

Inside Stevens

Friday, February 1, 2008

Mountain Planning

This past summer Stevens Pass submitted a new Master Development Plan (MDP) to the US Forest Service, the resort's landlord. Several years in the making, the plan is a conceptual blueprint for our future—a vision of what Stevens could become over the next 10-15 years. We hope that a significant portion of the projects described in the Master Plan will become a reality over this time frame.

It is apparent to almost everyone who skis or snowboards at Stevens that the resort needs expanded facilities—more terrain, additional lifts, larger base facilities, more parking and additional transit options. With the help of Brent Harley and Associates, a mountain resort planning firm from Whistler B.C., we have formulated a series of changes that could give us over 30% more terrain, increased lift capacity, on-mountain food facilities, better transportation and parking operations, a summer-time mountain biking operation, and more. Check under the “Mountain” section of this website, and then click on “Future Plan” for the full MDP, including descriptive maps—the three-D maps are especially informative.

We have asked the Forest Service that the detailed analysis of the Master Plan be done in phases. We hope this strategy will lead to more manageable, relevant and detailed environmental analysis, and also better match the time line of Stevens Pass priorities.

The first phase of the Master Plan will be a downhill mountain biking operation. It's a smaller version of the park at Whistler, and could include many of the same style of features—jumps, banked turns, etc. A series of trails will descend from the top of the Hogsback chairlift, advanced, intermediate and beginner, traversing across the terrain of Hogsback, SkyLine and Daisy. We hope the Forest Service will be able to initiate the public review process this spring. Ideally, we would like to begin construction in the summer of 2009. With this time line, we anticipate operations beginning in the summer of 2010.

The second phase of the Master Plan will be a series of winter-oriented projects. These will include a major terrain and lift addition tentatively called “Northern Exposure”—the forested area just east of Big Chief and its Showcase run. The new lift's lower terminal would be a short distance east of the far end of the overflow portion of parking lot E. Other phase two projects could include parking lot improvements, additional summer grooming of some of the existing front-side runs, a backside food facility, and perhaps more mountain biking trails.

All our proposals are required to undergo a comprehensive environmental review, including extensive public involvement, with the ultimate goal of Forest Service approval. At various stages of the review process we will be asking for public support, so look for postings on our website over the next year or so.

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Stevens Pass Mountain Planning