

**From:** W. T. Soeldner [<mailto:waltsoe@allmail.net>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 08, 2016 7:50 PM  
**To:** Mike Kaputa <[Mike.Kaputa@CO.CHELAN.WA.US](mailto:Mike.Kaputa@CO.CHELAN.WA.US)>  
**Subject:** Objection to EIS - Alpine Lakes Wilderness

Mike Kaputa, Director  
Chelan County Natural Resources Department

Dear Mr. Kaputa:

I am writing regarding what I believe to be **serious flaws in the scope of the Alpine Lakes Optimization and Automation Study**. I have hiked the Alpine Lakes Wilderness three times, spending a total of ten days there. I find the proposal to steal water from wilderness when alternative water management options have not been explored is a travesty, and quite likely will be proven to be illegal.

To begin with the Icicle Work Group (IWG), which has made this study has no members who are advocating to protect the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. (I am aware that the Center for Environmental Law and Policy withdrew from the group when the operating procedures were changed to gag CELP's objection to wilderness water projects.) It appears that the IWG is a self appointed conglomerate of groups interested in getting the contracts to do the work the IWG proposes. This is ethically indefensible.

**The IWG has not considered a number of alternatives that would protect the Alpine Lakes Wilderness**, one of the Northwest's most popular and iconic wilderness areas.

The the EIS proposed by the IWG must consider a **Wilderness Protection Alternative** that would promote the wilderness values set forth in the Wilderness Act of 1964. This would not allow new water infrastructure or diversions inside the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, requiring all new water supply to be obtained outside this wilderness.

The EIS must consider a **Water Conservation Alternative**. This would do an assessment of using aggressive water conservation measures by Wenatchee Valley cities, including restrictions on lawn watering. This should also assess transfer of waster rights from irrigation districts to cities in those places where orchards have already been replaced with residential subdivisions. And it should assess agricultural irrigation efficiency.

The EIS must also consider an **Irrigation District Water Right Change Alternative**, which would fix Icicle Creek's low flow problem. This would involve evaluating a move of the Icicle-Pehastin Irrigation District's (IPID)water right diversion to the Wenatchee River Downstream, permanently fixing Icicle Creek's low flow problem, and converting the IPID's diversion from gravity flow to pumping. Renewable energy options should be able to supply such power.

Finally the EIS should consider a **Water Right Relinquishment Alternative**. When a party doesn't use their rights, they lose them. The IPID says it only uses what it needs, and they have not used all their rights since the dam at Eightmile Lake collapsed decades ago.

For the sake of all that is good about our nation's public lands and especially its wilderness, this plan must be reconsidered with alternatives in mind.

Sincerely,  
W. Thomas Soeldner  
Valleyford, Washington