

Bradley Gasawski

From: Leto Castrilli <lady_letto@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 12:44 AM
To: Bradley Gasawski; CDS User
Subject: SE-26-00001 – Easton Travel Center – Opposition and SEPA Comments

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Kittitas County network. Do not click links, open attachments, fulfill requests, or follow guidance unless you recognize the sender and have verified the content is safe.

Mr. Gasawski,

I would like to express my strong **opposition** for the proposed truck stop/travel center in Easton (SE-26-00001) and would like to make comment specifically on the recent SEPA application. The same proposal continues to be put forth, yet there is no measurable change in the proposal or mitigation for the affects it will undoubtedly have. I urge the County to review this very carefully as there are a number of concerns with the application.

Under ‘Environmental Elements’, point 1. C. the applicant stated that the property is predominantly kladnick ashy sandy loam. This soil type is highly permeable. Any and all runoff containing heavy metals, petroleum byproducts, oil, microplastics, and other pollutants will enter directly into the aquifer and quickly make their way into nearby wells, Easton Water District well water, Lake Easton, Silver Creek, and the Yakima River. In their soil report it was noted that the water table is 41ft between ground level. It should be noted that at the time of the study (November), Lake Easton and Kachess were both at their lowest, with both being partially drained seasonally. The water table April – October would be much higher. This fact should be taken into account. With this soil type, extensive mitigation would need to occur to prevent contamination to the water supply. It is further stated in their own hydrological study (Page 7, section 8.0 ‘Conceptual Site Model’) that any pollution would infiltrate the aquifer with 4-5 years. The parcel sits within a Critical Aquifer Recharge Area (CARA). It should also be noted that plowing of snow is a major vector for the transfer of pollutants. I have yet to see a plan on how to safely remove contaminated snow runoff in addition to standard stormwater.

In section 3 ‘Water’, point A. 1. the applicant lists distances from nearby waterways. In the submitted SEPA it states Lake Easton is 1,200ft away. This is incorrect. In actuality, the distance from the easternmost proposed runoff holding area and the shore of Lake Easton is only 825ft, sloping downhill, towards the lake.

In section 3 ‘Water’, point A. 6. the applicant states that there will be no discharge of waste to surface waters. Any and all waste in the form of liquid pollutants will very rapidly run towards nearby Lake Easton and enter into the Yakima River watershed. The travel center is close enough to surface water with a highly permeable soil type that it would be absurd to state that pollutants will not affect the nearby surface water. Their own hydrologic study states (Page 9, Section 9.5 E. Hydrologic Budget) *“The surficial water would drain into the unconfined aquifer, run along the till or confining layer identified, and reach likely to a local river and surface waters like Lake Easton primarily”*. Trash will also be an issue, one can look at any comparable travel center and note the sharp spike in free-floating trash. On the subject of physical waste such as trash, it is known that projects such as these attract increased drug use and discarded paraphernalia.

In section 3 'Water' point B. 1. The applicant states that the project will rely on the Easton Water District. The district is fed by nearby wells. Therefore, usage should still be reported on the SEPA and documented as it would be with any other well.

In section 3 'Water' C. point 1. and 2. There is again no mention of snowmelt runoff or how polluted plowed snow will be collected, stored, and treated specifically. It does not take an engineer to know that snow behaves significantly differently than stormwater and requires additional consideration. Applicant states that no waste materials could enter surface or ground waters. This is unequivocally false.

In section 7 'Environmental Health' point 4. Applicant states that no additional emergency services would be required. It is well documented that travel stops/truck stops significantly increase emergency service response for medical calls, law enforcement, and fire. Easton has a healthy volunteer department and is fully capable of adequately serving the community at present. But this proposal would certainly put additional strain on the department, while responding predominantly to calls generated by travelers outside of the department's tax base. It should also be noted that with Easton being unincorporated, law enforcement must come from Ellensburg, over 40 miles away. There are no local agencies fully equipped to handle a hazmat type emergency, which this proposal has a significant chance of creating. There are also severe traffic issues with EMS and fire access to this property at present, which would be exacerbated by traffic from a travel center. Not acknowledging these facts in the SEPA, nor offering any form of mitigation is nothing short of absurd and will become a liability whether for the owners of this travel center, the County, or both.

The area in which this travel center would sit is also in one of the highest wildfire risk areas in Washington as assessed as part of the wildland urban interface. Any fire started here would quickly spread through the town and put hundreds of lives and properties at risk. Automobiles run a high risk of fire ignition – look at how many fires start each year along I-90, almost always caused by an automobile or a careless driver. The more automobiles in an area, the higher the risk.

In section 7 'Environmental Health' point 5. Concerning fuel storage - What plans are in place to deal with faulty tanks or storage containers? Leaks stemming from projects such as this have accounted for millions of dollars in cleanup fees in Washington State alone (See the Restover Truckstop in Olympia for reference). What is the contingency plan for when this truck stop is out of business in 20 years and leaking tanks and containers are left to leak directly into the groundwater?

In section 7 'Environmental Health', section B. 'Noise' points 2. and 3. The applicant greatly understates the noise impact that such a project would have after completion. Trucks are loud, and often left to idle overnight, creating an ambient noise level of over 75dB in many situations. Mitigation for this noise is not currently planned. This is not acceptable as the property directly adjacent to the proposal property is a wedding venue, camping area, and horse ranch, with residential housing also nearby. All would be greatly impacted by this increased noise level.

In section 8 'Land and Shoreline Use' point A. the applicant fails to mention that their directly adjacent neighbor is in fact the aforementioned venue, Silver Ridge Ranch. The applicant can not claim that they are unaware of their direct neighbor and what impact their travel stop would have on their neighboring business. This proposal would nothing short of ruin the property value and business opportunity of this beloved Easton venue. Horses, weddings, family fun, and camping do not mix with a truck stop a stone's throw away.

In section 10. 'Aesthetics' point B. concerning views, I would imagine that the patrons of Silver Ridge Ranch would strongly disagree with the applicant's statement that: *"No views in the immediate vicinity will be altered or obstructed"*.

In section 12. 'Recreation' point B. The applicant states that *"No formal recreational activities occur on the site"*. This is untrue. There is a well-traveled recreational path along the front of the property that services

walking, biking, and motorized recreational traffic in both summer and winter. This corridor is vital to all recreationalists and should be left intact.

In section 14. 'Transportation' point C. the applicant states that no improvements will be made to existing roads. Traffic is a massive issue that is not being acknowledged by the applicant. I-90 over Snoqualmie pass closes over 30 times each winter. Each and every time the pass closes due to a snow event, Sparks Road from the exit 70 overpass becomes impassable due to parked and/or jackknifed trucks. As it turns out, semis and heavy snows don't mix well. Luring trucks closer to the pass with the idea of a safe harbor at a truckstop in Easton, in the middle of heavy snow is another source of liability for both the applicant and the County. The roads in Easton cannot handle the current traffic during these events, let alone increased truck traffic due to this proposal. The travel center cannot handle the number of trucks that need to be harbored. The only safe and logical solution is to continue closing I-90 at Ellensburg. Trucks need to be turned around at Easton before they get dangerously stuck in the snow, creating a hazard for themselves, those around them, and the residents of Easton that can not get EMS during these events due to road blockages. They do not need encouragement to push further into snow country.

Please note that Easton broke a 24hr snowfall record in 2022, with 27 inches falling in a 24/hr period, amounting to 65 total inches of snowfall on the ground. Some may simply not be aware but Easton continually averages significantly more snowfall than neighboring towns such as Cle Elum or Ellensburg, being under a rain-shadow which turns into somewhat of a snow-shadow in winter months. The weather in Easton should not be underestimated. Luring truckers further into foul weather and danger is not wise - and that is what this proposal would serve to do. There will be fatalities if this proposal is accepted.

Section 14. 'Transportation' point E. the applicant cites an outdated traffic study and does not take into consideration the impact of frequent pass closures, snow, or other common weather events. The area continues to get busier each year. Numbers are likely far higher than reported.

Additional comments:

- Snow removal is not mentioned in the SEPA at all. And though a small snow shed appears on the Site Plan, it is unclear how during a snow event a county driver would be able to access said shed. When the pass is closed I-90 is often impassable due to stopped vehicles, and the exit 70 overpass and Sparks Road is completely blocked by parked or jackknifed trucks during every major snow event.
- Polluted groundwater will not only immediately affect Easton's water supply through both residential wells and Easton Water District wells, but will quickly contaminate Lake Easton and the Yakima River. There are two fish hatcheries within a mile of the truck stop which rely on water from the Yakima. Copper and other heavy metals commonly found in truckstop runoff have been found to negatively impact fish navigation. Water from Lake Easton also flows from the lake through the KRD canal for irrigation of crops as far as Ellensburg. Anything that enters the ground in Easton has the potential to have a profound impact downstream, far beyond Easton itself.
- This proposal does not fit in with the preservation of rural character and takes away from the rural history of our town.

If we stick to common sense and facts, it becomes abundantly clear that this parcel due to its location is not only unsuitable for this use, but this use will exacerbate existing safety issues and liability for both the Majestic Group and Kittitas County. There is no amount of tax revenue that Kittitas County could generate from this proposal that would offset the environmental impacts that this proposal would cause. It would be a failing of

our county officials as stewards of our land if this proposal were to be allowed to move forward in its current state.

I request a Determination of Significance and full EIS, or denial of the application.

Thank you for your time. Please add these comments to the public record.

Lifetime Easton Resident

Franny Castrilli



Virus-free. www.avast.com