

WATER TRANSFER WORKING GROUP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

APPLICATION NO./COURT CLAIM NO. Nos. G4-35799(D) and G4-35799(E)		
APPLICANT NAME Kittitas County	CONTACT NAME Paul Jewell	TELEPHONE NO. 509-962-7508
WATER RIGHT HOLDER'S NAME (if different) Kittitas County		EMAIL paul.jewell@co.kittitas.wa.us

DATE OF APPLICATION(S) October 6, 2015	PRIORITY DATE October 6, 2015, mitigated by pre-1905 water rights
---	--

WATER SOURCE: Groundwater in unconsolidated and consolidated (G4-35799(D)) and bedrock (G4-35799(E)) aquifers.	CROP: N/A
INSTANTANEOUS QUANTITY: Up to 92.682 gpm* * Combined total quantity from the County's Over The Counter (OTC) Program for new permit-exempt uses + these proposed mitigation groundwater permits will not exceed the quantity listed above. These quantities are currently authorized for mitigation for new permit-exempt uses under the County's OTC Program in the existing green zone.	ANNUAL QUANTITY: 149.60 ac-ft/yr (52.50 ac-ft/yr (CU))*
PERIOD OF USE: Year round, as needed	
PLACE OF USE: Existing "green zones" from Caribou Creek through Wilson Creek of the Williams, Amerivest, Roth, and Clennon water banks, as shown in Attachment A.	PURPOSE OF USE: Single and multiple domestic use
IRRIGATION METHOD: N/A	

<p>CONSUMPTIVE USE CALCULATION: Consumptive use calculations previously approved by Ecology (and presented to the WTWG) during formation of Williams, Amerivest, Roth, and Clennon water banks. The County has acquired up to 52.50 ac-ft/yr (CU).</p> <p>Mitigation suitability for each bank has previously been determined by Ecology. In total, the County has acquired and committed 149.60 ac-ft/yr; or 52.50 ac-ft/yr (consumptive use) to the OTC Program, which is suitable for mitigation on the mainstem Yakima River and select tributaries, such as the Manastash Creek subbasin through the County's OTC Program for new permit exempt uses and the subject groundwater mitigation permit applications.</p>

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

As part of its OTC Program, the County is seeking to obtain groundwater mitigation permits to provide water budget neutral water right permits to building permit applicants that do not meet the domestic use exemption under RCW 90.44.050. The County already has approval for the OTC Program to provide mitigation for domestic uses that are exempt under RCW 90.44.050, wherein mitigation certificates are recorded against qualifying parcels to document their water budget neutrality. The County proposes assigning portions of the groundwater mitigation permits issued by Ecology under this proposal to qualified building permit applicants as another service offered through their previously WTWG-approved OTC Program. The quantities the County is seeking under this pilot program are not additive to the existing Over-The-Counter Program's mitigation for permit-exempt uses.

Following consultation with Ecology and basin stakeholders, including the Yakama Nation staff and the Bureau of Reclamation, a subset of subbasins in the northeast portion of Lower Kittitas County were selected to pilot the approach in evaluation of water availability and impairment. The area includes the existing green zones from Caribou Creek through Wilson Creek (Wilson-Cherry) as shown in Attachment B. These subbasins were selected because they were generally identified as having fewer water supply issues.

To identify what existing and future parcels will require mitigation from the groundwater mitigation permit, the County has completed a detailed analyses of parcels with respect to exempt well use and project requirements as defined by *Campbell and Gwinn*. The review included comparing each plat to a Project Eligibility Review checklist developed by the County and approved by Ecology. If the project exceeds 14 lots (that would exceed water usage of 5,000 gallons per day) and has shared common ownership, infrastructure or utilities, then the County would require mitigation under the groundwater mitigation permit process. The analysis is only applicable to projects that received final plat approval after March 28, 2002.

Results of the analysis have been incorporated into the County's GIS database and made available through the County's on-line mapping tools. Relative location and numeration of the proposed points of withdrawal in the Wilson-Cherry subbasin is shown in Attachment B.

In summary, based on the review of existing information, including basin-specific hydrogeology (Aspect 2016), it is noted that:

- The County has acquired four water banks in the lower Kittitas basin with previously approved green zones as depicted on existing water bank suitability maps;
- The County has an approved OTC Program for mitigation of exempt wells which is currently authorized for 402 building permits expected through 2025;
- The suitability map(s) was established for the OTC Program based on a recognition that surface water is available in sufficient quantities to support both existing surface water rights, and indirect impact from some continued exempt well development;
- The subject permits (Nos. G4-35799(B), and G4-35799(C)) are subject to the same limit of 402 building permits previously approved for new permit exempt uses under the OTC Program;

- Wells drilled under the groundwater mitigation permit will have effects on the Yakima River and lower sections of its tributaries creeks within the green zone as a function of location and well depth. Locations and target aquifers are known based on the County's mapping and investigation of permit vs. permit-exempt authority requirements.
- Both the OTC Program's mitigation for new exempt uses and the subject permits are water budget neutral with respect to Total Water Supply Available (TWSA);
- Cumulative impacts within the approved green zone up to the 402 building permit limit will be the same irrespective of whether groundwater mitigation occurs through the OTC Program's mitigation for new exempt uses or this groundwater mitigation permit;
- Groundwater levels in the unconsolidated and consolidated and bedrock aquifers in the existing Lower County have increased beyond predevelopment levels;
- Ecology files indicate no water availability enforcement action or curtailment order has been issued on water rights within the existing green zone;
- All Mitigation Certificates issued under the County's OTC Program, including mitigation for new exempt uses and this groundwater mitigation permit will be provisioned based on future curtailment risk;
- All Mitigation Certificates and this groundwater mitigation permit will be provisioned on well construction standards, including completion interval and sealing requirements consistent with the subject permit and to minimize tributary impacts;
- Interference drawdown at 500 feet from continuously pumping the proposed wells at an average withdrawal rate (32.5 gpm) for 1 year is estimated to be less than 1 foot in a consolidated sedimentary aquifer and less than 10 feet in the basalt aquifer. Peak pumping (withdrawal of 92.682 gpm for 30 continuous days) results in less than 1.5 in the consolidated sedimentary aquifer and less than 20 feet of drawdown in the basalt aquifer. Both estimates conservatively assume no leakage or boundary condition from the nearby Yakima River and are a small percentage of the total available drawdown in the Basalt Aquifer; and
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species are present in surface water throughout the Lower County. The additional withdrawal of 52.5 ac-ft/yr of consumptive use from the green zone areas was previously considered as part the County's OTC Program for mitigation of new exempt uses to not impair these species, and the groundwater mitigation permit approach is designed to not exceed these levels.
- The Yakama Nation has time immemorial Federally-protected fishing rights in their Usual and Accustomed areas as also located throughout the Lower County.

Under the subject applications, the County is requesting a 10-year development schedule, after which the County would return to Ecology and the WTWG for review and authorization for additional mitigation quantities if appropriate. The County is also proposing bi-annual check-in meetings with Ecology and the WTWG to review the spatial distribution and density of assigned mitigation certificates under the groundwater mitigation permits as well as for exempt uses. These check-in meetings are designed to address any potential local impairment issues, including any concerns related to density of assigned mitigation certificates.

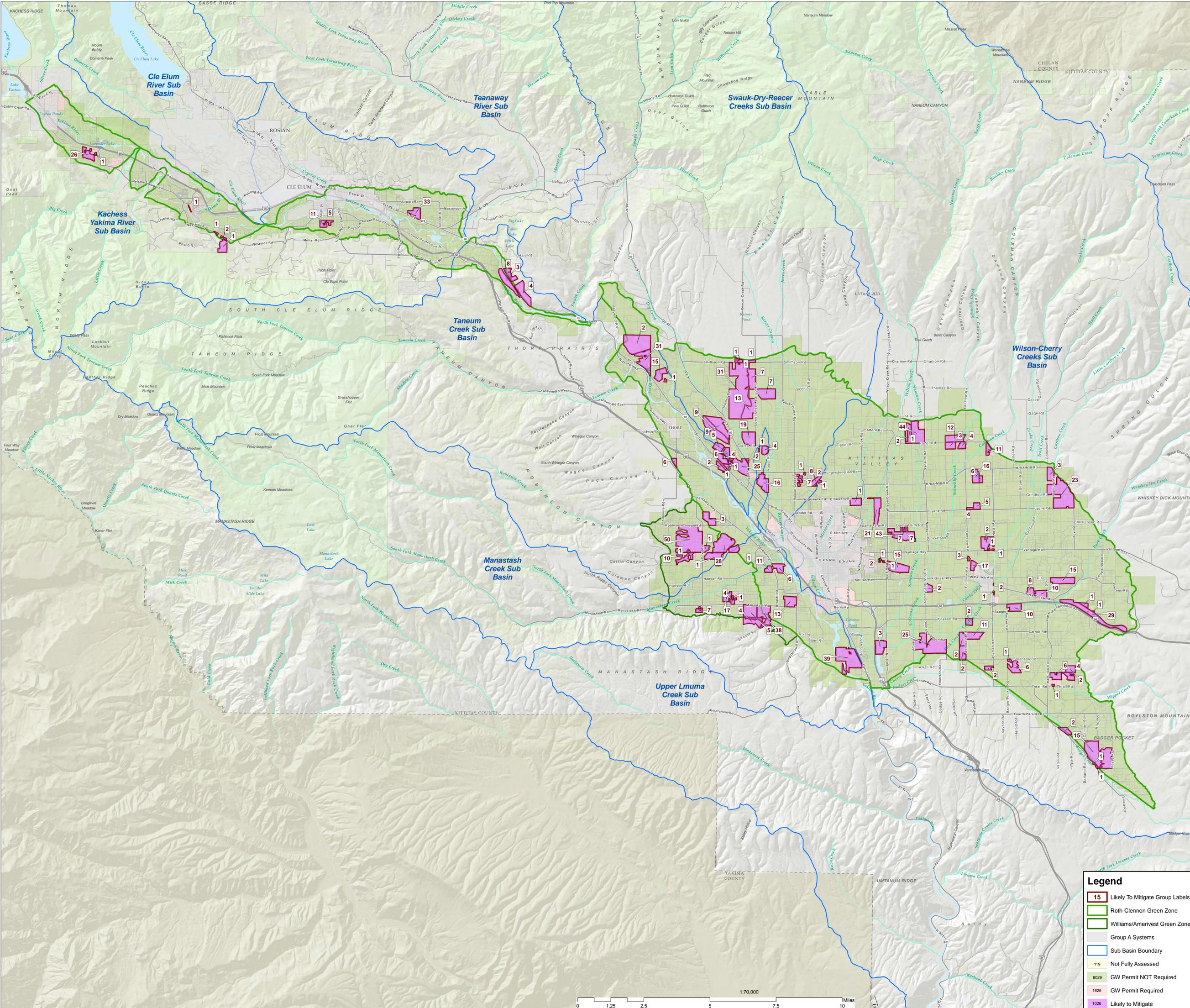
Based on the review of existing information, it was concluded that:

- Groundwater within the existing green zones are legally and physically available;
- Use of the full permitting quantity as provisioned will not impair existing senior water rights or TWSA;
- Although pumping interference effects are likely, no impairment of existing groundwater rights—either permit or permit-exempt—will occur in the unconsolidated and consolidated and bedrock aquifers with full use of the requested quantity; and
- Use of the full permitted quantity as provisioned will not impair ESA-listed species. The full permitted quantity here is subject to regulation to protect senior rights.

If future hydrologic conditions change, including the influence of federal project waters that affect local groundwater availability, reliability of uses issued under this groundwater mitigation permit may be less certain without mitigation other than a TWSA-neutral approach.

Specific to the County's groundwater mitigation permit, the County advertises mitigation with a pre-1905 senior priority date with currently firm reliability. As provisioned in the County's mitigation certificates, if a future occurrence results in a finding that water is not locally available, the permittee will be pro-rationed or curtailed. The County is considering pursuing purchase of senior water rights in other tributary subbasins, which could allow in-kind mitigation of potential impacts to tributaries if future curtailment problems occur. In addition, other mitigation option may exist, such as cooperative flow agreements with local irrigation districts. Individual users always have the option of pursuing water right acquisitions and transfers that would further increase reliability of their own water supply.

Kittitas County Groundwater Permit Status Map



Legend

- 15 Likely To Mitigate Group Labels
- Roth-Ciennon Green Zone
- Williams/Amerivest Green Zone
- Group A Systems
- Sub Basin Boundary
- 119 Not Fully Assessed
- 8029 GW Permit NOT Required
- 1625 GW Permit Required
- 1026 Likely to Mitigate

Wilson-Cherry Creek Sub Basin Permit Map

