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**Cc:** [CDS User](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Fowler Creek Guest Ranch CU-23-00003  
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Jamey,

My wife and I purchased land and built our cabin at 300 High Mark Drive in 2014. We have enjoyed the quiet and peaceful neighborhood alongside our neighbors for almost 10 years now. The land use and development in the area over that 10 years has been increasing (which is expected!) but it has fit within with the character of the neighborhood, and, specifically, has stayed true to the Rural Residential R-5 zoning designation.

Given the land-use challenges (specifically water rights) that we face in Kittitas County, we recognize that the applicant for Fowler Creek Guest Ranch CU-23-00003 is most likely just trying to find the best use of the land in order to both serve the area and get a return on their investment. We understand that – it is a challenge for many land owners in the area right now. This proposal, however, in its current form, is not the answer.

We have several concerns, listed below, which cause us to strongly oppose Fowler Creek Guest Ranch CU-23-00003.

Comments

- **Fire – CU Requirement to not be detrimental or injurious to the Safety of the surrounding neighborhood**
  - We have had fires in the immediate vicinity requiring significant resources to contain (2012 lightning strike, 2014 lightning strike on South Cle Elum Ridge above FS4517, and 2018(?) Target shooting at FS4517 North Ridge Trailhead). The official National Forest/County/City Burn Ban durations have been steadily widening over the years as fire risks increase. Our neighborhood has only **ONE EXIT in case of fire – FS4517**. This is the same road that the Fowler Creek Guest Ranch CU-23-00003 proposal is designating for use as their exit. The numbers of vehicles/traffic included by this proposal is woefully under-estimated (separate concern), but what happens if we get to a Level 2 or 3 Evacuation notice and everyone is attempting to exit down FS4517? What happens if there is an accident or someone gets stuck with their RV? This will block egress, and in a wildfire situation can cause injury and/or loss of life. What if there is an event going on at the Proposal site? That will include many more cars and people, most of whom will not even be staying at the Proposal location. What are the plans/mitigations for

safe egress in the case of fire – not just for customers of this proposal but for all of the current residents now potentially blocked by them?

- This proposal is targeted to serve transient customers visiting the area for short periods of time (days). We have strong concerns that these people will have limited or no knowledge of the dangers of fire to our area, and will serve as high-risks themselves for starting fires either on the ranch property or in the forest while recreating (campfires, target shooting, etc). While this is admittedly “speculative”, everyone who has spent time in Kittitas County knows it is a valid concern. We have had instances in the Granite Creek area of camp fires left smoldering by non-residents. A fire in the Proposal area itself would again, block egress and cause a safety risk for the residents of Granite Creek and Pasco Rd.

- **Traffic - CU Requirement to not be detrimental or injurious to the Safety of the surrounding neighborhood**

- FS 4517 - References and visuals of the impact to traffic on FS4517 seems to be missing completely. This is a Forest Service road rated at maintenance level 2 (Unpaved Off-Road). It is not intended to carry constant heavy traffic, and is not designed to accommodate larger vehicles safely on a routine basis.
  - The intersection of FS4517 and Fowler Creek Rd is extremely dangerous due to the “S” curve coming down to Fowler Creek Rd – in wet, icy, or snowy conditions we have seen many vehicles (> 10) slide off the road into the ditch in the 10 years we have lived here. It is not for the faint of heart in the winter. I can’t even imagine someone coming down FS4517 with a heavy trailer or RV in the winter - in many cases, we can’t even get local, experienced, snow removal companies to come up FS4517 because they don’t want to risk their equipment. This is a safety issue for both customers of this proposal and residents living in the area.
  - FS4517 is too narrow and has several blind corners, making it difficult to navigate even on a sunny day. Cars exceeding a reasonable speed and driving in the center of the road increase injury risks and the frequency of this happening will increase with the increased traffic due to this proposal.
  - Where is the analysis/data of traffic/safety on FS4517 in this proposal? It needs to be considered closely as part of any proposal evaluation.
- Fowler Creek Rd – What is currently a serene country road will have significantly increased traffic from this proposal. Ingress/Egress from the neighborhoods accessed via Fowler Creek Rd will be negatively impacted with the additional traffic.
  - Specifically, the intersection of West Side Rd with Fowler Creek Rd is already a safety concern. Exiting Fowler Creek onto West Side going East is fairly impossible with a trailer or RV without infringing on the opposite lane because of the sharp angle. Anyone turning onto Fowler Creek from westbound West Side has the same issue, but it is exacerbated by the fact that it’s also a blind turn with no way to see oncoming traffic.
  - Weekend and detour traffic on West Side due to backups or construction on I90 has greatly increased the safety risk at the Fowler Creek Rd intersection. Getting out of Fowler Creek can take time and be dangerous given the impatient oncoming traffic. That risk will be dramatically increase with this proposal as

more vehicles attempt to exit onto West Side.

- We believe the traffic numbers contained in this proposal are under-represented, and feel there needs to be more accurate studies performed on traffic local to this proposal as well as further out (E.g. West Side Rd and Golf Course Rd) as part of any proposal evaluation.

- **Noise and Light – CU Requirement to not be detrimental or injurious to the Peace and Character of the surrounding neighborhood**

- Representations in this proposal that noise and light will be “contained” by the geography and surrounding woods and will not impact the adjacent properties is just... wrong. In our 10 years in Granite Creek there have been many instances of parties – even quiet ones – which are clearly audible even though they are ½ mile from our cabin. People shooting in the forest and ORVs are audible for miles and echoes off the ridge. The RV park proposal, where it can be assumed that people will be outside and will have loud music and partying in order to enjoy their holiday away from home, will definitely be audible to the surrounding communities. Events which will accommodate 100+ people will be the equivalent of having a rock concert in our backyard given the current quiet nature of the surrounding communities. This is clearly detrimental to both the Peace of the surrounding neighborhood as well as it’s Character. This clearly does not meet the Conditional Use requirements.

Jamey, we appreciate the opportunity to voice our concerns regarding the Fowler Creek Guest Ranch CU-23-00003 and hope the board and others will take them into consideration as they evaluate the proposal.

Best,  
Drew Lytle  
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