

**Bryan Caddy**

3313 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Way  
Ridgefield, WA 98642  
360-989-6284  
bryank7bat@gmail.com

**Date:** November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**To:**

City of Ridgefield – Community Development & Code Enforcement  
Planning & Engineering Services  
Parks and Public Works Department  
230 Pioneer St  
Ridgefield, WA 98642

**Subject: THIRD Complaint** – Public Safety, Runoff, and Critical Areas Concerns Related to Retaining Wall Above City Nature Trail (Near 3311 S 2nd Way)

Dear City Staff,

This letter serves as my third formal complaint notice regarding the retaining wall, shed/chicken coop, slope excavation, and disturbed earth at or near 3311 S 2nd Way, Ridgefield, WA, located directly above the city-owned nature trail behind our properties.

This situation has now escalated into a public safety hazard, a potential environmental and critical areas violation, and a runoff/drainage concern due to the beginning of our fall and winter rains. I am respectfully requesting urgent City review and action.

**1. PROXIMITY OF RETAINING WALL TO PUBLIC TRAIL – LIFE SAFETY RISK**

The retaining wall constructed on the neighboring private property sits directly above the City's nature trail.

If the wall fails, or if the soil above it becomes saturated and gives way, debris will fall directly onto the public trail, potentially causing severe injury or death to anyone below.

This is no longer a hypothetical risk. It is a clear and present danger as rains increase and soils become saturated.

**2. FALL/WINTER RAINS HAVE STARTED – RUNOFF & SATURATION OBSERVATIONS**

Our rainy season has already begun, and during the recent storm I personally observed:

- Standing water/puddling in the retained area

Large puddles formed on the freshly exposed dirt behind the retaining wall.

This indicates:

- Poor drainage
- Soil saturation
- Ineffective compaction
- Potential hydrostatic pressure building behind the wall

This is extremely concerning for a retaining wall placed above public infrastructure.

- Dirty water running downslope into the greenbelt

During the same rain event, I saw turbid (muddy) water flowing around the other side of their house and into the natural green area below.

This suggests:

- Improper grading or altered stormwater flow
- Runoff from disturbed soils
- Potential erosion
- Sediment entering a Riparian Habitat or Critical Area

These conditions can quickly worsen as the rains intensify through fall and winter.

### 3. POSSIBLE CRITICAL AREAS / RIPARIAN HABITAT VIOLATION

Based on Clark County GIS references and local maps, the slope and greenbelt behind our homes appear to lie within or adjacent to a Riparian Habitat or Critical Areas buffer.

Within these areas, activities such as:

- Retaining walls
- Slope excavation
- Sheds/chicken coops
- Soil disturbance
- Vegetation removal
- Altering drainage paths

typically require a Critical Areas Permit, Habitat Review, and often a geotechnical assessment.

I have not seen any evidence of such permits, plans, or posted notices.

Given the drainage issues now visible after the rains, this work should be re-evaluated for compliance.

#### 4. UNDERMINING & SLOPE MODIFICATION BELOW MY LOT

The neighbor excavated soil directly below my property to create the retained area. This raises major concerns about:

- Loss of lateral support to my lot
- Saturated soil failure during heavy rains
- Erosion and slumping
- Additional load (surcharge) on the unpermitted wall
- Water redirecting toward the trail and greenbelt

The rains have now confirmed improper drainage and runoff patterns caused by the construction.

#### 5. REQUEST FOR CITY ACTION (ENGINEERING + PLANNING + PUBLIC WORKS)

I respectfully request the City of Ridgefield:

##### 1. Conduct a site inspection (Engineering + Code Enforcement)

Evaluate the retaining wall's structural integrity, drainage behind the wall, soil saturation, and proximity to the trail.

##### 2. Verify whether ANY permits were issued, including:

- Building permits
- Grading permits
- Critical Areas permits
- Habitat Review
- Geotechnical or engineering plans
- Setback/encroachment approvals

##### 3. Assess runoff and stormwater impacts

The observed muddy runoff must be evaluated for environmental and code compliance.

##### 4. Determine if the wall and structures violate Riparian Habitat or Critical Areas standards

##### 5. Evaluate the threat to public safety

Given the visible ponding, runoff, and saturated conditions, heavy winter rains could cause instability or failure.

## 6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE

I can provide:

- Images of the retaining wall and slope
- Trail location relative to the wall
- Property/boundary maps
- Copies of my previous two complaints

I will continue documenting conditions.

## 7. CLOSING STATEMENT

This is now my third complaint notice, and conditions are worsening with the onset of fall and winter weather.

The combination of:

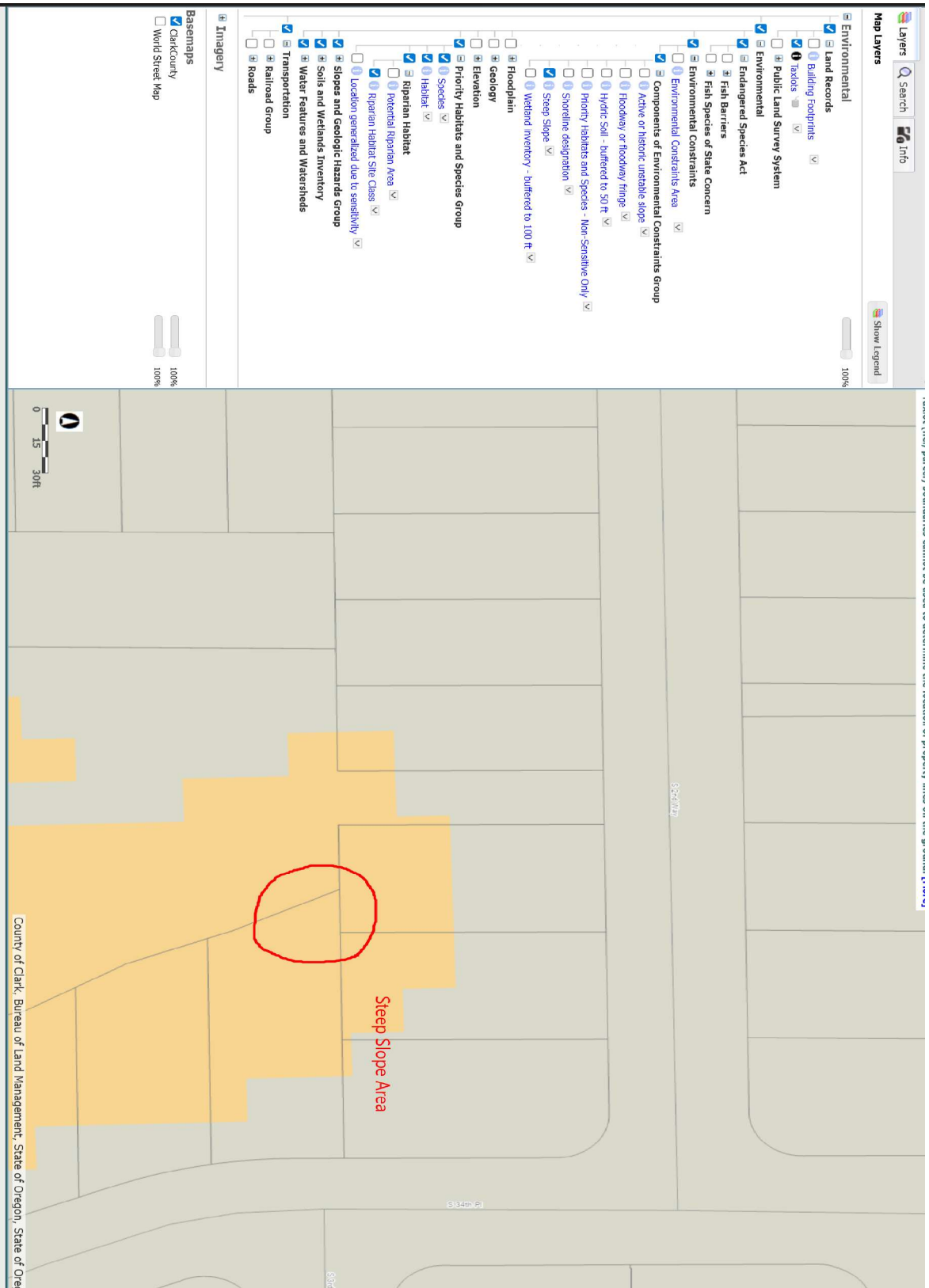
- Unpermitted construction,
- A steep slope,
- Proximity to a public trail,
- Visible water saturation,
- Dirty runoff into a green area, and
- Potential work within a Riparian Habitat buffer

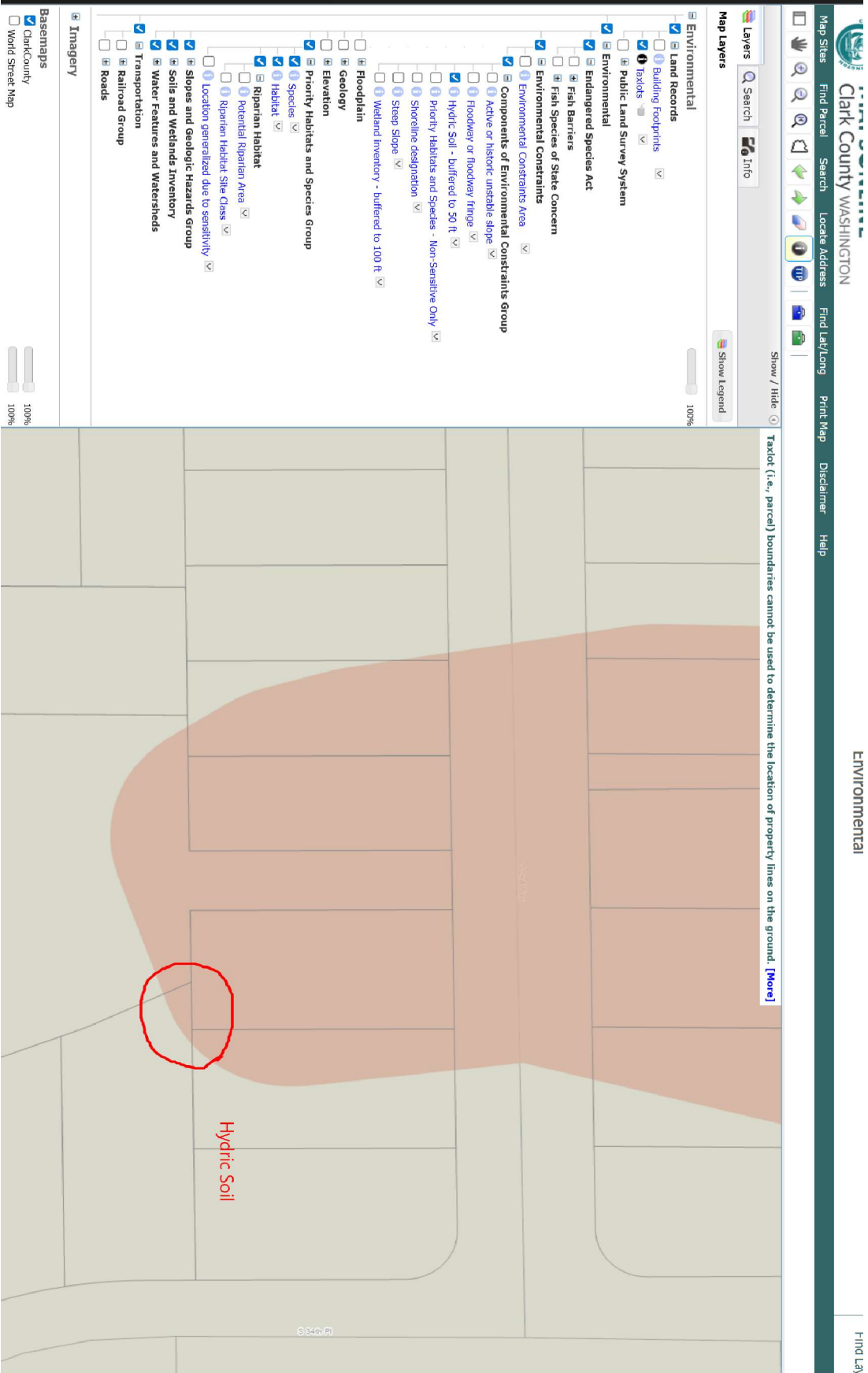
requires urgent City review.

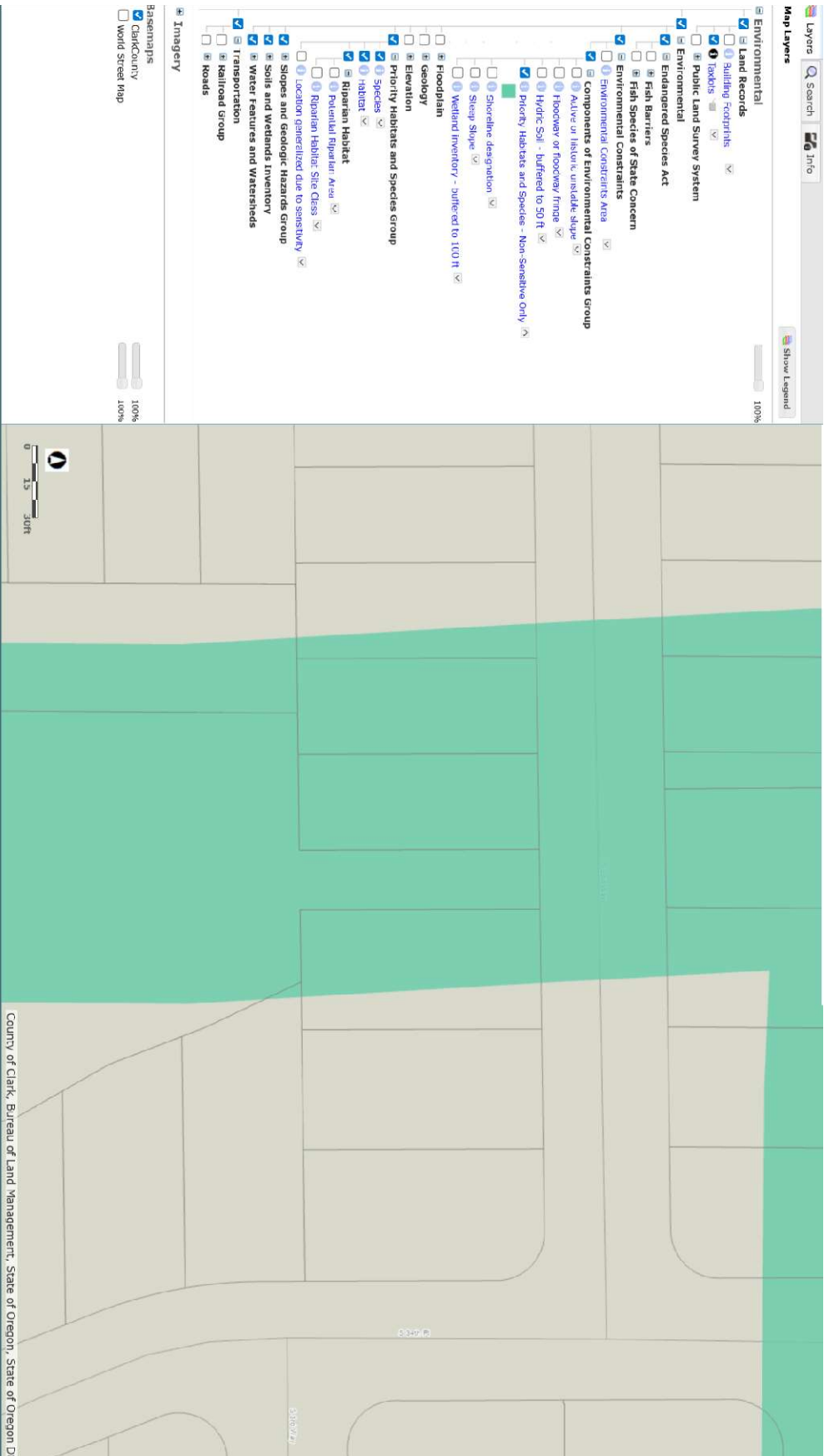
I appreciate your prompt attention and request written confirmation that this complaint has been received and opened for investigation.

Sincerely,

Bryan Caddy









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Layers Search Info

Map Layers

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100%

- ☐ Environmental
  - ☒ Land Records
    - ☒ Building Footprints
    - ☒ Taxlots
  - ☐ Public Land Survey System
  - ☒ Environmental
    - ☒ Endangered Species Act
    - ☐ Fish Barriers
    - ☒ Fish Species of State Concern
    - ☒ Environmental Constraints
      - ☒ Components of Environmental Constraints Group
        - ☒ Active or historic unstable slope
        - ☒ Floodway or floodway fringe
        - ☒ Hydric Soil - buffered to 50 ft
        - ☒ Priority Habitats and Species - Non-Sensitive Only
        - ☒ Shoreline designation
        - ☒ Steep Slope
        - ☒ Wetland Inventory - buffered to 100 ft
- ☐ Floodplain
- ☐ Geology
- ☐ Elevation
- ☒ Priority Habitats and Species Group
  - ☒ Species
  - ☒ Habitat
  - ☒ Potential Riparian Area
  - ☒ Riparian Habitat Site Class
  - ☒ Location generalized due to sensitivity
- ☒ Slopes and Geologic Hazards Group
- ☒ Soils and Wetlands Inventory
- ☒ Water Features and Watersheds
- ☒ Transportation
- ☐ Railroad Group
- ☐ Roads

Imagery

- Basemaps
- ☒ Clark County
  - ☐ World Street Map

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