

October 13, 2025

Mike Kaputa, Director
Chelan County Department of Natural Resources
SEPA Responsible Official
missionridgeeis@outlook.com
411 Washington St. Suite 201
Wenatchee, WA, 98801

RE: Mission Ridge Master Planned Resort Expansion
Draft Environmental Impact Statement Concerns

Dear Mr. Kaputa,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the DEIS for the proposed development adjacent to Mission Ridge ski area. We feel that the DEIS is full of incorrect conclusions and overlooked impacts. We are residents of the county, specifically residing in Pitcher Canyon, an area strongly impacted by the increased traffic, reduction in water and increased fire danger that will result from this development. Because of this, we oppose the development and urge you to reject their evaluation of impact. The following are some of our concerns.

Traffic

The increased traffic on Squilchuck Road and the road up to Mission Ridge will make it intolerable for people living on/along these roads. This much traffic on a basic 2 lane road is surely not up to county standards. There doesn't appear to be any upgrades proposed to deal with this increased traffic. Residents trying to access Squilchuck Road will be exposed to increased wait times and decreased safety.

Alternative routes out of the development in case of fire

There isn't a legitimate alternative escape route planned out of the development in the case of fire. There has to be an established, truly separated, alternative route to flee on.

Fires Starting

Putting that many people in such a small area is dangerous not only to the development, but to the town below. People in an area increases the likelihood of a fire starting. We have witnessed too many times that a small fire can increase and spread far too quickly for it to be safely handled.

Managing Fires

It would be unreasonably unsafe for firefighters to be sent into an confined area to fight the inevitable fires. The suggestion that a volunteer fire station could handle fires is overly optimistic. Under ideal circumstances it might be possible, but to suggest that it is a total, singular solution is misguided. Again, both the development and the town below would be exposed to too much danger.

Increased insurance costs

Fire insurance costs in a fire-likely area will be very high. Insurance costs are spread among all users, so all residents of the county should expect higher rates because of the risks being taken in the development.

Wildlife

The DEIS understates the presence of wildlife in the development area. Visitors to the area often report sightings that are in conflict with statement in the DEIS. The report states that there are no pika in the development area. We have seen otherwise. The reports says there is no impact on the protected elk in the area. We have seen elk in the development area. At the very least, further survey and documentation should be required.

Water

The DEIS specifies using wells/ground water for the early phases. As an irrigation water user, we believe that further study is needed to confirm the rights to water that the developer claims. As I understand it there are senior water rights in the Squilchuck drainage that should have priority.

Waste treatment

The DEIS specifies septic systems for waste treatment or alternatively waste treatment facilities. This was rejected in previous development proposed plans in the past. At the very least, further studies by the County should be directed to ensure that this important issue is handled correctly.

I strongly encourage Chelan County to stick to established codes. Reject their faulty evaluation of impact, or at least require that the developer do a more thorough and complete job of assessing environmental impacts, and providing results that are more publicly accessible.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Drew and Cathy Gaylord
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