

September 26, 2025

Dear WA Ecology,

This is a complaint to the WA Environmental Report Tracking System regarding excessive unpermitted groundwater withdrawal by the Fryslan Calf Ranch in Yakima County.

Fryslan Calf Ranch is located on Glade Road, about 2 miles Southeast from Mabton, WA on Sections 08,17 and 18 of Township 23 East, Range 08 North. The Calf Ranch was originally proposed for Parcel Nos. 230817-21001, 230808-33001, and 230818-11002 but it has spread onto neighboring parcel numbers.

The facility is also known as Windmill Estates Mabton Feedlot and Sage Brush Ranch. It is owned by entities variously known as Veldhuis Enterprises, Top En Twel, Klompe Frieslandia, Windmill Estates, and others.

Water is provided on Fryslan Calf Ranch by four unmonitored wells:

ACE-511 with a test capacity of 100 gpm

ACL-582 with a test capacity of 23 gpm

BIF-429 with a test capacity of 200+ gpm

BIF-430 with a test capacity of 150+ gpm

See Fryslan conditional use permit application available at [Fryslan 2016 2 CUP.pdf](#)

In 2015 Fryslan Calf Ranch applied for a conditional use permit to build 6,000 calf hutches on 30 acres of land. Among other comments Ecology stated:

- “The closest Ecology monitoring well (SID 204119) . . . shows 104 feet of decline over a 29 year period of record . . .”
- “The project’s capture of groundwater that would, in time, otherwise discharge to the Yakima River system affects and will impair water availability for existing Federal Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWP) rights.”
- “If the project is to go forward, main stem Yakima River mitigation for the above impacts would be required.”

Ecology comments are available at [Fryslan 2015 7 Ecy Comments.pdf](#)

Fryslan withdrew the application. A year later Fryslan submitted an application with a reduced footprint. This application proposed 1,500 calf hutches and withdrawal of 25,000 gallons of groundwater per day. Application available at [Fryslan 2016 2 CUP.pdf](#)

At the time of the second application Yakima County asked Ecology to evaluate a Fryslan Hydrogeological Assessment. Ecology found:

- “There is no direct mechanism to transfer water use established under the permit-exemption.”
- “If the proponent wishes to be net neutral with respect to the total water supply available in the Yakima River Basin, mitigation from or a transfer of a suitable existing water right would be necessary.”

This Technical Memo is available at [Fryslan 2017 1_Ecology_Technical_Memo.PDF](#)

Despite Ecology concerns Yakima County approved the 2016 CUP application.


Despite CUP stipulations the Fryslan Calf Ranch has now expanded to include about 7,000 calf hutches on 100 acres of land. Based on counts of animals and hutches from Google Earth snapshots the facility most likely houses 14,000 calves of various ages from newborn to one year.

The Friends of Toppenish Creek assert that this number of animals requires more than the permitted 25,000 gallons of groundwater per day. We complained to Yakima County in February of 2025 and the county is investigating. See FOTC complaint at [Fryslan Complaint VII.pdf](#)

This is a formal complaint to Ecology because the Fryslan Calf Ranch is withdrawing so much groundwater that aquifers beneath the facility will be significantly depleted. Water that should discharge to the Yakima River will be diverted for animal watering, for dust control, and for manure management.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Executive Director, Friends of Toppenish Creek

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