

2-18-2022 Email IDFG

Hello Samantha,

Thank you for your response to IDFG's letter from December 8, 2022; furthermore, thank you for your efforts in assisting Quigley Initiative LLC to comply with Blaine County Code of Ordinances, Section 9-20-6 ("Conservation Plan"). IDFG's mission is to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage Idaho's fish and wildlife resources for the public interest (Idaho Code § 36103(a)). To that end, the following comments are intended to aid and inform the subdivision proponent as well as Blaine County in avoiding, minimizing and mitigating effects to wildlife.

IDFG has reviewed the "2022 Updated Wildlife Assessment and Conservation Plan" for the proposed Quigley Ranch Subdivision. Many of the measures described in the plan, particularly in section 6.0 ("Impact Minimization Measures"), will be vital in minimizing the adverse effects to wildlife in Quigley Canyon. IDFG appreciates the proponent's recognition of the importance of Quigley Canyon and the surrounding hillsides for wintering and migrating elk and mule deer. In addition to the measures currently described, we recommend the following notes be included in the Conservation Plan:

Section 3.2.2:

- Please include mountain lions (*Puma concolor*) within the described common mammal species. Mountain lions are native to the Wood River Valley and frequently enter vicinity subdivisions, which may lead to conflict with people, livestock and pets.
- We note that badger (*Taxidea taxus*) and black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*) are described as "Common bird species". Badgers and jackrabbits are mammals.

Section 6.2:

- Specifically prohibit yews in the proposed rural development. Yews or their hybrids are commonly installed by landscaping companies across the western US; several species are toxic to a variety of animals including humans, domestic livestock, ungulates (deer and elk), dogs and cats. These include the Japanese yew (*Taxus cuspidata*), English/European yew (*T. baccata*), Chinese yew (*T. chinensis*, *T. sumatrana*, *T. celebica*), and the Canadian/Northern yew (*T. canadensis*). Yew ingestion can be fatal and has repeatedly caused elk and moose mortality in the Wood River Valley. As per Blaine County Code of Ordinances (Section 3-2-3), yews are declared as county noxious weeds and are unlawful to sell, plant or possess (including landowners); violations involving the possession or planting of yew in Blaine County are misdemeanors punishable by "a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), or by imprisonment not to exceed six (6) months, or by both such fine and imprisonment" (BCC of Ordinances, Sections 3-2-5 and 1-4-1).

- The Recommendation for fence minimization and design is vital for avoiding deer/elk entanglement and death. In addition to the described specifications, wildlife-friendly fences should also incorporate a smooth-wire top and bottom strand instead of barbed wire.
- The Recommendations to avoid feeding wildlife, to store pet food securely, and to not put trash out until the morning of pick-up, will be essential to prevent conflicts with black bears. Bear-proof garbage containers can also help minimize bear depredation and conflict.
- To prevent depredation or use by mountain lions as day beds, completely enclose any outdoor pet kennels (including a roof), outbuildings, window wells, and space underneath decks.

Section 7.0:

- This section states that “Substantial impacts to elk and deer migration and wintering habitat are not anticipated.” IDFG does not agree with this assessment, and we refer to paragraph 2 of our letter from Dec. 8, 2021 (attached). The loss of big game winter habitat to development and recreational use has significant implications for wildlife in the Wood River Valley. Currently, the south-facing slopes east of Hailey and Ketchum, including Quigley Canyon, contain most of the last quality winter range in the Wood River Valley that is used by mule deer and elk in severe winters. If current trends of development and associated recreational/residential use in the vicinity persist, these areas are not expected to continue supporting winter populations of big game.

I hope that this information is helpful to Blaine County and to Quigley Initiative LLC for the process of development planning and impact minimization in Hailey and the Quigley Canyon area. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on the development of this plan.

Bradley Dawson

Environmental Staff Biologist

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From: Samantha Stahlnecker <sam@opal-engineering.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 17, 2022 8:29 PM

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Subject: RE: IDFG Comment: Preliminary Plat for Quigley Ranch

Hello Bradley and Mike,

The applicant team received your letter in response to the proposed Quigley Ranch Subdivision dated December 8, 2022. Linked below are two Wildlife Assessment and Conservation Plans- one from 2016 and an updated plan from earlier this year in response to your letter. We have also adjusted the proposed lot boundaries to exclude existing trails as mentioned in your letter. Below is a link to the entire updated package- see Appendix III and Appendix IV.

[2016 Wildlife Assessment and Conservation Plan](#)

[2022 Updated Wildlife Assessment and Conservation Plan](#)

[Quigley Ranch Subdivision](#)

Also attached is an exhibit showing an overlay of the proposed lots with the “Approximate Quigley County Lots” area from the exhibit attached to the existing conservation easement. Please let me know if this does not answer your question regarding the conservation easement (Appendix V) and proposed lots overlap.

Thank you, and please feel free to contact me with any other questions.

Samantha Stahlnecker, P.E.

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