

Methow Valley Land Due Diligence

A working field checklist from 37 years of watching Methow lots change hands.

SECTION 1 OF 2

The 10 Questions Before You Write

Answer every question with paper, not conversation. Take this on the land walk.

- 1 Does the property have a perfected water right, an exempt well, or nothing? Get documentation, not a verbal answer.
- 2 If a well exists: what is the recorded log depth, yield in gallons per minute, and water-quality panel result?
- 3 Has a perc test been done? Where is the approved drainfield site, and does an alternative system need to be designed?
- 4 What is the recorded, deeded access to the parcel, and who plows the road in winter? Read the recorded easement or maintenance agreement.
- 5 What is the WA DNR fire risk classification, and is a standard carrier writing insurance on the parcel today?
- 6 What is the zoning, what does it allow you to build, and what critical-area overlays apply?
- 7 Are there easements, covenants, HOAs, or restrictions on use that would surprise you later?
- 8 What is the annual property tax, is the parcel under ag current-use, and what would the back-tax recapture be on a use change?
- 9 What was the prior use: pasture, orchard, timber, homestead, or industrial? Prior use can leave physical or legal traces.
- 10 What is the realistic timeline from close to a livable structure, and can your financing bridge it?

Land Walk Checklist

What to look at on the property, and what to verify on paper before closing.

SECTION 2 OF 2

By Topic

Water

- ☐ Water rights certificate or exempt well documentation on file
- ☐ Well log: depth, yield GPM, casing depth, drilled date
- ☐ Water quality panel: bacteria, nitrates, arsenic, iron
- ☐ Shared-well agreement recorded (if applicable)
- ☐ Ecology water rights search completed

Septic

- ☐ Perc test completed, drainfield site approved
- ☐ Alternative system needed? Design cost known?
- ☐ Setbacks from wells, surface water, property lines confirmed
- ☐ Existing system: age, last pump, tank size, records

Access & Easements

- ☐ Access type: county, HOA, private shared, easement
- ☐ Recorded easement or road maintenance agreement in hand
- ☐ Winter plowing responsibility and typical cost
- ☐ Legal + physical year-round access verified

Wildfire & Insurance

- ☐ WA DNR fire risk classification pulled for parcel
- ☐ Defensible space evaluated (0-5, 5-30, 30-100 ft)
- ☐ Home hardening: roof class, vents, siding, deck
- ☐ Insurance quote from active WA carrier in hand

Zoning & Permits

- ☐ Zoning designation and permitted uses confirmed
- ☐ Critical area overlays (riparian, wetland, slope, fire)
- ☐ Ag current-use status + back-tax exposure known
- ☐ Jurisdiction: county vs. Winthrop or Twisp town

Utilities

- ☐ Power at meter or line-extension quote from PUD
- ☐ Internet: fiber, fixed wireless, or Starlink verified
- ☐ Cell service tested on the parcel with your device
- ☐ Propane: supplier, tank ownership, delivery access

Financing & Close

- ☐ Land loan vs. construction-to-perm decided
- ☐ Lender pre-approval covers rural land
- ☐ Cash vs. financing negotiation strategy
- ☐ Timeline to livable structure penciled

Want me to walk a specific parcel with you?

Send me the address or MLS number. 60 to 90 minutes on site, plus a written follow-up. No obligation.

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