



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife

John Day Watershed
East Region
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Pendleton, Oregon 97801
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June 26, 2023

Morrow County Planning Department
Attn: Tamara Mabbott, Planning Director
215 NE Main Ave
Irrigon, Oregon 97844

RE: AC-145-23; ACM-146-23; AZM-147-23 Comprehensive Plan and Map Amendment

Dear Tamra Mabbott,

Thank you for providing the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) with the notice of application to amend the Morrow County Comprehensive Plan, modifying 274 acres of Exclusive Farm Use to General Industrial zoning. It is the policy of the state to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations (ORS 496.012) and good habitat is the foundation of healthy fish and wildlife populations.

The area within the site boundary is primarily cultivated agriculture and although wildlife species can use the areas between cultivated agriculture circles for nesting and foraging, these areas do not typically act as significant habitat. The subject property additionally contains an area of impounded water and associated wetland habitats. In the Columbia Plateau many wetland habitats are created as a result of crop irrigation practices and these areas provide important habitat for many wetland-dependent species. Maintaining wetland and surrounding upland habitat benefits wildlife, but also improves water quality by allowing filtration of possible contaminants before reaching streams and ground water. ODFW reviewed the notice and includes the following comment for County consideration.

- For future development within the subject property, the department recommends a buffer of at least 100ft from wetlands and associated riparian habitats.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Somers
Regional Habitat Biologist
John Day District Office
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife