



# ⊠ North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission ⊠

Richard B. Hamilton, Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

Date: 15 November 2006

To: Chatham County Planning Department

From: Jacquelyn Presley, Urban Wildlife Biologist, NC WRC

Please accept my comments on the: *Request by Dornoch Group for subdivision sketch design approval of "Lystra Road Subdivision", consisting of 90 lots on 144 acres, located off SR-1721, Lystra Road, Williams Township.*

We commend the applicant for protecting a 100-foot creek buffer around Herndon Creek. The ravine surrounding this creek has been identified as the Herndon Creek Ravine Natural Heritage Area, meaning that rare, biologically significant plants and animals have been found in this ravine. Herndon Creek feeds into Jordan Lake, a water supply source for surrounding communities as well as a biologically important area for aquatic wildlife. We recommend the applicant take the following steps to prevent degradation of this Natural Heritage Area:

- 1) We suggest the applicant ensure the buffer around this creek remains a **100-foot native, forested buffer** that does not become overrun with non-native plant species. After crossing the property, this creek eventually runs onto NC WRC Gameland. Any invasive species along this border can spread towards these Gamelands along Jordan Lake and degrade presently available wildlife habitat in these protected area.
- 2) We would prefer for the applicant to concentrate any residential construction outside of the Natural Heritage boundary as well as outside of the wetland area. In addition, we recommend the applicant restrict future homeowners from building structures within either of these sensitive environmental areas.

- 3) We recommend the developer redraw the road layout so the cul-de-sac that presently abuts the Natural Heritage Area boundary is eliminated. The present layout will require construction to occur within the Natural Heritage Area boundaries. If the cul-de-sac is eliminated, perhaps the remaining road stem could be extended to the east and form a loop with the other proposed road stem sketched to lie between the power easement and the Natural Heritage area.
- 4) We recommend the applicant minimize the amount of land clearing and tree cutting conducted prior to construction, which can reduce construction costs and preserve the maximum amount of intact wildlife habitat.