Valhalla Wilderness Society

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June 6, 2020

**Key Points from the VWS Review of the Proposed Zincton Resort Town**

**on Highway 31A between New Denver and Silverton**

The Zincton Resort Town Proposal

Zincton proposes a resort town for 1,750 people at Three Forks, and has applied for adjacent Crown land for a massive ski- and mountain-biking development that would extend from Three Forks to Retallack.

The resort town would be three times the population of New Denver and have bunkhouses, private cabins, restaurants, bars, spas, ski lifts and more. The Crown land would have ski lifts, groomed trails, a backcountry lodge and access corridors to service these developments from the highway. Ski lifts would put 1,500 people a day into what is now the wilderness of London and Whitewater Ridges.

Negative Environmental and Social Impacts

A claim that the development will be “zero carbon” and a promise to make the resort town pedestrian-only are good steps. But this does not mean the development will be “sustainable” or “environmentally friendly as claimed in the proponents Expression of Interest.

* The very existence on the site of 1,750 people, with their vehicles and traffic, and their need for infrastructure to handle accommodations, eating, parking, sewage, garbage, etc, will have marked negative impacts on the environment.
* Chairlifts and glading for ski runs would require a lot of logging and forest fragmentation, and would have a pronounced ecological and visual impact.
* With thousands of people and greatly increased traffic, the development will diminish the resident wildlife, and possibly wipe out some species at risk from the area, including provincially blue-listed grizzly bears, wolverines, and mountain goats.
* High numbers of people drawn by the resort will overcrowd recreation sites throughout the corridor and its backroads, degrading the experience of people who come to get away from crowds.
* The development would worsen the growing imbalance between commercial and noncommercial recreation. Just one commercial operation can overwhelm noncommercial recreation by using luxury amenities and marketing to maximize their number of patrons.
* A professional wildlife assessment has said that the Zincton development will cause human-gizzly bear encounters, including incidents with mountain bikers and highway collisions, that will result in killing the bears (and/or humans). But the high-quality grizzly habitat as well as human food and garbage will continue attracting grizzlies from outlying areas, eventually depleting grizzly bears from a very wide area.
* Experience with other resort towns shows that Zincton could potentially drive up property values, rent and taxes so high in New Denver that lower income people could no longer afford to live there. New Denver residents could potentially be outnumbered by a permanent but transient influx of people.

Please consider supporting the following positions in your letter.

* The Zincton resort town, lodge and Crown land application should be rejected outright because:
* If the government will not reject the Zincton proposal outright, the Minister should order a major Environmental Assessment.
* There should be no further resort or lodge development in the Highway 31A Corridor. Accommodations for the area’s visitors should be located within New Denver or Kaslo.

To see the Valhalla Wilderness Society’s detailed submission to the government, along with photographs of the recreation land around Highway 31A, please go to <http://www.vws.org>.

You will also find the full wildlife assessment by registered professional biologist and grizzly bear expert Wayne McCrory.

Send your input right away to:

MountainResortsBranch@gov.bc.ca

with the subject line: Zincton Resort. You can also write:

Kelly Northcott

Mountain Resorts Branch

Min. of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations

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DEADLINE: Monday, June 22, 2020, 4:30 pm