



January 3, 2018

Mr. Steve Morasch  
Landerholm  
805 Broadway, Ste. 1000  
Vancouver, WA 98660

RE: Dawson's Ridge Density Transfer Subdivision – Functionally Isolated Buffer

Steve:

This letter is in response to your question about the construction of a 10-foot asphalt trail functionally isolating the wetland buffer for the Dawson's Ridge Density Transfer Subdivision. The City of Camas's Critical Areas Ordinance for wetlands (CMC 16.53) defines functionally isolated buffers under CMC 16.53.040(4)(b)(i) as preexisting roads, structures, or vertical separation shall be excluded from buffers otherwise required by this chapter. Although the existing conditions are a dirt trail, once asphalt is applied it will meet this condition. The functional isolation of the buffer occurs in two ways – 1) the habitat function is fragmented by trail due to human activities such as walking, biking and horseback riding which typically causes wildlife to avoid these areas. In addition, there could be a thermal barrier where animals avoid crossing the asphalt trail during the summer months when the pavement is hot; and 2) the asphalt trail will cause fragmentation of the water quality function of the buffer by reducing the filtration capabilities of the buffer. As you may be aware, most critical area ordinances only allow 4-foot wide pervious trails to avoid functionally isolating the buffer from the critical area it is attempting to protect.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

  
Kevin L. Grosz, P.W.S.