

Wildlife nonprofit moves closer to building facility

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TVN Staff

Work may soon begin on the new Teton Wildlife Rehabilitation Center after the group received the permit it needed for its new facility.

The TWRC plans on having a functioning facility by next year on a three acre site just within Driggs City Limits off of West Little Avenue. At its latest meeting, the Driggs Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously

approved the Conditional Use Permit the groups needed to operate the center.

"I think the city heard our voice and heard that there is need for this facility," said cofounder and vice-president of the center, Lindsay Jones. She founded the center with fellow wildlife biologist and president of the organization, Renee Sidler.

The group still needs the city's permission to split the land for the

facility from the larger parcel owned by Edith Harrop and Gloria Smith.

During the P&Z hearing, Sidler and Jones addressed several concerns. Part of the conditions for the CUP included setbacks so that the center does not interfere with expansion plans for the nearby substation owned by the Bonneville Power Administration. These setbacks prevent building from happening a certain distance from the property line, which will also help prevent future conflicts with another neighboring property owned by Fillmore Farms.

The other main concern, voiced by P&Z commissioner Douglas Rey, was that some of the animals could pose a

danger to Driggs residents, especially with the facility being within Driggs' City Limits.

"We hope people trust that we're keeping the animals away from the public and keeping the cages bear proof and predator proof," Jones said.

She said the facility could only take animals they receive permits for, from either Idaho Fish and Game or the US Fish and Wildlife Service. That means they can take animals that could be considered dangerous only if one of those agencies determines they have the proper facilities to safely do so.

Jones said the group is meeting

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with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game soon to determine what animals the agency wants the group to be able to take in. Jones said that many facilities across the West that rehabilitate black bears are at or near capacity.

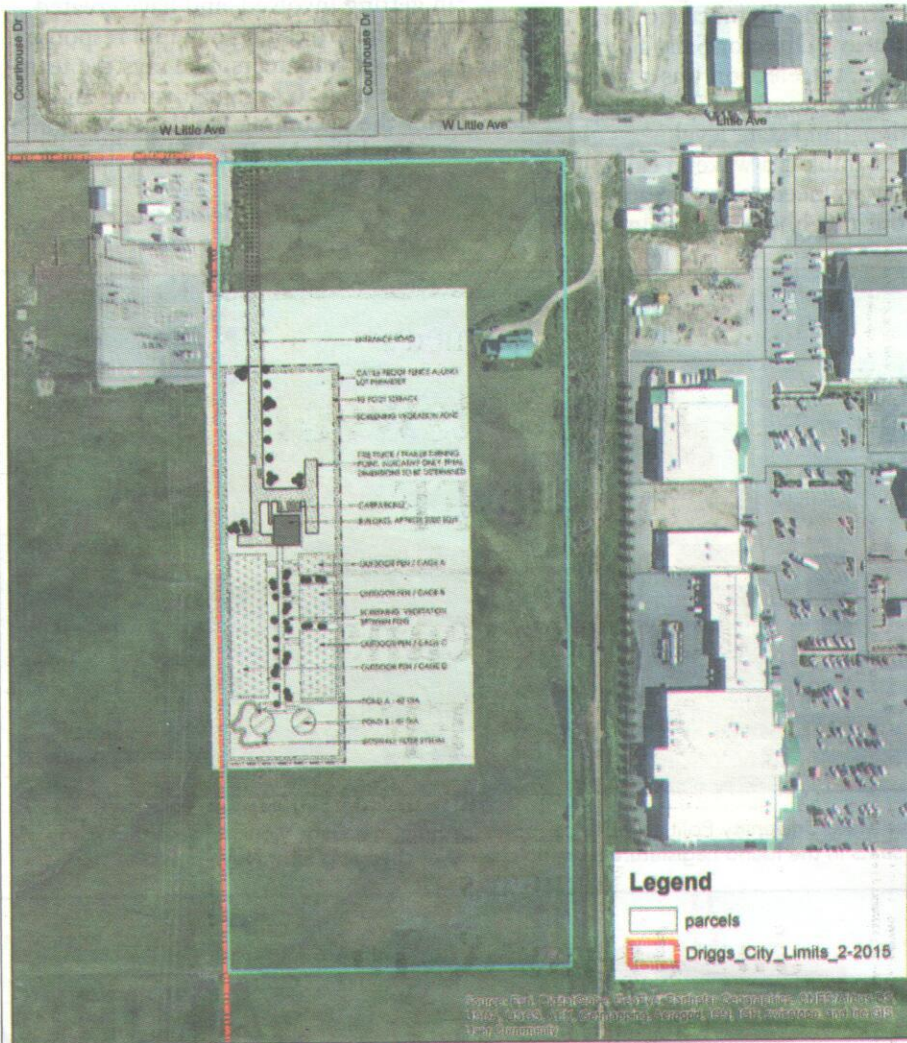
“We’d be ready to take those animals, if need be,” she said.

Jones said the TWRC was formed to rehabilitate animals that had been hurt by humans and then

re-introduce them to the wild.

The group will now raise funds to build the facility, with a plan to have it up and running in 2017.

“An important part of this is that we are only taking animals injured by human causes, so we feel like its our moral obligation to take care of this wildlife if we injure them,” Jones told the TVN in an earlier interview.



Teton Wildlife Rehab Facility- Vicinity Map

Data Sources: Teton County, ID, and City of Driggs
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