

Public Involvement

Public Involvement for this project began during the fall of 1999, with a "scoping letter". A total of 69 individuals, groups, and Indian Tribes were contacted. All were potentially interested in the projects and surrounding area.

A total of four comments were received; one from a ski school and the others from interested individuals. All four supported implementation of these projects.

Findings Required by Other Laws

Stevens Pass 4e

Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Wildlife, Fish, and Plant Species – Biological Evaluations, which evaluated potential effects from these projects on proposed, threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, have been completed.

A "No Effect" determination has been made for northern spotted owl critical habitat, marbled murrelet and marbled murrelet critical habitat, goshawk, and bald eagle.

A "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" determination was made for northern spotted owl, gray wolf, and lynx.

There is suitable nesting habitat within an eighth of a mile of the Jupiter lift. There is also late-successional habitat for roosting and foraging adjacent to the Brooks and Daisy chairlifts. Given the elevation and the west-side vegetation characteristics (deeper, wetter snow loads, therefore less foraging capability than at lower elevations) of the habitat present within an eighth of a mile, spotted owls are not expected to be nesting within the vicinity of the project area. In addition, the ski area generally shuts down their downhill operations from the beginning of April to the end of April, depending on snow conditions. This operation would overlap with owl's breeding season. Therefore, if any owls were nesting within the vicinity of this project site, habituation to this noise level would have already occurred. The activities associated with the proposed project are not expected to be above the noise associated with operation of the ski area.

Suitable habitat for grizzly bear and lynx is present within the project area. The project area receives moderate to high human use year around. In the event a grizzly bear or gray wolf is disturbed, there is equally suitable habitat present within core habitat to the north and south of the project area.

Suitable habitat also exists for lynx. However, given the high road density in the area, the moderate to high human use throughout the year, lynx are not expected to be using the project area. If present, they are likely dispersing through or adjacent to the project area.

The projects "May Effect, But are not Likely to Adversely Affect" Puget Sound Chinook salmon and bull trout. The nearest potential Chinook and bull trout habitat lies approximately 10 miles downstream from the project area, below Alpine Falls, which is a natural, permanent, year-round migration barrier. The only way these projects could affect habitat or populations this far downstream would be if they produce large amounts