



Cochise County Public Works Department

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JASON FACCIO
Director

Date: May 8, 2026
To: Flood Control District Board
From: Joaquin Solis, Floodplain Administrator
Subject: W/W Services LLC Floodplain Variance Request, Parcels 202-29-017A, 202-29-017D, 202-29-036 and 202-29-023A

Request: The applicant, W/W Services LLC, requests a variance to reduce the height of a proposed perimeter fence within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) without meeting the County's Floodplain elevation requirement.

Recommendation: Floodplain Staff recommends that the Flood Control District Board approve the requested variance to allow the bottom of a commercial fence to be elevated to a base flow depth and not a regulated depth (base flow depth plus one foot) as indicated in the current Floodplain regulations.

Background (Brief): Portions of the subject parcels are currently located within Zones A0-1 (depth 1 ft.) and AO-2 (depth 2 ft) designated special flood hazard areas in the Willcox area (near N. Fort Grant and Joe Hines Roads). The applicant is building a commercial perimeter fence and would like to lower the bottom of the fence to base flow heights and not regulatory heights. Floodplain regulations, per 5.1.D.6, states: To allow the Regulatory Flood discharge to pass, a minimum of 50% of fence shall be left open and unobstructed to or above the Regulatory Flood Elevation. No fence shall be constructed in a floodway.

The Regulatory flood elevations are for habitable structures (single family residences, manufactured homes, office buildings, etc.) and not fences. The applicant requests the variance because WW Services LLC representative states that the "obligation to install a nonpermeable fence to reduce dust from neighboring property as 3' will not help reduce dust". According to the 2023 approved Floodplain regulations, the fence openings shall be elevated to the same as a habitable structure. Best Available data from a recent Willcox hydrologic/hydraulic study indicates flow depths are not as high as the effective mapping indicate. Staff recommends approval of the variance. Although granting the variance would jeopardize Cochise County's inclusion in the National Flood Insurance Program or increase premiums on flood insurance, the Floodplain Regulations need to be revised to lower the fence height elevation to base flood elevation and not regulatory flood elevation so constructed fences may meet requirements.

Suggested Motion: I move to approve the variance requested by WW Services LLC, from the fence elevation requirements of two (2) and three (3) feet down to one (1) foot above the adjacent grade for the proposed perimeter fence along Parcels 202-29-017A, 202-29-017D, 202-29-036 and 202-29-023A, within the FEMA SFHA's located on N. Fort Grant Road in the Willcox Area.

Fiscal Impact & Funding Sources: No fiscal impact

Public Works Department

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Next Steps/Action Items/Follow-up: If the variance is granted the W/W Services will be in violation of the State and National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations, until they are revised, and:

- The variance must be recorded so that it runs with the title of the land
- May result in an increase in premiums or denial of flood insurance (if required by a lender)
- Jeopardizes Cochise County's inclusion in the NFIP and Community Rating System (CRS) which grants all County residents discounts on insurance premiums.

Impact of Not Approving: If the variance is not granted, the proposed fence, within the Special Flood Hazard Area, will be required to be elevated to the regulatory height.