



May 31, 2021

To: Yavapai County Board of Supervisors

Re: Yavapai Ranch Request for Extension of Planned Area Development (PAD)

Mr. Chair and Supervisors:

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat work, youth recruitment and retention, as well as educating sportsmen and women on issues important to their passions. AZSFWC consists of 40 member, affiliate, and associate groups that reach across the spectrum of hunting, angling, shooting, outdoor recreation, and businesses from across Arizona. Our member groups represent more than 16,000 outdoor enthusiasts from Arizona.

We understand during your June 2, 2021, Board meeting you will be evaluating a request for an extension to record a Planned Area Development (PAD) for the Yavapai Ranch (Ranch) in northern Yavapai County. AZSFWC is aware of the planning efforts the Ranch has undertaken over the last decade, as well as the fact this PAD was approved by the Yavapai County Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors in December of 2016. While the Ranch obtained the necessary approvals, the final recording was not completed, hence their request.

Much of northern Yavapai County has been split into 40-acre ranchettes which creates substantial conflict with effective management of wildlife populations. Emerging research suggests that movement corridors for wildlife are essential in maintaining healthy deer, elk, and pronghorn herds. Some of this research indicates that incorporating open space to maintain movements is key to the long-term survival of these species as well as other important wildlife species. An attractive feature of the Ranch's PAD is the clustering of developments that contain open space, and even more importantly, as designed the six "Villages" offer many advantages over random development. Roads and infrastructure requirements are minimized which is also a benefit to the conservation of many species ensuring large swaths of open lands are maintained.

AZSFWC is a signatory of the Upper Verde Fact Sheet and supports responsible management and conservation of the Verde River and its watershed. Another key element why AZSFWC offers support for this requested extension is the plan to put in conservation easements on the eastern portion of the Ranch, approximately 15 sections of land will overlay the Big Chino aquifer that supports the headwaters of the Verde River.

In the absence of a well thought out PAD, the future of this ecological gem is uncertain, and any adverse impacts to this unique part of Arizona could have long-term consequences to not only Yavapai County and its residents, but also to Arizona's wildlife!

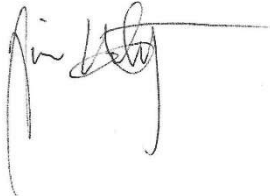
AZSFWC does not need to tell you how Arizona's and certainly Yavapai County's climate and quality of life attracts new residents moving here. While new developments often are viewed as detrimental to that quality of life, it will continue throughout Arizona and Yavapai County in the foreseeable future. So, as you consider the Ranch's request for an extension in implementing their PAD, we ask that you consider what seems to be a clear choice on your part; will the ranch be developed under a Master Plan that incorporates quality of life features such as the clustered village concept that maximizes open space and minimizes impacts to this wonderful area or will it in turn become an unregulated and unplanned multitude of 40 acre lots?

The PAD places a great deal of focus on open space, approximately 50% in fact, which well exceeds the County's desired open space. It is also noteworthy that the total number of individual sites to be developed has been identified at 6,500, which is a fraction of what could be developed within the area absent the PAD.

AZSFWC and 23 of our member organizations (list attached) believe an affirmative action on the Ranch's request is in the best interest of economic development, well-planned residential improvements, and even more importantly the conservation of our natural resources. We believe planned growth is the most preferable choice for Yavapai County, as well as for all of Arizona, and we request you grant the extension requested.

Thank you!

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht  
Executive Director



**AZSFWC Member Organizations supporting the  
Yavapai Ranch Request for Extension to Record  
the Approved Planned Area Development**

AZ Antelope Foundation  
AZ Bass Nation  
AZ Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
AZ Big Game Super Raffle  
AZ Deer Association  
AZ Flycasters Club  
AZ Houndsmen  
AZ Outdoor Adventures  
AZ Outdoor Sports  
AZ State Chapter NWTf  
AZ State Chapter of SCI  
AZ State Council of TU  
Ben Avery Clay Busters  
Christian Hunters of America  
Mohave Sportsman Club  
Outdoor Experience 4 All  
Southern AZ Quail Forever  
Southwest Wildlife Foundation  
SRT Outdoors  
The Bass Federation of AZ  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Valley of the Sun Quail Forever  
Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club