



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

SOUTHWEST REGION
3101 South Powerline Road
Nampa, Idaho 83686

C.L. "Butch" Otter / Governor
Virgil Moore / Director

March 24, 2016

City of Boise Planning and Development Services
150 N. Capital Boulevard
P.O. Box 500
Boise, ID 83701
PDSTransmittals@cityofboise.org

RE: DevCo LLC, annexation & rezone application, Case # CAR16-00002 & PUD16-00005

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) has reviewed the Annexation and Rezone Application and the Planned Unit Development for the proposed Ben's Crow Inn Subdivision located at 6781 East Warm Springs Avenue. This application requests an annexation of the property into Boise City and a development agreement to build a 24 lot single family subdivision, with R-2 and R-1B zoning. The development will occupy approximately 4.19 acres of land, and is currently surrounded by vacant, residential and open land. The Department's Boise River Wildlife Management Area (BRWMA) is approximately 0.30 miles east of the proposed subdivision.

The purpose of these comments is to assist the decision-making authority by providing technical information addressing potential effects to fish, wildlife, and habitats and how any adverse effects might be mitigated. It is not the purpose of the Department to support or oppose this proposal. Resident species of fish and wildlife are property of all Idaho citizens, and the Department and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission are expressly charged with statutory responsibility to preserve, protect, perpetuate and manage all fish and wildlife in Idaho (Idaho Code 36-103(a)). In fulfillment of our statutory charge and direction as provided by the Idaho Legislature, Department staff met with the developer for this project on Monday, March 11, 2016, to discuss our concerns and offer suggestions about the plan. These included, but were not limited to, construction and placement of fences and utilization deer resistant landscaping. The developer was provided with the Department's "Standard Recommendation for Development" as well. Additionally, we offer the following comments and suggestions.

The BRWMA and surrounding lands provide critical winter habitat to large populations of migratory mule deer during the winter and early spring months. During this time, mule deer regularly move between the foothills and the Boise River to satisfy certain habitat needs. In addition, the area provides habitat for resident mule deer. The Department strongly believes that an increase in development along Warm Springs Avenue will have an adverse cumulative impact on local wildlife. One impact identified by the Department is the diminishing connectivity between the BRWMA and the riparian and river floodplain habitat along the Boise River. Permanent conversion

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of habitat to residential use will likely have a measurable effect on big game in the region. Cumulatively, these developments could act as a barrier keeping big game and other wildlife from moving to and from the Boise River corridor. Due to the habitat connectivity it provides and its close proximity to the BRWMA, the area surrounding the proposed Crow's Inn subdivision has been identified as a key wildlife migration corridor (Harris Ranch Wildlife Impact Assessment and Mitigation Plan, 2006).

The Department analyzes and assesses each development proposal on a case by case basis. For this specific project (# CAR16-00002), it has been determined that the design layout contains fencing heights and a secondary wildlife corridor* that will provide permeability through the subdivision. A primary wildlife corridor* is located north of the project area, therefore no additional wildlife corridors will be requested for this subdivision.

Finally, the Department recommends that future residents of the proposed subdivision be educated about the wildlife amenities they have nearby and the sensitivity of those wildlife to human disturbance. The Department refers to the Department publication Home Builders and Owners Guide to Living with Wildlife, available here:

<http://idahodocs.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15100coll7/id/2733/rec/10>.

We would ask that this information be provided to the developer and in turn to potential residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact Rick Ward in the Southwest Region office at (208)475-2763, rick.ward@idfg.idaho.gov, or Krista Muller at the Boise River Wildlife Management Area at (208)334-2115, krista.muller@idfg.idaho.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Scott Reinecker
Southwest Regional Supervisor

* **Primary Wildlife Corridor:** An area used by a wide variety of wildlife species that are more wary of human activities and less inclined to venture close to settled areas (e.g., migrating mule deer). Primary corridors connect large contiguous habitats and wildlife populations. In addition, the vegetation characteristics in these areas meet security and thermal cover requirements and may provide limited foraging opportunity.

* **Secondary Wildlife Corridor:** The Department expects some deer to enter the subdivisions by street access. Therefore, we recommend that at least one secondary wildlife corridor be incorporated into each development plan. These corridors consist of an entrance and an exit for wildlife trapped within the subdivision. They not only allow permeability through the subdivision, but also provide additional connectivity to large contiguous habitats. Entrance and exit points could be designed to accommodate pedestrians as well, but must follow IDFG fencing recommendations.

SR/km/rw

ecc: Kiefer/ HQ

cc: Gold file

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