

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2012**

The Commissioners met for a public meeting to discuss the future of Northern State Recreation Area with Commissioners Kenneth A. Dahlstedt and Sharon Dillon present on Thursday, December 13, 2012, at 6:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Dahlstedt called the proceedings to order at 6:34 p.m.

The Commissioners welcomed Senator Elect Kirk Pearson and Senator Elect Elizabeth Scott to the meeting.

Commissioner Wesen's absence was excused.

II. AGENDA:

- a) 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Public Meeting to Consider Ideas for Recreational Uses of Northern State Recreation Area and the Proposed Redevelopment of Properties to a Destination Resort

Parks, Recreation and Fairgrounds Director Brian Adams provided a PowerPoint presentation that explained the cultural history of Northern State Recreation Area (NSRA). He explained that in 1909 the State of Washington constructed Northern State Hospital as a state of the art, self-sustaining occupational therapy and treatment facility for the mentally ill. The area was designed by Olmsted Brothers, the site included patient and staff housing, a dedicated reservoir, lumber mill, quarry, steam plant, farming and livestock operations. The hospital ended operations in 1973 and, today, the Washington State Department of General Administration and Skagit County are stewards of the site.

Mr. Adams explained that in 1991, Skagit County purchased a 726-acre portion of the former Northern State Hospital from the State of Washington for the purpose of developing a major regional recreation facility for the citizens of Skagit County and beyond. The site, now called the Northern State Recreation Area (NSRA), is located on the eastern edge of the urban growth area of Sedro-Woolley in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. He went on to provide information about the process and development of the NSRA Master Plan.

Economic Development Association of Skagit County Executive Director Don Wick spoke about the importance of developing tourism in Skagit County. He introduced Larry Dustin, Pete Papdopulos, the proponents of the proposed North Cascades Resorts at Northern State Recreation Area.

Mr. Dustin provided a PowerPoint presentation explaining the potential economic and fiscal benefits that may result from development of the North Cascades Resort. The potential economic benefits are added employment, payroll and spending associated with the construction and ongoing operations both locally and to the northern Puget Sound region. The resort's financial success depends on achieving a balanced business mix. The theme of the resort would include motorsports.

The resort elements would contain meeting rooms, recreational activities, an equestrian center, lodging, retail space, on-site business campus with office and light manufacturing space focused on tenants for motorsports oriented companies, plus restaurants, and a vocational school which would emphasize motorsports.

Mr. Dustin explained that if the project were to move forward, it would honor and accommodate the existing leases.

State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Compliance Specialist Lesley Ryan-Connelly explained that in 1993 the County received a grant from RCO Recreation and Conservation Funding and Salmon Recovery Grant and explained the obligations tied to the property. Ms. Ryan-Connelly can be reach at (360) 902-3080 or by e-mail at leslie.ryan-connelly@rco.wa.gov.

Herb Sargo of 20545 Rocky Ridge Lane in Sedro-Woolley, Larry Stiles of Independence Drive in Sedro-Woolley, President of Skagit Audubon Society of Skagit County Tim Manns of 1220 S. 11 Street in Mount Vernon, George Newberry of 17103 Marlee Drive in Burlington, Cheryl Willis of 10479 Wallen Road in Bow,

Brent Stovol of 26045 Minkler Road in Sedro-Woolley, Rich Rule of 617 Central in Sedro-Woolley, Dianne Freethy spoke on behalf of the Skagit Citizens' Alliance, Jeroldine Hallberg of 6335 S.R. 9 in Sedro-Woolley, Keith Ladley of 1139 Warner Street in Sedro-Woolley, Darrell Clark of 25812 Helmick Road in Sedro-Woolley, Glenn Hilton of 7560 Alpine in Sedro-Woolley, Alex Von Cube of 7410 Cokedale Road in Sedro-Woolley, John Day of 6368 Erwin Lane in Sedro-Woolley, all spoke in opposition to locating the proposed resort at NSRA.

Keith Wagoner of 410 Talcoff Street in Sedro-Woolley, Eron Berg of the City of Sedro-Woolley, Tim Rosenhan of 104 Wallen Road on Samish Island, Jim Miller of 1240 Whitecap Lane in Anacortes, Denny Organ of 9694 Samish Island Road in Bow, Lisa Janiki of 810 Talcoff Street in Sedro-Woolley, Tony Tomisino of 704 Sauk Mountain Drive in Sedro-Woolley, Pola Kelly of 407 State Street in Sedro-Woolley, Kevin Dystra of 1264 Rezone Lane in Sedro-Woolley, Louis Requa of 310 West Bennet in Sedro-Woolley, Don Gordon of 2319 State Route 9 at Lake McMurray, Jennifer Alor of 209 Ferry Street, Suite D. in Sedro-Woolley, Eileen Gribbel of 614 Reed in Sedro-Woolley, John Voth of 1906 Fowler Place in Mount Vernon, Dano White of 25875 Minkler Road in Sedro-Woolley, Becky White of 25875 Minkler Road in Sedro-Woolley, spoke in support of moving forward with a feasibility study of the proposed resort at NSRA.

Tom Pasma of 15216 Colony Road in Bow said he was volunteer for the proposed project and spoke about the benefits of the equestrian facility and indicated that the proposal included refurbishing the existing barns at NSRA.

Seeing no further public comments forthcoming, Chairman Dahlstedt adjourned the proceedings at 9:10 p.m.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Dahlstedt adjourned the proceedings at 9:10 p.m.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Chairman

Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner

Ron Wesen, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Linda Hammons, Clerk of the Board