



WILDLIFE HABITAT REPORT

FOR

4301 78TH STREET SW
MUKILTEO, WA

Wetland Resources, Inc. Project #18307

Prepared By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 SITE INVESTIGATION.....	2
2.1 PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION.....	2
2.2 STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS.....	3
2.3 HABITAT ASSESSMENT	3
2.1 CONCLUSIONS	4
3.0 USE OF THIS REPORT	5
4.0 REFERENCES	6

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: AERIAL VIEW OF SUBJECT PROPERTY.....	1
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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REPRESENTATIVE SITE PHOTOS (JANUARY 7, 2019)	
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Wetland Resources, Inc. (WRI) completed a fish and wildlife evaluation on January 7, 2019, on approximately four acres, composed of Snohomish County parcel numbers 28041000300100, 28041000300400, 28041000300500, and 28041000300600. The subject property is located northeast of the intersection of 44th Avenue West and 78th Street SW, in the city limits of Mukilteo, Washington. The Public Land Survey System (PLSS) locator for the property is Section 10, Township 28N, Range 4E, W.M. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if any fish, wildlife, or habitats are present on the subject site that would restrict development.



Figure 1 Aerial View of Subject Property

Pursuant to Mukilteo Municipal Code (MMC) 17.13.040(G), commercial, industrial, and certain multifamily development projects require a wildlife habitat report for permitting. MMC 17.52C.030 identifies Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs) as those areas with an association with certain protected species and habitats. Protected species include: 1) federally or state designated threatened, endangered, or sensitive species; 2) Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) designated priority species; and 3) species of local importance. Protected habitats include: 1) WDFW designated priority habitats; 2) habitats of local importance; 3) naturally occurring ponds less than 20-acres in size; 4) waters of the state (excluding wetlands); 5)

aquatic resources planted with game fish by governmental or tribal entities; 6) areas of rare plant species; and 7) land that connects habitat blocks and open space. Wetlands are regulated separately from HCAs in the City of Mukilteo and are not evaluated in this report. A separate Critical Area Study will be prepared to assess any wetland features.

The subject parcels are located in an area of high-intensity land use, including dense suburban single-family residences and industrial development (particularly Boeing and other industrial facilities nearby to the east and southeast). The site is immediately bordered by residential development to the west, a commercial distribution center to the south, and a church and parking lot to the east. The large forested area associated with Japanese Gulch extends partially onto the subject site from the north.

Based on our site investigation, no HCAs appear to be present on the subject site.

2.0 SITE INVESTIGATION

2.1 PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION

Prior to conducting the on-site investigation, public resource information was reviewed to identify the presence of any protected fish and wildlife habitats or species within or near the project area. These sources included:

- WDFW Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) Interactive Map: A potential biodiversity area and/or corridor is depicted partially extending over the subject site. A freshwater pond is located approximately 700 feet northwest of the subject site. No other features are mapped on or adjacent to the subject property by this resource.
- StreamNet Online Mapping Application: A non-fish stream is mapped flowing from south to north approximately 925 feet east of the site. The nearest fish-bearing channel is well downstream (approximately 1.25 miles). No other features are mapped on or adjacent to the subject property by this resource.
- WDFW SalmonScape Interactive Mapping System: The SalmonScape interactive map illustrates the south-north non-fish stream to the east mapped by StreamNet. Fish distribution is as identified on StreamNet as well. No feature is depicted on or immediately adjacent to the subject site.
- Washington DNR Natural Heritage and All Features List: No features are present within the Section, Township, and Range where the site is located.
- Snohomish County PDS Map Portal: The Snohomish County PDS Map Portal also depicts the south-north non-fish stream well east of the site. Additionally, multiple non-fish-bearing and untyped tributaries are depicted flowing into the south-north stream as well. No features are identified on or near the subject site.
- City of Mukilteo Streams and Watersheds Map: As with several of the public resources above, this map appears to illustrate the non-fish stream east of the site. However, this map also depicts Brewery Creek, which is mapped well north of the site on other resources,

originating approximately an eighth of a mile north east of the site. No other features are identified on or near the site.

2.2 STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

The fieldwork for this Wildlife Assessment for Underwood Nelson Development, LLC, was conducted by Scott Walters, the author of this report. Scott holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Conservation Biology and Applied Vertebrate Ecology. Additional training includes an advanced certificate in Aquarium and Aquatic Sciences, and a post-Baccalaureate certificate in Wetland Science and Management from the University of Washington. Scott is a certified Professional Wetland Scientist and has worked as an ecologist on projects across the country for over 12 years, including scientific study and protection of wetlands and other critical areas, environmental restoration monitoring, endangered species monitoring, and shorebird population research.

2.3 HABITAT ASSESSMENT

The northern portion of the property has a well-developed, multi-tiered, forest canopy with mature Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*). However, the area has a history of disturbance and invasive English ivy (*Hedera helix*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) are growing throughout. The remains of a burned-down house are still present in this area, along with a great deal of refuse/waste. Multiple foot trails that show signs of frequent use traverse the northern portion of the site. These various disturbances (invasive species, trash, highly-used trails) significantly reduce the understory of the forested area.

In the central and southern portions of the site, invasive Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) and English ivy are dominant in most areas, with some Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) present in the southeastern corner as well. Other vegetation present in these areas include bitter cherry (*Prunus emarginata*), crabapple (*Malus fusca*), English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), and some fruiting cultivars. It is in this slightly forested, scrub-shrub area that almost all wildlife activity was detected. This particular assemblage of plant species is highly productive for fruit-based food resources used by many avian species. However, none of the on-site plant species are rare, but rather are widely dispersed throughout Western Washington.

During the January 7th site investigation, a diverse community of bird species were observed making use of the central and southern portions of the site. Detected species include: Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), Hairy Woodpecker (*Leuconotopicus villosus*), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), and Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*). While some of these species, particularly the Pacific Wren, would typically be found in habitats similar to the northern portion of the site, this area was mostly devoid of avian activity. Signs of mammalian use were extremely limited. Despite multiple trails and areas of wide, soft earth, no tracks were observed and only one small scat was detected. This area does not appear to be utilized by large mammals such as deer, elk, or large predators. A few small burrows were seen near the middle of the site, likely from mountain beavers (*Aplodontia rufa*).

Mammals that are expected to use the site include species such as: shrews (*Sorex* spp.), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), skunks (*Mephitis* spp.), deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), and Virginia opossums (*Didelphis virginiana*). Amphibian species that may use this site include northwestern garter snake (*Thamnophis ordinoides*) and northwestern salamander (*Ambystoma gracile*).

The absence of large mammalian species may be explained by a combination of factors related to human activity/disturbance. A community garden (Mukilteo Community Garden) and paved trailhead are located just north of the site, partially bisecting were the forested area of the site intersperses with that of Japanese Gulch. These partial barriers, along with frequent trail use on and near the site, likely disincentivize wildlife movement to and from the property. High levels of noise disturbance emanating from airplane activities nearby are likely much higher than within the ravine of Japanese Gulch, where steep slopes mitigate some of the sound levels. Additionally, species such as deer would not gain much of an ecological advantage by travelling to the site as it is developed on three sides. Given the surrounding development, the subject property is the terminus of the southwestern-most portion of the forested areas associated with Japanese Gulch. Therefore, neither the forested nor the scrub-shrub portions of the site provide access or potential movement to other high-value habitats.

2.1 CONCLUSIONS

Avian activity and diversity were higher than typically seen on vegetated sites of this size. However, no federally or state protected species or species of local importance appear to use the site, and nearly no use by large mammals was detected. Although woodpeckers were seen on the site, they were not observed foraging, and woodpecker holes were not abundant. As such, there is no indication that Pileated Woodpeckers use the site as habitat. Some small bird nests were observed, but none large enough to support birds of prey. Additionally, while the southern portion of the site clearly supports a diverse community of avian wildlife species, biodiversity areas as defined by WDFW must be both valuable to fish or wildlife and be mostly composed of native vegetation (WDFW 2008). Thus, the highly invasive nature of the vegetation present on the subject site is inconsistent with this priority habitat classification.

Considering the on-site disturbances, in conjunction with the lack of detected mammalian activity, the site does not meet WDFW's definition of a wildlife corridor. Additionally, the site does not connect habitat blocks and open space.

The slightly forested, scrub-shrub portion of the subject site is clearly used by a variety of avian species. However, only habitats associated with federally or state species of concern, WDFW priority species, species of local importance, and other habitats designated by MMC 17.52C.030 afford protection to upland areas in the city of Mukilteo. There is no observed evidence that any federal, state, or locally important species use the subject site or that habitats of primary association with such species are present. Additionally, no ponds, streams, rare plant species, waters of the state (other than potential wetland areas that will be assessed in a separate Critical Area Study) are on or adjacent to the site.

No areas on or adjacent to the subject site appear to meet the designation criteria of HCAs as defined by the City of Mukilteo in MMC 17.52C.030 or MMC 17.08 "Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (HCAs)." Therefore, the performance standards within MMC 17.52C are not

germane to projects that may be proposed for the subject parcels. No fish, wildlife, or habitats are present on the subject site that should restrict development.

3.0 USE OF THIS REPORT

This Wildlife Habitat Report is supplied to Underwood Nelson Development, LLC, as a means of determining possible presence of protected fish and wildlife species or habitat, as required by the City of Mukilteo. This report is based largely on readily observable conditions and, to a lesser extent, on readily ascertainable conditions. No attempt has been made to determine hidden or concealed conditions.

The laws applicable to critical areas are subject to varying interpretations and may be changed at any time by the courts or legislative bodies. This report is intended to provide information deemed relevant in the applicant's attempt to comply with the laws now in effect.

This report conforms to the standard of care employed by wildlife ecologists. No other representation or warranty is made concerning the work or this report, and any implied representation or warranty is disclaimed.

Wetland Resources, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Walters". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Walters, PWS

Associate Ecologist & Wildlife Biologist

4.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

REPRESENTATIVE SITE PHOTOS **(JANUARY 7, 2019)**

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FORESTED AREAS IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE SUBJECT SITE.



REMAINS OF BURNED-DOWN HOUSE AND SCATTERED REFUSE.



TRANSITION BETWEEN FORESTED AND SCRUB-SHRUB HABITATS



BITTER CHERRY AND INVASIVE HOLLY PROVIDE FRUITING FOOD RESOURCES FOR BIRDS.



HIMALAYAN BLACKBERRY COVERS THE MAJORITY OF THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE SUBJECT SITE.