



File Code: 1950
Date: October 4, 2019

Re: Summit at Snoqualmie's Mountain Bike Park, Snoqualmie Ranger District

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Summit at Snoqualmie (The Summit) proposes to construct new mountain bike trails on National Forest System Lands (NFS) to be served by the Silver Fir chairlift. The new trails have been designed to operate as a downhill mountain bike park, but also to blend with the existing mountain bike trails at the Summit and improve the summer recreation experience. The bike park would include hand-built single-track as well as wider "flow" trails that will offer different user experiences and provide a variety of difficulty levels to suit riders of all abilities. The proposed bike park project includes elements that occur on both public and private lands. The proposal would include 6.3 miles of new trails on NFS land and 1.5 miles of additional trails on private lands at Summit Central, for a total of 7.8 miles of new mountain bike trails. On NFS land, the new trails would involve disturbance to approximately 3.1 acres and on private lands, the disturbance would involve 0.7 acres, for a total of 3.8 acres.

The Summit has worked with Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA) to layout out conceptual trail alignments that are designed to avoid streams and wetlands, as well as any known sensitive species, as documented in the Summit at Snoqualmie Master Plan EIS. Final trail alignments will be approved by USFS staff prior to construction. Construction activities are expected to include the use of small machinery, such as a small excavator, and hand crews to clear and grub the trail. All mountain bike trails would include grade reversals, drain dips, sediment traps, and other methods of drainage control to help ensure that the trail surfaces do not erode and to prevent sediment mobilization away from the trails.

Construction equipment, fuels, spill response materials and erosion control materials would be staged in disturbed areas, outside of Riparian Reserves, throughout the project area, depending upon the location of trail work at any given time. Staging areas would include the Silver Fir base area, the Summit Central base area, the top and bottom terminals of Silver Fir Express and Summit Central Express, and other existing open areas.

Purpose and Need for Project

The purpose of this project is respond to a formal proposal from The Summit to develop a system of downhill mountain bike trails, which would provide the public with additional year-round recreational activities at The Summit, and to better use the existing ski area infrastructure on a year-round basis while helping to meet the demand for lift-serviced mountain biking in the region.

Throughout the Pacific Northwest (PNW), many ski areas are operating or planning mountain bike parks. The growing success of mountain bike parks in the PNW shows that these parks are a viable economic enterprise and that a demand for lift-served mountain biking at The Summit exists. A mountain bike park at The Summit would help meet the demand for lift-served mountain biking along the I-5 and I-90 corridors. A mountain biking park at The Summit also offers an opportunity to capture some of the Washington and Oregon market that currently travels to Whistler along the I-5 corridor.



Development and operation of a mountain bike park at The Summit also represents the opportunity to sponsor economic activity outside of the bike park itself. Both the Summit and other businesses in the Snoqualmie Pass area would benefit, including food and beverage, lodging and retail.

There is a need for the Forest Service to evaluate the proposal to decide if developing a system of mountain bike trails on NFS land should be authorized, and whether the proposed design should be adjusted, and/or mitigation measures implemented to minimize or eliminate potential resource impacts.

Location

The project location is at The Summit at Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie Pass, in King County, Washington. The project area is in T22N, R11E, Sec 9 and 16. The enclosed maps are also available on the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56920>.

Scoping Comments

The proposed trail project is expected to fall under the following category of action excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act: 36 CFR 220.6 (e)(1): Construction and reconstruction of trails. This category requires a Project Record and Decision Memo.

Comments received within 30 days of the date of this letter will be considered in the analysis of this proposed project. Preferred comment method is via the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56920>. Once on the website, under “Get Connected,” click on the link for “Comment/Object on Project.” Electronic comments must be in one of the following formats: email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc).

Written comments may be submitted to: Martie Schramm, Snoqualmie District Ranger. They can be mailed to the Snoqualmie Ranger District, 902 SE North Bend Way, North Bend, WA 98045. The office business hours for submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m, Monday thru Friday. Please be sure to include “The Summit at Snoqualmie’s Mountain Bike Park Project” as the subject for your written comments. Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposal and available for public review (40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21).

If you have any questions, additional information can be provided by contacting Brian McNeil, at (425) 888-8770. Thank you for your interest in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Martie Schramm

MARTIE SCHRAMM
District Ranger