

Bradley Gasawski

From: Heather Sellers <sellershg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 4:31 PM
To: Bradley Gasawski
Cc: Keith Sellers
Subject: Comments - Proposed Easton Travel Center #SE-26-00001

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We are submitting comments under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) on the proposed travel center development in Easton, Washington.

We request that these comments be fully considered in the County's threshold determination and that the record remains open until all relevant environmental information has been adequately disclosed and analyzed.

Based on the information currently available, there are significant concerns that the proposal will have adverse environmental and health impacts that have not been adequately evaluated.

We respectfully request that the County issue a Determination of Significance (DS) and require preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) based on the reasons outlined below.

Upon reviewing the SEPA Checklist filed with CDS on 01 April 2026, numerous responses are either not descriptive enough to assess the actual impact, or the responses submitted lack sufficient detail to address the following concerns:

1. Transportation and Public Safety Impacts: The proposal includes substantial infrastructure for commercial truck fueling and parking, which will significantly increase **heavy truck traffic** at a rural interchange already affected by seasonal congestion related to recreation along the I-90 corridor. Per SE-26-00001, total new trips at the interchange are **8,560**.

This raises significant concerns regarding:

- A) Increased risk of motor vehicle collisions at a constrained rural interchange
- B) Safety of residents, pedestrians, and cyclists
- C) Opportunities for increased criminal activity, including theft, robbery, sex, and human trafficking, are created by the nature of transitory stops, services, and overnighting at a travel center.
- D) Impacts on emergency response times and evacuation routes, specifically for the: Easton Volunteer Fire Department (Kittitas County Fire District #3, and Kittitas County Sheriff's Office, based in Ellensburg, 38 miles away (there is currently no precinct office serving Upper County)

Requests:

1) Detailed traffic impact analysis, given the actual volume of vehicle and commercial traffic anticipated for this project, including peak-hour truck volumes, turning movements, and safety mitigation measures

2) Comprehensive analysis of Fire/ EMS/ HAZMAT response capabilities, as well as crime prevention/response, to determine the reasonable effects and levels of service which would be required by the proposed project, to include the number of anticipated stops for services, persons present by hour of day, plus overnights at the travel center.

2. Groundwater and Drinking Water Protection: The project's use of underground storage tanks and high-volume fuel dispensing poses a significant risk to groundwater resources.

A) Many residents in the area rely on private wells that draw from underground aquifers, as does the Easton Water District (proposed as the site's water utility).

B) The SEPA checklist does not appear to include adequate hydrogeologic analysis or a spill risk assessment, nor does it clearly define the anticipated volumes of fuel, diesel, and other hazardous materials that will be present at or stored at the site.

Request: A comprehensive groundwater study, including:

- 1) An aquifer vulnerability assessment;
- 2) Spill containment and response measures;
- 3) Long-term monitoring plans.

3. Surface Water, Stormwater, and Wetland Impacts: The project site is within a sensitive watershed associated with the Yakima River Basin. Impervious surfaces and truck-related pollutants (oil, grease, heavy metals) may degrade nearby ecosystems and water quality.

A) The submitted SEPA checklist and the inadequate project description vaguely state that impervious surfaces will not exceed 33%.

B) The submitted SEPA checklist response does not address water-oil recovery systems, which should be in place for spills and to contain regular fuel and oil discharge resulting from frequent commercial vehicle traffic and the overnight parking of large trucks.

Request: Analysis of surface water, stormwater, and wetland analysis to determine:

- 1) Stormwater runoff treatment and discharge, including water-oil separators;
- 2) The capture and recovery of heavy metals and other contaminants;
- 3) Potential impacts to wetlands and critical areas, specifically runoff from the site (including the roads leading to and from) flowing into ditches, streams, and waterways that drain to the lake and/or Yakima River Basin;
- 4) Strict compliance with state and federal water quality standards to protect groundwater, potable water sources (local wells), and the environment.

4. Air Quality and Public Health: Idling trucks operating 24 hours a day may adversely affect the health of nearby residents and visitors.

A) Truck stops are a known source of diesel emissions, including particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides (NOx).

Request: The County should require:

- 1) Air quality modeling relevant to the anticipated volume of commercial vehicle traffic and overnighting;
- 2) Evaluation of health impacts on residents;
- 3) Mitigation measures such as anti-idling policies, filtering emissions, and/or the implementation of other modern air-quality technologies.

5. Noise, Lighting, and Rural Character: Easton is a small, rural community whose identity is defined by its **natural environment, recreation, and quality of life.**

A) The proposed 24-hour operation will introduce continuous noise from engines, braking systems, and refrigeration units, as well as high-intensity lighting at all hours of the day and night. B) These impacts are inconsistent with the rural character of the Easton area as identified under the county's Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) designation as outlined in KCC 17.15.070.

Request: A detailed analysis should include:

- 1) Noise level modeling (day/night);
- 2) Ongoing light spill and glare impacts while the site is operating;
- 3) Mitigation measures to preserve community character;
- 4) How the proposed development meets the requirements and intent of the conditions and restrictions as outlined in the LAMIRD code for Kittitas County.

6. Wildlife and Habitat Impacts: The Easton area provides important habitat and movement corridors for wildlife.

A) Increased traffic, lighting, and development intensity may result in habitat fragmentation and increased wildlife-vehicle collisions.

Request: Further review should evaluate impacts on local species and habitat connectivity, including those associated with the nearby lake and river basin.

The SEPA review must **evaluate cumulative impacts**, including the combined effects of this project with existing Interstate-90 traffic, regional growth, and Easton's rural community characteristics. The current documentation appears insufficient in this regard, relying on generalized assumptions and **lacking site-specific analysis** in several critical areas.

Given the scope and potential impacts of this project, a Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) or mitigated DNS would be premature and unsupported by the current record. The potential for significant adverse environmental impacts clearly **warrants preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).**

This decision will have long-term consequences for the Easton community, and it is essential that growth be aligned with community values, environmental stewardship, and public health.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Heather & Keith Sellers

Residents of Lodge Creek Estates

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