

HOOD RIVER NEWS
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
February 5, 2003

'A sentinel'

This letter was sent to the Planning Commissioners of Hood River County:
Mt. Hood. Wy'East.

A beacon. An Oregon landmark. A sentinel. For those of us who live here, a reminder of what is great about our state. A mountain to revere, to find solace in and tread upon respectfully.

The fact that I am called upon to write this letter in opposition to vacation homes, golf courses and swimming pools on such an important piece of the earth is sad beyond words. Yes, there is the staggering amount of water needed to maintain a golf course and resort. Not to mention the harsh ecological impact the growth, the people, the fertilizers, and the pesticides will have on the surrounding area and wildlife. And consider this: we are faced with yet another year of drought due to insignificant snowfall. Which is due to strange weather patterns which are directly related to global warming and which will not go away. And we want to put in another ski area? Another development?

Is it wise to put yet another strain on an already taxed environment?

Is it wise to build when what is already there is more beautiful and more useful than anything any man or woman could possibly conceive of?

We are privileged to enjoy the world for the short time we are allowed to visit here. Let's leave the mountain the way we found it. For once, let's not think about profit, or our second, or even third home, or our golf game. Let's think bigger and broader and more responsibly than that. Let's think of what it will mean to the generations to come, long after we've passed on, to have the same experiences we've had – to know the beauty and strength and mystery of Mt. Hood. To gaze upon it during an evening sunset and be awed, not met with lights of developments. To hike its trails in peace and wonder and listen to cascading mountain streams, not sprinklers. And to glimpse an untouched paradise and then to pass it on. Let us not degrade or cheapen this natural wonder.

Is nothing sacred?

It should be.

It can be.

It is. Right now.

And we can choose to keep it that way for everyone.

**Jill Tomlinson
Portland**