



KITTITAS COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Clay Myers, Sheriff

8/12/2021

Board of County Commissioners

The Sheriff's Office is grateful for the opportunity to note our concerns regarding the 47 North development in the Bullfrog Flats area of Cle Elum. After reviewing the extensive information the City has made available, including the substantial changes from the original proposals for 47 North, we have several concerns about the impact of this project on county Law Enforcement.

Our first and overriding concern is the significant shift to non-landed residences and recreational vehicles. We believe the current proposal will result in a large portion of 47 North being bought up and used by people who are not full-time residents and not invested in Cle Elum or Kittitas County. It will likely produce an influx of part-time residents and short time renters who lack attachment and commitment to our community and who are historically associated with higher rates of nuisance, conflict, and crime. We understand and support the need for affordable housing in Cle Elum and the Upper County. That need, though, could be better addressed as a portion of a plan less prone to produce a rootless and problematic population center, based on owner-occupied land.

We believe the density of the current proposal will impact traffic safety and our already taxed transportation infrastructure. The current proposal includes hundreds of residences and hundreds of additional RV slips. In the case of the RV slips there is no real doubt that most will access 47 North via Bullfrog Rd. It is also likely that many users of the manufactured housing units will frequently access the development from I-90, and thus Bullfrog Rd.

Bullfrog Rd is already the exclusive access route to all Suncadia properties and the primary access route to a vast area of residential, business and recreational property in and north of Roslyn. The periodic, 'surge' type of traffic that occurs on Bullfrog Rd—primarily moving in one direction at the time of any given 'surge'—compounds the potential impact of increased usage beyond the simple number of vehicles involved. Because Bullfrog Rd is a 'choke point' on the route to many upstream resources, impacts to Bullfrog would affect large numbers of residents in and visitors to our county.

We understand the only mitigations currently planned for traffic control at the Bullfrog and SR903 outlets from 47 North are stop signs. We view that as inadequate and believe that this under-control of projected traffic, including hundreds of RV's, will result in serious periodic congestion and a high risk of collisions. We would urge that any specific mitigation recommendations from Kittitas County Public works should be supported.

Another area of concern is the Cle Elum/Roslyn School District. The families that will occupy homes in 47 North will include children who will primarily attend public schools in the unincorporated county. The draft EIS for 47 North considers the traffic impacts of this increased traffic; but an increased school

307 W. Umptanum Rd • Ellensburg, Washington 98926

PHONE 509-962-7525 • 509-674-2584

FAX 509-962-7599

<https://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/sheriff>



KITTITAS COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Clay Myers, Sheriff

population has other impacts, including on Law Enforcement. The safety and security of these new students in the Cle Elum Roslyn district will fall to the Sheriff's Office. Growth of the CERSD student body will increase not only the security measures necessary to safeguard students; it will increase the number of investigations that arise from student contacts and students' disclosures. We cooperate regularly and effectively with CERP in such investigations and the Sheriff's Office has no higher priority than the well-being of youth and students. That well-being and those investigations, however, come at a cost, which may not have been factored into the 47 North EIS.

A final area of concern is the increased usage of local outdoor recreational resources. Residents of Kittitas County love its opportunities to visit and recreate in wild places, open lands and waterways; we're sure people drawn to 47 North would feel the same way. The Sheriff's Office plays a large role in the enforcement of law and the protection of the safety of the public in its pursuit of outdoor recreation. We routinely work with state and federal Law Enforcement partners to address problems of access and parking and to investigate criminal complaints in outdoor spaces throughout the Upper County. The Sheriff's Office also bears responsibility for locating and assisting lost and injured adventurers and works together with Kittitas County Search And Rescue on scores of missions every year. An increase in outdoor recreation will necessarily and unfortunately result in more such crises.

There is no simple way to calculate the magnitude of the impacts of over a thousand new residences in the city of Cle Elum accessing their neighborhood via county roads, recreating in the county and sending their children to public schools in the county. It is certain, however, that there will be an impact: that the Sheriff's Office will be called on to shoulder a part of the public safety and emergency service needs of the new residents of 47 North, with costs in manpower and equipment. We believe the most important step to mitigate and manage impacts is to reject elements of the proposal likely to increase part-time, short-terms and temporary residents.

We are confident that CEPD Chief Kirk Bland has assessed the potential impacts of 47 North for public safety and criminal enforcement within the city of Cle Elum and has a plan to continue the excellent service of CEPD. We look forward to continuing our productive cooperation with CEPD and hope that Chief Bland's recommendations for mitigation and support are accommodated.

In closing, I will again emphasize my opinion that a 47 North project combining remote, corporate land ownership and users who are not full-time, vested residents will result in attitudes and practices that are destructive of community and associated with higher rates of crime. I hope the county will advocate for a return to a vision for the 47 North project that will avoid these outcomes.

Sincerely,


Clayton Myers

Kittitas County Sheriff