

Concerns with RB Wildlife Habitat Assessment
May 22, 2024

To: Members of the Planning & Community Development Commission; Lyons Board of Trustees, Town of Lyons Administration and Planning;

We would like to express our concerns regarding potential inaccuracies in the "Wildlife Habitat Assessment River Bend Event Center," which was prepared and submitted for Lyons Properties (Chris Legh) by Jerald M. Powell. Please include this in your meeting materials regarding the changes to RiverBend PUD-C zoning.

Specifically, the sentences quoted below from Powell's report bring us the most concern:

- "No native plant community habitat is present within or **near** River Bend Event Center."
- "No other wildlife species are expected to be impacted because of the lack of suitable habitat and the location of River Bend Event Center next to existing transportation and development. No sensitive habitats, critical habitats, or Designated Critical Habitat exist **nearby** that would be impacted by the proposed action at the River Bend Event Center."

Our property, 601 Indian Lookout Road, is immediately West/Northwest to property owned by RiverBend. We have nearly 8 acres of mostly undeveloped and wild natural land. It is full of native vegetation and wildlife, including a fox den, bears, bobcats, occasional cougars, deer, wild turkeys, raccoons, skunks, countless birds and rodents, and the town's famous golden eagles (who hunt on our property). Please see the attached photos for reference. Many animals use our property as a wildlife corridor to access the river, and this unique stretch of land is one of the few access points in Lyons for wildlife to move freely between the foothills and the riparian corridor. Frequent amplified music may have a devastating effect on this natural ecosystem, especially since we are in a natural amphitheater with rock walls (causing even the slightest sounds to ricochet and disturb wildlife).

Powell's report seems to neglect to mention habitat along RiverBend's West and Northwest boundaries, including the riparian corridor that we share with RiverBend. Furthermore, it states that no native plant community habitat or sensitive habitat exists NEAR RiverBend and implies that the venue only borders "existing transportation and development." Because of these inaccuracies and the unique location of RiverBend, we request that a new wildlife habitat assessment be completed that includes neighboring property. We also hope you refer to the insights and opinions of the Lyons Ecology Advisory Board regarding this matter.

Finally, we believe that Powell's relationship as a friend with the property owner/applicant (Chris Legh) potentially creates a conflict of interest. We recommend that a neutral third party creates the new wildlife habitat assessment.

Best regards,
Clara and Pat Thomas, 601 Indian Lookout Road



