



SCHOTT & ASSOCIATES

Ecologists & Wetlands Specialists

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MEMO

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PLANNING

September 21, 2022

To: Trisha Clark

From: Martin Schott

Subject: Buffer Assessment for SW Ebb Street at SW 50th Ave

Schott & Associates (S&A) was requested to provide natural resource consultation on the property located west of SW Ebb Avenue and between SW 48th Street and 50th Street in Lincoln City, Lincoln County, Oregon (T7S, R11W, Section 27DC, Tax Lots 2800-3500). Lincoln City has requested recommendations of how big the wetland buffer should be. This memo will address site history, site conditions, recommendations during the construction process to minimize wetland impacts and suggestions for management of the wetlands after construction. If recommended construction management practices are implemented S&A recommends a minimal 5' upland buffer will provide adequate wetland protection.

Site History

A wetland delineation was completed in October 2020 by Anita Cate Smith of Westbrook Science & Design, LLC and concurrence from Oregon Department of State Lands was received in August 2021 (WD2020-0630) (see attached).

Site Conditions

Martin Schott of S&A conducted a site visit in July 2022 and reviewed both the wetland delineation report and DSL's concurrence letter. S&A agreed with the delineated wetland boundaries and found both the wetland and adjacent upland to be in mostly good ecological condition. The wetland was found on lots 3000, 3100 and 3200 and extended offsite to the north and west. Any associated buffers onsite would affect lots 2900 and 3300. No wetlands were documented on lots 2800, 3400 and 3500.

The wetland onsite is described in the wetland delineation report, and is typical of coastal wetlands, which form in sandy soils. Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) and Sitka spruce (*Picea stichensis*) tend to be the dominant trees along with shore pine (*Pinus contorta*). The shrub layer is often dominated by twin flower (*Lonicera involcrata*). The herbaceous layer is often dominated by slough sedge (*Carex obnupta*). The adjacent uplands are often dominated by the same tree species. However, Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) often is the dominant shrub. Sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*) often replaces the slough sedge.

Recommendations During Construction

Any development near or adjacent to wetlands has the potential to negatively impacts the wetlands and their functions. Common practice is to require an upland buffer to protect the adjacent wetland. However, in lieu of a buffer, potential impacts can be minimized or eliminated through careful development.

One of the most common impacts to wetlands during construction phases is incidental encroachment into the wetland by large equipment and ground disturbance. This type of impact can be avoided by installing a construction fence along the wetland boundary or buffer boundary. All equipment operators should be instructed not to encroach beyond the construction fence.

After Construction Management

Another potential impact to wetlands is polluted water entering the wetland from the impervious surfaces. If *any* wetland impacts are proposed as part of the project, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) would require water quality treatment and certification for the subdivision. Development of Lots 2800, 3400 and 3500 would not have any jurisdictional wetland impacts. Thus, DEQ has no jurisdiction. However, Lots 2900 and 3300 are close to the delineated wetland and development has the potential to impact the wetland on these lots. The potential for this impact can be minimized or eliminated by treating the runoff from the impervious surfaces via rain gardens. The rain gardens can then drain either to the City's storm water system, or towards the wetland.

Another potential indirect impact to the wetland post construction is dewatering of the wetland by the development. This can happen when the storm water is diverted away from the wetland. This potential problem is not likely for a development this small. The climate on this portion of the Oregon coast is cool and wet enough where it is anticipated that natural hydrological inputs will support long term maintenance of the wetland.

Many potential impacts arise from direct human disturbance of wetlands. One of the most common problems with natural areas, including wetlands, is the dumping of yard debris. This problem can be discouraged by building a fence along the property line separating the wetland from the development. The fence should be high enough to make it difficult to dump the yard debris over the fence. Additionally, posting signs identifying the wetland and discouraging dumping can be posted.

Homeless camps have become a significant problem in many jurisdictions, and there were homeless camps in and adjacent to the wetland. There are several ways camping can be discouraged. Lots 3000, 3100 and 3200 can have a deed restriction that would protect the natural area and restrict camping. If there is a neighborhood association, it could manage the remaining natural area. If there isn't a neighborhood association the lots with the wetland could be come part of the nearest developable lot. Again, there would need to be a deed restriction on the lots with the wetland.

Summary

The wetland largely extends offsite to the north and west and is surrounded by existing development with very little noticeable wetland buffers. The onsite wetland and adjacent upland boundary (buffer) were both found to be in good ecological condition. Managing the site both during and after construction including placement of construction fencing as well as a permanent fence and deed restriction can help minimize impacts to the wetland. With these practices, S&A suggests that development does not pose significant impacts to the ecological health of the wetland and a minimal buffer of 5 feet be established and maintained. To further protect the wetland additional plantings of Sitka spruce within the wetland buffer may help provide separation and visual screening of the wetland from the developed lots.