IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
MAGIC VALLEY REGION
324 South 417 East, Suite 1
Jerome, Idaho 83338

C.L. "Butch" Otter / Governor
Virgil Moore / Director

August 10, 2016

Tom Bergin
Blaine County Planning and Zoning
219 First Avenue South, Suite 208
Hailey, Idaho 83333

RECEIVED
AUG 10 2016
BLAINE COUNTY
LAND USE & BUILDING SERVICES

Re: Three Creeks Crossing Preliminary Plat

Dear Tom:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) staff has reviewed the preliminary plat for the Three Creeks Crossing Subdivision in Blaine County. The proposed subdivision is located approximately 5 miles southwest of Hailey within the Croy Creek drainage at the intersection of Croy Creek and Rock Creek roads. It is our understanding the property encompasses nearly 300 acres and includes nine (9) lots for residential development.

The purpose of these comments is to assist the decision-making authority by providing technical information addressing potential effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat and how any adverse effects might be mitigated. It is not the purpose of IDFG to support or oppose this proposal. Resident species of fish and wildlife are property of all Idaho citizens, and IDFG and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission are expressly charged with statutory responsibility to preserve, protect, perpetuate and manage all fish and wildlife in Idaho (Idaho Code 36-103 (a)). In fulfillment of our statutory charge and direction as provided by the Idaho Legislature, we offer the following comments and recommendations.

IDFG has provided technical review and comment on multiple occasions regarding proposals to subdivide this property (e.g., January 25, 2005, January 9, 2006, July 21, 2006, and August 8, 2006). Our review of relevant wildlife databases relative to this proposal indicates the property lies outside of Classified Lands but does border Class III Lands (General and Important sage-grouse habitat, including an occupied lek <1-mile northwest of the property; Map 1) and is in close proximity to Class I (elk winter habitat; Map 2) and Class II lands (mule deer migration corridor; Map 3).

The proximity of the property to important wildlife habitat resources warrants the inclusion of wildlife-friendly plat notes to help minimize the potential effects of development in the area. We recommend the following plat notes:

- Big game and other wildlife depredations on native plant restorations, landscaping plants, and gardens are anticipated if development occurs at this site. All responsibility for

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controlling wildlife depredation will belong with the property owner. Any actions taken to alleviate depredation will be those prescribed by IDFG.

- We recommend all potential property owners are provided information in writing by the Applicant's agent that deer and elk depredation will occur on ornamental plants and all responsibility for controlling deer and elk depredation will belong with the property owner. IDFG will provide the Applicant the necessary written information for property owners to prevent and alleviate deer and elk depredation.

- Refuse (household garbage, landscaping trimmings, etc.) burning should be strictly prohibited.

- Pets running at large dramatically increase the negative effects of housing developments on wildlife. All pets should be kept in-doors, kenneled, or leashed at all times. In addition, we recommend the use of invisible fencing to restrict pets to the lots in which they live.

- We recommend all outside pet kennels are completely enclosed, including a roof, to prevent mountain lion and other predator depredation.

- All pet food should be stored and fed in a manner that does not attract "nuisance" wildlife (e.g. skunks, raccoons, magpies, red fox, etc.). All responsibility for controlling nuisance wildlife will belong with the property owner. Any actions taken to alleviate nuisance wildlife problems will be those prescribed by IDFG.

- Fencing should be kept to a minimum. No fencing would be our preferred option. If fences are necessary, they should be a post and rail or barbed wire design with a maximum top rail/wire height of 42" and a minimum bottom rail/wire height of 18". Only smooth wire should be used for the bottom strand of barbed wire fences. This design will facilitate wildlife passage through the area.

- All hay and other livestock feed should be stored and fed in a manner that does not attract big game or other wildlife species. Attracting big game from native habitats exacerbates existing winter habitat problems in the Blaine County.

- We recommend the feeding of game species or predatory wildlife be prohibited. Artificial feeding of wildlife tends to attract and concentrate animals away from native habitat, can facilitate the spread of disease, and has the potential to create conflict between neighboring homeowners due to the likelihood wildlife will use adjacent properties where they may be considered a nuisance.

- All actions needed for urban interface fire prevention (vegetation fuels removal, fuel breaks, etc.) should be completed within the building envelopes. No vegetation clearing or other actions should occur on naturally vegetated portions of the property. Should this type of work require a larger space than the one acre allotted for building envelopes, we recommend enlarging the building envelopes enough to accommodate these actions.

- Native plant communities support the most stable and diverse wildlife populations. Removal of native vegetation should be minimized and restricted to what is necessary to construct roadways and residences. Vegetation and soil disturbance by contractors and utilities companies should be limited to roads and building envelopes only. We recommend all disturbed sites are restored using native plant materials.

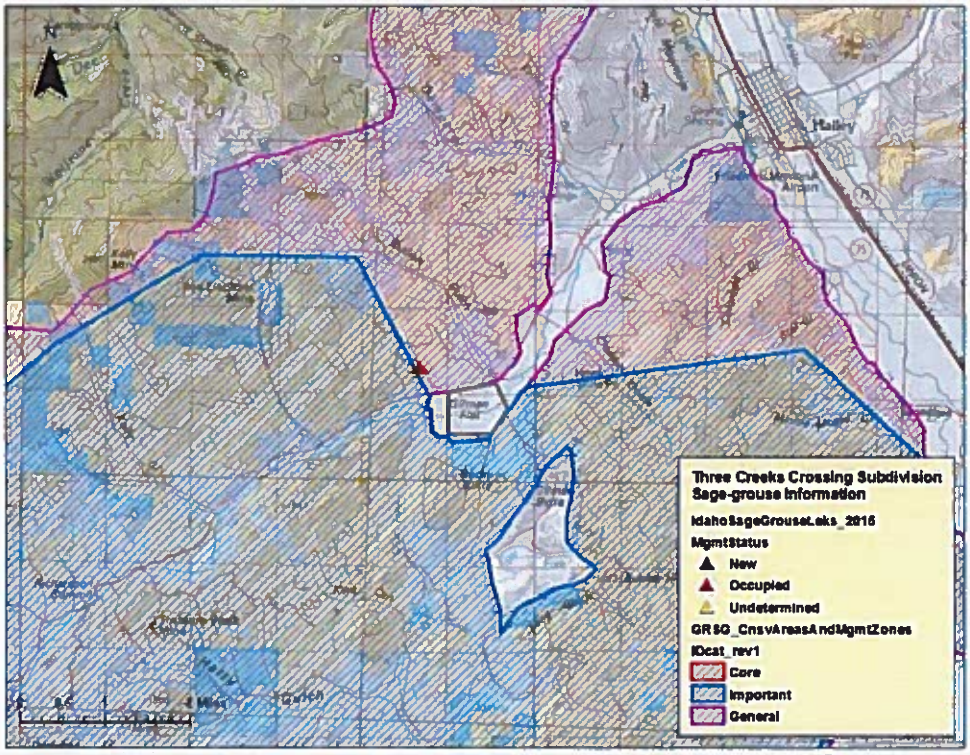
- The property is surrounded by public lands that provide popular access for recreation (i.e., hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, etc.). All potential property owners should be notified in writing that these activities on public lands are lawful, and constitutionally protected in the case of hunting, and will continue into the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please contact Mike McDonald, Environmental Staff Biologist, in this office if you have any questions.

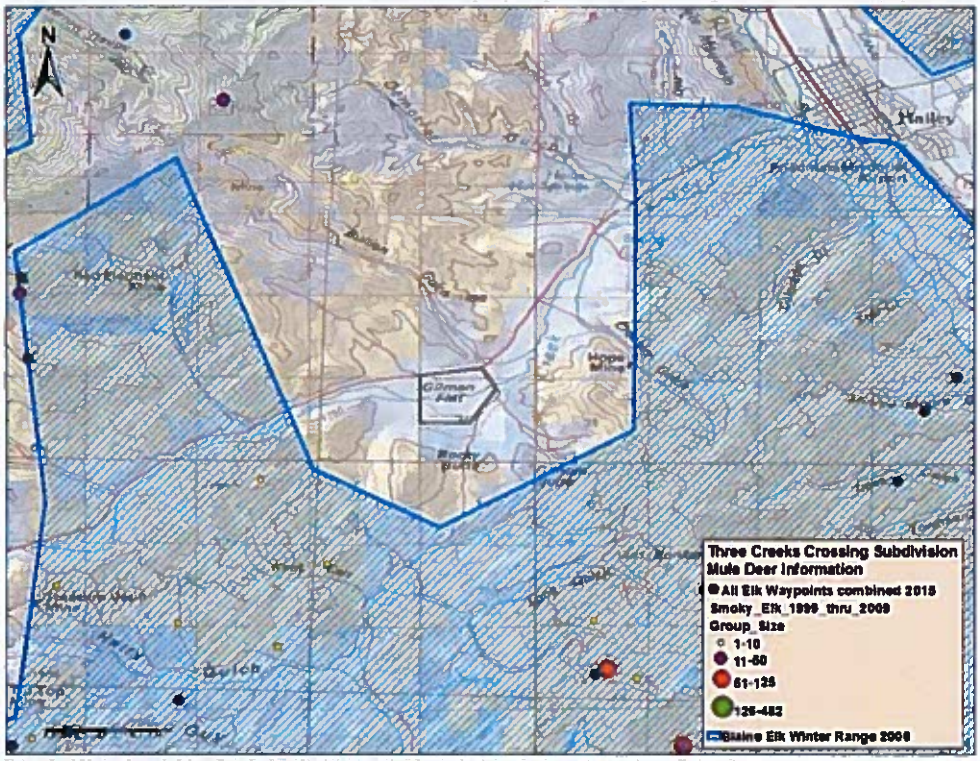
Sincerely,

Toby Boudreau
Magic Valley Regional Supervisor

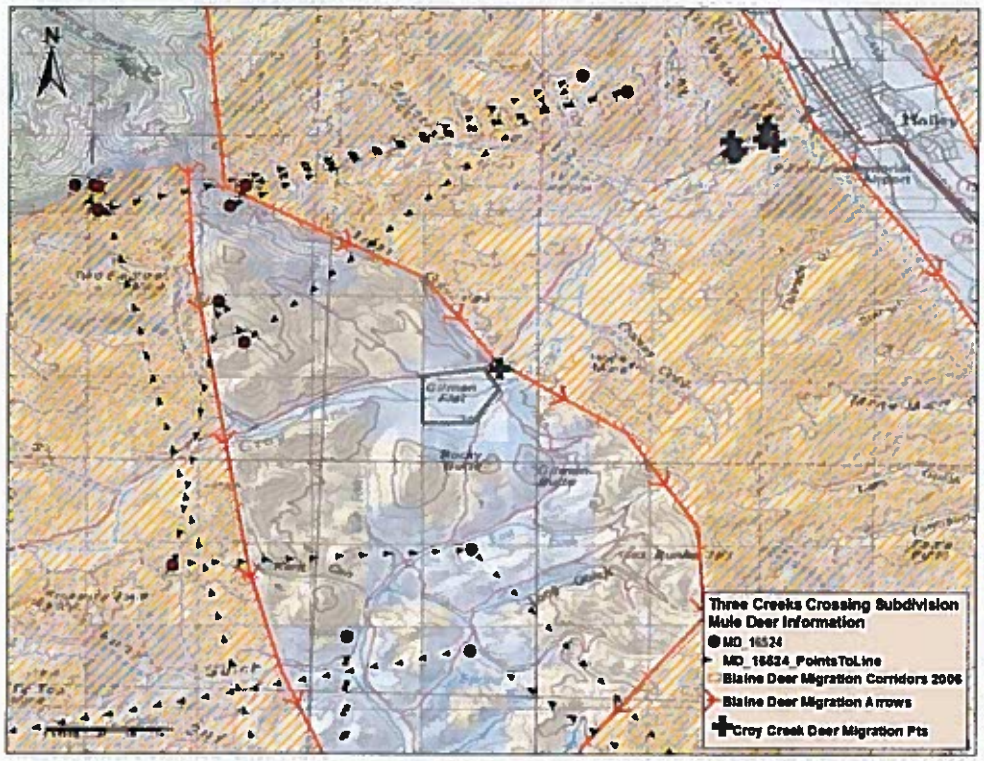
Cc: Kimberlee Johnson (Galena Engineering, Inc)
Kathy Grotto (Blaine County)
IDFG – Boise (Vecellio)
ECc: IDFG (R4 staff)



Map 1. Sage-grouse information, Three Creeks Crossing Subdivision, Blaine County.



Map 2. Elk information, Three Creeks Crossing Subdivision, Blaine County. Colored points represent locations and group sizes of elk detected during five winter aerial surveys between 1999 and 2015.



Map 3. Mule deer information, Three Creeks Crossing Subdivision, Blaine County. MD_16524 is a female mule deer radio marked in January 2016 near Pioneer Reservoir, 8 miles northwest of Bliss, Idaho. Points (●) and arrows (→) represent daily locations and direction of movement between locations in late May and June of this year.