

# APPENDIX F

## Natural Resources Analysis



**Natural Resource Analysis/Aquatic Resource Inventory**

**Trestles Phase 1 & II Subdivision**

**Prepared for**

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## **Natural Resources Analysis**

### **Introduction**

This report is an evaluation of natural resource conditions that currently exist on the 216.83 acre proposed Trestles Phase I & II subdivision. This narrative has coordinated in accordance with Teton County Idaho Subdivision Regulations outlined in Division 9-3-2 (C-2-c-WH), Wildlife Habitat Overlay Regulations (Teton County, 2013b). This report summarizes the natural resources present, an aquatic resource inventory, potential impacts and a mitigation plan to offset and minimization to areas within the depicted overlay.

### **Location**

The proposed Trestles subdivision is located at the intersection of State Highway 33 and W2000E S in Section 2 Township 5N, Range 45E, Teton County, Idaho. The parcel is located among a mixture of cultivated cropland, single family residential subdivisions and rural single-family homes. The parcel is bounded by Alpine View Subdivision to the north, Fall River Reserve Subdivision to the east, and State Highway 33 to the west and County Road W2000E to the south (Figure 1.).

### **Natural Resource Overlay**

The parcel contains three overlays, Big Game Migration Corridors and Seasonal Range, Songbird/Raptor Breeding and Wintering Habitat and Wetlands/Waterways all located within an approximate five-acre area at the northwest corner of the parcel.

### **Existing Land Use Descriptions**

#### **Cultivated Cropland**

Much of the parcel is historic and ongoing cultivated cropland (185+/- acres) planted in barley and hay. NOTE: Irrigation system rebuild 2022 back in production 2023. Normal agricultural practices such as cutting, disking, fertilizing, herbicide applications limit the availability of foraging and reproductive suitable habitat for most wildlife species within the cultivated portions of the parcel.

#### **Wetland Waterway**

The Teton County GIS Natural Resource Overlay depicts approximately 4.4 acres of Riparian Shrub Association (Merigliano, 2009) and the waterway Spring Creek (approx. 575 linear feet) at the northwest corner of the parcel (Figure 2). An existing off-site single-family residence is located adjacent this wetland/waterway.

## **Floodplains, Wetlands, Waterways and Riparian Areas**

There are floodplains, wetlands, or riparian areas located within the approximate five-acre portion of the parcel at the northwest corner per Teton County Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data.

## **Geology and Seismic Hazards**

The Teton County Earthquake Overlay Map (Teton County, Idaho GIS) depicts a low liquid susceptibility rating adjacent to the parcel.

## **Wildfire Danger**

The parcel is cultivated cropland and is tilled after harvest each year, and therefore, minimizing available fuel should a wildfire occur.

## **Ridges and Rock Outcroppings**

There are no ridges and/or outcroppings located within the parcel.

## **Areas within 1 Mile of State Highway or Ski Hill Road**

The proposed Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision is bounded by State Highway 33 for approximately 3,300 feet. The proposed subdivision is not within one mile of Ski Hill Road.

## **Wildlife Habitat Assessment**

The Teton County Natural Resource Overlay maps a small 4.4-acre portion of the parcel at the northwest corner boundary of the parcel, as *Big Game Migration Corridors and Seasonal Range, Songbird/Raptor Breeding and Wintering Range and Wetlands/Waterways* (Figure 2).

Field studies were conducted from October 2 thru October 6, 2022, during sunrise and late evening times of the day. The entire parcel was walked during these times and observations of wildlife present were noted. The primary focus of the surveys was on the riparian/waterway area at the northwest corner of the parcel.

There were no observations, signs of scat, browsing of vegetation, rubbing, or established paths of indicator wildlife species such as Elk and/or Mule Deer. Limited amounts of Moose scat and foraging of willows were observed within the wetland riparian area at the northwest boundary of the parcel. Additional wildlife species observed during the surveys were passerine birds such as the Magpie and American starling.

Probable indicator species potentially present on the parcel include,

### **ELK**

Elk may limitedly pass through the parcel however, in this region – defined by IDFG as the Palisades Zone – winter range is limited, and more representative of mule deer habitat. Known locations of elk herds in the Teton Basin include a herd east and south of Victor, and a herd along the Teton River in Teton Basin (IDFG 2019). The IDFG Seasonal Summer and Winter Range Maps (updated 6/22) indicate a low probability of the species utilizing the area.

### **MULE DEER**

Mule Deer traverses seasonally from higher to lower elevations between summer and winter ranges. Mule Deer might pass through during seasonal migrations and could utilize the parcel as fall habitat occasionally after harvest. The IDFG Seasonal Summer and Winter Range Maps (updated 6/22) indicate a low probability of the species utilizing the area.

### **MOOSE**

Moose use deciduous and coniferous forests and wetland habitats with a shrub understory near waterbodies for winter and summer range in Idaho (TRLT 2006). These vegetative communities are found within the parcel boundaries. Moose utilize the portion of Spring Creek within the parcel for browsing and cover.

The wetland/riparian habitat consisting of approximately 4.4 acres is within a 10.671 acre designated Open Area. No building or development will occur in this area and will provide habitat and protection to the species.

### **Songbird/Raptors**

Songbirds such as Western Meadowlark and American Starling utilize the parcel however, perching and roosting opportunities are limited within the parcel as the cropland portions contain no trees or shrubs. This does not imply there is no use, just potentially less than optimal habitat. The wetland/waterway portion of the parcel provides more suitable foraging habitat and protection/cover for avian species.

### **Trout**

Cutthroat and Rainbow species of trout are most likely found in Spring Creek.

### **Bald Eagle**

There are no nests within the parcel boundaries nor suitable habitat.

### **Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse**

There are no sage vegetative communities within the parcel to support grouse populations.

### **Sandhill Crane/Trumpeter Swan**

No observations of these species were noted during the surveys however, Sandhill Cranes and Trumpeter Swans probably utilize the wetland/riparian area at the northwest corner which will remain intact existing condition post-development.

## **Aquatic Resource Inventory**

The Trestles Phase I & II proposed subdivision contains Wetlands and Waterways Overlay as defined in Titles 8 and 9 (Teton County, 2013a & b). Ms. Jade Kruger, Teton County Planning Administrator requested that an Aquatic Resource Inventory be added to the natural resource analysis. The following information is based upon US Army Corps of Engineers wetland jurisdictional process utilized to determine presence and/or absence of "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS).

A Jurisdictional Determination application to the ACOE was not requested for this area as the wetland/riparian area is included with adjacent uplands for a total of 10.671 acres of Open Area and no impacts or development of this area will occur.

## **Existing Landscape**

As previously discussed, the parcel is historically and currently cultivated cropland. The 4.4 acres of Wetlands and Waterways have remained natural as this portion is not cultivated and unsuitable for crop production. The National Wetland Inventory Map classification for this area is PSSIC and PEMIA (Figure 3.).

## **Topography**

In general, the wetland/riparian area is flat with depressions of Spring Creek and associated tributaries. There is a distinct elevation change for upland adjacent cropland to the wetland/riparian area.

## **Hydrology**

The hydroperiod associated with the wetland/riparian area is primarily influenced by the flow of Spring Creek and is snowpack dependent and utilized for on and off-site crop irrigation. The area is functioning well with no indications of loss or impacts to the existing hydroperiod.

## **Wells**

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) indicates there are three permitted agriculture wells within the parcel boundaries

## **Surface Water**

A portion of Spring Creek flows through the northwest corner of the parcel for approximately 575 linear feet. Additionally, about 4.4 +/- acres of Riparian Shrub Association lie adjacent to the surface water.

## Vegetative Description

The following lists primary species identified within the Wetland and Waterway portion of the parcel.

Common Name	Scientific Name	ACOE/NPL Status
Geyer's willow	<i>Salix seyeriana</i>	FACW
Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	FAC
Nebraska sedge	<i>Carex nebrascensis</i>	OBL
Baltic rush	<i>Junus baltis</i>	FACW
Fowl bluegrass	<i>Pas palustria</i>	FAC

## Soils

The USDA/NRCS Web Soil Survey depicts the wetland/riparian area as, Badgerton-Arimo Complex 0-2% slopes

## Impacts

There are no impacts to the 4.4 +/- acre wetland/riparian area and is designated as Open Space and will potentially be placed into conservation easement for perpetuity.

## Findings/Conclusions

Utilization by Big Game, Songbird/Raptors is primarily in the riparian/waterway habitat and observations of browsing, scat, etc., indicate ethereal use by these species. The riparian/waterway habitat in addition to adjacent farmland is all contained in Block 2 Lot 6. The 10.671 acres of Open Area/Space will provide double the amount of suitable wildlife habitat than the overlays suggest. As previously mentioned, this area may be a candidate for a permanent conservation easement.

However, this area is entirely comprised of agricultural cropland which provides low seasonal range and migration corridors for big game. The primary use by big game species is expected to be from moose, seasonally utilizing the wetland/riparian area.

The proposed Trestles Subdivision Phase I & II, has a small portion of the total property within the Wildlife Habitat Overlay, contains no "crucial habitats" and is primarily cultivated cropland which provides low foraging and reproductive habitat for indicator wildlife species. There will be no direct impacts to indicator wildlife species from the proposed development.

The 10.671-acre Open Area which includes all the prime wildlife habitat within the proposed development and upland buffer will remain intact and potentially become a permanent conservation easement. This protection off sets any potential impacts direct and/or secondary to wildlife within the parcel. There are no areas where the proposed development poses a threat to the water quality of a river, stream or wetland.

The following management practices for residents within the proposed subdivision include,

Lighting – Outdoor lighting will be downcast and motion detector lights will be encouraged.

Pet Control – Owners of family pets will be restrained from interacting with wildlife should an encounter occur.

Wildlife Friendly Fencing – There are existing working fences along the perimeter of the parcel. All new fence construction will follow guidelines per Teton County Idaho Zoning Ordinance, Title 9 Division 9-3-2 (C-2-c-WH-vi-b) (Teton County, 2013b).

## REFERENCES

IDFG. 2020a. Raster Layers for Elk/Mule Deer Winter Range, Summer Range, and Migration Corridors, Updated 16 June 22

Merigliano, M. 2009. A Field Manual for Classified Vegetation in the Upper Snake River Valley. TetonRegional Land Trust. Teton County, ID.

Teton County Idaho GIS, Natural Resource Overlay

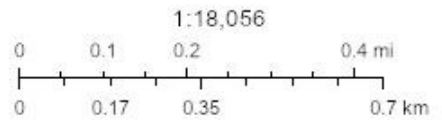
Teton County Idaho Zoning Ordinance Title 8. Rev. May 16, 2013. Teton County, ID.

Teton County. 2013b. Teton County Idaho Zoning Ordinance Title 9. Rev. September 9, 2013. TetonCounty, ID.

# Trestles Phase I & II - Site Location Map

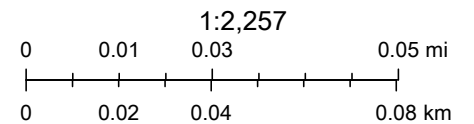
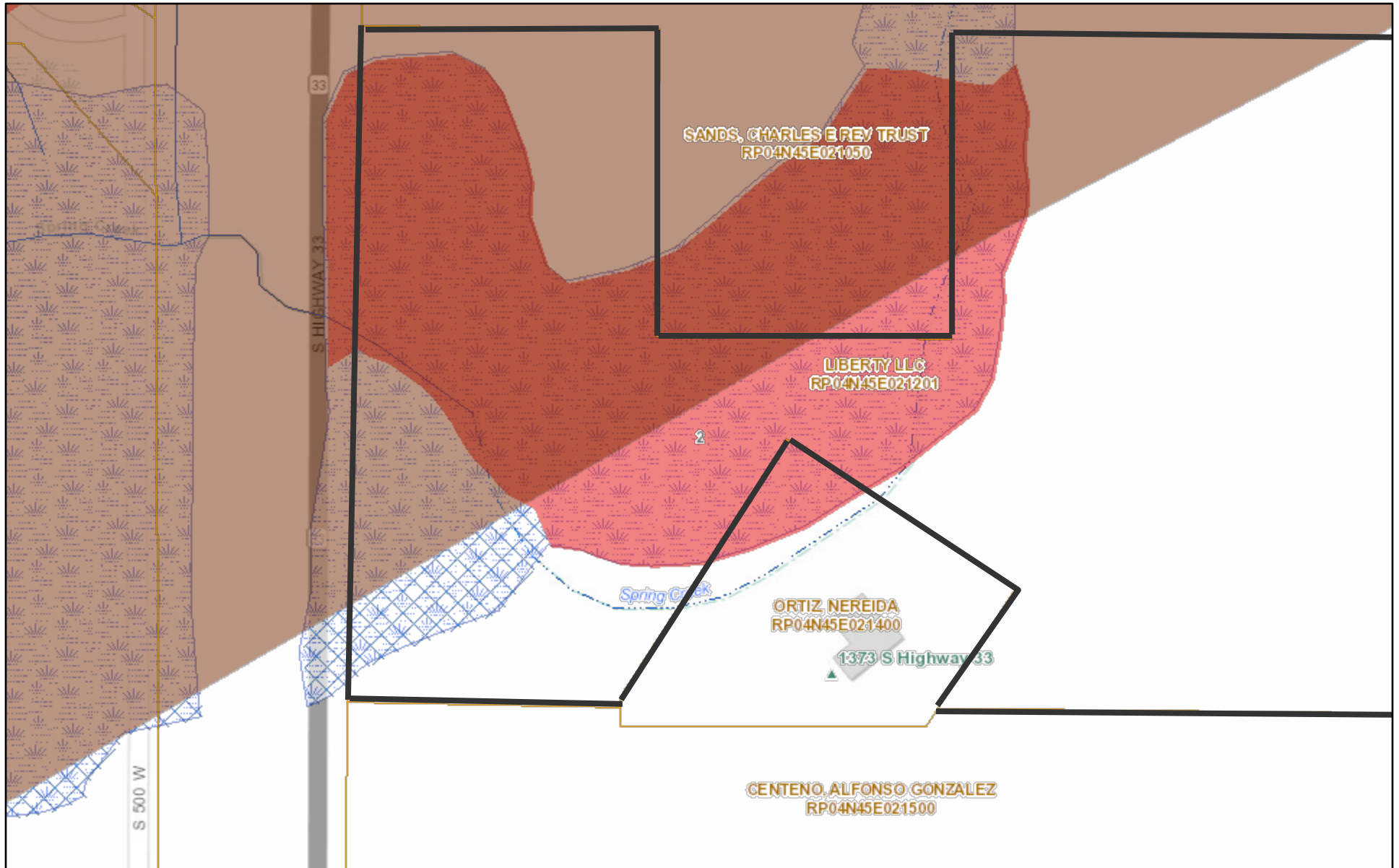


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Teton County Idaho GIS, Teton County, ID GIS, GIS, Aero-graphics Geospatial Services., Teton County GIS Dept, Teton County GIS

# Trestles Phase I & II Natural Resource Overlay Exhibit (enlarged view)




Teton County Idaho GIS, County of Teton, Bureau of Land Management, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA, USDA,

Teton County GIS



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Standards and Support Team,  
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**Wetlands**

- |   |                                |   |                                   |   |          |
|---|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|----------|
|  | Estuarine and Marine Deepwater |  | Freshwater Emergent Wetland       |  | Lake     |
|  | Estuarine and Marine Wetland   |  | Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland |  | Other    |
|   |                                |  | Freshwater Pond                   |  | Riverine |

This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.

**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph –1**

Wetland/Waterway Open Area - View to Northeast



**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph –2**

Wetland/Waterway Open Area - View to North



**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph —3**

Wetland/Waterway Open Area - View to East from SH 33



**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph —4**

View to South from Center of Parcel



**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph –5**

View to North East from Center of Parcel



**Trestles Phase I & II Subdivision—Site Photograph –6**

View to West from Center of Parcel

