

**COLUMBIA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

December 29, 2025

Conditional Use Permit and Site Design Review

HEARING DATE: January 5, 2026

PLANNER: Deborah S Jacob, Senior Planner

FILE NUMBERS: CU 24-118 and DR 24-139

**APPLICANT /:
OWNER** Ffynnon Properties LLC, Michael Agee & Neal Hevel
P.O. Box 66442, Portland OR 97290

LOCATION: The subject property is addressed at 57009 Pebble Creek Road
Vernonia, OR 97064

MAP ID NUMBER: 4400-00-02300

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 23869

ZONING: Primary Forest (PF-80)

SIZE: 51.70 acres

REQUEST: Conditional Use permit and Site Design Review to establish a
Private Park and Campground.

APPLICABLE REVIEW CRITERIA:

Columbia County Zoning Ordinance (CCZO)

Section 500	Primary Forest (PF-80)
Section 505	Conditional Uses
Section 508	General Review Standards
Section 509	Standards of Development
Section 510	Fire Siting Standards for Dwellings, Structures & Roads
Section 1190	Big Game Habitat Overlay Zone
Section 1400	Off-Street Parking & Loading
Section 1450	Transportation Impact Analysis
Section 1503	Conditional Uses
Section 1550	Site Design Review

BACKGROUND:

The property owners/applicants, Ffynnon Properties LLC, represented by Michael Agee and Neal Hevel, are proposing to establish a new private park on a 51.70 acre Primary Forest – 80 (PF-80) zoned property. According to the applications submitted for Conditional Use CU 24-118 and Site Design Review DR 24-139, this new park is intended to be a primitive campground that will accommodate 30 tent spaces and 10 recreational vehicle (RV) spaces and provide outdoor recreational activities for campers and day users.

According to the “about” page on the Ffynnon website, <https://www.ffynnonoregon.com/About>, events have been occurring on the subject property since September 2018. The Columbia County Land Use Compliance Specialist received a complaint in July of 2020 has had an open investigation on the property since that time.

PROPERTY SUMMARY:

The BEAK Maps of the Upper Nehalem Valley CPAC shows that this property is located in an area designated as Peripheral Big Game Habitat, but does not contain any threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife, plant, or animal species. The portions of the property proposed for camping and outdoor gatherings do not contain any steep slopes and will not be authorized to have any permanent structures without first obtaining land use and building permit approval.

According to FEMA FIRM Panel, No. 41009C04001D there are no identified flood hazard areas on the subject property, and per the Oregon Department of State Lands Statewide Wetlands Inventory (SWI) web maps, there are no identified wetlands areas on the subject property.

REVIEW CRITERIA, FACTS, ANALYSIS & FINDINGS:

Section 500 PRIMARY FOREST ZONE - 80

PF-80

TABLE OF AUTHORIZED USES & DEVELOPMENT

PARKS / PUBLIC / QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES	AUTHORIZATION	PF - 80 SECTION
Private Parks, Campgrounds, and Youth Camps	CUP/PC	505.4, 505.11, 508 - 510

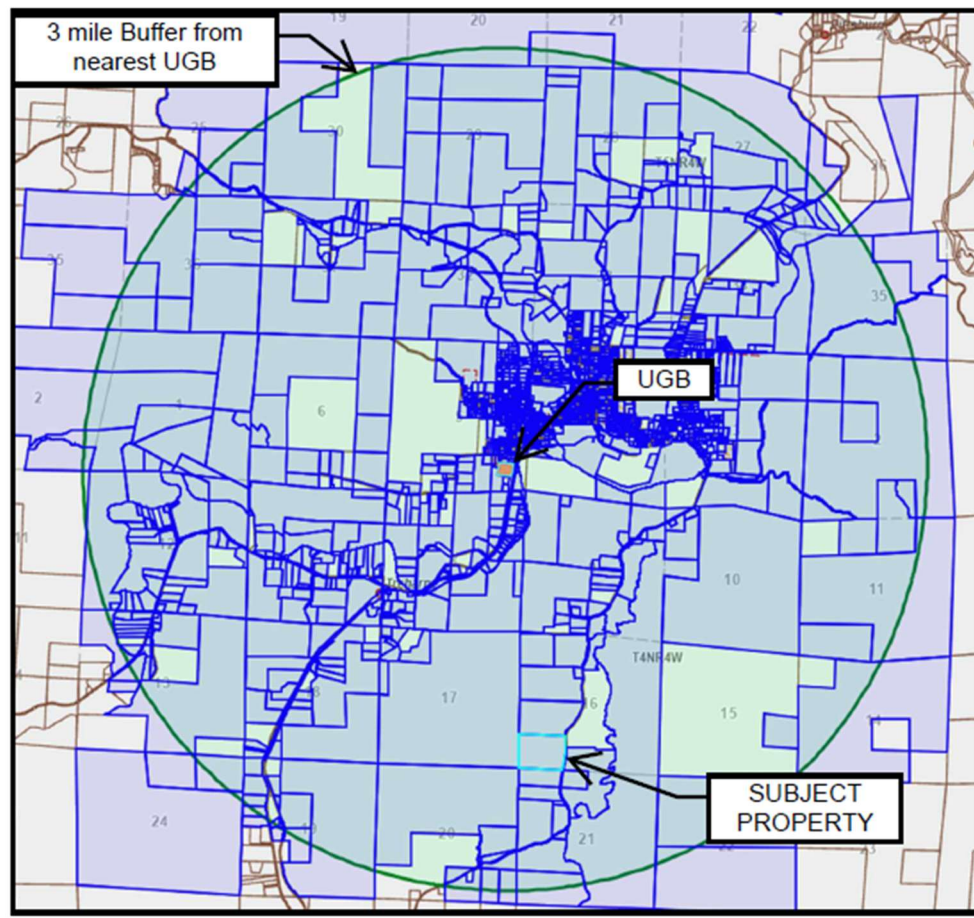
505 Conditional Uses. The following conditional uses may be allowed subject to the general review standards and process in Sections 1503 and 1603 of the Zoning Ordinance. All authorized uses and permanent structures shall also meet the applicable standards listed in Sections 506, 507, and 508 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other local, state, and federal laws pertaining to these uses.

.4 Private parks and campgrounds.

A. Campgrounds in private parks shall only be those allowed by this

subsection. **Except on a lot or parcel contiguous to a lake or reservoir, campgrounds shall not be allowed within three miles of an urban growth boundary** unless an exception is approved pursuant to ORS 197.732 and OAR Chapter 660, Division 004. A campground is an area devoted to overnight temporary use for vacation, recreational or emergency purposes, but not for residential purposes, and is established on a site or is contiguous to lands with a park or other outdoor natural amenity that is accessible for recreational use by the occupants of the campground. A campground shall be designed and integrated into the rural agricultural and forest environment in a manner that protects the natural amenities of the site and provides buffers of existing native trees and vegetation or other natural features between campsites. Campsites may be occupied by a tent, travel-trailer or recreational vehicle. Separate sewer, water or electric service hook-ups shall not be provided to individual camp sites. Campgrounds authorized by this subsection shall not include intensively developed recreational uses such as swimming pools, tennis courts, retail stores or gas stations. Overnight temporary use in the campground by a camper or camper's vehicle shall not exceed a total of 30 days during any consecutive 6 month period.

3 Mile Urban Growth Boundary Buffer and Subject Property Location Proximity



Finding: The applicant submitted a map showing the subject property to be 3.02 “road miles” as traveled along Pebble Creek Road from the subject property to a UGB area adjacent to that same roadway. The above language found in Columbia County Zoning Ordinance Section 505.4 (A) mirrors the language found in Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 660-006-0025 (4)(e)(A). The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) is the agency that promulgates these set of OAR and staff questioned the use of the “road miles” measurement directly with the DLCD Farm and Forest Specialist, Hilary Foote, via email. Ms. Foote responded that “within three miles” means as measured by a 3-mile *buffer* or, straight line measure, from the nearest UGB and she did not believe that applying the “road miles” measure would be legally defensible.

The subject property is not contiguous to a lake or reservoir, and as shown in the figure above, the nearest Urban Growth Boundary (City of Vernonia) which is not the one used by the applicants when applying the “road miles” measurement, is approximately 1.9 miles north of the subject property. The UGB area used by the applicant to obtain their “road miles” measure, located to the east of the closer UGB area the buffer map above was created from, is approximately 2.3 miles straight line distance to the subject property. The Columbia County Planning Director finds this to be a “fatal flaw”, precluding the subject property from consideration and approval of the proposed use.

CONCLUSION:

Because the subject property *is within three miles* of an Urban Growth Boundary and *not* contiguous to a lake or reservoir, pursuant to the language and rule of OAR 660-006-0025 (4)(e)(A) and CCZO Section 505.4 (A), the applicants would be required to seek and obtain approval for a goal exception pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 197.732 and OAR Chapter 660, Division 004, before the Columbia County Planning Director could recommend approval to the Planning Commission of a proposal for a Private Park and Campground on the subject property. Because an approval under the current conditions would directly conflict with and defeat the purpose of the CCZO, which has been written in accordance with state law, the Planning Director can only recommend **DENIAL** of the proposal to the Planning Commission.



Kate J. McGuire
Columbia County Planning Director

12 / 29 / 2025
Date