

DATE: July 28, 2022  
TO: Nancy Cooley (Blaine County, Zoning Specialist II)  
Dennis Kavanagh (Representative for Indian Creek HOA)  
FROM: Samantha Stahlnecker (Opal Engineering, PLLC)  
SUBJECT: Lemhi Drive Categorical Exclusion- Response to County Engineer Comments

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Nancy,

Please see below for my responses to Blaine County Engineer comments received on April 11, 2022. Included with this memorandum are revised civil engineering plans and a wall detail from our structural engineer. We look forward to staff's review of the MOD Categorical Exclusion and a public hearing date for the wetland conditional use permit application.

***County Engineer Comment #1:*** *As presented in these documents, the application represents a gravel road construction project, in the County's Mountain Overlay District, for the purpose of accessing single-family residential lots in the Indian Creek Ranches subdivision and a parcel owned by the Indian Creek Ranches Homeowners' Association ("HOA"). The road alignment currently exists, but is mostly an unimproved dirt, two-track road/path. As I understand the application, the improved road will be a private road maintained by the HOA. The application is not clear how the road will existing across the platted lots. That is, the application illustrates the lots across platted lots, but does not indicate if these lots will grant easements for this road, or if a parcel will be cut out from these lots, or some other agreement is planned.*

***Response:*** *A roadway and utility easement exists per the plat of Indian Creek Ranches No. 1. The proposed road falls entirely within the platted easement; however, a small amount of disturbance area exceeds the available easement area. I have reached out to affected property owners for permission to disturb area on private property and have received approval from 2 of the 4 property owners. Permission will be obtained prior to disturbance beyond the existing easement.*

***County Engineer Comment#2:*** *I anticipate a portion of the improved road will be visible from Indian Creek Road.*

***Response:*** *Agreed. Categorical exclusion 13 applies to lands within the SC-1.*





**County Engineer Comment #3:** *I suggest an avalanche study should be considered, as a general review of the road layout indicates avalanche zones might be over portions of the road layout. In addition to avalanche, the applicant should consider the risk of hillside slide events other than avalanche. As recent slide events in the Wood River Valley have proven, predicting such events is difficult, but should not be ignored entirely. Portions of this roadway might be susceptible to impacts from such a slide.*

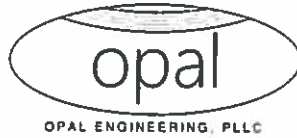
**Response:** *I do not believe Blaine County has code requiring an avalanche study for the development of this private road. Public roads are required to be located outside of high hazard avalanche zone, but this is a private, not public road. Residential structures may require an avalanche study to verify homes are located outside of avalanche zones or are appropriately mitigated.*

**County Engineer Comment #4:** *I suggest a geotechnical study should be considered. The engineer proposes somewhat large cut and fill slopes of 2:1 slopes. General knowledge of the area indicates that under a relatively thin layer topsoil type material, a combination of rock outcrops and loose deposited rock materials make up these hillslopes. Generally stable when established, especially with vegetation, cut slopes at 2:1 slopes into these hillslopes approach slopes that can be unstable in certain circumstances (e.g. high moisture content with no vegetation). Fill slopes often need to be "keyed into" existing slopes for stability, but such details are not provided with this application. In addition, a concrete block retaining wall is indicated, but no structural plans are provided with the application. Such retaining wall structural plans might also benefit, and may require, a geotechnical study.*

**Response:** *Butler and Associates and K&S Engineering are involved in the Lemhi Road improvements as the team's Geotechnical and Structural Engineers. No Geotechnical Study has been prepared; however, Steve Butler will be involved in the field work to verify cut and fill slope stability per added note on Details 1, 2, & 3, Sheet C0.1. Dave Konrad has provided a retaining wall design section included with this memorandum.*

**County Engineer Comment #5:** *Details for the proposed stormwater runoff collection and discharge devices (catch basins?), including runoff collected behind the proposed retaining wall in a 4" perforated pipe, are not indicated with this application. The applicant may want to consider revisions to, or more details of, the proposed road section to include stormwater runoff collection and discharge for the "uphill side" of the road and for the discharge of runoff onto the "downhill" slopes. Erosion control measures should be considered for anticipated stormwater runoff flows in road side ditches, stormwater discharge locations, and disturbed slopes. Also, I suggest some conveyance of water and debris under the road in the location of the existing drainage gulch (around STA 7+50 +/-) be considered. This may increase the impacts to existing wetlands indicated in the application.*

**Response:** *Please see attached for refined civil engineering plans showing retaining wall drainage discharge systems and erosion control check dams. Two culverts have been added to the plans to allow surface drainage to cross Lemhi Drive, one at the intersection of Bannock and Lemhi, and the second where Lemhi crosses the mapped wetlands. The additional disturbance to wetlands is approximately 100 square feet. The wetland disturbance area has been amended in the revised road design plans. The applicant will coordinate accordingly with the ACOE to ensure the current Joint Application is amended if needed.*



**County Engineer Comment #6:** *The grading plan indicated at the intersection with Bannock Drive appears to be a steep cross-slope....10% cross-slope immediately from the edge of the Bannock Drive travel way. This area should be graded to allow for vehicle turning movements and stopping at this intersection. Likewise, the grading indicated at the end of road turnaround and cul-de-sac also indicates steep grades. These areas should be graded to accommodate vehicle turning movements, including emergency vehicles, and snow storage.*

**Response:** *The proposed grading plan has been modified to provide an intersection approach area roughly 20' long with a maximum centerline slope of 2%. Grading of the hammerhead and cul-de-sac have been modified so their maximum grades are 4% Please see the included revised plans.*

**County Engineer Comment #7:** *The road is indicated to be 20-feet wide, but the application isn't clear as to how that width is maintained in the winter. That is, winter maintenance to maintain this width will require either snow removal from the roadway, or snow plowing directly off of the roadway. But, if snow plowing is proposed, this plowing will send snow through proposed guardrail installations or send snow down hillsides.*

**Response:** *The applicant discussed road width at length with the fire department, and they require a minimum of 16' clear during winter for access. The applicant will remove snow to the downhill side of Lemhi Drive. Snow is expected to be placed on the downhill side of Lemhi Drive where runoff will be captured by a proposed swale between the road and buildable area on Ranch No. 14, or runoff will flow into the wetland area on Ranch No. 14.*



## Rachel Martin

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**From:** Nancy Cooley  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2022 10:27 AM  
**To:** Rachel Martin  
**Subject:** FW: Lemhi Drive MOD Cat Ex - County Engineer Review

**From:** Jeff Loomis <jloomis@co.blaine.id.us>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 9, 2022 5:21 PM  
**To:** Nancy Cooley <ncooley@co.blaine.id.us>  
**Subject:** Lemhi Drive MOD Cat Ex - County Engineer Review

Nancy –

Per your request, I have reviewed the documents made available per the following Dropbox link...

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/i7eq16j8tohxvy259q1w/h?dl=0&rlkey=kmr59zwlocybtbnvmqeurde73t>

...for the Lemhi Drive Blaine County Mountain Overlay District Categorical Exclusion ("MOD Cat Ex") application. As requested, I specifically reviewed Standards 9-21-5 D4 and 9-21-5 D7.

As presented in these documents, the application represents a gravel road construction project, in the County's Mountain Overlay District, for the purpose of accessing single-family residential lots in the Indian Creek Ranches subdivision and a parcel owned by the Indian Creek Ranches Homeowners' Association ("HOA"). The road alignment currently exists, but is mostly an unimproved dirt, two-track road/path. As I understand the application, the improved road will be a private road maintained by the HOA. The application is not clear how the road will existing across the platted lots. That is, the application illustrates the lots across platted lots, but does not indicate if these lots will grant easements for this road, or if a parcel will be cut out from these lots, or some other agreement is planned.

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Please let me know if you have questions regarding these comments.

Thank you,  
JEFF LOOMIS, PE  
Blaine County Engineer