required to ensure the proposed treatment methods will meet state standards year-round and that the stormwater will not negatively impact water quality or quantity within the pond. Results of annual testing shall be shared with both the City and WSDFW.
6. The off-site man-made pond located to the southeast of the subject property shall be recognized as a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area pursuant to CEMC 18.01.030.G.7. A minimum 50-foot buffer shall be maintained from the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM), and a 15-foot Building Setback Line (BSBL) shall be observed from the edge of the buffer.
7. All stormwater must be retained onsite consistent with the City's Construction Standards and 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. A stormwater drainage plan and report, prepared by a licensed engineer and registered in the state of Washington, shall be submitted for City review and approval consideration before any land disturbing activities begin and permits are given. Design calculations for peak flow and peak volume storage requirements shall be based on a design storm frequency of ten-year, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event. Design calculations for treatment shall be based on sixty-four percent of the two-year recurrence interval, twenty-four-hour storm runoff event.
8. Treatment standards shall be based on best management practices identified in the Washington State Department of Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington or an equivalent manual deemed acceptable by the city. No untreated stormwater shall be discharged offsite or to critical areas on or adjacent to project site. Any potential discharges to critical areas or a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area shall meet all applicable requirements and shall obtain any additional required approvals, including but not limited to the City's critical areas regulations and Ecology and Fish and Wildlife requirements.
9. The overflow of runoff in excess of the design storm quantities must be situated or directed to locations to where it would have discharged prior to development. Appropriate methods must be used to attenuate flows so that erosion or damage to downstream properties or critical areas does not occur. The drainage plan shall include all calculations for the determination of the required size of the stormwater treatment and retention/detention system.
10. Before withdrawing or using any water please submit a *Request of Determination of Water Budget Neutrality* or an *Application for a new Water Right Permit*, depending on the size of your project to the Washington State Department of Ecology.
11. Under the current TIA, the following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce or eliminate project impacts:
    - The proposed project may have to provide proportional share contributions at the Airport Road and Spanski Road intersection, where additional intersection controls are warranted to provide proper traffic control and delineation between roadway and the adjacent commercial parking lot within the northeast quadrant of the intersection. Calculations of the proportional share is estimated as:
        - Airport Road/Spanski Road – TEV Baseline 148 by 2028 with 56 new Project trips. Proportional Share (148 + 56 = 204. 56/204 = 27.5%).
    - Install signage and supporting channelization at the intersection of E 1st Street and Spanski Road is recommended.

An updated TIA, and associated mitigation, is required that reflects the buildout period as proposed in the Developer's Agreement. The updated TIA shall be submitted and approved by the City, along with any associated mitigation, prior to approval of Phase 1 civil plans.

12. Project specific conditions for improvements will be included in the Staff Recommendation for SUB-2023-003, DA-2024-001.

✓ This MDNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). The lead agency will not act on this proposal for 15 days from the date below. Comments must be submitted by August 29, 2025.

Responsible Official: Rob Omans
Position/Title: SEPA Responsible Official
Phone: (509) 674-2262
Address: 119 W First Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922

Date: August 14, 2025 **Signature:** _____

✓ You may appeal this determination to: Rob Omans, City Administrator, at 119 W First Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922.

No later than: **August 29, 2025**
By method: Described here: https://cleelum.municipal.codes/CEMC/14.30.230(B)(5)

You should be prepared to make specific factual objections. Contact the City of Cle Elum to read or ask about the procedures for SEPA appeals.