



TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Date: May 28, 2024

To: Isaac Holowatz
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
5525 S 11th Street
Ridgefield, WA 98642

From: Jim Barnes
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Subject: **Vineyard Vista Subdivision Oregon White Oak Impacts and Mitigation**

Site Location: NE North Fork Avenue, La Center, WA 98629

Property Identification

Numbers: 63472945 & 258903000

Jurisdiction: City of La Center

This technical memorandum addresses a review completed by WDFW of the proposed mitigation for Oregon white oak (OWO) impacts on the Vineyard Vista Subdivision in La Center, Washington and a subsequent phone conference between Mason Wolfe of Wolfe Project Management and Isaac Holowatz on May 28, 2024.

The Vineyard Vista Subdivision project is avoiding impacts to the majority of the OWO trees on the site with the exception of two which are located within a dense mature Douglas fir forest. As a result, the trees are not providing any substantial habitat functions, and one of them was actually determined by Arborscape Tree Care to be in poor health with significant die back and deadwood throughout the canopy. The tree also has multiple co-dominant stems that are prone to failure due to weaker attachments to the main trunk.

The mitigation plan completed for the project by Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc. proposes a mitigation ratio exceeding 14:1 for the removal of the two OWO's. Although this is a high mitigation ratio, it does not meet the recommendations of the recently adopted PHS management guidelines of the WDFW in January 2024.

It was determined during the phone conference that, in order to create additional mitigation measures which would increase the overall habitat functions and values and replace the temporal loss of the trees, the following mitigation will be implemented on the project:

1. Three Douglas fir trees will be girdled in the Riparian Ecosystem Area in the northeast part of the project area. This will result in canopy release allowing adjacent trees to develop a healthier and more robust canopy over time. The fir trees will die and remain as vertical snags providing valuable wildlife habitat. Currently, the area is mostly devoid of snags or downed logs as it is a planted and managed Douglas fir forest lacking tree species diversity. The mitigation plan already proposes to create downed logs in the Riparian Ecosystem Area from trees to be removed along the outer boundary. Additionally, this area will be planted with other tree species as part of the mitigation strategy.
2. Install educational signs on pedestrian trails or other public access points along the boundaries of the OWO and upland forest enhancement areas, and the Riparian Ecosystem Area which discuss the habitat features present including snags, downed logs, oak habitat, and mitigation plantings. The signs will include a QR code which directs to the pertinent information on the WDFW website.
3. Install bat and bird boxes in the mitigation areas.

We appreciate your assistance with review of this project and working out mitigation measures that can adequately compensate for the necessary removal of OWO on the project area.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding the information provided in this memorandum.

Sincerely,



Jim Barnes

President

Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc.