

From: [Mike Podobnik](#)
To: [Jamey Ayling](#)
Cc: [CDS User](#)
Subject: Public Comments on Fowler Creek Guest Ranch, CU-23-00003
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2023 12:07:51 AM
Attachments: [Letter for the Residents of the Granite Creek Community dated 18 Oct 2023.pdf](#)

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October 18, 2023

Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby St
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Transmitted via email

Re: Fowler Creek Guest Ranch, CU-23-00003

My name is Michael Podobnik and I have a residence at 841 Forest Service Road 4517, Cle Elum, WA 98922. Our family's property, Parcel #17437, immediately borders the proposed development for Fowler Creek Guest Ranch, CU-23-00003, and I am submitting public comments in this regard.

Specifically, I wish to enter into public comments the verbatim high-level evaluation of the existing road conditions completed by Shawn Plichta, Professional Engineer, in response to the Site Plan submitted. That assessment is included in full below as well as attached for reference.

Respectfully,
Michael Podobnik

Attachments:

1.

Letter for the Residents of the Granite Creek Community, Shawn M. Plichta, PE

18 October 2023

For the Residents of the Granite Creek Community

To Whom It May Concern,

In response to the Site Plan submitted for the Fowler Creek Guest Ranch, I completed a high-level evaluation of the existing road conditions requested by residents of the Granite Creek community.

United States Forest Service (USFS) road 4517 is the single and readily available access into the Granite Creek community. On the Site Plan, the two points of access to the Guest Ranch are labeled "Exit" to USFS road 4517 and an "Entrance" from Fowler Creek Road. This access is currently unimproved and the "Exit" is the only means of egress from the Guest Ranch shown on the Site Plan.

My concern begins with the intersection of the "Exit" and USFS road 4517. In an emergency, such as a wildland wildfire, the traffic volumes proposed by the Guest Ranch combined with the residents and any vacation renters from approximately 120 lots in the Granite Creek community may exceed the capacity of this intersection and USFS road 4517. This existing USFS road may not have been designed and constructed to meet current standards for horizontal and vertical line of sight, stopping sight distance, turn radii for long wheel-base vehicles such as recreational vehicles, clear zone requirements, and roadway width for the traffic volumes and speed experienced in an evacuation scenario.

This situation is further exasperated with people, in a panicked state, evacuating the area sharing minimal roadway width with emergency responders trying to access the impacted area. These conditions create a higher probability for collisions and other accidents that may block USFS road 4517. Moreover, a mechanical breakdown of any vehicle may block the only access to the Granite Creek community and slow emergency response. The inability for people to evacuate and emergency responders to access the area increases the risk of significant loss of property and most importantly life.

In my opinion the proposed intersection and USFS road 4517 may not be adequate to provide safe egress for the Granite Creek community. Further engineering analysis should be completed for the proposed Site Plan in the permit application to ensure the combined traffic volumes for the Guest Ranch and Granite Creek community can egress the area both safely and expeditiously. Additional upgrades or improvements to the proposed access at the Guest Ranch as well as USFS road 4517 may be required to meet current standards in conformance with the Kittitas County Code.

Regards,

Shawn M. Plichta, PE

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Mike Podobnik
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