



Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition

PO Box 100
Mt. Hood, Oregon, 97041

Tell the Truth!

Working to preserve and protect the biological integrity and historic nature of the northeast side of Mt. Hood

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Urge the Forest Service and Mt. Hood Meadows to Tell the Public the Truth about Threats to the Northeast Side of Mt. Hood

By Joe Keating, Sierra Club - Federal Forests North

The Northside of Mt. Hood provides the mountain's only accessible yet higher alpine backcountry experience for those who Nordic and Telemark ski, snowshoe, hike and alpine climb. It is also home to the Cooper Spur Ski Area, a small family oriented recreational area with a simple rope tow. However, the lands in this area are under direct attack by recent activities of alarming proportion.

Mt. Hood Meadows, a Portland based real estate development company, recently completed a land swap with Hood River County in which Meadows received over 600 acres of land adjacent to the Inn at Cooper Spur and nearby federal forest land. This is yet another step towards converting this small ski area into a major destination resort. Meadows also revealed its extensive and detailed development plans including the construction of a 450-unit destination resort and golf course. David Riley, general manager for the Mt. Hood Meadows, has indicated that he has contracted with over a dozen firms to do surveys and studies about water, geology, waste treatment, traffic control, golf-course design, landscaping and architectural design.

Higher up on the mountain, in meetings organized and attended by the Forest Service, but not generally publicized, David Riley has revealed his extensive plans to members of the Crag Rats, Snowshoe Club, and the Oregon Nordic Club. The plans include putting in up to seven chairlifts and expanding the current Cooper Spur Ski Permit Area into the Cloud Cap Tilly Jane Historic District, including running a chair up to the Cloud Cap Inn, a historic area directly adjacent to the

Mt. Hood National Forest wilderness boundary. The plans further provide for the building of a base lodge as well as a mid-mountain restaurant smack dab in the middle of the historic Tilly Jane trail.

Unfortunately, these are only part of the current threats to the northeastern flank of Oregon's Alpine Gem. Four timber sales (Klan, Kilt, Tartan and Clear) would cut hundreds of acres of native forests and construct many miles of roads near existing recreation sites. Although the environmental analyses do not mention it, many of the plans for the proposed resort overlap with planned clear cuts and commercial thinning from these timber sales. While the Environmental Assessment cites fire risk reduction as a key reason justifying with these sales; consultation with knowledgeable experts in effective fire risk reduction plans has revealed that a 9.9 million board foot timber sale is not the solution. If these timber sales are completed without further environmental analysis and appropriate development of alternatives, not only will it be easier for Meadows to propose the placement of permanent ski runs and parking lots in their stead – it will also stand to severely impact the wildlife and watershed. Currently the Forest Service has not prepared analysis of the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of all this proposed activity.

Members of the Coalition are taking immediate action to urge the Forest Service to consider this significant new information. You can support this challenge by sending letters directly to the Kim Titus at the Forest Service Ranger Station in Mt. Hood and to David Riley of Mt. Hood Meadows. Urge them to:

1. **Tell The Public the Truth.** Ask the Forest Service and Dave Riley what are they planning to do up at Cooper Spur? Urge them to disclose to the public what they know and what they plan to do. Urge them to hold a public meeting where the public can get the information for themselves. Demand that the Forest Service consider the cumulative impacts from all these activities.

2. **Protect the Watershed.** Watershed protection is key to protecting the quality of our water supply, and the Crystal Springs Watershed cannot handle the impacts from the proposed development.

3. **Commercial Logging is not the Solution to Reducing the Risk of Fire.** There is a better alternative to reducing the risk of fire than a commercial timber sale. Commercial timber sales have only proven to increase fire risk, and ski runs do not make good firebreaks.

4. **Protect Historic Areas and Historic Uses.** Proposed expansion will destroy historic trail and push off existing low impact recreational users that prefer sweat not electricity.

5. **Mt. Hood is being loved to death.** The wildlife corridors and wilderness cannot handle the greatly increased use and impacts from the proposed development and ski expansion.

Send your letters directly to:

United States Forest Service
USFS - Region 6
Hood River Ranger Station
6780 Highway 35
Mt. Hood - Parkdale, OR 97041
Phone: (541) 352-6002

Franklin Drake, Owner
Mt. Hood Meadows
1975 SW 1st Ave. Suite M
Portland, OR 97201
(503) 295-6460

Dave Riley, General Manager
Mt. Hood Meadows
PO Box 470
Mt. Hood, Oregon 97041
(503) 337-2222 ext. 259

And please send a copy to:

Sierra Club – Oregon Chapter
Attn: Joe Keating
2950 SE Stark, Suite 110
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