

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

#	Comment	WDFW Response
1	<p>I would like WDFW to work with the Kittitas County Field & Stream Club when Green Dot road determinations are made.</p> <p>Leta Davis</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. WDFW worked with individual Kittitas County Field and Stream Club members during the process of determining the green dot routes, and made 2 presentations at club meetings. Input from other users, agencies and the Yakama Nation was also used in the process. This input was used in determining which roads to include in the Green Dot Road Management Area.</p>
2	<p>I am against green dotting of the green gate area of the Quilomene Wildlife area for the following reasons:</p> <p>I attended the Naneum to Columbia River Recreation Planning meetings held in Ellensburg and Wenatchee. At those meetings, the “12 mile maximum” green dotted roads behind the green gate was never discussed. The “12 mile maximum” miraculously appeared in the final document. Knowing this, I am opposed to green dotting roads behind the green gate.</p> <p>I attended the Southcentral 'green dot' road management public meeting March 22, 2018 in Selah. The powerpoint presentation contained slide 17 entitled “Green Gate Proposal Area”. Slide 17 that was shown to a crowded audience of the public listed the proposal was supported or endorsed by the Kittitas County Field & Stream Club, LT Murray WAAC, and Kittitas County Public Land Use Committee. The powerpoint presentation was not given as a handout at that meeting, and instructions were not given to access the powerpoint. I have since filed a Public Record Request for for that document. The version I was given by WDFW Public Records Coordinator uses “reviewed by”, it is not what was shown that night to the public. WDFW says there is no other version of slide 17. I believe DFW personnel blatantly presented misleading information to the public on March 22 in Selah. I also know what I and others saw that night.</p>	<p>Designating a Green Dot Road system in the Green Gate subarea from the many roads and tracks in this area was in the very first draft of the Naneum to Columbia River Recreation Plan and Access Plan (Naneum Plan) Objectives, produced in April 2014. The draft objectives were shared with the Naneum Advisory Committee at that time. In the first draft, the objective stated a road density goal (1 mile or road per section), rather than a total miles of road goal that was in subsequent drafts and the final draft (approximately 12 miles of road in the Green Gate subarea). WDFW and DNR had a meeting in May 2014 with representatives of the Kittitas County Field and Stream Club (KCFSC). The KCFSC had submitted written comments on many of the initial draft objectives to DFW and DNR prior to that meeting. Those comments, dated May 5, 2014, acknowledged the Green Gate subarea roads objective; the KCFSC written comments affirmed the goal of Green Dotting roads in the Green Gate subarea, but asked for more miles of road than were included in the draft objectives.</p> <p>The KCFSC had a designated representative on the Naneum Committee. At the final public meeting on the draft plan, the KCFSC representative asked that the record show the KCFSC was not in favor of the Whiskey Dick Winter</p>

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

<p>It seems that someone at DFW is trying to make slide 17 “disappear”.</p> <p>I believe WDFW used words like supported or endorsed on slide 17 AND that support/endorsement was shaky. The following A. B. C. clarifies this:</p> <p>A. Kittitas County Field & Stream Club (KCF&SC) Club members that attended the September 13, 2017 LT Murray Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) meeting were allowed to make public comment at the end of the meeting. They stated they did not want the Green Gate area to be green dotted, as it would close more than half the roads they regularly used. Members of the committee interacted with the public present with creative ideas to the road problems behind the Green Gate without closing roads. The KCF&SC representative on the WAAC agreed with the KCF&SC members present not to green dot the area behind the Green Gate.</p> <p>At the KCF&SC October 9, 2017 meeting a vote was taken about green dotting behind the Green Gate. The result of the vote was not to green dot the area behind the Green Gate, leave it status quo.</p> <p>At the KCF&SC January 8 meeting a motion was made/passed to re-affirm the October 9 vote. The officers present couldn't recall the vote, and the minutes were not available.</p> <p>At the KCF&SC February 12 meeting WDFW and DNR presented options A, B, and C for green dotting behind the Green Gate. A vote was taken, it was a tie. When members said the President had to break the tie, he said he had already voted. Later it was pointed out that the club meeting was adjourned before the vote was taken.</p> <p>At the KCF&SC March 12 meeting WDFW & DNR presented option D. The club president stated before the presentation that</p>	<p>Range Closure, but KCFSC was otherwise satisfied with the final draft of the plan. During the SEPA process for the Naneum Plan, the KCFSC president submitted a letter on behalf of the Club; this letter again affirmed the goal of Green Dotting roads in the Green Gate subarea, but again asking for more miles of road than was included in the Naneum Plan objectives. The KCFSC comment letter asked that a draft map, referenced as the “Sprecher” map, be the guide for Green Dotting in the Green Gate subarea. There were no comments received during the Naneum Plan SEPA (October 2014) that objected to Green Dotting roads in the Green Gate subarea nor asking that the roads in the Green Gate subarea be excluded from the Green Dot Road Management Area. The Naneum Plan was formally adopted in January 2015, under the signatures of the WDFW Director and the Commissioner of Public Lands.</p> <p>The commenter references meetings that subsequently occurred in 2017 and 2018, wherein some members of the public wanted to exclude the Green Gate subarea from the Green Dot Road Management Area. This would be contrary to the Green Gate Objective adopted with the rest of the Naneum Plan in January 2015. The Naneum Plan was developed over a 2.5 year robust public process. Every written comment received from the KCFSC or any of its individual members during that extended planning process affirmed the goal of Green Dotting roads in the Green Gate subarea. The current SEPA relates to the implementation of the Green Gate Strategies in the Naneum Recreation Plan, not the re-creation of a different Green Gate Objective.</p>
---	---

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

club members would not be voting. On March 14, 2018 Bill Essman (KCF&SC board member but designated as KCFS Club Road Chair) sent a memo to Mel Babik, LT Murray WLA Manager stating the KCF&SC board of directors would like to thank Mel for working with the club and the public to develop Option D. The memo goes on to say the Board thinks it will provide reasonable access to the area for hunters and other motorized use, while eliminating areas of concern. It went on to say the board also supports green dotting the open roads and identifying the area as state land.

As you can see by all the above details, membership of the KCF&SC were **not** in support of green dotting behind the Green Gate. It was only the KCF&SC board that made the decisions.

B. LT Murraray Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC)
At the September 13, 2017 meeting of the LT Murray WAAC green dotting of the Green Gate area was discussed, no decision of support was made at the meeting. There were 7 members of the KCF&SC present (of the 9 public in attendance) at the September 13 WAAC meeting. The public was allowed to speak at the end of the meeting. Public comments were to not green dot the area behind the Green Gate, which would cause a loss of open roads. WAAC members and the public expressed creative ideas to improve the roads and offered to assist. My comments were: “This has been an interesting advisory committee discussion. Don't forget these are 'public lands' and the need for 'transparency'. I caution you don't go any further without input from longtime users of the Green Gate area. SEPA is too late for public comment.”

C. Kittitas County Public Lands Advisory Committee (KCPLAC)

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

At the March 19, 2018 meeting of the KCPLAC WDFW and DNR gave a presentation about Green Gate Green Dot Road Implementation. Those present made and passed a motion to approve Green dot implementation plan as presented by WDFW and DNR. Dave Duncan offered to have the committee write a letter to WDFW and DNR supporting the proposal with the caveat that this approval is an exception to the committee's normal position of not supporting the closing of currently open roads on public lands. The motion was approved unanimously. There were 5 of the 12 members of the KCPLAC present at this meeting. Less than a majority (quorum) were present for the vote. No Kittitas County Commissioner was present. As stated in the Board of County Commissioners County of Kittitas State of Washington Resolution No: 2013-134 “the KCPLAC shall be responsible for gathering information and making recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.” I interpret that to mean the KCPLAC does not make decisions on their own, and send their decision on to the outside world independently from the Board of County Commissioners.

WDFW personnel have repeatedly used the excuse that they have no money to pay for road improvements, therefore roads need to be closed. I believe WDFW has the money to repair roads, but they have chosen to spend it elsewhere. WDFW also shows slides of primitive roads in the worst shape they can find, calling them “bad roads”, therefore these bad roads need to be closed. More time needs to be spent on creative solutions. Statements like “We don't have the money to fix them so they have to be closed.” OR “They are 'bad' roads so they have to be closed.” are not valid. WDFW must be stopped from setting a precedent that if they say there is no money OR it is a “bad” road then it must be closed.

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>Attached are my comments for DNS 18-036: GREEN DOT ROAD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT GREEN GATE AREA OF QUILOMENE WILDLIFE AREA.</p> <p>Please include my comments as a part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.</p> <p>Lana Thomas Cruse</p>	
3	<p><u>WDFW received 29 comments similar to the one below.</u></p> <p>As a Washingtonian who cares about the important state public lands of the Quilomene Wildlife Area, I support your proposed efforts (DNS 18-036) to establish an official sustainable road system in the Green Gate area that maintains public access while also restoring important habitat and reducing the impact of unnecessary roads on wildlife.</p> <p>The Quilomene Wildlife Area provides valuable habitat for a wide diversity of species from elk to sage grouse, and is important in a larger connected network of habitats for shrub-steppe species in Eastern Washington. It's important that this project restore habitat by removing unnecessary roads, and at the same time supporting the quality of recreational experiences such as hiking and wildlife watching. This decision should be followed with timely implementation of restoration including the seeding and planting of restored roadbeds.</p> <p>I value responsible access and the opportunity to explore the Quilomene Wildlife Area, and believe that an official Green Dot Road System along with information kiosks will increase understanding of how we can use these public lands responsibly.</p>	Comments noted.

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	Thanking you for taking my comments in support of proposal DNS 18-036.	
4	<p>At the "Southcentral 'green dot' road management public meeting" held March 22, 2018 in Selah, <u>I signed up to receive notification for the SEPA process.</u> I hear from others that the SEPA is now "out", and I have not received a notice. I understand the deadline is June 18. This is an awfully short timeline for me to prepare my response. If I didn't get a notice, then others who signed up probably did not receive a notice. Will there be an extension?</p> <p>Lana Thomas Cruse</p>	There was a 1 week extension.
5	<p>I am a US citizen currently residing in British Columbia. Before moving to BC I lived for 32 years in Seattle. As a birder and butterflyer I have frequently visited the Quilomene Wildlife Area (coming from Seattle and now from BC).</p> <p>I support DNS 18-036. I agree with the goal of maintaining public access while restoring wildlife habitat. I want to see an official Green Dot Road System with a designated parking area and information kiosks, and I want to see some of the current road system decommissioned and restored to native habitat. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>Carolee Colter</p>	Comment noted.
6	<p>I am writing to provide comment on the Green Dot Road Management System at Green Gate Area of the Quilomene Wildlife Area (DNS 18-036). We strongly support the proposal by your agency to create an official and sustainable road system to provide public access in this location, while closing and restoring unnecessary road segments to reduce the impact to wildlife and increase habitat availability and quality.</p>	Comment noted.

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

<p>Conservation Northwest works to protect, connect, and restore wildlife and their habitats from the Washington Coast to the BC Rockies. We engaged and commented throughout 2012 and 2013 on the development of the Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreation Plan with a request that the plan would meet the following criteria: ensure consistency with existing land management plans, increase security habitat for elk in all seasons, maintain seasonal closures for elk in winter range, contribute to local and landscape scale habitat connectivity for wildlife, and increase water storage and watershed health. We are glad to see the implementation of components of this planning process through this proposal in the Green Gate area of the Quilomene Wildlife Area.</p> <p>The Quilomene is an important wildlife area in our state. Known for its regular concentrations of mule deer and elk that increase in numbers during winter months as snow makes foraging difficult at higher elevations it is also home to sage grouse, coyote, beaver, Golden eagles, black bear, and Sage thrashers. Additionally it is an important habitat area in a larger connected network of habitats for shrub-steppe species in the Columbia Basin. While this area is vital for our state's wildlife today and in a changing climate, we also recognize the tremendous value this landscape has for the public to recreate and visit. We believe the identification and maintenance of a sustainable network of official roads that balances public access with natural resource protection is essential. We support the balanced proposal to adopt 15 miles of user built roads to the Green Dot system in combination with the restoration of 12 miles of roads back to native habitat.</p> <p>While we support the proposal as presented, we remain concerned that the success of this project will be in the timely and holistic implementation of all components. We support the</p>	
--	--

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>signage, information kiosks, and parking lot construction to develop an official recreation and access system that the agency can manage and maintain over time but we believe that the 12 miles of road closures and restoration need to implemented in concert with the other project components to deter additional use on those segments and gain the habitat and wildlife benefits that the project aims to achieve. Therefore, we have a strong interest in the funding and implementation plan to support the ripping machinery, seeding of grasses and shrubs, and installation of water bars and erosion control structures.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>Sincerely, Jen Watkins Conservation Northwest</p>	
7	<p>On behalf of Southeast Region, Department of Natural Resources, I'd like to thank Fish & Wildlife for leading a very collaborative, transparent, inclusive, and efficient process for establishing the green dot road network in the Green Gate Area of the Quilomene Wildlife Area. The Department of Natural Resources cooperated throughout the planning process and I'm happy to see staff from both our agencies working very well together to solve problems, compromise, and make sound decisions. There was ample opportunity for the public to engage and provide input, many of those comments and suggestions were incorporated into the final proposal. Additionally, this proposal will mitigate several resource damage concerns on lands managed by both our agencies. We are supportive of the Determination of Non-significance knowing that many alternatives were evaluated. Melissa Babik and staff did a tremendous amount of work finding a solution to this access problem. I welcome you to contact me if you'd like to discuss further. My phone number is (509) 925-0923. Thank you.</p>	Comment noted.

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Larry Leach State Lands Assistant Region Manager Southeast Region WA Department of Natural Resources</p>	
8	<p>I do not support making the green gate area green dot roads. These roads have been open for several years and have never been an issue. Most of these roads are rock and do not need maintained by the game department, nor is there much traffic on these roads. This is one of the last areas that anyone can utilize without having to deal with a lot of people. Once these are maintained roads, there will be more issues and need more patrolling by the game department. I have hunted this area for 50 years and my father for 80 years, so I know that there are not many issues in the area. However, green dotting the area is going to cause a LOT of issues.</p> <p>The game department says they do not have enough money to maintain roads, so why are you making more roads that must be maintained because they will now be green dotted???? I feel it just because they want more and more control over the public.</p> <p>I was present at the field and stream meeting when we voted on this issue and I do not feel my opinion is being considered on this issue. It was a very clear vote that the majority of the club felt the green gate area needs to be "left as is" and no green dotting. However, the field and stream club is not representing my vote of NO on this issue.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Per the Naneum to Columbia River Recreation and Access Plan (Naneum Plan) Objective, Green Dot Roads will be managed as a primitive driving experience and they will receive minimal maintenance.</p> <p>See response to comment #2 for details on the planning process and Kittitas County Field and Stream Club input. The current SEPA relates to the implementation of the Green Gate Strategies in the Naneum Plan, not the re-creation of a different Green Gate Objective. This project is about determining which roads will be included in the Green Dot and which will be closed to motorized vehicles.</p> <p>After designating Green Dot Roads in the Green Gate Subarea, open road density will be similar in this area as across the Colockum, Whiskey Dick and Quilomene Wildlife Areas. This will provide excellent motorized access, while providing areas for quality wildlife habitat.</p>

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>ALSO, the maps that I have seen of the green dot proposal do not make any sense at all. Almost all roads are on ridges, so when elk are on one ridge, hunters are going to be shooting across the canyon toward a green dot road - where others could be driving, etc. You cannot utilize the bottom of the draws to get to the elk, unless you are on foot or horse back. This is not considerate of older hunters or hunters with disabilities. Also, if you shoot an elk in the bottom of a draw, how can you get it out? Yes, some people can pack it, use horses, whatever, but AGAIN, no thought of older or disabled hunters!</p> <p>The green dotting of this area does not make any sense and the area needs to be left alone. Please feel free to contact me at (509) 929-3780. And please consider leaving the green gate area as is.</p> <p>Thank you. Tina Morefield</p>	
9	<p>I support Conservation NW proposed Green Dot road. This area gets high offroading use, game bird hunting, and wildlife viewing. There are several ad hoc roads that seem to serve no function and they should be seeded and returned to habitat for the elk, birds, and other wildlife. I personally would like to see better access to the West Bar area and the Ice Age floods ripple bars.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Shirley Vander Veen</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
10	<p>I am opposed to green dotting behind the Green Gate. I hunt coyotes in the area regularly and I don't want the Game Department and a few other people choosing which roads are best to be left open or closed. I have not read or heard any legitimate reasons for any closures in the area.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. DFW and DNR completed extensive outreach and communication and worked with groups and individuals to determine which roads to include in the Green Dot Road System. This implements an objective of the Naneum to Columbia River Recreation and</p>

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>I went into the area last Winter to hunt and new confusing "no vehicle" signs were already posted . The Game Department needs to spend money on fixing roads instead of inventing lame excuses to close roads.</p> <p>Gary Dahm</p>	<p>Access Plan (Naneum Plan) that went though a 2.5 year process to develop, that included an advisory committee, public meetings and SEPA. The purpose of this SEPA was to determine which roads to designate as Green Dot, it did not include revisiting the broader objective already determined in the Naneum Plan.</p> <p>To date no new roads have been posted as closed. In 2017, Wildlife Area Staff installed “no vehicle” signs on roads that were already closed on DNR and DFW land as part of Puget Sound Energy’s Lease of lands for the Wildhorse Wind Farm. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on those roads, but the area is open to walk in access and hunting through the Register to Hunt Program.</p>
11	<p>My name is Connor Parrish and I am contacting you to comment on DNS 18-036: GREEN DOT ROAD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT GREEN GATE AREA OF QUILOMENE WILDLIFE AREA. I am a resident of Selah, and I have spent time hunting, hiking, and shed hunting in the Quilomene and surrounding wildlife areas. I am in support of the proposed project that will add 15 miles of road and decommission 12 miles of road. Removing roads from the wet valley bottoms and placing them primarily on the ridge tops will reduce the amount of road damage recreationist cause during the spring or after rain storms. I would like to see more projects in our surrounding wildlife areas to remove roads from valley bottoms where rain and snowmelt combined with vehicles create problems.</p> <p>Decommissioning and future rehabilitation of the 12 miles of road should be made a priority to reduce the road scares. It would be nice if/when these road were rehabilitated, there could be trails left along the old road beds to allow the public to use them for horseback riding, hiking, or mountain biking. It is nice</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
 Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>to have trails to use and avoid the roads that are used by ORV users.</p> <p>Beyond this project, I would like to support the efforts of WDFW to reduce the density of roads in our wildlife areas and the seasonal closures of vehicle traffic during winter to protect Elk and Mule deer winter range. There are recreation interests beyond ORV use in these areas including hiking, hunting and wildlife viewing that are improved with lower road densities. Additionally, our Elk and Deer populations are below their management objectives and we should do everything we can to minimize the stress we put on these animals during their most vulnerable time of the year.</p> <p>I hope my comments are helpful, thanks for your hard work.</p> <p>Connor Parrish</p>	
12	<p>I just led a great trip near Ellensburg to see Washington's wildlife. I brought a whole group of folks from Seattle, and met up with our trip leader from Leavenworth. We saw over 65 bird species, as well as mammals, snakes, and other critters. I write this to explain that I am a Washingtonian who cares about the important state public lands of the Quilomene Wildlife Area, I support your proposed efforts (DNS 18-036) to establish an official sustainable road system in the Green Gate area that maintains public access while also restoring important habitat and reducing the impact of unnecessary roads on wildlife.</p> <p>The Quilomene Wildlife Area provides valuable habitat for a wide diversity of species from elk to sage grouse, and is important in a larger connected network of habitats for shrub-steppe species in Eastern Washington. It's important that this</p>	Comment noted.

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

	<p>project restore habitat by removing unnecessary roads, and at the same time supporting the quality of recreational experiences such as hiking and wildlife watching. This decision should be followed with timely implementation of restoration including the seeding and planting of restored roadbeds.</p> <p>I value responsible access and the opportunity to explore the Quilomene Wildlife Area, and believe that an official Green Dot Road System along with information kiosks will increase understanding of how we can use these public lands responsibly. Thanking you for taking my comments in support of proposal DNS 18-036.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Graham Taylor</p>	
13	<p>I support your proposed efforts (DNS 18-036) to establish an official sustainable road system in the Green Gate area that maintains public access while also restoring important habitat and reducing the impact of unnecessary roads on wildlife.</p> <p>I value responsible access and the opportunity to explore the Quilomene Wildlife Area, and believe that an official Green Dot Road System along with information kiosks will increase understanding of how we can use these public lands responsibly. Thanking you for taking my comments in support of proposal DNS 18-036.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Peggy J Printz</p>	Comment noted.

14	<p>I oppose the closure of approximately 12 miles of roadway and additional restricted access to motorized vehicles in the Quilomene Wildlife Area on both the WDFW and Dept. of Natural Resource lands ("DNR"). Reduced access to the Quilomene Wildlife Area negatively impacts my cultural, recreational, and lifestyle practices and contradicts the information provided in sections twelve (12) and thirteen (13) on page eleven (11) of the July 2016 SEPA checklist. I am a property owner, resident, and multi-generational homesteader of the North Kittitas valley and also an enrolled citizen of the Yakama Nation.</p> <p>I have used the area now described as the Quilomene Wildlife Area regularly during my lifetime and consistently with past generational use since time immemorial. Tribal citizens, elders, and I use this area annually, and during all seasons of the year, for traditional cultural purposes, hunting, and root digging. As a Kittitas band descendent, my relatives have travelled through, gathered, traded, and subsisted along with other Northeastern and Eastern Indian bands for an unrecorded number of generations. This proposal to decommission a dozen miles of roadway and restrict motorized access materially limits the ability to use this area by myself, elders, and others during inclement or hazardous seasons. This proposal to decommission roads and restrict motorized access in the Quilomene Wildlife Area substantially reduces mine and other's traditional food-gathering subsistence practices for elk, deer, roots, and other native products.</p> <p>This proposed closure is part of a long trend of restricting public access to areas of historical and traditional use. The proposed closure will have a cumulative effect, and independent result, of materially and substantially limiting or constructively</p>	<p>This project is part of the larger Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreations and Access Plan (Naneum Plan) that was completed in 2015, and included the objective of implementing Green Dot Road Management in the Green Gate subarea. During that time, there were no SEPA comments in opposition to implementing the Green Gate subarea objectives.</p> <p>Implementing the proposed project will result in an open road density of approximately 1.7 miles/section. This will still provide excellent access for tribal hunting, gathering and cultural purposes, commensurate with other parts of the larger Colockum, Quilomene, and Whiskey Dick landscape. The Yakama Nation comment letter on the original Naneum Plan voiced support for greater wildlife habitat protection in the Green Gate subarea, and the Yakama Nation supported moving forward with implementing the current project.</p>
----	--	--

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

<p>eliminating my multi-generational cultural practices, food and subsistence gathering, and the exercise of federal treaty-reserved hunting rights by enrolled tribal citizens. Nearly half of the restricted motorized access and proposed road closures do not have an alternate or circuitous route and will prevent further cultural and recreational use by elders, tribal citizens with diminished physical ability, and anyone unwilling to venture hazardous autumn, winter, or spring weather conditions on surrounding hills, ravines, and canyons. This proposal will displace existing and continued cultural and recreational uses contrary to statements published in the SEPA checklist sections for "Recreation" (12) and "Historic and cultural preservation" (13) on page eleven (11) by the proponent agency.</p> <p>I oppose the closure of roadways and motorized vehicle access in the Quilomene Wildlife Area on WDFW and DNR land that materially and substantially limits or constructively and cumulatively eliminates multi-generational cultural practices, food and subsistence gathering, and the exercise of federal treaty-reserved hunting rights by myself and other enrolled tribal citizens.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Allen Aronica</p>	
--	--

15	<p>This project really isn't about "green dotting" roads. It is absolutely about <u>closing</u> half of the existing roads in the Green Gate area. We are adamantly opposed to closing roads in this area, as are a majority of the users of the area. With this project in particular, by the time the project gets to SEPA most of the public are so discouraged they feel it is hopeless to respond.</p> <p>In the mid 1980's the Department of Wildlife concocted a plan to close 60% the existing roads in the Colockum, Quilomene and LT Murray <u>Wildlife Recreation Areas</u>. The public was generally in opposition but the Department promised there would be no more road closures. In reality, now more than ever, the Department was /is a mega-agency that is used to getting its way and promises aren't kept. Along the way, the word <u>Recreation</u> was omitted from the lands operation title. The messaging that went along with the title change is indisputable.</p> <p>WDFW was not a willing participant in the Naneum to Columbia <u>Recreation</u> Analysis process (N/C) except for when the document meets their agenda or objectives which in the case of this project they authored themselves. The N/C asked the public to rank their personal recreation interests. Pleasure driving or adventure driving ranked #6. If WDFW were actually following the spirit of the plan, the public ranking would not be ignored. In the early going of the N/C process both WDFW and DNR (an agency that has been drug into culpability for this project) presented to the public each agencies "Management Objectives" for the plan. WDFW's presentation was given by The Region 3 Lands Supervisor at the time. In describing WDFW's "Management" Objectives", the agenda of closing roads to impede tribal hunting was not mentioned. It remained behind a veiled curtain. The agenda to impede or limit tribal hunting preceded the beginning of the N/C process and it is in place today</p>	<p>The Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreation and Access Plan (Naneum Plan) was developed over a 2.5 year (June 2012-January 2015) planning process. Numerous public meetings were held during the process, and a citizen advisory group (the Committee) representing diverse public interests in the planning area, met regularly as the plan was developed. At the end of the planning process, all members of the Committee indicated they were satisfied with the final draft of the Naneum Plan. The Committee representative from the Kittitas County Field and Stream Club objected to the Whiskey Dick winter range vehicle access closure on behalf of the club, but did not object to the Green Gate Subarea Objectives.</p> <p>The Green Gate Subarea Objectives in the Naneum Plan included designating a Green Dot Road system in the Green Gate Subarea from a subset of the existing roads and tracks currently there. The objective included reducing the open road density from its current 27 miles (3 miles/section) to approximately 12 miles (~1.4 miles/section) after implementation.</p> <p>The Green Gate subarea was purchased by WDFW with RCO grant funds acquired to secure wildlife habitat formerly in private ownership. The intent of the Green Gate road management objective in the Naneum Plan was to provide recreational access to the area, while also managing the open road density to enhance wildlife habitat values of the area. The 3 miles of open road per section that existed upon purchase of the land is very high for an area managed for wildlife habitat, particularly for habitat intended to provide big game winter range.</p>
----	--	--

<p>after the signing of the N/C. The N/C landscape is all inclusive and contains the Green Gate area. We are not tribal members or spokespeople for the tribe but when roads are closed or annihilated to impede tribal hunting we lose our privilege to access our public lands by motor vehicle and we are not okay with that.</p> <p>The unveiled and openly discussed rationale WDFW uses for this road closure project leans toward habitat and wildlife protection. Legislative mandate 11-12 requires the agency to use "science" to come to a management decision. That has not been done. Furthermore, given the fact that WDFW receives revenue from ten wind towers on WDFW land within the Wild Horse Wind Farm grid, their pitch to protect Sage Grouse habitat is hypocritical. The "cash cow" discussion is not only relevant to wind towers. WDFW's voracious appetite for securing grant money is also egregious. In their arrogance to force everything their way, a grant request for the Green Gate area project was written and submitted to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) prior to May 1, 2018 by WDFW for ninety four thousand dollars to repair and upgrade roads that will remain open and destroy the roads to be closed. With the grant request being submitted prior to this SEPA process, obviously WDFW doesn't consider that any public process including SEPA will hamper their agenda. As with numerous past examples, WDFW will actually use a small portion of the grant funds for the capital project and siphon the rest to supplant unnecessary layers of management. Do I hear "we need an audit"? The irony to all of this is that the LT Murray Wildlife Area Manager stated in a public meeting —"we have no money to fix roads". This is a practiced and redundant narrative commonly vocalized to the</p>	<p>The commenter asserts that the Green Gate road management objective was designed to impede tribal hunting. This is untrue. Implementing the proposed project will result in an open road density of approximately 1.7 miles/section. This will still provide excellent access for tribal and nontribal hunting, commensurate with other parts of the larger Colockum, Quilomene, and Whiskey Dick landscape. The Yakama Nation comment letter on the original Naneum Plan voiced support for greater wildlife habitat protection in the Green Gate subarea, and the Yakama Nation supported moving forward with implementing the current project.</p> <p>Currently, the Green Gate subarea has the highest open road density of any portion of the Colockum, Quilomene, or Whiskey Dick landscape. Reducing the open road density to enhance wildlife habitat values is based in science. A considerable body of scientific literature suggests that open road densities of greater than about 1.5 miles per section negatively impact elk habitat effectiveness. Please see the following references as examples:</p> <p><i>Leege, T. A. 1984. Guidelines for Evaluating and Managing Summer Elk Habitat, Wildlife Bulletin 11. Idaho Fish and Game.</i></p> <p><i>Thomas, J.W., D. A. Leckenby, M. Henjum, R. J. Pedersen, and L.D. Bryant. 1988. Habitat Effectiveness Index for Elk on Blue Mountain Winter Ranges. General Technical Report PNW-GTR-218. US Forest Service.</i></p>
--	---

public to justify not repairing roads but it is actually designed to "spank" the Legislature for cutting WDFW's operating budget.

Stonewalling the public has been business as usual by WDFW for some time. WDFW does not have public support from "users" for this unnecessary project. The amount of lies and deceit we have had to endure from the few collaborators in favor of the project is stunning. There are multiple examples of proof for valid challenges and Region 3 WDFW representatives along with local DNR personnel are all aware of them and they would have to agree with us if they told the truth. Included among the challenges is that there is no support or endorsement from the members of the Kittitas County Field and Steam Club, The Kittitas County Board of Commissioners or the LT Murray Wildlife Area Advisory Committee for this project. The implied support or endorsement from these entities is a lie. Some meetings and mapping exercises were with one person from the public and they were held in secret. Does anybody care to challenge us on this point? Furthermore, green dotting or parameters for green dotting behind the Green Gate were never submitted into the N/C document by the N/C Committee or the public. The ill-conceived notion was submitted by somebody from within WDFW. That person remains a mystery.

Prior to the NIC, WDFW attempted to satisfy its lust for closing roads by turning the Green Gate area into ADA access only. That brainstorm was met by a successful challenge because ADA access means equal access not exclusive access. Today, with this project, there is no consideration for ADA access whatsoever! That scheme was followed by a cooperative project between WDFW and the Mule Deer Foundation when Bitter Brush was planted in the right —of-ways of existing roads behind the Green Gate. This was done in an effort to minimize or reduce the viability of roads so they could eventually be closed by claiming

Wisdom, M. J., L. R. Bright, C. G. Carey, W. H. Hines, R. J. Pedersen, D. A. Smithey, J. W. Thomas, G. W. Witmer. 1986. A Model to Evaluate Elk Habitat in Western Oregon. Publication No. R6-F&WL-216-1986. USDA Forest Service.

Lyon, L. J. 1979. Habitat effectiveness for elk as influenced by roads and cover. Journal of Forestry 77:658-660.

Lyon, L. J. 1983. Road density models describing habitat effectiveness for elk. Journal of Forestry 81:592-595.

Christensen, A. G., L. J. Lyon, and J. W. Unsworth. 1993. Elk management in the northern region: considerations in forest plan updates or revisions. US Forest Service General Technical Report INT-303.

Kolman, J. 2016. Roads, Land, and Big Game Harvest. A Report to the Montana Legislature in Fulfillment of House Joint Resolution J13. Environmental Quality Council.

The commenter references meetings that subsequently occurred in 2017 and 2018, wherein some members of the public wanted to exclude the Green Gate subarea from the Green Dot Road Management Area. This would be contrary to the Green Gate Objective adopted with the rest of the Plan in January 2015. The Plan was developed over a 2.5 year robust public process. Every written comment

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

<p>habitat impact. After the N/C process was completed, WDFW attempted to establish a "birding "or "walking" trail behind the Green Gate. This project was not conceived in the N/C or the LT Murray WAAC but was yet another attempt by Region 3 staff to inhibit, restrict or discourage traditional motorized access and to displace hunting. The"trail" project was challenged and after a time consuming process the attempt was abandoned.</p> <p>Finely for now, on numerous occasions "users" of the area asked for "status Quo", "Leave it as is"or do nothing". WDFW totally rebuked the public's request to have "Status Quo" as an option even though WDFW has "managed" the land as "Status Quo" since it was acquired in 2007. The area has functioned for decades as it is and WDFW has no scientific proof to the contrary.</p> <p>So here we go again. This project was ill-conceived and the process has been poorly managed from the beginning. It not only does not meet the expectations of a public process, it lacks transparency and is a total fraud. If anybody cares to debate or take exception to our comments lets go direct to the WDFW Fish and Wildlife Commission, the Director of Fish and Wildlife and the Commissioner of Public Lands to have a discussion for complete vetting of what we have said. We have ample facts to dispute WDFW's claim that there is a "determination of non-significance" for this project. Please refer to the attached letter sent to Regional Director Mike Livingston on 2-21-2018 for further context. (We received no response to the letter)We will not only continue to challenge the SEPA but the Underlying Action as well. We recommend that proponents for closing roads that hide behind" green dotting "or false information prepare to hang on for the ride. They will no longer be able to pretend that we haven't said anything.</p> <p>Dennis Ohlde, Arvilla Ohlde</p>	<p>received during that extended planning process, including those received from the commenter, affirmed the goal of Green Dotting roads in the Green Gate subarea. The current SEPA relates to the implementation of the Green Gate Strategies in the Naneum Plan, not the re-creation of a different Green Gate Objective.</p>
--	--

<p>16 <u>Email exchange between commenter and DFW that was requested to be part of the record</u> I contacted Lisa Wood, WDFW SEPA Coordinator, by phone to get clarification for where I need to direct time sensitive challenges to your Green Gate project #DNS-18-036. She advised me that you are the responsible applicant. I previously asked Ross Huffman for an actual copy of the Power Point slide presentation he showed to the public during the Selah meeting regarding the Green Gate green dotting. (see my email request attached below.) I don't believe he gave me what he presented at that meeting. If I am correct, this is a serious issue for you to defend as this process goes forward. It is my recollection that either the words "support" or "endorsement" were used to describe the position or response from the Murray WAAG, KCFSC, and KCPLUAC for green dotting of the Green Gate area. This may not be the exact order as shown in the slide but I believe they were shown with individual bullet points. I will give you and Ross the benefit of the doubt until I am able to prove what was actually shown or you can prove that I am wrong. However, even implied endorsement from these groups in any form is not correct and not appropriate to state in a public meeting without providing specific clarification. For example, your WAAG did not vote one way or the other and they clearly did not endorse the project. What they did was to give <u>advice</u> by way of offering creative remedies for road "problems" and they advocated for using public assistance and volunteer labor to accomplish the goal of keeping the roads open and viable. Your response to these cooperative ideas was to simply state "we have no money for road repair". That is ironic isn't it when your Green Gate SEPA talks about acquiring grants or funds for not only road upgrades and repair but to destroy the roads slated for closure.</p>	<p>Melissa just forwarded me your email you sent to her on 6/14, that references an earlier email on 6/8. Unfortunately nobody with WDFW received your email sent on 6/8 and that is why there has been no reply. In your email on 6/8 you made 4 requests for assistance and our response is below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-At this time WDFW is planning on extending the SEPA comment period, notification should be going out tomorrow (6/15).-Public who attended the meeting and provided a legible email address have received the SEPA and can provide comments if they choose.-There is currently no 4x4 representative on the LT Murray WAAC. The person who represented that interest resigned.-I have contacted Lisa Wood who received your email on 6/14 and she has made your email part of the SEPA comments.
--	--

SEPA DNS 18-036 Green Dot Road Management of the Green Gate Area Quilomene Wildlife Area
Comments received during the June 4-25, 2018 comment period and WDFW responses.

Here is what I need from you for now:

- A reasonable extension of the SEPA response period so I can acquire proof about the Power Point slide.
- I need your help to contact people that attended the Selah meeting that may have photos of the actual unedited March 22nd slide in question. I predict that in the end it will be proven that it is best for you to complete this cooperative gesture rather than to wait for me to find the proof.
- Please provide either contact information or have the person contact me, that is your 4X4 representative on your WAAG. You may recall that Bill Essman stated he was proxy for that group during your September WAAG meeting.
- Finally, please include this email as part of my SEPA response. I anticipate that I will be submitting further input in the near future.

Thank you, Dennis Ohlde