

Planning Emails

Thank you for accepting comments on the Mt. Spokane (PASEA) project.

Please choose Alternative 2 and if possible allow back country alpine skiing in the PASEA.

It seems only fair that this use would be allowed, given the other uses allowed. I suspect this may have just been an oversight on the part of the planners, there is so much to consider!

Additionally, as the former campaign chair of the thrice victorious tax initiative for conservation futures in Spoken County I believe I can assert there is quite a bit of public support for conservation, which has been specifically tied to clean air/clean water in all of our campaigns, and this is what residents are supporting, not necessarily recreation replacing these values.

The Department of Ecology has projected changes that will make the ski expansion vulnerable to natural weather cycles, thus forcing a reliance on artificial snow, which only exacerbates an engineering and infrastructure problem created by the expansion. The removal of the trees, as you know, sets into motion additional weakness for the forest that remains, and it makes worse the possibility of recovering from insect and fire damage.

I won't go into specific scientific details, which I know others have written about, but I do want to add my voice to the comments about this issue.

Please support alternative 2.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable.

Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact.

The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.

Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I support Natural Forest Area (Alternative II). I ask for a land classification with minimal change that still allows low impact recreation. This gives access into the area for the public and not just Alpine Skiers. The NFA minimizes damage to topography or environment.

I am not an expert - but I am a heavy user of the Park - both in winter and summer - and I volunteer there.

Thank you for the update on the Mt Spokane DEIS.

I couldn't help but notice under the heading "Purpose of the combined DEIS" the following wording "...evaluate the PROBABLE adverse environmental impacts...". To me, that wording implies someone's mind is already made up that the proposed development is a negative for the environment. Maybe that's just standard text for this kind of document. I hope that everyone involved is keeping an open mind. It would be a shame to pass up this opportunity to enhance the use of our public lands. Thanks for your consideration.

I have corresponded previously in favor of the Mt. Spokane expansion issue. I feel at this point all the rhetoric has. Unfortunately, become political rather than practical. There is almost an insidious method of approach those opposed have taken. The facts are in regardless of the order presented.

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All studies have been completed ad nauseam.

Wouldn't it be refreshing for common sense to prevail at this point. I can only imagine the countless time you have spent on this important matter. With that in mind I kept this short.

I support Alternative 2, Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing **should** be allowed in the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA). It already occurs in the PASEA but Parks will not allow it under Alt. 2. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian use are allowed.

- The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth and native forest that has never been logged; it's not replaceable.
- Defragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.
- Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."
- The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.
- Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.
- Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.
- Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. How will you expand a ski area if you don't know where to put all the vehicles and the people?
- Global climate change impacts are not mentioned at all. Old growth forests help reduce climate change by sequestering carbon and holding soil moisture.

I received a mass-email from The Lands Council to send comments to you supporting the blockage of the ski area expansion. BUT, I am in favor and not opposed. I know they are the organization trying to block the expansion and I feel for you because they are a tenacious group! The type of people who would lay down in front of a bull dozer for their cause (I guess you need to give them credit for committing to their cause with such passion). The loss of a few trees won't cause any issues, in my opinion, other than creating more food for the deer and elk! AND, it opens up recreational opportunities for humans! And I think humans are pretty important! So chalk me up for a 'YES' for expanding the ski areas! If there is something more formal I could do to support the expansion just let me know. Thank you and keep up the fight!!!

I agree with Corey, that hill needs to be expanded. And a bunch of tree huggers getting in the way is almost always just some crazy Liberal(s) looking for attention. In other words people without real jobs, as why else would they have time to "lay in front of a bull dozer" for a cause. When they should be doing something productive.

It makes economic sense to improve & expand the ski hill. Mt Spokane has a chance to keep local money here. To compete with Schweitzer & Silver mountains etc. Expansion will create employment with is desperately needed around here.

Anybody that's spent time in the woods and with a half an ounce of brains knows, cutting down a few trees is not going to scare off any elk or deer....its going to attract them. (just ask a hunter what he thinks of when he sees a logged off area)

So chalk me up for a YES to expansion.

- 1) The small number of trees harvested would be minimal compared to the total harvested in Washington each year.
- 2) During Winter this area could be enjoyed by a great number of people who will put more money into the areas economy. Not to mention the added jobs for Spokane County.
- 3) The upper 2/3 of Mt. Spokane is not used by deer or elk during the Winter and Spring because of snow depths. During Summer and Fall these open areas can be used for grazing by deer and elk and varies types of rodents. These animals can also enjoy the protection the State Park offers.

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So why wouldn't the creation of Jobs, putting money into the areas economy and creating grazing lands for wildlife not be pluses to support expansion of the ski area. My guess would be that the majority of the members of the Land Council are residence of King County, who could care less about our economy or understand that wild game gaze in open areas and not in deep forest.

I haven't skied in several years, but years ago I would ski 50 days/year at Mt. Spokane and even back then we talked about the need for expansion. I total support the expansion for the reasons given above.

Please accept these comments from someone who cares about the future of our earth and the future of MT Spokane.

Having grown up in Spokane, I enjoyed playing up on Mt Spokane, but would hate to see its never logged west side lost to short sided gain. Leave the water and carbon on the hillside longer, leave the westside of Mt Spokane untouched! I'm attaching comments also below to have you support ALT 2.

- Please support Alternative 2, Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing **should** be allowed in the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA). It already occurs in the PASEA but Parks will not allow it under Alt. 2. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian use are allowed.

- The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth and native forest that has never been logged; it's not replaceable.

- Defragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

- Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

- The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

- Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.

- Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

- Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. How will you expand a ski area if you don't know where to put all the vehicles and the people?

- Global climate change impacts are not mentioned at all. Old growth forests help reduce climate change by sequestering carbon and holding soil moisture.

I was copied on an email sent to XXXXX by the Lands Council, asking people to support their position denying the proposed expansion of skiing on Mt. Spokane. I support the expansion rather than the Lands Council's position. I am a lifelong resident of Spokane and have watched the Lands Council and their positions for many years. I find them to be extremist and opposed to virtually anything that increases human enjoyment, no matter what the overall effect is upon the environment. The honest facts are, as aptly stated by XXXXX, that the expansion will actually aid wildlife rather than hurt it!

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·Please support Alternative 2, Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat: back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA). It already occurs in the PASEA but Parks will not allow it under Alt.2. while, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian use are allowed.

·The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. Old growth and native forest that has never been logged is not replaceable. This would just be a tragic loss of an old growth ecosystem that we have far too few of any more.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

- Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for wildlife.*
- The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.*
- Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.*
- Preservation of cultural and archaeological resources has not been adequately addressed.*
- Upgrades in parking and lodges were not discussed. How will you expand a ski area if you don't know where to put all the vehicles and the people?*
- Global climate change impacts are not mentioned at all. Old growth forests help reduce climate change by sequestering carbon and holding soil moisture.*

Please support Alternative 2 with the exception of not allowing back country skiing. Old growth and native forest are not replaceable. Do not allow clear cutting for more ski runs and chair lifts. Clear cutting would reduce habitat for wildlife including fish health downstream and soil preservation. Please keep this exceptional wooded area as is both for its beauty and for wildlife habitat, human appreciation via snowshoeing, hiking, back country skiing and for climatic and native forest health.

I live in the Ponderosa neighborhood, between Dishman Hills and Iller Creek Conservation Area. When I walk around our neighborhood and enjoy viewing the hills, it feels like I live in an area with lots of undeveloped forest nearby.

However, when private pilot friends take me for scenic flights at low elevation over the whole county, I realize how much I am kidding myself. No matter whether private or public land, not much forest remains, and there is very little of it where the trees are not young and evenly spaced, groomed for the next harvest.

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Clearcutting through the old growth on Mt. Spokane so that a limited number of people can enjoy skiing a limited number of weeks a year is not a good decision for the environment, people, and wildlife.

•Support Alternative 2!

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Do your job- Protect Our Public lands, waters, future, wildlife & health!

Your attention to this most urgent matter would be much appreciated by all present & future generations of all species.

Randy, we definitely support Alternative 2 in the draft EIS about expanded ski runs on the west side of Mt. Spokane. That forest should be preserved as is with the exception that winter back-country skiing is OK there. There are plenty of fine ski areas near here already, for one thing, but the point is to preserve rare old growth forest ecosystems for our next generations.

I am a frequent user of Mt Spokane State Park for hiking, biking, skiing and snow shoeing. I am concerned about the proposal to extend the commercial aspects of the ski area into the old growth region on the Northwest side of the mountain.

I would support Alternative 2, the Natural Forest Alternative with the modification of allowing backcountry skiing in the area, since that is already occurring. The alternative also allows hiking and mountain biking on existing trails.

Thanks for helping us preserve this wonderful natural resource.

I am a voting citizen of Spokane County and wish to see minimal future impacts to Mt. Spokane, and the old growth forest in particular. **Decisions now will leave a legacy of either preservation or destruction.**

I know you must be repeatedly receiving the list of concerns as voiced by conservation groups and I've included them below to confirm my support of this cautious and careful approach to developing Mt. Spokane further. I think it is a balanced approach.

PLEASE add me to the numbers supporting cautious and preservation-minded decision-making with regard to Mt. Spokane.

Please support Alternative 2, NFA with a caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA.

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I am very encouraged to see that there will be an Environmental Impact Study before the group that is promoting further expansion of the ski area is given the go-ahead to proceed. I know the intent of the original group of men that bought the property was for its use to be wider than just for skiing. I am hoping that if the request is approved at all it will be scaled back to include improvements in hiking, biking and cross-country ski trails.

My grandfather, Frank W. Guilbert, was a key mover in the establishment of Mt. Spokane as a State Park.

I am a native Spokane resident and an avid backcountry skier, hiker and mountain biker in the Mt. Spokane State Park. I learned how to ski at the age of 3 at Mt. Spokane and I care deeply about the preservation of this beautiful resource for generations to come.

Please accept these comments into the official record for the DEIS for the Mt. Spokane PASEA Classification:

- I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing **should** be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there, and mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA.
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I support Alternative 2 of the NFA, for the following reasons:

- *Seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that have never been logged: they are irreplaceable.*
- *Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for wildlife.*
- *Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."*
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Old growth is forever. The seven proposed new ski runs and the corridor for the new lift will destroy forest that makes Mt. Spokane so unique. Is that the legacy the parks department wants? You must realize there ARE generations not even born? Haven't we robbed them enough? Or are WE all that matters, as in, HA Ha Ha, suckers, you shoulda been born before WE cashed in nature's chips?

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Imagine preserving at least tiny shreds of the natural legacy we were blessed with; imagine how much old growth, how much Genuine Forest we have already cashed out.

To destroy more of the fragmented and pathetic remnants of Genuine Forest...snuffing nature to pad the profits of---admit it, the Cowles Family, fundamentally...you know, the Spokesman Review, just for starters...is that how we will remember Randy Kline's decision? No thought for what matters most, just simple genuflection to "powerful people", at extravagant cost to Mt. Spokane, wildlife, and people who will only know Genuine Forest by historical accounts. If I were in your place, and sacrificed such natural treasure....

Is there no decency left in any form of "government"?

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing **should** be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I grew up here and know how important it is to preserve the Mt. Spokane area; I hike there often.

I continue to join the Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife in advocating that the old growth ecosystem on the west side of Mt. Spokane be kept intact. And I continue to be alarmed that the proposed ski run development continues to pose a threat to this irreplaceable area. There is no mitigation possible when old growth is cut and to propose that there is some way of mitigating such a loss would be laughable if it weren't such a travesty.

In addition, the draft EIS does not adequately address several areas of concern:

Effects on waterways and fish below the proposed ruined area

Potential loss of wetland areas as they were surveyed at their lowest point (late summer) instead of more accurately in the spring

Reduced habitat for rare or endangered species as well as inadequate planning for moose, wolves and other species

Inadequate attention to cultural and archeological issues

Furthermore, the EIS does not address the necessary changes that would be required regarding parking, lodging, and other guest facilities for an expanded ski area. These additions would be both necessary and hugely impactful to the environment.

And lastly, the immense role that old growth plays in carbon sequestration and the effect this has on climate change is a vital concern which must be adequately addressed before a stand is blithely leveled to provide a larger play area for the species which is causing global warming.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) but believe that back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA and require no lifts or forest cutting.

Please protect the Mt Spokane old growth forest.

The existing ski runs on Mt. Spokane are perfectly adequate for recreation and therefore there is no excuse for destroying old growth forest and wildlife habitat for amusement.

I was disturbed to learn that there are proposals being considered to expand the alpine skiing on Mt. Spokane. There are many ski areas already within short driving distance of Spokane so it is not like we have a shortage of this resource. However, we would lose forest, habitat, wildlife and life quality that could not be replaced.

You likely know that Spokane advertises itself with the motto "Near Nature, Near Perfect". That is a very good indication of what is valued in this area and what we believe adds quality to our lives.

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I would not support any reduction in forest area to Mount Spokane and hope your vote will maintain the forest and wild areas.

I support the protection of the natural forest of Spokane Mountain and the preservation of habitat for wildlife of that area. The plans for ski runs and clear cut for a chair lift destroys the native forest that can not be replaced. This area is essential for wildlife and studies for the impact for destruction of the forest for recreational use of a few has not been conclusive. There are already many ski areas available to the public within traveling distance of Spokane and to create a larger area that would benefit few at the destruction of forest should not be approved. This area could be used for backpacking, hiking, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing that would preserve the habitat and server a variety of purposes without cutting forests or much disruption of wildlife. Multiple use recreation areas and forests that do not have a detrimental impact on wildlife and future use for recreation should take precedence over limited usage and any clear cutting.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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-Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

-Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

-Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

-Once you lose it it will never be the same.

-What you save today will be worth more tomorrow!

I have hiked, snowshoed and cross country skied on Mt. Spokane for over forty years. I would truly appreciate it being as close to a wilderness area as possible.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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We have received information from friends who have studied this issue. My husband and I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat.

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I was distressed to learn that the old growth forest on the west side of Mt. Spokane was in danger. You know that old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts must be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

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I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area. The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable. The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer. Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly. Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered. Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

I hope you will consider all of the concerns that have been well documented by the Sierra Club in regards to the old growth forest on the West Side of Mt. Spokane are left in tack.

I am concerned that the wildlife has little chance of survival when we keep encroaching on the relatively small areas where they can be undisturbed. Also my concern is for the streams that are downstream of the proposed logging.

In this age where our children's health and well being is well documented to be threatened by global warming I hope you will consider the broad range impact of the short term benefits of cutting more of our old forest land. I hope you will choose to protect these valuable, irreplaceable gifts with your considered vote for a protected forest we can enjoy now and later.

I know for a fact that the Moose and other wild life travel the loop from Mt. Spokane to Brown's Mountain out to the wildlife sanctuary near Cheney. If you destroy that last stand of old growth wildlife will have no other place to go. Stop bowing down to the corporate masters and save the last few places where wildlife can go to survive.

Destroy the wild life and you destroy us.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposal for the future of Mt. Spokane State Park. The remaining native forest should be left undisturbed, and not harmed further by ski area expansion.

Mt. Spokane State Park is treasured by the Spokane community. Already there are significant impacts to the Park from the existing alpine ski area.

Since 2007 the Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area, 'PASEA')."

Regarding alternatives, I support Alternative Two, the Natural Forest Alternative with the following qualifier: backcountry skiing should be allowed to

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continue in the PASEA.

For the FEIS, please include a discussion on upgrading parking and the lodges, and better discuss cultural and archeological resources.

Finally, climate change likely will have an impact on the region's forests and snow. Please include in the EIS a thorough discussion of climate change impacts as they relate to the alternatives.

As someone who absolutely loves this place and spends a lot of time in the park, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, and observing its wildlife, I want to express as strongly as I can my desire that this expansion not go forward. It saddens and troubles me that a private concessionaire could be allowed to destroy more of what little old growth forest remains in the park, degrading the ability of this beautiful forest to support wildlife and to serve as a quiet place where those of us who prefer human-powered recreation can explore and enjoy the natural world. There are precious few such places left within close proximity to Spokane, and, even ecological considerations aside, it seems unfair to the quiet majority of us who happily buy a Discover Pass each year primarily so we can hike and explore such places year-round to have more of it taken away by a private company that is only open 3-4 months a year and serves those who--though they buy expensive equipment and lift tickets--don't even have to buy a Discover Pass. I write, by the way, as someone who also loves downhill skiing and who wishes I could love my local ski resort but who finds myself unable even to patronize them as long as they continue to attempt to colonize more of my favorite state park and to destroy more of its natural character.

I also am troubled at the shifting, misleading and occasionally outright false claims that the ski resort is using to support its bid, ranging from claims of its ability to expand its season (when in most years there is still plenty of snow to ski in the existing boundaries of the resort long past its closing date, as I can attest from experience) to its recent ludicrous claim that the clearcuts it plans for the chairlift and additional ski runs will make the park more resilient to forest fires.

I would hope that we would pay attention to the advice of our own Department of Fish and Wildlife, which recommended against logging this area. This old-growth forest is irreplaceable.

Please designate this area as a Natural Forest Area and allow it to go on supporting the wide range of wildlife that depends on it and providing a place human-powered exploration (which, it seems to me, includes backcountry skiing--I don't quite understand why it would be disallowed, so long as it remains illegal to cut down trees).

I am an attorney in Spokane. Over the years I have done a lot of cross country skiing on Mt. Spokane. I am opposed to any expansion that would result in cutting down old growth timber. Such timber is important for sequestration of carbon dioxide. It is also important for wildlife habitat; wildlife must be able to roam freely and not be inhibited by more paving and structures.

Additional problems caused by an expansion would be increased air pollution, including carbon dioxide, from more automobiles using the area. The last thing we need in the face of climate warming (climate change) is additional destruction of plant and animal habitat.

The EIS should definitely consider the problem of increased greenhouse emissions in the construction and operation of this project.

I support the protection of the natural forest of Spokane Mountain and the preservation of habitat for wildlife of that area. The plans for ski runs and clear cut for a chair lift destroys the native forest that can not be replaced. This area is essential for wildlife and studies for the impact for destruction of the forest for recreational use of a few has not been conclusive. There are already many ski areas available to the public within traveling distance of Spokane and to create a larger area that would benefit few at the destruction of forest should not be approved. This area could be used for

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backpacking, hiking, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing that would preserve the habitat and server a variety of purposes without cutting forests or much disruption of wildlife. Multiple use recreation areas and forests that do not have a detrimental impact on wildlife and future use for recreation should take precedence over limited usage and any clear cutting.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable. Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.

Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

It is imperative to preserve as much of our old growth forests as possible. Once these treasures are gone for short term gain they are gone forever. The trade off is simply not worth it.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

DO NOT CUT ANY OLD GROWTH EXCEPT AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT DISEASE. DON'T YOU SEE THAT YOU CAN NEVER GET THE OLD GROWTH BACK.

As a resident of north spokane I use the backside of mt. spokane and surrounding mountains for recreation including snowshoeing and hiking. These old growth areas are important to me and are already endangered due the ski resort and its impact on general habitat.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

These are essential issue and sequestering Carbon is not reproducible at this time!!!!

Thank you for acting in the most responsible manner to save this precious resource for all generations!!!!!!!

I have been a resident of Spokane Co. for the past 50 years and have enjoyed the wilderness areas surrounding Mt. Spokane, having backpacked this incredible wilderness. No where else, close to Spokane, can one enjoy the unspoiled outdoors as the area surrounding Mt. Spokane, off the beaten path areas. Standing in the old growth forest is almost magical. Any attempt to clear-cut this old growth stand of trees will severely impact all animals who live there. Prior to living here I lived at Lime Lake that borders the Salmo-Priest Wilderness area, Crowell Ridge was out my back door.

Mt. Spokane has been a gem to Eastern Washington and a testament to the State's care and concern to protect the natural, untouched wilderness, of which we should cherish and preserve. You have continually advocated to keep the old growth timber and it's forest floor intact providing a home for the flora and fauna that live there year-round. However I have concerns about why this issue is being contemplated and has reached this point and have genuine concerns. These concerns are subjective and objective in fact. I would like to address the objective elements.

First and foremost is the fact that the clear cutting of the old growth forest will degrade the entire ecosystem from the water, the air and displace

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thousands of animals, birds and plants that have never been touched by man, never to return. And for what, so that we may please those who want to ski down a mountain, lasting 25 minutes? To make more money? These skiers are not the majority of people who enjoy and respect this mountain. What about those who respect nature in it's raw form even if they never visit this mountain. Once you clear cut you can never replace the ecology created by nature. There is no going back. Fragmenting of forest is best illustrated by the Amazon rain forest deforestation, where "islands" were created for wildlife to live, not understanding that the plowed fields between these islands might have been the Amazon River it's self, being impossible to cross. This will happen if clear-cutting is allowed.

It has been brought to my attention that wildlife modeling for wolves, deer, moose, martin, wolverine was not done correctly, as was archaeological resources and cultural concerns were not adequately covered. Siltation will impact the quality of water for wildlife and fish, with streams be choked all the way down and beyond the ski slopes. Also these wetlands should have been investigated and delineated in the spring and not the late summer as implied.

This idea of pushing mother nature to the limit of survival is not in the best interests of man and would be devastating to the animals and plants that live there. This is their home, not man-kinds to do with for a dollar bill. You have been charged to balance the needs of a few thrill seekers against the right, nature's right, to live free, unencumbered by the will and so-called rights of man.

I ask you to do the right thing and that is to not allow clear-cutting of old growth forests for the thrill and pleasure of man for 4 months out of the year. I call upon your compassion and reasoning in this controversial issue and stand up for the animals and plants that have called this mountain their home for thousands of years, untouched by man.

Please protect and maintain the old growth forest on the west side of Mt Spokane.

The Natural Forest Alternative is the best choice. This forest cannot be replaced. Streams, wetlands, fish and wildlife will be at risk if the forest is scarred by a clear-cut. Changes in snow pack levels and our warming summer heat must also be considered.

Take time to consider all the aspects that will cause significant adverse impacts on this wild area. Protect this park for the future.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I've become aware that there is a request to do logging in an old growth area forest on Mt. Spokane. I am writing to you to ask that you please make sure that the old growth forest on the west side of Mt. Spokane remain intact and whole.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

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Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I am a member of the Save Mt. Spokane Coalition. And, I am writing to express my strong support for Alternative 2, the Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) designation for the PASEA. Additionally, I also want to express my support for allowing back country skiing, which I understand will not be allowed if the decision is made to designate the PASEA as NFA. I have back country skied in this area and I know that other people also sometimes backcountry ski there. Back country skiing on the snow has very minimum or no impact. However, it clearly is not consistent to disallow back country skiing here while at the same time allow mountain biking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and equestrian uses. All of those uses have as much or more impact than back country skiing. In addition to back country skiing, over the years I have frequently hiked, mountain biked, camped and cross country skied within the PASEA so I have an intimate familiarity and love for this undisturbed and pristine area.

Like many baby boomers, I learned to ski at Mt. Spokane when I was a teenager in the early 1960's. And, since then, I have continued to ski most every year at Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. It is very important to me that the ski area continue to be viable, financially successful, and that it remain an important resource for the greater Spokane area. But, in my opinion, in order to remain economically viable and financially successful, the ski area needs many major improvements to help it keep up with the times. The area needs major infrastructure improvements such as a reconfiguration of its chairlifts, updated chairlifts, parking lot improvements, lodge improvements, drainage and landscaping improvements just to name a few things. The other local and competing ski areas, where I also frequently ski every year, have made substantial infrastructure improvements to draw skiers. The difference between the infrastructure at those ski areas and Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is very apparent. As a lifelong skier, I believe that the Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park would benefit more and attract more (and new) skiers by making improvements to the north-facing Chair Four area of the mountain, improvements such as cutting new runs as well as glading and thinning trees, to allow for better tree-skiing and glade skiing opportunities. I believe those improvements would be a better draw to us skiers than some short new runs within the PASEA. Likewise, it is the proverbial "getting the cart in front of the horse" to propose an expansion with a new chair and runs before upgrading the basic infrastructure such as parking and lodge facilities that would support potential additional skier visits.

With regard to the proposed chair lift and seven runs on the west side of the mountain in the PASEA, these proposals will necessitate the clear-cutting of substantial old growth. It has been argued by some proponents of the expansion into the PASEA that no old growth exists within the PASEA. It is noteworthy that since 2007 the State Department of Natural Resources, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Pacific Biodiversity Institute all have recognized that the area proposed to be cut for the new chair and the ski runs contains significant areas of old growth trees which should, in their expert opinions, be kept uncut and intact. Once cut, the old growth and native forest area is not replaceable and those effects cannot be mitigated. Additionally, clear cutting this natural forest area for the proposed chair and the seven new runs will fragment this forest area and irreversibly reduce the habitat for the rare animals and plants that the experts within these agencies say exist here.

Also, the year round streams that exist near the bottom of the proposed new chair are the headwaters of Blanchard Creek, which itself is a valuable and fragile ecosystem. The installation of a chair and new ski runs and the consequent disruption on the land will cause a harmful disruption to these streams and create potential damage to fish health downstream in Blanchard Creek. Additionally, with regard to the wetland areas within the PASEA, and particularly wetlands located within the footprint of the proposed new ski runs, a review of the DEIS clearly illustrates that the delineation of the wetlands was done during the summer when they are drier and less prevalent. Research on proper methods for wetlands delineation will illustrate that, to insure accuracy, wetlands should be delineated during the spring and late spring. The wetlands delineation in the DEIS was flawed. Also, a review of the DEIS clearly illustrates that cultural the archaeological resources located with the PASEA were not adequately addressed.

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Another shortcoming in the DEIS relates to climate change, which the DEIS fails to address. Old growth forests such as those forests within the PASEA help reduce the negative effects of climate change in many ways, including by sequestering carbon and holding soil moisture. The failure of the DEIS to address the probable effects of climate change is a major shortcoming which needs to be addressed.

In conclusion, I urge the Parks Commission to adopt Alternative Two, the Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) designation for the PASEA in order to protect this wonderful area of Mt. Spokane State Park in perpetuity for multiple, year round use by the many user groups who presently use it. Additionally, I urge the Parks Commission to allow backcountry skiing within the Natural Forest Area. I appreciate and thank you for your consideration in this matter.

1. Nix clear-cut's- old growth is irreplaceable!
2. Fragmentation nixes wildlife (esp.rare),
3. Steams/wetlands are vital for humans/fish/wildlife,
4. Old-growth sequester carbon/hold moisture,

DEIS:

1. Counter's DNS/DFW- there is significant old-growth in PASA,
2. Cultural/archeological resources, upgrades parking/lodging & global warming ignored.

Do your job- Protect Our Public lands, waters, wildlife, health & future!

Once the wilderness is gone- it's gone forever. It's Not a sacrifice area-it's sacred!

Your attention to this most urgent matter would be much appreciated by all present & future generations of all species.

Please protect and maintain the old growth forest on the west side of Mt Spokane.

The Natural Forest Alternative is the best choice. This forest cannot be replaced. Streams, wetlands, fish and wildlife will be at risk if the forest is scarred by a clear-cut. Changes in snow pack levels and our warming summer heat must also be considered.

Take time to consider all the aspects that will cause significant adverse impacts on this wild area. Protect this park for the future.

Really? Is another ski run that important or even need that something as awe inspiring as old growth needs to be destroyed?

Being the daughter of a logger, who was way a head of the times, having grown up around old growth and a degree in forestry and wildlife find the whole idea of even thinking of allowing such an atrocity disturbing. It simply is not good stewardship.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable.

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Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.

Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I am in favor of classifying the whole PASEA for #4 **Recreational use** and allowing the Ski Area development to proceed. I have been following this process for a while, and may not know all the details, but it sure seems like it has taken a long time. It feels like things just continue to drag on. We are starting over in a whole new process again. What is different now?

From what I have read it seems to me that all the environmental questions have been *asked and answered multiple times*. Now we seem to be repeating a lot of the process and this is very time consuming and again incurring large legal costs. This revenue would be much better spent on ongoing upgrading facilities and new ski runs to allow better accommodation of the increasing number of skier visits to Mt. Spokane.

First, before the Commission begins deliberations on this matter, it would be most instructive to review the unique PASEA on-site. Please do so.

We are enthusiastic Mt. Spokane State Park users--we both alpine and cross-country ski in Mt. Spokane State Park and also hike there during non-snow months. We support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) including the addition of back-country alpine skiing permitted in the PASEA.

The proposed seven runs and chair lift area are within old growth native forest and will apparently be clear cut. Irreplaceable resources. And fragmented forests reduce habitat for common documented wildlife as well as for rare species. Since 2007 the Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for intact old growth. The 2010 Pacific Biodiversity Institute Biological Survey, page 58, confirmed "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

Please also note that streams still running in late September near the base of the proposed chair are critical components of surrounding sponge-like

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wetlands and for downstream aquifer supply and fish health. These wetlands should have been delineated in spring rather than in late summer.

Further, modeling for moose, wolves and other species appears inadequately analyzed for potential wildlife impact via increased human intrusion/recreational pressure.

Cultural and archaeological resources were also inadequately addressed.

Imperative parking and lodge upgrade plans were omitted.

Finally, global warming/climate change impacts must be assessed and appropriately addressed. Old growth forests sequester carbon and retain soil moisture--critical for each person in our region, for the region's health and prosperity.

Again, we urge the Commission to adopt Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) including back-country alpine skiing permitted in the PASEA. This Alternative including alpine skiing permitted, is the sole reasoned designation consistent with the Natural Resources Mission and management objectives for Mt. Spokane State Park:

" Protecting, preserving, and interpreting key natural resources of the park, including rare, fragile and/or high quality examples of vegetative communities, associations and species; important fish and wildlife corridors and habitat areas.... and by insuring that the park use does not adversely affect water quality and/or impede natural hydrology."

Please leave the west side of Mt Spokane untouched as it provides needed habitat for so many animals.

Please save Mt. Spokane from development. Let's protect this natural paradise. I support Alternative Two, Natural Forest Alternative. We can't mitigate old growth, native forests that have never been logged. Clear cutting for a chair lift and ski runs will fragment habitat for rare wildlife. The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream. We need to protect nearby wetlands, too. Please look at the big picture. How do you think history will judge us?

Attached, please find a PDF document of my comments RE: Mt. Spokane PASEA, to include in the public record and for decision-making purposes. A hard copy was mailed to your office on Friday. PDF SAVED Make sure is attached.

My first job at age 14 was at Mt Spokane working in the lodge. Since that time, this close to home ski hill has been a place of community, gathering, and enjoyment for my family and friends ... 15 years of fun! We urge you to please consider the implications of taking down an old growth forest - it is not within our power to regrow it! I have worked and ridden on hills all over the country, and nothin beats the homey feel of Mt Spokane. There are rarely lift lines, and if so the wait is not bad. Part of what makes Washington awesome is the wilderness that remains! For those of us with an adventurous spirit, the old growth groves are already a playground. Grooming these runs is not what the patrons of Mt Spokane want. You must ask who's best interests are being served. This mountain has supported our sense of play and adventure, if we cannot show respect in return, we don't deserve her.

Please save Mt. Spokane from development. Let's protect this natural paradise. I support Alternative Two, Natural Forest Alternative. We can't mitigate old growth, native forests that have never been logged. Clear cutting for a chair lift and ski runs will fragment habitat for rare wildlife. The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream. We need to protect nearby wetlands, too. Please look at the big picture. How do you think history will judge us?

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While these comments were recommended by The Lands Council and Sierra Club, I agree wholeheartedly with each point. I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area. The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable. Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife. Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)." The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream. Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer. Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly. Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered. Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative. Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

We support Alternative Two – Natural Forest Area, but backcountry skiing should be allowed. Many people already backcountry and cross-country ski in the PASEA as well as mountain bike, snowshoe, and ride horses. These are all activities, which are allowed in a Natural Forest Area.

The clear cutting of old growth trees in the PASEA, in the largest intact high elevation old growth forest in Spokane county, to create the seven proposed runs cannot be mitigated. The diversity and complexity of an unlogged forest can never be replaced. It is irresponsible of State Parks to have not included a detailed discussion of the potential impacts to old growth forests on Mt. Spokane. There is no way to replace a forest of this quality and quantity.

The fragmentation caused by clear cutting ski runs will greatly reduce habitat for rare wildlife species. We are very concerned that the wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly. The Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have both written against the clear cutting of this intact old growth forest. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010 page 58) says "There are significant areas of old growth in the biological survey area (PASEA)."

Mt. Spokane is a significant feature to the landscape of the Spokane Area and to the culture of area Tribes. The Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately discussed in the DEIS and greatly deserve attention in this document and in the decision to classify this area.

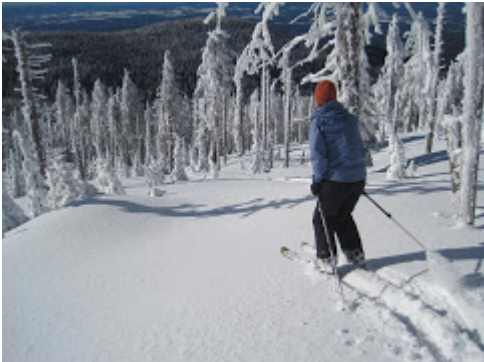
Natural Forest Area classification allows "non-groomed cross-country skiing." The DEIS uses the term "off-trail cross-country skiing" and backcountry skiing, which is the same thing. The term cross-country or nordic is actually another way to describe backcountry skiing. The term "Backcountry Alpine Skiing" used in the DEIS does not exist in skiing literature. Inventing a term for the purposes of excluding a more modern, fatter, cross-country ski makes absolutely no sense. The proper term is Alpine Touring or backcountry skiing, which is not the same as alpine skiing (downhill in a resort). See REI definitions in their cross country skiing glossary where they list Alpine Touring (a style of backcountry skiing). REI defines back country as:

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"Any kind of skiing done *away from developed land*, open roads or lift-assisted ski resorts. It may refer to cross-country skiing, or to randonee or telemark skiing, in these areas." We did a web search and all of the definitions that we found for backcountry skiing and Alpine Touring all refer to undeveloped land, which is why many of us ski the backside of Mt. Spokane (PASEA), and are consistent with alternative 2 and the Natural Forest Area classification.

Backcountry Skiing Canada defines backcountry skiing as: "skiing over ungroomed and unmarked slopes not in a developed ski resort but instead in the rural areas away from roads and populated areas. The snow pack is not monitored, patrolled, or maintained and mechanical means of ascent such as ski lifts are typically not present. Human power is frequently the means of access and ascent. It offers skiers a chance to experience challenging terrain in a more natural setting, and make the first tracks in fresh powder."

Any development allowed in the PASEA will destroy not only the rare high elevation old growth forest habitat on Mt. Spokane, it will destroy the unique recreational opportunity to ski deep powder through old high elevation forest in a natural condition an hour from Spokane.



Ungroomed/Off Trail Cross-Country Skiing in the PASEA

While we strongly opposed development in the PASEA/Natural Forest Area, we are very supportive of run and lift expansion within the existing footprint of the Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, and we want to see resources directed away from development in the PASEA to a new lodge 2, a remodeled lodge 1, and upgrades to parking. Parking and lodge improvements are not included in the DEIS. This is a big omission.

Please take our comments into consideration for changes to incorporate into the FEIS.

Please see the attached comment letter.

Governor Inslee, if it is in your power to make an executive decision to classify the 800-acre PASEA on the west face of Mount Spokane as a Natural Forest Area, I beseech you to please do. If you are unfamiliar with what is happening within the Mount Spokane PASEA classification conversation, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will provide you with the resources necessary to get up to speed on this important topic.

I have lived in Spokane for fifty years now and I love our State Park at Mt Spokane. I do not want to see further expansion of the ski area.

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We have an outstanding old growth area that begs for protection. It is simply irreplaceable . For that reason I am urging adoption of Alternative 2 of the DEIS. As development encroaches our state park, I feel it is critical for us to not increase development within the park. The addition of a ski lift and seven ski runs on the west face is doing just that.

Please choose the Natural Forest Alternative. That will allow multiple use for many people and still keep the forest intact. Expansion of the ski area will require clear cutting and all the inherent problems that brings to watersheds and wildlife.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA). The old growth forest, streams, and wetlands should be maintained for wildlife and low impact recreation such as hiking and snowshoeing.

Attached is my comment letter for the DEIS written for Mount Spokane.
Attached letter make sure is attached.

Dan, Are you in charge of the cultural resource review for the proposed alpine ski area expansion on in Mount Spokane State Park?

I wanted to reach out to you as a fellow anthropologist and let you know that the Spokane Tribe is against this project. We see Mount Spokane is a significant and critical part of the Tribe's cultural landscape. We recently recorded Mt. Spokane as a TCP with DAHP and I would be happy to send you the information. PASEA is not a small project, it is going to have huge impacts on the mountain and its integrity and equally large adverse view shed impacts based on its location. The Upper Columbia United Tribes, Kalispel tribe cultural resource program, and the Colville Confederated Tribes all agree with us on this. I know State Parks needs new sources of revenue, but this is not an acceptable means of doing it. Please help us prevent the PASEA project from proceeding.

As a user of the park for many years, you may want to know that we have mountain biked, hiked, cross country skied, camped and alpine skied. It is all good.

Great Park. I'm certain that we have been on private ground as well next to the park, like the Inland Empire Paper. So it feels in larger then it is.

I am in favor of the ski area expansion as are most, but not all, of my friends. Some would like to see upgrades in the lodge and lifts before more runs are added.

But others see it differently. Many will not go to Mt Spokane because it is just too tough, too steep, for their wives and little ones. They get tired of the few green and blue runs. Mt Spokane management knows they need the upgrades. And they will get it done in proper order. The management is the best we have had in years, maybe ever. But to afford those upgrades, they need to attract more skiers. And to do that more blue and green runs are a necessity.

Additionally, I don't see any downside to the additional runs. It is an old forest on the back side. But they are small trees that have never been thinned that I can recall. A lot of animals enjoy the additional meadow land created by the runs.

For the sake of brevity and to help you process the comments quicker without having to read through very similar ones, I strongly support the comments of The Lands Council, XXXXX and XXXXX.

I am very much in favor of Alternative Two in sections 1 and 2 of the DEIS, and Alternative One in section three of the DEIS.

As a season pass holder at Mt. Spokane I think it would be a terrible decision to expand the terrain. It is ridiculous to even think about destroying

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more habitat in an already damaged ecosystem. More people on the mountain might mean more money, but I can tell you it certainly will not enhance my experience on the mountain. In fact, if Mt. Spokane does decide to expand, I will never return to the mountain. The madness of the human enterprise needs to stop somewhere, and here is an opportunity to say NO to unending growth.

Any decision by Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission must allow the proposed chairlift and seven runs to proceed.

I am a licensed geologist in the state of Washington, an avid skier, and currently the elected Secretary of the Society of Northwest Environmental Scientists (SINES) www.spokanesines.org.

In response to the DEIS for the PROPOSED LAND CLASSIFICATION FOR THE AREA KNOWN AS THE POTENTIAL ALPINE SKI EXPANSION AREA (PASEA) AT MOUNT SPOKANE STATE PARK AND SKI AREA EXPANSION.

I whole-heartedly support the expansion. Please let me tell you why.

This has been a promise to the users of Mt. Spokane since at least the 1970s. In fact as copied from your website:

VISION: Washington's state parks will be cherished destinations with natural, cultural, recreational, artistic, and interpretive experiences that all Washingtonians enjoy, appreciate, and proudly support. Recreational is the key in this case.

When I first started skiing the 'Kan in the early 1970s it was reported to be the dream that the 'back side' would be opened up and as a result a destination resort would/could be viable. In addition, this opens the Park to access to all of the residents of Washington State and promotes more out of state tax dollars into the system via tourism.

Now the bad.

The Lands Council et al has promulgated a misinformation campaign designed to stop the entire process. In my opinion all of their arguments obfuscate the process and are designed to place the project on an indefinite hold so as to bankrupt the applicant. While an effective ploy I doubt it meets with the rational conclusion that State Parks are for the masses. Please review your mission statement on this one.

The Lands Council and others have presented such half-truths as this is 'Old-Growth' forest. When put to task Mr. Mike Peterson responded that it was not old growth, but near old growth. They are proud of their lie and as such should be commended for their unified mission of providing misinformation to all that are gullible.

The Land's Council's argument is designed to bury the truth under a mountain of feel-good rhetoric. I believe that a group of 'elite environmentalists' have found a 'playground' for themselves and they do not want to share it with the masses: It is their belief that only those on foot, or those so enlightened should enjoy this terrain. Their web page documents this pretty well, I think.

I submit that the expansion of Mt. Spokane is not only a good thing for the people of Washington State but that it will bring economic growth to the Region and to the State Parks System. What is wrong with that? In addition the elk and other grazing animals will enjoy the fruits of this labor with increased forage capabilities. If this is to be an area of no beneficial use let's cede the State Park to the Fed and reclassify the Park as a Wilderness Area.

In closing, as long as MT. Spokane 2000 is held to the terms and conditions of the Permit I am for the expansion of the resort. This legal nonsense has gone on long enough.

I ask you to choose alternative 4 (allow the backside of Mt Spokane to be used as an extension to the existing ski hill). I am a life long resident of Spokane and the Mountain needs this expansion to compete with other ski areas and improve the ski experience. This expansion is where the original rope tow was at and many skiers go out of bounds to ski the "back side". We need this expansion, not more delays.

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Please vote to allow Mt. Spokane 2000 to install chair 6 at Mt. Spokane.

Doing so will increase the skiing experience as well as the skiing safety on the mountain. 1.The new chair will provide an easier method for people presently finding themselves skiing in the PASEA by accident, to return to the front side of the mountain.

2.Developing the PASEA will make the PASEA area more skiing safe in that presently the area has much blow down timber, hanging timber, and roots which can interfere with skiing.

3.With a chair serving the PASEA, the area will be regularly served by the Ski Patrol, which is not the case now.

4 . A chair lift in the PASEA will also reduce the traffic flow of skiers (beginning to advanced level) on the "Cat Track" returning to Lodge 1 and Lodge 2 from the north and northwest side of the mountain.

Allowing Mt. Spokane 2000 to develop the PASEA will make the area a much healthier forest, as well as removing a great deal of fuel for forest fires. Certainly we should all be aware of the fire danger in our state.

Again please choose to allow Mt. Spokane 2000 to develop the PASEA for skiing by adding chair 6.

I support classifying the Mt Spokane proposed expansion area as a RECREATIONAL site. This will allow for a much needed expansion of a new chair with 7 runs. I have skied Mt Spokane for almost 50 years. I taught my 2 sons and my wife to ski on this beautiful mountain. This expansion will really benefit our region's recreational opportunities and economic development. I urge you to classify this RECREATIONAL

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Can you provide a map of the proposed expansion area?

Expansion of the ski area is not tantamount to total environmental degradation. That is the position of many in opposition to a plan that makes sense environmentally, recreationally and particularly in terms of skier safety. As our population expands, and it has since this process started many years ago and will continue to, a major issue of concern should be skier safety.

Dispersing an increasing number of skiers over a larger area will take a lot of pressure off the cat track which is virtually the only route for beginning and intermediate skiers to return to the main lodge, lodge 2. The vast majority of us who pursue recreational downhill skiing are also environmentally aware and concerned citizens.

My opinion is we and skiers in the future are being held hostage by a small group of individuals who throw every conceivable issue, regardless how minor, at the decision making process. This has been going on for many years and it represents a vocal minority using stall tactics, court action and questionable impacts on the environment to halt the expansion.

Considering the severe forest and wild land fires we have experienced this fire season it makes sense to consider opening some areas from heavy forestation in an effort to create what might be called recreational fire breaks. The greatest environmental disaster would be to have the ski area, current or future, and the rest of Mt. Spokane State Park devastated by fire.

As you can see from my comments above, I'm in favor of the expansion and feel the delay in the decision to do so has gone on far too long.

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As you can see from my comments above, I'm in favor of the expansion and feel the delay in the decision to do so has gone on far too long.

Mt. Spokane has been too compromised as a natural system already. People need to have access to nature, uncompromised.

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Perhaps you should make it easier for people to comment, eh? Try to imagine the public having similar input access as the developers of the new, planned, major wound to Mt. Spokane. Is that Cowles I smell?

Hey, Washington State Parks website...everything depends on whose interests are being served---that's clear enough.

I am in favor of adding additional acreage to the Mt. Spokane Snow Sports Ski and Board area.

We would like to voice my opinion regarding the proposed opening up additional ski runs at Mt. Spokane. Please allow the ski resort to open up the back side and also to allow more modern lodges to be built.

I say this as a Spokane raised person who started skiing their way back in the early 70s. I grew up in Spokane to late teens and then left to live and ski in the Seattle area. While in Seattle area I witnessed dramatic growth at virtually all of the ski resorts there. No resort sat on his laurels. They all improved their ski runs and amenities and in doing so stayed current with the competition. I watched them flourish and keep people interested in outdoor activities like skiing and snowboarding.

When I move back here in 2000 I notice at Mt Spokane not much has changed up there and it is sad. Especially since the location has enormous untapped potential and could be a real jewel of Spokane.

And from what I understand there originally were ski runs and a lodge on the back side. I really hope that you will consider these facts and allow Mt Spokane to become more current and attractive to us. Spokane and Mt. Spokane both need a more modern forward thinking image and we deserve it!

Mt. Spokane needs to reach out not only the local people but also the town-of-town tourists. Spokane does this with Bloomsday and Hoopfest. With a first class ski mountain we be proud that Spokane offers another great reason for locals to get up to the mountain and to attract visitors. Its time for Mt. Spokane to get the attention she deserves and we need to insure her future.

Please allow the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard park to move forward. I am so tired of how little of our state we can actually explore with our family. The Ski/Snowboard park is one of the few locations that families can actually get out and enjoy our great park lands together.

I understand that there is some concern about the environmental impact to this expansion. I would like to ask, what is the societal impact to withholding opportunities for families to spend time together? More crime, more teenage issues? This state needs to take every opportunity to provide ways for families to spend time together to enjoy the great outdoors. Right now, the land in question is hardly being used by families to enjoy the outdoors. Every time I'm on the chair lift with my 12 year old son, he comments on how beautiful it is, how much he loves the trees, to look at the sky, to see the mountains, to see a different perspective from the life we live in the city. He has become more aware and more appreciative of the outdoors because of what the Ski/Snowboard Park has afforded us. Please, please, please consider the positive impact that this expansion would have on our society as a whole, and do not be limited by the fear of the environmental impact on such a tiny portion of our planet.

Please allow the expansion of the park to move forward, it will benefit us all.

Alternative 3 - Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. No Chairlift or Trails. Back country skiing allowed.

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I believe it is important to choose alternative 3 since this area is extremely pristine and the last area like this on the mountain. Allowing lifts back here would greatly inhibit the snowshoeing and backcountry ski recreation that is taking off in the snow sports industry and at Mt Spokane.

I have lived in Spokane my whole life - 58 years and we have such a gem in Mount Spokane. I am in support of the land classification Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. I am in favor of the Project Action Alternative 2 or 3. We love hiking and skiing on Mount Spokane and the land was intended for recreation. I don't see the adverse impact with this addition. Skiing is a quiet sport and hikers tend to be very protective of animals. I hope you'll approve this expansion. Thank you.

As long time pass holders to Mt. Spokane, I'm writing this letter in support of the backside terrain expansion. Mt. Spokane is a great mountain & this will only make it better. Please allow them to add a chairlift; additional runs!!!

My vote for alternatives offered in Section 1:

Alternative 3 - Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. No Chairlift or Trails. Back country skiing allowed.

This allows people to use the area but leaves the STATE PARK intact. There is a lot of outdated equipment run by the ski area. They should focus on better serving the existing allowed terrain before altering the STATE PARK further. The STATE PARK should be treated as such and not as an expanding ski area. The region has plenty of ski areas at about the same drive time. This one should not be expanded.

Please support the expansion of Mt Spokane State Park to include a new chairlift.

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Our family has enjoyed Mt. Spokane for many years and it makes sense to have better skiing options available close to the population base and keep our skiers from having to drive to Idaho and beyond. Mt. Spokane is a great resource for all of our citizens and another ski lift will allow it to be more competitive and operate safely for a longer season.

I am a long time member of the Mt Spokane Ski Patrol, one who has not commented on this issue in the past. I have held back my comments because I already ski on the back side of Mt Spokane and enjoy the challenges of not having trails or a lift to access the terrain.

Today, I am making my comments in full support of adding trails and a lift in the proposed area. Last season, in February I believe, there was a guest of Mt Spokane who was seriously injured while skiing the backside of the mountain. He had several injuries including a tension pneumothorax (collapsed lung). He was in a life threatening situation. I was there that day and listened intently on the situation unfolding over the radio. While this area is technically out of our patrol area, we are the ones that are best prepared for this type of rescue. The whole operation from beginning to end took more than 3 hours, further putting the life of the patient in jeopardy considering his injuries. Serious time was lost trying to locate the guest, and hauling him down the backside to the access road to be brought back around into the ski area to a waiting ambulance. As locals and kids continue to venture off the backside, we (the patrol) are increasingly called upon to go back there for search and rescue operations. Having trails and a lift back there would greatly increase our response time and ability to save lives. The aforementioned rescue, given trails and lift, could have had at least an hour shaved off the total rescue time.

I think I have made the point about the positive impact the lift and trails would have on the patrol's ability to do what we do. Conversely, if an agreement cannot be made regarding the terrain, I would support a complete closure of the backside to everyone. Closing the backside to all, would

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mostly eliminate guests of the park getting themselves into dangerous situations and, also protect the habitats that apparently are extremely delicate back there.

There should be no chairlift or development on the northwest side of Mt. Spokane. It would drastically alter the natural setting there in a deleterious way.

An expanded Mt. Spokane will benefit the regions citizens through enhanced recreation for youth and families and positively impact the regions economy.

It is IMPORTANT that Alternative 4 is selected as the path forward for the vitality of the resort.

I wish to state my support for Alternative 4 for the expansion of the Mt Spokane ski area. This non-profit ski area provides a lot of outdoor entertainment at a modest price for the people of Washington state.

I am a four season user of Mt Spokane State Park. First, the ski area will NOT impact my use and enjoyment of the park during the spring, summer and winter seasons. Frankly, the area in question sees little use and summer recreational use will be increased if the proposed expansion is approved. Second, the ski area is in dire need of the additional intermediate ski runs which this expansion will provide. I am a certified alpine ski instructor (Professional Ski Instructors Association) and I have instructed at both Forty Nine and Lookout Pass. I have also skied at other local resorts including Silver, Schweitzer and Red Mountain. Even though Mt Spokane has great slope potential and ample snow, it cannot compete with any of these other resorts in its current configuration. If the proposed expansion is not approved the people of Spokane, young and old, will continue to be denied a great outdoor winter opportunity.

We fully support the initiative to expand Mt. Spokane operations to the back-north side of the mountain. This is a well-established recreation area and is enjoyed by users year round. Mt Spokane must compete with much larger private ski resorts most notable Schweitzer and Silver Mtn. Allowing reclamation of the north side ski terrain will help them stay competitive and provide for healthy winter sport activity. Mt Spokane has long ceased to be wilderness but we believe that expansion can be done in an environmentally responsible fashion. I would expect no less from the leadership at Mt Spokane. As long time season pass holders and condo owners we spend a good amount of time on the mountain. We've come to know the mountain and it's people quite well. Everyone I know in support of this expansion cherishes the mountain. Local opposition such as the lands council is really missing the point. This is the kind of development that we can all support no matter our political affiliation. The impacts are minimal and the benefits are substantial.

I am definitely in favor of Part 1 alternative 4 we need more family recreation in the Spokane Area

Yes to expansion. This is well thought out, impact is minimal and opens up more recreation for more users on a year round basis.

As an outdoor enthusiast and skier, I wanted to document my preference.

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I am writing to show my support of the Mt. Spokane expansion, more specifically the addition of a chairlift and new trails. The land is there to be enjoyed by the public throughout all the seasons of the year and with the expansion, it can be enjoyed safely in the winter as well. Mt. Spokane has done a fantastic job maintaining the mountain and will continue to be a great steward of our mountain.

I strongly support Part 1 Alternative 4.

I would absolutely love to see the Mt. Spokane ski area continue to grow. It is a great place to go skiing that is nearby and doesn't break your wallet. Also I love going up to Mt Spokane in the summer and feel as if the chairlift will not hurt any of the natural beauty Mt. Spokane has. I support this movement for the new chairlift.

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I believe the Mt. Spokane should be able to expand the ski park. It would be beneficial for the community and help preserve the park environment. Please make the decision to provide Spokane with additional ski options by approving section IV and allowing MT. Spokane to set up an additional chair lift and operate 7-8 additional runs. MT. Spokane has made every effort to minimize environmental impact and the community of Spokane needs this addition.

MT Spokane has proven to be good stewards of the existing ski area on Mt. Spokane and will do so with the new area as well.

I strongly urge the Commission to approve the Mt. Spokane expansion project and allow development of a new lift and seven new runs on the north side of Mt. Spokane (approve Part 1, Alternative 4; and Part 2, Alternative 2). The project will bring significant improvements to the public's recreational activities at Mt. Spokane, and will also enhance public safety in the ski area.

So you know, I am a committed environmentalist, and I have supported a number of local, national and international environmental organizations for many years -- from Friends of the Falls to the World Wildlife Fund. I donate every year to the Washington State Parks fund. I am also an active outdoorsman, and greatly appreciate the importance of our societal efforts to maintain pristine environments for the benefit of our progeny.

Those interests support my position on this project. As you know, the project has been scaled back repeatedly in response to environmental concerns -- legitimate and otherwise (like the supposed old growth ruse). Legitimate environmental concerns have been thoroughly addressed and more than adequately resolved. However -- and this is important -- the greater public benefit should not be held hostage to the strident, uncompromising position of a very small minority who advance a no development agenda at all costs and without regard to other important interests. Sadly, that seems to be where we might find ourselves with this project.

It is time for the Commission to step up and do the right thing for Spokane, the Inland Empire, and the State of Washington. Thousands of Washington State residents have waited years now for this small project to enhance our resource, consistent with the purpose for which the property was initially given to the people -- all of them -- not just a few. Approve the project -- Part 1, Alternative 4, and Part 2, Alternative 3.

I am a longtime resident of Spokane. I am also a conservationist. According to what I've read I would love to see the expansion of the mountain ski resort move forward. Please allow them to add the new lift and seven new runs. I believe it's a sound decision both economically and environmentally for the city of Spokane. Thank you for your consideration.

My three daughters learned to ski at Mt. Spokane at a very young age and we've been season pass holders ever since. It's a wonderful family ski hill and one of our favorite spots in Eastern Washington.

I agree with Mt. Spokane 2000 that the front side area is too crowded on many weekend days, especially the main cat track that takes skiers and riders back to the already crowded Lodge 2 area. There are hundreds of beginners in that area, and I've witnessed plenty of collisions and near-misses because of the density of skiers converging on the Ego Flats run.

I believe that opening a new lift and runs through the PASEA plan would help thin out the crowd on the front side and make Mt. Spokane a safer, more enjoyable ski area for everyone.

I am writing in support of the expansion of the Mt. Ski area with the addition of one new lift and opening six trails. I have skied there for over 25 years now as well as at the other ski areas in Washington and Idaho near Spokane and Mt. Spokane really needs to expand to remain competitive. Mt. Spokane is a fantastic resource for this community and this expansion would make it even better.

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I live about 20 minutes from the base of Mt. Spokane. Over the years I have enjoyed mountain biking, hiking, and other recreation on the mountain. But not until recently have I enjoyed Mt. Spokane in winter. Skiing has opened a whole new aspect of enjoyment that I have not experienced until now. Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is an essential element in allowing the greater Spokane area to enjoy the mountain, and an expansion of the Park would increase awareness of its existence, bring more people to the mountain, which would culminate in a feeling of greater responsibility to protect it.

Balance is necessary in all things. Citizens will not want to preserve and protect something that they cannot experience in a beneficial manner. Proper and well thought through expansion of Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park would be an excellent way to draw more people to the mountain, creating a greater percentage of the populace that love and personally know the mountain.

Expansion will have negative effects on the environment, but they will be marginal. Over protection of the mountain will also have negative effects, these may be more lasting. Proper enjoyment of nature develops humans, causing positive expansion of emotional and physical health. Being in nature builds and strengthens the family core, and an increase of people enjoying the Park will raise the likelihood of more families coming to it.

In summary, I believe an expansion of Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park will have positive effects that will by far out weigh any negative effects on the environment.

NO NO NO. I ski Mt. Spokane a lot as I am a season pass holder. There are hardly ever any lines (accept school holiday) to get on a lift and certainly the ski runs are not over crowded. There is no need for Mt. Spokane to cut down more trees and open more "groomed" areas. Besides.....It is my understanding that they plan to cut down trees that are considered "old growth";. No No No. We need natural environments for wild life to remain healthy.

Enough already....I thought this issue was dead and that their permit had been turned down....why are we wasting tax payers' money to revisit this issue over and over? Please use the money to better the parks we already have and eliminate usage fees for those who now can't afford to take their families to a part because they can't afford the Discover Pass.

I would like to submit my support for alternative 4 of Part 1, land classification, in regard to the Mt. Spokane ski area expansion. I believe use of the Mountain as an expanded ski resort gives the best opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors. It is an area already surrounded by development and there are plenty of wilderness areas in harder to reach parts of our state.

I would also like to endorse alternative 2 of part 2, project action. Providing more access to this area is a benefit to the health and outdoor experience of our community.

I would like to see Alternative 4 for the Mt Spokane Pasea adopted. The installation of a chairlift and the 7 runs would greatly improve the mountain for skiing. As most of us have seen over our lifetime, it seems as though a small special interest group is usually catered to, and the majority of support goes unheard. The latest Mt Spokane EIS addresses a wide variety of concerns and seems to me covers the bulk of concerns. Once again I say go with Alternative 4. Thank you for letting me be heard.

My wife and I support option 4 allowing for a new chair lift and 7 runs on Mt. Spokane.

I support Land Classification Alternative 4 (Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area) and Project Action Alternative 2 (Enhanced Recreation Alternative 2).

I encourage the development of the great family park of mt spokane. Not only will a new chair bring more revenue to the state , it will bring more

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access to the mountain to the local families of spokane. There is nothing more important than our local resources, and we need this more than anything. It will bring great changes to the community.

Part 1 Land Classification, Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Which allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, Alternative 4 safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. It also contributes to the safety of the various outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy the area. This area is well known to skiers both locally and visitors. The area will be used regardless of the designation. Providing a lift to facilitate safe travel in the area and support of rescue operations is the best choice. It is also my understanding that this land was donated by a private citizen for the use of the public. I do not believe his intent was to have the public locked out. Again, I support ALTERNATIVE 4.

I am in support of the Mt Spokane ski area expansion. I at the base of Mt Spokane in the Foothills area, only about 20 minutes from the ski area. I have skied here over 50 years and consider Mt Spokane my HOME mountain. This is such an important recreational area because of its proximity to Spokane. In my opinion, there is ample area for all to enjoy a variety of activities. I believe the ski terrain expansion will be positive for all.

Please approve this expansion project.

I support the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski backside. While I respect this has an impact on the environment, the opportunity to further expose the public to the value of the outdoors and outdoor activity offsets the minor impact to the environment.

I appreciate the Parks thoughtful approach to this project and hope you will approve the expansion.

I love the idea to expand the ski area at Mount Spokane. After skiing the slopes there once, I was surprised there wasn't more trails to go down than there is currently. I am happy to hear there are plans for expansion and would love to visit the new trails after they are built.

Building more trails will attract more people to the park to generate additional money. Local residents can get tired of a ski resort if nothing changes, and will often visit other places to get new experiences. White Pass Ski Resort finally had an expansion on their mountain and it added a whole new ski experience for local and distant travelers. If skiers have more choices on the slopes, they will continue to ski at the mountain.

While I am still in favor of adding more trails, the environment has a big impact on the decision for this. If the Parks system figures out a way to minimize the impact, I am in favor of this. If there are certain sections of the land that have rare plants and trees, then perhaps building near there is a bad idea.

I am sure everything will work out smoothly. Thanks

Have skied and hiked in the area for 12 years.

The following are my decision choices.

There is room and need for these choices with little impact on the mountain.

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing

I say you should let mt spokane use the land for their projects.. I have skier at mt spokane most of my life and in all my time there skiers and boarders have respected forests. .after all we dont like hitting trees please let mt spokane use this land for their expansion! Thank you!

I am in favor of allowing Mt. Spokane to add a additional chair lift on the back side of the mountain & creating 7 new ski runs. As the property was given to the state for the purpose of down hill skiing, I see no reason to not allow the expansion. Its a small area in terms of the overall

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wilderness managed by the State of Washington, but allows the greatest number of people to enjoy the Great Outdoors.

I feel very frustrated that these comments are becoming an annual event. I hope that Mt Spokane, the State Park system and all the special interest groups can eventually come to the conclusion that the expansion of the ski area is a good thing for all the families and children in our community. I'm writing to support of land use alternative #4 which is to allow a ski lift to be installed on the backside of Mt Spokane with 7 new trails. I will be in support of Project Action alternative #3 when that come to public comment as well. I am the past board treasurer of the Spokane Ski Racing Association. This group has approximately 100 families that ski regularly at Mt Spokane. The vast majority of this group is interested in alternative #4 for land use as well. I hope for the community's sake that this can finally pass in the right order so we can proceed with approval of the chair lift on the backside of Mt Spokane.

I support this project and object to the contial law suits by the Land Counsel. This project has been studied to death for decades and it needs to move forward ASAP.

Please approve Part 1 -- Land Classification -- Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allow for one chairlift and seven new trails while safeguarding natural areas and solidifying the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

In addition, under Project Action, please approve either Alternative 2, the Enhanced Recreation Alternative OR Alternative 3, the Mitigated Alternative.

Bear in mind that many of us have attended meetings and written multiple times over the years requesting the opportunity to build a chairlift and trails on the back side of Mt. Spokane. The seemingly endless delay in approving this sensible request is extremely frustrating. Please wrap up all of the reviews and let the nonprofit Mt. Spokane ski area proceed to offer enhanced winter recreation opportunities at a low cost to local families.

I'm writing in support of classifying the backside of Mt. Spokane for Recreational use (specifically Alternative 4) and hope you will give approval to the ski resort to move forward with a new ski lift and the seven additional trails they are proposing. I live at the base of Mt. Spokane and I am a friend of the mountain. In the summer we hike and ride horses on the mountain, do trail maintenance and in the winter we ski and snow shoe on the mountain as well.

Our horsemanship organization (Jedi Horsemanship) is hosting an endurance ride on the mountain next weekend and I will again be teaching as an instructor for the Mt. Spokane ski school this year. We are there year round.

I am intimately familiar with the proposal and Mt. Spokanes extensive due diligence to satisfy any and all concerns (particularly of an environmental nature) related to the expansion of the resort and I am very much in favor of the expansion and feel it will be a great benefit to everyone who enjoys this wonderful resource.

Those of us who are constantly on the mountain want nothing more than to see this wonderful area managed and maintained properly so that it can be enjoyed by all for generations to come and I feel this project will have a positive impact on that objective.

Again, please allow the Mt. Spokane expansion to be classified as Alternative 4.

The Backside Expansion proposed by Mt. Spokane 2000 is disgusting. Do not let them destroy our resource.

I am in favor of option 4 classification of the land, which is Recreation, Resource Recreation and National Forest Area. This option allows one chairlift and seven new trails. I am extremely excited to see the expansion of Mt. Spokane Ski Area. Since it is so close to Spokane, it is such an

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easy destination for our youth and provides a healthy and affordable outdoor activity for all ages.

The best possible use for this area is a new Lift 7 runs.. As close to Spokane as it is will bring lots of use.

I vote for option 4. Let us expand!

As an avid snowboarder and outdoor enthusiast, I implore you to consider the expansion of MT Spokane's back side with an additional chairlift as well as more runs to ride on. Not only will this expansion benefit the winter recreation enthusiasts such as myself it would also benefit summer activities and job creation.

I am in favor of this expansion, and would look forward to spending time in eastern Washington to ride here even more now that I live in central Washington.

There is absolutely no need for another chairlift at Mt Spokane, I have had a season pass there for the last 30 years, there are rarely lift lines when all the current chairs are running and the terrain added would just be more of the same that was already up there. The early and late season argument is silly, you still have to ski the front side of the mountain to get back to the lodge and they always close at the same time no matter how much snow they have. The money would be much better spent on upgrading the facilities and parking, that are mostly awful, particularly lodge 1. Leave the backside in its current natural state.

Though I am a long time and frequent skier at the Mount Spokane Ski Area, I am strongly opposed to the proposed expansion of the area. Further encroachment on the wild lands of Mount Spokane is not supported by the low number of user days seen by the ski area.

I urge that the following action be taken:

Part 1 Land Classification

Alternative 3 - Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. No Chairlift or Trails. Back country skiing allowed.

Part 2 Project Action

Alternative 1 - No Action. Lift and Trails are not approved at this time.

I Support land classification alternative 4

Mt. Spokane needs to expand to keep up with demand and to compete with the other area ski resorts. Without expansion, all the other ski resorts will become more appealing and Mt. Spokane will be left behind. The economic impact would be terrible for the area. Let them build the new chair!!

I agree, the expansion of Mt Spokane will benefit the economy for the overall Community. Not only will it bring in monies for the area it will also help attract more locals to go to Mt Spokane instead of the other mountains in the area. The expansion will also help eliminate the congestion by opening up more terrain to ski on. By expanding the area and design it to safeguard the natural areas, this will not interfere with the natural habitants of the forest. They will still be protected and will be able to survive as before. It will also help cut back on skiers and Boarder riders going out of bounds to seek better terrain. The convenience of being able to go to the backside will offer a chair lift back rather than walking the full mile to the existing chair lift.

As a skier and an active participant in Washington's wonderful State Parks, I support Mt. Spokane further development in an environmentally responsible way. I fully support Part 1, Alternative 4; and Part 2, Alternatives 2 or 3, for further use of Mt. Spokane for skiing and related recreation.

I prefer the No Action alternative on both Mt Spokane expansion proposals. Leave the natural areas remaining wild, for the sake of future generations and wildlife. Once runs are cleared and a lift installed, the natural value of the mountain will be lost forever.

Please allow for expansion. It will help keep mt Spokane a fun place to both ski and Hike and it will be safer. The amount of expansion is very small.

Part 1 Land Classification (4 alternatives)

I vote for Alternative 4.

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards

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natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Part 2 Project Action

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing

Alternative 3 - Mitigated Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails but doesn't include as much grading and clearing. This was the Alternative chosen by State Parks in the 2012 decision.

I am ok with both Alternatives 2 and 3 as a project action, and totally in support of alternate 3 to get it passed.

This will really enhanced Mt. Spokane. I love to snowboard there in the winter and hike & mountain bike there in the Summer.

I am in favor of the ski area expansion for the following 5 reasons:

1. **EXPANDED WILDLIFE HABITAT, SPECIES DIVERSITY, IMPROVED WILDLIFE VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES:** The best places to view wildlife are in what are called transition areas. Multiple species of birds, as well as large ungulates and the predators that prey on them all benefit from open brushy areas that transition to more heavily timbered areas. Having worked professionally to improve forest health, thin timber stands and replant clearcuts, I know that ungulate species such as deer, elk, and moose rely on open areas where there is an abundance of herbaceous forage plants and berry bushes on which to browse.

2. **SUSTAINABILITY:** Sustainable outdoor recreation is vital for healthy people and a healthy community. Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Corp needs to expand if it is going to continue providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities for the growing number of skiers and snowboarders who visit or live in our area. Like other lift served ski areas in North America, Mt. Spokane understands that serving the recreational needs of people and being good stewards of the environment are NOT mutually exclusive goals. Mt. Spokane is blessed with a lot of natural and highly variable ski terrain. Adding a few lift towers and making some relatively insignificant changes to the landscape in order to increase skier safety and public accessibility will not negatively impact the environment over the long term.

3. **FOREST HEALTH:** Even first year forestry students understand that selective thinning can benefit the overall health of a forest while improving wildlife habitat. Practitioners of forest science understand that selectively thinning or removing some trees to create a ski run or a fire break, or just to utilize the timber resource, can greatly enhance forest health and reduce the chances of catastrophic wildfire.

I recently read a statement on the Lands Council webpage that claimed the old growth forest adjacent to the expansion area on Mt. Spokane was irreplaceable. That is an irrational and patently absurd statement in light of what we know about forest ecology. The 370 page Forest Health Assessment and Plan for the 2006-2007 Project Area of Mount Spokane State Park with Washington State Parks clearly demonstrates that forest succession has historically been and remains an ON GOING PROCESS on Mt. Spokane. □ c

This study, and numerous other studies completed in other timber stands throughout our national forests clearly show that aging or overcrowded forests composed of one or a few dominant species can become increasingly susceptible to insect infestation, parasites and diseases, often leading to catastrophic wildfire. And even then, the outcome is a restart of the natural forest succession process that eventually cycles through numerous transition species to what people like to call, old growth forest where one or a few climax species dominate.

The proposed ski area expansion will have a negligible impact on the volume and/or distribution of any so-called old growth or mature timber in the

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proposed expansion area, and by creating a buffer, could very likely prove beneficial to the very timber stands the Lands Council claims they want to protect.

4. **PRESERVING SNOW COVER:** The operations crew at Mt. Spokane treats snow as a precious commodity. No crew does a better job preparing and preserving the available snow cover than Mt. Spokane. Some ski areas have to artificially create snow, but Mt. Spokane is typically blessed with enough natural snow to offer fantastic skiing conditions. Groomed and consolidated snow tends to slow the melting process preserving the snow cover for as long as possible. This is an important consideration in regards to issues such as climate change, water retention, and stream flows.

5. **LOW IMPACT OUTDOOR RECREATION:** Providing opportunities for the people of eastern Washington to enjoy outdoor recreation, especially during our long and sometimes dreary winter months, is vital to sustaining a healthy and vibrant community. Mt. Spokane ski operations utilize the natural landscape and have made an art form of moving snow around. Yes, ski area operations require some basic facilities and require a minimal footprint, but grooming activities, as well as the tracks left by thousands of skiers and snowboarders simply melt away every spring.

In conclusion, providing additional recreational opportunities while also protecting the timber resource, enhancing wildlife habitat and preserving water resources are NOT mutually exclusive goals. Folks who simply want to lock the gate on Mt. Spokane and throw away the key are NOT making use of the best available environmental science and are NOT considering the growing recreational needs of our community. Providing safe access for the public to utilize and enjoy what is essentially the ultimate renewable resource (snow) is in the best interest of the citizens of Washington State and the State Parks Commission.

Just a quick note to say that I fully support the expansion of Mt. Spokane ski area and don't see that expansion as an environmental danger. We live in a beautiful area of Washington, and the forest lands are not that impacted by skiing. If anything, getting more people out into the woods in the winter especially at Mt. Spokane is a good thing in my opinion. The mountain is well managed by the Non profit organization that runs the ski facility from what I have observed.

Oh my gosh! Please do not close these areas to skiers and horses! There are so few areas close to town to do these activities. What a shame! Most of these people love the environment and do all they can to sustain its beauty

I would like to express our family's interest in seeing the Mt. Spokane project expansion continue forward. We are in support of Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area that allows for one new chairlift and 7 new trails. We are also in support of the State Parks decision in 2012 that allows for Alternative 3 - Mitigated Alternative in section 2 of the Project Action.

This course of action is in line with protecting our the wonderful natural resources we are fortunate to have in the Pacific NW, while at the same time allowing for these natural areas to be enjoyed by the citizenry.

Our hope is the State Parks Commission will move forward with the previously selected plan and enhance the outdoor experience at Mt. Spokane.

I learned to ski thru the Spokesman Review Mt. Spokane ski school, in 1961 (HS sophomore). I utilized Mt. Spokane for skiing during the winter months (extensively) and on occasion, in the summer, to visit the summit, until graduating from WSU. I strongly support :

Part 1, Land classification - Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

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To classify Mt Spokane as a natural forest area" while ignoring overall growth in that part of Spokane county, ignoring the long existence of access roads to Mt. Kit Carson and Mt. Spokane even back in the 60's, ignoring the fact that many of us skied the upper NW slope, site of the original lodge AND the fact that the Lands council has an agenda that is ignorant of the reality of this area - would be a gross failure of state government to act in favor of the MAJORITY of Spokane county residents.

Further, I support :
Part 2 Project Action

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing.

The Spokane Lands council represents everything that has gone wrong with the concept of conservation - nothing more.

I am in support of the expansion of Mt Spokane Ski Park. I believe that the operator of the concession has provided a concise plan on expansion that protects the environment, and allows for expanding the terrain which will benefit the users of this great ski area.

I am in favor of the classification Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Please allow for the expansion of Mt Spokane Recreation, Allowing for one chairlift and seven new trails to solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I have grown up, and lived in Mead Washington for the last 22 years. Both my wife and I have enjoyed summer trips filled with hiking and Mountain biking in State park land, while filling our winter months with skiing at Mt. Spokane. I have been a skier there since I was 10 years old and Mt. Spokane has always been my home. My friends and I have always taken pride in it being a place where we can see both God's beauty at work with the beautiful landscape, while seeing the joy it brings so many people during the winter months. Most people dread the cold and wet winter months but the Mountain has given people something to look forward to and enjoy! I know many people want to conserve the landscape, and protect the things that are in it, and I agree with that whole heartily. However with that said, I feel like expanding the Mountains terrain does not interfere with this. I know it is entirely opinion, but i feel like the people who truly love skiing, also love the mountain, and respect it, because they know the joy it does, and will continue to provide. This is why i am a supporter of the expansion plan proposed by Mt. Spokane ski area.

I have emailed regarding the Mt. Spokane expansion in the past but my input was completely disregarded. The backside of the mountain is currently the best preserved terrain that we Spokane residents have to ride. It is close, accessible, and offers the beautiful, untouched powder conditions that everyone seeks after. I have had a season pass two years now and enjoy the backside as it is UNTOUCHED. From previous experience I can guarantee that the proposed runs down the backside will end up looking like the run under chair 4 - completely moguled out and useless. Everyone avoids it and I have seen many people injured on that particular section. Leave the backside untouched. I understand that resorts like you guys are trying to cater to peoples needs and are making an effort to better serve your customers. Spend the money elsewhere - like hiring somebody who is qualified to plan your park. Consider lift upgrades, improved facilities, or even for planned events for families to attend.

please make the classification for the area in question on Mt. Spokane a recreation area, and approve their expansion proposal. We enjoy horseback riding on Mt. Spokane in the summer months, and we are finally seeing some equestrian events being brought back to the mountain this year, which are attracting people from all over the state & beyond, which in turn is always helpful to the economy of the spokane area and brings revenue to the state parks. Classifying that land as NFA could potentially snuff out these events for the coming years, and ultimately hurt the community, both in what we are able to enjoy, and the potential for extra income from the people a larger ski resort & equestrian events will draw. From what I have read, the Mt. Spokane Ski & Snowboard Park has put in its due diligence to ensure this project will not be

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environmentally harmful. I respectfully request you put an end to the roadblocks to this new project, and the unreasonable efforts to block other activities that are currently allowed in a large part of that area, such as skiing, mountain biking and horseback riding. The community thanks you for your efforts in this matter!

Mt. Spokane Ski area is a wonderful community resource. I have been skiing there for 9 years now and thoroughly enjoy it. There are many wonderful runs, but it doesn't compare to some of the other local ski areas. I continue to get my season pass there because of the close proximity to Spokane and easy access for me. In order to draw more people to the park and keep up with the other parks, the additional ski run is vital. I often see ski tracks down the side of the mountain where the new chair is proposed, so it is already utilized, just not in an official capacity. I feel that making it an official ski run will make it safer for those who want to ski that side of the mountain but occasionally get lost trying to find Chair 4. I enjoy the wilderness - hiking, biking in the summer and running all year long, so am concerned about maintaining parks in their natural state and not causing harm. I don't feel that adding this additional run will cause harm to the natural area and will enhance residents enjoyment of the park.

Let this expansion go through. Mt. Spokane has a long standing history and status in the area as a fantastic place to be in both the winter and summer. Skiers, snowboarders, hikers and bikers all want that hill to be successful and to thrive. The best way I think we can ensure Mt. Spokane's future success is to allow the operation to grow, and allow outdoor enthusiasts greater access to the pristine area we love to play in.

I am writing to express my complete opposition to any expansion of the ski area within the boundaries of Mt. Spokane State Park. I have been a resident of Spokane for most of my life and even learned to ski at the ski area within the park. I still occasionally snowboard at the park and trail run there during the summer. I base my opposition on the following:

The ski area was, and still is, badly maintained when compared to other resorts in the area. The ski lifts are slow and out-of-date, the lodges are in disrepair, and concessions are third-rate. The existing ski area has sufficient capacity for current demand making expansion unnecessary. The cost involved would be better spent on improving the current facilities. The ski area is not turning away people due to a lack of acreage or lift capacity.

Expansion of the ski area would necessarily involve destruction of large swaths of forest, some of which can be classified as old-growth. This forest provides wildlife habitat that would be lost forever. Despite what many commenters have said, wildlife will not simply adjust some will die out or leave.

I am reprinting the remarks of one commenter as they better express most of my concerns:

The Advisory Committee was missing two main ingredients - a wildlife biologist and an environmentalist. Mountain bikers, runners, hikers, campers, snowmobile users, backcountry horse people, snowboarders and skiers - the basic groups on the Advisory Committee, are recreational users. Their main purpose on a committee is to request more trails, more area, and more facilities from the park. Who requests the need for areas of dense vegetation for certain birds, or untouched alpine creeks, or high-altitude wetlands for moose or huckleberry thickets for bears? The state has to give the creatures who live there now first rights even though they can't speak for themselves. Mt. Spokane didn't belong to the Cowles family when the Indians were the only inhabitants of the area. They just "acquired it" from the government or others who took it from the Native Americans. The park is a "state" park, not just a local park for local purposes. It belongs to the citizens [and wildlife] of the State of Washington and its future needs to take that into consideration. □

Thank you for soliciting input from the citizens of Spokane and its surrounding area.

Mr. Kline, this expansion project is very important to our alpine ski program. Mt. Spokane 2000, has been extremely helpful to all four programs held

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on the mountain during the winter months. We, as volunteers, teach people with developmental disabilities; how to either snow board, downhill ski, cross country ski or adaptive ski. Having additional skiable terrain would make a world of difference not only to our students and coaches but to the rest of the thousands of people that use the mountain during the winter months. With the improvements to the back side, we will end up with more area to explore this great mountain by either hiking or biking. We should end up with more huckleberry bushes for those who like to pick in the late summer months. We will end up with more low vegetation and grasses for all of the animals that call the mountain home. I also understand that this land was donated for public use by the Cowles family, and by granting this expansion, we will have additional, year round use of this great mountain for people of all interests.

support the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area to the "backside"; as proposed. Mt. Spokane is a vital piece of the outdoor recreation scene in the Spokane area and it is important to keep this facility competitive with other ski areas in the region. I am also a user of the park in the summer, and my opinion is the new ski runs will not seriously degrade the area where they are proposed.

I am in full support of Mt Spokane's Recreation Classification and the proposed State Park expansion! As a Christian I fully believe that it is our responsibility to take care to the land, plants, and animals provided for us; but if it is our job to protect and care and do the work for it, why on earth can we not get enjoyment from it? And what better place then one that has already been designed for that very purpose! I know that there are far more qualified places for a Natural Forest Area classification. I am an equestrian and riding the trails on the Mountain are always the highlight of my riding year! My family and I are all avid snowshoeing, hiking, riding, ski/snowboarding, huckleberry picking fans. The opportunity to spend quality time with each other while also pursuing our individual interests up there compares to few other things. Please don't take that away from the people of Spokane!

Please allow Mount Spokane 2000 to proceed with the installing of the new chair in the backside area of Mt. Spokane. This local ski area is competing with other areas for skier visits and is unable to expand their terrain due to being in a State Park. This chair would increase the income for the state park system and improve the skier's amenities in the park. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

I want to voice my support for the expansion at Mt Spokane with the addition of the new chairlift. I am a 20+ year season pass holder at the resort and have recently added my 2 kids (ages 9 and 11) as pass holders too. We love the mountain for its easy access from the city. We love the new lodge improvements so there is more room to eat as a family. The one major complaint is the amount of skiable terrain for my family is somewhat limited and very small compared to the other regional ski resorts like 49, Silver and Schweitzer. The proposed new terrain would open new opportunity for my family to ski more areas safely and without damaging the environment.

This is a very bad idea! We have already lost far much wildlife habitat. I vote for the no-project alternative.

Also, mountain biking should be banned. Bicycles should not be allowed in any natural area. They are inanimate objects and have no rights. There is also no right to mountain bike. That was settled in federal court in 1996: <http://mjvande.nfshost.com/mtb10.htm> . It's dishonest of mountain bikers to say that they don't have access to trails closed to bikes. They have EXACTLY the same access as everyone else -- ON FOOT! Why isn't that good enough for mountain bikers? They are all capable of walking....

A favorite myth of mountain bikers is that mountain biking is no more harmful to wildlife, people, and the environment than hiking, and that science supports that view. Of course, it's not true. To settle the matter once and for all, I read all of the research they cited, and wrote a review of the research on mountain biking impacts (see <http://mjvande.nfshost.com/scb7.htm>). I found that of the seven studies they cited, (1) all were written by mountain bikers, and (2) in every case, the authors misinterpreted their own data, in order to come to the conclusion that they favored. They also studiously avoided mentioning another scientific study (Wisdom et al) which did not favor mountain biking, and came to the opposite conclusions.

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Those were all experimental studies. Two other studies (by White et al and by Jeff Marion) used a survey design, which is inherently incapable of answering that question (comparing hiking with mountain biking). I only mention them because mountain bikers often cite them, but scientifically, they are worthless.

Mountain biking accelerates erosion, creates V-shaped ruts, kills small animals and plants on and next to the trail, drives wildlife and other trail users out of the area, and, worst of all, teaches kids that the rough treatment of nature is okay (it's NOT!). What's good about THAT?

To see exactly what harm mountain biking does to the land, watch this 5-minute video: <http://vimeo.com/48784297>.

In addition to all of this, it is extremely dangerous: http://mjvande.nfshost.com/mtb_dangerous.htm .

For more information: <http://mjvande.nfshost.com/mtbfaq.htm> .

The common thread among those who want more recreation in our parks is total ignorance about and disinterest in the wildlife whose homes these parks are. Yes, if humans are the only beings that matter, it is simply a conflict among humans (but even then, allowing bikes on trails harms the MAJORITY of park users hikers and equestrians who can no longer safely and peacefully enjoy their parks).

The parks aren't gymnasiums or racetracks or even human playgrounds. They are WILDLIFE HABITAT, which is precisely why they are attractive to humans. Activities, such as mountain biking, that destroy habitat, violate the charter of the parks.

Even kayaking and rafting, which give humans access to the entirety of a water body, prevent the wildlife that live there from making full use of their habitat, and should not be allowed. Of course those who think that only humans matter won't understand what I am talking about an indication of the sad state of our culture and educational system.

Please approve the Mt Spokane expansion. This will be so beneficial to our community and expand the great skiing Mt Spokane has to offer.

Mt. Spokane 2000 has been an exceptional steward of Mt. Spokane Ski, Snowboard Park. Their diligence in maintaining the Mt. Spokane ski area should be commended and all of its users are grateful for the countless efforts they have exhausted to ensure the mountain's sustainability and recreational quality on a very limited budget. There is no argument that skiers/boarders make up the vast majority of Mt. Spokane visitors. In order to stay competitive with other regional ski destinations and to ensure more space on the mountain for safe recreation, it's imperative that the PASEA be classified as Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. I urge the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the PASEA as Recreation so that Mt. Spokane 2000 can proceed with its plans to improve the mountain experience for all of its visitors. On busy weekends, the mountain can get a little crowded. With a new lift on the northwest side of the mountain and additional runs, there will be less congestion on the mountain most notably the runs accessed by Chairs 2 and 3. I would prefer that Mt. Spokane 2000 allocate more time and resources into glading existing ski terrain on the mountain to provide more tree skiing. With that in mind, fewer runs in the PASEA would be preferable so that the area could be dedicated to tree skiing for experienced skiers. I don't believe Mt. Spokane needs more blue square runs. I love skiing the northwest side of the mountain but dislike the hike out to Chair 4. Having a lift back there would be fantastic but I'd prefer they designate that area for more challenging terrain.

Listen to those who use this mountain substantially more than any other group. Please move forward with the "Recreational" designation of the

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PASEA so that Mt. Spokane can provide its visitors with an experience that will rival other local ski areas and ensure the mountain's sustainability for future generations.

I support the #4 alternative designation for the area, which is "recreation/resource recreation" I have been a skier at Mt. Spokane for over 15 years, and I utilize the x-country trails, the current downhill area, and I also have skied the area under consideration for many years, as many other people have. I support the expansion for two primary reasons:

1) Mt. Spokane is a very amazing and family-friendly ski hill which provides good skiing for the Spokane community at the lowest prices and closest location possible. Unfortunately over time, skiing in general has become less and less "family friendly" most ski hills are too far away and/or too costly for many people/families in the Spokane-area to enjoy. Mt. Spokane represents the lone ski hill that is still fairly affordable and accessible to Spokane-area residents. An expansion would continue this great service and also help the ski hill "survive" next to the other larger area ski hills, all of which have expanded over time, offered new runs and terrain, lodges, etc., and seriously increased their prices as well. The expansion would help keep our local hill family-friendly and viable as a ski hill.

2) I have been skiing and hiking the area in question for many years, and I have seen no "unique habitats" or "special old-growth" in the area. I co-authored the government publication "Forested Plant Associations of the Colville National Forest" (USDA PNW-GTR-360, 1995), and have an extensive knowledge of the natural forests of our area. While I have not studied the area extensively, there appears to be nothing unique or special in terms of habitat or size of trees that I have seen. While the area may represent some forest types which are "rare" in Spokane County, this is very deceiving because Spokane County is largely low-elevation dry forest habitat types with few mountains over 4000-5000 ft. If one instead examines the local mountains in which Mt. Spokane is part of, the vegetation types in question are not rare, but rather ubiquitous in the surrounding mountains both to the north and east.

In conclusion, the expansion of the ski hill into the area in question is a very good idea for the people and community of Spokane and surrounding area. The area affected by the proposed expansion is relatively small and the plan looks very sound and does not "threaten" or "endanger"; any types of vegetation which I have heard called "rare or old-growth"

Please allocate the land for recreational use and allow the chair lift and ski runs to be built.

I support the expansion of ski terrain and addition of chair 6 to Mt Spokane state park.

I feel it is environmentally sound to expand existing ski areas rather than develop new ones.

Also the road is already there and lodges and all other infrastructure is in place.

Supporting skiing here allows the most convenient access for Spokanites especially youth to enjoy the outdoors and our state parks.

Please allow development of the NW side of Mt. Spokane for ski and snowboard park use. Mt. Spokane is such an important recreational area for the Spokane area. We need additional development of this recreational area.

I am amazed that this continues to need more clarification. This is the third time I have commented on this over the past few years. The mount spoken ski park is a great use of the state park land. It has already been used before for the same purpose. This expansion is only to re-open that area for use. More people will be able to enjoy more of the mountain during the year. I hope that the judgment will be to open this land back up to public use by enlarging the ski area on the mountain.

Mt Spokane and in particular Spokane 2000 have been pushing this for 10 years now, while mostly ignoring the real issues the resort has.

1. Old worn out lift system. Band aid fixes on chairs that are breaking down, leaving skiers stuck on chairs for lengthy amounts of time.

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2. Base area facilities. Lodge one is a joke, no one but SSRA uses it only open on weekends vintage bathrooms. Lodge 2 food service is a terrible layout bathrooms a joke, too small on most weekends.

3. Parking, nothing like slogging through 6 inches of mud to get to the base area or coming back to your car to find it covered in mud from splashing. Busy weekends parking over 1 mile away from lodge 2.

4. Maintaining current runs or lack of.. Several runs on chair 4 and 1 are unsafe during most of the season due to stumps, fallen trees and new growth except during the biggest snow years.

I am a season pass holder at Mt Spokane and have been for 25 years, skiing 50 plus days a year at MS. The area that they want to expand into is a fun side country experience that no other local resort offers. Many skiers and boarders already ride this area with more and more enjoying it every season. Putting a old beat-up chair in there will ruin that side county experience for ever. Mt Spokane has plenty of uphill capacity. Leave it alone, clean up the front side, parking and lodge issues and quit wasting money and time on this issue.

An expanded Mt. Spokane will benefit the region's citizens through enhanced recreation for youth and families and positively impact the region's economy. I urge the commission to approve Alternative 4 allowing for one chairlift and seven new trails.

I am writing to you to please consider and to allow Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park to expand the ski areas and classify those areas for Recreation.

Wouldn't it be better for our local economy and the environment that Mt Spokane be the destination, rather than our citizens and visitors driving all the way over to Idaho because they have the "better mountains" By the way, less driving means less emissions which makes Mt. Spokane the better choice to lessen your carbon foot print.

I am in favor of the expansion of the ski resort. My mother learned to ski at Mt. Spokane, and I currently hold a season pass. The area has always be well used by local people. Access from town is easy, the drive is short. The resort would benefit from the expanded area, particularly with the more sheltered terrain.

Mt Spokane has asked me once again to comment on the expansion plan, so once again I do so:

Development of the northwest side of the mountain will ruin a scape that is beautiful in its natural state. The pristine nature would be lost forever. Government agencies should take great care before allowing private enterprises to permanently damage natural areas because land that belongs to the public cannot be changed back once an impetuous and careless decision is made to ruin it. For profit should rule the roost when it comes to public lands.

As an avid snowshoer, I wonder when the Ski area says: "all traditional routes have been preserved"; How can a route be preserved when there are 7 runs and a lift across trail 140? I also wonder about the impact of even more skiers in the backside, and as they move further out looking for a backcountry experience...there is nothing to truly stop or prevent skiers in restricted areas. I understand that everyone wants the good early snow, I know I head right for trail 140 for deep stuff early on, or snow at the end of the season. But at the same time, the resort already has a good chunk of the Mtn and there are plenty of boarders and skiers on the backside already. The Nordic park has horse, quartz, shadow mountains. The snowmobiles are everywhere else on the backside, roads, restricted areas; mt kit Carson, so what is left after the expansion? I also wonder if the Resort would do better to continue to improve what they already have. Thank you for your time.

I am writing in support of Alternative 4 for Part 1 - Land Classification. In addition, I support Alternative 2 or 3 of Part 2 - Project Action.

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Mt. Spokane needs this expansion to benefit the regions citizens through enhanced recreation for youth and families and positively impact the regions economy.

The proposed Mount Spokane expansion is a vital step in ensuring Spokanes recreation and economic growth. My wife and I both medical providers in Spokane since 2005. A major consideration for people like us to move here and stay is the outdoor recreation opportunities available. Spokane has been very slow to maximize its outdoor recreation potential. Honestly, Spokane has failed on this front, and is far behind the rest of the pacific northwest. It's time to move toward into the future and make Spokane a great place to work, live, and play. Cut the environment red tape and move let the people of Spokane move forward with making this a great place to live.

Mt Spokane has been available to multiple uses of recreation for many years and there has been minimal adverse conditions as a result of this recreation. I have been skiing, hiking, mt. biking, cross-country skiing, berry picking, camping, even trail cleaning at Mt. Spokane consistently since 1986. In my experiences and my families' time on the mountain we have encountered many species of wildlife, from chipmunks to moose. In my opinion there has been no adverse effect on their habitat or the environment.

Having said all of that, I find it interesting that the Mt. Spokane proposed expansion has been held up this long already. This proposed additional area is (and has been) used by all forms of recreation for many years. We ski, mt. bike, hike, snow-mobile, berry harvest, etc. this area (we refer to as the "back side"); for decades. So, it seem to me that the proposed development go forward. IT IS ALREADY IN USE AND HAS BEEN.

We will continue to enjoy all of Mt Spokane in the future and would encourage the Proposed Expansion so others may also. Momentum 2000 and the operations of the resort have been diligent in finding the balance of recreation and preservation of the eco-system. Their history indicates that and we should allow them to continue.

I would like to voice my strong support of Mt Spokane PASEA and urge approval of Alternative 4 to Part 1: Land Classification. This alternative allows for 1 chairlift and 7 runs on the NW side of the mountain. With that approved I would further urge approval of Alternative 2, Enhanced Recreation Alternative, to Part 2: Project Action.

I bring to your attention this excerpt from the WA State Parks Mission: "State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide memorable recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives. "And the Vision" Washington's state parks will be cherished destinations with natural, cultural, recreational, artistic, and interpretive experiences that all Washingtonians enjoy, appreciate, and proudly support." And these Core Values: "Commitment to stewardship that transmits high quality park assets to future generations

....Dedication to outdoor recreation and public enjoyment that welcomes all our citizens to their public parks."

I believe that MS 2000, as a partner, has endeavored to help Washinton State Parks fulfill it's mission with the PASEA. Additionally, the PASEA was carefully developed keeping in mind the Park's mission of stewardship and protection of resources.

Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park provides a lower cost and more accessable ski and ride experience for the people of the Spokane region. Most are intermediate skier/riders and the mountain presently has limited and congested intermediate terrain. The expansion will increase intermdediate terrain and provide for a safer and more enjoyable outdoor experience.

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I recently replied in favor of the expansion. This process has dragged on far too long and is indicative of what a few activists can accomplish with vocal opposition, not just to this effort but to almost anything. My hunch is that comments in support of the expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski area expansion far outnumber those in opposition. They use every conceivable means to halt the project.

I'm opposed to the proposed expansion at Mt Spokane State Park. Adding a lift in this pristine area of the mountain makes no sense. The lodge and facilities at the mountain are terrible Lodge one is falling apart lodge two even with the updates is dated and not a comfortable place to be. Chair two does not start at the bottom of the mountain and you either have to hike to the chair or take a children's chair up to chair two. The people of the inland northwest have many choices for skiing and adding an additional lift will not attract more people to the mountain. Fixing the current facilities would have a more positive impact. Many back country skiers enjoy this pristine quiet area with out chair lifts and grooming operations. Adding a chair to the back side will destroy some of the best back country skiing in the region. Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park in my opinion does not have the right to force it way against the will of the tax payers that own the park. This is a state resource that needs to manage with the purpose to fulfill the needs of all users although the back country users are a limited number, their voices should be heard. The mountain experience will be ruined forever not to mention the big eye sore of a chair lift and clear cut. I use the park year round the sight of the chair and all the runs cut into the mountain and the associated buildings will leave a permanent scar on the undeveloped side of the mountain This will hinder the other outdoor recreation year round.

An expanded ski area would enable Mt. Spokane to compete favorably with other local ski areas.

I strongly oppose the development of a new ski area on Mt Spokane. There are few areas in this part of the state that are more beautiful and pristine than this area of old-growth forest in our State Park. This area deserves protection for two main reasons:

1. There are very few acres of virgin, uncut forest left in Eastern Washington. These old trees are an important part of the ecosystem and support wildlife in a way that only old-growth forests can. Many birds and animals, including black bears and moose will be pushed out if these areas are developed. These animals will die, as they are pushed into residential areas and highways. The trees and plants of this forest also clean the air and produce oxygen. Global Climate change is already having devastating impacts on the planet and this area is helping to combat the effects of carbon pollution.
2. Mt. Spokane is an important part of the culture of local Indian tribes, including the Spokane tribe. The tribe has used this area of the mountain for thousands of years for food and herb gathering and is recognized as a sacred place in the tribe. The Indians deserve respect of their sacred places.

This 800 acres needs our protection from development. There are so few truly wild places left in our part of the state. Turning this wilderness area into another playground for use by only a few is outrageous! In this time on our planet, our State Parks and other entities should be looking for ways to save more land from development; not spending thousands of dollars destroying what little is left. I love Mt. Spokane and I believe it should remain wild so that my son and my granddaughter and her children can enjoy the wild things there forever.

I would like to see a chairlift installed and additional trails cleared for skiing at Mt. Spokane Ski Park.

the ski area needs to address the issues inside the boundary markers instead of the backside expansion. Chairlifts parking lodge 1 brush cutting and thinning of trees you don't have to look very far to see what is needed. the backside needs nothing. it is very skiable sidecountry with easy access back to the ski area. let's spend the money where it counts and make it a better area for everyone.

I have written many prior support letters for the "back side"; expansion of Mt Spokane. For public safety, public enjoyment and overall economic impact I believe this project should go forward as quickly as possible.

I support:

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Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Please let's get this project completed!!

Thank you for your time and consideration as you review this project. I am sure the issues are many and the decision is not an easy one. I would like to highly encourage you to accept Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Parks proposal for expansion. In looking to the past, they have been faithful stewards of the land that has been entrusted to them and I fully expect that they will be good stewards of the land moving forward. The proposal makes an additional section of the mountain available to more people to be able to enjoy and use in various ways while still maintaining forested sections and glades within that area. In the long run it makes a more effective use of the mountain for an expanded number of people while improving Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Parks ability to serve the community. Most likely, it will also bring additional revenue to the area of Spokane as more people will choose to stay in Spokane or travel to Spokane to ski rather than traveling elsewhere.

I personally look forward to seeing the expansion process complete so that more of the mountain can be enjoyed! As you approve the proposal, I would like to see a requirement that snowshoeing trails be maintained or improved, as well as the ability for snowmobiles to have access to winter trails.

I would like to voice my support for alternative #4 for the mountain expansion project.

My family have, many times, enjoyed hiking extensively in the area in consideration. There are many little trails through the area, with many groups using it after the snow has melted. Also, there is a lot of mountain biking down a couple of trails down the mountain to the road up. During the winter, when the snow is good, a lot of people ski down the backside down to the snowmobile trail back to chair 4.

My point is that this is not a virgin unused area of forest as some are saying.

I believe that there needs to be a comprehensive plan for the area to be enjoyed by the public with dedicated trails and other areas for managing the heavy public use that is already occurring.

As for the new chair, it will not disturb the area when it is covered by 10-12 feet of snow. In my years of skiing back there, the only wild animal I've seen is a crow flying.

We enjoy winter recreation at Mt. Spokane. I think expansion of the area is a very good idea. It is not only good for users of the facility, but will also provide job opportunities which are of great value in these times. There is no shortage of pristine mountain timberland in NE Washington. To me, it seems ridiculous that enviros want to stop this valuable project. The expansion will provide better skiing and an economic boost for Spokane people. The expansion should go forward.

I have just completed a 12 year term on the board of Mt. Spokane 2000. The board has been concerned with the lack of adequate terrain adequate for the majority of the users of the area which are intermediate skiers and boarders. Alternative 4 of the EIS would allow an increase in the type of terrain needed for the users I have described by adding one chair lift and opening seven new trails. This would be accomplished while safeguarding the natural areas within the boundaries of the PASEA.

I urge acceptance of Alternative 4.

I'm writing to let you know I'm in favor of the expansion at Mt. Spokane. This project is long over due and should be aloud to move forward soon. Hundreds of people already ski this side of the mountain and hike up to chair 4. It makes sense to add a chair to improve safety and keep people

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from getting lost on the backside of the mountain. I have been skiing this mountain since I was a child and now my 9 and 12 year olds race for SSRA and keep asking me why a small group environmentalists are aloud to hold up such a worthy project. I hope you will see that cutting down a few trees and adding a chair will actually improve fire access and protect the mountain from future wildfires and not to mention at the time when wildlife inhabit these areas the mountain is shut down for the summer.

We have waited so long for expansion of the Mt Spokane ski area. It seems all the environmental studies have been approved repeatedly. The expanded ski area will provide enhanced recreation for northeast Washington families and have a positive economic impact on the area. Please vote for Part 1, Land Classification, Alternative 4 and Part 2, Project Action, Alternative 2. Thank you.

Mt. Spokane is a destination spot of the Pacific Northwest. Not only for Snow sports but numerous Summer activities such as Mt. Biking, Hiking, Berrie picking just to name a few. Now as a Grandfather of 5 our family has treasured Mt. Spokane year round since 1973.

I SUPPORT the addition of another chair for many reasons.

- 1) Increased snow rider safety by reducing current overcrowded runs on chair 2 & 3.
- 2) Reduce lift lines that sometimes is up to 30-40 minuets.
- 3) More advanced snow riders would have legitimate patrolled runs to use rather than go out of bounds to enjoy the snow.. (AND MANY DO.) When inexperienced riders follow there tracks they end up lost or in Blanchard costing Mt. Spokane Ski Patrol time, money, and resources.
- 4) Brush cleaners for the snow sports area reduce fire potential and enable Huckleberries to grow in abundance. It would be a shame to lose OUR precious mountain to a fire.

There are many many other reasons I support the Mt. Spokane expansion but the main 4 safety issues are above.

Please allow the addition of another chair to Mt. Spokane

As related to this project, please vote for part 1 alternative 4!

Part 1 - land classification

Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area.

If not, please vote for alternative 2 under part 2!

Part 2 Project Action

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative.

As someone who has grown up year around on this mountain it is disconcerting how this land is under utilized! The Spokane region needs more, the economy needs more and us voters need more! There is more money flying to ID ski resorts because Mt Dpokanr is behind the times.

Please vote for the land expansion!

I strongly urge the board to allow Mt Spokane Ski Area to proceed with it's planned development. Not lonely will it greatly enhance our winter

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recreation but it will enhance wildlife during the off season. The state has many old growth, road less, and wilderness areas yet available close winter recreation areas are few. the planned expansion will enhance wildlife by opening up areas for more food and provide needed fire breaks. Thank you for your time.

Please allow this expansion; it will be a good use of this public land.

I strongly support Alternative 4, the development of Mt. Spokane in order to install another lift and seven additional ski runs. As someone who enjoys the mountain in all four seasons, I do not believe this project will significantly impact the wilderness nor harm wildlife. Please heed the overwhelming wishes of the public and green-light the ski lift expansion.

Remember, you're public servants first and advocates second.

As our local not-for-profit mountain, Mt. Spokane provides a valuable resource to the local community by providing cost-affordable skiing, where other "destination resorts"; do not. It also provides a valuable educational service with the ski school and ski patrol training school that is within an hour's drive of the major population center in the region.

My family of five has enjoyed Mt. Spokane as a teaching mountain and we highly support the expansion of the terrain to service a growing community and to provide additional training ground for new skiers and ski patrol alike. The mountain receives heavy usage, like a "city park"; and more terrain would be a significant benefit for those local citizens who cannot afford to take their families to expensive destination resorts in Idaho and Montana.

Please support Alternative 4!

As a MT Spokane skier I would be in favor of expansion. This mountain is a gem for the families in and around Spokane. We are proud of the current ski area and remodel on Lodge 2 but look forward to additional ski runs for ski enthusiasts. Let's keep them local!

I would like to add my support in favor of the land classification, alternative #4 for the Mt Spokane ski hill expansion.

As a senior and a yearly pass holder for many years at Mt Spokane, I can see many benefits for expanding the ski area to the NW side of the mountain and adding a lift for ease of access.

I have skied this area for years and have never seen any wildlife such as bear, moose that are supposed to inhabit this area. Usually the snow is too deep and the hillside too steep for even them to traverse. The area proposed by Mt Spokane will allow this local ski hill to compete fairly with all the other ski areas in the vicinity. The other ski mountains are expanding their ski areas and improving the terrain to offer greater outdoor winter activities and more variety of terrain to attract visitors. Mt Spokane has to be able to offer similar skiable terrain in order to survive.

As to the old growth forest issue, removing a few trees would be healthy for the area and would provide fire safety in the event of a lightning caused forest fire.

I encourage you to pas alternative #4 in favor of the expansion.

The ski area expansion project at Mt. Spokane should be approved. The area where the expansion will occur has a long history of downhill skiing, and other seasonal recreation uses, with lifts and trails being used for many years. I have personally interviewed many older Mt. Spokane skiers that skied and even taught skiing in the proposed expansion area. Even today the "backside" as it is known by us locals, is skied most every ski day.

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The area to be developed will introduce 80 acres of groomed trails, not a knockout blow when we consider the park is over 14,000 acres in size. The environmental impact is minimal when using best practices, as the concessionaire will for this enhancement. I agree that areas with "Old Growth"; should be maintained and protected. Let's find some and do just that. This area has been logged, burned, logged again, and used for recreation over the past 100 plus years. It does not contain the "last stand of old growth forest in Spokane County." Let's find the actual last stand and protect it. In fact, the expansion area contains no old growth forest, by any rational or accepted definition.

I understand a person's wish to save " their private stash" of snow on the mountain, as I have heard people say that are against the expansion. I heard one person say, that area is for the "elite" only. This is contrary to everything that Mt. Spokane State Park stands for. The more people we can get to use the park, the better the chance a person has to learn about the Park's varied uses, ecosystems, importance and beauty. Maybe that visitor will bring some of that knowledge back home to improve their own environment. Mt. Spokane State Park is the gem of the State Park system due to its various uses, ecosystems, and availability to 700,000 people who live near it. It is just that, a Park, a place for people to enjoy, owned by the citizens of the State of Washington. It is not, nor will ever be a wilderness, with old growth needing protection in the expansion area. The expansion achieves a rare balance recreational use and environmental responsibility. I am for the expansion.

I am strongly in favor of the installation of the new chairlift on the north side of Mt. Spokane. I have skied at Mt. Spokane for 60 years was a member of the Mt. Spokane Ski Patrol for 25 years. I have been involved in many lost skier searches associated with people skiing the area where the new chairlift would be installed. A new chairlift would enhance the personal safety of the people that are currently skiing this portion of the mountain in search of better snow conditions on the north side of the mountain by making it a patrolled portion of the mountain.

I believe that a new chairlift would create a lot of new interest and enthusiasm for local and regional people to visit Mt. Spokane and help sustain the financial aspects of the state park. We all know that state parks are short of funding and this situation is likely to get worse as tax dollars become harder to come by. So in many ways, the installation of the new chairlift would be sustainable to the state park and our entire community.

As regards Mt. Spokane opening up the back side of the mountain for ski area expansion I choose:

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I have skied Mt. Spokane since I was a kid and am now 60. Ski area use is great for our parks because it encourages people to get out and enjoy nature and thereby have a greater concern for its stewardship. By simply "blocking" zones so that people can't get out and enjoy those areas I think is throwing the baby out with the bath water.

I fully support Mt. Spokane's plans for expansion of the backside of the mountain.

It is very hard to believe that some people would put up this much fight to keep land from being used. Our adults, youth and children will get more from the outdoor activities on the ski slopes than these opponents. I guess they want Spokane to stay on the 50's. I am 70 now and when the talk of expansion began I said I would never see it and maybe my children and grand children may not also.

My spouse and I would love to see the ski area expanded! Please do whatever it takes to expand the ski area!

I support the mount Spokane expansion project.

As I approach my 75th birthday in October, I reflect on the happiness and joy I have experienced skiing at Mt. Spokane. The details are sketchy but

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I do recall the excitement and anticipation I felt riding in my sixteen year old friend's car to go skiing for the first time, at the age of 14, at what I think was called Lindner lodge. It was night skiing and the rope tow was unruly and the slope unforgiving for a beginner, but I was hooked.

The mountain belongs to the people. It does not belong to skiers or other recreationalists. It does not belong to groups motivated by what I'm not sure at times. It seems that some of these groups resent the people's use of this nearby mountain playground.

It offers year round recreation for multiple activities. Ski runs and cat tracks become hiking trails and picnic lunch havens. The grassy, treeless areas of the ski runs are beautiful lawns on the mountain and beckon people to come and enjoy the hiking and views. In my opinion they are enhancements when viewed from a distance.

As Spokane has grown so has the number of families and individuals that have discovered this close-in playground and they have come to love it.

The facilities have not kept up with this growth. It is time to listen to we the skiers, who respect and want to protect this area Gem. We need the expansion and we need ALTERNATIVE 4. In spite of the evil sounding "grading" options and half efforts please consider doing it right the first time. PROJECT ACTION ALTERNATIVE 2 makes sense and will be an improvement of which we can all be proud.

The detractors do good and I respect that, but sometimes their enthusiasm stands in the way of common sense. Please look at this project with common sense and the wonderful recreation opportunity it provides for the Inland Empire.

The Mt Spokane ski expansion project I feel would give the people of Spokane more recreational space in which to explore and be more active. I understand and can appreciate the concerns of the impact this might cause the environment but I truly believe the management of mount Spokane has nothing but the best interest of the mountain in mind for all visitor's to the park. I think the impact will be minimal. I want to express my wishes that you approve the Ski expansion as planned.

Either way your decision will be respected.

As a life long skier on Mt Spokane I fully endorse the ski area expansion. It is my opinion that this relatively small expansion would vastly improve the area by providing more skiable acres which reduces overcrowding on the current lift and trail system. With the population growth of the surrounding area comes a need for more acres and the current area cannot sustain the additional skiers that will undoubtedly come do the easy accessibility of the park. The four current lifts have been in operation for as long as I can remember (40 plus years) and I cannot possibly believe that this over due expansion proposal can possibly have significant negative impact on the largest park in the state. I also find it difficult to swallow that a small special interest group who spends the lion share of there funding on litigation can hold up a reasonable project of such a minimal impact.

I support the Mt. Spokane ski park expansion. My family loves the outdoors and Mt. Spokane. We consider it a wonderful resource for the Spokane area which not only brings revenue to the area, but also strengthens families and a sense of community for groups. As a pastor at a large church in Spokane, I have even seen the ski park enrich people and relationships in my congregation.

Not only do we enjoy winter recreation, but we hike and mountain bike in the summer too. I'm very familiar with the terrain and area proposed for the expansion. The impact will be minimal. I do not believe the expansion will interfere with the enjoyment of the mountain in the summer. I look forward to both summer and winter recreation following the expansion.

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Let's grow our mountain activities, encourage snow sports in our city which is "near nature, near perfect," strengthen families and community through outdoor recreation, and increase the revenues for businesses related to snow sports and outdoor recreation.

Please approve the Mt. Spokane Snow Park expansion. Places like Mt. Spokane Snow Park make living and working in Spokane AMAZING! Let's make it even better!

I urge the parks department to use their expertise to review the use of Mt. Spokane effectively. You have at your disposal facts which dispel much of the arguments (myths) used in opposing Alternative 4.

Failure to expand the skiing opportunities at Mt. Spokane will only mean that more fossil fuels will be used taking skiers to other venues as they expand their ski areas. The net effect will be far more negative than managing the existing recreational facility and expanding it to better use the facilities already in place.

More people using this resource means better physical health and provides an alternative activity that is wholesome for both body and mind.

Please evaluate the facts of this area without emotion and choose Alternate 4. for recreational use.

Please expand: it would reduce gas emissions since many kids my age (in college) refuse to go to Mt Spokane simply because it is smaller than the other area ski resorts. Also, more hotel fees and restaurant fees would be paid at Mt. Spokane, in Spokane Valley, Mead or Spokane instead of Sandpoint, Keller, Wallace, etc.

The plan to open the backside of Mt. Spokane with a new chair lift is far over due. The economic and community benefits will have a positive impact on our area without doing damage to the natural state of the park.

I have been skiing at Mt Spokane since 1985 and I also enjoy the Mt biking trails that Mt Spokane offers. The expansion would allow Mt Spokane access to great terrain that would be north facing and most of the time be out of the fog. This area is already being skied by backcountry skiers and by adding a lift it would make the area safer. It would also greatly benefit wildlife, in that it would open up dense forest that is for the most part dead timber, and the runs would make great mountain meadows in the summertime. The ski business is competitive, and Mt Spokane needs this expansion to stay competitive.

The Mt. Spokane expansion project for the ski runs should continue forward as planned. The area in question is not frequented by that many visitors and would not have any harm or impact to the environment or animals. It would be an asset to Mt. Spokane for future generations to use and enjoy.

Randy, thank you again for another opportunity to comment on the Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park's proposed expansion that including a new chair lift and seven new runs. I have reviewed the DEIS and found that issues were addressed and where needed, mitigated. As the Vice President of the Spokane Falls Chapter of Trout Unlimited, I have been particularly interested in the wetlands assessments the the potential affect of habitat for the Redband Trout in the streams below that are sourced by the waters of Mt Spokane.

At this junction I fully support the Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park's proposed expansion. When one weighs the benefits, the people and community win. There appears to be negligible adverse affects to the environment and there is the potential for enhancements that can occurs when a ski area expands.

Mount Spokane Adventures need to expand the ski area on Mount Spokane, because skiing is a great exercise and sport for many people young and old. When we live near a mountain like Mount Spokane we should not have to drive another hour away in order to have good skiing. Other mountains a little further away have expanded there areas which have drawn people away from Mount Spokane. I also like to hike camp and go

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fishing so I spend a lot of time in nature, so if you just use a little common sense since there is no way a winter Sport like skiing would have an effect on animals, birds or the environment.

PLEASE help the Mount Spokane ski area expand as needed.

I support classifying the Mt Spokane proposed expansion area as a RECREATIONAL site. This will allow for a much needed expansion of a new chair with 7 runs. I have skied Mt Spokane for almost 50 years. I taught my 2 sons and my wife to ski on this beautiful mountain. This expansion will really benefit our region's recreational opportunities and economic development. I urge you to classify this RECREATIONAL.

I am writing in support of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land as "Recreation"; and allow for the proposed ski lift and ski runs.

Allowing for the ski area combines the best of what Mt Spokane has to offer; recreational and natural value.

Please allow alternative number 4 and growth of the Mt. Spokane ski recreation area. Our family has enjoyed skiing on the hill for multiple generations. Our 67 year old, Spokane company, has supported the ski hill for over 60 years and like to see it continue to provide great opportunity for the community in recreation.

Please approve Mt Spokane PASEA Land Classification as a "Recreation" Area, Alternative 4, and Project Action as Enhance Recreation.

This decision was already approved in 2012! Since then thousands of more dollars have gone to the litigation of this process with no more evidence of significant environmental impact. What a shame.

As a 20 year member of the Mt Spokane Ski Patrol and a Search and Rescue Board Member, we are wasting time, money, and human resources to rescue the lost and injured in this un-patrolled, dangerous, and difficult access area. Over the last twenty years I have personally been involved in well over 100 rescues on the so called "Back Side" Why is this even an issue? Some of the proposed expansion area has already been a recreation ski area with surface lifts and a beautiful lodge. Unfortunately, people with money, that do not even spend time on our Mt, are trying to influence you, the commissioners, in making poor decisions on our behalf. We need access to this area and we need to be able to rescue the people using this area. Past rescues include skiers, snowboarders, snow shoe hikers, snowmobile riders, and even members of Mt Spokane Mountaineering Club. This mountaineering club, along with the Lands Council, opposes this expansion. We endanger more people every time we put a rescue together. If this area had a ski lift and better access, we could reduce these search and rescues while actually patrolling this area.

I spend the majority of my time on Mt Spokane as a condo owner and a Mt Spokane employee/Ski Patrol. On a daily basis, I see the great benefit of getting people out of their homes and into the great outdoors. I believe as you the commissioners have already stated; "there is a direct link to children's health and general human health by the amount of time spent outdoors recreating such as parks provide and as population growth continues in Washington State necessitating the need for further park acquisition and development to ensure per capita access to state parks" If this PASEA is designated Recreation, we have the opportunity to provide significantly more recreation opportunities for significantly more people!

Lastly, I'm very disappointed that the connector trail from the proposed ski expansion area no longer includes the planned connector trail to the Chair 4 ski runs. This connector trail would provide many more options to the Ski Patrol and Lift Maintenance Operations.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and I sincerely want to thank you for the time and effort you spend on the Washington State Parks

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Recreation Commission.

As a long time advocate of the environment and one who enjoys the tremendous experience of using our State Parks and trails; I would urge that the approval of our request to expand our access to Mt. Spokane be accepted. This would increase our enjoyment for those of us who relish our access to opening more of Mt. Spokane for snow skiing. I understand that our request will be addressed later this year and I am communicating my hope to see more access to Mt. Spokane. This State Park is truly a valuable natural resource to all of us who use Mt. Spokane and we urge that you accept this important and reasonable request.

Mt Spokane Ski Area is a treasure that needs to be expanded to compete with other local ski areas.

The back side will allow more varied ski terrain with minimal impact to the forested land to the north.

I have lived in the Spokane area for over 30 years and have watched with interest the ski area finally having proper management and pride in its facilities. I believe that supporting the expansion will be a vote for Spokane in general.

It is unbelievable how the Parks Staff has stonewalled this project for more then 8 years. And seeing how the Park Commissioners have been subordinate to the Parks staff has been amazing. It would be a grave mistake for the commission not to approve the Mt. Spokane Ski Expansion. The expansion will help the mountain management (a non-profit group) be more competitive with the other ski areas that made major improvements. It is the belief of many that should the expansion is not approved, the mountain will not be able to compete, and would need to give the concession back to the Parks. Should this happen it is believed parks would close the mountain and designate it for NFA, use.

It is my strongest wish the Parks will see fit to approve the expansion for the thousands of citizens of the State of Washington. This would be terrible for the State to loose this asset.

My son is a Spokane Powder Hound with Spokane parks and recreation. He has taken lessons at Mount Spokane for several years. It's a wonderful place for him to ski and can be so much more with the proposed expansion.

Right now things can get a little crowded and I have seen some pretty wild collisions between experienced and novice skiers having to share the same areas.

Opening up the park would not only make it more fun it would also make it a safer place to ski.

We also hike up there during the Summer and have not seen any ill affects to the wildlife around the ski area.

If anything wildlife gravitates towards the ski area.

Mt. Spokane is the main place that our family skis/snowboards at but it is in desperate need of additional areas to ski. I love the closeness to the Spokane Valley and what a gas savings it is, compared to other local ski resorts, but half way into the day, the runs begin to get a bit boring and repetitive. I would love to see the ski area expanded to add more runs for moderate difficulty.

I fully support the backside expansion of MT SPOKANE. I feel it will provide new terrain with a better exposure that our local ski resort needs.

I am writing on behalf in support of the PASEA at Mt Spokane.

I am a fourth generation Spokanite who grew up alpine skiing at Mt Spokane. My father learned to ski at Mt Spokane, as did I and now my two children. I have spent years exploring the western and northwestern areas of the mountain that have been designating for as the PASEA. My experience back there has been mixed; the terrain is great and there are some wonderful open glades, but mostly there is a whole lot of dead timber, downfall and too dense second growth forest. I've never encountered any wildlife while skiing there...although I am sure wildlife returns to the area when the snow recedes.

-Oppenents of the expansion claim that this area is old growth forest. There may be a few trees that evaded the 19th centurey saw, but almost all if it

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is a second growth forest in desperate need of management - full of downed timber and overly dense stands that will be victim to a devastating wildfire. If the expansion goes through, I sure hope the state allocates some money to thin stands of trees that are not designated for the ski slope. This area is one lightning storm away from being abolished by a devastating forest fire.

-Opponents also claim that the expansion will disrupt wildlife. This is nonsense. The biggest disruption to wildlife right now in winter is the snowmobiles the scream through the area. If the opponents are honest about their claims, they would put forth greater effort to limit snow mobile use on the access roads that circumnavigate the mountain.

-Additionally with regards to wildlife, any clearing that takes place for future ski runs will provide new meadow habitat for mammals - which thrive in open spaces, as access to forage is more plentiful. I've spent many summer weekends hiking at Schweitzer Ski Resort, where moose and wildlife are everywhere. These animals seem to prefer the open ski slopes, which is full of forage. If you've ever hiked around an alpine ski area in summer, you know to watch out, because you will likely scare up a moose.

Lastly, I want to say that this area is not pristine wilderness but is a recreational area, and was designated as such when donated to the state and designated as a PARK - not a wilderness. The Spokane area has plenty of undeveloped wilderness areas within reach for those seeking such places to recreate. But Mt Spokane State Park is not one of them - it is a multi-use recreational area that has been and will continue to be appropriately developed as such. I respect the opinions of the opponents in wanting to limit the development of this mountain, but the truth is, the mountain is already developed. The PASAE is a very limited development in scope, but will greatly enhance the alpine experience unique to Mt Spokane. Expansion will also contribute positively to the local economy and in my non-expert opinion, probably increase wildlife in the area (and no doubt huckleberry picking).

Please do the right thing for the future of Mt Spokane State Park and allow expansion of this wonderful recreational area.

My Father first brought me to Mt. Spokane in the 60's and taught all of his kids how to ski. I have since passed this tradition along. As a family we have had many great days and nights skiing at Mt. Spokane. We are looking forward to opening up some new terrain. This new area will allow a longer season and spread the skiers out.

Please allow this to happen. This is very important for Mt. Spokane to compete with surrounding area resorts.

alternative #4 is the right choice for mt Spokane and the community as this change will enhance both ken muench

I believe expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area would be beneficial to the region, both economically and in terms of recreational opportunities. Accordingly, I ask that you approve the following: For Part I, Alternative 4; and for Part II, Alternative 2 or 3.

Please allow Mt. Spokane Ski Area to expand. I ask that you approve the following for this project:

Land Classification: Alternative 4; and

Project Action: Alternative 2 or 3.

I support expansion of Mt. Spokane Ski Area. I ask that you approve Alternative 4 for the Land Classification and either Alternative 2 or Alternative 3 for the Project Action.

I have read the Combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the classification of land and ski area expansion for the Mt. Spokane PASEA, its proposed alternatives and appendices. The various reports on environmental impact, mitigation measures and cumulative effects appear to be

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well researched and thorough.

While it appears that some unfavorable environmental impact would result from an expansion of the Mt. Spokane's downhill skiing capacity, it also appears that this impact could be significantly lessened by the mitigation strategies put forth in the DEIS.

I believe that the greater public interest is best served by reclassifying the PASEA under Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area. I also believe the public in general would favor Project Action Alternative 2 (enhanced recreation) over the other alternatives.

It is worth noting that the DEIS did not mention the benefits that the proposed trails would provide with regard to forest fire containment. In the event of forest fire, each trail will provide a fire break that will significantly slow down a fire's progress, thus allowing fire crews extra time to contain and extinguish the fire. The wider a trail is made, the more effective the firebreak. Similar firebreaks are being cut on most of my 160 acres of forestland this month. Please take these facts into your consideration.

I would very much like to see an approval of an another chairlift as proposed. I have been on that side of Mount Spokane and do not feel it would not impact the environment in a bad way. There is a lot of open terrain there at this time. Thank you

I cannot believe it is taking so long for you to make a decision on what is a no brainer regarding the expansion of Mt. Spokane Ski Park.

I have sent 2 letters in the past, and just because you have a handful of selfish skiers that want to keep the hidden treasures of Mt. Spokane to themselves you have cost the owners of Mt. Spokane a lot of money and have deprived the bulk of normal skier's access to some great terrain.

I will patiently try to explain where I stand regarding the expansion plans.

First of all, I am a very active and avid skier, even at the age of 70 I still enjoy the deep powder and the groomed runs that skiers like myself enjoy in the great Northwest. I ski in British Columbia, Oregon, Western Washington and in my local community around Spokane, Washington and Mt. Spokane is the only resort out of over a dozen that has not been able to expand and add ski lifts to their wonderful mountain.....EVERY resort in the northwest, including Canada has been able to expand in the last few years with the exception of Mt. Spokane, just because there are select few of powerful people here in the Spokane community that are selfish and want to keep the backside, virgin powder skiing to themselves and are using the excuse of "old growth, natural habitat, owls, deer, elk, moose....on and on....total hogwash of not letting Mt. Spokane expand

I ski 70 days a year at over 10 resorts and have great times in all areas, but am very limited in accessing the best terrain on Mt. Spokane (the back side) unless, I want to work extra hard in doing a hike to get to chair 4 or in my case, actually getting lost during a snow storm in 2009 and hiking out for over 12 hours to safety and over 10 miles. This would never have happened, if the Park board would just use their common sense in approving this possible expansion.

Heavens, it was approved once and Mt. Spokane actually invested in buying a ski lift, then some selfish jerks stopped the expansion.

I would love to have the hidden gem of skiing the back country at Mt. Spokane for myself and or a few others like me , but I have to be reasonable and know if Mt. Spokane is to survive in this very competitive industry they need to expand and offer more terrain to the families and even the beginner skiers/snowboarder. I am not the future of Mt. Spokane, families are and newbies.

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Please take my comments as positive and let Mt. Spokane expand....sure I will miss some first track powder, but the bulk of the skier/snowboarder community will come out the better and Mt. Spokane can continue to be the true gem that we lucky Spokanites have in our back yard.

Be smart and approve this expansion for the better of the populace.

I would like to express my support of the Mt Spokane PASEA. We have been avid skiers frequenting Mt Spokane for the past 30 years and would welcome the addition of a new chair. The Park is so proximal to Spokane and provides both winter and summer recreation with in a 30 minute drive from downtown. A great plus for our tourism, and locals alike. The mountain has never been managed as competently as it is presently, with focused stewardship of the overall well being of the State Park which will enjoyed for years to come. Respectfully submitted, Val Taylor.

Please allow expansion of NE side of Mt Spokane for 7 additional chairlifts! There are so many skiers at Mt Spokane on weekends that it is dangerous for younger kids and beginners. Being so close to Spokane, it is a very popular recreational skiing area. We really need more runs to spread out the skiers more, then it would be more at par with other resorts like 49 degrees etc. Our family and friends would really appreciate the added recreational area. Thanks!

I do believe that the mt spokane state park expansion would be a great addition for the ski and snowboard community, as well as the entire spokane community. It wi help keep the mountain competitive with other ski resorts in the area. Thanks for reading my comment on the matter.

I am in favor of the Mt. Spokane chairlift construction and creation of additional ski runs. This area has historical ski usage that is reasonably being expanded upon. With proper mitigations in place, this development seems to meet the needs of public interest while meeting environment regulatory objectives and expected land usage.

I would like to support Alternative 4 on Part 1 - Land Classification. Thank you.

This mountain bike trail as I understand the proposal will be a downhill type trail with man made features (jumps, drops, berms etc). This proposal will need to be analyzed in the context of increased traffic on the road. This type of usage versus cross country mountain bike trails typically involves an individual ferrying bikes to the top via car or truck and then riding down. Creating a downhill mountain bike park type of trail is appropriately placed in ski areas as a summer use for a highly developed area (ski area) where there are lift facilities. To create the same use in this wild and natural State Park and the accompanied traffic on the Mt Constitution road is out of character and not consistent with the types of approved uses for state parks. In other words a trail which caters to bikes solely designed to go downhill is actually encouraging more mechanized vehicles in the park to transport bikes to the top. I would ask that the state not approve this use and merely allow for the trail to be maintained for hiking and cycling (seasonal only) but not allow for a man made downhill bike park trail use.

I support alternate # 4 in part 1. I strongly believe that expansion of the ski resort is in the best interest of all users of Mt. Spokane State Park. In this day and age of the cuts/ or lack of funding by the legislature and the Discovery Pass sells not able to make the park system self sufficient it is the duty of the Parks system to do everything they can to get more people in the parks not drive people away. I believe that the expansion will be a benefit to all parties and will not do harm to the environment. I also support alternate #3 in part 2.

I believe the ski resort has worked very hard to balance environmental stewardship with recreational priorities.

I support the recreation classification that would allow installation of a new chair with 7 new runs at Mt Spokane. My family and I have been skiers at Mt Spokane for many many years and know this would be a great addition to a great place to ski. We use the park year round by hiking and camping as well.

I support putting additional ski runs in at Mt. Spokane as proposed by Mt. Spokane Ski & Snowboard Park.

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I have used Mt. Spokane for over 40 years, in all seasons, and am now indoctrinating the third generation of my family to the gem called Mt. Spokane State Park. As proposed, I believe the new chairlift and ski trails will add significantly to the enjoyment of area skiers.

A natural forest area needs to burn occasionally to be truly natural. I don't think most fans of Mt. Spokane State Park want to look up at Mt. Spokane and see large columns of smoke. As I hike around Mt. Spokane I see a lot of prime fire fuel conditions. Any logging or clearing done for ski runs will help alleviate some of that hazard.

I hope the decision is made to allow the proposed expansion of Mt. Spokane Ski & Snowboard Park.

I have enjoyed skiing, x-c skiing, hiking and snow shoeing on Mt. Spokane since the early 1980's. It is indeed a special place and I wish to preserve it as such. That said, I support Alternative 4 of the Land Classification and Alternative 2 of the Recreation Classification. I believe Mt. Spokane Ski Area has been thorough and reasonable in researching and planning the proposed backside chairlift and runs. The expansion would benefit a great number of Spokane residents and visitors, enhancing the outdoor experience and spreading skiers out on the mountain which is a safety factor. Personally, have skied all my life and have ventured on the "backside" 3 or 4 times with an experienced companion. I would love to explore that area more as many of the good skiers already do but I am hesitant in the event of an accident and the difficulty of getting help there. Having a chairlift and runs would provide ski patrol if needed, keep folks from accidentally getting lost in the woods along with providing some challenging and scenic runs. If you look at Mt. Spokane today in the summer you will not see a scarred wasteland, even after all these years of heavy use. The woods are full of critters and the runs are covered with brush... incidentally from which I plan to pick huckleberries today. I did choose Alternative 2 in the Recreation Classification because my preference is minimal grading and thinning, keeping it as natural and unique as possible. It is my opinion that the options I support will provide the best outdoor experience to the greatest number of folks and it does so in a responsible manner.

It is recommended that the board "sit on the curb" and make a realistic decision to progress with the Mt Spokane project to expand the ski area. The amount of land submitted for development is minimal and would not affect or effect or diminish the of wild life in the area. In fact the minimal amount of clearing would only enhance the movement of game and birds with, in the spring, summer and fall months, low brush which provides growth of food for all species. Under art 1 if the plan item number 4 best suits the total of all. Part 2 number 2 also suits the enhancement of all concerned. We must remember to open our minds for the best of all concerned, wild life, economic growth, and the total overall enhancement of the Spokane community.

I am for the expansion of Mt Spokane's winter recreation plans.

The environmental impact is minimal compared to the improved recreation factor for the area.

The expansion is in the state park and can be monitored. History tells us that the environment is a high priority for Mt Spokane PASEA. Please consider Alternative 4 for the expansion.

Alternative 4- Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Thanks for entertaining my comments. Our whole family loves Mt Spokane and volunteers time and effort on the mountain

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The Mt Spokane ski area needs to be expanded. My family has enjoyed the ski area since moving here in 2007. It is the closest ski area to Spokane but it is limited in the variety and number of runs. My children enjoy the quick trip to the mountain but after a few visits complain about being "bored" due to the lack of runs. The resort does the best they can with limited space. The terrain park adds variety and Mt Spokane has the best grooming of the 4 closest ski areas.

Spokane is struggling economically. I am a small business owner. We hire new employees both locally and nationally. It would be helpful in recruiting top notch employees to be able to point to Mt Spokane as a great place to ski. An improved ski area would help draw new business to Spokane as well.

I'm all for protecting the environment. I would use less gas by not driving twice as far to Idaho to ski (to give my kids more variety). Plus it's revenue that goes to Idaho and not Washington. Today's kids are environmentally aware but environmentally inept. They are taught about the environment in school but few of them actually get outside and into nature. Who has a better appreciation and understanding of nature (and willing to protect and care for it) than people who actually spend time in the great outdoors. The more experiences kids have in the outdoors the more they will see its value. Expanding the Mt Spokane ski area will get more people on the mountain, cherishing its beauty.

I support to addition of a chairlift to the backside of Mt. Spokane and the addition of groomed runs therein.

I am a regular user of the mountain as a downhill skier, backcountry snowshoer, mountain biker and hiker. It is a wonderful asset for this community and I strongly support the increase in the ski area as a prudent and reasonable investment using an environmentally friendly approach.

Please vote to proceed with this permitting process so we can get the ski lift installed, the runs built, and the fire load reduced.

Please vote to allow Mt. Spokane 2000 to install chair 6 at Mt. Spokane.

Doing so will increase the skiing experience as well as the skiing safety on the mountain.

1. The new chair will provide an easier method for people presently finding themselves skiing in the PASEA by accident, to return to the front side of the mountain.
2. Developing the PASEA will make the PASEA area more skiing safe in that presently the area has much blow down timber, hanging timber, and roots which can interfere with skiing.
3. With a chair serving the PASEA, the area will be regularly served by the Ski Patrol, which is not the case now.
4. A chair lift in the PASEA will also reduce the traffic flow of skiers (beginning to advanced level) on the Cat Track returning to Lodge 1 and Lodge 2 from the north and northwest side of the mountain.

Allowing Mt. Spokane 2000 to develop the PASEA will make the area a much healthier forest, as well as removing a great deal of fuel for forest fires. Certainly we should all be aware of the fire danger in our state.

Again please choose to allow Mt. Spokane 2000 to develop the PASEA for skiing by adding chair 6.

I support the expansion of the ski resort including a new lift in the 279 acres mentioned. This area represents less than 1 % of the entire park yet provides stunning views from the Palouse to the Selkirk Ridge near Sandpoint Idaho.

With some of the timber thicket removed from this area; hikers, backcountry skiers and downhill ones will be able to see Nature in all her glory in

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additional westerly and northwesterly directions which are currently hard to view.

Wildlife will flourish in this area with more grazing in the newly created glades for elk, deer and bear on the grasses and additional huckleberries. Less fire potential will also be a benefit.

As a lifelong resident of Spokane, I have enjoyed Mount Spokane in all seasons for 54 years. Lets give our kids more reasons to hike, bike, snowshoe and downhill ski by opening up the mountain a little bit more. Healthy people make a healthy society so lets keep the Ski Resort viable in this Win-Win reasonable and limited expansion!

I am totally for expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski area. As a Spokane resident, I have many options to ski at many resorts and spend my money with them as well. Mt. Spokane is by far the most convenient ski area for Spokane residents. But as a skier with over 45 years of experience, it is my opinion that Mt. Spokane is the least attractive of all the ski hills in our area. The reason is lack of good terrain and overcrowding of chairlifts. If Mt. Spokane is not allowed to expand, I really feel it will be the "kiss of death"; for the resort over the next ten to fifteen years. Other resorts will continue to expand and Mt. Spokane will be stuck in the 70's.

Also, I might add, there is probably a ratio of at least 200:1 of downhill skiers who would appreciate this expansion versus back country skiers and snow shoers who would oppose it. Seems like a "no-brainer" to me.

Please decide on alternative 2 or 3, for maintaining a natural forest area of the land in question at Mt. Spokane. Preserving as much undisturbed land for flora and fauna should be our main goal as our city and surrounding area become increasingly developed, rather than increased recreational opportunities.

I once again want to urge the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land in question proposed for expansion at Mt. Spokane as Recreation Recreation Resource Area or Recreation and Natural Forest Area.

As a life long skier at Mt. Spokane I feel it is imperative for the resort to continue to update facilities and maximize the land available for skiing and snowboarding on the mountain. Failure to do this may result in the area losing people and revenue to other resorts. This could be devastating for the future of Mt. Spokane.

I'm very much concerned about the environment and animals in the park, but don't feel like adding a chair lift and clearing some ground will have much of an effect on them as there are already 5 chairlifts there. In fact increased revenue may end up helping to maintain the areas natural resources.

I dont like the idea of special interest groups deciding how this land should be used and continuing to cost the area and perhaps users of the area more and more money to defend law suits. The land belongs to all the citizens of the state, not just a small group of people.

I believe that Alternative #4 provides for the best public use of Mount Spokane, and will serve the overall needs of all users, while maintaining the integrity of the State Park.

WE SUPPORT THE MT SPOKANE SKI AREA EXPANSION !

My wife and I are over 70, retired and members of Prime Timers (PT) at Mt Spokane. On Wednesday afternoons (PT days) we see High School children arrive to ski and snowboard. I have only been hit and knocked over once by a careless 13 year old snowboarder, who blindly came out of the woods onto the trail I was skiing. We need more space as the skiing population increases.

But I also have always great concern for the environment. I worked for the Forest Service during summers after graduating from Gonzaga Prep,

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which influenced my views of sustainability, environment and design. As an Architect I was employed by, and became a partner in, a now-closed firm named Environmental Concern Inc. (ECI) a firm name which still exists in Anchorage, AK, ECI Hyer. From an environmental point of view, Mt Spokane is the right place to expand. It is close to a major urban area, minimizing driving time and related energy concerns. We're not going to stop human outdoor recreation, so expanding opportunities near population centers makes good environmental sense.

As an Architectural student I had a great interest in energy concerns, which continued to develop as a professional before Green and LEED were buzz words, and which are now enforceable by evolving jurisdictional requirements. But the greatest energy conserving criteria (although not enforced adequately) is still preserving existing structures. Redeveloping and expanding what exists may not always make the most economical sense, but normally makes the most environmental sense.

So the place to improve and expand is Mt Spokane.

I am in favor of expanding the current Mt. Spokane ski area to include the 800 acres adding a lift and 7 runs.

I have looked over the PAGES of reports on the flora, fauna, maps, impact. So much research and evaluation for this project that has received favor and then the rug is pulled out from the project. Mt. Spokane is a local attraction for the community and beyond. We ski, hike and bike the area during all of the seasons and enjoy having such an exceptional park so close to Spokane.

I see the addition of skiable acres a plus for the community, the mountain and the state parks. We currently ski that backside and ski out at chair 4. Having a lift would open that area for so many more to enjoy the deeper, crisper snow and perhaps extend the season.

I am in favor of the Mt. Spokane chairlift construction and creation of additional ski runs. This area has historical ski usage that is reasonably being expanded upon. With proper mitigations in place, this development seems to meet the needs of public interest while meeting environment regulatory objectives and expected land usage.

For the amount of people Mt Spokane serves during the winter, the mountain needs to be expanded. At peak times I sometimes look to other mountains for winter sports. I support Land Classification: Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Thank you for your time,

I am fully in favor of installation of the new lift and cutting 7 new runs at Mt Spokane. We are so fortunate to have a ski area so close to Spokane, let's make it as good as it can be. 800 acres is literally nothing in the scope of how much forest we have within 60 miles of the Spokane area. I do not see how developing the additional 800 acres will make any difference. They won't be clear cutting it, they will just thin and cut some runs. Please allow the concession holder to proceed with the master plan. Thank you.

I'm a 42 year expert level skier that has been skiing at Mt Spokane since 1980 and have been waiting and waiting for some much needed improvements to happen, and I'm not referring to the bathrooms.

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I have a family of six people that have had season passes for as long as I can remember but it gets harder every year when other hills make improvements for the better of the sport and the state park won't allow anything to change at Mt Spokane.

The new expansion on the backside will provide more terrain to spread the skiers around, better quality of snow, and attract other skiers from surrounding areas.

Sitting back and letting the world pass by without striving for improvements is a silly notion in today's world, especially when it comes to sporting activities.

Let the new expansion take place so we can enjoy even more of what my family loves to do!

I would like to support Alternative 4 for this expansion. As an outdoors person, I firmly believe that this will not have negative impacts.

I think it would be great for Mt. Spokane to be able to expand. What a great way to see our national forest in winter, by skiing through them.

I am also writing in support of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land as "Recreation"; and allow for the proposed ski lift and ski runs.

Allowing for the ski area combines the best of what Mt Spokane has to offer; recreational and natural value.

Development of the Northwest side of Mt. Spokane will be good for the local economy, allowing more skiers to enjoy the mountain. I don't believe the development, if done properly, would not be environmentally damaging. We look forward to an expanded Mt. Spokane.

I am eighty years old and have had the privilege and pleasure of skiing Mt. Spokane since 1946. I have witnessed several operators for the park in those years. I am now witnessing the management organization of the Mt. Spokane ski and snowboard area committed to preserving our natural areas. Over the past decade they have worked tirelessly to balance environmental stewardship with recreational priorities. I can only imagine the cost and time devoted to make sure every development process meets with state and parks codes. I therefore ask you to recommend:

Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I choose alternative #1 - do not make changes to the forested land. There are other means of increasing recreation using the land currently held for that purpose.

At age 48, I've been skiing Mt. Spokane for over 35 years, but no longer spend much time there. This season, I'll be skiing elsewhere even though Mt. Spokane is closest. I've chosen to go elsewhere because Mt. Spokane is crowded, and the lift lines can be long. I enjoy Mt. Spokane in the off-season, and enjoy the woods and the trails.

The so-called old growth forest at Mt. Spokane isn't much different than most other forests relatively close to an urban area. A nice shady area to walk (and ski through for those of us who can), is what the old-growth forest is, and in it I see roads, buildings, and other things that remind me that I'm not in the wilderness. In fact, the entire area being considered is continually skied on by the backcountry-type skiers, and goes to show how skiing, or snowboarding itself does not damage forest, unlike bike riding. Skiers ride on layers of snow - and when spring arrives, there's virtually no evidence of any skiing, snowboarding. Mt. Spokane's snowshoeing and cross-country skiing crowd is far more guilty of leaving behind unpleasant spring-time surprises.

I do appreciate the problem with cutting down forest to make way for the chairlift and trails, but this is hardly detrimental to the forest - the runways in the summer are sometimes the healthiest parts of the ecosystem! The ugliest part of the plan is the lift itself - and that's the unfortunate price to pay for a better park. We, the active users, want to use Mt. Spokane State Park for what it's worth - not to view photographs and gesture angrily from an

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armchair about fallen trees.

If and when Mt. Spokane begins to upgrade their terrain, I'll bring my family up for skiing - but until then, we'll treat Mt. Spokane as a place of last resort. The back side has often been the missing ingredient for great skiing on days sporting otherwise poor conditions, but unfortunately cannot be enjoyed by all.

Please OK the back side expansion of recreational use for the Spokane 2000 Club. Previously the land was donated for recreational use. Please OK the ski lift. Thank you Dieter Ulrich

I support the Proposed action in the Mount Spokane PASEA Land Classification project currently going through SEPA.

I support Alternative Number 4 of Part 1 and Alternative Number 2 of Part 2.

As far as a comment goes... I ski the backside as much as possible, its some of the best skiing on the mountain. I downhill mountain bike and have ridden horses on the mountain. I own property adjacent to the ski area. I think the best way to convince someone about the reality of the situation in regards to the PASEA expansion is to tell a quick story.

When my daughter was about 4 she was a good skier. We got off chair 2 and turned right to go to Northwest Passage. She likes to ski the trees. She asked me if she could ski the trees on the left of the ski run, I said sure because I felt like I could keep up with her. She being much smaller than am was able to get ahead of me when I ran into a small tree. I lost her. I have been skiing on Mt. Spokane for the last 30 years and know the Mt. very well. I know that if my daughter continued to the left she would end up on the backside. That section of the backside is so packed with downed trees and brush that it's nearly impassable. I remembered one story in vivid detail as a screamed for my "lost" daughter" It was the little girl who got stuck in a creek and almost froze to death before Mt. Staff and Ski Patrols saved her life. My daughter turned right instead of left and was later located by her hysterical father.

What I want to make sure you understand is that this kind of situation happens. It happens quickly and it happens to experienced skiers and non experienced skiers. The Mt Spokane staff and ski patrollers have told you what they need to do to make the area a reasonably safe place for the public. If you choose to disregard what they are saying the next lost or god forbid dead skier they find will be at least in some part your responsibility.

The Staff at Mt Spokane are some of the best people I know and I trust and respect them. Please help our community and allow them to make Mt. Spokane a better place.

I have skied at Mt Spokane for several years and I agree with the mountains decision to expand the area and install a new lift on the back side of the mountain. Over the years the mountain has continued to grow and with its close proximity to Spokane it is an attractive destination. Expanding the ski are allows the mountain to meet these needs and will allow Mt Spokane to remain competitive with other local mountains.

I support Land Classification Alternative 4 as a necessary element to the "Mt. Spokane Ski Area Expansion"; project which I believe benefits all snow-sports enthusiasts throughout the Inland Northwest.

I support Project Action Alternative 3 as a necessary element of the "Mt. Spokane Ski Area Expansion" project, which I believe will benefit all snow-sports enthusiasts throughout the Inland Northwest.

I support the overall expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area, as well as all supporting projects necessary to move this project forward. I believe the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area stands to benefit all snow-sports enthusiasts throughout the Inland Northwest, and will be beneficial in

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attracting tourism (and more money) for all surrounding counties.

While the comment that the environment might or is it will be adversely affected if another ski lift and trails are created, it is unclear to me just how these features in the designated area would do unmitigated harm. Is it 10% of the park land is for skiers who congregate during the winter months of snow? Hm.

I would think this kind of expansion would cause minimal problems for plants, animals, or people.

My own long range hope is that a Ski Lodge could be included in new designs so folks could ski several days in a row without having to travel up and down the mountain. Such an accommodation would reduce gas emissions and enhance employment, it would appear.

I am writing today about the Mt Spokane PASEA. To summarize my position I am in support of Land Classification Alternative 4 and Project Action Alternative 3. I have arrived at my conclusion after enjoying over a decade of hiking, mountain biking and backcountry skiing (using climbing skins and telemark skis). I have also enjoyed lift assisted skiing at Mt Spokane with my children when they were younger, and they now join me in hiking up into this area as backcountry skiers themselves.

Based on my first-hand experience with the proposed expansion area through all four seasons I was very surprised to find the Lands Council arguing that this area was old growth forest, calling it "the last stand of old growth forest in Spokane County." It is clear from the most recent EIS that the preceding assertion is not true. Additionally, the area is visited by bicyclists in the summer and snowmobilers in the winter, so the Lands Council representing this as some sort of wilderness is inaccurate. Since the most recent EIS does not match the Lands Council assertions they are planning to challenge the very EIS that they requested. It is apparent, even to lovers of the forest that the Lands Council has little to no allegiance to facts in this matter.

Mt Spokane 2000 and the management of Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park have actively cooperated with every step of the planning process. Additionally, Mt Spokane 2000 is a non-profit organization and thousands of families enjoy learning to ski at Mt Spokane.

As a backcountry skier who uses the area I can assert that I have never had any user conflicts with any skier or snowboarder coming from Mt Spokane. Additionally, the amount of land that is proposed for a chairlift and groomed trails is a very small fraction of that side of Mt Spokane. Project Action Alternative 3 successfully minimizes the impact of the proposed ski area expansion.

Since it is probably unusual for someone who prefers self-propelled activities to support a ski area expansion I want you to know that my motivation comes from three sources: (1) My first-hand experience with the area tells me the impacts will be minimal and the greater good will be served by the expansion; (2) Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park has been a consistently good steward of the land; and (3) The Lands Council has been consistently disingenuous, some might go so far as to suggest duplicitous, in their approach to this matter and such behavior should not be reinforced.

I ask you to consider the greater good of the thousands of families who visit Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park as more compelling the machinations of the Lands Council as you decide to implement Land Classification Alternative 4 and Project Action Alternative 3 in the Mt Spokane PASEA.

I believe that the Non-profit ownership group at Mt. Spokane can sensitively and responsibly expand the public skiing area without damaging the existing ecosystem. Wildlife continues to inhabit the existing ski area, which still contains old growth forest as well. People frequently ski out of

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bounds into the area in question, and at times need to be rescued at taxpayer expense. Developing a limited area on the backside will actually improve safety and reduce congestion for current skiers by spreading them out. Mt. Spokane currently has the infrastructure to support and maintain this limited expansion, which will also improve its ability to compete with private ski resorts in the area.

I am in favor of Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area (allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane).

This alternative provides recreation and access to forest areas for the greatest number of Washington State citizens.

I have lived at the base of Mt.Spokane since the early eighties and skied on the mountain even longer.

Since the entire ski area only comprises about ten percent of the park, I see no problem with adding a few hundred acres for a ski area expansion. This project has had opposition from a small number of environmental folks for a long time and it is time to let the expansion go forward without more political garbage!

This park is used very little during the non-ski season. I have seen weekends with large events bring in a lot of folks but general hikers,bikers and such are normally small numbers. The alpine ski area/ use is located in a controlled area. The potential for mostly quiet during the non-ski season months for the proposed addition is likely.

Please be responsible and realize this small expansion WILL NOT create an adverse impact on the environment!

Just repeating that line does not make it so!

It is time to allow the ski area expansion to go forward instead of coming up with more reasons to deny Washington State citizens the right to an improved ski area. Please allow whatever classification for the land that is needed.

I would like submit my support of option #4 allowing the installation of the new chair lift. Mt. SPOKANE serves the Spokane area as one of its greatest opportunities for family volunteering and recreation.

Please move forward with the "backside"; expansion on Mount Spokane for the good of society. Mt Spokane is an excellent recreation facility for everyone throughout the year. The expansion plan incorporates all of the necessary environmental stewardship requirements. The wild life will adapt as it has since Lewis and Clark passed through this area over 200 years ago.

I hike through the Selkirk Mountains quite often. No where does snow skiing leave a damaging impact on the environment.

The land should be classified as recreational as it is currently being used.

I support Mt. Spokane's efforts to expand the ski runs. I believe that expanding can be done with respect to multiple users and to the environment. I feel that Mt. Spokane skiing has respectfully and conscientiously operated the mountain and proved that they are dedicated and want to ensure a long future for outdoor enthusiasts. I also feel that with cuts in park funding...that expanding the ski area will bring more people and more revenue to the mountain. I go to the park in the summer for hiking and biking. I go to the park in the winter for skiing and snow shoeing. I sincerely feel that expanding the ski area would be beneficial for skiers, snowboarders, outdoor enthusiasts...and bring financial benefits also. I feel that we can co-exist with the environment.

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My family and I (mom, dad and boy 12 and girl 10) are deeply involved with Mt Spokane both when it comes to downhill skiing as well as nordic skiing, snowshoeing and uphill/backcountry skiing. We just love all the different winter activities the mountain offers so close to town and we would like to see the mountain prosper and develop for the future. While we are always concerned about any degrading of natural landscapes, we feel that Mt Spokane State Park, through the many partnerships it has created together with good management has shown that it can strike the right balance between access and preservation. This is what makes the park unique. We therefor support the expansion of the alpine area as follows;

Part 1: Alternative 4

Part 2: Alternative 3

Please add the chair and expand the skiing at Mount Spokane.

When I decided to move to Spokane in 1973 I knew that, unlike New Jersey, I would be facing snowy winters. My first year of teaching at Whitworth University, therefore, included a class in downhill skiing. Mount Spokane has been an important part of my life ever since. I taught my three children, and eight grandchildren, to ski. Some in my family have gained the level of ability to ski the area in question without the new chair, but I would like to ski that area with all of them.

I know that there is concern for endangered species, but as a 76 year old man I feel I am part of the endangered group of old skiers. I hate to see old people skip Mt. Spokane for other ski areas, and even more seriously skip town for life in Arizona or California. I can make it from my house to the top of chair one in about an hour. For over 40 years this has been a part of my habitat. I have volunteered to work on trails in the summer and have cared deeply for this part of my world. I have spent many many hours in that environment, and I want to enjoy it even more than I have until this point. It is a great gift to my family and I would love to enjoy, and live in, the parts of the mountain that have been off limits to me until this point in time.

I have been to a number of hearings about this park expansion, and have seen great enthusiasm for this development. The people who want this development are people who have spent much of their life on that mountain. They love it and do not want it destroyed in any way. I hate to see people who truly care for the mountain and its development be outmaneuvered by people who have very little ownership and very little intimate relationship to Mount Spokane.

I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THE EXPANSION PROJECT WITH MT SPOKANE. MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS REALLY LOOK FORWARD TO ANY EXPANSION TO OUR LOCAL SKI MOUNTAIN. THANK YOU FOR THIS CONSIDERATION.

As a resident and active park user I support the ski area expansion.

Having been a long time user of the park in numerous capacities, I support the expansion of the ski area. The change to natural forest is unnecessarily restrictive.

As a resident and active user of the park, I support the ski area expansion.

I oppose the ski area adding land. There is important habitat and old growth forests that need protection. Once they are gone it will be forever. With global warming the chances of lower snowfall is a very real prospect. To lose wild spaces for recreation that may come to a halt in coming years seems very bad policy.

My husband and children and I have been skiing at Mt Spokane for over 40 years. I think it is extremely important that we maintain and improve the skiing. It is our beloved Spokane's mountain! I think we should keep the revenue of the skiers in Washington and not Idaho. We need to expand the ski area. We also go up to Mt. Spokane in the summer and pick huckleberries and the meadows seem very healthy and the huckleberries are great. I don't think a ski area is a great detriment to the environment Let us enjoy the great outdoors and not have to drive 2 hrs to Idaho.

I fully support the expansion of the PASEA at Mt. Spokane. The expansion of the recreation area will allow this community asset to flourish further and keep the ski area competing with the other local mountains that have all taken measures to expand and grow in the past decade.

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As both a guest of the ski area, as well as a hiker/biker in the rest of the state park, I do not see this expansion as having a negative impact on the rest of the environment.

Allowing the expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski area is a positive for all involved.

This is the best ski area in the region in terms of terrain and convenience to the public, and though not grown like Schweitzer, it has the potential to be a far greater economic contributor to the area if the expansion is allowed. Both in ticket sales and in destination day facilities.

Though not included in the current ski area, the acreage in question is already heavily used by “out of bounds” skiers, and has been for generations. Officially opening this area would make it much safer, eliminating potentially dangerous situations of lost skiers and out-of-area searches that occasionally happen now.

Mt. Spokane has always been a good shepherd of the area and the land, even with the decrease in revenues since the heyday of skiing in the 1970s. A dedicated body of management and skiers has maintained one of the most family friendly areas anywhere.

The Mt. Spokane volunteer Ski Patrol is one of the most highly regarded in North America, and their annual Ski Swap, the largest event of its kind anywhere. This is because of dedication and a genuine care for the mountain.

The money has been spent for the chairlift, and it would be an awful thing to do to not allow it to be installed.

As to the environment, please recall that the original Ski Area was actually located on the back side of the mountain, with trails now overgrown, but still skied in the deepest snow times of the year by adventurous skiers.

These old trails from the 1940s-1960s are testimony to the ability of nature to heal itself. In fact, I doubt most people could even locate them during the summer...but they exist, and I have skied them since the late 1970s, coming out below Chair 4 on the trail that leads to Blanchard, ID.

While opening the back of the mountain will take away the “secret” powder stashes we old-timer hate to disclose, it will result in a better mountain for everyone. There will still be plenty of hidden glades below the area for those of us who know the land and don’t mind hiking back up to the ski area!

Please allow the expansion now, when the time is right. If we don’t, we limit the benefit of this great resource to the citizens for whom the Park System exists for in the first place, and also the additional revenue of all types that cannot come to fruition without making Mt. Spokane into a regional destination resort.

The environmental impact is negligible, but the recreational, fiscal, and political impact is great. In a time where government has a reputation for being heavy-handed and beholden to the lunatic fringe rather than the average citizens, this is a great opportunity to tell the Mt. Spokane group: “Proceed, and show us you can do it right.” I believe they can, and that the result will be a fine example of public-private cooperation with benefits that exceed expectations.

Then, when it’s raining and miserable in Olympia, and the snow at Crystal Mountain is like wet concrete, come ski with us and see what it feels like

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to step back in time and experience what you remember from your childhood: a fun, safe, clean mountain where families can afford to go and always have a great time.

With the added terrain, Mt. Spokane still won't have the vertical of some other areas, but it won't have lift lines, and the terrain already rivals giants...like a miniature Sun Valley. Yes, it's our little "secret" here in Spokane, and with the extra capacity we hope to gain, there will be room for more to share in our good fortune to have such a gem only 20 minutes from town.

The only reasonable answer is a resounding YES!!! Thanks so much for reading my input!

No more habitat destruction! No more development! Our wildlife have already lost far too much of their habitat, which is why so many species are endangered. Restrict mountain bikes and other vehicles to paved roads only! Global warming/climate change requires that all species have the ability to move northward, without barriers such as human developments. That requires wildlife corridors that are not developed. All paved roads should have underpasses and overpasses for the wildlife to cross to the other side at will.

I'm a member of Mt. Spokane Prime Timers ski club. I support the expansion of Mt. Spokane ski hill. Since I do live close to the ski hill, I have a ski pass which makes it convenient for me to go when I want. Usually I ski by myself and find that I do get bored on the same runs for intermediate skiers. I am loyal to my mountain so I do not visit other ski areas very often but would definitely want more runs for Mt. Spokane. Thank you,

If any of you have actually walked the area in question you have seen the dead, diseased and downed timber. It's a fire storm waiting to happen. Expansion of the ski area will take care of the problem and insure the health of the area. We do not want Mt Spokane to be a bald nob devastated by fire.

Additionally, the safety of the skiing public is at stake. Many use this currently unpatrolled area. With expansion, the area will be patrolled, enhancing both safety and the skier's outdoor experience.

[I tried to comment earlier, but may accidentally have sent before I was done. If you received that one, kindly replace it with this one.]

I unreservedly support the proposed expansion of Mt. Spokane's ski area. Thus, I support whichever alternative under consideration will best serve the purpose of expanding the ski area to make more terrain available to skiers.

I am an environmentalist. I love the outdoors, the trees, and the creatures that inhabit the outdoors. I also love people, and I believe that people's lives are enriched by being connected to the outdoors in meaningful ways -- and that people's appreciation and support for the environment are increased by opportunities to be connected. Skiing is a wonderful way for people of all kinds to be connected meaningfully to their natural environment. And I do mean "all kinds" -- it pleases me no end, when skiing at Mt. Spokane, to see blind skiers, and disabled skiers as well as numerous people like me who see age forty dimly in the rear-view mirror. None of us are ever going into the back-country; you might as well fence it off. And that is no way to run a park.

Wild lands have their place. But the intent, and the very nature of wildlands is to exclude most people. I noticed at the presentations relating to PASEA that many of those supporting a very restrictive designation for the land are in their twenties, in outstanding physical shape and appear to represent the view that THEY should have access to the backcountry, but maybe others should not. Others appear to represent the view simply that no one at all should have access to the land, and that it should be reserved exclusively for the use of the wild creatures that live there. I respectfully submit that neither is an appropriate point of view for public park lands, especially not these lands given their unique history. Public park lands

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should not be the exclusive preserve of the young, athletic outdoorsmen, nor should people be excluded.

Parks serve an essential need for the human species, to connect people to their natural environment, and few parks do so more beautifully than ski areas. Though it is a good thing that there are areas, far from ready access by urban people that are reserved for animals, this land is park land, and should be open for people to use. The history of the land, or most of it at any rate, is that it was donated by owners who held it for logging but wanted to see it used for skiing, a sport to which they were devoted. Opponents of expansion of the ski hill are quick to argue that the donors did not put any qualifying language in their deed of gift specifying that the land was to be used for skiing, but that is a legalistic hagggle: there WAS no environmental movement as we now know it at the time, and the donors were known to be ski enthusiasts. And they gave their land to the State Parks Department, at a time when no one would have imagined that a serious argument could be made that a State Park should be closed to the people whose park it is.

The proposals have been studied, and mitigation has been provided for any predictable adverse impact on natural species living in the area. The law also says that environmental studies must also consider the human impacts of decisions: I respectfully submit that both nature and people are best served by letting people use this park to ski in. Thank you.

My Name is Chris White and I am a volunteer Ski Patroller at Mt. Spokane. Throughout the many years of public comment and testimony the Commission has heard a lot of testimony regarding public safety and the need to manage the entire concession area in a consistent manner. I did not see this reflected or described adequately in the DEIS. Shouldn't decision makers be given a full disclosure document?

There are serious consequences to ignoring the safety issues on the mountain. I don't want to dramatize this, but here is a real life scenario:

- Commission choses Alternatives 1, 2, or 3
- A ten year old sees many people duck the boundary ropes and skiing the PASEA. She follows the tracks off of Gold Cross
- She knows the mountain fairly well and thinks that if she stays high she will come out on Chair 4
- She gets lost, doesn't have a cellphone.
- Her parents report her missing at 3:45pm, but they do not believe she would go out of bounds
- She gets stuck in a deep ravine, takes her skis off and falls through the ice bridge and into the stream cavern and is not found until spring
- Parents hire an attorney, and the attorney finds that the concessionaire and the vast majority of public had spent over a decade trying to get approval to address this overwhelming safety issue.

This is just one of many things that can happen if the Commission does not make the thoughtful decision to adopt Alternative 4. Please give the Patrol the tools it needs to insure public safety.

As a frequent summer and winter user of Mt Spokane State park, I urge you to go with Alternative #4 and allow the expansion of the alpine ski area on Mt Spokane. The benefits outweigh any impacts.

Please approve the land classification for alternative 4. Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I have taught my two children to ski at Mt. Spokane. Other than a huckleberry picking trip, I like most do not use the park much in the other seasons. The majority of people in Spokane overwhelmingly support this. It has been sad to see so much time and money expended and in my view wasted

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as the review and approval process was hijacked by leadership at the Lands Council and their attorney Rachel Pascal Osborne.

Mt. Spokane needs to adapt to climate change, shorter seasons and the need to move intermediate skiers out of congested zones. As a former instructor in the adaptive ski program and a current instructor with the Powderhounds (developmentally disabled) at Mt. Spokane, i speak for the need to bring more intermediate terrain to people who have very limited opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, I think my comments are on their behalf as well my own.

With respect to the Project Action, i strongly encourage the adoption of alternative 2.

Part 2 Project Action

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing

Let the needs of the many who love to recreate at Mt. Spokane in the winter at the alpine ski area , outweigh the few who have tried to hijack the true friends of Mt. Spokane. The Lands Council and their proxy organizations do not represent the true desires and needs of the community.

I support Alternative 4. The Ski area needs the room to expand in order to serve current and future customers.

I am in support of expanding Mt Spokane

Please classify this area as Recreational so skiers can access the terrain. Mt Spokane is this communities local mountain.

In favor of the expansion

I'd love to see the Mt. Spokane expansion happen! I grew up ski racing at Mt Spokane. Last winter my children took ski lessons at Mt. Spokane. That's three generations! I'd like to see Mt. Spokane become more competitive with all the other neighboring ski resorts. Silver Mt. Resort is closer for us, but I drag the family to Mt. Spokane. Once my children realize there's another ski hill closer and has good runs, our money might move to Idaho! Mt. Spokane is a wonderful place to ski! They've done a great job improving what they can! Please let it expand. It's much needed. Much over due.

My friends and I have been ecstatic about the backside expansion for the past... I'm not sure how many years! I think it's time to get kicking! It is a necessary requirement if the mountain wants to compete with other local mountains, and adding the new terrain will not only allow more space, but will bring in people that enjoy back country, or alpine skiing that can (currently) only get that from Schweitzer or Lookout, etc. Please consider the ski/snowboard folk of the Pacific Northwest! Thanks, Austin Burrowes

Season ticket holder at Mt Spokane. Great benefit to the community. I support the expansion because of the community benefit of the ski hill and my belief that the expansion can be done in a responsible way. Thanks.

I support the expansion of the Mt Spokane ski area for a number of reasons:

- 1) Managed ski trails will be a great help in protecting the mountains aging forests. Opening green belts on the mountain will help suppress fire situations and provide easier access in time of emergencies.
- 2) The Spokane area has this natural gem right at our back door if we choose to develop and use it. The quality of life in the area is greatly enhanced by the mountain that is close enough so that families can recreate together.
- 3)It would be a great economy booster to reduce the congestion that we currently are experiencing at the area.
- 4) I live in the Nine Mile area and enjoy taking family and friends to Mt Spokane but it really needs to have more ski-able acres.
- 5) Please consider all the pluses that far out weigh any negatives associated with the proposed expansion of Mt Spokane ski area.

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I'm in favor of the recreational designation so the backside expansion can move forward.

I have owned property and lived in the foothills of Mt Spokane for thirty eight years. I have taught my children to ski on Mt Spokane and I am now teaching my grand children to ski on Mt Spokane. I want to add a strong voice of support for the future and development of the Mt Spokane ski area. I strongly recommend that you approve Part 1 alternative 4 and Part 2 alternative 2.

The staff at Mt Spokane has worked for several years to address the recreational and family needs of the public that enjoy the great outdoor opportunities the area has to offer as well as addressing the concerns of environmental organizations. The staff has proposed a plan that will enhance and add to the unique experience of Mt Spokane to the ever increasing number of people that enjoy skiing and snow broading on Mt Spokane. The proposed plan has been developed through a long and laborious process of listening to many concerns, pro and con.

The proposed plan of Part 1 alternative 4 and Part 2 alternative 2 is the best plan for the safety and enjoyment of the public and the facilities. I have skied the PASEA area for a number of years. The area has many hazards to the skiing public and is a lighting strike away from a huge fire. The proposed plan would give the public the opportunity to enjoy the PASEA in a much safer environment. Allowing ski patrol personnel and equipment greater access to serve the public on ski runs that would be developed with the public's safety in mind. The proposed plan would also allow for some clearing of many fire hazards that are truely needed to help portect the area from natural disaster.

This project has been considered and debated for sometime now. The PASEA was intended to be used for recreational skiing enjoyment. It is time to finally approve this project plan. I understand the environmental concerns that have been expressed. How many have been where I have been? The proposed plan of Part 1 alternative 4 and Part 2 alternative 2 will have very little impact on the environment of Mt Spokane's PASEA. The public's safe enjoyment of this area will last a life time for many, many famlies and people.

I wish for the expansion to occur. But for the area involved to be thinned of trees only. Beyond the path that must be cut for the lift towers and emergency snowmobiles to be cut, I wish the area only to be thinned of trees so that one may ski but not remove excessive amounts of trees.

The trees should be cut so that they fall down slope as to not be a danger to recreational skiers/boarders, but left for ground cover and habitat for animals.

The area is filled with users already, but controlled expansion is necessary.

I recently ended my term as a member of Mt. Spokane 2000. Last winter and spring we understood that the State Parks Commission was holding its; fall meeting in Spokane on Nov. 2 in Spokane and that a decision on the Mt. Spokane PASEA would be made at that time.

Now we learn that the comment period on the EIS has been extended until the end of September. The planning and due diligence on this expansion has been underway for over 10 year. The EIS addresses, I believe, the final two major aspects of the plan land classification and the project action plan. These two areas have been revised several times to reflect the priorities expressed by the community with the project reduced in size and great care used to minimize the environmental impact.

I am in favor of Alternative #4, it allows for recreational enhancements, protects natural areas protects 90% of the forest in the expansion area and the recreational classification will provide greater skiable access to terrain suited for the intermediate skiing and boarding public.

Recommend that the Commission support this land classification request for Recreational Use as the expansion will benefit the public, the Spokane

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area and the state park system.

We are most definitely in support of Alternative 4 of Part 1-Land Classification for the Mt Spokane PASEA - as well as in support of either Alternative 2 or 3 of the Part 2-Project Action.

I learned to ski at Mt Spokane 42 years ago, spent most of my skiing life at another mountain & was absent from the sport for a number of years. When my son turned 7 - I told myself that I needed to get back on my skis and get him on a pair, too! Living in Spokane, Mt. Spokane was the obvious choice; their Ski School had a great reputation. He has taken multiple lessons from the talented Ski School instructors and we're planning on another 6-week session this season. We love the family friendly atmosphere and have appreciated the improvements that have been made over the years. That being said - they need new terrain. Having grown up skiing at a different mountain – it's hard not to compare, yet knowing the comparison isn't really fair since this is a State Park - but they need new terrain. When I heard of the possibility of a new chairnew terrain - I was thrilled. We've begun to make Mt. Spokane our winter Saturday habit. It's a great family sport and a great way to get exercise in the winter. Please help Mt. Spokane continue to improve... not only to attract new families to the sport - - but to keep the families that are there!

Why is our State Park being turned into a ski resort? This proposal will wipe out the primary recreational area on the upper north side of the mountain--several entire trail systems will be erased, huckleberry gathering areas will be denuded, historic sites affected, and old growth forest gone. Whose lame idea was it MONETIZE PARKS???? This will change the whole park from a diverse recreational destination to a terrascaped ski resort for the elite. Only the rich can afford to ski. This is a TERRIBLE IDEA!!! People are already pissed off about the Discover Pass shutting out a third of WA residents who can't afford it. This will just further alienate your park visitors.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THE STATE PARK SYSTEM WAS CREATED TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS OF OUR STATE WITH A PLACE TO PROVIDE FOR A CHANCE TO GET OUT AND ENJOY THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF VARIOUS PLACES IN OUR STATE. I AM UNABLE TO THINK OF ANY PLACE I HAVE EVER BEEN IN THE WINTER THAT IS MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE DRIVE TO AND FROM THE MOUNTAIN (AS WELL AS CLIMBING UP TO THE VISTA HOUSE AND TAKING IN THE VIEW THERE). I WILL BE 82 WHEN THE SNOW COMES AND I STILL HOPE TO MAKE A FEW TRIPS TO THE TOP AGAIN THIS WINTER. I HAVE NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY THERE HAS BEEN SO MUCH OPPOSITION TO SOMETHING THAT WOULD PROVIDE THAT MUCH MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO GET OUT AND ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF THE MOUNTAIN! (LIKE WISE, I HAVE NOT UNDERSTOOD THE HESITATION ON THE PART OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON TO MOVE AHEAD WITH PROVIDING THESE OPPORTUNITIES! ORVAL AND ANITA JANSSEN

The expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski park area is not a necessary expansion. I could see the need to expand the ski area if the current space was crowded. I ski all over the mountain and have yet to see conditions that would be in anyway considered crowded. On many occasions I find that I am the only one on the run.

To add to the problem, skiing and snowboarding is an activity that is in a decline—it has been for years. Weather this is due to low snow pack (global warming) or absurd ticket prices, skiing and snowboarding is in decline.....a strange time to expand. If approved, the ski park will have more acres to ski...by fewer and fewer people coming to ski them.

To level trees and habitat to make room for ski runs that are not needed seems reckless and desperate. A decision that will ultimately only have a one time, short term effect on the Ski park's tickets sales.

I could see an expansion of the park if ticket lines and ski runs were overcrowded-but that is not the case. The market is in decline. Seem like a poor time to expand.

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I vote for Alternative 4-Recreation, and am pleased to see the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission and the ski area managers address a key deficiency in Mt. Spokane's existing ski facility.

As currently configured, the Mt Spokane operation is mostly reliant upon south-facing slopes. In most winters, Mt Spokane's deep snowpacks weather the highly erosive element of south-facing slopes - solar exposure and wind - without detriment to its operation. However, as the region-wide drought illustrated during the winter of 2004-2005, ski areas with south-facing aspects are especially susceptible to dramatic reductions in their operating season (e.g., Mt Spokane has a 29-day; fiscal year; during the winter of 2004-2005)

Expansion into terrain with a northern aspect will not only yield a very high quality recreation experience, and better, overall snow quality, it will help add resilience to the financial performance of the ski area. During years of modest natural snowfall, north-facing slopes will enjoy deeper snowpacks and will allow Mt Spokane to open earlier in the winter and help the facility operate later into the ski season. Thank You.

Thank you for taking the time to both allow and read the commentary.

The proposed expansion would greatly improve the ski area. I visit the area about 25 times during the winter and twice during the summer. Coworkers, family and friends all visit the area; it is an important part of the Spokane community.

It seems that the west side of the state makes demands of the east side in disproportion to the benefits the west provides. The west consumes our water, electricity, minerals and crops. In return they impose their own beliefs upon those from which their economic might is derived. To deny the people use of their land would be unwise. Furthermore, to allow or rather perpetuate this litigious oppression of our community would be egregious.

I urge you to make a decision that would most benefit those who are directly impacted.

Classify the land as Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area.

Allow the Project Action to include Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allow for the lift and seven trails. Include more grading and clearing. Thank you,

I am opposed to the proposed Mt. SPOKANE Ski Area expansion! I support Alternative 3: Resource recreation & natural forest area, no chairlift or trails, backcountry skiing allowed.

Mount Spokane State park should remain the same. NO MT. SPOKANE SKI AREA EXPANSION!

Alternative 3 - Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. No Chairlift or Trails. Back country skiing allowed.

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I have worked in the realm of commercial real estate development for nearly 35 years, and throughout my career I have had numerous opportunities to participate in a wide variety of SEPA-governed land use actions, including those outlined in the Mt. Spokane DEIS for Land Classification and Ski Area Expansion (I think that's what you guys are calling this lengthy compilation of documents!). I believe I can therefore state with authority that the referenced document is by far the most comprehensive SEPA analysis I've ever witnessed, leaving no stone unturned and no alternative

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unexplored.

That being said, I would urge the Commission to support only one option as presented in the DEIS, Alternative #4, as it best balances the recreational needs of the community with WSP's mission of providing a quality winter recreational venue to the public that is safe, accessible, affordable, environmentally sustainable, and best of all, easily managed by WSP staff.

Alternative #1, the do nothing approach, is a non-starter, as it merely delays the goals of the 1999 CAMP process even further, pushing classification out of the way once again and sending mixed signals to park users as to how WSP intends to manage the PASEA.

Alternative #2, the NFA approach, and Alternative #3, the Resource Recreation approach with no new chairlift, will take away any incentive for the concessionaire to manage the PASEA or promote any recreational uses therein. Alternative #2 would be a step backwards by not allowing any alpine skiing or boarding of any sort, including back country skiing, rendering the area unusable for the concessionaire or its customers. Alternative #3 would mimic the status quo by allowing back country skiing, but negates the concessionaire's ability to create additional revenues or broaden its market appeal. Either of these two alternatives would pass additional management responsibilities and costs back to WSP from the concessionaire, as Mt. Spokane 2000 would have no financial incentive to continue backcountry patrolling and rescue operations in the PASEA.

Mt. Spokane 2000's detractors have conducted a campaign of obfuscation and distortion of the facts, so much so that I urge the Commission, in rendering their decision, to ignore this relentless innuendo and consider only the factual science and conclusions of fact presented in the DEIS. The studies presented in the DEIS clearly refute their allegations that the PASEA is a significant "old-growth" forest or that critical habitat for endangered or threatened species will be eliminated.

I would also urge the Commission to consider that adoption of any alternative other than #4 would likely result in Mt. Spokane 2000 giving the PASEA back to WSP, as there would be no reason to continue paying concession rent or carrying liability insurance on land that cannot be managed in a manner that optimizes the safety of the concessionaire's customers or provides no prospect of economic gain.

Thanks to WSP staff for all of their hard work on this this project, as well as to the Commission for the time and energy they have devoted towards what has been a complex process with potentially complicated outcomes. I will look forward to their decision in November, Respectfully submitted.

I'm in favor of installation of a chair on the backside to expand the terrain for skiing. It is disappointing to see the delays that have been caused by those who oppose it. I also am in favor of the new mountain biking trails that have been proposed for both the ski area and the other parts of the park. I encourage the decision makers to thwart those who want to lock up this beautiful piece of recreational land that is owned by all the citizens of Washington.

I started skiing on Mt Spokane in 1969 at age 13. Our family visits Mt Spokane State Park both winter and summer. Our most recent use was 2 weeks ago hiking with friends to the top of Mt Kit Cason. This is an outstanding resource for the Spokane area. I would like to see the expansion for the ski area completed. Mt Spokane is a great ski area and this expansion will help the area continue to be successful. The ski area adds a great deal of money to the state park. It also provides great winter recreation for Spokane area residents. A properly done expansion will add to both summer and winter recreation opportunities. Allow Mt Spokane ski area to expand in a responsible manner and add to the recreation usage of the area.

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I believe the addition of new terrain is important to success of Mt. Spokane Skiing. There are few issues that it would solve. One it would add much needed intermediate terrain. It would relieve the pressure on the current cat track system which accounts for a large number of accidents. Mt. Spokane has a fog issue that often creates a hazardous skiing environment. The side that is being considered for expansion doesn't experience this issue which allows people to ski in all conditions.

The response that the front could be further developed is obviously coming from someone that doesn't frequent Mt. Spokane. This would only add further to the overcrowding and use of this portion of the mountain. I personally will probably consider moving to another area that has expanded its terrain if the expansion doesn't go through.

The community needs Mt. Spokane to be healthy and able to compete with other areas. This process has done nothing but waste the assets of Mt. Spokane.

I urge you to allow the ski area expansion including the chair lift in the PASAE land of Mt. Spokane State Park. I have read (seriously) the Environmental Impact Study 2009 with its latest additions and the Master Facilities Plan. I found that the biggest concern is not the old growth forest because there isn't one, just a few significantly old trees. It's not other flora because there are no rare species. It's not fauna such as lynx and wolverine because they don't den in the area, research can't prove human presence affects their behavior, and forested areas are available for during daytime. The biggest problem appears to be the fragility of the soil in the area since it is nutrient poor struggling to support vegetation. This affects all other living aspects of the area as well as water quality. However, in the expansion plan it was clearly mentioned that woody debris and cleared timber would be retained for strategic placement to hold soil in place. Also, in an email conversation with Brad McQuarrie last spring, he was adamant in understanding how to develop this strategy. With this attitude, I am completely confident that the expansion will involve the least impact on the environment as possible. I MS 2000 will make changes to continue to balance land use and conservation with their plans: to control erosion during preparation of the land for the chair lift and ski runs using fencing and grass/coconut fiber rolls and strategic movement of machinery; to slow runoff of melt water in the spring by reseeded and planting afterwards; to monitor summer use with trail alterations; and to continue monitoring of runoff water, fauna activity, and flora distribution and density.

With a long history of the use of this of land already including PASEA, it would seem more important to open the use of the land formally to develop a monitoring plan than to have informal use that is not monitored. With monitored use, old growth trees and sensitive areas such as where animals are known to den can be protected with a buffering area and channeling land users away, allowing everyone to appreciate from a distance. Monitoring plans could have transparency for the public such as web-linked, live game cameras. These ideas would indirectly develop a better understanding in land users of the aspects of the area, enhance stewardship, and develop an ever important sense of place in young people as many suffer from Nature Deficit Disorder.

It is easy for agencies such as The Lands Council to be overwhelmed by feelings of fear of change as their members look around the world and see loss of critical habitat and species diversity and become determined not to let this happen locally. This fear is unwarranted in the case of this project as proven in the environmental studies. The expansion of this area is an opportunity to develop habitat for getting our greatest resource, our kids, outside. As Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park serves as a leader modeling the intentions of the 2007 Children and Nature Plan of Action signed by multiple leaders of agencies including the National Association of State Park Directors, we need to support their efforts in the fight against childhood issues brought about by lack of physical activity, by giving them the space to accommodate this role where getting out into nature especially during a high risk time to be sedentary, winter, is vital to a healthy population. Therefore, Mr. Kline, I urge you to act with faith in the

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intelligent design of the expansion, in conservation spirit of MS 2000, and for our young people; allow the expansion, please.

I strongly oppose construction of a ski lift and new ski trails in the proposed expansion area. I have reviewed proposals and comments. The Mt Spokane ski concession will be better served by focusing their resources on improvement of existing facilities and dropping lift ticket prices to attract middle class skiers. Glading of the trees in the proposed expansion area and improving the traverse to the base of Lift 4 will accomplish goals of expanding terrain for those who limit their exercise to sliding downhill, while improving the cache of the area for 'side-country' skiers and limiting environmental impact.

I am commenting to support land classification at Mt. Spokane as recreational, as well as for approval of all Mt. Spokane's revised proposal.

As a lifetime Mt. Spokane skier and Spokane resident, I know the impact of the expansion will be beneficial to the region. Facilities and terrain at Mt. Spokane have lagged for years. With this expansion and facility improvements (some which have already been completed) could make Mt. Spokane competitive once again in the region.

Thank you, and please approve Mt. Spokane 2000's vision for the area that has been contested by such a minority group, in order to benefit a much larger group.

I grew up skiing at Mt. Spokane and return there each winter from Texas with my family to ski and snowboard. It is a gem and has a long history as a recreation area on all sides of the mountain. We have now been arguing about this proposed expansion for several years. It is ridiculous to argue that the expansion will detract from the mountain's current uses, as it is primarily a winter recreation area for the entire region. The expansion will allow Mt. Spokane to compete with other area resorts who have much larger terrain areas and more chair lifts. It will also open up better and more reliable snow pack to skiing. I dropped in back there 2 years ago while the area was open for backcountry skiing and it was absolutely gorgeous and the snow was up to my waist. But I had to hike out on a long cat-track to Chair 4 because there was no chairlift to access the area. It's not sustainable and safe to allow access to the area without a chair to service it. Please approve Part 1, Alternative 4, and Part 2, Alternative 2 so that Mt. Spokane can finally begin work on the expansion project and, most importantly, so I can begin skiing on it! Thanks,

I am really at a loss to have to be commenting on this again. Why is the ski area having so much hassle? The expansion project is a perfect idea for the area. The area needs the fire breaks alone not to mention the much needed clean up in that particular part of the mountain. The actual first lodge of Mt. Spokane is right there. Its going to bring much needed safety for the entire mountain. People are not going to stop going back there. But when someone gets injured or lost, and someone every year does, the ski patrol will have a much easier time getting to them. It will save someone's life. I do hope that we can get behind this so everyone can enjoy the mountain.

As a patron of Mt Spokane State Park for over 50 years I wholeheartedly encourage the commission to accept Part 1, Alternative 4, and Part 2, Alternative 2 or 3. I prefer Part 2, #2, but recognize your interest in #3 as it was the commissions' original choice. We have waited long enough and Mt Spokane Ski Resort has spent more than enough money to have this go on further. Remember this is money the skiing public has spent on tickets to use this area. It has been well documented that a majority of the Mt Spokane skiing public supports these alternatives. In addition, development of the "Backside" will greatly enhance safety on the mountain and make the resort more financially viable. Mt Spokane State Park sends more money to the State Park system than any other (possibly all other) parks in the state. A vibrant, financially successful ski resort at Mt Spokane will ensure that the other State Parks in Washington will be able to offer more service to the citizens of Washington State and to visitors from outside out state bringing in outside dollars to our communities. Please consider the Alternatives you have already decided on and put this issue to an end.

The Mount Spokane Expansion Project would greatly benefit the greater Spokane area as well as the ski area. This is a beloved ski hill and expanding it to allow more access would be a great benefit.

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I write in support of the Mt. Spokane ski area expansion plan, and ask the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the proposed expansion area for recreational use. I proposed expansion / classification will effectuate the primary purpose of our park system - to allow enjoyment and use of our natural resources, while preserving it for future generations. The latest Environmental Impact Statement concludes that environmental impact due to the reclassification of Mt. Spokane state park land to recreation will be minimal. Thus, allowing increased recreational use will allow members of the public to enjoy the tranquility of the park, reminding them why conservation and stewardship are necessary in the first place. Please approve the Mt. Spokane expansion as proposed.

Please consider supporting Land Classification alternative - #4 Recreation. I believe Mt. Spokane has been, and will continue to be, a good protector and partner while working with this land. The new chairlift will be wonderful in so many ways, to so many people. Thank you for your consideration.

I am writing in support of allowing for one chairlift and seven new trails on Mt. Spokane. As an avid outdoorsman, and someone who spends a great deal of time on and around Mt. Spokane, it is my opinion that the responsible use and management of our natural resources will benefit all stakeholders.

Economically, by making the area slightly more user friendly (in the form of improved and safer trails), while also safeguarding the natural areas that make Mt. Spokane such a draw for those who love the beauty of the mountain, will increase awareness and make Mt. Spokane even more of a treasured destination for outdoor lovers here in Eastern Washington. A new chairlift will also bring excitement and further cement Mt. Spokane as a great destination for winter sports.

The responsible management of our natural resources intrinsically create a safer, healthier ecosystem in which all of the stakeholders can benefit. By allowing for improvements on Mt. Spokane, it will keep the area a solid outdoor recreation area for generations to come.

I support the Mt. Spokane Expansion which includes the new chair lift. Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I have lived in the City of Spokane for the past 21 years. Our official City motto is Near Nature, Near Perfect. With that in mind, I am adamantly opposed to the ski area expansion. For one single reason: Currently, Mt. Spokane is the ONLY mountain in the Washington State where hikers, bikers, Horseback riders, snowshoers, and back country skiers can traverse from the bottom of the mountain to the top completely on singletrack/ natural trails. If the expansion is allowed, this one of a kind natural experience will be lost to Washington State forever. I find this outcome to be as far away from Near Nature, Near Perfect as possible. Please don't take away this experience from all the park's summer users, and a good portion of the park's winter users.

Additionally, Mt. Spokane is currently 'In Balance' Mt. Spokane provides great opportunities for all the activities listed above as well as ski and snowboard in the winter. While adding a few extra runs will slightly enhance my snowboarding experience, it will devastate my summer mountain biking experience.

All of the above activities are magical for the people doing them. For my summer mountain biking, a big part of the magic of Mt. Spokane is just how removed from society the trail system is, even though you are only minutes from the 1/2 million people of the greater Spokane area. When mountain biking at Mt. Spokane you really do feel like you are truly out in the wilderness. The new ski trails would eliminate this aspect of the Mt.

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Spokane experience, as once you get halfway up the mountain you would break out onto the clearcut sections of the expanded ski area. Essentially taking the 'mountain' out of the mountain biking.

I implore you weigh the needs of all the parks users and protect the beautiful balance that exists currently. Please do not ruin the Mt. Spokane summer experience for a marginal upgrade to the experience of a small minority of winter users. Thank you for your consideration.

I think that the Non-profit ownership group at Mt. Spokane can expand the public skiing area without damaging the existing ecosystem. I have been huckleberry picking on the present ski slopes in the summer and the area is filled with huckleberry bushes that attract wildlife. The skiing has not impacted the bushes at all. The snow covers them in the winter and the skiers just go on top of them with no apparent damage in the summer. The Ski area has been a very responsible steward of the land. There are many older skiers who ski at Mt Spokane and we love the fact that it is so close and so easy to get to. I am concerned that if Mt Spokane is unable to expand to the backside of the Mountain then it will no longer support itself and will be forced to close. That would leave many people without a place to ski.

Mt Spokane is the only area that offers a handicap ski program thru Spokane Parks and Recreation Department. This is a very important program that would no longer continue if the Mountain were closed.

I ski at Mt Spokane and love the fact that I can be there in an hour from my house.

I have heard people say that Mt Spokane should focus on fixing up the lodge and not expansion. Well they have upgraded to lodge and now we need to do the expansion which will not impact on hikers because they go there in the summer not in the winter. Thank you for your time and consideration.

I believe that Alternative #4 is the best plan for the future of Mt. Spokane State Park.

I support approval, under Part 1, of the revised proposal for Recreation (accessible); and, under Part 2, Alternative -2.

Page II-2: There is confusion here over the difference between cross-country ski trails as a permitted use and nordic track skiing as a non-permitted use. I would leave it at off-trail cross-country skiing as the permitted use so it's clear that track skiing is not permitted.

Page II-3 2.3 2nd paragraph: Off-trail snowmobiling should not be permitted in the presence of backcountry alpine skiing. Currently there are problems here and we don't want to perpetuate them.

Page II-21: State Parks frequently comes up with different amounts of mileage when it comes to Mt. Spokane's trails. My latest calculation is 80 miles of trails, including about 20 miles of single track.

Page II-22 3.6.2.2: Change "backcountry skiing" to backcountry " alpine" skiing as the non-permitted use. Backcountry nordic skiing would still be permitted.

Page III-115 Alt. 2 and 3: Delete "primarily mountain bikes)."Trail 140 is multi-use and lots of users use it. And by the time the new runs are built, we will probably have a new mountain bike trail which will decrease the use of Trail 140 for mountain biking.

The document makes frequent reference to the potential for a "Round the Mountain" 5000" trail. Do these references mean that if Alternative 4 is

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adopted and people want to build this trail, that another EIS would not be necessary? Thanks. The document is a big improvement!

As you know Mount Spokane 2000, has been working to secure approval to expand the ski area on the backside of the mountain. We're nearing the end of the process and asking for your help.

Mt. Spokane's expansion plan, revised to reflect the needs and priorities of the community and environmental groups, balances environmental stewardship and recreational opportunity. The expansion will introduce 80 acres of groomed trails, seven new runs and a chair lift within an 850-acre area designated for alpine use.

Due diligence and planning for the expansion began over 10 years ago. To date there have been numerous, extensive studies reviewing virtually every aspect of the plan, plus their economic, social and environmental impacts. The latest -- an Environmental Impact Statement -- was completed this summer to help determine two key aspects of the plan 1) land classification for this particular area and 2) the project action plan for the chairlift and 7 runs. The all-inclusive Draft Environmental Impact Statement can be read here <http://www.parks.wa.gov/856/Mount-Spokane-PASEA-Land-Classification>

While it's very technical and complex, the EIS generally concludes that the current expansion plan, which was revised several times to reflect the needs and priorities of the community, addresses forest health and land conservation concerns.

I'm asking you to please write a letter or email in favor of this expansion plan and ask the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land for Recreation. They are calling it Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area.

Although I skied on this mountain since I was 7 years old, I can no longer ski because of health issues. This area is near and dear to my heart and I want my children, grandchildren and all families to have the enjoyment we had and more. This is such a fabulous undertaking and will do nothing but enrich the lives of all who partake. I have included bullet points relevant to the project.

- Land Classification alternative #4 Recreation will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas and solidify the long-term future of Mt. Spokane
- Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable 4-season recreation destination for citizens of this region
- Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain, which also promotes better skier safety
- Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator and partner, working as good stewards of this land over the past decade
- Over several years of planning and extensive studies, Mt. Spokane's land classification has been adapted to preserve and protect 90% of the forest in its expansion area.
- The expansion, and use for recreational skiing, would be good for Spokane
- The Commission should support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and the region.

The Impact Of The Ski Area Expansion Is A Negligible Area Relative To The Size Of The Park And Surrounding Forest. No Reasonable Person Can Think Wildlife Will Not Just Continue To Live Around The New Lifts. It Is Just Another Facet Of The Animal's World. The Watershed Will Be Fine. Flora Will Flourish. Let's Stop the Elitist Tree Hugging Nonsense And Move Forward. People Are Wildlife Too. We Can. All Share The world Reasonably. Please Excuse The Formatting. Best Regards,

As an outdoor enthusiast using Mt Spokane for over 35 years in both the summer and the winter I am asking the Washington State Parks and

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Recreation Commission to approve the land classification of the back side of the mountain to Recreation. Mt Spokane offers an opportunity for the largest population base in Eastern Washington to use and recreate in our back yard without having to travel long distances which most cannot afford. Mt Spokane has done a great job with limited funds to keep the skiing experience affordable to the general public. By approving the classification to recreational Mt. Spokane can make additional terrain assessable and safe to more of the general public. This is a huge asset to the Spokane area. Giving the youth of our region more opportunities to recreate is good for both the youth and the community. I think it is the obligation of Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to provide opportunities for recreation to happen not reduce opportunities. Mt Spokane has proven over the last decade that they can provide great recreational opportunity and protect the environment at the same time. Please approve the classification to Recreation.

I have been skiing at Mt. Spokane since I was three years old. While I love this mountain dearly there are times when I wish it was bigger with more terrain to keep me enticed for an entire day of skiing. I am writing in hopes that the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will classify the land on the backside of the mountain "alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area"; for recreation. This land classification alternative "#4 Recreation"; will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas and solidify the long term future of Mt. Spokane. I hear my friend every winter tell me that they would rather ski at Schweitzer because of the limited terrain at Mt. Spokane and it disappoints me because I know they are missing out on the unique atmosphere and beauty Mt. Spokane has to offer.

Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable four season recreation destination for citizens of Spokane and the surrounding areas. It's affordable for everyone and caters to all types of skiers, snowboarders and families. Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain which also promotes better skier safety. Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator and partner, working with good stewards of this land over the past decade. The expansion and use for recreational skiing would be good for Spokane and the surrounding communities. The commission should support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and region.

100 per cent in favor of developing the back side of Mount Spokane for skiing! The wildlife will actually be enhanced as the ski runs provide wonderful grass habitat for the deer and wild birds! That land was left for that specific purpose, the developers have done more than enough to provide assurances for the environment, the ski people do a GREAT job and it's a WONDERFUL recreation place for Spokane and the Inland Empire. PLEASE STOP letting the handful of nuts stop this wonderful project! PLEASE LET IT HAPPEN!!!! Don't allow a small group of loud fools usurp the public good!

Mt. Spokane is a local treasure to the many residents of Spokane and the surrounding areas, and draws in tourism and revenue to the area at the same time. Its many activities, including mountain biking, snow skiing and boarding, snow machining, huckleberry picking, hiking, and even simple family picnics bring individuals and families far and wide to its beautiful slopes year-round.

I began snow-skiing when I was three years old and have enjoyed Mt. Spokane with my family as I have grown. I am now 37 and was excited to hear about the addition of another chair at Mt. Spokane. Mt. Spokane is by far the closest and best ski destination Spokane has, and as such, should have an additional run added. This will provide additional safety for skiers and snow-boarders, as well as bring more revenue to support the park and the area from both local and tourist visitors. Having an additional patrolled run has been the dream of many long-time visitors of Mt. Spokane (I am 37 and have hoped for an additional lift addition since I was able to ride Chair 2 at the age of 5).

Bringing on an additional lift would give the many skiers and boarders new options with more advanced runs, allowing for the surrounding forest area to be better protected. It would reduce lines to ride lifts, which are often long and tedious to wait in.

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I grew up with a view of Mt. Spokane from my living room in Deer Park, and have cherished it my entire life. I do not believe that the addition of a ski-lift or ski runs will be harmful or damage the beauty or nature of this mountain - only enhance the pleasure it can bring the area. Please allow the addition of another chair lift to Mt. Spokane, as many have been hoping be done for decades. Thank you,

I am writing in support of the proposed new backside chairlift at Mt. Spokane.

You have undoubtedly heard many concerns regarding “;what if” scenarios when it comes to installing this chairlift. The existing chairlifts at Mt. Spokane do not appear to adversely impact wildlife or vegetation. The existing chairlifts provide recreational opportunities for people in the area to get out and enjoy the park in a unique way. Installing the backside chairlift will only serve to enhance this experience. It is hard to imagine that the wildlife and vegetation has been adversely impacted, except on a speculative basis, with the existing ski area development, consequently the expansion will not be adversely impactful either. Thank you for your time.

I am writing in support of the additional chairlift on the backside of Mt Spokane. Adding the chair will have minimal impact on the vegetation and/or wildlife. The vegetation is under several inches of snow, thus is protected from damage and the wildlife has moved lower altitudes and not using this area.

A chair lift by its vary nature reduces the impact on the vegetation and terrain as the people are moved up the hill above ground and the only impact are several posts, much like trees that are already in the area.

I support the additional chairlift on the back side of Mt Spokane.

Concerning the Mt. Spokane Expansion: Many, MANY years ago, this entire operation was created to meet the wants and wishes of the residents of Spokane. And to continue to meet the demands of the growth of the area, one must expand and upgrade as necessary. This is NOT a bad thing! Please continue on with the proposed expansion. There is no need to send skiers to the mountains around us when we have a wonderful place to ski right in our own back yard.

I am for the expansion of Mt. Spokane.

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

This Alternative has my vote!

I am in favor of the Mt. Spokane expansion project.

I believe this will be good for the greater Spokane community by providing additional recreation opportunities.

Please consider the land classification for the PASEA at Mount Spokane as Recreation. Our mountain needs this expansion to better serve our users. I am involved in a program with developmentally disabled athletes and the expansion would provide additional skiing terrain that would be very suitable for our group of over 90 participants. Thank you!

We are residents of the City of Spokane and are writing this email in support of having the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission approve the request of Mount Spokane 2000 for classifying land adjoining the current ski area for recreational use. Such approval would enhance Mt. Spokane filling its role as a reasonably priced ski area with convenient access to the Spokane metropolitan area. This in contrast to other ski areas that serve primarily to generate profits for private for-profit companies.

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We understand that the recreational classification will provide the opportunity for necessary expansion of Mt. Spokane so that it can offer more terrain and skiing opportunities in order to be able to effectively compete and to make the best use of this beautiful area.

We appreciate the conservation concerns that necessarily are involved with this expansion, but we also know that Mount Spokane 2000 has spent considerable time and expense to undertake a thorough environmental review of the proposed expansion, which has been in the planning stage for some 10 years, and, as a result, both environmental stewardship and needed recreational opportunities are being addressed.

Spokane's motto focuses on "Near Nature" and this expansion gives meaning to that slogan by allowing the people of the area the opportunity to experience the beauty of the Mt. Spokane area through skiing activities. The project complements the lifestyle by focusing on safe and sound use of the area's natural amenities that Spokane-area residents have always enjoyed and hope to enjoy in the future.

The bottom line is that the project is good for Spokane in so many ways and will serve as a model for appropriate use of the area's natural resources.

We ask that the commission also act appropriately and approve the expansion area for classification as recreational use. Very truly yours.

I am writing in support of option 4, Part 1 Land Classification to allow for a ski chairlift to be added.
Please don't delay this action further.

The Pacific Northwest is known for great winter recreation and many people live here because of this. For more than 75 years ski areas have been operating successfully without ruining the mountains where they are located. The project at Mt. Spokane associated with adding a new chairlift has been very thoroughly studied to ensure the continued good stewardship of the Mt. Spokane State Park. The new trails will avoid the Park's sensitive areas. This will enable the ski area operations to harmonize with the natural functions of the ecosystem. I grew up in Spokane and love the Park as much as anyone. This new chairlift will do much to help the Park continue to be the place where local people choose to ski. There are new chairlifts being installed every year at other local ski areas and Mt. Spokane needs to move ahead to keep competitive. So please approve this new chairlift project that has been in the planning stages for more than a decade.

I strongly encourage the State to deny the expansion. The group that runs this mountain in my opinion is in over their head. Giving them more to manage would be rewarding poor performance. I realize I am saying this to the State, and this state could write a book on running things poorly. However, this operation is poor even by comparison to the State of Washington. It would be better to bring in a professional company and have them clean the place up, and if they can run with a level of professionalism, then consider granting an expansion. If you are insistent on keeping these characters running the operation, at least force them to step up their game. If you need supporting information for my comments, look at the equipment up there, and consider that it was purchased and installed by the people that this group took it from. What has this nonprofit group done to improve the operation? New chairs? New facilities? Improved parking lots? Creative improvements. From my viewpoint, none of the above. Finally, it is entertaining that the group that took the operation over, which appear to be mostly democrats want to clear cut old growth and remove vegetation near streams. They want 2 standards, one for them and one for others. These people have pushed their way around all these years, now let them live with the results.

Please allow recreational expansion on MT SPOKANE-

We have followed the progress of the red chair and look forward to accessing the north side of MT SPOKANE recreationally. I support highest level of access available. Thanks,

I am totally in favor of this project and support the well-developed plans by Mt Spokane 2000 to expand the ski area as proposed. This mountain is

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used by many people for all types of recreation, year round. I use this area myself year round, including the proposed area. Many would like to restrict our use of this area, but the best use is to allow this expansion which will also expand recreational opportunities in this great park. It is NOT a wilderness area and is NOT virgin old growth forest and does not need protection as such. These are my opinions.

Why in the world would you not approve installation of a chairlift on the back side of Mt Spokane? For years the back side has been just deadfalls, brush and a very difficult walk without getting killed by deadfall trees ready to fall. Approve the chairlift and let hundreds and hundreds of people enjoy that side of the mountain which has been tied up by people who just don't want people to go there. For God's sake it's a park. Let the people use it.

I am very much in favor of the expansion plan at Mt. Spokane. I have been an avid skier for the better part of 40 years. I've long considered it a bit of a minor miracle that Mt. Spokane is close to my home in Spokane, it is easily accessible, and it is amazingly affordable. No other local resort can boast the same.

Because of these features, Mt. Spokane is especially attractive to young families, and mine was no exception. I skied there as a child, and I started my kids skiing there. Our family was very happy until they reached the intermediate skill level. At that time, we became aware that there was a limited amount of terrain that suited this intermediate level - it seemed there was either the bunny hill or higher skill level terrain, with not a lot in between. Therefore, we began to ski at Schweitzer Resort, where a proportional amount of intermediate terrain exists.

I'm now a grandmother, with grandkids just beginning to ski. We are back at Mt. Spokane. I would love to remain there, and it is my understanding that the proposed expansion would create much more intermediate terrain. It is also my understanding that a classification of #4 Recreation be established to make this happen. So let's do it!

I urge the Parks Commissioners to vote yes in support of the new chairlift planned for the backside of Mt. Spokane. As a long time skier at Mt. Spokane, I know that adding another chair there is long overdue and would open up so much more great recreational terrain. Thank you for your yes vote!

I would ask that you support the expansion plan allowing an additional chairlift to be added to Mt. Spokane. I have skied at Mt. Spokane for the past 48 years, and also have a tremendous interest in protecting the environmental quality of the region. I think addition of the chairlift accomplishes both.

Land Classification alternative #4 Recreation will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas and solidify the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable 4-season recreation destination for citizens of this region. Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain, which also promotes better skier safety. Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator and partner, working as good stewards of this land over the past decade. Over several years of planning and extensive studies, Mt. Spokane's land classification has been adapted to preserve and protect 90% of the forest in its expansion area. The expansion, and use for recreational skiing, would be good for Spokane. The Commission should support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and the region.

Please get on with the ski lift project expansion

I support Part 1 Alternative 4 of this project.

I am writing in support of the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission to classify the Mt. Spokane PASEA as "Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area."

Both Mt. Spokane State Park and Mt. Spokane Ski Area (MSSA) are great assets to the Inland Northwest and the proposed ski area expansion

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nicely balances and considers environmental stewardship. The environmental impact of this expansion, especially as now revised, would be negligible and the benefits derived from such expansion would be substantial.

The MSSA provides a convenient, high quality and affordable recreational area for the Inland Northwest but has become somewhat less competitive with other regional winter recreational offerings. Maintaining competitiveness is critical to the continued financial viability of MSSA which, in turn, benefits the community with affordable winter recreational offerings, the promotion of strong community and healthy lifestyles, providing much needed revenue for State Parks, and incremental employment opportunities.

Adding the PASEA would surely attract additional skiers while lowering skier density resulting in higher revenue while lessening liability respectively. The PASEA would further establish MSSA over the long term and provide Mt. Spokane with a stronger partner and steward over the land in the years ahead as has been demonstrated in years past.

In exchange for this extensive recreational benefit in the PASEA, is a minimal environmental cost. Trees would be removed in less than 10% of the total PASEA, the vast majority of which would not be mature forest. Other impacts would not only be minimal, but another 170 acres of NFA would be added to Mt. Spokane State Park outside of the MSSA. Clearly, the benefits of adding the PASEA substantially outweigh the costs.

The social and economic benefits resulting from the approval of the PASEA would preserve and improve a regional recreational treasure and would give strength to an established and demonstrated environmental steward of Mt. Spokane State Park at a negligible environmental cost.

Please support the Mt Spokane Ski/Snowboard park expansion. The agency that runs the facility has been a great ambassador for the park. Even with limited resources, they have been able to go up against the other area's resorts and attract the locals and continue to be a viable ski area, even with limited financial resources. Even as the other resorts have all expanded their terrain. This is further reflected as Mt Spokane continues to be top rated family ski resort in the Islanders' reader pole. It's because the users, like my family, and the concessioner, care and protect the natural resource that we have. I coach students with the Spokane Parks and Rec's Power hound program; a ski/board, adaptive program that teaches people with disabilities to ski. For most of the students its just a chance to experience the Mountain. For those that have the physical ability we ready them for WA State Special Olympics in Wenatchee every year. The expansion would allow two things. One to offer a viable and affordable FAMILY ski hill for the locals, rather than having to travel to the other hills. If you ski you realize that Schweitzer lift tickets are almost twice that of Mt Spokane. Making it possible for many to get out and enjoy winter sports at an affordable price. Secondly, the mountain with it high usage, makes it difficult to find area's to coach the kids with disabilities. The expansion would allow us to be able to place the training race gates in non congestive area's, away from the main stream, enabling us to coach the students safely. Greatly enhancing the experience for the mainstream skiers and the one coaching opportunities for our students to coach the kids. Mt Spokane is a great asset to the community. The land where the chair would be built, was designated for outdoor recreation. I believe based on the studies completed, the Mountain and nature can coexist. I urge you to support the expansion. Thank You,

Having moved to the Spokane area in 1978 and having received full certification as a professional ski instructor in Utah 9 years earlier, I began skiing at Mt. Spokane with my family. I taught skiing at Mt. Spokane for 25 years and I know the terrain very well including the out of bounds areas in the PASEA. Both of my children became ski instructors at Mt. Spokane and all of us were fully certified instructors and supervisors in the ski school. Now I have 4 granddaughters who all have season ski passes at Mt. Spokane.

This is my frame of reference for the comments I have regarding the PASEA.

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I have done some research into the history of Mt. Spokane State Park, who obtained the land, how it was donated to the state, and for what expressed purposes. I highly support the plan submitted by State Parks staff option 4 which allows the construction of a fixed grip chairlift within the PASEA including the proposed ski runs and trails. I have read the environmental mitigation language in the plans and believe them to be adequate to preserve the natural conditions that exist while allowing recreation as the original park donors planned.

For reasons I don't fully understand, the ski area on Mt. Spokane was built on the East facing slopes and most of the ski runs are tilted to the North. This causes skiers to use one leg more than the other and creates an asymmetry that tires participants. When chair 4 was built on the North slope of Mt. Spokane, it accessed terrain that is mostly protected from the sun and the snow is almost always in better condition there as is the protection from the prevailing winds that frequently fog in the southern and eastern slopes during the winter months. But the slopes are far down the mountain where the snow melts early in the season exposing dirt and rocks.

The terrain in the PASEA is ideal for skiing because it mostly has northern exposure and because it extends to the top of the mountain, avoiding the late season melt off. It also contains ideal fall line conditions for skiing where the runs can be cut such that skiers will be able to use symmetry in motion that reduces fatigue and thereby increasing the recreation experience of park guests. From an instructional perspective, it will be a great teaching area.

Finally, Mt. Spokane has the best terrain for skiing, the closest to the population center of Spokane and the terrain has not been expanded for 40 years due to the financial structure of the concession agreements. For the first time in 40 years, Mt. Spokane 2000 not only has the financial ability to provide the expansion in recreation opportunity to the citizens of the area, it has the management skills and proven talent to operate the expanded area professionally and with good stewardship to the environment. They have tripled the satisfaction level of the skiers and riders during the time they have operated the ski area to where it is the preferred area for skiing in the region. And they have accomplished this without pricing Mt. Spokane out of the market regionally.

I have skied at 153 different ski resorts during my lifetime and Mt. Spokane provides a better guest experience than most. Given the out of fall line runs that exist on the mountain and the poorly placed ski lifts that exist on the mountain, Mt. Spokane 2000 prepares the runs and the snow for guests in a manner that keeps us coming back. I almost never hear a complaint from a guest when I am skiing there, on the hill or in the lodges. When I do, it is usually about the parking lot or the fog. The operator of the ski area has proven to me that they will properly manage the expansion project and make it into something State Parks will be proud of and something Spokane will brag about for years.

I would like the commission to know that I am in support of the expansion of Mt. Spokane and would like to see the Commission classify the land as Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area (Alternative No. 4). In addition, I am in support of the Commission taking action on the project and voting to approve the Enhanced Recreation Alternative (Alternative 2). Thank you,

I am supporting the expansion of Mt. Spokane Ski Area. I support (Part 1) Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Additionally, on Part 2, I support Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing, or, Alternative 3 - Mitigated Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails but doesn't include as much grading and clearing. This was the Alternative chosen by State Parks in the 2012

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The Mt. Spokane expansion will help insure the future of the area, help to make it competitive, and provide the maximum recreation opportunity to the greater majority of the taxpayers.

Please register my support for the expansion, Regards,

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Please register my support for the expansion, Regards,

I support the expansion of the Mt. Spokane area.

This is an important part of the culture of Spokane. It is a ski area that middle income families can participate in an already expensive activity. The people that have run Mt. Spokane for years seem to have taken into consideration the surrounding environment and have been good stewards of the property. I would not imagine this expansion would be any different. The need is there, it seems the area would not be adversely affected by this relatively small expansion and more people would be able to safely participate in a wonderful outdoor sport, and enjoy the views afforded by being there.

Must we destroy the beautiful to enjoy the beautiful?

This summer I had the great pleasure to walk into the northwest old growth Grand Fir forest on Mt Spokane. Dapple shaded cool glades watered by ferny spring fed rivulets gave relief and peace from summer heat and bustle. This is a priceless area, vulnerable to man's machinery. Let's not desecrate it. I hate to imagine the scars ski runs would leave on our mountain.

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There are alternatives for expanding the business of the ski resort. The Land's Council has provided you with several more sensible options. Don't break the public trust to protect the natural beauty of the park for future generations.

As an instructor of the intellectually disabled for the Spokane Powderhounds I am in favor of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area expansion. My daughter is a Powderhound and, like her, the majority of the lower-level skiers have a very hard time transitioning from Chair 5 to Chair 3. Most of the students I have taught have been lower level. Unlike typically developing skiers each advancement for our students happens in baby steps. More often than not, coercing the students to ride chair 3 may take several weeks, then if they have a negative experience they are quite unwilling to try again. More low intermediate terrain proposed in the expansion would greatly benefit the Powderhounds. Currently the easiest path down Chair 3 goes through the terrain park and eventually the cat track back to the base. Parts of that run are a bit steep. If an anxious low-level skier gets passed at close range by a zooming snow boarder either on the run or the crowded cat track, it will likely cause a setback. I am very grateful to the Mt. Spokane management and staff for the support of the Powderhound program. The expansion would not only enhance the area, but it will improve the lives of our intellectually disabled skiers through recreation in a safer, more inviting environment.

I was born, raised and worked in Spokane my entire life. I know the value of Mt Spokane to Eastern Washington as I learned to ski there as did most kids I know. We urge the Commission to adopt the expansion plan of providing one additional chair and seven runs within the current boundary of the ski area. This project is a very small footprint at Mt Spokane. We have observed over the years how important parks and their availability are to all citizens. Spokane does not have the economic engine of Western Washington, but it does have a large and engaged citizenry excited about outdoor recreation. We also have a long and cold winter, unlike Western Washington and in the winter Mt. Spokane offers easy access at affordable prices for cross country skiing, snow shoeing, hiking and downhill skiing for our families. This is important to our public health. Enough impediments have been placed in the way of this project. It is now time to move forward.

I fully support the expansion project at Mt. Spokane. This is truly a awesome recreational area and should be shared with the public. It seems a shame that monies that could have been spent to enhance the area gets wasted in useless legal battles.

I strongly recommend that you approve the Mt Spokane ski area expansion. The state parks have been established for the use of the people. Thousands of people use the Mt Spokane ski area each year. Whole families ski together, one of the few activities that the whole family can do together. All ages ski at Mt Spokane, from toddlers to 90 year olds and all ages in between. This ski area is a local treasure that is very rare and valuable and needs to be preserved and supported.

I hike in the area where the expansion will take place. When hiking in that area for a full day, three other people is the most that I have seen in that area in a full day of hiking. Most of the area being considered for the expansion will remain untouched by the expansion and fully utilizable by the few people who now use that area. Mt Spokane needs more ski runs to accommodate the number of skiers that now use the area and as the population of the surrounding area continues to grow, the need will only increase. Mt Spokane ski area is the only area less than an hour's drive from the Spokane area. It is also the most affordable since it is run by a non-profit organization. All the other ski areas accessible from Spokane for a day of skiing are expanding. In order to remain a viable entity, Mt Spokane ski area must expand its skiable area as well. If Mt Spokane cannot stay competitive and be attractive to skiers, it will fail financially. It is now a significant source of revenue to the park system that should not be put at risk by failing to approve the expansion. Skiers do not damage their environment. No large animals are in the area during the ski season. Having clear areas with low vegetation will provide habitat for wild animals not now present in this area. Skiers leave no sign of their presence, unlike those that oppose the expansion. Skier's tracks melt each spring. Please act in the best interest of the vast majority of the people who use Mt Spokane Park and approve the ski area expansion.

I am writing to express my strong support for alternative 2 of the Mount Spokane PASEA DEIS for Land Classification.

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The currently unclassified Potential Alpine Ski Area Expansion (PASEA) encompasses a special and environmentally sensitive ecosystem that calls out for the highest level of protection, i.e., natural forest area. Whether one considers watershed, soil, vegetation, or wildlife, each has exceptional features that should be conserved to the greatest degree possible. Where else in Eastern Washington can one access a subalpine ecosystem less than one hour from a major metropolitan area? The disturbances allowed under alternatives 3 and 4 in the DEIS represent threats to an important Spokane River watershed at a time when climate change is forcing us to reconsider water management. The presence of invasive plant species in most disturbed areas of Mt. Spokane, particularly the alpine ski area, is indicative of the vegetative threats that present with alternatives 3 and 4. The large number of state priority wildlife species that reproduce or migrate through the PASEA are themselves alone reason for the protection that would be ensure under alternative 2.

I am a multi-use recreationist on Mt. Spokane: hiking, mountain biking, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, huckleberry picking, and bird watching. I undertake none of these activities in the alpine ski area, nor could I derive any pleasure from them in the alpine ski area. If I needed to rank them, trail #140 would probably come out as my favorite on the mountain. I am almost guaranteed to find an olive-sided flycatcher or dusky grouse when I use the trail. From my perspective, alternatives 3 and 4 prioritize a single recreational activity over all other opportunities on Mt. Spokane.

Please allow the lift and seven trails to be constructed on the back side of mt spokane for the long time future of the mt spokane ski area. This will benefit the region's citizens through enhanced recreation for youth and families and positively impact the region's economy.

I am writing to express my strong support for alternative 1 (no action) for the Mount Spokane PASEA DEIS for Proposed Ski Area Expansion.

The action alternatives proposed in the DEIS would have multiple negative environmental impacts on an exceptional ecosystem that I noted in my comments regarding the PASEA Land Use DEIS. One environmental impact to be elaborated in this DEIS, and not fully considered in the analysis, would be the potential impact on climate change by the 2 action alternatives. No action is, at a minimum, green house gas-neutral and even possibly, -reducing. The action alternatives would add green house gases to the atmosphere, thus contributing to the ever increasing acceleration of climate change.

The action alternatives would have negative aesthetic impact on Mount Spokane, an Eastern Washington natural landmark. Whether viewed from a distance or up close, the current ski area is an eyesore on the mountain summit. The bare southern slope stands out as one enjoys the mountain's view driving into Spokane from the west. Up close, it's even worse because of the dense weeds that cover the bare slopes in the non-snow seasons.

Finally, the action alternatives favor one form of recreation to the detriment of others. Our state parks are the people's lands, available for all types of recreation. Many recreation types available on Mt. Spokane are lower cost than alpine skiing and consequently, more accessible to all members of our community and not just the affluent. Expansion of the ski area would diminish recreational opportunities like hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, huckleberry picking.

Please allow Mt Spokane to expand the north side of the mountain. Mt Spokane will be a good Stewart to the forest. Expansion is badly needed.

I have been a recreational skier on Mt. Spokane since the late 1970's, having taught our 5 children and numerous grandchildren the joy of skiing on this mountain. Picnics, huckleberry-picking, hiking, and some cross-country skiing have all been a major part of my recreational life on Mt. Spokane for the past 38 years. Now, in my late 70's, I still enjoy skiing regularly with Prime-Timers as well as friends and family members on the mountain.

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The proposed expansion to the north side of Mt. Spokane is badly needed to provide additional ski terrain and relieve the growing pressure on the already developed ski areas on the mountain, as well as to provide an improved skiing "experience" for all the skiers who visit the mountain. It is the closest - and one of the best - ski areas serving the Spokane skiing community and deserves to be improved through the proposed expansion.

I strongly urge the Washington State Parks Commission to give their approval to this much-needed civic improvement and provide our skiing community with an expanded ski area on Mt. Spokane. Thank You!

I would like to state that I am in favor of the expansion of the Mount Spokane Ski are, I believe Option #4, and part 1, and then would prefer Alternative Number 2. My family enjoys skiing at Mt. Spokane and is in our second year of having season passes and plan on continuing to do so. It's a very enjoyable recreational hill and the installation of an additional ski lift with runs. This would greatly enhance this family friendly and affordable recreational area for many people in the Spokane area who do not wish to travel far and pay the steeper prices at some of the other ski hills.

I would prefer Alternate #2 if the expansion is approved. I would assume the lift without much terrain change would result in primarily black diamond runs that are not groomed. As a more moderate skier, I think this would be more of a draw. I do not feel that this would be detrimental to the environment or interfere with other uses of the park, but would increase the awareness and value of the park.

Please approve Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and several new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long term future of Mount Spokane.

In addition, a chairlift with defined trails will improve our ability to safely and quickly provide medical assistance to injured skiers and reduce the numbers of lost skiers.

I'm writing to support terrain expansion at Mt. Spokane. I'll be very brief.

My wife and I moved here with our family two years ago for our careers. While several dozen communities across America would have plausibly satisfied our family's needs, Spokane won. There are three basic reasons. First, Spokane was a larger town offering infrastructure (airports, food, shopping) that many competitors lacked. Second, the career opportunities here were greater for us due to expanding educational opportunities (new medical school, Gonzaga, WSU satellite campus). Finally, we moved here because of Spokane's proximity to outdoor recreation.

As a doctor and an engineer starting a new family it's important to note that Spokane won against other rival cities in no small part due to its access to recreation. This doesn't make Spokane unique but it certainly offers an aspect to this community that other community's likely lack. Expanding the terrain at Mt. Spokane is important as a symbol of Washington State's commitment to balancing environmental planning and recreational use. More importantly however, is focusing on the improvement and refinement of one of Spokane's greatest assets: proximity to nature.

Please consider this my encouraging plea of support for: Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I wish to express my desire for the land classification alternative #4, and the terrain expansion project alternative #2 to be implemented.

Currently a vast area of Mt. Spokane State Park is inaccessible to a vast portion of the population. This development will encourage greater use of

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the park, without in any way degrading the park's existing features and natural beauty.

I fully support the expansion of Mt. Spokane's ski area. I support and would like to see the land classified as Recreation Area and the appropriate action taken to build an additional lift along with 7 new trails. An expansion of the mountain would surely attract more skiers and boarders - both beginner and advanced riders alike. With an expansion of terrain I know I (as an advanced skier) would visit Mt. Spokane for more than just night skiing.

Thank you for your time, and please support and pass the Proposed Land Classification for the Area Known as the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA) at Mount Spokane State Park and Ski Area Expansion.

Please this Mt needs to be expanded it will help wild life food supply and give more terrain for the human use.

I would just like to comment on the Terrain Expansion of Mt Spokane. I would like to voice my support for alternative 4 under the land classification section of the document. I used to live in Spokane and began teaching my children to ski at Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard park. Since moving to Pullman we continue to support this local hill because of its location and the great environment. Everyone else here in Pullman goes elsewhere to ski because of the newly expanded 49 degrees north and I am afraid that some expansion at Mt Spokane is needed. As a state park I think having so many people coming up to spend a day with family doing something active is exactly what our state parks are meant for. I love coming up to the area all year around and feel that new lifts and runs would only allow for this area to thrive and I fully support this expansion.

I've been skiing at Mt. Spokane since 1969. I now ski there with my wife, daughters, and friends. The expansion area would be welcome. I've peered over the edge wanting to ski there for most of my life. I'm hoping this will soon be a reality. Thank you for considering providing more joy to more people. I find that this expansion really fits with Spokane's motto of Near Nature, Near Perfect. It won't be perfect for everyone, but it is near nature, and that's what we love about living here.

Gentlemen, I have been enjoying year around outdoor recreation in Mt. Spokane State Park since the 1970's. I am dismayed by the opposition to the ski area expansion by the Lands Council. Their relentless legal challenges to this project are to me ill-founded and obstructionist for no good reason.

In the late 1990's a citizens advisory committee heartily endorsed expansion into this area and later the Parks Department agreed and approved a plan to that effect. Since then the Lands Council has caused excessive costs and lost time by Mt. Spokane 2000 and Washington State Parks for the selfish desires of a few overly enthusiastic environmentalists in their desire to not allow any but the most basic of park uses in this area to any but a very few individuals. Their contention that this expansion will cause irreparable harm to one of the only old growth forests in the State Parks is unfounded. Experts have found the forest not to be old growth. Additionally Mt. Spokane 2000 has worked with citizens groups, Washington State Parks and environmentalist and bent over backwards to design this proposed expansion to minimize impact to the flora, fauna and environment by human use.

The Lands Council's contention that further use of the chairlifts 4 and 1 terrains will improve the use of the ski area are somewhat correct, but the impact of further clearing will be minimal and will do little to relieve overcrowding on the few heavily used ski runs. Their suggestion that a high speed lift would also improve the skiing experience is also flawed. It will only increase the number of times the runs are overcrowded in a day and the cost to purchase and install the lift would be far higher than installing the less costly lift that is already owned. The small amount of terrain improvement that would be required by the new northwest lift would be minimal.

Mount Spokane has been used for downhill and cross country skiing, snowshoeing and mountaineering for almost 100 years. Much of the present land in the park was donated for use as ski terrain by citizens that enjoyed skiing so close to the city. It will be a travesty if a few environmentalists

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are successful in blocking the proposed ski area expansion. In my opinion The only negative effect to approving the expansion will be to the Lands Council's misguided mission in this area and to a few of the member's egos.

I've downhill skied at Mt Spokane for close to 40 years. The last few years I've also started up cross country skiing at Mt Spokane. I taught my kids how to downhill ski there also. I believe skiing has helped my kids to appreciate and respect the outdoors. They are both avid outdoors people and are very environmentally conscience. We all hike and take several backpacking trips each year.

I believe the more ways we have for people to enjoy the outdoors will create the desire in more people to preserve & protect the outdoors.

I'm for the expansion project. It is long over do. Just think of the amount of greenhouse gases that will be prevented by people who will start going there again because it so close and it has more capacity. I know many people who will drive much farther just because of the limited terrain at Mt Spokane. I think Mt Spokane has done a great job in lining things out for this project and it deserves to go thru.

I'm tired of watching other mountains expand, while my mountain, Mt Spokane, is mired by hyper environmentalism. It's time to help clear the way for the small amount of improvements they have been fighting for on Mt Spokane, so our local ski area can continue to grow and keep up

I am writing today to express my concern about the Mount Spokane PASEA. My family and I love the rugged beauty of the mountain, the breathtaking views from the summit and the abundance of wildlife we encounter there. Please do not allow any more development of this beautiful place! There is already a lot of development on the mountain and I cannot understand how this is happening in our State Park. If State Parks can be commercialized like this then what wilderness will be left? I want my children to grow up exploring pristine wild places and observing flora and fauna in protected places. Isn't this one of the reasons State Parks exist? I am saddened enough by what is already happening on the mountain; please do not allow any more development.

I would like to voice my support for the Mt Spokane ski area expansion. They have worked with the state and environmental groups to come up with a plane that is a "win win" for all parties. It will help the ski area, the state park and all of the Spokane area.

I am writing to advocate for the Mt. Spokane Ski Area. Please allow the necessary permits, allowances for Mt. Spokane to add an additional chair lift. If Mt. Spokane is going to be able to compete with area ski resorts, they must add additional ski areas / choices for skiers. They have an excellent record of land management and there is more than enough room on Mt. Spokane to add this lift.

Please pass the Alternative 4 measure of the draft, remembering that the Alternative 4 measure also safeguards natural areas of Mt. Spokane and solidifies the long term use and sustainability of Mt. Spokane for years to come. Thank you.

I am in favor of project Action Alternative 4 Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. Brad and his staff have done a great job of turning this family friendly ski hill into a great resort to take my family to every weekend during the ski season. The resort does need additional terrain and this plan provides the extra terrain without adversely damaging the environment. Please vote in favor of Alternative 4!

Please consider in Part 1, Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

If Part 1, Alternative 4 is chosen then please allow Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing.

Please end this senseless time consuming and costly process.

I do NOT support the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area. I have skied at Mt. Spokane for 40 years and think it is a great ski area just as it is. New runs and a new chair lift will be detrimental to the natural environment and the wildlife that lives there. Expansion would also bring more automobile traffic. We do not need Mt. Spokane to be more like Schweitzer or 49 Degrees North. Mt. Spokane is a unique ski resort as is and an

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incredible and beautiful State Park.

I am a back country hiker, XC skier, mountain biker, and downhill skier. I think you can meet more people's recreational needs by allowing the ski hill expansion to be approved. We have this beautiful downhill ski area close to the city that badly needs expansion to meet the needs of so many potential users. I support alt. 4 of the proposed action plans. This will help meet the recreational needs of many more users while still keeping most of the state park for other users, thank you.

I am in strong favor of the proposed Mt Spokane ski area expansion with placement of a new chairlift. This expansion will greatly enhance the ski area and allow for continued and expanded support by the local community. I feel this is vital to the long term success of the ski area.

I have been an avid skier on Mt. Spokane since I learned in 1968. I have seen it change in many ways as a ski resort. I have also embraced the multi-use nature of the park - mt biking, hiking, berry picking, sightseeing. It is truly a gem in our backyard.

I am afraid without the PASEA being developed into an alpine ski recreation area and expansion of the ski acreage, the ski area is doomed over the next decade to 20 years. With global warming, the snow loads and season are decreasing. I have often said snow skiers are the canaries in the coal mine for global warming; it is happening at such a rapid velocity we can literally pick up on real changes over decades or less. Mt Spokane ski area needs north facing slopes for snow holding and for colder temperatures.

Additionally, Mt Spokane has been the most affordable area for this metro area for years. It is where middle class families can go within their budgets. However, in these strained economic times with the clear degradation of the middle class's economic power, I am worried less and less people will take their children up and the sport will wither away.

There will always be rich physicians and attorneys who enjoy strapping on GO PRO cams and skiing areas without chairlifts or traveling to posh destination resorts. There will not always be bus drivers and service workers bringing their kids and friends up, and the sport will suffer because of it. The PASEA is crucial to keep this area alive and accessible to all. I've hiked and skied it and while it is dense and quiet, I would not consider it pristine or wilderness or virgin forest. The Alternative 4 for land classification makes total sense to me and I suspect to my 4 year old granddaughter who had her first winter on skis on Mt. Spokane. I would like her and her friends in the future to still have this marvelous mountain to enjoy. I support, 100%, the development of the PASEA to expand the Mt. Spokane ski area.

I am for the expansion of the Alpine Ski Area on Mount Spokane. Skiing would be improved, more jobs created and there is still enough natural forest area in the Park for solitude/habitat. I am for Alternative # 4 that allows for a chairlift to be installed. Thanks.

As a skier who uses lift serviced and non-lift serviced areas on Mt Spokane, I support Alternative 3, allowing backcountry skiing, but no new lift. The area proposed by Mt. Spokane is where snowshoers, skiers, hikers, etc, use for uphill travel. The addition of 7 new runs seems silly and unnecessary, because you can already access that area of the mountain with a 5 minute walk from the top of the chair 1 lift. Mt Spokane should have considered upgrading the main chair and/or backside lifts to high speed 3 or 4 person lifts instead of buying a new one before they had their plan approved.

I again wish to express my strong opposition to this ski expansion. This would eliminate the ONLY old growth forest still remaining in all of Spokane County, the second most populous county in WA. It would benefit a very small percentage of the citizens of this state, only those who downhill ski. Our State Parks belong to all the citizens of this state. This would not only take away a part of that park for all but a few of the state's residents. In doing so, it would permanently destroy a very unique feature of this park, this county & this state. It would also destroy any unique flora & fauna in this area & further damage the watershed. Please do not allow this to happen.

I think the expansion should happen. It would revitalize the interest in the mountain and skiing for future generations.

The alternative that I support is Alternative 4, which includes the installation of a new chair lift and 7 - 9 trails or runs. The bulk of the funding for Mt. Spokane comes from the skiers, not the snowmobilers, or the cross country skiers, but the alpine skiers. The existing Alpine area at times becomes

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a absolute zoo with all the families. Putting in another lift with associated runs will help to alleviate some of this crowding. The special interest group that wants to change it into an area that very few people will use should look at who actually funds the roads and all the other improvements, and non-improvements on the mountain. Makes me wonder how many improvements to the whole area would be done if a lot of the money wasn't used to get experts to try and justify using 80 acres for thousands of the supporters of the mountain. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

yes on alternative 4

Please add my name, as a citizen of the State of Washington, very much in favor of the proposed expansion to the ski area at Mt. Spokane State Park. As you may be aware, the land that makes up the Mt. Spokane State Park was donated to the State of Washington for the express purpose of becoming a State Park for the enjoyment and recreation of ALL citizens, not just a select few. The argument that we must protect this pristine and unspoiled land is completely without merit. There is little if any pristine property on Mt. Spokane. I recall during the 1960s that horsemen cut trails all over the mountain for the purpose of riding time trials. Please allow for the installation of the additional chairlift and the necessary clearing and grading to proceed. This plan has been hamstrung for much too long and at much too great a cost.

I have been utilizing Mt. Spokane State Park for recreational use since I was two years old- dating back to 1965. I figure I have spent about 1/3 of my entire life of 51 years within the boundaries of Mt. Spokane State Park. In addition I have instructed and coached for over 30 years on Mt. Spokane and I have affected the lives of hundreds and hundreds of young skiers through a wonderful recreational activity called snow skiing. In addition, I have taken my family up countless times during the summer months to pick hackberries, hike and take in the beautiful views while sharing the ski runs with the native animals, might I add. I and my family support part 1, #4, and alternative # 2 of part 2 to support the expansion for recreational use along with the addition of the new red chair. I hope the State board uses common sense when making the decision. Over the years, I have witnessed people that are against the expansion literally put forth lies and false accusations. I'm convinced that those people must not really utilize the park, because they would see that the wildlife thrive on the ski runs and the surrounding area. I have been skiing on the proposed backside for years, and I with full confidence can say that if the expansion is done with proper care and the State overseeing this expansion, it can be done with very little or no impact to the environment. The state provides parks for recreation, and look at me! Like I said I have spent 1/3 of my 51 years living, enjoying, and thriving with nature in a Washington State Park. My children are doing the same, and I hope their children will get to experience the same. Once again I am in support of part1 #4 and part 2 #2.

In summary, If I add up my parents, and immediate family we have spent over 100 years within Mt. Spokane State Park enjoying skiing, hiking, berry picking, site seeing. In our eyes we are family with Mt. Spokane State Park.

Since Mt. Spokane 2000 has taken over the concessions and the ski area the area has improved and is run wonderfully. I have seen more and more skier at Mt. Spokane and they are getting busier as time goes by. I would love to see more terrain for skiing now. I grew up learning to ski at Mt. Spokane going through the racing program and have been actively coaching with SSRA for nearly 10 years. I have been around to know what everyone has gone through to make this expansion a reality and would like to see the day that the red chair gets installed and is up and running. If you have ever been up to Mt. Spokane when its busy you realize that overcrowding is a problem especially when the ski team brings races to the mountain. I feel that with the installation of the red chair mt. Spokane would be able to increase revenues that could help grow the mountain and help rebuild outdated lodging and infrastructure.

All of us are excited about the new Red Chair. We can't wait to get it installed and it would certainly reduce to crowding on the front side. I am in favor of #4 classifying the back side

As a frequent user of this terrain in both winter(skiing/backcountry skiing) and summer(biking, hiking, berry picking) I'd like to make it clear that having a chairlift and ski runs established in this area would not harm and most likely assist in forest health and regeneration.

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As I understand, the land was originally donated to the State of Washington for the purposes of recreation, and outdoor activity. All alternatives other than #4 contradict that original purpose.

There are many stakeholders who have different agendas and many have different points of view. My purpose of writing are to state 2 simple reasons Alternative #4 is the only solution. The first is that it supports the original mission of the private landowner who donated this land to the State of Washington originally. The second is safety.

As a mountain ski patroller, I have spent many nights searching for people lost on the backside and involved in extractions of hurt skiers who venture into this unpatrolled area. It will greatly enhance safety to have mechanisms to extract people out of this area with equipment installed, and drastically clean up an area that requires skill and knowledge to safely recreate in now.

I want to voice my support for Alternative 4:

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. I have skied Mt. Spokane every year since I was four years old. I grew up on that mountain and am now raising my kids there. I saw the mountain go through a big decline prior to the management of the Mt. Spokane 2000 group and the last several years the mountain is being so well run that it is a delight to ski there every weekend all winter long with friends and family. Expanding the skiable terrain would make the mountain that much better! Mt. Spokane is a gem in our community and we should continue to help it shine!

Please support the Mt Spokane lift expansion project. The area proposed has historically been used as a lift area and has been skied as back country for decades.

I am writing another letter in support for the backside expansion. I have read a lot of comments and heard a lot of untrue statements I've been skiing at Mt Spokane for over 30 years. My kids learned to ski here and all seven of my grandchildren learned to ski here. My husband was on the Ski Patrol for 36 years and I know how dangerous it was for him and the other Patrollers going back there to help injured or lost skiers. This makes so much sense I can't believe someone hasn't stopped all this controversy and just passed the decision years ago.

Mt Spokane is committed to ensuring environmentally sound development of winter sports offerings. The Mt Spokane facility is sustainable in the long run and will continue to be of tremendous social and economic benefit to nearby communities. (Most agree that Mt. Spokane State Park provides countless recreational opportunities, a unique setting for meaningful conservation education programs, noteworthy seasonal employment, and tax revenues that help fund essential government services.) It is imperative that Mt. Spokane's existing winter sports facility be allowed to evolve and take steps forward to help accommodate the marketplace demand for skiing and snowboarding. Equally important, it is critical that Mt. Spokane be allowed to develop the components of a winter sports facility that help sustain the concession area in the highly competitive local and regional ski markets.

My grandchildren are Ski Racers and I travel with them to races at the other mountains. They all have new runs, new lifts and safe conditions for these athletes. Mt Spokane needs to have the ability to keep up with the other mountains.

You update your house with new appliances, and furniture. Mt Spokane needs to have the ability to update the mountain as well. They need to be able to compete in this market place and make Mt Spokane a great family destination.

I urge the Commission to adopt Alternative 4 and allow the Concessionaire to make these improvements. Please read these comments and vote

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accordingly.

00I am writing in support of the proposed expansion of the ski area into the north side of Mt Spokane. I am a senior citizen who has been skiing at Mt. Spokane off and on for many years and it is one of the few places that is affordable and easily accessible for seniors such as my wife and I. We believe it is affordable due to the unique non-profit operation of the ski area. It is accessible due to its proximity to the city of Spokane and because of the attitude that they have towards seniors at the mountain. With state finances as they are, it is also a great example of a park that is not paid for entirely by state government, but instead is a source of revenue for the park system because of the rent paid to the state. What extra money that is generated at the resort is reinvested into the resort/park, rather than distributed elsewhere as profits.

The Prime Timers senior group that skis at Mt Spokane began with just a few members 10 or 11 years ago and now numbers in excess of 600 seniors. The management of the non-profit ski area, not only helps keep skiing affordable for seniors, it also provides a unique social setting for Prime Timers to congregate that helps keep seniors from becoming socially isolated, As grim as it sounds, as we age, and our friends and spouses begin to die, it is very easy for seniors to abandon their activities and become very isolated. In visiting with other seniors on the mountain and listening to their stories, I have come to realize how beneficial this ski area and the Prime Timers are. And that doesn't even take into account the many benefits of remaining physically active.

I believe this is a unique opportunity to make Mt. Spokane even better for those that care about being able to spend time in the beautiful outdoors during the winter - and in the summer as well. The expansion will be into an area previously serviced by a ski lift and will enhance the recreational experience of thousands of people with a minimal expense to the state, and minimal impact on the environment. Like you, my wife and I hold mountains in high regard. There is nothing quite like being on the top of a mountain, in the sunshine in winter, to make a person appreciate what life has to offer and how fortunate we are. One of the best ways to teach others to respect the environment is to let them experience it firsthand, and Mt. Spokane's ski and snowboard park is very good at doing that. Because of its proximity to Spokane, each week during the winter bus loads of school children from the surrounding area are learning to ski - becoming physically active rather than spending their time indoors playing video games.

There is an attitude at Mt Spokane that come not from chasing a buck, but from a commitment to the park and to keeping it available for the people. To keep it competitive, and thus available, it needs this growth. It is the right thing to do for people in the long run.

I am in favor of either:

Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing

Alternative 3 - Mitigated Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails but doesn't include as much grading and clearing (which was the Alternative chosen by State Parks in the 2012 decision).

In Part 1, Land Classification I support : Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane and in Part 2, Project Action I support: Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing

I am a CPA and longtime user of our wonderful Mt. Spokane State Park. I wholeheartedly support the notion of developing the backside of the Mt. Spokane ski area. The Mt. Spokane ski area is a jewel to those of us in Spokane County, and the enhancement of its back side is a wise use of our recreational spaces.

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Mt. Spokane is the most special place in the world to me. I was lucky that my parents purchased their first condo there when I was 2 years old, over 32 years ago, and we have had a condo there ever since. I learned to ski on that mountain, I learned to race on that mountain. I coached other kids, and took some up for their first ski runs ever. My future children will one day learn to ski there. My husband proposed to me on that mountain. In the summers, we hike, pick huckleberries, and enjoy the peace and serenity, and the stunning views. I look forward to years of doing this with my husband, dog and family.

My dad was a longtime advocate of the mountain, and sat on the original Mt Spokane 2000 Board - his name is etched on the plaque at Lodge 2. I am proud that he worked to help the mountain become what it is today - a local mountain bringing opportunities for recreation, joy, and a connection with nature to so many people. We don't have money to go to fancier places, and we don't want to. We love our local mountain for all that it is, and ask and expect for it to be little more. The proposed expansion of the Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park isn't asking a lot, and those advocating for the expansion have been so willing to compromise the original plan to make all interested parties happy. Eighty acres and seven runs doesn't count for much by most mountains standards because they have free reign to do whatever they want with whatever land they have access to. Here, we are not trying to degrade the quality of the land or of anyone's experience on the mountain. The opposing parties are skewed in their demands: the forest in question isn't Old Growth forest, and the suggestion to make it National Forest Area actually means that no one can utilize the land. The reality is that the proposed changes will make the mountain a better place for people to experience the outdoors and enjoy their local amenities. I have been going to Mt Spokane since 1982. In 1997, my father, brother and I spread my mom's ashes on Mt Spokane, after a battle with cancer. I was 17 years old. In 2013, I spread my dad's ashes on Mt Spokane, after a battle with cancer. I was 32 years old. One day, we will spread our dog's ashes on Mt Spokane. One day, hopefully far from now, someone spread my ashes on Mt Spokane. It is the most special place in the world to me, where I am closest to my loved ones and feel at home.

When it comes to making decisions like these, the options are never easy or clear. So many people have so many opinions and feelings. I just hope that when this decision is made, those making it consider the people who love this mountain and have a personal investment in it and its future. It shouldn't be decided based on the opinions of a few that have no heart in the fight and no history with the location. My family is literally part of this mountain and will be forever. My parents, though they cannot speak now, deserve a voice in this decision. Please consider us and our love for this place. This most special place.

I am writing in support of the expansion plan being planned for Mt. Spokane, specifically Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Among other things, this plan: protects natural areas, allows for significant recreational enhancements, and solidifies the future of Mt. Spokane allows Mt. Spokane to provide an accessible and affordable year round destination for citizens of this region will create greater terrain and access for skiers, which also promotes better skier safety recognizes Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator, partner and good steward of this land over the past decade demonstrates that over several years of extensive studies, Mt. Spokane's land classification has been adapted to preserve and protect 90% of the forest in its expansion area. I urge the Commission to support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and the region.

I am a long term Mt. Spokane skier. I grew up skiing on Mt. Spokane and even ski raced with SSRA ski racing club on Mt. Spokane. There used to be skiing on the backside before the original lodge burned down long ago. In fact I still ski there even though it requires an occasional hike out even though this is frowned upon.

I know that the latest mountain management has been making a great effort to open up the backside of the mountain. I feel this is a good idea as it would make it safer to ski back there as well as relieve congestion on the front side. The number of skiers has steadily increased. I totally support

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this plan.

The Commission should support this and reclassify the land for Recreational use, the forth alternative. #4 Recreation.

Awaiting the Red Chair.

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ALTERNATIVE 4 BE ESTABLISHED FOR MT SPOKANE STATE PARK. THE PARK IS THE BEST AND CLOSET OUTDOOR RECREATION LAND WE HAVE IN THE AREA, FOR ALL THE SEASONS.

WITH THE LOW ECONOMY CAUSING LESS MONEY TO CIRCULATE THROUGH THE AREA IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE TO CONSIDER DOING MUCH OUTDOOR RECREATION. THIS STATE PARK IS THE BEST WE HAVE IN THE AREA AND THE COST TO USE THIS LAND KEEPS INCREASING AND WE THE TAX PAYERS ARE GETTING LESS AND LESS BENEFIT FROM IT.

OPENING UP THE LAND WE CAN SKI, BIKE AND HIKE ON DURING THE YEAR, INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO ENJOY THAT LAND. MT SPOKANE STATE PARK IS OFTEN THE FIRST PLACE INDIVIDUALS ARE INTRODUCED TO OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE AREA. INCREASING THE LAND WE CAN USE, HELPS SUPPORT ALL OUTDOOR RECREATION, LAND CONSERVATION AND BENEFITS THE STATE WHEN ASKING FOR MORE FUNDING TO SUPPORT IT. IN ORDER TO LOVE LAND AND TAKE CARE OF IT, YOU HAVE TO USE AND ENJOY IT.

I am currently a weekend 40 for the Ski Patrol. Last year we did a search and rescue on the back side of the mountain. The individual caught his tip on a tree, spun him around and plastered himself against another tree. It took 30 minutes for one of his friends to go down the hill to the road that curves around to the bottom of chair 4 to report the accident. It then took us 30 additional minutes to locate the individual, get the proper equipment down to the hurt skier. Then it took 5 of us to 45 more minutes to get a loaded toboggan down the hill to a snowmobile who could then run the person down the road to the bottom of chair four and then back to the front side to load this person in a waiting helicopter for transport to Sacred Heart Hospital. This person should not be alive today. His left lung was full of holes and had collapsed and he had two front ribs broken and one rear rib broken. He is alive today because of the effort and luck of many people. If we had proper access and recovery equipment to the back side this would not have been the case. We could of had the person taken care of and shipped down to the hospital within 30 to 45 minutes.

I believe that by opening up the back side to a chair and open runs will make our job as patrollers a lot easier than it currently is. By not opening the back side, we will always have people going back there and having the time of their life even if it is their life they are giving up. The above scenario is not the first and will not be the last because the individual who got hurt was a very experienced skier and well known by the area. I hate to lose someone to our negligence and shortsightedness when looking at the area and not expanding it when we have the opportunity to do so. I believe the expansion request is a win, win situation for all.

I support the Mount Spokane Ski area full expansion project. My two sons and I ski on a regular basis at Mount Spokane. We do so because it is the closest drive. We would really like to see the north side fully expanded as it would provide a little longer season and more area to ski. There are other ski areas but they are a much further drive from our home. We wish to utilize the entire park area for recreation. Being able to be outdoors in the winter is a very health and positive recreational activity. So many people will benefit from this expansion for generations to come. I see a great deal of youth that come up to the Mountain for the day to ski or snow board. Keeping our youth active and involved in productive activities should be of paramount concern to the State Parks and Recreation Commission. The State Parks and Recreation Commission should give consideration the impact the expansion will have to our local community particularly giving options to our youth. Also cutting down on carbon release and travel time

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should also be considered. Mount Spokane Ski area is the closest ski area to the central population of Spokane County. All of these factors should be considered in making a decision to allow full expansion of the park.

Please allow Mount Spokane Ski & Snowboard Park to fully expand the ski area by installing a new lift and trails. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

I would really like to see the back side expansion of Mt. Spokane. We are so fortunate to have such a great local hill run by a great group of people. They have been able to keep skiing more affordable which makes it more accessible to more people. I would love to see this expansion. I know a lot of thought was put into making sure the expansion has as little environmental impact as possible.

I am in favor of classification for the ski area as recreation and allowing the expansion to proceed now. This process has taken way to long and the special interests have been allowed to disrupt a well-intentioned Mt Spokane 2000 group. Mt Spokane is a gem in the inland NW that will only get better with the expanded operation allowing more Washington citizens to enjoy it and increasing tourism to the area. I am proud to ski at Mt Spokane and I know that management will be good stewards for our land....as they have always been.

PLEASE APPROVE THE EXPANSION!

For the Part 1 Land Classification (4 alternatives)

Please chose:

Alternative 4 Recreation: Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. This Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane Ski Area, as well as increased tax income for the Washington State Parks.

Part 2 Project Action

Please choose:

Alternative 2 The Enhanced Recreation Alternative. This allows for the lift and seven trails. It includes more grading and clearing.

Much of the PASEA timber land is in poor health. This can be easily seen in the pictures taken from the air and ground which have been shown at the previous State Parks meetings.

Good stewardship of the forest can be seen on the Inland Paper wood lands adjacent to Mt. Spokane. Brush is cut and burned, down timber is removed, and wood not marketed by Inland Paper, is made available for firewood to the public. This is not the case in the Mt. Spokane State Park, particularly in the PASEA.

The forester from the Deer Park area spoke at the Bellingham State Parks meeting about the poor stewardship of the woodlands in the PASEA. He described the poor condition of the PASEA forest, and the cost required to remove the hanging and down timber. By allowing Mt. Spokane 2000 to develop this area for skiing, a sizable portion of this down and dangerous hanging timber can be cleaned up without cost to the State Parks system.

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Please make the choice to maximize recreational use of the PASEA and provide good stewardship of the forest in the PASEA.

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I would strongly support Alternative 4 for the Land Classification and Alternative 3 for the Project action. Increasing the amount of ski able terrain with a minimal impact to the overall park would continue to allow many people in the Greater Spokane area to experience outdoor winter activities. The area in question is already impacted by back country skiers and by creating lift service to this area it will reduce the danger and expense of rescues. I think these alternatives reach the best balance between safety, land usability and preservation of natural areas.

Typically in our country and culture a small and noisy minority can and will halt progress when it comes to development of any kind. In the case of Mt. Spokane's expansion of the ski area the opponents use all sorts of emotion based arguments such as destruction of old growth forest, protection of flora and fauna, drinking water, wildlife, etc.

My preference is for Alternative # 4. It will not eliminate snow-shoeing, destroy forest lands or pollute our drinking water. It will enhance human use of our resources and make Mt. Spokane a far safer and more enjoyable experience for the thousands who ski there each year. But also, hiker, huckleberry picker, lover of nature.

I have visited and supported Mt. Spokane State Park since the early 1980s when I started skiing. I have skied at Mt. Spokane for over 25 years both within the resort boundaries and in the PASEA area. Once my children started skiing, I joined the Mt. Spokane Ski Patrol. Within the last 4 years both of my children joined the patrol. I am currently the Patrol Director and spend over 300 hours per year volunteering both on and off the mountain.

As a member of the Ski Patrol, I spend a lot of time in the PASEA. We responded to over 40 lost skiers last year and most of them were located in the PASEA. Search and rescue is difficult in this area due to the poor health of the forest (windfalls, brush, tight spacing, etc.). In addition, once located the skiers are forced downhill to the snowmobile road and a lengthy traverse or we have to allocate additional patrollers to bring a snowmobile around the bottom for transport. With the additional chair lift, we would be able to simply guide the majority of lost skiers to the bottom of the lift.

I also was on a serious life-threatening injury in the center of the PASEA in February 2013. This skier impacted a tree and nearly died. It required allocating 9 patrollers to transport the patient, care for the patient, and transport medical equipment (over 189 of the patrollers on the mountain). From start to finish, the injury took over 4 hours due to the route required ' down the mountain through very dense timber, onto the service road, hooked to a snowmobile, dragged to the bottom of chair #4, dragged to the top of the mountain, then finally dragged down to the Ski Patrol building. Not only did it endanger the guest's life, but it kept half of the patrol out of position for over 4 hours.

In addition to the safety concerns, I also support classifying the PASEA to allow the additional chair lift to open up the park to additional people. The purpose of a park is to draw the public to enjoy them, and Mt. Spokane would become much more inviting to the intermediate skier with the additional lift. Currently, all skier traffic merges into one cat track that traverses across the mountain and intersects multiple downhill runs. This provides a higher concentration of collision injuries than any other part of the mountain. With the addition of the new forklift, it would remove much of the beginner/intermediate traffic from the current learning area and chair 3 (eliminating congestion and many collision-related injuries).

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In summary, please accept my recommendation to classify the PASEA to allow an additional chairlift as proposed. It provides public safety advantages, financial advantages to the resort through increased skier visits, logistical advantages through removing congested areas, and would allow timber management resulting in a healthier forest.

I am a Junior at Lewis and Clark High School in Spokane Washington. I have skied at Mt. Spokane for many years and worked on and around their fine patrol. For me, Mt. Spokane is a home away from home and a major stress reliever. Mixed between study and family, Mt. Spokane has given me hours on end of volunteer work that pushes me in my goals of becoming a first responder as well as a love to help our community. The issue at hand, for which I am writing, concerns Mt. Spokane's desire for expansion over the back side (north western slope). As a patroller, I have witnessed countless events such as search and rescue and accidents on the back side. Some of the accidents have been life threatening. As a mountain we can place ski boundaries, ropes and enter at your own risk signs but people continually, annually, drop in. Short of building a wall, skiers will continue to go back. Those who crash get lost or injured on the slopes of the back side take away patrol resources from the front and move them towards the unknown. This leaves us open to events unraveling in the areas we normally cover. Opening up the back side would provide a safer environment. Our resources will be better served in designating this area as in bounds. In addition, Mt. Spokane is the go to destination for a day of family fun. We continually see young and old indulging in a sport we can all love. For the novice learner, opening up new groomed trails will make it possible for Mt. Spokane to continue training the skiers and boarders of tomorrow in the best environment possible. Please consider opening the backside for expansion and the safety and enjoyment of our community for years to follow.

Please let's allow for growth at Mt Spokane that truly enhances the area while keeping safe the natural areas. Skier or not, this benefits our area's economy - Remember Buy Local. This is reference to Part 1, Alternate 4.

At age 82, I recently re-newed my 2014-15 Mt. Spokane Season Ski Pass. In as much as I live 140 miles from the Mt. Spokane Ski hill base, I'm running out of time that I can continue-on, writing positive in-put (i.e. comments) to projects - that are becoming ...longer than life to complete!! Pick # 4 before I go-big-or-go-HOME-for-good!!!

I strongly support the planned expansion of Mt Spokane ski area and the recreation designation for that area. It will benefit many groups of recreational users and still leave much of the state park untouched.

I would like to offer my support for Mt Spokane expand the skiable terrain with the proposed terrain expansion. My family and I ski and recreate at Mt Spokane year round. We enjoy the access offered and the support it provides our family.

I support the expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park into the PASEA area. The expansion has been proposed in such a way as to minimize impact on the natural surroundings. Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is an important destination for eastern Washington. It provides convenient and low cost access to outdoor winter recreation for all ages. The proposed expansion is modest and not aggressive. It will enable Alpine skiing to thrive, which benefits the greater Spokane area in both economic value and recreational value. Please quit wasting our tax dollars in putting up more and more hoops and barriers and approve this modest expansion. Thank you.

I want to provide my support to Alternative 4 of the Mt Spokane ski hill development and classification. I ski at Mt. Spokane and know the terrain under discussion, and feel that it will be a significant addition to the area that this resort adds to the local area. This ski area is a great resource of the local area, and without expansion, this ski area risks falling behind other local ski areas, specifically Schweitzer, 49 north, and Sugar Mountain.

I feel that the opponents to this expansion have used every tactic possible to delay and challenge every step in the process; a delay that results in major expenses. Every approval has been reviewed multiple times with legal repercussions. Of course, our legal system allows this, which is why it happens. It does not reflect, however, the good planning and cooperation with the agencies who oversee operations inside the state park.

I ask the review committee to evaluate the number of people who will get recreational benefit from this proposal: Will the number of hikers who

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enjoy the old growth area be larger or smaller than the number of skiers who can make use of this area. And, does the proposed development significantly destroy the existing area. I would say no to this last question. Some old growth trees would be removed to make way for the ski runs, but the loss of habitat is minimal, and the access by the public is greatly enhanced.

I urge you to approve alternative 4 for Mt. Spokane, and put an end to the delay tactics that have been present for so many years.

Why would we not expand this area? Come on people. Let's do the right thing.

I am all for the development of a ski lift to open up the area in question. I have been skiing for 54 years I have been there extensively. By the looks of the forest it has gone un-managed to date. There are diseased trees and a ton of windfall or damage. If runs were developed to mesh nicely with the natural forest then I cannot believe it would be anything but positive for the health of the forest and the recreational area. I do not know who benefits from the selective logging but doesn't that provide revenue as well? Cleaning up the forest and creating runs with one chair I have to believe is minimally invasive and the possible revenue to the area would be great. As of now Mt. Spokane is a third rate ski hill with the only thing going for it being close to Spokane. It simply is not inviting like Schweitzer...Silver etc. I think it would attract many that would spend money in the area if the mountain were developed more. The forest is cleaned up and revenue increased. A win-win. Thanks,

I disagree with the backside expansion. It will only disrupt moose habitats and increase ticket prices.

I am in favor of expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski area, Plan # 2, for the following reasons:

The expansion will allow excess for more skiers with this plan. As it is now only the hardest of hikers may ski in this area. I am an old guy of 78 and this will allow me to enjoy the north exposure.

The Mt. Spokane 2000 Non Profit has done a beautiful job of renewing and operating this local gem of a ski area just 12 miles from my Spokane home. With this new carefully planned expansion it could attract new skiers to the area.

Please allow the expansion of the MT Spokane winter park. This is a very convent area for all of the folks in Spokane county to relax and have fun. You See, Mt spokane is close enough that everyone with a full time job can still enjoy the actives on weekdays either before or after work. Reading what some of the nay sayers are saying is not true. Just look at the Mt spokane website they are busting all the myths that are being thrown around. The area we want to expand is already being used the rest of the year. Just not during the winter season. Makes sense you would allow a new lift to be put in right there. It's not going to cost the tax payers anything.

I am writing in hopes that the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will classify the land on the backside of the mountain alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area for recreation. This land classification alternative #4 Recreation" will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas and solidify the long term future of Mt. Spokane.

Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable four season recreation destination for citizens of Spokane and the surrounding areas. It's affordable for everyone and caters to all types of skiers, snowboarders and families. Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain which also promotes better skier safety. Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator and partner, working with good stewards of this land over the past decade. The expansion and use for recreational skiing would be good for Spokane and the surrounding communities. The commission should support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and region.

This classification and expansion will not only benefit the mountain but all winter enthusiasts. Feel free to write more if you want or talk about your personal experience or connection to Mt. Spokane. Thank you so much for your support friends!

I am in favor of Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

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please dont let them put a chair lift on the back side of mt. Spokane it will ruin the forest. one can alrady access the backside and take the cat track to chair 4. there is no neede for a lift back there. the added lift will only raise the price of a lift ticket witch is alrady way to high of prices. its the same mt as it was 10 years ago so why are prices 50\$ and up its a rip off.

I would like to voice my support for the proposed expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski area.

Please approve.

Land Classification alternative #4 Recreation will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas and solidify the long-term future of Mt. Spokane

- Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable 4-season recreation destination for citizens of this region
 - Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain, which also promotes better skier safety
 - Mt. Spokane has been a collaborator and partner, working as good stewards of this land over the past decade
 - Over several years of planning and extensive studies, Mt. Spokane's land classification has been adapted to preserve and protect 90% of the forest in its expansion area.
- The expansion, and use for recreational skiing, would be good for Spokane
- The Commission should support this land classification request for Recreational use, as the expansion will benefit the state and the region.
 - I started skiing at the mountain in 1961. This is so important for our region.

Please allow Mt Spokane Ski Area to expand its recreation possibilities on the backside we really need this.

This is in response to the proposed Mt. Spokane expansion. My family has enjoyed skiing at Mt Spokane for three generations, soon to be four. All the people I have dealt with in the Mt Spokane organization have always impressed me with their integrity and concern for the environment. The proposed expansion would be a natural progression to improve the outdoor experience at Mt. Spokane for the skiers and other users of the Mountain. I am very familiar with area involved and can see no negative environmental impact. Expanding the ski area would also help Mt. Spokane be more competitive with other ski areas to increase their market share of the business. All this helps Mt. Spokane remain as one of the best and most accessible recreational areas to the Spokane area.

My wife and I both think the expansion on Mt Spokane would be a good addition to the ski hill. People are already skiing the area because of the deeper snow on that side of the mountain. There is a safety issue due to the fact if you miss judge your line you can end up not being able to hike back to chair 4. The placement of the new chair would eliminate this problem. We would love to feel comfortable skiing that part of the mountain with the chair in place.

We have both hiked and snow shoed the mountain for years and see no reason why the expansion would change that. The ability to enjoy the beautiful forest and wildlife viewing is something we cherish every trip we make. We can't believe that cutting 7 runs onto the mountain is going to affect wildlife in any significant way.

We understand there are many things to consider. We hope you weigh all of the facts and make the decision to allow the expansion to go forward.

I am in favor of alternative 4. I believe the addition of an extra chairlift and more ski runs for Mt. Spokane will significantly improve the quality of recreation for the greater Spokane community. I enjoy skiing at Mt. Spokane and have purchased a season pass on several occasions. However, the limited number of lifts and variety of terrain at Mt. Spokane have often forced me to leave our area for better skiing, and I would very much prefer to stay local. I also believe this development will be done in an environmentally friendly manner and will enhance rather than detract from the

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environment. Thank you for your consideration.

As a member of this great outdoor recreation community I support the following land use alternative:

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. Mt. Spokane has shown great resolve in creating a safe alpine skiing venue for families. They have effectively balanced responsible land stewardship with recreation and they have proven to be accountable to the people they serve. Like any great company or non-profit if you are not growing your dieing let Mt. Spokane GROW.

To anyone familiar with Mt. Spokane, it should be obvious that allowing this expansion of the existing ski area is the best interests of all parties, including Nature.

1) People already ski in the proposal area.

-- The lack of defined trails, lifts, and ease of emergency access creates a dangerous situation for those skiers already making use of the proposed area.

-- By defining ski runs, it is more likely that skiers will stick to those runs, potentially minimizing the actual human impact to nature (as skiers are presently free to go wherever they would like, in the absence of defined runs).

2) This proposal augments nature, it does not destroy it.

-- By engaging in prudent forest management, the potential for destructive wildfires is mitigated.

-- Opening up hillsides, such as via ski runs, produces elk-friendly meadow areas.

3) Mt. Spokane is an absolutely jewel for skiers

--- My family gladly travels the 4 hours several times per ski season because Mt. Spokane is among the best family-oriented, affordable ski areas in the northwest. It's great skiing and the ski area is well-run. Augmenting an existing ski area is a reasonable environmental choice, especially as it is a small number of acres given the overall size of the state park.

I recommend that MT Spokane be allowed to expand their skiing and snowboarding terrain. They would greatly add to the value and experience to the mountain. I believe that they should be granted full permission to add another lift and all permits be granted. Thank you,

The work has been done with the planning and environmental reviews and has been approved. Move the project forward! It is a great plan and will benefit many.

My wife and I have spent some time reviewing the Combined Environmental Impact Statement regarding the land classification of the PASEA at Mt. Spokane. We were certainly impressed with the thoroughness of the study, the attention given to protecting old growth timber, and the waterways within the area. We can see no valid reason why the land classification described in Alternative 4 of the DEIS cannot be approved. We urge you to give the Mt. Spokane plan favorable consideration.

Thank you for your consideration and continued devotion to the park. My background includes over 15 years of skiing at Mt. Spokane. I learned at the ski school. I progressed and owe a debt to the mountain.

I do not have an opinion on expansion, only suggestions. I love the backside off of chair one. We have named all the pitches. I would like to see runs cut appropriately. There are natural glades spattered throughout the planned area. It would be a shame to cut ski runs into these areas. I believe that preserving these glades as well as glading several new sections is the proper route. By this the park may boast gladed skiing as well as new cut runs.

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Much of the opposition that I have heard personally revolves heavily around losing terrain rather than gaining. I have only been a bystander and have been living abroad in Montana the past several years but am planning a return to Spokane. Therefore I do not know nearly all of the facts. Concessions must be made to everyone. Mt Spokane is an excellent family mountain but expert terrain is mild. Tree skiing is a huge attribute to the park! I love some of the steeper pitches (Exterminator, Two Face, etc) but I love the trees next to Rock Slide and the backside off of chair 1 the best. New groomers on the backside will not benefit myself nor the others who love the backside and I believe these customers are just as important to preserve as the families.

Thank you for your time. I would love a streamlined response and continued dialog as to the cutting of new runs. I plan on returning this year for the night skiing alone but Silver is still in the running...

I would like to voice my support for Alternative 4 because, as a recreational mountain biker, the area begin proposed as Recreation means that it will remain open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan. Mountain biking is a healthy, family friendly activity that should be encouraged at every opportunity. It provides the aforementioned health benefits to the participants, and an economic boost to the communities that support it with trails to play on.

I would like to communicate my support for Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area and I would like to see the area proposed as recreation be open to mountain bike users.

I want to make sure that mountain biking is allowed. Therefore, I support Alternative 4 and the area proposed as recreation to remand open to mountain bikes.

I support Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area of the Mt. Spokane Draft Environmental Impact State land classification. Please consider classifying the proposed area as Recreation to remain open for mountain biking activities.

Please keep or expand Mountain Biking opportunities on Mt Spokane. Mountain biking is one of the healthiest and most popular forms of exercise these days and we need as many trails open as possible to keep our population fit.

I support alternative #4 as there can never be enough mountain bike trails. Mountain biking is not only good for one's physical and mental well-being but is a sport which consistently increases in numbers which is very good for tourism and the economy. Give mountain biking the credit it deserves. It is not going away anytime soon.

Please consider the following comments with regard to the Mt. Spokane Land Classification on behalf of Spokane Audubon and its 160 members. The mission of Spokane Audubon is to nurture and protect birds and other wildlife and their habitats, and to encourage biological diversity for the benefit of people and nature in the Spokane region and the world in which we live. Spokane Audubon is also part of the Save Mt. Spokane Coalition and has been involved in the planning process including scoping.

Land Classification

Spokane Audubon agrees with the purpose and need for completing the CAMP process for Mt. Spokane State Park. Overall we support Alternative 2, classification of the PASEA as a Natural Forest Area. We agree with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife assessment that the old growth forest habitat on the north aspect of Mount Spokane is unique and has high value for wildlife and biodiversity.

Considering that 2/3 of the high elevation (above 4000 feet) of Mount Spokane State Park is dedicated to the developed ski area, preservation of the remaining high elevation forest should be the highest priority of Washington State Parks. Mt. Spokane is only one of two areas in Spokane County

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over 4250 feet in elevation and contains the largest expanse of old growth habitat in Spokane County. Designation of the PASEA as Recreation under Alternative 4 would significantly fragment this habitat type. □

The Washington State Parks Land Classification System defines Natural Forest Area as

(a) Old-growth forest communities that have developed for one hundred fifty years or longer and have the following structural characteristics: Large old-growth trees, large snags, large logs on land, and large logs in streams; or

(b) Mature forest communities that have developed for ninety years or longer; or

(c) Unusual forest communities and/or interrelated vegetative communities of significant ecological value. an extremely unique forest ecosystem for the region with a high value for wildlife and species diversity.

All of the above conditions are met at the headwaters of Blanchard Creek on the north slopes of the PASEA.

We agree that the preservation of forest processes should be subordinate to recreation, however we would like to raise the following concerns and questions regarding Recreation in the Natural Forest Area:

1. How will state parks be able to distinguish between off-trail cross-country skiing, which is listed a permitted activity and backcountry skiing, which would not be permitted Since this distinction seems rather arbitrary, we suggest that non-motorized low-impact activities (hiking, snowshoeing, skiing) be allowed as long as these activities do not interfere with the preservation of natural forest conditions.

Proposed Ski Area Expansion

Spokane Audubon is especially concerned with the ecological impacts that would result from the ski area expansion (PASEA). Therefore we recommend that the Washington Parks Commission choose Alternative 1, no action.

The DEIS is problematic and insufficient in the following areas:

1. Purpose and need.

Purpose #2 is highly questionable as the proposed lift and runs would be on the southwest slopes, not the north facing slopes as stated for better snow retention. If the authors of the DEIS have such trouble with compass directions, it seriously undermines the credibility of the rest of the document.

The DEIS is insufficient in that there is no analysis of the net loss of backcountry skiing opportunities. The DEIS assumes that expansion would improve the recreational opportunities, yet expansion would eliminate a unique backcountry experience and replace it with more of what is currently available.

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The DEIS fails to address potential upgrades to the existing facilities as alternatives. For example, the perceived need to provide for beginner and intermediate skiers could be easily met by installing midway stations on the existing lifts.

2. Mitigation.

Mitigation measures for Alternatives 2 and 3 are inadequate with regard to preservation of old growth forest. Construction of a lift and ski runs require cutting trees and fragmentation of the forest, which essentially eliminates the structure and function of old growth as suitable wildlife habitat.

Noxious weed assessment and management is inadequate, as it is practically non-existent. The DEIS needs to include a comprehensive assessment of how the spread of noxious weeds will be controlled with the removal of the over story. Clearing ski runs will greatly increase the spread of noxious weeds, and a mitigation plan needs to be in place before approval of either Alternative 2 or 3.

3. Wildlife

Lynx: Multiple sightings of lynx have been recorded and suitable habitat exists, ski area expansion would eliminate the upper slopes of Mt. Spokane as suitable habitat. Numerous studies suggest that ski area development is incompatible with lynx occupation.

Pacific Wren: Potential breeding habitat currently exists, but with the impact of ski area expansion on wetlands and streams, this would be eliminated.

Pileated woodpecker and brown creeper, both resident species, would be highly affected by the removal of snags that would accompany ski area expansion.

Northern Goshawk are known year-round residents and nest on Mt. Spokane. Our members have recorded nestlings just below the PASEA. A more extensive survey of goshawk nesting sites is necessary in the PASEA as few people enter this area in the spring and summer due to heavy forest and lack of trails. Therefore few nests would have been found.

Black-backed woodpeckers, which are rare in Spokane County, occur on Mt. Spokane. The DEIS needs to include a more extensive survey of this species along with the Three-toed Woodpecker which is also rare and found in the park. The DEIS makes no mention of the Three-toed Woodpecker; this needs to be addressed.

4. Fragmentation and habitat loss.

The DEIS fails to adequately address the cumulative effect of the loss of habitat connectivity to the Selkirk Mountains, especially with regard to landscape level changes anticipated with increase climatic changes. The DEIS needs to address current and anticipated land use activities on private and federal lands that could increase the importance of intact subalpine forest on wildlife species.

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5. Summer impacts.

With its focus on winter recreation, the DEIS is currently missing any impacts that will occur from April to November and these need to be addressed in the DEIS. These impacts include:

1. More rapid snowmelt. The loss of over story and tree cover resulting from ski runs and lift construction will increase the rapidity of snowmelt, resulting in increased erosion and loss of soil moisture.
2. Increased soil erosion. One needs only to examine the current ski runs to see that the surface is loose soil and rock filled with runnels.
3. Visual and recreational impacts. Off season, the current ski area is unsightly and unsuitable for hiking, biking or other recreation, as the slopes are unstable and covered in noxious weeds.

For the above reasons, Spokane Audubon recommends that the Washington Parks Commission classify the PASEA as a Natural Forest Area and choose the no action alternative in section III, which would preclude ski area expansion. The high elevation area of Mt. Spokane is too valuable as wildlife habitat and intact forest to be devoted to a single use (alpine skiing) which would severely reduce the state parks ability to meet one of its core values: Commitment to stewardship that transmits high quality park assets to future generations. □

I am an avid participant in a variety of recreational activities, including Mountain Biking, Horse Riding, and Hiking. Of those sports, Mountain Biking is the one that I am most interested in preserving in Mt Spokane State Park. I support Alternative 4 for that reason. I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remains open to mountain bikes. Mountain biking is a sport easily adopted by a variety of people in Washington state, and had the advantage of being of great interest to both young and old. It does not require a large amount of money to get involved in, with second hand bikes and hybrid bikes able to do easy trails. Washington state should be encouraging healthy recreational activities, and so should adopt Alternative 4 to preserve Mountain Biking in the park.

I support Alternative 4 because I deeply want to see the area proposed as Recreation remain OPEN to mountain bikes, as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

Mountain biking is something that I cherish deeply - I also spend boat loads of money at local restaurants and on lodging when I come to town to ride Mt. Spokane. Mountain biking is good for people, good for nature and good for business.

Part I-land classification.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I support Alternative 4 to this plan because I would like to see the recreation area open for mountain bikes.

I feel very strongly that all users of the Mount Spokane area should have continued access to the future trail development. As an avid mountain biker, it concerns me that several of the proposed options would remove bicycles from the users who can enjoy the trails. Since alternative 4 appears to be the only option that supports continued access for bicycles, I support that option.

Multi-use trails work well all over the state in a number of areas that I have ridden and hiked, such as Riverside State Park, Kettle Crest and Sullivan Lake. As cyclists, we are accustomed to stopping for hikers and horsemen and have had no problems with either group. I have found all trail users

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to be respectful of each other and of others; choice of mode, whether that be bicycle, boots or horse.

As an avid mountain biker I support alternative 4 for the project above because I want to see the recreation area remain open to mountain bikers. Thank you.

I recently moved back to the NW from the East coast. One aspect of my return was the strong focus on outdoor activities, especially the recent focus on mountain biking. I have biked in the Mt Spokane park in the past and hope to continue to do so. I hope to also share my love of the outdoors and mountain biking with my children. Please keep this park open to mountain biking!

Since I start riding my bike 3 years ago, out on the trails, my health has improved 150%. I'm 50 years old and would like to keep my health this way. Please consider the Alternative measure 4 for this new expansion project.

I support Alternative 4, as it would allow for future mountain biking in the expansion area.

It is important to me to continue to provide spaces for mountain biking in Washington State Parks--my first off-road rides were in a Washington State Park, and I continue to purchase an annual Discover pass for the sole reason of biking on state park trails. Please keep the Proposed Alpine Ski Expansion Area recreation area open for mountain biking during the off-season so others like me can continue to enjoy our sport.

I have seen plans to allow for land use designations for PASEA. As a hiker and mountain biker, I strongly support the Alternative 4, to allow for designation of this land for use by mountain bikes as well as other users. Thank you so much for your work on this project.

I just want to add my support for continued mountain bike use at Mt. Spokane. I try to make it over to the park twice a year to ride my mountain bike and believe that we should continue to have access to the trails there. The local chapter of Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance is on hand to do construction, repair, and maintenance so the costs of such activities are greatly reduced. As a continued destination for mountain biking many positive aspects are promoted. Time engaged in physical activity and spent with family and friends. Not to mention dollars brought into the area in the form of tourist dollars and tax. This is a positive influence on society when so many things can be going wrong.

I would like to state that I am not in support of an expansion of Mt. Spokane PASEA where a new ski lift is installed and new ski runs cut and graded as noted in some alternatives in the DEIS. I am a current back country snowboarder and mountain biker that uses Mt Spokane regularly and I would like to see the proposed area left in its current state. I would support an alternative plan that preserves the forest yet allows for winter time use as well as warm weather non-motorized light impact uses (hiking and mountain biking). I would also support new single track trails to be built according to sustainable trail building techniques championed by WSP, IMBA and Evergreen Mountain Bike Association.

Please support Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. I would like to see the area proposed as recreation remains open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

Please consider Alternative 4 for the land classification for the Mt Spokane PASEA. As skier, snowboarders AND mountain bikers, this would make this great resource available to me and my family for year-round recreation. This region also has very active mountain bike and trail advocacy and maintenance groups that are more than willing to work with the USFS now and into the future to ensure that any mountain bike trails are properly maintained. Further, these groups work hard to educate our fellow mountain bikers as to the rules of the trail to ensure that this type of quality resource remain available for generations to come.

I know this mountain better than most, I love it with all of my heart. The existence of Mt. Spokane State Park and Mt. Spokane Ski Area depends on this expansion. I've written out about eight reasons why we need the Red Chair. Simply put, I know fully that Alternative 4 is the best option for this community.

I support Alternative 4: the area proposed as Recreation needs to remain open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan. Alpine ski areas are a natural mountain biking haven (heaven!) during the summer months and are a proven and extremely efficient utilization of natural resources. Allow the area to be loved, well-tended and cared for by responsible upstanding recreationists year-round. Mountain bikers, especially when brought together for trail maintenance and trail building volunteer events, are an asset to the community.

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With regards to part I - land classification, I support Alternative 4. I want to see the area proposed as Recreation, remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I am interested in the development process for new recreational areas and would like to see consideration taken in the steps to insure the use of the land is kept as wide open as possible. When feasible, new recreational areas should not be developed for only one use. For example, terrain for skiing should also be available for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. It may not be possible to have the land be available for all, but it shouldn't be exclusive to just one activity that is only done a couple months of the year.

I would like to strongly voice my support for classifying the Mt Spokane area as Alternative 4. I am an avid mountain biker, and believe that Mt Spokane should continue to be open for mountain biking as well as continuing to develop mixed and single use trails that support mountain biking. I am also a nordic and alpine skier and hope that this area will embrace both summer and winter recreational opportunities afforded by the mountain. Thanks for your support.

I'm in support of mountain bike access on Mt Spokane and surrounding areas. It can bring quite a bit of income to the area during the summer months if developed as a multiuser trail network.

Please consider the following in support of Alternative 4 to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes and hiking, we are stewards of the trail as mountain bikers our community strives to both enjoy and respect nature. As evidenced by the trail upkeep of 140, I have personally put time into maintaining these trails and the enjoyment they bring to all ages. The mountain biking community here in Spokane loves to call Mt Spokane one of our premier Mt Biking areas and respectively would like to see continual access to trails and additional access if granted.

I support Alternative 4 as I would like to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I am the father of 3 young children (ages 3, 6, 9) and the way we bond as a family is playing together outside. In the winter, we ski. In the summer, we mountain bike, rock climb, and hike. One of the reasons I live in Washington is the ample accessibility of mountain biking for my family, and it is important that the state continue to expand the offerings. More than just fun, mountain biking tourism is a driver of economic development in surrounding areas (<http://www.pinkbike.com/u/leelau/blog/economic-impacts-of-mountain-biking-tourism.html>), and as a non-motorized sport, it has minimal impact on the environment. It promotes healthy children, adults, active tourists enjoying nature, and creates future land conservationists who will fight to preserve open space .

I strongly support Alternative 4 in the Mount Spokane planning process because I want to see this recreation area remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I am writing in support of the Alternative 4 of this plan because I and my fellow mountain bike friends want to see the area proposed as Recreation so it remains open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan. Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed for Recreation, remaining open to mountain bikes.

I have already commented that I would like to see the ski expansion proceed. I would also like to add the following comments regarding the mountain bike proposal-

Part I-land classification. I would like to see Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area proceed.

I support Alternative 4.

I support Alternative 4 because you want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Part I-land classification

I'd like to let you know that I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as "Recreation" remaining open to mountain bikes.

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As a lifetime skier and hiker at Mt. Spokane I feel compelled to write to you about the future plans to expand the ski area and have the area classified Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. I believe with this classification will allow for recreational improvements as well as maintaining the environmental areas with the upmost respect to the natural areas

I believe Mt. Spokane is a vital asset to Spokane and the surrounding area. I believe its ski school is as good, if not better, than any of the other programs at surrounding resorts. I have a two and half year old and she will be soon taking lessons at the mountain. I believe the closeness and affordable prices make this an essential alternative to more expensive and further away resorts.

As other resorts in the area expand and upgrade facilities, I believe it is imperative for Mr. Spokane to do the same in order to stay viable. I have followed the expansion plans for the last ten years and believe that Mt. Spokane, and it's expansion committee, have done due diligence in respecting and preserving the forest on the mountain and am confident they will continue to do so in the expansion area.

I believe the Commission should support this expansion which would benefit not only Spokane, but our visitors as well.

You should do the research, nearly every mountain resort in America is expanding into bike parks for the summer and it is profitable when done right. Don't be left in behind when there is no reason for it

I write this comment today in hopes of having an impact on the proceedings of this decision. I am writing this in support of ALTERNATIVE 4. I have chosen this alternative after reading the publicly available documentation on this decision process. My decision is based on the impacts of reclassification, which would prevent mountain biking activities to take place on land that is reclassified for use as alpine-skiing recreational areas.

My family and I are avid mountain bikers, and also active members of the Evergreen bike club. As a result I am insulted and appalled by the mere consideration of this reclassification. If this reclassification happens the impact on the mountain biking community in Spokane will be huge. We would lose our current access to the top of the mountain, and be prevented from building multi-use trails up there as well. If this reclassification happens, hundreds of man hours will become useless, and the year round use of the mountain will be severely hampered. So for the sake of all of the community members that use this mountain year round, do not reclassify the land.

Please pick this choice, Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area. My family loves to hike and mountain bike on the trails at Mount Spokane. This last year my son and I have worked on the trails twice during this summer. I would hate to lose that family time. We do not ski, it cost to much for lift tickets. Please pick Alternative 4

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remains open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan. Please keep this area, and any area possible, fully open to mountain biking.

Mt Spokane should always be open for mountain bikes and efforts should be made to increase and improve the trails. State government should work with groups who are interested in development and maintenance and allow them to continue work. Alternative 4 for the Mt Spokane PASEA should be pursued. Thank you.

I support alternate 4. I recreate at mt Spokane via ski both alpine and nordic, road bike, mt. bike, hiking, snowshoeing.

Please Support Alternative 4. Recreation should include Mt Spokane being open to mountain bikes.

For Mt. Spokane, please use the designation Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area. This is the only alternative that allows for Mountain Bike use which Mt. Spokane is perfect for and a very large user group. This designation allows for the growth of the sport and more opportunities for kids, teens, and young adult user groups; who are more often biking than hiking.

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I fully support the expansion of the Mt Spokane ski area. The expanded area is needed and will make the ski area competitive with the other area resort. The area is not pristine and there is many square miles of habitat and areas for the hikers.

Mt Spokane has been a viable recreation area for over 100 years, my children's grandparents skied there as young adults and our family has continued the tradition. The ski area has grown with each decade as has the number of families who continued to utilize the area. Mt Spokane is competing with several other ski resorts in the area, it needs to be kept competitive which only an expansion can do. Please support the expansion so more can enjoy the Spokane regions best out your backdoor ski area.

Presently skiers already use that area. As this is out of bounds this is a dangerous practice. Opening this area would enhance public safety and allow safer access for less than expert skiers. In the public interest the only responsible decision is to allow the expansion.

Please choose option 4! Thank you

I SUPPORT Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to MOUNTAIN BIKES as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I support Alternative 4 (Part I-land classification) because I believe the area should remain open to recreation including mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

After reviewing both sides of this argument I can see no reason for Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard park to go through with the expansion. As it stands at this time, There is not enough parking or room in the lodges for the number of skiers and snowboards that use the park.

As the number of snowmobilers increase there have been many near accidents with the limited space they have. To claim that this expansion would be increasing the number of trails for snowmobiles, would also be increasing the number of snowmobilers. I'm sure the hope is also to increase the number of skiers. With this said, Mt. Spokane cannot grow in size. The plan is just to push more people into the same size area. The only way to accommodate the increase in people is to clear more of the forest to add ski runs, snowmobile roads, access roads for cars and trucks and parking for the users.

Above all, through the whole process pushing the pedestrian (snowshoers and backcountry skiers) traffic out.

This is just addressing the people and space issues, without addressing the environmental aspects. Using common sense can only lead one to see that added more people, more vehicles (cars, trucks and snowmobiles), more roads, more parking, a greater electrical load, and clearing more forest land can only be a greater impact on the small amount of space that's left on Mt. Spokane.

I support mountain biking. It is a low impact activity that brings tourist dollars to the surrounding area, and provides a healthy outlet for youth and adults. If mountain biking is not allowed in Mount Spokane State Park, I will have no reason to visit the area, stay in your hotels, and patronize local restaurants and stores.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

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Our family enjoys the beautiful trails for mountain biking. We would love to see more of them. The park is huge and has plenty of room for all to enjoy. I do believe that they need to make more trails specifically designed for biking. There are a lot of places building bike parks throughout the country which brings in revenue for the state. I know there have been complaints over the years between different user groups and this is because we all share the same trails (for the most part).I understand the fears of many regarding the destruction of the park due to mountain biking. I think if you look at other examples around the country you will find this to not be the case. We hope to see more trails in the near future

Please note that I support the option #4 for the Mt. Spokane proposal. A beautiful area with many resources and I believe mountain biking should be allowed.

Use of long distance trails that have typically been reserved for non-motorized use is a bad idea. As a hiker, skier, and bicyclist I believe there needs to be less co-mingling of motorized and non-motorized use, and we need more places to get away from motorized travel. Allowing motor vehicles on trails like the John Wayne trail and the Centennial trail will drive the walker's skiers and bicycles away. During a recent Hog Loppet at Blewett pass I experienced how difficult it was to ski with Snowmobiles, the fumes from the vehicles lingered in the air long after the snowmobiles were gone making it hard to breath. Let's find more places to reserve for quiet use.

I support alternative 4. I mountain bike with my 10 and 7 year old boys often. Their grandparents live near Mt. Spokane state park and any of the other plans are likely to leave us without access to Mt. Spokane State Park in the form we love.

I am against constructing a new chairlift and the seven new ski trails which would require clear cutting of the old growth forest in the area. Old growth, native forests are an increasingly rare and irreplaceable resource that should be protected and enjoyed by the community intact. Since 2007, both the Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The scientific perspective provided by these official organizations should not be readily disregarded. The DEIS does not adequately address the impact on fisheries, wildlife, and climate change. The cultural impact of losing such a beautiful resource should also be better considered.

Our family of 6 all mountains bike and enjoy riding the trails in our beautiful state. We frequently visit the Spokane area as two of our children go to college there.

Mt. Spokane is a lovely area and a wonderful place to mountain bike.

Please make every effort and consideration to include mountain biking in your future plans for that area.

I think that taking the old land for the resort is a TERRIBLE idea. You're taking wilderness out of our beautiful mountain. What about the hikers and snow shoers that want to experience the wilderness and the trails? Or just the resort. This is a terrible idea and the snow shoe and hikers need to be put into consideration. We need our space and none of us want to see a resort.

Please consider that mountain bike access be maintained and expanded at the Mount Spokane State Park.

I RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 4 FOR THE PART I LAND USE CLASSIFICATION FOR THIS PROJECT

I support Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park plan for expansion. I believe it is designed to protect the Park as well as provide the needed recreational opportunities for all the users of the Park. It is designed to be a good management plan of the already permitted area for the Ski and Snowboard Park.

With regards to the Mount Spokane State Park I am in support of Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area-is the only option that allows certainty of access to this area for bikes. I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I have written before in support of the proposed (small) expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area. I previously spelled out some of my reasons why I

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believe the expansion is in the best interest of the state, the State Parks Department and the public at large. I have read the DEIS and followed and heard both sides of the debate.

An article on page B5 of the September 27, 2014 edition of the Spokesman-Review by Leslie R. Weatherhead was far more eloquent than I could ever hope to be. If you have not already done so, please read it at:

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2014/sep/27/special-to-the-spokesman-review-expansion-of-ski/> .

As Ms. Weatherhead implies, parks are established for the recreation and enjoyment of people into perpetuity. That also implies that parks cannot be overused or they won't be usable as parks into perpetuity. Also, it goes without saying that people can't enjoy a park that is inaccessible to them. That is why we have laws like the ADA that promote access to places so that more people are able to utilize and enjoy those places.

It is also common sense that if people harm or destroy a park and the wildlife therein, it will make the park less attractive to people so they will no longer come to the park. I really hope no one on either side of the debate wants that. It is important to note, however, the vast, vast majority of people on both sides of the debate would be outraged by anyone who would destroy the beauty of a park and/or harm the wildlife therein. As you probably know, that vast majority also includes the vast majority of winter outdoor recreationalists. As you no doubt know, a balance must be maintained between under-use and over-use

It also seems irrefutable that if the ski area expansion could make 2% of Mt. Spokane State Park more accessible to more people (as is proposed by the expansion plan) and in so doing, produce a 5% increase in park utilization (in this case, by skiers and other winter outdoor enthusiasts), while at the same time maintain and/or reduce any environmental impacts to the park, such a proposal should be adopted.

A small, but vocal, minority would have the Park returned to an area less accessible to the general public. In return, they would have a more exclusive use of the park for themselves. At least, that is what I make of the Lands Councils position against the proposed ski area expansion. Please do everything in your power to support the proposed expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski Area. It is a thoroughly researched and balanced proposal which merits adoption.

I am writing in support of the terrain expansion at Mt. Spokane. More specifically, I am in support of

Part 1 Land Classification - Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Which would allow for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Subsequently, I am in support of Part 2 Project Action and either Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allowing for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing or Alternative 3 - Mitigated Alternative. Allowing for the lift and seven trails but doesn't include as much grading and clearing.

I must admit I was reluctant to support the expansion initially. I felt Mt. Spokane 2000 should focus on upgrading its current infrastructure, including improved seats on existing chair lifts, finding creative ways to mitigate the amount of traffic on the cat track from the chair 3 area to chair 2 and 5, and continued clearing of snags/brush, etc... in tree/glade areas within the current ski area boundary. However, I have come to the conclusion the expansion will most likely increase the number of skier visits, spread skier traffic more effectively across the mountain, increase operating revenues,

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and enable Mt. Spokane 2000 to work toward the infrastructure goals outlined above. I do believe these goals are part of their ongoing plans.

Regarding the concerns around removing trees and disrupting natural habitat, I have studied the EIS documents and images and it appears to me the trails and lift would be located in areas necessitating the least amount of physical disruption to the terrain.

I am a skier and Mt. Spokane is my primary choice for this recreational activity. Having skied there for nearly 40 years, the prospect of skiing new lift served terrain is, admittedly, exciting.

My family and I enjoy skiing at Mt Spokane and look forward to the expansion of the area as stated in Alternative 4.

The ski area is a great recreational resource for our area and the need for additional runs for downhill skiing is important to keep the mountain viable for all ages and levels of skiers and snow boarders.

It has been my understanding that the expansion area is part of the areas lease from the State; if that is the case it should be used for the expansion of the skiing facilities for the installing of a chair lift and the addition of seven trails.

MT Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is used by four generations of my family and we all look forward to the expansion of the area for that use.

We, the Covelli-Ellison family, wholeheartedly support the proposed expansion, which will open up additional terrain for alpine skiing at Mt. Spokane State Park. We are therefore in favor of the land classification as recreational.

Our family has many ties to the Mt. Spokane State Park and the alpine ski area. My husband is a committed Mt. Spokane Ski Patroller, serving as Director from 2011 2013. We taught our daughters to ski at Mt. Spokane at three. They ski raced for Spokane Ski Racing Association (SSRA) for a decade and later became coaches for SSRA. The alpine ski area richly serves as a vital part of our familys history.

We would like to see the alpine ski resort on Mt. Spokane thrive. As other competing resorts have undergone terrain expansion in the last decade and many alpine skiers have become less enthusiastic about skiing at Mt. Spokane. This proposed expansion will provide more intermediate terrain on the mountain, which is greatly needed and will serve the majority of the alpine ski population. We believe it will contribute to the overall success of the Mt. Spokane alpine resort.

We believe that the alpine ski resort within Mt. Spokane State Park is truly a jewel for Spokane and we want it to thrive for future generations so that they, too, may come to treasure it as our family has.

Oh, gosh, I messed up just now! I meant to say that I support Alternatives 2 or 3 just now, NOT 1 or 2!!! Please disregard my statement from a few minutes ago and use this one instead.

This column expresses my own viewpoint very effectively.

Sept. 27, 2014

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The Washington State Parks Commission invited comments upon a draft environmental impact statement related to a proposal to open up additional terrain for skiing at Mount Spokane State Park. Here is mine:

I unreservedly support the proposed expansion of the Mt. Spokane ski area. Thus, I support whichever alternative under consideration will best serve the purpose of expanding the ski area to make more terrain available to skiers.

I am an environmentalist. I love the outdoors, the trees and the creatures that inhabit the outdoors. I also love people, and I believe that people's lives are enriched by being connected to the outdoors in meaningful ways and that people's appreciation and support for the environment are increased by opportunities to be connected.

Skiing is a wonderful way for people of all kinds to be connected meaningfully to their natural environment. And I do mean all kinds of people. It pleases me to no end, when skiing at Mt. Spokane, to see blind skiers and disabled skiers as well as numerous people like me who see age 40 only dimly in the rearview mirror. None of us will ever ski in the backcountry; you might as well fence it off. And that is no way to run a park.

Wild lands have their place. But the intent and the very nature of wild lands is to exclude most people. I noticed at the presentations relating to the proposed expansion of the ski area that many of those opposing expansion and supporting a very restrictive designation for the land are in their 20s, in outstanding physical shape and appear to represent the view that they should have access to ski in the backcountry, but maybe others should not. Others appear to represent the view that no one should have access to the land, and that it should be reserved exclusively for the use of the wild creatures that live there.

I respectfully submit that neither is an appropriate point of view for public park lands, especially not these lands, given their unique history. Public park lands should not be the exclusive preserve of young, athletic outdoorsmen; nor should people be excluded.

Parks serve an essential need for the human species, to connect people to their natural environment, and few parks do so more beautifully than ski areas. Though it is no doubt a good thing that there are areas far from ready access by urban people that are reserved strictly for animals, this land is park land and should be open for people to use.

The history of the land at Mount Spokane State Park, or most of it at any rate, is that it was donated to the public by owners who held it for logging but wanted to see it used for skiing, a sport to which they were devoted. Opponents of expansion of the ski hill are quick to argue that the donors did not put any qualifying language in their deed of gift specifying that the land was to be used for skiing, but that is a legalistic hagggle: The donors were known to be ski enthusiasts, and they gave their land to the State Parks Department, at a time when no one would have imagined that a serious argument could be made that a state park should be closed to the people whose park it is (there was no environmental movement as we now know it).

The importance of wildlife has not been ignored: The proposals have been studied and mitigation has been provided for any predictable adverse impact on natural species living in the area. The law governing environmental impacts also says that environmental studies must also consider the human impacts of decisions.

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I respectfully submit that both nature and people are best served by letting people use this park to ski in.

I fully support Mt. Spokanes expansion onto the backside where chair 6 is proposed. This is OUR ski hill and we should be proud that this non-profit wants to continue to make it a better place to ski. I believe that there are a few, who oppose this expansion, elite skiers who would like to keep this area for themselves. Their motives are purely selfish and want this back county area to remain their private stash. Like that secret stash of powder at the end of a recent storm day that only you know about. However this is a Public Ski Facility. No individuals should be able to dictate what is good for all of us when it is really just self-serving. I as you to vote YES to Mt. Spokanes much needed proposed expansion.

This note is for endorsement of the Mt Spokane Expansion project. I attended Gonzaga University from 1963 to 1968, primarily because I loved Winter and snow. My roommate and I were Officers of the Gonzaga Ski Club, and organized ski lessons at Mt. Spokane and student ski trips also to Mt. Spokane and many other areas at the time. WE all were taught Environmental respect at GU and living in this area when skiing, (downhill cross country), hiking, camping, biking, rafting, and kayaking.

After several years in Seattle, getting Married, and starting a family, we returned to live in Spokane in 1971. I joined the Mt Spokane Ski Patrol (20 year member) that year and our kids grew up on the Mountain. We also camped at Priest Lake for many summers with the same group. All of my kids today are Environmentalists and have the utmost respect for the outdoors. Their background of camping at Priest Lake, and skiing at Mt. Spokane, hiking and huckleberry picking all over the Mountain, and observing rabbits, squirrels, many bird types, and seeing Cougars and Bears on the ski runs had a major impact on them. The only negative impact they saw were snowmobiles.

My Grandkids and Grand Nieces and Nephews now hike and ski the Mountain inheriting the same respect for the outdoors and the Mountains. (See Friends of the Centennial Trail Fall Newsletter article about my 7 yr old Grandson and his Environmental concerns). My computer desktop has a full size photo taken from the top of chair #2 looking toward Idaho and the valley lakes below.

Due to night skiing and hundreds of thousands of visitors to this area and the Mountain, there has been a major positive economic impact and positive impression left for many. Due to the nonprofit management; program there is no worry about profit instead of conservative caretaking of the Mountain into the future.

We are used to the Minority Self Interest Environmental Groups that have had a very bad impact on our forest lands based on their position on “ tree cutting” no management of pine beetles, and the devastation that has caused creating wild land fire danger and devastation all over the Country. Their misinformation to the public on many issues is an ethical Crime! Let the majority of the people have a say in the outcome here. Please don't allow the minority self-interest group have its way with disregard for the interests of the majority along with their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

I am in favor of classifying the whole PASEA for #4 Recreational use and allowing the Ski Area development to proceed. I have been following this process for a while, and may not know all the details, but it sure seems like it has taken a long time. It feels like things just continue to drag on. We are starting over in a whole new process again. What is different now?

From what I have read it seems to me that all the environmental questions have been asked and answered multiple times. Now we seem to be repeating a lot of the process and this is very time consuming and again incurring large legal costs. This revenue would be much better spent on ongoing upgrading facilities and new ski runs to allow better accommodation of the increasing number of skier visits to Mt. Spokane.

As a mountain biker i lean more toward the gravity side of are sport and have been riding

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For many years and rode many trails in pnw and bc so dos my family! This sport is growing by leaps and bounds the diversity of people who rude is amazing from ethnic to gender blue collar white collar mothers taken their sons fathers taking their daughters! Mtn bike parks work for both public and ski areas most mountain biker i know r good people and care about nature and conservation as well as bikinga d for the most part will police their own if given a chance! I'm for option 4 allowing mt biking

After additional information my choice is alternative 2, this sacred mountain does not need seven more ski runs, this sacred mountain has been impacted enough and should be left alone for further generations, The traditional cultural properties (TCP) will need to be addressed and may be eligible for the National Register and represents a significant property with cultural associations for the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

I am writing to let you know how important Mt. Spokane is the the mountain biking community state wide. We are concerned about the Part I-land classification in the current plan. It is important that Alternative 4 be chosen to protect access for bikes. Cycling is a \$6.1 billion dollar industry and the seventh most popular recreational activity in the U.S; according to Jon Kennedy of Diamonback Bicycles of Kent, Washington. Off-road riding is the fastest growing segment of the sport, so removing off-road riding opportunities makes no sense for the citizens of Washington or the business community of Washington. Please protect and expand off-road mountain bike opportunities.

I am writing to support human outdoor recreation. Given the limited options, that means I support Alternative 4 of the PASEA. Especially, for the potential mountain biking opportunities it might provide.

-I just got back this past weekend from my family's third trip to Whistler this summer because we really enjoy the outdoors and more specifically, the variety of recreational opportunities Whistler offers that no place in Washington State comes close to yet.
-It strikes me that there is no counter to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to provide balance. We need a Human Impact Statement (HIS) to do that. If there was a HIS, Alternative 4 might not go nearly far enough. I don't think many people would regard Whistler as some sort of wasteland that has been destroyed by ski and biking trails. Rather, it might will do more to heighten an our regard for the environment than any other preserved area.

I live in Spokane County, hike the backside of Mt. Spokane quite often, and I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that have never been logged. Its not replaceable. Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA).

The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream. Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer. Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly. Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered. Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative. Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I support Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area

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As a single Mom, I have biked and skied with my boys (10 and 12) up at Mt. Spokane and I would enjoy more recreational opportunities (more bike trails, more intermediate skiing slopes) to get the kids outdoors and keep them active. It is such a wonderful asset to have these types of activities be so close to Spokane. I would appreciate the state parks support of these things too! It is our public land and let's get people out into nature to encourage the next generation to appreciate the beautiful treasure that we have in our own backyard!!

I refer to my comment letter of May 22, 2012 regarding the expansion EIS process that was ongoing at that time. In that letter I recognized the time and effort that Washington State Parks and MS 2000 have dedicated to this project. Also in that letter, I suggested revisions and additions to the analysis that could strengthen the EIS. Many of these revisions are evident in the new document and once again, I congratulate you on a thorough analysis. To the extent that the 2012 comment letter still applies to the analysis, I incorporate that letter into these comments.

I offer this particular comment as a practicing wetlands biologist with experience throughout the United States, and specifically, with 16 years of experience working as an environmental and planning professional in ski areas in the Pacific Northwest. Since the 2012 analysis, I worked as a sub-consultant to ICF for the mapping and delineation and rating of streams and wetlands in the PASEA. The wetlands/stream work was done over the course of a week during July 2013. Some individuals who wish to continue stalling this project may argue that the delineation is not acceptable to them because it was conducted during this dry; time of the year. There are two main arguments that support the validity of the delineation. First, the current delineation protocols, identified in the wetland report (Section III, Appendix D) provide for the delineation of wetlands during drier periods. These protocols include indicators of the three parameters necessary for the determination of wetlands: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and hydrology. As noted in the datasheets attached to the delineation report, there were no instances where an area was determined not to be a wetland because of a lack of water. In fact, the data sheets show that water was present in the majority of areas where the vegetation and soils were indicative of wetlands. In addition, the delineation protocols allow for the use of secondary indicators of hydrology, if water is not present. Thus, any assertion that the wetlands were improperly delineated based on lack of hydrology is unfounded. Second, while at lower elevations July may be a dry time of the year, in a mountain environment, where snow covers the terrain for half of the year or more, July is the period immediately after snowmelt, when the ground is most saturated. As a result, the perennial initiation points of streams are typically flowing at peak levels, and the wetlands on the mountain are at their greatest saturation compared to any other time of the year. Any assertion that July is not the best time to delineate streams and wetlands on a snowy mountain is unfounded. It is the best time for this work.

While this new analysis addresses the land classification as well as the project action, it is noteworthy that the real effects; of the land classification would result from the implementation of the project action. This revised analysis clearly demonstrates the recreational benefits of the project compared to the minimal effects on the environment. Figure EIS-16 is the culmination of years of planning and environmental inventory. Under Alternative 3, there would be no grading in wetlands or buffers, and only one acre of clearing in wetlands or buffers. This is, by far, the least impactful ski area expansion that I have worked on (see my experience in my previous comment letter).

Since 2012, when I submitted my comment letter, Mt. Spokane has fallen even further behind with regard to improvements when compared to its competitors in the region. Falling behind has been identified as an issue at Mt. Spokane since 1997! Washington State Parks and MS 2000 have clearly analyzed and planned this project to balance all of the environmental and human issues. Its time to stop with analysis paralysis; and allow the project to move forward.

I love the mountain and I love how the alpine ski area is being run by Mount Spokane 2000! I have been a certified ski instructor with the Professional Ski Instructors of America for over 50 years. Mt. Spokane has been MY ski area since the present #1 chair lift was built in 1956. Many of us thought the mountain was cursed with bad management since it first was created. MS 2000 may not be perfect but it is an excellent

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organization doing a fine job of providing great skiing for people of all abilities.
But I am opposed to the expansion.

I think they are overlooking a great opportunity to provide a great skiing experience by not trumpeting the almost pristine area of old growth on the Western slope as a unique opportunity for those who like that kind of natural world skiing. It would offer an environmental treat and it would be able to provide the convenience of a chair lift to get back and do it again! And all that is currently available for the reasonable price of regular lift ticket!

Now there are those who think it shouldn't be made more attractive with some minor thinning to make it more enjoyable because they look upon it as their private preserve. But that is to be expected by the present conditions, for the very few.

Spreading out the skiers would make the total experience at Mt. Spokane an even better choice for those who don't want to feel crowded and still want their recreation at a reasonable price, which is customary at Mt. Spokane.

It would be a sin and a shame to clear cut ski runs and the chair lift path through these spectacularly gorgeous monuments to mother nature. Trees and terrain on that slope can't be replaced for over a hundred years, if ever! I have been back there in summer and winter and it is like a cathedral in a natural surrounding! How could anyone think of destroying that splendor for a few dollars more?

My mountain is seldom troubled by more than very short lift lines.

Enhance Mt. Spokane by bringing new people to it by calling their attention to a truly mystical and emotional Eastern Washington ski time that is part nature and all natural pleasure.

Knowledge is the only unlimited and expanding resource.

I have been skiing at Mt. Spokane for 37 years. It is a great mountain with interesting terrain that is conveniently located to a population center. On good days the parking lot is filled to overflowing. There are certainly ways that the area could be improved, but expanding the area onto the southwest slopes is not one of them.

Land Classification:

I support Alternative 2, classifying PASEA as a Natural Forest Area. The old growth forest habitat on the north of Mt. Spokane is unique and has high value for wildlife and biodiversity.

Currently 2/3 of the area above 4000' is dedicated to the developed ski area. No additional acreage should be sacrificed to development. This area easily meets the criteria for the Washington State Parks Land Classification for Natural Forest Area.

Proposed Ski Area Expansion:

I support Alternative 1, no action.

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If the goal is increased attendance, there are a number of things the MS2000 can do besides expand the ski area into this valuable habitat. Even now, there are times when the parking lot is filled to overflowing. Where do they plan to put all these additional people? In the spring, it is not a lack of snow that causes lower attendance. By the end of March, many people have moved on to other activities and are no longer interested in skiing. Having a larger area clear-cut is not going to increase attendance.

Mitigation would be difficult at best. How do you replace unfragmented, old growth forest? In addition, the likelihood of noxious weeds being introduced to the area is high.

There are a number of wildlife species that would be negatively impacted by fragmentation of the largest old growth forest habitat in Spokane County: Lynx, Pacific Wren, Pileated woodpecker, Northern Goshawk, Black-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers.

Impacts from fragmentation and tree removal would have year round impacts including rapid snowmelt, increased soil erosion, and visual and recreational impacts.

In summary:

Land Classification should be Natural Forest Area as recommended in Alternative 2.

No action should be taken in the proposed ski area expansion as stated in Alternative 1. The consequences of doing otherwise are much too high.

Respectfully submitted to the Washington State Parks "I am in favor of the Mt. Spokane expansion plan. I hereby ask the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land for Recreation use and specifically as Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. I look forward to utilizing and enjoying the expanded and enhanced area (and during all four seasons) and keeping more of my recreation dollars in the State of Washington. (I have actually been looking forward to the day of expanded use for several years now.) The area's closeness to Spokane and the Spokane Valley (and its planned expansion) will make it even more attractive for affordable/easily accessible use and recreation related commerce. It will undoubtedly draw more people from Idaho (and other states) as well.

I encourage the Commission to select and secure this recreation; classification so we can expand, enjoy and steward our local & great outdoors.

First, thank you, and the Commissioners and staff of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and others, for engaging in a thoughtful, deliberative evaluation process and providing an opportunity for meaningful public discourse about a what we can all agree is a substantial decision about the future and direction of the Mt. Spokane State Park and the PASEA proposal. I can only begin to appreciate the enormous amount of work that has been invested in this assessment.

After moving to Spokane in 2004, my family and I quickly became avid and four season users of the park, and try to take advantage of all that Mt. Spokane and the surrounding terrain have to offer. We also value the solitude and relative isolation that segments of the park and near-by area can provide.

I have carefully examined the draft environmental impact study, the positions of the Lands Council, the Sierra Club, Spokane Mountaineers and other organizations that propose a more conservative approach to the expansion proposed by the Mt. Spokane ski area operator. I have also examined the history of the usage of the area, and coupled that with my own observations, with particular interest in the area that would be impacted

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by the installation of a sixth chairlift and the cleared ski runs that would accompany that lift.

I urge the Commission to adopt land classification alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. This outcome would preserve the natural beauty and integrity of the park while maximizing affordable winter recreation opportunities for thousands of Spokane residents and do so sustainably and responsibly.

EIS 1 (land classification): Alternative 2 (natural forest land classification)

EIS 2 (ski area expansion): Alternative 1 (no action alternative)

These comments address the Draft Mount Spokane State Park and Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Classification of Land and Ski Area Expansion (DEIS). After reviewing this document it seems that it was written from and for the perspectives of the Proposed Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA) project advocates rather than as a balanced environmental due diligence document as intended. There are multiple examples of dubious logic and wishful thinking used to downplay the projects impacts for a range of potential impact categories. There is a sense of grasping for positive outcomes for the action alternatives as well as a need for the project as a whole.

One example of pro-project reasoning is that increasing the size of the ski park will lessen the resources needed for the ski patrol because back-country terrain on Mount Spokane will be eliminated (III-4). A second is that lynx, while known to inhabit the area, should not be affected by the conversion of their habitat, because they are nocturnal, can hide in remnant tree stands between ski trails during the day then move about freely at night when people don't ski (III-70).

The DEIS does not do an adequate job of addressing impacts from the proposed project and has several significant data gaps. Although the proposed impacts are both large scale and permanent, the DEIS meant to address them is incomplete and seems part of a rushed environmental review process.

As revealed in historic photos available at the Museum of Arts and Cultures and the Spokane Library Northwest room, the forest on the west slope of Mount Spokane (the PASEA project area) has a great deal of integrity and is essentially unchanged from how it looked in the 1930s. The west side of Mount Spokane has always been set aside from development and is thus still wild and natural. According to the DEIS (III-46) the average age of the trees in the PASEA area is 110-129 years old. This is an old, intact forest; part of a larger montane habitat ecosystem area and state park less than twenty miles from the city of Spokane. The fragmented tree islands the project will create will have little natural or cultural value. From the perspective of SEPA review, and the long term use and stewardship of Mount Spokane, the benefits of PASEA do not balance the impacts.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resource assessment is inadequate in the DEIS. The description of Mount Spokane and its resources from a cultural resource point of view is incomplete. Mount Spokane is a significant land form and Traditional Cultural Place (TCP) to the people of the Spokane Tribe. The Spokane Tribe Archaeology and Preservation Program recently recorded Mount Spokane as a TCP with the Washington State SHPOs office. Washington State Parks own recent planning document, Cultural Resource Management Plan: Mount Spokane State Park (2009: discusses Mount Spokane

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potential as a Tribal TCP. Thus, the DEIS (III-116) incorrectly makes the statement that, under both action alternatives, there would be no effect on known historic, cultural or archaeological resources as none are formally recorded, to date, within the expansion area. □

The limited records of cultural resources on Mount Spokane do not reflect their absence, but rather a lack of study. In the few archaeological surveys that have been conducted there seems to have been a focus on small scale ground impacts and on historic, rather than indigenous resources and land use. The anthropological significance of the mountain to surrounding tribes is barely touched upon. The investigators did not inquire with the Spokane Tribe; if they had Precontact cultural resources on the mountain would have been documented earlier.

The DEIS incorrectly states that the only expected impacts to cultural resources from the PASEA project are related to historic structures on or near the summit. These resources, while significant, are only one small and short term aspect of the mountain's cultural resources. The Spokane Tribe has been intimately connected to Mount Spokane for as long as oral history recounts. For the Spokane Tribe the significance of Mount Spokane includes: the location of a creation myth, a vision quest and prayer site, an important hunting and gathering location for first foods and medicinal plants, and a territorial marker.

The cultural resources mitigation and consultation measures outlined in the report are inadequate. The DEIS does not address an ethnographic TCP study as requested by the Spokane Tribe Archaeology and Preservation Program in its pre-DEIS scoping comments. The DEIS (III-117), instead, states that an archaeological survey of the project will be conducted, but also seems to nullify the results in advance when it states,

However, steep slopes, vegetation, and timber deadfall limit the effectiveness of ground survey for identifying historic, cultural or archaeological resources. Therefore, a systematic pedestrian survey by a professional archaeologist chosen by State Parks will be conducted.

In any respect, this proposed archaeological survey has not yet been conducted so there is no way to effectively evaluate the impacts of the PASEA project on cultural resources, an essential step in SEPA review. Mitigation measures in the DEIS consist of an inadvertent discovery plan (III-117) while a cultural resource inventory or an evaluation of site significance is absent. In short, the DEIS does not include the information needed to understand or address impacts to cultural resources on Mount Spokane. An integrated view of cultural resources should be considered in a revised DEIS, not just impacts to archaeological materials and the built environment. The DEIS should also elaborate on which current register eligible built environment elements are slated for impact and what the proposed mitigation measures are, if any.

Significant data gaps for cultural resources

- TCP survey needs to be conducted.
- Archaeological survey needs to be conducted.
- Spokane, Kalispell, Colville, and Coeur d'Alene tribes cultural resource and language programs need to be contacted.
- Historic research needs to be conducted.

Visual Resources

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As a solitary peak situated at the edge of the expansive channeled scab-lands and Palouse plains, Mount Spokane is a dominate feature of the Spokane-area landscape. In the DEIS this aspect of the PASEA project is greatly underplayed the visual impacts would be more significant than is portrayed by the DEIS.

The DEIS seems to indicate that visual impacts are limited to a maximum distance of ten miles from the project (III-100). While this may be true for flat or undulating terrain, it does not apply to the sides of mountains. Mount Spokane is a prominent landmark, visible for many miles. The proposed PASEA is currently largely a combination of old-growth and mature forest coverage. The seven proposed new ski runs will convert this intact, high-altitude, perched forest into one cut by linear man-made scars with associated buildings, lights, and infrastructure. Residents of Spokane that today look up during spring, summer and fall to see a unbroken, dark green, evergreen canopy on the side of the mountain will instead see seven man made corridors cutting this forest from top to bottom. In winter the corridors will be white scars cutting through a mixed green and white hoarfrost forest. The beauty and character of the mountain will be diminished.

Visual impacts from the PASEA project are expected to be in the range of at least 50 miles, possibly more depending on the vantage point. For example the proposed PASEA project area is clearly visible from north Spokane/Country Homes (17 miles away), downtown Spokane (21 miles away), Four Mound (24 miles away) as well as high points on the Spokane Reservation (over 40 miles away).

Due to the high visibility of the project area, the ski runs will be a large, adverse, visual impact relative to current conditions. The proposed mitigation is feathering ~~exposed the windward edges of the PASEA~~ forest/ski run (i.e. blow-down, snow damage) are expected to be particularly severe.

In the DEIS analysis an inadequate sample of four vantage points all within 10 miles of the PASEA project was selected based on fieldwork and a Google Earth analysis ~~1(02)~~. One of the view-points, the Vista House, is uphill from the ski park thus the runs are not visible. Two of the three other select vantage points appear to be blocked from views of the mountain by nearby foot hills or vegetation, thus visual impacts are quantified at zero. Only one of the four self-selected viewpoints is at a location where the PASEA project can be seen. The DEIS goes one to confusingly and inaccurately state,

Viewpoint #3 was chosen as it is one of the few locations exhibiting a rural-residential population density where the development would be visible. □

Regarding cumulative effects, the DEIS also inaccurately states (III-105) that,

(proposed) development within the expansion area is generally screened from view by topography in areas outside the park. As such, the (PASEA) expansion will have minimal visual impact from roads or vistas outside the park.

PASEA, instead, would be visible to many thousands living in the city of Spokane and surrounding communities. However, the DEIS goes on to state (III-102) that,

It is impractical to conduct a visual analysis of the entire area as a whole. □

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This leaves the DEIS reader without tools to critically evaluate impacts to visual resource needed for the SEPA review. There are significant data gaps in the DEIS although the spatial tools needed to fill them are commonly available within the GIS industry.

Significant data gaps for visual impacts

-A comprehensive view-shed analysis should be conducted using Arc GIS and digital elevation models.

-The range of the view-shed analysis should be at least 50 miles.

-View shed analysis results should be presented in clear to read graphs within the revised DEIS.

-For PASEA's visual impacts the view-shed analysis should include: number of square miles, population data, demographic data, municipalities included, landscape features included, and cultural resource sites with line of sight of the PASEA project area.

-The analysis needs to include comparative data of visual impact footprints for other ski parks in Washington State compared to the proposed PASEA.

Please choose Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area that allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

The Washington Natural Heritage Program is providing the following information to assist in scoping the impacts of the possible ski area expansion at Mount Spokane State Park. In 1993, the Natural Heritage Program conducted an evaluation of forests at Mt. Spokane State Park. The detail results of Mt. Spokane State Park found in that report will not be presented in this letter. The report's conclusion, that much of the park was and still is a natural forest, will be emphasized to define it as a valuable conservation asset of uncommon quality.

The Blanchard Creek Natural Forest area as recommended in 1993 includes the proposed ski expansion area (PASEA). Today, the Blanchard Creek Natural Forest area retains the majority of the natural qualities as previously identified except that its forest structures are nearly 21 years older. The Natural Heritage Program still recognizes that the Blanchard Creek area is a Natural Forest Area. The possible ski area expansion would reduce the size and natural function of the current Blanchard Creek Natural Forest in half.

One of the greatest values of Mount Spokane State Park is its large size and low level of fragmentation of forests within its boundaries. Those mostly unfragmented forests extend from the southern tip of the park north along the westerly slopes of Mt. Spokane to forests off the park to the northeast. The northwest slope of Mt. Spokane (the ski expansion area) is part of the largest, least fragmented forest habitat in the Park and connects the park forests on the south to forests on and off the park to the north. Mt. Spokane Park appears not only to be the largest, least fragmented forest landscape locally but inspection of aerial photography in Washington and Idaho reveals that similarly sized and continuous forest areas do not occur within a 20 to 30 mile radius.

The forest vegetation communities composing the Blanchard Creek Natural Forest are representative of the subalpine and mid-montane forests of the Northern Rocky Mountains. Although these communities may be relatively common, their occurrence in a continuous forest block in a natural, un-manipulated condition is an uncommon quality. Section 3.3.2.2 Forested Communities in the 2014 DEIS discusses the presence of the old

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growth forest features and their value to wildlife within the PASEA. Those characteristics further emphasize the natural values of the PASEA.

The area warrants special recognition and attention so that it continues to add to the diversity of the park as an important natural destination in Washington. The Washington Natural Heritage Programs strongly recommends Alternative 2 be adopted to recognize the value of the area in its natural condition.

Thank you for considering our comments and concerns about the PASEA. If you have any questions please give me call at (360) 902-1749.

We appreciate the consideration and time expended by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission in determining the future plans for Mt. Spokane.

After relocating to Spokane approximately ten years ago, we observed that many families expressed discontent over the long dark winter months. Both my husband and I are active outdoor enthusiasts and one of our primary reasons for relocating to this city was to be in a position to raise our children in close proximity to outdoor recreation.

As a two parent working family, we have limited time and resources to travel long distances to ski and hike and were thrilled with the opportunity to be in such close proximity to Mt. Spokane.

During our first year in Spokane, we began taking our two young girls up to Mt. Spokane to learn to ski and enjoy the tubing hill. They have literally grown up on the mountain and we have come to love the community that Mt. Spokane has cultivated. Many of the ski instructors are volunteers and the climate is very inclusive and encouraging to all who come to love winter sports. Mt. Spokane's history is rich and the enthusiasm and caring exhibited by the employees and patrons is unparalleled.

On behalf of our family, and more importantly, on behalf of the greater Spokane community, I respectfully request Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify Mt. Spokane as recreation land (Alternative 4) and take project action (#2) which allows for a new chairlift, additional trails, grading and clearing. This choice is critical because the action would greatly enhance a ski area that is required to compete with other ski areas, two of which are located in Idaho. The additional expansion will result in a broader, more enhanced recreational area which will draw in more of the Spokane community, offering an affordable, wholesome environment for all to enjoy. While the existing ski area has served and delighted the local alpine community for years, the backside expansion is sorely needed for the mountain to continue to compete with other resorts and other modes of recreation. Without continued growth and improvement, Mt. Spokane is unlikely to sustain enough revenue to maintain its operations. This would be a travesty for the local community.

Finally, it has been our observation over the past several years that the entire Mt. Spokane community shares the same overarching goals of maintaining this beautiful mountain. The expansion and the preservation can coexist together. Patrons and employees take of this mountain both in winter and off-season months and that kind of dedication is not going away.

Mt. Spokane's expansion onto the Northwest facing slopes will provide needed terrain for both intermediate and expert skiers. The expansion to the north slopes will help the area during limited snowfall seasons.

Most important, is the safety issues. People will continue to try to ski through the windfall and dead trees and accidents will happen. It is extremely

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difficult to get adequate and timely care to the victims. Please vote in favor of alternative 4.

Should alternative 4, not be approved, State Parks are and should be responsible for the rescue and costs of caring for the victims.

I am very much in favor of allowing development of the parcel in question for recreational downhill skiing.

I support Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area

By expanding accessible recreation in this state park I believe the park will draw more Discover Pass purchasing users and support the long term viability of the ski area. This option promotes longevity by reducing fire danger on a valuable park.

Many times I have heard XXXXX., my longtime partner at the Rockwood Clinic in Spokane -now an honored retired 86 year old "Master of Rheumatology" -say that he moved to Spokane from the Mayo Clinic in the mid-1960s with wife mainly because of the proximity of the town to the Mt Spokane ski hill. They chose Spokane for their medical practice because of the less than one hour ride to the hill.

Keeping Mt Spokane competitive is important to build Spokanes future - for example in developing a medical school here. The distance to skiing as recreation is not just important to the XXXXX and XXXXX's, but to hosts of people who wish to maximize time spent for fun, while leading full lives. Not just physicians, but leaders in all fields.

Mt Spokane is for the recreation of the people of Spokane. It cannot hope to become Aspen, or even Schweitzer Basin.

But it enhances our region.

It has been 10 years trying to get another lift, while being co-operative with all other user groups.

Time to approve the long standing plan!

This letter is written in favor of Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area" I support Alternative #4 at many levels; however in this letter I will address my concerns over public safety. Alternative #4 is the only alternative which addresses solutions for improving the public's safety. Because skiers and snowboarders routinely utilize the PASEA for out of bounds; skiing and riding, MT. Spokane Patrol is called on a weekly basis to assist and evacuate injured skiers and snowboarders and to conduct search and rescue missions for lost skier/snowboarders. Lift installation and trail development would yield many public safety and ski patrol-related benefits, among them: no longer will skiers/riders have to use a designated snowmobile road to access a lift; improved ski patrol response time, decrease in the number of search and rescue missions, and reduce the overall risks associated with search and rescue; fewer patrollers will be needed to respond to calls in the PASEA, leaving more patrollers available for other calls; decreased dependency on the high density Cat Track area; skiers and snowboarders can safely enjoy the PASEA knowing they will have the same high level of ski patrol services they have grown to expect by skiing/riding at Mt. Spokane; spreading; out of the mountain guests will reduce the number of advanced/intermediate guests using the beginner terrain, resulting in room for more beginners.

The possibility of increasing the number of beginner guests is of great interest to me. Presently the ski/snowboard lessons conducted through the ski/snowboard school quickly fills denying the opportunity to many potential guests. I applaud the Governors Blue Ribbon Task Force for their findings outlining the benefits of outdoor recreation. I share their belief that experiencing and recreating in the outdoors contributes to both mental and physical health for everyone from our children to our returning veterans and aging Baby Boomers □.

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As a pediatric dentist practicing in Spokane since 1976, I have seen firsthand the importance of family shared activities especially those that involve the outdoors and physical exercise. I have appreciated Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Parks commitment to being a family recreation opportunity. I commend them in their efforts to bring more guests to the state park through their successful programs such as ski/snowboard school, adaptive skier services, snowboard terrain park, snowshoe access, tubing hill and lift and child care. The recently remodeled and enlarged day care facility allows even the young guest to be included while the rest of the family enjoys their day of skiing/riding. Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is the perfect vehicle to bring our families together to enjoy the great outdoors and is truly a resource to be shared and enjoyed by all the citizens of eastern Washington.

Land Classification alternative Recreation will allow for improved guest and ski patrol safety, increased access to winter outdoor recreation for our families and continued expansion of guest services at Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. By choosing #4Recreation you will be supporting the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and will be sending a clear message to Governor Inslee that you have done your part to lead the way to greater outdoor recreation. Thank you for choosing Alternative #4 Recreation.

I feel that the proposed expansion of the Mt. Spokane Ski area is in the best interest of the community. I see people from all over using the facility. Many of our skiers have used this area for years with no damage to the echo system.

I also noted an article in the Spokesman Review that covered it with much more clarity than I could.

I am in full accord with the expansion.

I live at the far west end of Spirit Lake. We drink Spirit Lake water and have easy access to the State Park through IEP land and roads. I have been a regular Mt Spokane skier since the ski concession was at Cooks Cabin, and spent 26 years as a volunteer with the ski patrol. I care about the environment and have a real self interest in preserving water quality of the run off from Mt Spokane.

I fully support the expansion. Many of us have been skiing that area for years with no harm to the environment. Why try to limit that access now?

Wildlife has adjusted to the presence of skiers during the winter. Two examples: The moose cow calf which delayed the ski area opening because the groomed trails offered a packed access to get between different ranges; a cougar mother and cubs which dened within 100 yards of a chair 4 ski run several years ago. We must remember that the ski season and periods of maximum wild life activity do not overlap in any substantial way.

I am also concerned about any expansion of the natural area. Summer and fall hikes and winter tree skiing have shown me how much blow down and other potential fuels have been allowed to accumulate in the Park. There is a huge potential for a fire disaster. Ski runs and access roads are fire breaks and access for fire fighters and make effective firefighting much easier.

Please don't lock up public lands for a few extremists.

We are commenting on the PASEA DEIS Land Classification,

The current use of the northwest area classified as the PASEA area of Mount Spokane can be categorized as low to medium recreational activities that span the four seasons typically known to the Pacific Northwest. To preserve the sustainable and healthy relationship between this natural area

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and the Spokane community, the most viable classification of the PASEA is Alternative 3 (section 2.3) - Resource Recreation (with Natural Forest Area below the Chair 4 Road). The following description details permitted activities and facilities of Alternative 3: Examples of permitted facilities and activities in Resource Recreation Areas include primitive camping, interpretive trails and kiosks, hiking trails, cross-country ski trails, technical rock climbing, off-trail hiking, off-trail snowmobiling, off-trail cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Comparing the activities that the unclassified area experiences currently, Alternative 3 is the most similar, and still preserves the aspects of solitude, visual resources, recreational opportunities and wilderness associated with the PASEA. It is important for Spokane residents to continue using Mt. Spokane in a similar manner for both recreation and educational purposes. For these reasons, Alternative 3 is the best choice for the land classification of the PASEA.

Concerns about the DEIS and Alternative Three are as follows.

As outlined in the DEIS there is currently minimal erosion in the PASEA, because it has been undisturbed for so many years. If the expansion were to take place, the steep gradient of the landscape would be prone to erosion. The absence of root systems would also pose a significant threat to the wetland areas on the mountain. Landslides and mass wasting events could occur, which could further disrupt habitat. Additionally, this type of erosion could endanger human life, both in the landslides themselves and if roadways were to become blocked in an emergency. For these reasons, it is crucial that no action in the PASEA lead to erosion. Therefore, Alternative 4 would be an irresponsible choice, and Alternative 3 should be chosen instead.

Section 3.2 (on vegetation) of the DEIS for the reclassification of land within the PASEA has various deficiencies. Principally, although the PASEA is currently managed as a de facto natural forest area, it still has a trail and also allows back country skiing. The implementation of Alternative 2, would require some of these activities to be regulated and restricted. The DEIS fails to address any changes that might be made by reclassifying the PASEA as all Natural Forest Area and any environmental impacts that could occur through this option. Additionally, section 3.2 lists possible impacts, but then goes on to say that some or more could be felt under each alternative. There are no specific impacts outlined for each alternative and no appendix is provided with further information. In addition, there are many other sections of the DEIS where risks are described in vague terms, without any quantifying information. The FEIS authors should make an effort to speak to these risks in more specific terms throughout the entire document.

Appendix 3 of the DEIS states, for most species in this study, effects of recreation/human disturbance are considered secondary or minor concerns compared to impacts of habitat loss and/or degradation (page 2). Habitat loss and degradation would be felt most heavily under Alternative 4, and therefore would have the most impact on the wildlife in the area. Alternatives 2 and 3 would have a much lesser impact while still allowing for recreational and community activities. Appendix 3 was also prepared in July of 2009, and does not account for possible changes over the past 5 years in the PASEA such as effects of global climate change, trail management and possible erosion.

Section 3.4 of the DEIS for the reclassification of land within the PASEA provides an inadequate assessment of the potential impacts to wildlife under each land reclassification option. Though Appendix 3 provides a much more detailed study of possible impacts, some of this information needs to be portrayed in the principal DEIS. The DEIS merely lists some general potential impacts, and makes sweeping statements such as, "under Alternative 2, there would be less opportunity for potential impacts to vegetative communities and forested stands due to the more limited range of uses that would be allowed to occur" (3.3.2.2). But, this does not address any of the specific issues that might come up. Appendix 3 addresses possible impacts for 21 focal species,; but none of this information is included in the DEIS itself, giving the illusion of an inadequate DEIS. Section

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3.4 also addresses many possible disturbances to wildlife, including trapping/poaching, animal collection and snag/coarse woody debris destruction. While these are all very possible effects, the DEIS fails to address any way that they could be mitigated individually. For example, poaching and trapping will remain the same under any of the four alternatives without any outside regulation and plan of action. This lack of specificity concerning poaching and trapping needs to be addressed by the DEIS. Also, the amount of allowed snag/coarse woody debris removal should be addressed by the EIS under each alternative as to give a better idea of what will and will not be allowed.

The document states that conditional use facilities can be undertaken such as alpine ski facilities under the Resource Recreation classification. Yet the DEIS states, within the Resource Recreation area, alpine backcountry skiing would be allowed as a conditional use, but no lift or formal ski trails would be allowed to be constructed. Alternative 3 would only allow backcountry alpine skiing as a conditional use, but the DEIS does not provide any guarantees that this statement would be enforced in the short term, or even in the long-term future. Therefore, Alternative 3 could be manipulated by private enterprises to more closely resemble Alternative 4 and the expansion of the Mount Spokane ski facilities. The DEIS needs to be reviewed and this exception within Alternative 3 needs to be further explored and backed up with legal documents.

Another concern is the extent of forest management, particularly the clearing of downed, tipped, or damaged trees. No specific acceptable or not acceptable actions are noted, which allows for misinterpretation of the document. To avoid any confusion or abuse of the intent, following this statement should be an example of a forest management plan including the extent of clearing.

There are several concerns in Section 3.7. Section 3.7.1 is about cultural and historical values associated with this area. The DEIS mentions the historical value of the area to certain tribes, but does not appear to consult any tribes about their valuation of the area. Assumptions cannot be made and the FEIS needs to include direct evidence and statements made by local tribes in order to validate included declarations. In section 3.7.7, the DEIS states that none of the alternatives will have a negative impact on the environmental health of surrounding property, without discussing environmental health impacts for the PASEA. This is also an incredibly vague section. More detail should be provided in the FEIS as to the specific environmental health impacts of each alternative. Lastly, in section 3.7.8, the DEIS discussed utilities. The FEIS should include information about the source of Avistas power. Many individuals in the area are concerned about clean energy, and the additional energy needs of Mt. Spokane could be significant, which in turn would lead to increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Alternative 3 would allow for an official reinforcement of how the West side of Mount Spokane is being used for current recreational activities. It would also increase the safety of the backside of the mountain and allow for more educational and interpretive opportunities for the community. Mount Spokane is the most accessible and convenient natural area for the Spokane community. It provides the community with an expansive list of recreational options. Any change in the recreational opportunities would have a negative impact on the community, and would make outdoor activities inconvenient.

Despite the errors in the DEIS, it is still clear to us that Alternative 3 is the most desirable. It will provide increased recreation opportunities for the public and opportunities for increased revenue for MS 2000, while still preserving an important old growth forest and other pristine land. Once the FEIS is complete, we suspect it will reveal even more issues with adding a new ski lift, and Alternative 3 will be an even more obvious choice for land classification. As members of the Spokane community, the Mt. Spokane area provides us with much needed outdoor recreation. We have taken advantage of the hiking trails and consider them and other recreational activities to be a unique and essential escape for citizens of urban Spokane. As students within the Gonzaga community, Mt. Spokane has become a vital resource for learning opportunities, recreational opportunities, and is

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essential to the essence of the Gonzaga community. We value Mt. Spokane for its duality as a ski mountain and a wilderness recreation area.

After reviewing Section 3 of the Mt. Spokane State Park DEIS covering Soils and Watershed, we support Alternative 1 (No action) for Section 3.1 (Soils) and Alternative 1 (No expansion is proposed) for Section 3.2 (Watershed).

3.1 Soil:

3.1.1- According to the NRCS Soils Resource Report the soils in PASEA have a severe to extreme erosion hazard. This is primarily due to the parent soil material being crystalline granitic bedrock. Field surveys revealed no signs of major soil erosion or landslides. This is primarily due to the undisturbed condition of the expansion area being primarily vegetated with native grasses and trees.

Currently, tree root systems and underbrush on Mt. Spokane--the same infrastructure that would be removed with the expansion--are preventing soil erosion. If they were cut, how would the potential soil erosion and landslide danger be dealt with? As years go by the roots will begin to decay, underbrush will change and erosion potential will grow. How will this be dealt with? What, if any, management practices will be put in place effectively to control reintroduction? These variables and possibilities need to be taken into account in order to properly understand the long term effects that any expansion might have on the environment.

3.1.3. The expansion suggests that in areas of prescribed tree removal the root system would be left in place to minimize soil mobility; however, the ground cover would be re-vegetated where it is disturbed by tree removal activities.

What will happen when root systems begin to decay? What is the management's plan when it comes to erosion over the long term? Will the ecosystem's slope-face suffer? How can we be certain the run off won't change the hydrology of the ecosystem and the quality of the water? There needs to be more details about what the proposed re-vegetation plan will include, and studies done determining what will be required in order to safely and most effectively prevent erosion.

3.1.3: Although these soils range from moderate to high erosion potential, soil mobility would be minimized during and after construction through implementation of temporary and permanent erosion and sediment control measures.

What are these control measures proposed by the DEIS? What are the explicit plans of the DEIS? How have they gone about in the past controlling the soils erosive quality? Will they replant native species if non-native species take over and alter the ecosystem? Please provide a more detailed explanation of the control measures that the DEIS is proposing.

Water Quality

3.1.6 - Previous construction projects on Mt. Spokane have changed sediment yield, soil compaction and impermeable surface between pre-development conditions and present day recreational area

development. Changes in sediment yield and soil compaction are primarily temporary and associated with construction activities; however, permanent developments such as roads and buildings would continue to result in increased impermeable surfaces.

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The threat of increased sediment yields, runoff from construction, and increasing water temperatures due to more sun exposure from the lack of trees are all potential problems. How are these going to be mitigated especially if there isn't a baseline for water quality currently on Mt. Spokane? Without a control to compare to, how is the expansion going to prove that the water quality hasn't changed? In order to prove that there is no change in water quality wouldn't the expansion need to demonstrate evidence that compares the control to post-construction?

In the DEIS, Alternative 2 states the following --- No Direct; Impacts to streams would occur. It also later states the following--- Approximately, 3.9 acres of direct impacts to stream buffers from clearing and/or grading would occur under Alt. 2

The expansion claims that there are no direct impacts on the water quality. However, there are indirect impacts to consider--consequences of construction that are potentially just as dangerous as direct effects. These are the headwaters for a stream that runs through old growth and provides crucial habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species. So we are asking, is indirect; sediment or run off pollution any less devastating than the impact of direct pollution? Morally, can people permit this?

In conclusion:

We noticed that there was no research done on the results that the vegetation removal would have on the snow melt runoff. We would assume that reduced vegetation would increase the speed of the snow melt in the spring and summer, possibly causing erosion, as well as affecting snow retention in the winter, which could mean less of a snow base.

On our visit to the location at Mt. Spokane on Saturday, September 20th, we noticed that there was a strongly flowing stream approximately 100 feet from where the proposed ski lift terminal would be located. The groundwater retention may be affected by the vegetation removal which would cause erosion in the area, especially near the ski lift terminal.

We would advise that there be studies done of the area to look into answering these questions. In addition, research should be done looking into past ski mountain developments that have taken place under similar circumstances in order to better understand the long term affects that both Alternative 1 and 2 will have on the area.

I would like the commission to approve the land use that will allow the ski concession to expand. I feel that this is a good compromise for the parties involved. This expansion will help with the fuel load in the park and make search & rescue operations safer. Thank you for your consideration.

In the current state of not being able to allow lightening caused forest fires to burn, the creation of further ski runs on this public land will create open space for grass and bushes as food for deer, elk, moose etc. The land is only used 4 months out of the year by skiers, at a time of year when most wildlife has moved to lower ground with less snowpack, or is in hibernation. As biology major with a strong commitment to the environment, i do not feel that this increase in percentage of open area would be of a negative impact. Mt Spokane as a ski area is the most affordable locally and caters to the families in our community. There are limited options for working out in the winter in our climate. As a PT I applaud those who take the time to encourage their children to ski and promote a healthy, active, outdoor lifestyle. I see no solid argument for stifling the ski resort, as the environmental impact is minimal and the benefits to our community appear multifaceted.

Mt. Spokane is a very fun place to go in the winter and summer. Since Mt. Spokane 2000 took over in 98 or 99, attendance has grown very very much. In the winter, some animals just don't come out and the skiers and boards use the mountain, and have a great time. In the summer, the wild

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life takes the mountain back. We share the mountain. I'm sure a lift and runs can be added that everyone can live with. Booth us and the wildlife. I hope so because I like the wild life to.

Please, no expansion.

Why should one group essentially takeover the top of the largest state park in the state? They can only use it for a few short months each year, leaving clearcuts a garbage the rest of the year.

Fish and Wildlife are against this as well. That's significant.

Why has this gotten this far?

Who is paying for this?

Is this just about money?

Do not sellout.

Think long term.

Alternative 3 - Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. No Chairlift or Trails. Back country skiing allowed.

Please consider my comments here regarding the DEIS for the proposed land classification for the area known as the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA) at Mount Spokane State Park issued August 15, 2014.

The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA). The Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife advocate for keeping the old growth intact.

It is not possible to mitigate the removal of old growth native forests that have never been logged. The new runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut in the proposed plan. The old growth loss would not be replaceable.

Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat and critical corridors for rare wildlife.

I support Alternative Two, the Natural Forest Alternative (NFA), with the addition of allowing back-country alpine skiing in the PASEA. Mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed, so back-country downhill skiing should be as well. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA.

As a year-round visitor to the park, I know the streams run high and muddy in the spring then taper off quickly in the summer. This would be exasperated with the proposed chair and new runs, and negatively impact fish health downstream as well as important year-round stream flows.

Wetlands should have be designated in the spring, and not in late summer.

The impact of upgrades to parking and lodges should be discussed.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture. Global warming impacts, absent from the DEIS, should be examined. This is a critical concern, and should be of high concern to the ski industry as well.

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The core values statement for Washington State Parks includes Dedication to outdoor recreation and public enjoyment that welcomes all our citizens to their public parks. Mount Spokane State Park already dedicates a large area to Alpine Skiing, which could be improved and capacity increased without incorporating all the proposed new area. The downhill ski boundary dominates winter recreation on most of the slopes of the main mountain. In the service of welcoming ALL citizens, the NFA alternative invites all uses of the higher elevations of the Park.

We have skied at Mt. Spokane for over 40 years. This ski area is more than a recreational site. It has afforded a much needed opportunity for exercise and an outdoor experience for many in our educational system; namely, those home schooled and challenged students. As we take this opportunity to expand, it allows for more programs to develop at a more affordable cost. This is a recreational area that truly services all of the Spokane area as well as tourists. **WE URGE YOU TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY.** Future generations will thank you.

It is my hope that you approve the expansion of Mt. Spokane. For many years, I have enjoyed having a family oriented, non-profit ski area so close to where I live. I believe that the Mt Spokane Ski and Snow Park leaders have been diligent in pursuing their responsibilities under the law in their application for expansion. I also want a financially viable Mt. Spokane to be available to my children and grandchildren. Please approve the backside terrain expansion project.

Please approve the Combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Alternate Number 4 of Part 1 and Alternate Number 2 of Part 2 to make skiing at Mt Spokane safer. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

I believe this land should be classified in such a way that allows Mt. Spokane to expand and add a chair lift to this area; alternative 4 seems best. Thank you.

I am quite pleased that the existing ski area exists. It provides excellent recreational activities on the state land. However, I am strongly against expansion of the site. Negative impacts to the environment and back country recreational opportunities would outweigh the benefit of a new chair lift and trails. We need connected and intact habitat and this project would only decrease the already small amount we have.

I am in support of OPTION 3 for the land classification which will provide for a combination of Natural Area, Resource Recreation and Recreation in the area shown as PASEA.

I am also in support of the OPTION 3 which provides for an alpine ski lift in the PASEA as proposed by the Mt Spokane 2000 group.

I am not a skier but use the park frequently. I have been involved with the land classification issue in Mt. Spokane State Park since September 1993 and have served on various study committees including being a founding and current member of the Friends of Mt. Spokane. I have made it a specific purpose to visit the back side of the mountain to view the area under consideration and I have read the DEIS. I see nothing that would preclude the options supported above.

All requests for additional studies and analysis have been met and the issue has been studied to death. No smoking gun has appeared that will preclude the supported land classification or proposed ski development. And in fact I believe that with the requirements that have been proposed for land management and development the area will be better managed for forest health than it is now or would be as a Natural Forest Area. In addition, it would provide for a safer environment for the skiers and other recreation that takes place in that area.

Resource Recreation provides for some conditional uses. The purpose of this criteria is so that these uses may be considered on their own merit at the appropriate time with the appropriate input and analysis. These uses are not being proposed at this time, have not been discussed and should not be categorically excluded in a commission action.

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Upon final classification of the PASEA we will complete the land classification for Mt. Spokane State Park. This has been a long and difficult process with a great deal of input. It would not be appropriate to now go back into this process of changing other land classifications without further analysis and public input. Do not get involved in any classification swaps.

The State Parks has a dual mission of providing for recreation and preservation. These supported options support this mission.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

I strongly recommend and encourage you to expand the Mt. Spokane ski area that has been under review for the past 10+ years. It is time to make a positive decision in favor of expanded winter recreational opportunities on Mt. Spokane.

My first visit to Mt. Spokane was in late December 1940. With hand-me-down boots, skis, and poles, my Dad took me up to Mt. Spokane to learn to ski. He put me between his legs to ride the rope tow to the top of the beginner run. I then had my first ski run on Mt. Spokane and I have been hooked on the sport ever since. I look forward to my 74th year on Mt. Spokane this winter, hopefully in the expanded ski area.

The history of Mt. Spokane State Park is unique. The original land was donated, primarily by local timber and mining companies for the purpose of setting aside a large area that could accommodate the increasing year around recreational needs of a growing Spokane County and Eastern Washington population. Their farsightedness has proven correct as we have seen the proliferation of recreational activities that have occurred on Mt. Spokane over the years. Mt. Spokane is truly one of the greatest all seasons community recreational parks in the world. The State of Washington Park and Recreation Commission should be proud of that accomplishment and continue to expand recreational opportunities on Mt. Spokane as the population grows in this part of the state.

During the few months of winter, Mt. Spokane is the ideal location for alpine skiing facilities, with the highest altitude in Eastern Washington to capture good snow conditions, conveniently close to the major population base, and extremely well run by the current concessionaire.

Please make the right decision to expand the Mt. Spokane ski area. We have waited a long time for the opportunity to move forward with this project.

Alternative preference:

EIS 1 (land classification): Alternative 2 (natural forest land classification)

EIS 2 (ski area expansion) Alternative 1 (no action alternative)

The following comments are recommendation from the Tribal Archaeologist of the Spokane Tribe to address the Draft Mount Spokane State Park and Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Classification of Land and Ski Area Expansion. After reviewing this document there were many questions left unanswered throughout the text. I have major concerns with the lack of archaeological research that has been performed up to this point, and the EIS does not adequately address the processes that will be taken to protect cultural resources. The sections that do mention archaeology are left rather vague, and lack adequate information. Mount Spokane has

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recently been recorded as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). The mountain also has many stories related to the mountain itself about creation, and traditional collection of huckleberries and bear grass.

The original requests from the Spokane Tribe included the requirement of a TCP study, consideration for traditional plants that are collected by the tribe, and a full archaeological survey of the mountain. Both the TCP study and archaeological survey are yet to be conducted. In the EIS it is stated that Mount Spokane State Park has had a long history with Native Americans, yet the prehistory has not been fully established (II-23). Mount Spokane needs more archaeological surveys to be conducted to further explore the prehistoric importance of the area. Historically there have also been several archaeological studies that have yielded ten features that were eligible for the National Register. On page III-16 it is stated that the draft EIS will contain descriptions and the existing conditions of historic, cultural, and archaeological resources. The analysis is said to comply with the governor's executive order 05-05 and consultation with interested tribes and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The sections in the EIS are very brief when it comes to the topic of cultural resources and although the tribe was contacted many of the requests from the Spokane Tribe were not addressed.

My preference for the land classification is alternative 2 (II-2) keeping the land for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of natural forest processes while providing for low- intensity outdoor recreation activities as subordinate uses. Activities that already are practiced at Mount Spokane such as hiking and biking could still continue, however this land would be protected as natural forest. The questions that arises with alternative 2 is why backcountry skiing has been prohibited, when it is already allowed in the PASEA currently. Spokane County including Mount Spokane is zoned as Rural Conservation in which downhill, cross- country/ backcountry skiing, snowmobiling, and ice- skating are permitted uses(II-27). If such activities as snowmobiling and snow shoeing are allowed as before, why has backcountry skiing been prohibited? This needs to be further explained in the EIS, and the relationship that the removal of alpine or back country skiing has in the land classification change that would likely result in removal of the PASEA from the current MS 2000 Concessionaire Agreement.

Soil as stated in the EIS at Mount Spokane is considered to have a severe to extreme erosion hazard (II-8). Due to the soil being composed of granitic bedrock, erosion is a very real hazard if the ski expansion takes place. Due to the undisturbed condition of the PASEA erosion has not been a problem, but with the removal of trees and soil, erosion becomes a factor. This will not only affect the soil but water, animals, and safety will be affected as well. Large amounts of soil will be affected by the addition of seven new runs. Although these are intended to be beginner to intermediate runs, the clearing of the area and the impact of snow cats and seasonal melt will cause a level of erosion. According to page III-108, there are inadequate runs for beginners to low intermediate. Several of the chairs are characterized as advanced slopes but some of the runs can also be characterized as intermediate through expert due to manmade terrain. Several of these runs contain either park features or moguls with significantly increase the difficulty of the run. It is not addressed on page III-109 in the description of slopes which of the runs are not only considered expert due to terrain, but it should also be stated which runs have manmade terrain on them, increasing the intensity level. The proposed runs within the PASEA would slightly increase the number of beginner through low intermediate, yet the change would be minimal. The market still far exceeds the beginner levels, which is what the PASEA argues that it needs (III- 113).

Mount Spokane has the highest point in the county and the highest elevation habitat that is found in the local area (II-12). Due to its unique habitat which houses many different species of animals and plants Mount Spokane should be preserved as it is now. It has already been cleared on the south side for the ski resort and the north side should be preserved as natural forest land. The Spokane Tribe is largely concerned about huckleberries and bear grass being affected due to the expansion. According to page III-43 Subalpine fir or bear grass and several species of

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huckleberries make up a large percentage of vegetation in the PASEA area. These plants are culturally significant to the tribe and are still collected today. The expansion would have a large effect on the plants and would eradicate a large percentage of them, and the tribe does not want to see this happen. Alternative two would have less potential impacts on forest stands due to the limited amount of activities that can take place on the PASEA land. This will help preserve the oldest forest and highest peak located in the area for generations.

With the expansion of the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park it is expected that sales will increase, and more visitors will frequent this mountain rather than drive to further locations. In the EIS it clearly states that the topography and terrain for new parking facility or new roads is not accessible and would unlikely be constructed. Although on the weekdays generally the park receives modest use and relatively low demands for parking (III-122), it briefly discusses weekends and holidays. Although there would be an increase in demand for tickets at the mountain it is not anticipated that parking would exceed the supply. I believe this situation has been entirely overlooked. Just last weekend I visited Mount Spokane, and although the roads are in good condition, there is room for improvements. The parking lot has potholes and gravel all over and the roads and the roads are very narrow. Such narrow roads with a significant increase in traffic would pose safety hazards with ice on the road for cars and people. I have experienced the parking lot at Mount Spokane during the weekends and holidays, and the roads are very unsafe in my opinion. They pose a safety hazard; there is not enough parking near the lodge so cars are parked along the road leading to the resort. On busy weekends cars are even told to park in the middle of the road with two lanes of cars on either side. This situation has been overlooked much like the condition of the lodge. I believe it would be in the mountains best interest to improve the resort to draw in customers, invest in snow makers due to the southern location of the runs, and improve the park they already have, before expanding.

A major concern that has been discussed in many different departments opposing the PASEA is the old growth forest that is located within the Mount Spokane PASEA location. During the surveys performed by Pacific Biodiversity Institute in 2012, it was concluded that 14 of the 92 stands in the approximately 490- acre Biological Survey Area located in the PASEA area, contained potential old growth forests (III-7). Yet the EIS contradicts itself on page III-45 where it states that in the study area frequent natural disturbances like fire damage decrease the likelihood of encountering classic old growth forest. These studies are incomplete and raise questions of how accurate the information in the EIS is if there are several pages that contradict themselves. It has been stated that Mount Spokane is one of the last examples of old growth in the Spokane area, and to clear cut a forest for ski runs would be irresponsible and would eliminate not only an amazing forest, but also a diverse habitat. Areas which contain old growth within the PASEA trail alignments have some of the largest diameter trees, as well as numerous streams and wetlands. The tribe would like to see this old growth preserved for years to come, and for the PASEA to be abandoned. According to the document recreation is widely recognized and is becoming an increasingly important factor which affects wildlife and vegetation, yet information on recreational impacts is lacking (III-68). Studies on the wildlife in the area such as the gray wolf, Canadian lynx, and wolverine have little to no information on the effects of ski runs, and the direct presence of humans can cause stress and abandonment. Other animals such as the Brown Creeper bird and American martin do not have any information on the direct effect people may have on them. Outcomes for the forest and wildlife in the PASEA cannot be determined yet because the information just does not exist, and a project this big should not be attempted with inadequate information.

This solitary peak dominates the Spokane landscape standing at over 5,000 feet tall, and can be seen from miles away. It is stated in the EIS that hiking trails, grading, construction of lifts, roads, and buildings contribute to the developed landscape that is visible to visitors at Mount Spokane and within the park (III-105). Yet it also states that the PASEA expansion will be screened from view by topography, and you will not be able to see the expansion outside of the park. This mountain can be seen from many miles away. The clear cutting of the ski runs stated in the PASEA will be seen from miles away both inside and outside of the park. Once these runs are cleared this forest will never return to the state it is in now. Downplaying the visibility makes the runs seem like a small issue, but people who live near the state park or prairies surrounding the park will see a scarred mountain where a once intact state forest use to stand. The EIS states is impractical to conduct a visual analysis of the entire area as a whole, which does not make sense. Anywhere someone can see the north face of Mount Spokane they will be able to see the effects of the clear

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cutting for the ski runs.

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I wrote the attached to the Parks Commission earlier this summer. To the extent that history matters in the EIS and to the extent there is any question about donor intent, I submit this to you for the record.

It has come to my attention that Mr. Jeff Lambert continues to use my Great Uncle Cheney Cowles name in a misleading manner in his correspondence with the State Parks Commission about the Mt Spokane Ski Area expansion in the PASEA. I want to be sure the record correctly reflects my family's support of the expansion project.

Mr. Lambert is entitled to his own opinion about the expansion, but to imply that Cheney Cowles would have supported setting aside land within the PASEA as NFA is inappropriate. My family, both past and present, value Mt. Spokane as a place for all types of recreation for all types of people. Cheney Cowles, a founder of the Spokane Ski Club in 1931, embraced access to recreation and donated land within the PASEA for that purpose. I am proud to say, the Spokane Ski Club is alive and well, supporting youth learn to ski programs and other skiing scholarships. Our family's fifth generation is carrying the torch of the past, as they are avid skiers and recreationalists, having grown up exploring Mt. Spokane.

Mt. Spokane has been and should continue to be the regions playground. Thank you for consideration.

I'd like to strongly support option 4-expansion of the ski area. I'm a 63 yr old subspecialty physician who moved to Spokane in 1992; a significant contributor to this decision was the Mt Spokane ski facility where my family could exercise and enjoy the outdoors all winter, close to home, at affordable prices. My kids grew up skiing there every weekend all winter, and are now expert at a sport they can enjoy their whole lives (try keeping up football or baseball until your 70s). They grew to view the winter as something to look forward too and take advantage of, rather than seeing it as indoor time, and ended up appreciating the beauty of this season, complete with snow ghosts for company. The extensive time on lifts with us kept them very communicative with us and had them associating enjoyably with adults even when very young; they both went on to very successful careers and I think this background helped their social and educational development even more than maintaining their fitness level. Our whole country is only now starting to realize the importance of keeping our kids active and fit (rather than obese and a set up for adult onset diabetes).

The back part of Mt. Spokane, the area in discussion for expansion, is already heavily skied and our family specifically has been some of the many usually expert skiers who have skied off-piste; there for decades (my kids thought this was a great adventure); everyone skis down and traverses the snowmobile road to lift 4 to get back up. The skiers have not been destructive-we don't run into and tear down trees. It is not isolated; around the base there is already a snowmobile trail (with heavy traffic of lots of very loud snow machines with gas/oil fumes). I can't imagine these machines are not more destructive to wildlife habitat than skiers.

The ski area development at Mt. Spokane is not a money grubbing high end resort where people flaunt fancy clothes and skis and those who don't have them are embarrassed. It allows families of modest means to do a great family winter activity together, without hours of driving or spending heavily for accommodation; its more strenuous and better for everybody than video games in inclement winter weather, at reasonable cost with very easy access from the city. It is one of the major outdoor venues that attracts high skill individuals to this region. Please help allow it to grow in this

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modest and thoughtful way.

Mt Spokane Ski Area is a regional asset which needs to be maintained and updated to hold pass with the complementary mountain destinations in the region. We have had periods in the past where Mt Spokane became run down and disfunctional. Those were sad and nearly devastating times for the mountain. This expansion is necessary to maintain Mt Spokane as a true player in winter recreation. Being the nearest mountain recreation retreat to Spokane itself, it is very important to maintain this asset at the Crown Jewel it is. Please go forward with this expansion plan so we can continue to have solid, use, support and revenue of Mt Spokane. Sincerely Yours, Scott L Cramer, season ticket holder 15 years.

I am in favor of land classification alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area.

I believe this safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane, while allowing for recreational use.

Furthermore, I support project action for the Enhanced Recreation Alternative.

This project is a waste of money and not needed. They should focus on infrastructure, larger lodge, more parking, etc.

I am strongly in favor of the expansion plan for Mt. Spokane State Park. I am asking the WA State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the land for Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and a Natural Forest Area. I believe that Mt. Spokane has been a very good steward of the Park and that the EIS has shown that their plans will accomplish two very important goals: 1) Protect 90% of the forest in the expansion area. 2) Allow for significant recreational enhancement. The expansion would benefit the area residents, but it would also benefit the State and region economically. Because it would increase the terrain for skiing, it would also make skiing safer by spreading out the skiers. Our area is growing in population and we need the recreational opportunities that this well researched and respected plan would create.

I wish to voice my support for the new chairlift proposed on Mt. Spokane. It would be a welcome addition to the current runs on the mountain and would be a great use for the land on the mountain.

As a resident of Spokane, I think it is very important to grow the businesses in this and surrounding areas. With this said growing the recreation community will increase business and continue to allow everyone to enjoy the mountain. I enjoy the outdoors and have complete respect for it. Mt. Spokane Park's desire to increase its hill by one chairlift and seven trails while safeguarding the natural areas is a positive thing.

Would love to see this happen!! One of the chairs is used by the racers so it limits the runs that the rest of us can use.

Mt. Spokane is great just the way it is! The Mt. Spokane backside is the only place within an hour of Spokane where there is natural, uncut forest with consistent enough snow pack for alpine skiing. It would destroy virgin forest and animal habitat. The construction would open the area up to invasive species of weeds. Please do not permit the cutting of runs and construction of a lift.

I am not sure what the issues seem to be with allowing the ski park to expand beyond the confines it currently has, I do feel however that allowing for the expansion will create many advantages. These are both fiscal and with regard to viewing the nature around us.

1) Having a larger area available for winter recreation will attract more customers and therefore creating higher tax revenue in Washington state, which seems to be needed at the moment. This tax revenue would be from not just the ski area, but also the gas stations nearby, tire stores, ski shops, restaurants, etc. that are inevitably used in the process.

2) Having a larger area available for winter recreation will allow more people to enjoy the natural areas available to them in this state. I probably spend more time admiring nature (both living and inanimate) while on the ski slopes than anywhere else. I don't feel that having a lift and ski trails will negatively impact nature, but will allow for increased opportunities to view it. As an example, the best huckleberry bushes to be found in this state are

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directly under a ski trail (coincidence? I think not!) So, aside from having the opportunities to enjoy nature the natural areas of the state in the winter, I think the expansion would really make people more aware that the rest of the mountain has neat features as well.

I am a long time Mt Spokane skier and an avid outdoorsman that loves nature. I've spent many years in the forest and have developed a great appreciation for wildlife and the environment. I believe that the expansion will actually improve wildlife habitat with no negative impact. The runs will provide improved vegetation providing feed for animal. Skiing will have no impact on the animals because most animals migrate to lower elevation during the winter.

Mt Spokane State Park provides many opportunities for winter outdoor recreation. I feel this expansion is in everyones best interest and I fully support it.

I would like to encourage the Washington State Parks Board to approve the Mt. Spokane Expansion Project. I grew up recreating at Mt. Spokane hiking, biking, camping, skiing, and other activities. Now, I enjoy the Mt. with my children and their families. Who are 5th generation of our family to enjoy Mt. Spokane. My grandfather helped build original buildings on the mountain as part of the Big Deal; The mountain has changed very little since then, accept the access seems to be shrinking opposed to being expanded Similar to the Lands Council, I am care about the environment the beauty of the mountain as well as its long term sustainability. Mt. Spokane, the Parks and other 3rd party companies have evaluated the impact of the expansion on the environment, and they continue to come up with the same answer, the expansion will have zero negative impact in the environment.

The same people continue to find new reasons to counter the studies and change their issues to support their own selfish desire to keep the mountain shut off from more people that can enjoy the backside of Mt. Spokane. I have trouble understanding their motivation. There is plenty of backside terrain for people from all walks of life to enjoy. Having a chair lift on the backside will make the area more accessible and will mitigate the current safety concerns. The fact of the matter is that people will continue to use the backside with new chair or not. With enhanced access and codified runs and paths for equipment and people, the mountain will become much safer for families and others to enjoy the backside.

Mt. Spokane is wonderful asset to the Spokane area. Growing the resort and access to others will only enhance the mountain and park experience. It's a state park, it should be made readily available for as many people as possible, If the expansion does not happen, it will eliminate the backside experience for many people that are unable or unwilling to navigate the risks challenges without the ability for the ski patrol and others to quickly and safely access the backside in the event of an emergency.

Please approve the expansion; it is the right thing to do for the majority of the citizens of the State of Washington.

I am writing in support of MS200 expansion into the PASEA, specifically Alternative 4.

Since the Public Scoping process in November 2013 MS200 has addressed all of the elements of the environment that may be significantly impacted by the facilities and activities that could occur under formal land classification and as a result of the proposed ski area expansion.

The PASEA consist of 800 acres, the area affected by the expansion is now down to 279 acres. The area that will need tree removal is now down to 80 acres. This is only 0.575 percent of the State Park. The total area affected by the expansion is only 1.7% of the park. This leaves over 13,600 acres untouched including more pristine areas like Ragged Ridge. Which have very limited access.

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MS2000 has adjusted plans and made every effort to meet the concerns of ALL the users of the State Park. At the same time bike trails are being expanded and routed thru out the PASEA without public input.

I specifically support Alternative 4 due to Purpose Three noted in the Combined Draft Environmental impact Statement. This states Improve search and rescue within the PASEA. Having personally been involved in numerous searches in the PASEA most do not realize just how large of an area 800 acres is. We are literally looking for someone when standing will take up about one square foot of area. The PASEA consists of over 34 million square feet! This is a perfect example of a needle in a haystack. These searches can take place at any time of day or night. Searchers risk life and limb at times and will do so no matter the outcome of the expansion. Should they be required to do so? Currently with limited access the time required to search using existing chairs and snowmobiles far exceeds the standards set by the Mount Spokane Ski Patrol. These standards are set inside the current ski area and include examples such as time to get an AED to an injured guest. Time to get a guest from the bottom of chair four to the Aid room. Guests have come to expect this level of service in an area that is designated as a skiable area. At this time NONE of the PASEA meet these standards.

Alternative 4 with the mitigation measures will insure all the guests of the State Park an enjoyable experience both summer and winter. It will allow the Mount Spokane Ski Patrol the ability to react faster and deliver the service guests expect even in the PASEA.

MS2000 has proven to be good stewards of the State Park ski area. A large improvement over concessionaires of the past. Given the chance they will be good stewards of the PASEA.

We should all be able to enjoy this area not just the select few. After all is this not the mission of the State Park system?

My family skis at Mt Spokane and we occasionally visit the Mt Spokane area in the summer (mountain and road biking). I'm commenting on the proposed expansion. I would encourage approving the installation of a new lift and trails. Mt Spokane is a great family ski resort that is close to town and affordable. It is special to see families spending time together in the state parks and we have a great resource with a nearby mountain and forest land. I'd like to see opportunities increased.

The expansion allows the ski area to remain competitive with other ski resorts in the region and makes this side of the mountain safer for users. We should encourage and expand opportunities for Washington citizens to ski in Washington.

So please come up with a plan that allows the new chair/expansion but that also works for the long term goals and health of the state park.

Thank you for providing an easy forum to comment. We are very fortunate to have such great state parks and outdoor opportunities. Lets keep improving these opportunities.

Since Mt. Spokane 2000 has take over the concessions and the ski area the area has improved and is run wonderfully. I have seen more and more skiers and riders at Mt. Spokane and they are getting busier as time goes by. I would love to see more terrain for skiing now.

I have been skiing at Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park since I was two back in 93. I have worked on the mountain for the past ten years with ski

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school as a cadet, been involved with the ski racing program as an athlete and as a couch, and now am managing the terrain park, events and building the features with the cat as well. My family have all been so invested in this mountain as well. My dad has been on the Mt. Spokane Patrol since 93 and has worked as lift maintenance for the past seven years. My mom has worked in the kitchen for the past five years and my soon to be wife has worked as the Snowsports manager for the past five as well. We are all so supportive of this mountain and would love to see things change.

Please consider Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard park and listen to all the facts from both sides, you will find that many facts from the Lance Counsel and The Friends of Mount Spokane are false. They are all very selfish people who flat out don't want to share the mountain, therefore they make ridicules story and false facts about the backside of the mountain to keep it for themselves.

All of us are excited about the new Red Chair. We can't wait to get it installed and it would certainly reduce to crowding on the front side.

I am in favor of #4 classifying the back side

I am writing yet another letter to you to ask to you consider opening up the backside for skiing and recreation. I have gone to the backside many times in my 36 years as a Ski Patroller at Mt Spokane. People go back there looking for more exciting places to ski or fresh powder or to just explore. They all know it's not Patrolled and a closed area but they go anyway. When someone reports them lost, the Patrol must go back and try to rescue them.

There are down trees, no easy runs and dangerous conditions. It's not an easy rescue and puts a lot of Patrollers who are basically trained volunteers in danger.

If the mountain could put in a chair lift and a few runs, it would be so much safer for everyone.

Plus with all the down timber back there, I imagine that it's very dangerous in the summer and fall for fires. We've seen this happen in other parts of the State where the fires are fueled by all the cluttered forests. Let us take a lesson from what happened to Pateros and that region and try to stop that from happening in our part of the State.

The mountain has shown to be good users of public resources. They need this area developed so they can maintain safety. Please vote to let this happen.

Please keep mount Spokane open to all forms of recreation. Your discover pass has already limited the amount and kind (low income) of people that use the mountain.

Restricting further use on expanded areas would just keep wilderness loving people like myself from enjoying all that the mountain has to offer. People who take the time to go and enjoy the mountain are rarely the same people that harm the flora and fauna.

So, please keep all forms of recreation available to those who need a bit of fresh air, and that includes, hikers, bikers, equestrian, huckleberry pickers, sight seers, and all other tax paying citizens.

I do support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation; remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan.

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Thank you for keeping my (and yours) mountain open to all of us!!!

I am currently a citizen of Spokane. I grew up here and learned to ski on Mt Spokane in the 1950's. After moving away for 20 years, I came back with my family and raised two boys. Both are adults now and learned to ski on Mt Spokane. It is a wonderful family sport that we have all shared and loved.

I have also served on the board of Mt Spokane for over a decade. Our goal is to provide the best, conveniently located ski area to the Spokane and surrounding community. Expanding to the backside serves this goal. It has been a long, arduous and very expensive process. Duplications and misrepresentations abound.

I hope we can all come to a agreement that expanding opportunities for skiers within careful studies to comply with the natural beauty and adequate and reasonable protection of our God given resources that best serves the majority of the community.

I urge you to support the expansion of Mt Spokane to the PASEA!

I am 100% in favor of alternative #4.

The back side of the mountain is the best snow on the mountain as it is north facing. It is a badly needed improvement to the mountain. Further more, with all of the fallen trees and dead trees it is a fire hazard.

Please use some common sense and see this project through. It has been severely scaled back and is needed to begin to be competitive with the local resorts.

I am certain that a chair lift over the back side of the mountain will be a huge success!

I and my family are long time skiers on Mt. Spokane. The snow conditions and terrain on the existing north slope are often superior to the east and south areas. It would seem to be more excellent addition to the ski operation to develop the northwest area.

I support Part 1 alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

And I support Part 2 alternative 3: Mitigated Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails but doesn't include as much grading and clearing.

Please make the Red Chair at Mt. Spokane a reality!

Thanks

I am a skier. I am opposed to further expansion of the Mt Spokane ski area. Simply, the ski area has developed enough of the natural environment of Mt Spokane. The remaining natural park at this elevation is rare feature near Spokane. It should be left for those who seek and deserve access to this area of the park without the intrusion of ski lifts and clear cut paths for ski trails. Development is also an unjustifiable destruction of natural forest land. I like lift access skiing, but also enjoy backcountry skiing and have always appreciated that there is an area of Mt Spokane where backcountry skiers and snowshoers can be without snowmobiles, ski lifts, and ski area rules. This is their park too. Mt Spokane ski area, lift riders, and snowmobiles have plenty of park terrain. And the preservation of this area is not just for me, backcountry skiers, and snowshoers. It's is for the benefit for all ages, over all seasons, for generations to come.

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As a resident of Spokane and WA State tax-payer, I oppose expansion of the Mount Spokane 2000 ski area and associated addition of a chair lift and ski trails, with the pending PASEA classification. Our area already has great access to developed skiing.

The intact wilderness habitat that currently exists in this area is an incredible asset, and vital to the continued survival and health of a variety of bird, wildlife and plant species. Please do all you can to protect the full 800 acres and classify the land in a manner that preserves its ecological value over its economic value.

While preservation of virgin and old growth forest may be a honourable thing, I am completely convinced that more people will benefit from expansion than from the current policy.

As a lifetime Spokane resident, recreationalist & Mt Spokane skier, I support the acceptance of Alternative #4 of Part #1 and Alternative #2 or #3 (preferably #2) of Part 2.

Spokane Ski Racing Association (SSRA), incorporated as Mount Spokane Alpine Team, is a non-profit 501c3 organization that has operated on Mt. Spokane since the late 1950's. From humble beginnings, SSRA has grown and developed into the best childrens alpine ski racing program in the Inland Northwest, as well as one of the best in the entire Pacific Northwest. Membership has grown to over 100 athletes, ages 5-18, and their families; more than doubling in size since 1997.

The mission of the Spokane Ski Racing Association is to provide opportunities for young skiers to participate and compete in alpine ski racing. SSRA embodies fun, safety, participation, skill development, and competition. Being a member of SSRA insures an athlete the opportunity to achieve greatness in ski racing, while becoming an expert, all-mountain skier. SSRA is equally committed to nurturing positive attributes and life skills through alpine winter sport. Athletic fitness, individual responsibility and positive self-image are important aptitudes developed within SSRA programs.

SSRA has set growth goals for the future that amplify its priority of making ski racing accessible and inclusive to the diverse population of the Spokane area. For instance, athlete tuition accounts for only 60-65% of operating expenses, annually. The remaining 35-40% of operating expenses is provided through membership fundraising events, corporate sponsorship, and hosting events for kids in the Spokane area and the entire region. This subsidization lowers program fees and makes participation possible for a wide population of young people in Spokane. In addition, a need-based scholarship fund was created in February, 2006 to assist families who could not otherwise participate in SSRA.

With this commitment to Spokane and the customers of Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, and a purpose based in the health and development of young people; SSRA's growth will undoubtedly mirror that of the Spokane area, as well as, the skier visits of Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. To accommodate this growth; additional parking, lodge space, lift capacity, and ski trail acreage is needed. And, for that reason, amongst others, SSRA wholeheartedly endorses the following options under consideration:

Part 1 Land Classification

Alternative 4 - (Preferred) Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

Part 2 Project Action

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Alternative 2 - Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails. Includes more grading and clearing.

Below are some of the most important reasons to expand into the PASEA for the health and safety of children and families of SSRA, and the greater Spokane area:

Safe Ski Trail Densities and Appropriate Progression of Terrain

In specific regard to Spokane Ski Racing Association, kids need more terrain than is currently available at Mt. Spokane. The current intermediate terrain is congested and often dangerous. The area desperately needs more runs cut to bridge the gap between beginner and expert terrain. Furthermore, Mt. Spokane often experiences low clouds (yes, fog) like some other areas of the Inland Northwest. This results in a further concentration of skiers on a portion of the runs. This is especially the case on the backside chair 4 runs. These runs on the Northwest side of the mountain seem to experience far less fog than the front side. Cutting runs in the PASEA (also North/Northwest facing) provides more terrain that sees far less limited visibility conditions.

Long-term Economic Sustainability

Specific to Spokane Ski Racing Association, North slopes mean earlier and better training for the kids, and a more reliable means to deliver the healthy athletic pursuits of alpine skiing disciplines. Perhaps even more importantly, Mt. Spokane and SSRA competes with other areas, all of which have expanded terrain and lifts within the last 10 years. Like any business, Mt. Spokane must provide improved facilities, runs, and lifts. This can only occur and be sustained, with the additional expansion area utilized. We want to keep Spokane children of diverse economic means participating in the sport. This goal is most easily realized at close, affordable, Mt. Spokane. If Mt. Spokane cannot expand its operation and current boundaries, it will be extremely challenged to compete. If it cannot compete in the long term, our children will be the victims.

Thank you for your time as it is an investment in the young people of the Spokane area and the Inland Northwest! We love Mt. Spokane and consider it one of the most special places on earth. In fact, my family of five call Mt. Spokane home. We are third generation Mt. Spokane skiers and want to enjoy Mt. Spokane for many generations to come. However, we need the ski area to increase in area by expanding. Adequate trail development (expansion) and clearing will minimize risk for children and the rest of the general public to share the area. Please help the families and children of SSRA and Mt. Spokane experience a safe and successful future.

Any decision by Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission must allow the proposed chairlift and seven runs to proceed.

Please choose alternative 4 for land classification and alternative 2 for project action.

As a mother of 3 children who ski at Mt. Spokane, I worry a great deal about the safety of my children due to the current limitations of our ski area. The management does an excellent job with signage, grooming, and general management of the ski area. No, phenomenal is more accurate. However, there are very few beginner and intermediate runs and traffic congestion on these runs is becoming unacceptable, and frankly dangerous.

I notice it most on the days when we have limited visibility. Everyone heads to chair 4 or the area that is currently out of bounds. Children largely have to stay on established trails. Particularly in these conditions, I have seen a lot of close calls that could have ended tragically. Sadly, I have also

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witnessed collisions. Since so much terrain is easily accessible and so many people are skiing it already, it is upsetting to think that my children could be in a much safer situation if we simply added trails in the area that is already skied.

Please expand the area. It is such an important piece of the fabric of Spokane and a place our family cherishes. Our children deserve to enjoy such a wonderful place with less risk of being hurt due to trail congestion.

Please continue to allow for mountain biking on Mt Spokane. As a lifetime hiker, runner, biker and skier I moved here from the Colorado mountains to have access to trails and forests - but with less traffic. I have met some of my best friends on bikes. I have even traveled the world (all the way to Ecuador and France) just to bike. I've brought my friends, from all over the world, here to bike, and Mt Spokane is a favorite. As a physician, I am tired of seeing obese people and Mountain biking is one sport that I see growing every year. It's fun and promotes exercise and a sense of conservation for our land.

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as Recreation remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan. I think any alternative that does not allow for mountain biking in the state park panders to a specific user group and is not in the spirit of a state park.

I am very much in favor of the chair lift expansion at Mt Spokane. It makes excellent use of land that the public in general, can use year around that would otherwise only be used by the local squirrel population and they don't pay taxes.

I support Mt Spokane's proposal to expand the developed ski area to the northwest side of Mt Spokane. The scaled back scope of the expansion is a good compromise between the unique attributes of Mt. Spokane and the very much needed additional inbound ski area at Mt. Spokane.

I support Mt Spokane for recreation to keep access for bikes.

Let the ski area expand, create more jobs, become more of a regional destination!

We love Mt. Spokane and are so excited about the expansion. Mt. Spokane is really special and meets the needs of the Spokane area. It is so accessible and the community not only loves it, but really uses it. We work hard and to have a place like Mt. Spokane where we are so close and can go for 1/2 day of skiing after work is such a treat and unbelievable! Going for a full day is so much fun because we can spend our day on the mountain not in the car. Since it is so close we use it a lot all through out the year. That is the best part!! The skiing is affordable for our family and creates a great family destination. It is affordable because it is close to the community so you don't have the expense of having to stay on the mountain. With the expansion it will allow for recreational enhancements, protect our precious natural areas and keep Mt. Spokane going which is so important for this region and for the future of Mt. Spokane. Since our son is blind there would be more terrain which means skier safety and I am into skier safety for myself and the rest of my family. When the slopes are too crowded it can be dangerous. Also with more terrain it attracts more levels of skiers which impacts this area economically which is good for the state and this area and draws people to this region for recreation. Mt. Spokane has been a good partner with this community and a good steward of the land which is so important. My understanding is that with this expansion Mt. Spokane will protect 90% of the forest. Mt. Spokane is an important economic piece of our Spokane pie because it helps us attract people who love recreation, people who love nature and it is a selling point for families for wonderful things for families to do together in the great outdoors. Help us and make this happen!!!! We LOVE Mt. Spokane and we need your help now to keep Mt. Spokane going and offer families and citizens a great place to enjoy recreation all through out the year. It is very important to our community, our economic viability on this side of the State and with our fragile economy, recreation is about the only boost that we have in recruiting business and employers to this area. Let's do this!!!! Thank you for helping us make this happen!!!! We are so excited!!!!

I would like to enthusiastically support the Mt Spokane Ski Area Expansion. My Blind son and I only ski at Mt Spokane because he feels comfortable there. However to expand his skills as a skier; he needs some new and interesting terrain and the less frequent fog on the backside would help my

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visibility to guide him on foggy days.

This is a regional resource that contributes to our area in many ways. It helped me recruit a Dentist to relocate from Montana. The recreation is so important to our area. It is about all we have. As we will never have the robust economy of the west side of the State; Recreation is about it. This land was donated to the State for recreation and this project fulfills this mission. This land has not been old growth or prairie forest for 100 years and the already logged land was donated for recreation. There is much better land to prohibit Humans to use; Land that is better for wildlife. Land that is prairie. Land that would be closer to migratory pathways.

The objections to the expansion are uninformed and kneejerk based on emotional appeals that the Ski area will cut down thousand year old old growth trees and cause the extinction of many species. This expansion increases public safety and provides access for rescue and emergency equipment. Overall the expansion is a huge bonus for our area, which rarely gets any great things. Thank you for your consideration of this wonderful project

The Pacific Northwest has a number of excellent ski areas to choose from. Over the years, we have watched each resort expand and improve their services. Mt. Spokane is a valuable resource for outdoor enthusiasts in our region, however; like any business, it must evolve in order to be competitive.

We have read many comments written by the opponents to the Mt. Spokane chairlift expansion. On balance, we fail to see a compelling argument. The mountain presently has chairlift exposure in every direction, except the northwest, and it is difficult to validate the logic to deny this application on social or ecological terms.

We have seen facility, terrain and chairlift expansion at Schweitzer, 49 North, Silver Mountain and Lookout Pass. Given the multitude of choices, it is inevitable that Mt. Spokane must offer similar improvements in order to remain relevant. The economic reality is that businesses must meet the demands of their customers, or face extinction.

Our commentary is representative of a large number of long-term supporters of Mt. Spokane. We urge the regulatory process to find in favor of PASEA Alternative 4 and the subsequent chairlift expansion.

Please provide planning for bicycle use in all public areas!

I have been a long-time volunteer ski patrolman at Mt. Spokane and I hope deeply for the continued success of Mt. Spokane as a ski area. I also have a vested interest in Mt. Spokane as I am also a Snowblaze Condominium owner. However, my position on the ski patrol does place me in a somewhat awkward position with my opposition to the ski area expansion, or so-called PASEA.

I have not been convinced that adding a sixth chairlift will secure the future of Mt. Spokane as it simply appears to add more of the same type of terrain already available, and adds another antiquated double chairlift that other ski areas are removing from service. By contrast, adding a chairlift and logged ski runs will certainly destroy the excellent back country skiing in those areas, which are cherished by many skiers. I also have concerns with soil erosion from the delicate north-facing slopes in the proposed expansion area as I also enjoy the Mt. Spokane hiking trails in the summer and fall seasons.

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Moreover, the addition of a chairlift will add to the maintenance responsibilities of the mountain staff, yet provide nothing in terms of skier services at the two existing (and decaying) lodges or parking areas. Any claims of added revenue as a result of completing the project should be considered only as speculation.

I urge the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to vote to keep the ski area as it is with no ski run expansion and keeping the back country skiing as-is.

The Spokane Mountaineers position is to oppose the ski area expansion and advocate for a land use classification that prevents development of the PASEA. Consequently, the Spokane Mountaineers recommend the land classification in the PASEA be set as Natural Forest Area (Alternative 2 in the land classification portion of the DEIS. We note the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Fish & Wildlife both endorse the wild forest of the PASEA as Natural Forest Area. In addition, the State Parks staff recommendation in 1999 was to set the land classification as NFA.

The DEIS incorrectly excludes backcountry skiing from the NFA land classification. Backcountry skiing is low impact and is either no more damaging or even less damaging than cross country skiing that is included as a use in NFA. The definitions of cross country skiing, backcountry skiing and alpine skiing are quite broad and nuanced. So for example, the impact of crosscountry skiing on tracked and groomed trails has a greater impact than backcountry skiing that does not require any modification to the natural forest. We request that backcountry skiing without roads, lifts or other ground disturbance be allowed in the NFA classification.

The inclusion of backcountry skiing provides a place for this activity in a near Spokane location that is otherwise not available. The Mount Spokane State Park is considerably closer than any other mountain areas that are suitable for backcountry skiing and serves to provide for the recreation desires of the backcountry ski community.

Having considerable knowledge of the history of Mt. Spokane, we refute the claims of previous development in the PASEA for skiing or logging. The PASEA forest is old-growth as all experts state. Moreover, it is unique and has been called by State Parks staff, the most important forest ecosystem in the State Parks system. The history of ski activities in the PASEA is limited to a crude rope tow in the pre-1950s era when skiing was limited to the existing open slopes and glades primarily on the south and east sides. The Cooks cabin and ill-fated lodge that succumbed to fire at the start of it's first winter season are already classified in the Cultural Resources land use. The DEIS does not fully explain the adverse effects of development that is expected under less stringent land use classifications.

The development of recreation uses under the other land use classification alternatives will change the composition of flora and fauna, increase erosion and landslides and affect stream water quality. There is no mitigation that will be successful in replacing or protecting the ecological values. There should be a more detailed explanation of the adverse effects of the recreation facilities development on the identified ecological resources.

SE Group is tied to the ski industry as their primary client type; after all SE is an abbreviation for their legal name Sno-Engineering, Inc. it is reasonable to be quite skeptical about their assessment of mitigation effectiveness.

The SE Group in their 1992 report on the Mt. Spokane State Park Alpine Ski Area Study stated, "the ski area is plagued with a brush problem since the trails have not been manicured with a bulldozer and reseeded." The analysis of Alternative 2 - Figure EIS-6 does not consider the

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effects of bulldozer work and reseeded. The analysis also does not consider the placement of access roads and grading necessary for drainage. We request further analysis has to include the modifications and improvements to the natural grade and vegetation within the ski runs.

We also request further evaluation of the possibility of a higher density development under the all of the recreation alternatives. The proposed developments have included and should be expected to include lighted runs, lodge or huts, access roads including the potential for year round vehicular access and glading of the areas in-between the ski runs. The lights will affect the scenic values evaluation.

There is little mention of the effects of changing the drainage and vegetation on the landslide potential even though the area is dotted with small landslides and a major slide closed the Park entry for the entire summer season. The cost of the potential for more frequent landslides should be further evaluated.

The absence of the analysis of the environmental impacts of full development that is allowed under each land classification does not provide adequate information to the decision-makers. It appears the intent is to minimize the stated effect of the ski area expansion in Alternative 2.

Given the public desire for protecting natural areas and the States policy to identify, acquire and protect natural areas, why would the State Parks Commission sacrifice a high-quality irreplaceable old growth forest like the PASEA.

I am writing this comment in favor of the proposed Potential Alpine Ski Area Expansion (PASEA) at Mount Spokane.

I have skied at Mount Spokane for the last 40 years (since I was 5 years old). Most of those years I have been a season pass holder (as I currently am). I have been advocating for a new chair and expansion of the back side of Mount Spokane for many years. The reasons I support the expansion are as such:

Safety

First and foremost, I see the expansion of the PASEA as a safety issue. As I mentioned I have skied at Mount Spokane for roughly 40 years. Until recently, I only witnessed a hand full of skiers skiing the "backside" of the mountain. It was very rare in the past to see tracks over the backside. Recently, however, many people have "caught on" to the "good skiing" on the backside because in the last few years I have seen an exponential increase in the amount of skiers skiing the backside of the mountain (the PASEA).

I have a personal experience related to the safety issue. About 8 years ago one of my sons and his friend (they were both about 12 years old) followed some tracks down the backside. They became lost. Fortunately, they encountered a snowmobiler on the lower cut-off road. The snowmobiler gave them a ride to Chair 4. The situation could have been a lot worse, since this was late in the day and they could have easily been lost for the night or longer, since I had no idea they had "skied over the backside". This type of incident will be all that more common due to the increased use of that area by alpine skiers.

Improved Ski Conditions

As has been presented in the project proposal, the PASEA is on the northwest side of the mountain and therefore will have better snow for skiing (drier) and increased snow pack which will lead to improved conditions in both the early and late seasons.

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New terrain

I have skied the backside recently and now know first hand how good the terrain is. However, as mentioned above it is risky now because of the downfall and lack of designated runs.

Mount Spokane could use some more variety and new terrain. I think this improvement will keep a lot of local skiers coming (or returning) to Mount Spokane instead of driving further (which has a negative environmental impact) to other ski areas.

Environment

I know there will be much opposition to the PASEA based on concerns about the environmental impact. I am a Civil Engineer, not a Biologist, but my limited background (and common sense) tells me that this expansion will have a negligible negative effect on the environment. First off, the main use will be in the winter when most of the animals (at least the ones of main concern) are not be in the area. Secondly, I believe any environmental impacts can and will be mitigated.

I could elaborate further on some of the issues, but I mainly just wanted to give my support to the expansion.

I look forward to safe skiing on the North face of Mount Spokane in the near future.

I do not favor expansion of the Mt. Spokane alpine ski area. Land use option 1.

I'm writing in regards to the Mt. Spokane PASEA. I ask that the Parks Dept. protect all remaining old growth and intact forest left on Mt. Spokane and deny the ski expansion.

Intact forest, intact old growth, is in short supply, esp. near Spokane. Ski hills are not in short supply. We have more than enough. While I sympathize with the Mt. Spokane hill in wanting more runs, their economic desires should not trump the greater need of maintaining much needed wildlife connectivity in the Mt. Spokane area. I'm surprised their proposal is even being considered by the Parks Department.

In addition to providing habitat for lynx and other keystone species, the backside of the Mt. Spokane also provides wonderful back country skiing valued by many skiers in the area. This form of recreation should be supported by the Parks Dept. as well.

The other factor that must be considered as well is climate change. Sorry, but Mt. Spokane is not going to fare well in a warming world, even if they get to log the colder backside of Mt. Spokane. And in a warming world, intact habitat and connectivity will be the keys to giving many species a shot at surviving the serious climate change. We have so little intact habitat left near Spokane!

Please, please protect the backside of the Mt. Spokane. Deny any expansion of the ski area.

I am writing this note in support of the Mt Spokane PASEA. I have written notes on several occasions voicing my support yet we seem to end up doing this time and time again. It seems to me that those opposed are trying to run the well dry financially in their opposition to this project. I truly hope this is finally settled this time around.

I have lived in the Spokane area since my husband retired from the US Navy in January of 1998. I learned to ski on Mt. Spokane several years ago and I look forward to teaching my grandson who was born this past summer to ski there the year after next. I have purchased a Washington State

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Parks Pass since their inception 3 or 4 years ago, donate money at the time of my drivers license renewal and purchase an annual ski pass each and every year.

I would be the first to agree that Mt. Spokane is a real treasure and should be shared by all. I believe since the beginning of the Mt Spokane PASEA, Mt Spokane 2000 has negotiated in good faith and have made concessions in the spirit of a good partnership with those who oppose. At this point I am not sure what else I can say or do to help expedite the approval of this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns or if there is anything I can do personally to expedite the approval process.

I am writing this note in support of the Mt Spokane PASEA. I have written notes on several occasions voicing my support yet we seem to end up doing this time and time again. It seems to me that those opposed are trying to run the well dry financially in their opposition to this project. I truly hope this is finally settled this time around.

I am a 57 year old retire military man who served 20 plus years in the United States Navy. With the exception of the time I served in the military I have lived in the Spokane area. I learned to downhill ski on Mt. Spokane when I was in third grade. Since that time my wife and children have also learned there and I look forward to teaching my grandson who was born this past summer to ski there the year after next. I have purchased a Washington State Parks Pass since their inception 3 or 4 years ago, donate money at the time of my drivers license renewal and purchase an annual ski pass each and every year.

I would be the first to agree that Mt. Spokane is a real treasure and should be shared by all. I believe since the beginning of the Mt Spokane PASEA Mt Spokane 2000 has negotiated in good faith and have made concessions in the spirit of a good partnership with those who oppose. At this point I am not sure what else I can say or do to help facilitate the approval of this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns or if there is anything I can do personally to expedite the approval process.

Let the full expansion go forward. Skiers and snowboarders respect the outdoors more than most.

I would like to submit my support of Alternative 4 for the Land Classification of the Mt Spokane PASEA. After a long and transparent public process this alternative strikes the best balance for the ski area, environment and general public it would serve.

On behalf of Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Board of Directors (MS2000), we acknowledge how difficult it is to encapsulate over a dozen years of work into a few short pages attempting to bring current State Park Commissioners up to speed on a complicated development proposal.

This EIS is, by nature, very complex and technical, it concludes that the current expansion plan addresses forest health and land conservation concerns. Also, the laws governing environmental impacts must also consider the human impacts of decisions in addition to the technical environmental details of the EIS. MS2000 respectfully requests the Washington State Parks Commission to classify the land for Recreation Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area as we believe it will allow for significant enhancements, safeguard natural areas and solidify the long-term future of Mt. Spokane as a regional asset.

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We are confident that the expansion plan, which was revised to balance recreational opportunity with environmental stewardship, addresses forest health and land conservation concerns. As a non-profit organization, we've spent over a decade and nearly \$1 million studying potential impacts to ensure that Mt. Spokane protects and preserves State Parks asset. In addition to the 2014 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) MS2000 has studied:

1. A range of alternatives for long-term use and development within the existing and potential alpine ski area.
2. Regional recreational demand analysis for downhill skiing and snowboarding.
3. Financial analysis of alternatives including potential fiscal implication.
4. Biological assessment of alternatives, including impacts on endangered, threatened, and sensitive species and their habitats.
5. Assessment of effects on existing recreation, including snowmobile, equestrian, bicycle and pedestrian trail use.
6. 2012 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Plan of Development.
7. 2014 Spokane County Habitat Management Plan prepared by ICF.
8. 2014 Wetland Delineation Report prepared by ICF.

MS2000 has worked in collaboration with a variety of experts to develop a plan that addresses concerns and benefits the entire region. On behalf of the MS2000 Board of Directors I thank you for all the time and serious attention you have given to this very important matter and urge you to support this land classification request for Recreational use, as it will create social and economic benefits for the state and the entire region.

terrain expansion at Mount Spokane would work well with the use of the Mount Spokane Part 1 alt # 4 and Part 2 alt # 2

The DEIS for the classification changes at the Mt. Spokane State Park is flawed by not assessing the impacts to the hydrology of the mountain and the tributary streams that feed Blanchard Creek, which is home to native Redband trout.

Climate change is recognized as affecting the snow holding ability of the mountain and, therefore, an advantage of opening the northwest face for ski access. This same consideration should be made regarding the overall hydrology of the proposed ski area expansion. As recently as September 20, 2014, I witnessed that the streams leaving the proposed ski area were running clear, cold water at a surprising volume. This source of cold, oxygenated water is likely to be critical to the survival of the Redband trout. The DEIS notes that the hydrology will be changed by the clearing of the forest for ski runs, but does not address that impact on the native fish or offer any mitigation.

I strongly encourage that the classification changes described in Alternative 4, not be accepted.

I would like to add my voice for the expansion of the Mount Spokane Ski ; Snowboard Park. I am in favor of this proposed expansion. Mount Spokane is a family friendly resort serving not only the Spokane area residents but also those who have made it a vacation destination. As a non profit organization, they have been good stewards of their existing facility and ski/board areas. The proposed area of expansion will not be a hindrance to the existing natural resources but will allow for better stewardship of this existing area which is already being used by other sports enthusiasts currently throughout the year. I know that the original approval for the expansion was received in 2011. I have not read any information provided by those opposing this expansion that would sway my opinion to the contrary. Please end this stalemate by allowing this expansion to move forward

For most of my 52 years, I have used the Mount Spokane State Park recreational opportunities for everything from Huckleberry Picking to snow skiing

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and hiking to mountain biking. I hope to be able to continue to use the Park as I age and hope that our access points and the types of use that are allowed will not be diminished. I think of the various plans that have been offered, Alternative 4 appears to offer the most access and is my recommendation.

I am an avid downhill skier, but I also belong to the Spokane Mountaineers, so I can see both sides of this issue. I am in favor of the backside expansion because Mt. Spokane Ski Area is by far the closest ski area to Spokane. In order to stay competitive with the other areas such as 49 Degrees and Silver, who are constantly expanding, Mt Spokane needs to expand, too. If they don't stay competitive, we could potentially lose them as a recreation resource. Truthfully, there is already a ski area there. It isn't as though they are "invading an untouched wilderness area. I don't feel that a ski area destroys the beauty or wildlife of an area I hike up there in the summer, as well. I hope that you will be supportive also of the economic impact this can have for new employment opportunities for Spokane.

I support the backside expansion wholeheartedly. I understand there are objections, but unfortunately believe they have no merit. The environmental impact would be negligible especially considering the amount of land near mt Spokane that is managed by pacific paper company. Cutting in some ski runs would have far less impact than the logging operations performed on the mountains. Not that I am against the management of the land by pacific paper company I think they do an outstanding job. I believe this expansion is long long overdue.

I think expanding the terrain on Mt Spokane to include a new chairlift and ski runs would benefit Spokane. I support the backside terrain expansion project.

I would like to comment on the DEIS for Mt. Spokane development. While these comments were recommended by The Lands Council and Sierra Club, I agree wholeheartedly with each point.

I support Alternative Two (2), Natural Forest Alternative (NFA) with one caveat. Back country alpine skiing should be allowed in the PASEA. It already occurs there. But, inconsistently, mountain biking, snowshoeing and equestrian uses are allowed. Non-groomed cross country trails are allowed in an NFA. Back country skiing is not done in a lift-assisted ski area.

The seven runs and the area for the chair lift will be clear-cut. You can't mitigate old growth, native forests that has never been logged. It's not replaceable.

Fragmentation of forests reduces habitat for rare wildlife.

Since 2007 the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have advocated for keeping the old growth intact. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute (Biological Survey 2010, page 58) says, "There are significant areas of old growth in the Biological Survey Area (PASEA)."

The streams near the base of the proposed chair are important for fish health downstream.

Wetlands should have been delineated in the spring and not late summer.

Wildlife modeling for moose, wolves and other species was not done correctly.

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Cultural and Archaeological Resources were not adequately covered.

Upgrades in parking, and lodges were not discussed. This is imperative.

Old growth forests sequester carbon and hold soil moisture in. Global warming impacts should be examined in the DEIS. They are not mentioned at all.

I support the expansion of Mt Spokane Ski area. It will be a great recreation addition to a great mountain and bring more people to our Washington Parks

Once upon a time in WA state, in my lifetime, there were ski areas named Hurricane Ridge, Mt Pilchuck, and Yodelin. These are gone now. Maybe that is the future of skiing at Mt Spokane. quote from a friend, regarding the problems and issues the Lands Council and other environmental activists are hurling at the ski area.

Good afternoon,

This letter is to establish my endorsement for the expansion of Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. I have previously written in support and will include copies of my letters in this email. Briefly, I want to hit on key points:

I am endorsing Alternative 4, Recreation and Resource Recreation. This will allow expansion, but also allow other recreation opportunities. Also, very important: added revenue. With increased skier visits projected as a result of the expansion, more income to the ski area means more revenue for Washington State Parks. In addition, further expansion will allow for additional much needed employment opportunities, supporting job growth in Eastern Washington and North Idaho.

Alternative 2 (Natural Forest Area) will not be feasible. Skiers, snowshoers, mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders will access the area no matter if it has an NFA designation. This area is too close to two major metropolitan areas and has easy access. People will use this area, bottom line. It is better to have Recreation and Resource Recreation where the area can be enjoyed by park visitors and monitored and maintained by park and ski area managers.

Please consider the Mission Statement of Washington State Parks.

The Natural Forest Area designation I believe is incongruous to the state parks mission.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission cares for Washington's most treasured lands, waters, and historic places. State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide memorable recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives.

Vision

Washington's state parks will be cherished destinations with natural, cultural, recreational, artistic, and interpretive experiences that all

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Washingtonians enjoy, appreciate, and proudly support.

Core Values

The agency has adopted the following core values:

Commitment to stewardship that transmits high quality park assets to future generations

Dedication to outdoor recreation and public enjoyment that welcomes all our citizens to their public parks

Excellence in all we do

Involving the public in our policy development and decision making

Support for one another as we translate our mission into reality

In 2011, Don Hoch, Washington State Parks and Recreation Director sent a message regarding budget cuts and public input to the 61 Initiative Project. Question: Did the Discover Pass raise the projected 65 million, as predicted? Did much of that go to DFW and DNR? It seems to me the need for revenue is always growing. With the ski area expansion, this will become a reality, and propel the ski area and Mount Spokane State Park further into this century as a beneficial plan for all.

With the real potential for no general fund support, State Parks must rethink our approach to providing recreation opportunities and stewarding park resources. We face a basic choice:

1. Keep the agency as we know it, but dramatically smaller to reflect reduced funding and hope to rebuild in better times, or
2. Use the current crisis as an opportunity to transform the agency, diversifying funding sources, engaging support, building expertise and creating an agency adapted to operating without state general funds.

I recently established a task force to explore the latter choice and craft a revenue and efficiency strategy to help set the agency on a conscious course towards long-term financial stability. The task force convened work groups with agency staff and stakeholders and developed 61 distinct revenue and efficiency initiatives.

Now we need your help. As a State Parks supporter, we need to know from you whether we were on the right track. Attached is a document that describes all 61 initiatives and which ones we're recommending to implement first. Please give us your thoughts. We've set up a special e-mail inbox to collect your input: transformation.strategy@parks.wa.gov. Your input will help us create a revenue and efficiency strategy to help guide us into our second century of service.

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Contrast the above with the Lands Council:

Lands Council Statement

We preserve and revitalize Inland Northwest forests, water, and wildlife through advocacy, education, effective action, and community engagement. We collaborate with a broad range of interested parties to seek smart and mutually respectful solutions to environment and health issues.

We're enriched by the beauty of nature. We're energized by the recreational opportunities it affords. And we're inspired to preserve its legacy for future generations.

At The Lands Council, that's the work we do, every day!

I would like to say that the Lands Council has only blocked and provided negative feedback and incorrect information and emotional tactics to derail the ski area expansion project. They should adhere to their mission statement as effectively as Washington State Parks, and Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. "Smart and Mutually Respectful" solutions fell by the wayside regarding the ski area, when mountain management and other environmentalists have been supportive and constantly upgrading/changing the expansion. It is now under 300 acres. The Lands Council would have better served their public by collaborating with the ski area in useful dialog and expertise. It is unfortunate that they decided not to partner with such a large project and worthy cause.

The following is my letter dated March 15, which still holds true. Also, is an email which I wrote in support as well. Thank you for allowing input. Please allow the expansion.

In 2011 I wrote on behalf of the Mount Spokane Ski Area expansion.

Good Afternoon,

I am writing on behalf of Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park . I feel the expansion at Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is not only critical but is also a good investment to the future of the area. I have been a resident of Washington State for 40 years, a resident of Snowblaze Condominium Association for 15, and had been a parks employee at Mount Spokane previously, and am a registered voter.

I have seen the changes Mount Spokane has gone through over the years, and have seen the positive growth and changes the Mount Spokane 2000 board and current employees have brought to the mountain throughout the years. The current management is always looking for ways to improve the quality of skiing and snowboarding experiences, offers new improvements every year such as the Children's Choice Tube Hill, provides excellent opportunity for Junior Olympics through SSRA to give opportunity to young people for advancement, and provides daily services in the way of grooming and food service to continue to provide to season pass holders a quality experience. The board did exactly as they said: continual improvement for the mountain and proper use of resources. Because of this, the numbers of skiers and snowboarders attending the mountain has grown. There was a recent study that even in the bad economy, people are still enjoying the winter sports in the mountains, and the sport has not declined as it has in other areas. People still love to ski and snowboard in spite of downturns in the economy.

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I have seen the numbers of visitors increase, the quality of the mountain experience increase through the years. It is for this reason I feel the ski area is a good investment for the future of Spokane Not only that, but the entire history of the mountain, from Mount Baldy to the World's First Double Chairlift, to the history of support from Davenport, Cowles families, and the Civil Conservation Corps, all too numerous to name, should be preserved. Residents of the Spokane area and the state of Washington should embrace Mount Spokane as an important historical and cultural resource, and a new lift, plus expansion, can help with commemoration of this history. It can and will pay for itself in the years to come.

I feel it would be a shame to let such an opportunity slide by if the expansion would not go through. It would show a lack of concern for an important historical facility in Spokane . Realize that the expansion of other mountains, such as 49 Degrees North, Lookout Pass , and improvements by other resorts have increased visitation and revenue. The same could happen for Mount Spokane , only increased twofold. Spokane as you know is much closer to a major metropolitan area, both the city of Spokane and Coeur d'Alene and serves residents of Idaho as well. I believe the expansion is good for our community and our friends and neighbors in Idaho .

I would like to see the documentation and studies that reflect how a new chair and expansion of around 200 acres would negatively impact wildlife habitat. Also how wolverines are present on Mount Spokane . Living at Snowblaze, we have in fact elk, moose, deer, cougar, bear, bobcat, coyote, and other multitudes of wildlife that we frequently encounter, often right in our backyard, and they do not seem negatively impacted. We are coexisting with wildlife, sharing our home with these animals. Please ensure these negative impacts are based on sound scientific research and not hearsay or personal feelings.

Remember: Mount Spokane was, and always has been, put aside for recreational use. Because of the recreational development, it can be better cared for due to the frequency of employees and park users. We have a natural area past the Nordic area, and this area is misused by atvs as it is not frequently patrolled. The simple fact is that Mount Spokane is too close to major urban development, and too many people can have the potential of abusing the natural areas. It is much better to have recreational use areas that are frequented by park staff, visitors and volunteers to control this, as they will better maintain the resource, prevent abuse and environmental degradation, and repair any damage that occurs.

One important thing: Mount Spokane is used by families with children. If we do not expand and open the gates to the park and expose young people to the wilderness, how will children, the future environmentalists, be able to enjoy the outdoors, and ultimately become good stewards of natural resources? How will people be able to share this with their children if we close up parks and turn them all into locked-down natural areas? If the area is expanded, it will only increase future enjoyment of natural habitat. Skiing and snowboarding are much needed healthy outdoor activities for children, and to expand will allow even more families to enjoy the area. Think of the reason why you, in parks, became stewards of the resource. It was because you were exposed to positive experiences in parks and other natural areas when you were young. Think of the happiness and excitement the new lift and expansion would bring to young people.

Please consider the future of the city of Spokane , the cultural and historical impact that new runs and the chairlift can offer. We are now embarking on a new decade. See the vision, the important historical moment in securing a new lift for visitors of tomorrow, and realize this expansion as the next chapter in our state's vibrant history. Be the planners who were creative enough to find a way to make it happen. Remember, during the economic downturn years ago, we had active legislators, planners and assistance in securing funds for the Centennial Trail, leaving a legacy of improved lifestyle for the city of Spokane .

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Please support the expansion at Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park

What they need is to reduce spending

I want to express my support of the backside expansion.

I hope it is not too late to issue comment, I realize that the 12th was the deadline, however would still like to include my comments if at all possible. I have been so busy that I have been unable to complete my formal notice, so hope this email will be considered. I wish I had more time. But I did respond in earlier emails in support of the expansion project.

I feel the backside expansion should go through.

I have been a skier since 1989, I have owned a condo at Snowblaze next to the ski area since 1992, and am a year-round permanent resident. I have been an employee of Mount Spokane ski area since 1989, currently assisting the marketing department with the snowline. I have also been a park aid for Mount Spokane for Washington State Parks. Today, I use the park year round for hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, picking berries, as well as skiing both downhill and backcountry. The mountain is my home. I also have an AAS Degree in Natural Resources from Spokane Community College , where I tutored dendrology under the direction of instructor XXXXX, and studied forestry and surveying with Monica Spickar. So I have a vested interested in the park, and in using the park on a daily basis, am familiar with all the natural features of the area.

I feel that the expansion should go through as planned.

I would like to see further study by an independent group with sound scientific background. I want to see actual data (numbers, stream surveys, edge effect studies, etc) and cited. In short, I want to see a professional draft done by professional independent contractors. To me, the last studies seem to have been done by environmentalists with emotional attachments that make up data and terminology as they go along, not looking at the benefits and the "larger picture" of the park users, and the resource. I need better data, please.

And especially noted: there have been no studies done on the benefits of the expansion. I feel that the expansion would clear out deadfall, removing catastrophic fire conditions, improve light, improve habitat for elk, moose and deer, as well as raptors and other predators. There are numerous studies on Edge Effect and by qualified foresters performing selective cuttings, which have improved forest ecology. By opening up the backside with even minimal cutting, there would be a remarkable improvement in forest health and wildlife habitat, I feel, and we need a study to show this. Please consider more study on this issue.

Please continue to actively pursue the recreational aspect, which I feel will benefit the skiers and snowboarders tremendously, and improve the revenue for Washington State Parks. Current park management has been very professional and very accommodating to all involved, even to reducing the expansion to under 300 acres, and this latest block is to the point of what I would call a witch hunt against current management. However I am mostly interested in long term health of the forest, especially worried about the fire reduction issues and the soil health. Because we have systematically suppressed fires, and therefore eliminated a natural occurring event therefore changing the ecology of the forest, it is in a poor state of health as a result. A managed clearing would be beneficial.

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I feel that the last EIS was done poorly. I will give one example:

a) Old-growth forest communities that have developed for one hundred fifty years or longer

and have the following structural characteristics: Large old-growth trees, large snags, large logs on land, and large logs in streams; or

(b) Mature forest communities that have developed for ninety years or longer; or

(c) Unusual forest communities and/or interrelated vegetative communities of significant ecological value

Finally! Old growth defined! Large logs on land! In streams! etc.

Large logs in streams? Many folks have large logs in streams on their property, yet they do not have an old growth forest. In what way does a statement like this define the archaic term "old growth"? How does this define old growth?

Firstly an old growth forest is a term that is out of date. A shifting mosaic, or late-successional forest would be a more appropriate term, in which the ecosystem has reached its maximum potential and age, and is in the state of decline. If you want to see old growth, or this sort of forest the EIS has so passionately referred to, please refer to the Hoh rain forest, or the Roosevelt Cedar Grove, or even the Hobo Cedar Grove. Remember, a few old creakers does not make an old growth forest. A forest goes through many changes, and these constitute centuries of birth, output and decline. Think of the history of Mount Spokane, such as previous fires, logging, habitation, etc. And remember that the expansion is under 300 acres.

My family and I are outdoor enthusiasts and concerned about preservation of Washington States natural beauty. We are also a skiing family and have enjoyed utilizing the facilities of Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. The opportunity to enjoy the fresh air and closeness of the natural beauty of Mt Spokane is unique. We wholeheartedly support the planned ski terrain expansion. I am well familiar with the surrounding terrain and the proposed location of the expansion. I believe this will improve the quality of the wilderness and the experience of all those who visit this area. The plan is well thought out and balances the further development of this important recreational resource and wilderness preservation and appropriate management. My family endorses the proposal: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I support Alternative 4: Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area.

Here is why; In 2011 we had a report of two lost skiers in the Pesea. A Teenage boy took a teenage girl back there to explore and got lost. It took as a better part of an hour to locate them. The girl, 14 years old, had fallen backwards into a creek and, in the when we found her, had extreme hypothermia as she was soaked head to toe. In her confusion, she had additionally taken off most of ski clothes, leaving soaked cotton underneath. She was curled up in a ball in the snow, barely responsive. It was a very dire situation.

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the extraction off the backside took close to another hour. It wasn't because we did not have the best skiers on the scene, it was because we had to thread the toboggan thru deadfall and snags, sometimes picking up the sled on 4 corners to get it over a horizontal tree 3 feet off the ground, or an extreme traverse to avoid dangerous snags for our own safety. At one point, we had to setup a belay to get the sled over 5 consecutive trees suspended at various heights horizontally across the snow.

Our patient survived, and perhaps learned a valuable lesson about trusting boys, but these situations will not simply go away with a classification. Please allow us to manage the forest to make it safe within the PESEA.

Thank you for choosing responsible family recreation that gets people out and into our wonderful natural resources ahead of special interests that want to keep the backside skiing for the select experts. Let's support the East side of the state by keeping Spokane a recreation destination for biking and skiing - with Mt. Spokane our crown jewel.

Mt Spokane's greatest asset is the relatively unspoiled back side (west side) which is currently open to backcountry skiers. Please keep it unspoiled and deny the planned expansion. The expansion would give more of the same terrain already available without lines at Mt Spokane. Currently it is different only because it is unglazed and there are no lifts. This offers a unique recreation opportunity for those willing to hike out. Let's keep it that way.

I support the expansion of Mt. Spokane ski and snowboard park.

The DEIS for the classification of land and ski area expansion clearly indicates the PASEA should be classified as a Natural Forest Area as proposed in Alternative 2. There is no other logical conclusion that can be made based on the long-term negative consequences of Alternatives 3 & 4, which I will detail in this comment letter.

Washington State Parks has an important dual mission to provide healthy outdoor recreation opportunities and to ensure the care and protection of a vast collection of natural, cultural and historical resources. It's not one or the other.

Healthy outdoor recreation opportunities:

Mount Spokane is accessible in all four seasons for a large number of recreational pursuits, including downhill skiing, snowmobiling, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, mountain biking, running, birding, tourism, berry picking, and other activities. The park serves the masses at times and can be considered over-utilized for the infrastructure, especially during the winter.

The ski area presently has authorization to use 1425 acres or 10% of the park. Lift assisted groomed runs and skiable terrain take up fully 65% of the upper alpine area. This leaves only 35% of the upper mountain without roads, buildings, additional infrastructure, clear cuts, lifts and lift towers, which creates an area susceptible to fragmented habitat, stormwater erosion and weeds. The mission to provide recreation has been more than satisfied on Mount Spokane.

The care and protection of a vast collection of natural, cultural and historical resources:

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Alternative 2 provides for the other equally important part of the dual mission the care and protection of a very unique natural resource an intact 800 acre alpine habitat with alpine wetlands, fragile vegetation, springs and creek headwaters, and old growth. All scientists agree that habitat loss is the number one reason species decline and disappear from their native areas. Once this block of 800 acres of alpine forest is fragmented, the area will be open to predation, erosion, weeds, and loss of water retention capabilities. The mission to provide for the care and protection of this type of unique habitat, the only one of its type in Spokane County, will only be satisfied with its protection through Alternative 2.

3.6 RECREATION

3.6.1 Affected Environment

Mount Spokane State Park, encompassing a total of approximately 14,000 acres, offers a wide range of recreation opportunities throughout the year. Existing recreational facilities include 85 picnic sites, 3 picnic shelters, a group camping area for 90 people, 8 standard camp sites, parking for approximately 1,588 vehicles, 2 horse feeding stations, 2 comfort stations, 16 vault toilets, 50 miles of hiking/equestrian trails, 50 miles of roads, 3 cabins and the historic Vista House. An existing concessionaire, Mount Spokane 2000, operates the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park within a 1,425-acre developed portion of its 2,233-acre concession area.

The DEIS has identified critical problems associated with the facilities (chairlift, towers, operating buildings, elimination of 279 acres of forest) and other activities (construction, removal of downed trees, building of roads, recreational skiing) proposed by Mount Spokane 2000 and Alternative 4. They are at a minimum:

Wildlife habitat supporting populations and occurrences of resident wildlife species within the PASEA and transiting through it;

- Wildlife habitat connectivity to intra-park and regional wildlife corridors;
- Natural forest and native plant associations and communities;
- Soils and slope stability;
- Water quality;
- Introduction of non-native plant species; and
- Scenic resources including viewsheds.

Importantly, according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soils Resource Report most soils in the park, including the PASEA, have a severe to extreme erosion hazard. This was more than evident when in May 2008 the park experienced an extreme flood event, which washed out roads and trails throughout the park. Parks has to take into consideration that this is an alpine area up to 5800 feet and the slope gradients are steep 40% to 60%. There is already an excellent example of run-off damage and severe erosion in the current ski area. Once the land is disturbed, it will look just like the wasteland on the opposite side of the mountain. It's a lesson in front of our eyes.

Past field surveys revealed no signs of major soil erosion or landslides, primarily due to the undisturbed condition of the PASEA

Mitigation is mentioned as an alternative to the destruction of the natural resource, but mitigation cannot replace vernal wetlands in an alpine setting;

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mitigation cannot bring back wildlife species that need connectivity to habitat; mitigation cannot replace old growth trees that have been in place for centuries; mitigation in this case can only be considered as avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.

2.5.1 through 2.5.4 are the General Mitigation Measures and Specific Measures proposed. These are regulations, procedures and activities that may limit damage short term, but they do not eliminate the overall impact and damage done to an intact and very sensitive alpine environment. We have all walked through logged areas, during and post removal of trees and land clearing. It's never the same despite all the promises and words mitigation conveys.

The recreation mission is filled; now we must protect the natural environment mission.

The DEIS is clear as to the advantages of Alternative 2 and disadvantages of the other alternatives:

3.1.2.2 Alternative 2 Natural Forest Area

-Under this alternative, there would be less opportunity for potential impacts to soil and geology resources due to the more limited range of uses that would be allowed to occur.

-This alternative would provide the least potential for soil and geology impacts and would be as described in Alternative 1 No Action.

- This alternative would provide the least potential for stream, wetland and water quality impacts of all the action alternatives and would be similar to Alternative 1.

3.1.2.4 Alternative 4 Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area

Under this alternative, there would be greater opportunity for potential impacts to soil and geology resources due to the expanded range of uses that would be allowed to occur in the Recreation classification.

-Construction and operation of facilities, such as recreational trails, cleared ski runs and lift towers, have the potential to negatively impact streams, wetlands and water quality

Cumulative Effects:

The DEIS is clear that the present ski area has considerable problems with erosion, stormwater control, compaction, and the typical development conditions. This will continue in the PASEA if Alternative 4 is chosen. It also makes it clear that the cumulative effects on the environment will be devastating. Particularly disturbing is the cumulative effects of 3.3.4, which has the potential to inhibit or significantly reduce the water availability downstream for other users and to supply water for the aquifer.

3.1.4 Cumulative Effects

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Cumulatively, past construction on lands within and in the vicinity of the PASEA

include the construction of Chair 4 Road, the Vista House, the Summit Road, existing ski area facilities at the summit of Mount Spokane and communication towers. These existing facilities have changed sediment yield, soil compaction and impermeable surfaces between pre-development conditions and present day recreational area development. Changes in sediment yield and soil compaction are primarily temporary and associated with construction activities; however, permanent developments such as trails, roads, buildings, and structures would continue to result in an increase of impermeable surfaces over predevelopment conditions.

3.2.4 Cumulative Effects

Under Alternatives 3 and 4, future projects and construction activities occurring within wetlands and streams have the potential to alter plant communities and functional processes of the riparian zone. These processes include sediment filtration, stream bank stabilization, floodwater storage (duration and timing of flow), large woody debris (LWD) recruitment, and stream channel shading. Conversion of forest to meadow is also likely to alter hydrologic functions within the project area (e.g., evapotranspiration reduction, infiltration rates). While wetland and stream buffer widths typically encompass an area greater than the functional riparian zone, construction activities within the buffers occur in closer proximity to watershed resources. Based on this circumstance, there is a higher potential for projects occurring within wetland and stream buffers to impact watershed resources compared to projects occurring outside.

3.3.4 Cumulative Effects

Under Alternatives 3 and 4, cumulative impacts to vegetation due to potential future recreational trail and facility development include alterations in snowpack and snowmelt due to a change in vegetation communities present in portions of the PASEA and corresponding alterations on the vegetation growing season due to increased sunlight and longer snow retention in cleared areas (see Section III, section 3.3 Vegetation for a detailed analysis of the potential impacts associated with construction and operation of alpine ski facilities).

3.4.4 Cumulative Effects

Potential cumulative effects are discussed in this section. Depending upon the degree of trail development and use patterns, new trails through forests and meadows that do not currently have trail use may result in displacement/avoidance behavior by wildlife. Many species often move away from human activity or they intentionally avoid associated human recreation sites. Animals that have been displaced by recreation are less likely to survive and reproduce where habitat is unfamiliar or inferior. In particular, during breeding, rearing, and winter and early spring foraging seasons; stress on wildlife is likely to increase susceptibility to illness, predation, and reduce individual fitness.

The DEIS is clear that changes to the PASEA through construction and permanent elimination of the presently forested area will have an impact on water quantity and quality downstream.

3.2.1 Affected Environment

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Mount Spokane is a critical component of the hydrologic cycle in the greater Spokane/Coeur d'Alene area. The mountain serves an important role of storing water that falls as snow in winter, and recharging groundwater throughout the spring and summer months.

3.2.1.1 Streams

Multiple unnamed ephemeral and perennial streams occur within the PASEA

3.2.1.3 Water Quality

No water quality monitoring stations occur within the PASEA or within Mount Spokane State Park.

3.2.1.3 Water Quality

Activities that are most likely to indirectly impact water quality within the PASEA are those that may occur within wetland or stream buffers such as any necessary clearing of riparian vegetation for recreational trails and facilities.

The DEIS makes it clear that construction and operation of recreational facilities and uses permitted will have the potential to impact vegetative communities and forested stands within the PASEA.

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Mount Spokane State Park, including the PASEA, occupies a unique position on the landscape in Spokane County. It has the highest point in the county and has high elevation habitat that is found nowhere else in the local area.

Although land classification itself will not impact existing vegetative communities, construction and operation of recreational facilities and uses permitted consistent with the Land Classification Compatibility Matrix for Facilities and Activities (see Appendix 2) have the potential to impact vegetative communities and forested stands within the PASEA.

Potential impacts from trail construction, trail use or ongoing maintenance include the following:

- impacts to plants and their habitats;
- direct harm to plants providing ecosystem services;
- loss or alteration of plant habitats;
- altered ecosystem function;
- increased spread of invasive species;
- displacement of native plants by non-natives;
- increased soil disturbance favoring invasive species establishment;

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-soil compaction and associated changes in hydrology and plant growth; human, pet and wildlife travel leading to the spread of invasive species;

The DEIS makes it clear that wildlife will be displaced and their habitat fragmented and eliminated if Alternative 4 is selected. This is typical of the impact of recreational facilities like a ski area. A recent report published by the London Zoological Society on behalf of the World Wildlife Fund claim that the global loss of species is worse than previously thought and suggests populations have halved in 40 years. The report shows that the biggest recorded threat to biodiversity comes from the combined impacts of habitat loss and degradation, driven by what WWF calls unsustainable human consumption. <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-29418983>

3.4.1 Affected Environment

There are a wide variety of impacts from recreation on the twenty-one species of interest. Potential impact types by mode of recreation for the twenty-one focal wildlife species is provided in detail in Recreation and Trail Impacts on Wildlife Species of Interest in Mount Spokane State Park, as noted in Appendix 3.

Displacement/avoidance Many species often move away from human activity or intentionally avoid associated sites. Sites may be avoided due to the disruption caused by human presence or habitat changes associated with the site (e.g., soil compaction, dryness of soils and vegetation along roadsides and trails). Animals displaced are less likely to survive and reproduce where habitat is unfamiliar or inferior. Displacement or avoidance is by far the most common response found in the literature related to recreation facilities and activities.

3.4.2.4 Alternative 4 Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area

Under Alternative 4, there would be greater opportunity for potential impacts to wildlife due to the expanded range of uses that would be allowed to occur in the Recreation classification.

The DEIS claims that the present ski area has only 280 acres of trails, and tree and open skiing (by using Google Earth's mapping program, the 280 acres seems underestimated by considerable acreage). Obviously, the current ski area served by the built environment (lodges, chairs, trails, etc.) is underutilized. Increasing the existing ski area acreage by building new trails through the south and southeast forest stands is where the efforts of Mount Spokane should put their limited funds and resources, not installing another used, old and slow chair through the PASEA and clear-cutting seven new trails. The facility's lodges, roads, parking, septic systems and, in general, infrastructure need a great deal of repair and long overdue maintenance before expanding into and destroying the PASEA.

3.6 RECREATION

3.6.1 Affected Environment

Mount Spokane 2000, operates the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park within a

1,425-acre developed portion of its 2,233-acre concession area. Within the developed portion of the ski area boundary, MS 2000 currently operates five aerial chairlifts. The lift network at Mount Spokane provides access to 45 named trails on approximately 150 acres of formal ski trails and another 130 acres of tree and open skiing.

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Alternative Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Natural Forest Area

Under Alternative 4, there would be greater opportunity for potential impacts to historic, cultural, and archaeological resources due to the expanded range of uses that would be allowed to occur in the Recreation classification.

To end, I believe Alternative 2 is the best solution for the park, the public, and the environment. I also feel that backcountry skiing that has been allowed through the years in the PASEA should be considered as a conditional use for the Natural Forest Area on Mt. Spokane. The DEIS did not take into consideration the long term effect of global warming. There have been numerous articles and at least one book that predict lower elevation ski areas, like Mount Spokane, will go out of business in the near future because of more rain and less snow.

I live below Mount Spokane and my property includes a wetland formed by Deadman Creek, which flows off the southwest side. I am acutely aware of the changes in water flow and subsequent wetland changes as precipitation changes on the mountain. As indicated, any clear-cutting of forested areas within the PASEA will result in changing the moisture available for summer flows to the northwest and northeast. We cannot let this happen.

The commission has shown a bias toward the ski area expansion in past decisions, which were made without the benefit of a DEIS. Parks and the commission were only stopped by a Lands Council lawsuit. This DEIS is clear that Alternative 2 is the only path to not only protecting an intact wildlife habitat and natural resource, but forcing Mount Spokane 2000 to use their limited financial resources to improve the ski area facilities presently in operation.

I would like encourage you to support the Backside Terrain Expansion project at Mt Spokane. As a resident of the area and a frequent visitor to Mt Spokane during all time of the year, I can tell you that what the ski are has accomplished over the years is incredible while keeping it very affordable to skiers and boarders. The expansion is needed to keep the ski area competitive with other local areas. While all other areas have expanded over the years, Mt Spokane has not been able to. They have been a terrific steward to the park.

As a forestry graduate, the area in question is not old growth. It is in a area where logging has happened in the past and part of the ski area was once locate in the same area. The ski area is not going to destroy any of the habitat in the area.

Please allow them to expand.

I strongly support the land classification of Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest

Area that allows for one chairlift and seven new trails on Mt. Spokane.

I have enjoyed the use of Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard park for decades. I feel strongly that expansion of the ski area to include an additional chair lift and associated runs would greatly enhance the park.

Please consider alternative 4 as the best option for the public interest when enhancing plans for the park.

The purpose, need and potential impacts for this project have been sufficiently studied and documented. The proposal for a recreational land classification and alpine ski expansion should be approved by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. The proposal represents a

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very balanced approach to further developing the alpine skiing experience, enhancing safety and clarifying several current and potential land use issues for the park.

Please ignore the misguided legal and propaganda approach being used by those who oppose the purpose and need of this project. The strategic tactic of delay or sue and settle has become a well traveled road used by a variety of groups opposed to any type of development project in the United States. Unfortunately for the proponents in this case, this has meant years of delay and large sums of money wasted that could have greatly improved the park in many other ways.

I am writing to express Greater Spokane Incorporated's support for Mt. Spokane's expansion plan, Alternative #4 Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. As the regional chamber of commerce and economic development council for the Spokane area, we cannot overstate the value that Mt. Spokane brings to our community. This expansion plan, revised to reflect the needs and priorities of the community and environmental groups, perfectly balances environmental stewardship and recreational opportunity.

Mt. Spokane fills an important niche as an accessible, affordable 4-season recreation destination for citizens of this region. One of the greatest benefits of living the Spokane area is the beautiful setting in which we live. When Spokane was featured as Best Town for outdoor enthusiasts by Outside Magazine in 2013, Mt. Spokane was specifically mentioned for its contribution to our outdoor culture for residents and tourists alike.

The expansion and use for recreational skiing would only add to this important aspect of our community culture. The expansion will introduce 80 acres of groomed trails, seven new runs and a chair lift within an 850-acre area designated for alpine use. Recreational classification will create greater access for skiers and more terrain, which also promotes better skier safety.

In addition to the recreational opportunities, we are enthusiastic about the environmental conservation this plan provides. The people at Mt. Spokane have worked hard to be good stewards of this land over the past decade. Over several years of planning and extensive studies, their land classification has been adapted to preserve and protect 90% of the forest in its expansion area.

This plan will allow for significant recreational enhancements, protect natural areas, and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane. We hope and trust that you will give this plan due consideration and we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important issue facing our community.

I'm in something of a unique spot here. My primary uses of Mt Spokane state park consist of skiing and mountain biking. I do some hiking and nordic skiing as well, but primarily bikes and downhill skiing. On the skiing front, I enjoy the concession ski area for it's convenience and proximity to town. It's been fairly well run in my experience, and offers a good local hill skiing experience. Brad and crew do a fine job. That said, probably half my time on the ski hill has been during hours of non operation. I really like the mountain for it's proximity as a training area for back country skiing. I've skinned up numerous times on Monday nights or weekend mornings before lifts spin. I've skied the north side and skinned out the skid roads. I personally wouldn't gain much from a lift and cut runs on the north side. I'd really appreciate some proper forest management there to include some thinning, but I'd prefer the thinning be proper for fuel reduction and disease abatement. I like tree runs a little thicker than most.

So on the ski front, I'm not too bothered by the status quo aside from some clean up needed on the north side.

On the bike front though, I'm quite invested in seeing a path forward for public access improved and increased. I know a large number of people who

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travel to Silver Mt and further for alpine biking opportunities. If we can move forward with the plan that was developed several years ago(that if I'm not mistaken has been on the parks directors desk for a while?) we could funnel some of that traffic closer and keep some of that money in WA. Sustainable bike trail development and maintenance is a very positive and relatively low impact way for the public to enjoy state land.

Based on the options put forward, it seems option 4 is the best bet to maintain and improve bike access, so that's my vote.

I support the expansion of Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park to include the proposed lift on the backside of the mountain. I feel that the extensive environmental studies indicate that the level of impact on the environment on the backside of the mountain is totally acceptable for a State Park. I believe that Mt Spokane 2000 have been a good steward of the mountain and that there seems to be no problem with animals using the current ski area in the summer and I often see small animal tracks in the snow early in the morning. In the summer I have seen deer, moose on the front side eating Huckleberries, I try to avoid any big animals but I would not be surprised if one showed up. I have used various areas of the State Park in different seasons and feel like this addition would allow more people access to a very nice part of the park. In addition Mt Spokane Ski and Snowboard park is in need of additional advance beginner and lower intermediate terrain and I believe that this addition would provide that terrain for all skiers and riders. I love seeing the adaptive program at Mt Spokane from sit skis to the Special Olympics I think this new terrain will offer lots of opportunity for everyone. Thank you so much for soliciting input from citizens.

My wife, Lynn and I are in support of the expansion of Mount Spokane ski area. I believe it could be expanded with minimum impact on the environment and would be greatly appreciated and utilized by many skiers/hikers.

I would like to express my sincere interest, and support for part or for complete implantation of the expansion plan. I would also like to express that I personally have been extremely happy with the current ski resort management and how they have developed and continued to improve the mountain facilities and area. I am a proud owner of family season passes and had left to another mountain some years ago. We returned and now call Mt. Spokane our home mountain, after being impressed with the improvements and how the mountain was being run. I would hope that the relationship with the current nonprofit group would continue; and that the lack of the growing relationship progressing could prompt the current group to not continue in with the same role in the future. This would be a huge loss for the mountain and the area. In addition, our family strives to be good stewards of the mountain and the areas. I am a proud member of The Evergreen Mountain Bike Allowance and I have personally worked on numerous trail work crews. I have seen first hand how, well organized groups along with concerned citizens can work together to maintain and use the trails and the mountain in a good way. The trails are constructed with Engineers there to oversee the proper construction. The alternative is to go back to old ways and hope the mountain is left alone. History has shown that this just leads to poached incorrectly constructed trails, and ski resort mismanagement. The current groups involved have demonstrated good stewardship, and I support them being the groups that lead us to the next stage. In addition, I would like to also add that I have always had a personal connection to the mountain. My Great Uncle company, E.O. Fieldstad constructed the the Vista House under contract with the CCC. This was the start of the foundation for proper preservation and recreational use. We have focused on passing that same good stewardship approach to our kids. We thoroughly enjoy downhill skiing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and mountain biking on the mountain. We have also seen the increase in number of individuals enjoying those same activities, and see the justification for expansion to preserve the mountain correctly and to help preserve current areas of use and protect from overuse. Please make the right choices when determining what the next step is in building upon that properly set foundation. I appreciate you asking for input.

Please deny Mount Spokane's proposal to add a chair lift and ski runs inside the Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA). Recreational skiing is already plentiful in this region, and--for now-- that includes back country terrain. To expand lift-serve skiing would remove ecologically necessary forest, shrink wildlife habitat and reduce terrain for back country skiers. Ski area expansion seems like a terrible choice at a time when we need to take ever opportunity to protect disappearing wilderness that plays such a critical ecological role. That is well-known to the folks reading this, I'm

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sure, but some people righting comments in support of expansion just don't understand what is at stake. Please choose wisely.

I oppose the mt spokane ski area expansion. We have more than enough areas for down hill skiing in our area. What we don't have are areas of old growth habitat. The importance of this habitat to species isn't quantifiable. Given today's news that over half of the species on the planet have disappeared in the last 40 years, it makes it all the more valuable. It isn't replaceable once it's gone. Additionally, these areas are valuable for hiking, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, education, and biking. The park does not exist only to serve downhill skiers. Right now, the park provides the right balance of recreational opportunities, along with protecting and preserving valuable habitat and old growth species. Please maintain the park as it is.

I just wanted to write a quick note in support of Mt. Spokane. I am a horseback rider and the trails at Mt. Spokane are unbelievable. We were up there for a horse event over Labor Day weekend and had a fabulous time. The rangers were very helpful and very nice. Several of our riders saw various wildlife including moose, deer and even a black bear. I am in support of Natural Forest, but believe that we can have that while allowing our citizens to enjoy the forest also.

Because of these reasons, I am in support of Alternative 4:

Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I really hope that we can all continue to enjoy Mt. Spokane as the gem that it is.

We support Alternative 4 to expand

Mt. Spokane. Our children ski for SSRA and we have been enjoying it for years. My husband grew up in Spokane and was also on the ski team. It has always been a local mountain for Spokane residents to enjoy. People from all socioeconomic groups can enjoy Mt. Spokane because it is a low cost mountain and is close to Spokane. This makes it possible to go there and back in a day, unlike other mountains which are farther away and have expensive lodging. Please support alternative 4 so Mt. Spokane can be an even better local mountain for the people of Spokane. Thank you for your consideration,

I support Alternative 4 because I want to see the area proposed as recreation; remaining open to mountain bikes as envisioned in the revised Trails Plan!

I think number 3 of part 2 should be approved.

Mt Spokane should be required to do more gladeing in the meadows area. Many years ago that was kept skiable and now there are 25 year old trees throughout the meadows area. They could also reduce the number of runs in the expansion area and do gladeing in some of the expanded area to enhance the tree skiing experience on the mountain.

These minor changes in the plan would reduce cost of expansion and still provide one of the best skiing in this area. This would also leave more old trees for forest preservation. We have proven that skiing through the trees where there has been gladeing improve the health of the forest.

I don't support the backside expansion.

I don't want to make this snow easily available to john q public. if you can't or won't simply skate or hike the few minutes it takes to go over the top of chair one, then you don't deserve to enjoy the well preserved, facing snow. Leaving this area alone preserves the snow, habitat and experience by making it easy to trounce the area and quickly ski it out, there will be no reason for me to come back here two and three days after a snow storm

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knowing the backside awaits.

come on, look at all the easy blue runs that dominate the plans. instead of a chair and clear cuts, spend the time making it easy to get out of the gullies, staff snow mobiles for rides, put in a tow rope.. heck do all of that for decades and save thousands of dollars instead.

Please do not allow this expansion. It is not necessary as all the terrain is already accessible. That side of mt. Spokane being undeveloped makes the mountain unique. Please do not let corporate greed destroy our mountain.

I support Alternative 4 to expand the ski area.

I am writing to request the Parks Commission to adopt Alternative 2, Natural Forest Area designation, for the Land Classification portion of the DEIS for Mount Spokane State Parks PASEA. Of all of the alternatives, this is the alternative that is the best-fit for the area in question. Of the other alternatives, alternative 3 would be the second most acceptable alternative. Alternatives 1 and 4 should under no circumstances be considered viable alternatives. Should this progress to part two and project action, I would only support the no action alternative.

The PASEA should be classified as a Natural Forest Area. According to its own Natural Resources documents, State Parks defines mature forests as trees 90+ years and old growth as plant communities including large old-growth trees of 150+ years, large snags, large downed logs, and large logs in streams. Some trees within the PASEA have been determined to be over 200 years old (from core samples). It is impossible to mitigate for fragmentation (via installation of a chair lift and ski runs) of a forest community that includes specimens of over 200 years within the mature forest community. Furthermore, A Washington State Parks Core Value, listed along with the State Parks Vision, Mission, and Core Values on State Parks documents, states Stewardship that preserves the State's natural, cultural, and ethnic heritage in perpetuity is a core value of state parks. As the only mature old growth forest in Spokane County, and as a publically owned old growth forest, it is in the public's best interest to preserve this as a Natural Forest Area. This is additionally supported by the Department of Fish and Wildlife in its January 29, 2007 letter: The native mature forest habitat on the northern aspect of Mt. Spokane is an extremely unique forest ecosystem with a high value for wildlife and species biodiversity. Considering its size, its un-fragmented condition along with its stage of forest succession and structure, a similar forest could not be found anywhere else in Spokane County nor replicated. One could add, nor mitigate for the loss of such a forest. Finally, the DEIS itself includes a footnote stating "Commission direction regarding the management of natural resources within areas classified as Recreational is discussed in Commission Policy 73-04-1 Protecting Washington State Parks Natural Resources. Subsection A(1) states that State Parks will maintain native plants and animals (biodiversity) that occur, or seek to re-establish them where they historically occurred, within those park lands classified by the Commission as Resource Recreation Areas, Natural Areas, Natural Forest Areas, or Natural Area Preserves. When consistent with recreational use, cultural resources integrity, and other agency objectives, native plants and animals will also be preserved in lands classified as Recreation and Heritage Areas" (pg. II DEIS). Rather than choose a recreation designation and then make an effort to preserve biodiversity despite the removal of large swaths of the currently intact forest for the singular use of the alpine ski concession, it would be better to preserve cultural resource integrity and biodiversity by choosing to protect this unique area in perpetuity through Natural Forest Area designation. For these reasons, Alternative 2 is the best classification for the PASEA.

The DEIS lists mitigation measures that would be undertaken should the PASEA be designated via Alternative 4. I cannot state strongly enough my support for Alternative 2, but I did wish to take the time to comment on some of the mitigations listed within the document. Mitigation measures from section 2.5.1, numbers 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 18, and 19 (page II-6-7); section 2.5.2, numbers 1, 8, and 9 (page II-7); and section 2.5.3, number 3 are not being followed within the alpine ski area's current concession area. The document does not indicate how State Parks would address a failure on the

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part of the concession to address mitigation concerns, and I find it deeply troubling that the proposed mitigations for the expansion are not currently being followed within the existing footprint. See the pictures below, taken during the summer of 2013, for a visual of the current problems:

Photo #1 taken from the chair 3 cat track and above chair 5 and Lodge #2. Yellow flowers in foreground are klamath weed (also known as common St. Johnswort); pink flowers are knapweed. No evidence of measures to control noxious weeds, nor to reestablish native vegetation. Tire tracks show failure to keep vehicle traffic to a confined area (notice off-established route tire tracks in the upper portion of the photograph heading to the lower right quadrant of the photo and off cat track). Road is overly steep and no erosion controls are in place (neither for wind nor water erosion).

Photo #2 taken from the chair 3 cat track within the alpine ski concession area. Yellow flowers are klamath weed (aka, St. Johnswort), a recognized noxious weed. Just above center left of photo, note highly eroded section near chair riblet. No indication of noxious weed control or attempt to reestablish native vegetation. The DEIS mitigation measure 2.5.2 #8 states that trails must be regularly monitored to identify and eradicate all non-native and invasive species before they become established. Both photo #1 and #2 indicate a failure to do so within the current concession area, and imply a high likelihood that the concession would continue to fail to address this concern within the PASEA, where there are currently no established populations of invasive weeds, and no erosion problems.

Photo #3 depicting derelict bus and equipment left at the top of chair 3 within the alpine ski concession area. Within the DEIS, the document states the concession must enforce measures to ensure trash or refuse associated with construction is minimized. The trash from this photo may or may not be connected with construction, but it has been in place for years. No measures have been undertaken to clean the site.

Photo #4 depicting derelict equipment left at the top of chair 3 within the alpine ski concession area.

Under mitigation measure 2.5.4, #1 (page II-8), fall should additionally be considered under seasonality of trail use by wildlife populations. The huckleberry patches (and other wild berries) within the PASEA are of critical use to a wide variety of wildlife during the late summer/fall. It is unclear why the fall season was left off the mitigation list, but it is clear that cutting large swaths of forest for a chair lift and ski runs would have a negative impact on berry patches. The concession currently uses brush cutters to clear runs within the concession area (posting a recent photo of a ski run groomer pulling a brush hog to its Facebook page). Huckleberry bushes are slow growing, and cutting them with a brush hog would prevent berry production for several years. These berry patches are critical wildlife foraging sites in the fall season. The huckleberry patches are also considered culturally significant to the Spokane Tribe, and are therefore a cultural resource within the park (along with the bear grass that currently grows within the PASEA, another slow-growing plant that would be impacted for years should it be disturbed).

Other concerns raised by the DEIS include:

Under section 3.2.1.2 pertaining to wetlands: the "Impacts on Vegetation, Figure EIS 6" document shows runs crossing through wetlands. This is unacceptable, and cannot be mitigated for.

Page II-17 lists types of skiing. The list provided on this page is straightforward and easy to understand. Page II-2 adds an additional category of "Alpine;backcountry; skiing" that is nowhere defined within the document, and is misleading/confusing to the reader. In conversations with the General Manager of MS2000, I have been led to believe that this term refers to lift-assisted skiing within the PASEA should it be classified

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under Alternatives 1 through 3. However, nowhere is this term defined, and MS2000 has a history of making misleading statements in its own best interest (see also: current MS2000 website material claiming the PASEA contains no old growth trees, that the PASEA does not qualify for NFA designation, and that no snowshoe trails will be affected). Due to a history of misleading information presented to the public, I have little faith in the verbal definition of alpine ;backcountry; skiing that was presented to me. State Parks itself need to clarify what exactly is meant by the term as it is used on page II-2 of the DEIS document, as well as clarify why this activity would not be granted as a conditional use. Other regional ski areas allow lift-assisted access to backcountry areas adjacent to their concession areas, so it is unclear why MS2000 differs in this regard (see Silver Mountains Wardner Peak area, or Lookout Ski Area's lift-assistance for backcountry skiers accessing the Stevens Peak area). The term as presented within the DEIS is misleading, since it could also refer to all backcountry skiing (alpine touring, randonee skiing, or telemark skiing using climbing skins, all forms of skiing that are most closely related to the allowable cross-country ski trails, off-trail hiking, off-trail cross country skiing (i.e., Nordic skiing) and snowshoeing stated as examples of permitted facilities and activities in Natural Forest Areas (II-2).

Finally, on the maps that accompany the DEIS, the legend terms are not defined. It is impossible for a layperson to understand what they are looking at when the legend is so grainy as to be practically illegible, and what terms can be deciphered include things like ABLA/ATFI and ABLA/LUGLH, to list merely two of the confusing items in the list. What do these legend items refer to?

I'm voicing my support for alternative 4 on this project.

I've been an avid snowboarder on My Spokane for years and it would be wonderful to see this terrain expansion happen. It would be of great benefit for the resort and it's patrons.

I am in full support of the ski area expansion for the red chairlift. Skiing brings in many people to the area, providing both a boost to the local economy as well as providing increased access to the beautiful outdoors. The expansion will specifically increase access to more of lovely Mr Spokane. My Spokane Ski Resort has done an excellent job in managing their area over the past years. Please allow them to continue their excellent management over the increased area. Please approve the ski lift expansion!

From what I have read, over the years about the History of Mt Spokane State Park, the land was donated to the State to develop into a recreational area, primarily as a Ski Resort. The people that donated this land made their fortunes in the Timber and Newspaper industries. They did not really want to be in the Ski Resort business and therefore donated it to the State for them to develop as such. The Lands Council has their own agenda, in this case, somewhat the opposite of the Park Founders I would think.

It seems to me that in any drawn out ongoing legal argument or process; it is usually more about money than anything else. Obviously every skier and snowboarder in the Inland Northwest has the most to gain. But look how much money has been spent trying to stop this, what are their real motives? Do these people have to divulge where their money comes from to fight this expansion?

Chopping down some of the last old growth trees for an expanded ski franchise on Mt. Spokane will further fragment any habitat the area provides for creatures preferring never logged forests as well as reduce the watershed's capacity for holding snow pack. More ski runs on the mountain degrade the watershed for aquifer replenishment as well as harm fish habitat downstream. There is no mitigation that can be done for the removal of old growth trees. The PASEA is relatively silent concerning the carbon sequestration function of trees as well as cultural and archaeological resources. Altogether this expansion is a bad idea. It is proposed mostly for the west face and as such will not even be usable for the latter part of the ski season as what diminishing amounts of snow Mt. Spokane will receive will melt off sooner on the west face than the existing ski slopes.

F&ck the expansion!

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Please allow for this expansion.

As a mountain biker I hope you can commit to alternative 4. Mt. Spokane is the best shuttle accessible mountain biking in the area.

I support the park expansion at mt Spokane. This is a family friendly place to ski, and local folks of many different economic brackets love to come and enjoy time together. I think the addition of runs is important to continue to attract higher level skiers and keep the park viable for future use.

As a 14 year season pass holder I have seen many changes in the ski area and strongly feel this type of expansion is not the best use for this area.

The snow fall at the mountain is unpredictable, it is the lowest elevation of all local ski areas and is most likely have finical problems when we get several mild winters in a row. Who is going to pay for the higher overhead when no one shows up to ski???

The season pass holders cost and day lift passes would have to go up.

This area should not be turned into a destination ski resort. It is a good low cost ski area on public land and should STAY THAT WAY.

The existing lifts are more than adequate for accommodating additional skiers if the parks department would allow them to selectively remove some trees on hills that are currently unskiable.

The roads going up to Mt Spokane cannot accommodate the added traffic safely.

In regards to the proposed development at Mount Spokane, we make the following recommendations to the DEIS and the Washington Parks Commission. We represent a concerned group of Gonzaga University students who strongly care about the matters concerning both vegetation and wildlife. If either alternative two, or three were to be selected, the detrimental effects to both areas of concern would be irreversible. Therefore, we recommend that the parks commission takes our comments and concerns into account when determining the fate of the state park.

1. Vegetation Analysis

We students recommend the Land Classification Alternative One (with option of back-country skiing recreation). Overall, the proposal of the ski lift to the south-western facing slope of Mount Spokane would be detrimental to the environment and is not advised when considering the negative impacts. The proposal (SECTION III. MOUNT SPOKANE STATE PARK PROPOSED SKI AREA EXPANSION DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT 3.3 vegetation) would cover 297 acres of land which include various habitats, some of which are considered globally and nationally rare. Specifically the "Old Growth" habitat, is home to multiple species that fulfill a specialized niche, and is a rare area due to the lack of fires. Aside from habitat loss, the long-term consequences of the disturbance include the expansion of invasive species. The survey of invasive species is limited to what species that have been seen by "volunteers" in previous years. There is little mentioned about the projected spread of invasive species after construction, nor what management plan the mountain would pursue. The proposal is completely absent of any consequences of bringing in mechanical equipment during construction as well. The disturbance would not only allow for the spread of invasive species, but there will also be a spiral effect for the watershed. Initially, flooding will occur, followed by a lack of water retention. These depletion and excess consequences on vegetation are not mentioned within the vegetation section of the DEIS.

Along with the issues listed above, the proposal also explicitly states; No studies have been preformed to determine the presence and extent of non-vascular plant species (e.g., mosses) in study area" (3.3.2.3). Although the proposal attempts to deal with direct impacts, according to the writers "Many indirect impacts are also poorly understood given our knowledge and abilities to assess the impact of any project on the

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surrounding environment” (3.3.3). Before any action is taken, the potential indirect impacts must be evaluated in regards to surrounding and neighboring environments. We would request an analysis of these species to be done and the potential impact on those species identified to be taken into consideration before any action is taken.

Although the DEIS attempts to take into account the impacts on vegetation, two major habitat types would be affected including Sitka alder-dominated wetlands and dry open meadows, which are both considered globally rare. The DEIS does not acknowledge the level of importance of these habitats to not only the local environment but the national environment. The proposal attempts to blow past this by saying the habitats are “locally common”. Along with this, the DEIS has a complete oversight of classification of “old growth forest”. The area has been proven on multiple occasions to contain old growth forest and an oversight of this is detrimental to the overall impact statement and the environmental significance of the area.

We chose to allow side country skiing, because we believe that this would enhance Mt. Spokane’s skiing experience and would have little affect on the vegetation.

2. Wildlife Analysis

As Environmental Studies students with a thorough understanding of ecology and how ecosystems function, we are recommending Land Classification Alternative One, with option of back-country skiing recreation in the PASEA, from the DEIS. We prefer this alternative because the proposed ski lift would impact wildlife such as the Canadian lynx, wolverine, northern goshawk, and pygmy shrew. As with the vegetation survey, the wildlife survey is incomplete and lacks adequate information regarding impacts the ski lift would have on the twenty-one focal wildlife species listed in table II-2 of the DEIS. The DEIS itself states that the data is lacking:

Even for those species with the greatest information, however, data are often lacking on specific thresholds of disturbance (intensity of use, distance thresholds, temporal effects, etc.)” (3.4.3).

Additionally, much of the research from the DEIS is out of date, with some dated as far back as 1999. For example, surveys on wolves were conducted in 2008, leaving substantial time for the population size to increase or decrease.

In the final EIS, we would like to see the parks commission provide more informative and comprehensive data on the impacts to the 21 focal wildlife species, with special consideration given to the species listed as threatened at the state level. This should include listing breeding habitat for species other than the lynx, and surveys on “keystone” species. Additionally, research should be reevaluated to ensure that it is still accurate, and that no significant changes have occurred.

Inclusion of data on keystone species would clear confusion about technicalities of the old growth status as well as enlighten upon the productivity of the habitat. Like vegetation, we believe that side country skiing would have little affect on wildlife, and opening this terrain to skiing would improve Mt. Spokane’s appeal to a larger group of more advanced skiers.

Please stop letting the small group of people who want to keep the backside of the mountain for themselves delay this project anymore. Mt. Spokane

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has gone above and beyond doing everything they have been asked to do to make sure this project is a win-win for everyone. The amount of reviews that keep happening is a waste of time and money, money that could be spent better in many ways. This mountain is already strapped for cash and delaying this project only hurts them more. If you let a small group of people dictate the future of a state park, then you are not doing the right thing for everyone else. It should come down to what would benefit the greater majority of people in this area, not the benefit of a select few. You want us to continue to support state parks by buying the yearly pass, but then only want to listen to a small group opposed to this project. I want my money spent on the yearly pass to go to the parks and stop being wasted on this process being dragged out or I will just stop purchasing the pass if the money continues to be wasted. Please let us all enjoy the mountain and let them upgrade to draw in more people. More people equals more passes being bought, more money into the area, more jobs and greater utilization of Mt. Spokane.

I think it is important to allow the full area expansion of the ski area, I believe it is called the land classification alternative 4. I already ski in this area on a regular basis, accessing it from the top of chair 1 and ending up at the bottom of chair 4. Opening it up to the rest of the skiers would be a great benefit to those skiers and boarders who would have the ability to ski the area but are stuck on the front side causing lots of congestion at the existing lifts. I feel those individuals who are promoting alternative 3 are using the area and are of the notion that we got our private ski area and we want to keep the rest out. The forest on the back side is in need of better management, with lots of dead fall trees and undergrowth throughout the area. I have seen the management of Mt Spokane do an honorable job of maintaining the ski area and the forest for all its users and I believe they will continue to do so in the future with the expanded area.

I am writing in support of the Terrain Expansion at Mt. Spokane.

I am in favor of Alternative 4 for Land Classification: Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

I am in favor of the Alternative 2: Enhanced Recreation Alternative. Allows for the lift and seven trails, and grading and clearing.
Please approve Part 1 Alternative 4 for Land Classification.
Please approve Part 2 Alternative 2 or Alternative 3 for Project Action.

Bad idea. The traffic would be increased causing safety issues.
Don't do it. Waste of money.

I support the expansion of the downhill ski area

Spokane 2000 is a wonderful Non Profit organization that rescued a local prized ski mountain from poor management and greedy business. They have poured their souls into creating a friendly and energetic atmosphere for family's to enjoy winter together at a cost that's much less than other privately owned local ski areas. Please help them succeed and allow them this expansion and give family's an opportunity to have affordable winter recreation that is on par with other local areas. Please keep Washington's skiing dollars in Washington! Thank you.

The backside expansion in my opinion is not needed at Mount Spokane at the present time Mount Spokane needs a new lodge this is the worst lodge out of all the local ski areas. The majority of the people I have spoken to would rather see a new lodge than a new back side chair that will get limited use. I ski at Mount Spokane every week end and I almost never see chairs 1 or 2 to crowded to service the Skiers. The backside chair will be a chair lift that gets limited use the back side of the mountain does not have good snow coverage until late in the year. The back side of the mountain should be left undeveloped and left to the wild life that cohabits this area and the back country skiers in the winter. Mount Spokane has the only back country skiing that is accessible by chairs in the local area.

I am writing in support of Alternative Number 4 of Part 1 and Alternative Number 2 of Part 2 as it is vital that Mt Spokane be allowed to expand into

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the PASEA to provide for much greater public safety by decongesting ski trails, bridging the gap between beginner and expert terrain, and offering more skiing and snowboarding options on the Northwest side of the mountain that is less prone to fog.

This expansion is also very important to Spokane region from economic perspective as new and improved ski terrain will attract more visitors, which will have only positive effect on the region's economy. This, in its own turn, will allow for more resource allocation for taking care of our natural resources in the area.

Please make the right decision and allow the proposed chairlift and new ski runs to proceed for the benefit of our community and the entire region.

Please allow mountain biking to continue/progress at mt. Sp

Please put up the red chair!!!! We need new trails!

Alternative 4 should be allowed.

Alternative 4 - Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Forest Area. Allows for one chairlift and seven new trails, safeguards natural areas and solidifies the long-term future of Mt. Spokane.

We represent the Board of the Condo Association at Mt Spokane. We are in support of Mt Spokane's expansion. The condo association has 132 private condos for people who love being at Mt Spokane. Our residents enjoy skiing, hiking, biking, sledding and just enjoying the beauty of Mt Spokane.

Every year we work on projects to update our Condos. We hope that the Mt Spokane Ski area, the Nordic area and the Parks Department does the same. Developing the backside of the mountain would make the mountain more valuable for skiing and a better asset for all of us.

The mountain works hard to find fun things to do there. Tubing, night skiing, events during the season, and many more things. Developing the back side would just enhance the mountain more.

We are three Environmental Studies students at Gonzaga University with backgrounds in biology, botany, ecology, and chemistry. In addition, we have frequently hiked, skied, and biked on and around Mount Spokane. Having lived, worked, recreated, and studied in this city for 3 years, we have come to appreciate the beauty and diversity of the surrounding area. While we utilize - and love - Spokane's outdoor parks, we are also concerned about the degradation of habitat we have witnessed in areas that have been developed or overpopulated. Having invested so much of our academic lives here in Spokane, we feel we are in a position where it is both our desire and our responsibility to advocate stewardship of the local forests.

Based on our assessment of the Mount Spokane Ski Area Expansion Draft EIS, we advocate the continued implementation of Alternative 1: No Action. In response to some of the concerns raised in Section 3.6: Recreation, we propose adding midways to the existing runs in order to increase access for intermediate and beginner skiers. The rest of this document will identify our concerns with the draft EIS and includes our suggestions on how the document should be improved.

Section 3.5: Visual Resources

Analysis of Critical View Points (3.5.3.3) was limited to only 4 points of which were 10-20 miles away, and only 1 of which could actually be

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expansion area.

The EIS final draft should assess visual impact at a greater variety of distance zones (from the skiing hill itself, from Highway 2, and from Spokane especially)

The EIS final draft should assess the visual impact for all 4 seasons (not just summer where foliage might obscure the view).

Also, we believe that the wildlife of the area plays an important part in the scenic value of the area (seeing deer graze, or a hawk hunt). As such, we would like the final EIS to discuss the loss of wildlife as a visual issue. Specifically, how the ski expansion would affect visitors ability to have such scenic opportunities.

Section 3.6 : Recreation

The study was largely focused on winter activities on the mountains. Other recreational activities were acknowledged in the introduction of Section 3.6, but we would like to know more about how the types of warm-weather outdoor activities might be impacted by the ski area expansion.

- Hiking
- Mountain biking
- Wildlife viewing
- Horseback riding

We would also like the EIS to expand on how the recreational opportunities of current back-country skiers would be impacted by the proposed expansion. We would especially like the final EIS to discuss the According to the EIS, the proposed ski area has "better early and late season snow retention and quality." However, we wondered how reducing the tree coverage on the mountain (in order to build ski runs, etc.) would affect the snow levels of the PASEA (i.e. less shade= less snow)? More specifically, would the benefits be canceled out?

In addition, please note that the current runs are eastern and northern sides of the mountain and that the proposed expansion area is on the western slope, not the northern. This would indicate that the poorer snow retention associated with "southern exposure" should not affect the current Mt. Spokane ski area.

Section 3.7.1: Archaeological Resources:

According to the draft EIS, "no cultural resources surveys have been conducted in the majority of the expansion area." However, the proposed ski area's proximity to a cultural landscape boundary and a number of historic buildings as well as the mountain's cultural and historical significance for the area make such analyses vital for.

An archeological survey, should be performed by professional archaeologists in the proposed ski area. Such information is The results of the survey must then be analyzed included in the final EIS.

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Additional attention should be given to the impact that the proposed ski area would have on the Paradise Camp/Summit Area Cultural Landscape which borders it. This should take into account both physical impacts (increased weathering, etc.) as well as visual aesthetics.

Section 3.7.3: Noise:

While the noise caused by proposed ski area may not be discomforting to humans, it would detract from the overall aesthetic value of the place by overwhelming the current, natural; soundscape (wind passing through the trees, etc.) with man-made noises (snowmobiles, human voices, etc.).

We would also like the final EIS to examine the potential impact that such noise would have on local wildlife (behavior, nesting habits, etc.).

The ski expansion on Mt. Spokane would be a very valuable endeavor for more people to enjoy the supreme beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Mt. Spokane is a very popular ski resort for people of all ages, busloads of kids are brought up every week. The ski expansion would also provide additional trails through this marvelous wilderness for hikers and equestrian riders. The American Endurance Riders Association hosted an endurance ride on Mt. Spokane over labor day weekend and hopes to make this an annual event. Over 200 people and horses participated. Wildlife can still thrive alongside hiking / equestrian trails as hikers and horses do not create much noise disturbance.

I support the approval for Mt. Spokane in Spokane, WA to be able to expand their ski park by building a new chairlift and new ski runs where they deem appropriate.

Please say YES to this expansion project at Mt. Spokane.