

HOOD RIVER NEWS
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
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Water, winter pears

What is going on up there on Cooper Spur? The answer is: Water, Wilderness, and Winter Pears.

This isn't about skiing, or jobs, or even Trophy homes. This is about conserving and preserving the abundance that has sustained all the residents of this beautiful valley all these millennium.

The bottom line is: Are we willing to protect the source of our drinking water, our treasured Wilderness Areas, and the orchards that have defined and sustained five generations?

This whole Goal 8 Destination Resort scheme is a sham; let's go back to the basics. We do not need another layer of bureaucratic red tape on top of the already mystifying labyrinth of land use regulation.

If a citizen has forest property zoned F-1 and he or she wants to change the use of their land, let them go to the County Planning Commission just like you or I have to do. Do the math, study the environmental impact and let the chips fall where they may.

The controlling partner of Mt. Hood Meadows Inc. is a Portland builder/developer. He has swapped land with the County for pennies on the dollar and then requests a Goal 8 mapping process.

To no one's surprise, an independent consultant and the county planning staff determined that there are no suitable locations for a destination resort in Hood River County. Is that the end of it?

No, now Mt. Hood Meadows Inc., read — Drake Construction — wants to change the rules, and the facts.

I do not have anything against Dave Riley, General Manager of Mt. Hood Meadows Inc.

In fact, I have visited the Cooper Spur Ski Lodge twice in the last month. It is a delightful, family oriented facility that fits the scale of the surrounding area and provides healthy entertainment at an affordable price. If Mt. Hood Meadows Inc. can operate Cooper Spur consistent with its current configuration and make a profit, my hat is off to them.

If the Hood River Planning Commission wants to foster economic development in the Upper Valley, fine.

I say, draw a circle three miles around the Crystal Springs Water District; draw a circle three miles around public lands designated as Wilderness Areas; and draw a circle three miles around high value orchard land. Call the land inside the circles buffer zones. No new development in the buffer zones.

There is plenty of privately held land left to fill with Trophy homes, hobby farms, overnight lodging, or whatever. I personally like the idea of a hockey rink.

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Hood River