

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/2/2024 7:01:44 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to object primarily to the siting of the Twin Sisters winter ski hut, though I have reservations about the Heliotrope and Watson Lake sites as well.

As a resident of Whatcom County for over 20 years, I have spent a great deal of time in the sister's range, both winter and summer, have climbed the peaks many times, and ski toured throughout the area. The Sisters range is a profoundly special place due to its unique combination of wild, difficult-to-access remoteness yet simultaneous proximity to Bellingham and the I5 corridor. For those willing to work a bit extra for it, in the winter, it is a place to escape the high-use winter areas of the higher cascades and have a true wilderness experience.

The proposal didn't indicate any access to the spaces (outside expensive guided trips through the operator), and I fail to see how a private-use guiding hut, increasing traffic to a very special public lands winter landscape, benefits public recreationists already enjoying that area in any way. Anyone recreating in that area is there for the remoteness, and locating an exclusive private-use, for-profit ski hut is a move to 'develop' the area at the expense of the quality of recreation experience for others without any significant benefit.

The proposal did not address the following: Will there be public access to the hut? Will land-clearing be required to install the decking? What is the plan for impact mitigation of site construction, wastewater, and human waste?

This is a poor development strategy for winter-use hut access and a concern for all three private-use huts.

Without space/time being allocated to self-guided trips, it feels like a sellout of public recreation spaces to exclusive private-use groups.