

BRIEFING NOTES

- The Jumbo Resort proposal has been strongly opposed by the local community for the past 15 years. Polling has consistently demonstrated the community's strong opposition to this project on environmental, social and economic grounds.
- The Jumbo Valley is located in a remote wild area adjacent to the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy and 55 km from Invermere, the nearest municipality. Access to the Jumbo Valley, 35 km beyond Panorama ski hill, is via a dirt and gravel mountain road with over 18 avalanche slide paths and multiple single lane creek crossings
- There are 13 existing ski resorts within a 3 hour driving distance from Invermere - none operate at capacity
- The Ktunaxa Nation has registered strong opposition to the project
- The Purcell mountains ecosystem, of which the Jumbo Valley is central, supports a viable population of grizzly bears, a species that would be in direct conflict with any human development
- It is not possible to mitigate environmental impacts without the unpopular prospect of closing off all surrounding drainages to public access according to government biologists
- As a result of global warming the glaciers are retreating and are predicted to be entirely melted within 4 decades
- Note to Hockey Fans: Scott and Rob Niedermayer of the Anaheim Mighty Ducks have donated jerseys, hats, and hockey sticks to support the "Keep Jumbo Wild" campaign
- Current land use zoning: special resource management zone based on the East Kootenay CORE table recommendations: "A ski resort development may be acceptable provided it can be done in a manner compatible with other recognized values."
- Kicking Horse Coffee, recipients of Business Bank of Canada's Entrepreneur of the Year award, have recently produced a line of coffee "Jumbo Wild" and through the international and national distribution of their popular product are garnering support for keeping Jumbo wild

ASIDE:

Over an 8 week period, 5000 people responded to the government's call for input on the Jumbo Glacier Resort proposal...over 90% of respondents opposed the project.

- Environmental Assessment Office Website

"It's not the quantity of responses we looked at, it was the quality."

- Minister of Sustainable Resource Development George Abbott's response to the media's questions regarding widespread public opposition
October 14, 2004

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BACKGROUND

- The proposed resort would be located:
 - in the Jumbo Valley, a popular backcountry recreation wilderness area, and would include several adjacent peaks and glaciers in the adjoining drainage
 - 55kms from Invermere, in the heart of the Central Purcells
 - 5 hours from the nearest international airport (Calgary)
 - adjacent to the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, southern BC's largest unroaded wilderness area
- Jumbo is a remote valley that is still ecologically viable despite past resource extraction and present recreation, neither of which preclude wildlife values as a permanent resort would. It contains no permanent recreation facilities and structures.
- In total the proposed resort would encompass 6,000 hectares of public land, including redevelopment into a European resort replica
- Budgeted at \$450 million to build-out, Jumbo Glacier Resort would include:
 - 23 ski lifts crisscrossing 4 glaciers (by comparison Panorama has 9 lifts)
 - over 6,250 bed units (by comparison Panorama has approximately 3,000 at present)
 - A projected 700,000 visitors annually
 - 96 ha of private chalets and 16 ha of commercial core area
 - Resort on completion will consist of 143 single-family chalets, 240 townhouse units, 974 condo/hotel units, & 369 hotel rooms.
- Shopping malls, night clubs, restaurants are proposed. Necessary public services such as waste disposal, policing, schools, hospitals, and fire protection will impact present regional services and will require increased public funding, including accelerated land fill needs..

ASIDE:

"The B.C. government has been struggling with an easy question: should it plant a potentially uneconomic project on a melting glacier in an area that doesn't want it?"

- Canadian Business Magazine 2004

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ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Costs of Road:** The Ministry of Transport stated that the traffic volumes predicted by the proponent would require a 2 lane paved road and would therefore cost upwards of \$2million/km (\$70million in total). This does not include annual road maintenance and avalanche control costs for 18 or more direct avalanche chutes up the Jumbo Valley. projected maintenance cost of \$7500 - \$10,000/km and avalanche control of \$150,000/yr minimum. (Ministry of Transportation, Aug 24,1999 ref.74565)
- The proponent has proposed to pay for the road with the sale of lift tickets. The taxpayers of BC will be financing the cost of the roads up front, but what will happen when the resort goes bankrupt?
- “The Canadian Ski Council is predicting a 22% drop or higher in numbers of domestic skiers in the next 15 years. It’s risky to rely on international visitors to fuel that growth” Prof. Simon Hudson University of Calgary. Calgary Herald Oct 15,2004
- “The most basic reality is that if a ski area is going to increase its visits, it is going to do so at the expense of other (existing) ski areas.” Hal Clifford, author Downhill Slide
- To break even, the resort must generate 300,000 skier visits/year in a declining market. Panorama, after 25 years of operation, has had a maximum of 200,000 skiers visits/year
- Visitors will need to drive nearly 5 hours to reach Jumbo Resort, passing up Lake Louise, Sunshine, Norquay, Nakiska, Kicking Horse, Fernie, Kimberly and Panorama on the way
- “It appears doubtful that the (Jumbo) resort can achieve economic break-even...” Snow Engineering Feasibility Assessment, March 1999

ASIDE:

The Canadian Ski Council is predicting a 22% drop or more in numbers of domestic skiers in the next 15 years- Canadian Ski Council 2003

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CLIMATE CONCERNS**ASIDE:**

“Our results indicate that climate warming does not bode well for ski resorts like Jumbo, or for snow sports in general.

River flows in summer on the eastern slopes of the Rockies have decreased by 30 to 85 percent in the past century. There are several reasons, including a 25-37 percent decline in the mass of glaciers in the headwaters, a 30-40% decline in winter snowpacks, and an increase of 12-13 percent in evaporation, as well as human withdrawals from southern rivers of the eastern slopes.

The climate on the eastern slopes and western prairies has already warmed by 1-4 C, and a further 6-8 C warming is predicted during the remainder of the 21st century.

Similar changes have been predicted for Glacier National Park by the US Geological Survey. They predict that glaciers will be gone within 30 years, and most winter precipitation will fall as rain. Results for the Columbia Valley will probably be very similar to these two sites.”

Dr. David Schindler, Killam Memorial Professor of Ecology at University of Alberta, is the recipient of numerous prestigious internationally significant awards for science including Canada’s highest scientific honour, the 2001 Herzberg Gold Medal for Science & Engineering. Dr. Schindler was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2004.

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COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- The proposed resort does not pose a significant financial gain for the Columbia Valley as a community, and the District will not see any substantial direct benefit from the proposed development.” (source District of Invermere staff report 2004)
- Invermere has one of Canada’s highest current growth rates at 11%, it could reach 15% by 2006 mainly second home owners. Invermere does not have the infrastructure in place to deal with the onslaught of current rates of development nor will they be able to provide potable water at the present growth.
- Currently all of Panorama’s emergency injuries must be sent to Calgary or Cranbrook over 200km away. Invermere is a high cost community with the average house price at over \$300,000, but the average income for resort employees is less than \$30,000. The disparity of income to living costs will likely create substantial social problems in the Invermere area.
- Public opposition to the resort has been steady over 15 years. Response to opinion polls (and an Invermere Town Hall meeting) consistently showed an opposition rate of around 90%.

FIRST NATIONS

- The area proposed for development is of high interest to the entire Ktunaxa Nation Tribal Council (KNTC) which consists of 5 bands. The Ktunaxa Nation is in treaty negotiations with the province at this time and have registered their opposition to the project. This opposition was not accurately reflected in the final report from the Environmental Assessment Office.
- “The decision not to develop the Jumbo Creek Valley is the only decision that the Ktunaxa people will accept.” (Chief Alfred Joseph- Sept 20, 1995 Ktunaxa Chiefs signed declaration stating their opposition)
- The strength of Ktunaxa Nation Tribal Council opposition to the project is clear in contrast to their historical support of progressive economic development in their community. The KNTC has supported front country ski hill development in other traditional territories such as Fernie and Golden.

ASIDE:

“The District of Invermere has actively sought input from the citizens of Invermere and has received overwhelming and widespread opposition to the proposal, based largely on negative environmental, economic and social concerns. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the District of Invermere opposes the Jumbo Glacier Resort proposal...” District of Invermere Resolution 2003

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Scientific information has demonstrated that the Jumbo Resort project will have very substantial negative environmental impacts on the glaciers, the watershed and will eventually impact the internationally recognized Ramsar designated Columbia Wetlands. Threatened and endangered wildlife such as mountain caribou, grizzly bear, mountain goats, wolverine and bull trout will be negatively impacted.

The environmental assessment process was extremely flawed and reported by individuals inside the process to have been politically directed and not based on the science provided by the Government's own biologists.

- “The proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort has the potential for substantial and direct cumulative impacts to the Central Purcell Grizzly Bear population.” BC Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection, 2004
- “... there will be a substantial impact to grizzly bear habitat effectiveness, mortality risk, and most importantly, the fragmentation of grizzly bear distribution...” Matt Austin, Large Carnivore Specialist, Biodiversity Branch, Government of B.C.
- “While the developer claims to be committed to ‘no net impact’ to grizzly bears this could only be achieved by reducing or largely eliminating human activities in surrounding watersheds, including, but not limited to, the Glacier, Howser, Toby, Horsethief, and Brewer/Dutch drainages.” Stefan Himmer, BSc. RPBio
- “ My colleagues and I see the southern Purcell mountains as one of the last non–fragmented “fingers” of southern grizzly bear distribution in BC” Dr. John Boulanger
- “No other land management prescription of the Forest directly results in more stream-water depletion, wetlands impacts, ...or permanent habitat loss (than ski areas).’ Cynthia Cody US Environmental Protection Agency.
- Blue listed species such as bull trout, cutthroat trout, wolverine and mountain goats will be adversely impacted. Report to EAO from scientists Chris Beers, Cam Gillies & Rene Franken.
- Climate Change is the new reality. Glaciers are melting worldwide, and rates of decline have doubled since the 1980's. Waters are drying up – in the Canadian West, late summer flows are dwindling, threatening communities, farms, and fish. There is no question that climate-related phenomena have become the major environmental concern of this century. Dr. David Suzuki
- “Glaciers are critical to local environments and water supplies. It is expected that the remaining glaciers of the Purcells and Rockies will have ablated to the point of disappearing in less than 4 decades.” Dr. Mindy Brugman, Glaciologist
- Snow packs in the Southern Canadian Rockies are expected to drop from 30-50% within 3 decades based on climate change models for the Columbia Basin. University of Washington

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ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONT.**ASIDE:**

"...whereas the resort will contribute significant pollution to the Columbia River Wetlands, we oppose the Jumbo Glacier Resort..."
2004 AGM Resolution, International Living Lakes Network...

TAKE ACTION

The Jumbo Wild campaign has received extensive media attention in major international publications such as the New York Times, LA Times and Frankfurt Rundschau. In 2005 alone there were over 200 media hits.

The Jumbo resort-style industrial tourism is out of balance with Canadian values and compromises regional opportunities for sustainable, responsible, well-planned tourism

With the world watching to see what is decided for the Jumbo Valley, the Liberal government can easily send a clear message of its commitment to achieve one of its "Goals for a Golden Decade", to become a leader in sustainability. Rejecting the proposal, once and for all, sends a clear message that tourism in this province must be sustainable and aligned with the values of the people who live here.

'Wildlife and wilderness' is our market niche; it is our product differentiation, and when the world is watching us in 2010, we will be able to showcase our stewardship with pride.

ASIDE:

"The one thing we have in Canada that is so rare everywhere else in the world is wilderness and wildlife – Jumbo Glacier Resort would devastate those values"

- Becky Scott, Olympic Gold Medalist

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