

LETTER 38 (LOG # 497)

Doug Ballou

Kelly Heidecker

From: Doug Ballou [dballou@pacifier.com]
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2006 8:38 AM
To: Kelly Heidecker
Cc: Board of Clark County Commissioners; 'Barron, Bill'
Subject: DEIS Comments, Cowlitz Casino-Resort Project
Importance: High

Dear Ms. Heidecker.

Attached are comments regarding the Draft EIS for the proposed Cowlitz Casino-Resort that I am submitting on behalf of NACCC, which is the umbrella organization for the 35 neighborhood associations in unincorporated Clark County. Thank you.

Regards,
Doug Ballou
Chairman, NACCC
(360) 573-3314

7/14/2006

Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County

July 14, 2006

Mr. Stanley Speaks
Regional Director
Northwest Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4169

RE: DEIS Comments, Cowlitz Casino-Resort Project.

Dear Mr. Speaks:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the "Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Trust Acquisition and Casino Project in Clark County, Washington. I am Chairman of the Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County (NACCC) which is an umbrella organization composed of representatives from each of 35 Neighborhood Associations in unincorporated Clark County. Approximately 150,000 people live within the boundaries of these neighborhood associations. NACCC is active in many issues which impact the livability of our community. Certainly this proposed development will have significant impacts, positive and negative, on our community at large.

Clark County has conducted an in-depth review of the draft EIS on behalf of Clark County citizens. Members of NACCC have also reviewed the draft EIS. NACCC has come to the same conclusion as Clark County that the DEIS is inadequate in describing the alternatives nor does it identify or assess the impacts the development will have on our community. Board of Clark County Commissioners Chairman Marc Boldt said in his comments at the June 15th Public Hearing that Clark County staff had previewed the EIS before the draft was issued for public comment and had provided over 200 comments, most of which had been ignored in the issued DEIS. This is very troubling to neighborhood leaders who volunteer their time to serve on a variety of tasks forces and citizen advisory groups. You have asked for comments, comments have been provided, it is our expectation that the final EIS will include comments received and how they were reflected in the final document and an explanation or rationale for the comments not reflected.

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July 14, 2006

RE: DEIS Comments, Cowlitz Casino-Resort Project.

A primary concern that we have is the impact of this development on our transportation system. Future economic growth in this region will depend on an adequate transportation infrastructure. The I-5 Bridge over the Columbia River is at capacity with stop-and-go traffic during the morning commute (6-9am) and evening commute (3-7pm). The DEIS specifically states that the presence of a casino at the La Center/I-5 junction would add an additional 13,616 weekday trips and 17,820 Saturday trips. Nowhere in the document does it mention what the impact of this increased traffic will have on I-5 and/or secondary roads. How will this impact traffic flows on I-5 and contribution to traffic jams on the I-5 Bridge? What will the financial impacts of this increased traffic be? The impact the casino will have on traffic is one of the most glaring omissions in the DEIS. More work needs to be done to better assess traffic impacts due to this project, which would include traffic modeling using appropriate traffic models used by local and state government.

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cowlitz Casino-Resort Project.

Sincerely,

Doug Ballou
Chairman, NACCC
3109 NE 96th Street
Vancouver, WA 98665

Comments in this letter were ratified by NACCC Members in attendance at the July 10, 2006 monthly organization meeting.

Cc: Board of Clark County Commissioners
Bill Barron, County Administrator
NACCC Members