

June 13, 2023

To: City of Medical Lake

Re: LU-2023-005-CA-SEPA-DNS-2023-06-01

I wish to comment on LU-2023-005-CA-SEPA-DNS-2023-06-01, particularly the WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist. I am a Professional Wetland Scientist with 34 years of experience working in wetlands. I have published 31 refereed scientific studies; 22 of which concern wetlands. I am a Biology Professor (Full) at Gonzaga University where I have worked for 27 years. Finally, I am the owner of a wetlands consulting business - RS Wetland Delineation LLC.

There are a number of errors in the above Environmental Checklist. It does not use the best available science and inaccurately answers certain questions. Specifically (requested information underlined and applicant's answers in *italics*):

**Earth c.** What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland. *Rocky-fourmound complex*

This is only partially correct. The upland area around the wetland are certainly Fourmound, i.e. 3114 (a type of well-drained soil) but the wetland itself is not. The checklist is about a wetland, therefore the checklist should also describe the wetland soils that will be damaged by the imported fill material.

**Water a1.** Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into. *There is an isolated basin category III wetland on the site.*

This is incorrect. As I reported to the Medical Lake Planning Commission and City Council on May 25, 2023 both orally and in writing, the wetland may have been a Category III Wetland when last surveyed in 2020 but in my professional opinion I believe it is now a Category II wetland. I requested an independent third-party review of the wetland status at that meeting, but my comment was dismissed with accompanied unprofessional and partisan ad hominem disparagement of my professional credentials by City Planner, Ms. Elisa Rodriguez (Zoom recording available).

**Water a3.** Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material. *There will be no fill or dredging in the wetland.*

This is incorrect. The environmental determination was evaluated precisely because a wetland will be filled. Filling a wetland requires fill.

**Water 3C1 and 3C2.** Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe. Stormwater from impervious surfaces will be directed into the soil immediately adjacent to the impervious surface.

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe. None known.

Actually, this is known. Since the wetland is to be filled with gravel and/or soil, then by definition the height of the land will rise. Water flows downhill. Therefore, water and any pollutants from the building site - particularly fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides commonly used by homeowners - will eventually reach the wetland. A silt fence will be used during construction, but no sort of impervious concrete wall has been outlined in the plan. This answer is an example of the applicant not following the best available scientific knowledge of hydrology and seeming unfamiliarity with the wetland's location within a sensitive TMDL basin.

Respectfully,



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