

HABITAT TECHNOLOGIES

March 24, 2025

Mr. Mike Dahlem
@ JMJ Team
e-mail mike@jmjteam.com

RE: Revised Tree Removal Program Fruitland Elementary School Improvements

Dear Mr. Dahlem,

As outlined within the project documents, the public safety, parking, and vehicle/bus circulation modifications associated with the existing Fruitland Elementary School are designed to meet the growing needs of the students, faculty/staff, and general visiting public and would require the unavoidable removal of a number of existing significant coniferous and deciduous trees along the Fruitland Avenue Corridor. These required actions would result in the unavoidable modification of three existing, mixed forest clusters of vegetation that have become established following prior land use actions between the existing school features and the Fruitland Avenue Corridor.

These mixed forested clusters of vegetation were dominated by a variety of coniferous and deciduous trees along with often a dense understory of both native and invasive shrubs, grasses, ferns, and herbs. The largest of these three mixed forested clusters was along the southwestern boundary of the school facility and bounded to the south by a retained mixed forested area. The movement of seasonal surface water along the eastern side of the Fruitland Avenue Corridor – through these three forested clusters - was to the north and eventually entered a City of Puyallup stormwater conveyance system associated with Fruitland Avenue that continued northerly from the northwestern corner of the school facility.

The proposed school safety improvements would require the unavoidable modification of all three of these mixed forested clusters. As compensation for the unavoidable removal of these trees the final site development action would retain as many of these significant and healthy trees as feasible, would plant a variety of desirable trees and shrubs within retained available landscaping areas, and would remove existing invasive vegetation from the retained available landscaping areas. These compensatory actions would provide a replacement ratio of approximately 2.8 to 1 (planted trees to removed significant trees), would provide greater tree species diversity than presently exists onsite, would provide a better balance of coniferous and deciduous species, and would remove identified undesirable black cottonwood trees.

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The proposed compensatory actions would also follow the City of Puyallup's planting standards for frontage and parking lot landscapes. In addition, the proposed compensatory actions would retain the very southern portion of the onsite southern mixed forest cluster adjacent to the offsite forested area to the south. The retention of this onsite forested area, while not a significant part of the identified offsite forested areas, would continue to provide onsite habitats for a variety of native wildlife species while also providing screening of potential light, noise, and dust associated with the revised onsite parking areas.

CONCLUSION

It is the opinion of Habitat Technologies that the proposed safety improvements, together with the proposed compensatory actions, would ensure that there would be no significant adverse impacts to the physical or biological functions either onsite or offsite within the adjacent forested areas to the south and to the east of the existing school facility. In addition, these offsite forested areas are also part of the Clarks Creek Park and provide a system of accessible, well-used public recreational trails.

Thank you for allowing Habitat Technologies the opportunity to assist with your site planning. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Deming

Thomas D. Deming, SPWS
Habitat Technologies