

10-19-2013

Comments CU 23 00004 Guest Ranch

To Jamey Ayling

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Here are my last concerns:

**Water**, per submitted Exhibit 8

Water from where? If needed, additional support water from where?

Exhibit 8 has photo of Well tag id: ABL232. Is that sufficient to supply this site, once it is fully operational? Has been using 5000 gallons daily, since 1994; for domestic use, horses, etc. So, how many horses does it take to use 5000 gallons per day?

Exhibit mentions additional water from well source in "Green Zone" via water line? Green zone is not identified and neither is the placement of the water line.

**Water** continued:

Section for "Preapplication Conference Waiver Request Form" it's, Section 6; Proposed Water System; with six check boxes available. Three of those boxes are checked, indicating a Group A well, a Group B well and Cistern apply to this Guest Ranch.

So where are the Group A and Group B wells within the Ranch? What are their Tag numbers? If off site, again what are the Tag numbers?

The Form instructions also direct applicator to show the well(s) on the site plan. Site Plan as submitted only shows one well and does not identify the type of well; A or B. Where is the other well(s)? What are the Well Tag numbers? Which Green Zone is it in?

Overall **land**:

84 acres; but how many acres are Wetlands? How many are Buffer area?

**Noise**:

Exhibit 11, Noise; why can we (over ½ mile away and 200' higher in elevation) hear developers dogs when they stay over night at the home on this property? Around here, noise rises above tree top and bounces off our peaks and ridges – rifle shots echo for at least a couple of miles. Loud music does the same; especially base tones. Motor bikes, etc are easily heard.

**Fire Pits**. Section 7 states there will be several fire pits located through out the ranch. For fire safety, who will manage those and be sure they don't get out of hand?

**Traffic Flow**: Site map (Exhibit 16) indicates Ranch entrance is off Fowler Creek Rd (west of FSR 4517) and ranch Exit is onto FSR 4517; maybe 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of mile south, up hill from Fowler Creek Rd. Does that indicate the traffic on site is one-way? 100% in on Fowler Creek and 100% out via FS Road 4517?

Exhibit 12 Traffic basically states 10% of traffic moving east on Westside Road. There may be 5% of that 10% that would move to the south on FS Road 4517. If that is the case; where would that 5% go? Doesn't 100% of traffic enter Ranch off Fowler Creek Road and exist Ranch via FS R4517? Site Map is not clear on this. Many if not most camp grounds have one way traffic. As site map seems to indicate.

Is the USFS aware of this potential added traffic volume to the beginning to FSR 4517? Who will maintain that road? Shouldn't that portion of FSR4517 be upgraded to meet county needs and safety standards, now that so many RV's may be traveling on it. Surface conditions, width, heavy brush all seem unsafe, especially during emergency situations. Fire vehicles could be greatly impeded.

**Traffic;** Intersections meeting Westside Road:

Not clear why only 4 intersections were included in the proposed plan; Fowler Creek Road and Westside Road, Westside Road and Gobblers Knob Road, Westside & Mohar Road and Westside Road and Zrebiec Road.

Why would Gobbler Knob Road be included? Why not major intersections along Westside; such as: Golf Course Road at Westside Road? Woods & Steele Road? Inclusion of these two intersections and their resulting traffic would give a much more accurate view of traffic volumes and impacts. Especially if the traffic count reports are current and not old or one possibly taken during the covid days.

In addition intersection of Westside Road and Fowler Creek Roads intersect in an confusing and dangerous way. Not unusual to see a car getting off Golf Course Road, head east on Westside Road. Then as Westside turns and heads down hill to the fork in the road; with Fowler on right, while also making large curve to left up a hill. Many cars mistakenly continue on the right and go on to Fowler Creek. Then they have to turn around, normally by driving in to one of our neighbors driveways. Since those are private, narrow driveways that vehicle has to back up on to Fowler Creek. This necessitates re-work of his gravel driveway to reapply and level out gravel. Biggest safety problem is how these two roads meet at a 3 point intersect at the bottom of both an hill and curve. That intersection needs major re-design so basically Fowler Creek Road meets Westside further to the east; giving better visibility both directions on Westside.

Also, County installed new, fancy guard rails on Westside Road, to the west and up hill of Fowler Creek Road. To my knowledge the up hill, west end of that guard rail has now been hit damaged twice, and enough to require at least 10' of that western portion to be replaced. Last such incident was within last few weeks and guard rail has yet to be replaced. In both cases, the guard rail was hit by vehicles heading east. Thus the vehicle had to leave the east bound lane, cross west bound lane, cross the dirt road margin and hit this guard rail. The entire Westside Road to both sides of Fowler Creek Road as well as their intersection area are in bad need of major improvements and re-design to improve sight distance.

**Exhibit 15;** Residential Habitat. Mentions the ability for people to have a chance to see animals that they might not otherwise see. Even bears. Will there be informational signs / kiosk through out the view areas to educate viewers to the possible danger from bears? Especially mama bears? We have all seen how a few visitors to our National Parks are mis-behaving and endangering themselves and others by incorrect interaction with wild animals.

Sounds of Nature: chirping birds, hooting of owls, etc.

Wouldn't the potential voices, radio, generator noise of 30 RV's, especially at night – plus use of the Party Barn, cause many of those animals to relocate out of the area? Also while working between Pasco Road and the BPA powerlines, recently, the BNSF train passed down by I90, crossing Golf Course Road – based on the South Cle Elum Ridge that train noised “bounced” back and down at us; making it sound as if the train was running right under the power lines. Echo re-direction in this valley and general area prolongs the effect of noise. It does not help to dissipate it. Trees just “push” noise upward to the higher ridge & hills near this guest site.

Ranch Capacity / vehicle trips.

Ranch capacity: RV spots, cabins, Ranch/Guest House = aprox 100 / 110 persons (at max capacity)

Party Barn = aprox 200 persons (at max capacity)

So, party barn of 200 visitors, how many would be from the other Guest Ranch locations?

Would Barn be used by persons other than from the other Guest Ranch locations?

Seems that in total, Ranch & Barn could have 300+ persons at any one time?

If so, where would the non-ranch guests park? Is there room for trucks, trailers, rv's at the Barn?

Can the Ranch and county roads handle this volume of traffic during a wild fire emergency?

Where would that traffic go if fire was at Westside Road? (north of the ranch)?

Surrounding Property Review; **Section 13:**

In summary this exhibit – lists several properties bordering the proposed guest ranch. In almost every case, the exhibit states “proposed use not detrimental or injurious to character of surrounding neighborhood. Proposed use will ensure compatibility of neighboring lands. Most of the properties are heavily forested – stopping noise, etc. And/or property is on hill which is a natural barrier to minimize majority of possible noise.

Sounds like snake oil sales pitch. Hills around here just push sounds around – helping noise to bounce around. They do not stop noise. This Ranch will be at the bottom of a bowl, almost surrounded by hills (80% or so) that enhance the “life” of the noise as it moves around. In some cases I can hear the site owners dogs barking in the evening, when they are on the property. I also hear motorbikes, quads, some trucks and cars.

What happens when a owner of such surrounding Timbered property needs to perform Firewise work and logging to improve health of their forests and safety of their land? If the heavy timber is gone; wouldn't that in turn allow more Ranch noise onto neighbor land? Thus, that neighbor would be allowing such noise onto their land? Thus creating their own problem?

This project does not enhance, improve or maintain our Rural, peaceful, private, seclusion as neighborhoods and communities.

**Exhibit 7** – Buildings & Recreation and **Exhibit 12 Traffic**

30 RV sites, B&B building, Ranch House, Cabins (10 cabins with 2 – 4 bedrooms + 1 – 3 bathrooms: These are just “cabins”) – elsewhere in the exhibits they mention these facilities will handle 100 – 110 visitors.

Then these facilities generate 92 vehicle trips Daily

Then Exhibit 7 references (Party) Barn to accommodate up to 200 people.

However Exhibit 12 Traffic does not seem to account for Barn traffic for 200 people. Will that be 100 vehicles? 200 vehicles? In addition to the Ranch visitor facilities? Also, as a party Barn – won't most guests be leaving late at night? Maybe mid-night, or later? What is their late night impact to road traffic and safety?

**SEPA** Check List: B Environmental Elements, 1, e: land fill, gravel

Exhibit says such materials will come from an on-site barrow pit on (land id) 822534 –

However it appears this pit is not on-site; County records indicate 822534 is a open pit area in Ronald; probably near the old veneer plant?

The surrounding communities / neighborhoods do not see any value to this proposal. It does not enhance nor improve our communities. We all have vested interests in our homes, land and neighborhoods. Encouraging tourist, campers, etc who have no strong attachments to this area does not improve the communities.

Actions of visitors, guest, interlopers, strangers; people with no invested interest in the area. Some who are "here" just to play; showing no respect for anything. How will they be informed about fire restrictions, not using fireworks in summer, no open fire pits, not to trespass on private property, especially under the BPA high tension powerlines that are on private property. How will folks be "policed" / educated on these points. Just because there are hundreds of acres visible with apparently miles of "trails / dirt roads", etc does not mean those are open to public use. Such use puts many property owners in a big Liability situation from accidents, fire, etc. They should not be placed in this situation due to someone else's business goals.

Lastly – this Proposal is very open-ended. Nothing in it is "firm/definite". There are no safeguards about what happens if the business fails, is sold, wants to change their business nature/plan or build additional cabins, RV sites or even full time homes. Somehow any such changes should be discouraged as well as require a new Proposal and Public Comment Period. Why didn't the property owner just split the 84 acres and build more Homes; say 8 or 10 of them and be done with that land?

Thank you

Mike Hoban

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