



February 22, 2006

The Board of Directors,  
Regional District of East Kootenays  
19 – 24th Avenue South  
Cranbrook, BC, V1C 3H8  
By Email: rdek@rdek.bc.ca

Dear Board Members:

**Re: Re-zoning proposal for Jumbo Glacier Resort**

The Federation of Mountain Clubs (FMC) would like to give our support for retaining the current zoning for the Jumbo Valley that supports public recreation and wildlife and rejects permanent infrastructure. We respectfully oppose the Jumbo Glacier Resort development proposal and ask that the Regional District of East Kootenays reject the application to rezone the area to develop this 6000 ha resort and associated real estate project in the heart of the Purcell Mountains.

The Federation of Mountain Clubs represents non-motorized recreationists from around the province. We are a democratic, grassroots organization dedicated to the conservation of and access to British Columbia's wilderness and mountain areas. Our membership includes about 3500 people from outdoor clubs around the province. It is a diverse group of non-motorized outdoor recreationists that use mostly public lands. Unfortunately, none of our members were able to attend your recent open house, and thus we were not able to give our input at that time. However, we have written on this subject several times over the last decade or so, and now wish to reiterate our views.

For over a decade, our members and the thousands of people who live and recreate in Kootenay region and around the province have opposed Jumbo resort for economic, environmental and social reasons. The Jumbo Valley is an internationally significant wilderness area and wildlife corridor and it would be irresponsible to allow for a mega-resort development in this region. The Jumbo Resort development is out of balance with local and provincial values and compromises regional opportunities for responsible, well-planned tourism and public recreation.

The FMC recognizes that destination resort tourism is an important part of B.C.'s growing economy. However, instead of developing a new resort in the heart of an otherwise wild and pristine mountain range and destroying the very wilderness that draws tourists to British Columbia, let's focus our provincial resources in existing resort towns such as Fernie, Invermere, Kimberley and Golden (to name a few). Even the RDEK's own regional growth strategy recognized that future tourism development should be concentrated in and around existing communities, thus preserving the wilderness and wildlife habitat on which BC's growing sustainable tourism economy is based.

If we are serious about increasing BC's tourism revenues (a goal, which I think you will find most people in our sector support), it is critical that conservation is the first priority of the little true wilderness that we have left. Only the most diligent wilderness conservation and stewardship will ensure the integrity of our tourism product and opportunities, and how we are viewed in the marketplace. British Columbia's wildlife and wilderness are scarce resources that are without equal in the world. They are deeply valued by British Columbia residents and a drawing card for visitors from around the world. Retaining the integrity of the wilderness is crucial to the well-being and long-term viability of BC's overall \$10 billion tourism industry, which markets BC's high environmental qualities to the world.

Although only a percentage of tourists may go into the backcountry, they come to BC because of the reputation and qualities these wilderness areas portray. These are the Supernatural qualities that are the marketing 'hook' that allows BC to attract and hold our market share in the world's largest industry. Clearly, the pristine nature of our backcountry wilderness areas like Jumbo Valley, and the wildlife populations it supports, must be maintained, as it is fundamental to our ability to market and compete in the world marketplace.

The Jumbo Pass, Glacier and Valley areas should not be developed as a resort. Rather, it should become a designated wilderness area where wildlife can take refuge, biodiversity can be protected and non-motorized, low-impact, backcountry recreation, both public and commercial, can take place. It is these recreation and conservation values that are in a declining supply provincially and worldwide. A resort of the scale proposed would have far reaching impacts for the East Kootenays and beyond.

We understand that the Regional District will have to make a decision regarding this controversial Resort development proposal and the associated zoning application. Please receive this letter as our official submission to the RDEK stating our opposition to the proposed resort development. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue of both provincial and local significance.

Yours Truly,



Pat Harrison, President  
Federation of Mountain Clubs

cc. Hon. Olga Ilich, Minister of Tourism, Sport and Arts.  
Hon. Pat Bell, Minister of Agriculture and Land.  
Jim Yardley, ADM, Tourism and Resort Development.  
Bill Irwin, ED, Tourism and Resort Operations.  
Psyche Brown, Tourism & Resort Development Division.