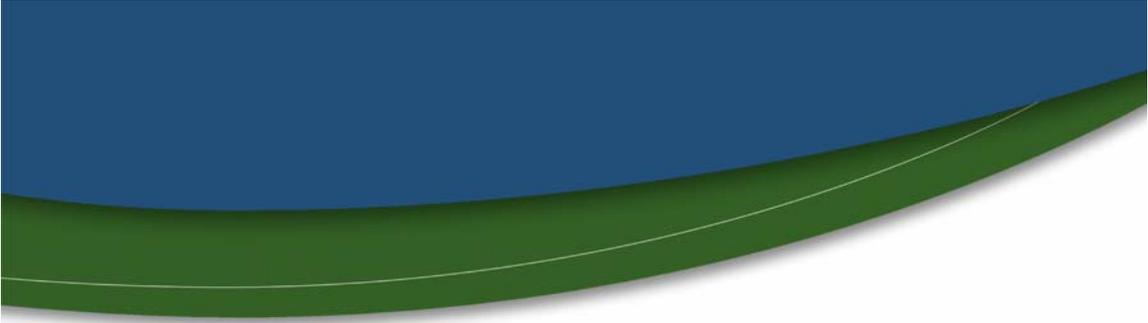


**Appendix C**  
**Report on Public Views and Interests**



**JUMBO GLACIER RESORT PROJECT  
REPORT ON PUBLIC VIEWS AND INTERESTS**

**Prepared by:  
Environmental Assessment Office**

**August 3, 2004**

## Preamble

This report has been prepared in accordance with section 6.3.9 of the procedural order issued under section 11 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* for the Jumbo Glacier Resort Project (the Project). The purpose of the Report on Public Views and Interests is to summarize and report on all written public comments received by the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) during the environmental assessment (EA) review of the Project.

The Project is located in one of the few areas in the East Kootenay that provides easy motorized access to the Purcell Mountains. Jumbo Creek valley and adjacent areas are popular backcountry area for hunting and recreational use such as hiking and picnicking in the summer months. The area, and the Project, have been the subject of ongoing land use debate for over ten years, despite the Kootenay/Boundary Land Use Plan allowing resort development in the area. As a result, the context of the EA review is one in which there is local public, political and First Nations division on the Project.

EA in British Columbia is an issue-driven technical review process that leads to an informed political decision. The consideration of public comments is an important part of the EA review process. Specific issues raised in submissions are considered as part of the technical review which is documented in the Assessment Report.

A public comment period conducted as part of an EA review should not be treated or considered as a referendum on a project. Public participants are self-selected and trusted to provide information that is complete and accurate. Further, there is generally not a high level of quality control built into the process for submitting public comments.

The number of submissions that express support for or concerns regarding a given project should not be considered to represent polling or survey data. Such data has no statistical validity or measurable levels of confidence associated with the degree of project acceptability. At best, this type of information is only indicative of the general nature and extent of public views and interests. In order to make this information more useful, it has (for February 13 to April 13, 2004 formal public comment period only) been put in the context of the response rate of specific communities and regions (see 2.1.3.4, Figure 8 to Figure 11).

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## 1. Background

### 1.1. The Project

Glacier Resorts Ltd. (the Proponent) proposes a year round ski resort in Jumbo Creek valley, located in the Purcell Mountain Range approximately 55 km west of Invermere, British Columbia.

At full build-out, the proposed \$450 million the Project would include an estimated 104 hectare (ha) resort base area consisting of a hotel with approximately 6,250 bed units (which includes 750 bed units for staff accommodation), condominium vacation homes, and associated amenities for the resort community. The Controlled Recreation Area (CRA) which includes areas licensed for ski runs and connecting territory, would encompass approximately 5,925 ha and includes lift-serviced access to several nearby glaciers at an elevation of up to approximately 3,400 metres. The Project would provide approximately 3,750 person years of construction employment and create 750 to 800 permanent full-time jobs.

### 1.2. Environmental Assessment Review Process

Since the environmental assessment (EA) review of the Project began in 1995, the following list of activities have been undertaken:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
June 1995	EA Application Filed by Glacier Resorts Ltd.
<b>July 15 to September 28, 1995</b>	<b>75-day Public Comment Period on Application</b>
December 1996	Draft Project Support Specifications prepared by the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Project Committee
<b>December 13, 1996 to February 20, 1997</b>	<b>60-day Public Comment Period on the Draft Project Report Specifications</b>
May 1998	Final Project Report Specifications prepared by the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Project Committee
May 1998 to December, 2003	Glacier Resorts Ltd. conducts studies and compiles information required in response to the Final Project Report Specifications
December 2002	Project transitioned for review under the new <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> (2002)
December 30, 2003	Project Report completed by Glacier Resorts Ltd. and submitted to the EAO
January 27, 2004	EAO accepts the Project Report for review
February 5, 2004	EAO 180-day Review Period on the Project Report begins
<b>February 13 to April 13, 2004</b>	<b>60-day Public Comment Period on the Project Report</b>
June 28, 2004	EAO accepts the Project Report Supplement (Migratory and Non-migratory Birds) for review
<b>July 1 to 9, 2004</b>	<b>9-day Public Comment Period on the Project Report Supplement</b>
August 3, 2004	Assessment Report referred to Ministers.

### 1.3. Public Consultation

#### 1.3.1 EAO Activities

The main goals of public consultation in the EA process are:

- to ensure an open and accountable review process;
- to provide notification and information to the public at an early stage in the planning of proposed reviewable projects;
- to ensure that there is adequate public input into the identification and resolution of concerns and issues raised with respect to proposed projects and their potential effects; and,
- to ensure that local public and community-level information, knowledge and concerns contribute to both the project design process of the proponent and the decision making process of the government.

For the Jumbo Glacier Resort Project, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has participated in the following forums for public review and input into the EA review process:

- public meetings (1995)
- the establishment and operation of a Public Advisory Committee (1996-1998)
- public open houses (2004)
- public review and comment periods on:
  1. the Project Application (1995)
  2. the Draft Project Report Specifications (1996/1997)
  3. the Project Report (2004)
  4. the Project Report Supplement (2004)
- access to project review information through the EAO's Project Information Centre online at [www.eao.gov.bc.ca](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca).
- maintenance of local information outlets at libraries at Invermere, Cranbrook, Nelson, Argenta and Silverton, as well as at the government agent's office in Kaslo.

#### 1.3.2 Proponent Activities

The Proponent is responsible for presenting the features of a proposed development. During the EA review, they have designed and implemented a public consultation program that has included:

- holding public open houses and more structured public meetings in various communities;
- offering to hold on-on-one meetings with identified public interest groups which have a known interest in the project; and,
- accommodating requests from public interest groups and organizations which approach the proponent to discuss the project.

As well, the Proponent has opened a Project Information Centre in Invermere and established a website ([www.jumboglacierresort.com](http://www.jumboglacierresort.com)) as two additional measures to communicate with the public and to provide access to information.

#### 1.3.3 Adequacy of Consultation

The December 13, 1996 document titled *Assessment of the Adequacy of Measures Being Implemented for Public and First Nations Notification, Access to Information and Consultation*

reviewed the consultation activities to that point in the review and determined that they were satisfactory (Appendix A).

On January 28, 2004, pursuant to section 6.3.1 of the Procedural Order issued under section 11 of the *Environmental Assessment Act*, the EAO reviewed the Public Consultation Program described in the Project Report (Volume 1, Section A.8). The EAO concluded that the past and proposed public consultation activities were adequate for the purpose of reviewing the additional information required to complete the EA review and required the Proponent to conduct the proposed Public Consultation Program outlined in the Project Report, as well as satisfy some additional requirements (Appendix B).

A summary of the Proponent's consultation activities is provided in Appendix C.

## 2. Written Public Comments

This section of the report summarizes written public comments on key project documents produced during the EA review process. Since July 1995, public comments have been received both inside and outside the following formal public comment periods:

- Public Comment Period on the Project Application July 15 to September 28, 1995 (75 days)
- Public Comment Period on the Draft Project Report Specifications December 18, 1996 to February 20, 1997 (60 days)
- Public Comment Period on the Project Report February 13 to April 13, 2004 (60 days)
- Public Comment Period on the Project Report Supplement July 1 to 9, 2004 (9 days)

There has been considerable and sustained interest in the Project throughout the EA review process. The purpose of each formal comment period is to elicit feedback on specific information related to a particular phase of the EA review. The Project Report (2004) represents the most current design of the Project; written public comments received during the review of this document best represent the existing state of public views and interests. Reporting on public views and interests focuses on this period (February 13-April 13, 2004), the analysis of which is the most detailed and comprehensive. The analysis of earlier public comments is more general in nature and has been included to provide an indication of the sustained level of interest in the Project.

### 2.1. Formal Public Comment Periods

#### 2.1.1 Public Comments on the Application (July 15, 1995 to September 28, 1995)

##### 2.1.1.1 Background

The Project Application was submitted to the Environmental Assessment Office on June 30, 1995 by Glacier Resorts Ltd.

The EAO established a 75-day formal written public comment period to provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the Application and to ensure that all relevant issues relating to the project were identified and addressed as part of the EA review process.

The public was notified about the Application through announcements in community papers, and the report was available for review at satellite document repositories throughout the project study area. Written submissions were received by the EAO during the 75-day public comment period.

### 2.1.1.2 Number of Submissions

The EAO received 324 unique submissions from identifiable individuals (including 4 petitions, each counted as one submission (see 2.1.1.4 Petitions)). An analysis of the geographical distribution of comments received during this period (1995) was not conducted.

### 2.1.1.3 Public Views and Interests

The following presents an overview of key issues derived from written comments during the 75-day comment period on the Jumbo Glacier Resort Project Application. There has been no attempt to substantively revise or correct (where inaccurate) the manner in public issues have been represented. A detailed summary of public issues and Project Committee responses is attached as Appendix D.

## I General Issues

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### *Review Process*

### *Land Use Planning*

### *Sustainability*

In regard to the actual review process, there was concern expressed that the public has little or no influence on whether the project should continue. There was a strong perception that the public is alienated from the process through use of highly technical and somewhat misleading language.

The need for proper integration with community values and findings of local planning processes such as the East Kootenay CORE table was noted as essential. It was further emphasized that regional sustainability was a priority without compromising the area's economic or environmental future.

## II Specific Project Design Issues

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### *Resort Configuration*

### *Glacier Skiing*

### *Waste Management*

### *Site Access/Access Road*

### *Electricity Supply*

In terms of the proposed resort configuration, there was a preference for a reduced resort development to minimize the footprint on the environment.

A number of respondents were concerned with glacier ablation impacting the overall glacier ski potential. Specific concerns were raised regarding the use of explosives, bulldozing and the use of salt or fertilizers.

Concerns were expressed with regard to waste management particularly in an alpine/sub alpine environment. Specific concerns were raised in regard to the sewage treatment plant operations, Invermere's landfill site capacity, liquid and solid waste impacts on fisheries and surrounding watersheds.

Concerns were raised regarding site access and use of the access road from a maintenance and overall use perspective. Protection

of wildlife was viewed as a priority by a number of respondents. Forest fire risk and the potential for avalanches was a concern with regard to road access and public safety.

The visual, ecological and financial impact of transmission line routes to the proposed development were raised as concerns.

### III Environmental Management Issues

<i>Environmental Impact Studies – General</i>	A few respondents noted that the Application does not adequately address the actual impact of the project on the environment including the areas beyond Jumbo Creek. Respondents noted the need for substantiated plans for mitigation of impacts and ongoing monitoring.
<i>Water Management</i>	
<i>Air Quality</i>	
<i>Fish and Wildlife Resources</i>	
<i>Wilderness Character of Area</i>	Concerns were noted related to water quantity and quality impacts that may accompany the proposed development. Specific concerns were noted over potential reduced water flows and the acquisition of potable water. Concerns were also expressed related to accumulated air pollution in the valley as a result of further development and activity.
<i>Grizzly bears</i>	Protection of the existing fish and wildlife resources was of considerable interest to many respondents. Maintaining the Columbia River wetlands was a priority along with protecting potentially threatened species and the existing wildlife corridors. Grizzly bear protection was of considerable interest.
	A priority was placed by many respondents on maintaining the wilderness character of the area. The need for monitored and controlled growth of the proposed development was emphasized along with protecting the area for the current recreational users (particularly those experiencing the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy).

### IV Economic Issues

<i>Project Feasibility/Clientele</i>	A number of respondents raised concerns related to the financial viability of the project and the need for performance guarantees.
<i>Public Sector Costs</i>	Some concern was expressed as to the Proponent's perceived limited experience in operating a ski resort. A number of respondents were concerned about the potential financial risks to the public sector with direct reference to avalanche control, search and rescue, access road maintenance and fire management.
<i>Effect on Local Economy and Business Opportunities</i>	Many respondents were supportive of the project and could foresee economic and employment benefits of the development in the area particularly in the tourism sector.

### V. Social and Community Issues

<i>First Nations</i>	From a First Nations perspective, a few respondents were concerned about the potential impact the land claims negotiation and settlement process may have on the proposed development.
<i>Impacts on Columbia Valley Communities</i>	
<i>Community Services</i>	The potential impact on the quality of life in the Columbia Valley communities was raised as a concern by a number of respondents. Specifically, respondents were concerned about road/air
<i>Employment</i>	
<i>Community Character and</i>	

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<i>Direction</i>	transportation impacts, including noise and congestion.
<i>Displacement of Local Interests</i>	<p>The impacts of the proposed development on community services including emergency services, local health resources, educational facilities, and policing were of concern to a number of respondents.</p> <p>A number of respondents welcomed the anticipated year-round employment opportunities that could potentially accompany the resort development. However, there was some concern that the remuneration packages would be low.</p> <p>There was concern expressed that the Kootenay region will lose its reputation as a genuine wilderness destination and that its carefree lifestyle and character would diminish. A number of respondents were concerned with the potential for increase in local crime related activities with the attraction of a transient workforce.</p> <p>The potential displacement of local interests for ‘foreign’ interests was raised as a concern. However, a few respondents voiced interest in accommodating the proposed development in the valley in order to stimulate the current economic base.</p>

#### 2.1.1.4 Petitions

The content of each of the four petitions received was as follows. No effort was made to identify duplicate signatures. Signatories are self-selected and trusted to provide information that is complete and accurate.

*“We are a few neighbours on the West Arm of Kootenay Lake who oppose the introduction of a new ski area into the Kootenays. Development on the magnitude which has been proposed for the Jumbo Pass area would profoundly affect our lives. As we and our families have watched the steady march of development in the Kootenays for the past 100 years, we have come to realize that there comes a time when one does not wish Nelson, Balfour, Kaslo or Willow Point to go the way of Squamish or Whistler.”*

**11 signatures**

*“We, the undersigned, do not want the Provincial Government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort.”*

**733 signatures collected by the  
Jumbo Creek Conservation Society**

*“Under the auspices of this Association, I support the development proposal for Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort.”*

**95 signatures collected by the  
Association for the Protection and Enjoyment of the Kootenays (APEK)**

*“...Most of us are in the 20-30 age range and are active participants in outdoor sports here in the Kootenay area. Almost all of us have grown up in the Kootenays and would like to see its beauty preserved for ourselves and for our young students. We have 6 concerns regarding the Jumbo Pass Ski Resort ... Please, if nothing else, place the decisions of the Jumbo Pass area in the hands of the community.”*

**12 signatures collected by  
Students in the East Kootenay Elementary Teacher Education Program**

## 2.1.2 Public Comments on the Draft Project Report Specifications (December 18, 1996 to February 20, 1997)

### 2.1.2.1 Background

The Draft Project Report Specifications was prepared by the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Project Committee and issued by the EAO in December 1996. The material comprising the draft specifications was assembled from public feedback received on the Application during a public comment period that extended from July 10 to September 28, 1995, and also from Project Committee members and other government agencies. The document was made available to the public on December 19, 1996, and an official 60-day public comment period was issued from January 13, 1997 to February 12, 1997. Due to a large volume of submissions received the week following February 12, 1997, the public comment period was extended to February 20, 1997 to include these comments.

The purpose of the 60-day public comment period on the Draft Project Report Specifications was to seek public input on the material presented and to assist in determining the need for additional studies and information.

On July 15, 1997, the EAO issued a document entitled *Analysis of Public Submissions Received During Jumbo Glacier Draft Project Report Specifications Public Comment Period December 18, 1996 – February 20, 1997* (Appendix E).

### 2.1.2.2 Number of Submissions

The EAO received 350 unique submissions from identifiable individuals (including 5 petitions, each counted as one submission (see 2.1.2.5 Petitions)).

### 2.1.2.3 Geographical Distribution of Submissions

Based on the 346 submissions analyzed (petitions excluded), written submissions were received from the following identifiable locations<sup>1</sup> (Figure 1).

- 73 submissions (23%) from the East Kootenay; including 50 submissions from Invermere/Panorama/Windermere, 7 submissions from Cranbrook, 6 submissions from Fairmont Hot Springs, and 7 submissions from Radium Hot Springs/Edgewater;
- 190 submissions (60%) from the West Kootenay, including 80 submissions from Nelson, 40 submissions from Argenta/Kaslo, 12 submissions from Winlaw and 12 submissions from Creston;
- 21 (7%) from the rest of BC; and,
- 34 (10%) from the rest of Canada and the world.

Sixty-six submissions made explicit comments with respect to the Draft Project Report Specifications. Three-hundred and nine submissions expressed various degrees of opposition to the Project, while 8 submissions expressed support for the Project. Twenty-eight submissions did not specifically state support for, or opposition to, the Project (Figure 2).

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<sup>1</sup> The place of origin could not be determined for 27 submissions.

Figure 1. Geographical distribution of written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period (n=318) established for the review of the Draft Project Report Specifications (December 18, 1996 to February 20, 1997).

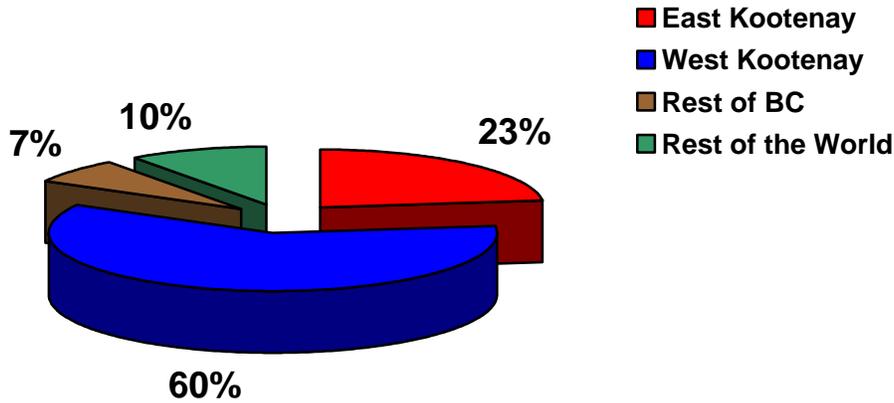
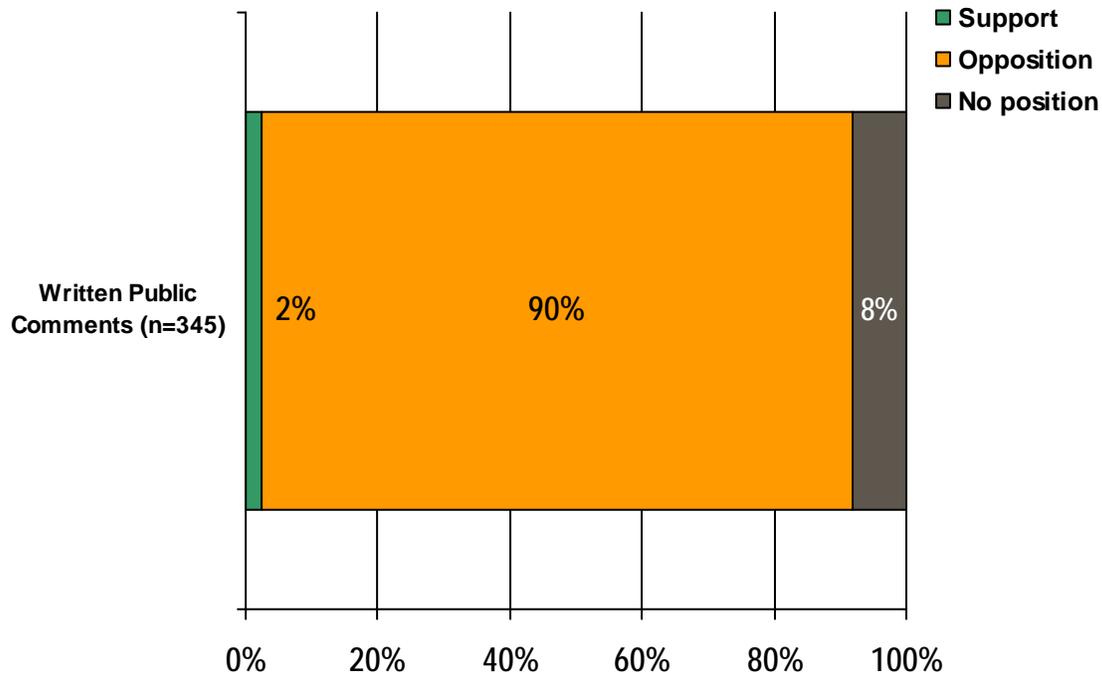


Figure 2. Summary of public views on the Project stated in written public submissions (n=345) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Draft Project Report Specifications (December 18, 1996 to February 20, 1997). The number of submissions that expressed project support or opposition should not be considered to represent polling or survey data. Such data has no statistical validity or measurable levels of confidence associated with the degree of project acceptability.



#### 2.1.2.4 Public Views and Interests

An overview of key issues derived from written comments during the 60-day comment period on the Jumbo Glacier Resort Draft Project Report Specifications is presented below. There has been no attempt to substantively revise or correct (where inaccurate) the manner in which public issues have been represented. The issues are summarized in the following categories:

- I General Issues
- II Specific Project Design Issues
- III Environmental Management Issues
- IV Social and Economic Issues

A detailed summary of all issues and responses during this comment period is available in the document *Responses to Public Comments as Flagged in July 4, 1997 Chart: Tabulation of Public Comments Received during Public Comment Period on Draft Project Report Specifications – December 18, 1996 to February 20, 1997* in Appendix F.

#### I General Issues

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<b>Studies in general</b>	Respondents requested that consideration be given to European studies showing the environmental impact of similar projects. As well, it was noted that the Proponent adhere to strict guidelines regarding the collection and analysis of data for Project studies. Respondents expressed concern about the Proponent's definition of sustainable development and requested documentation of its green policy.
<b>Process</b>	It was requested that the Project Specifications include a summary of the application of the EA outlining the project committee rationale, relationship to the public advisory committee and the general public, and the government's policy regarding land stewardship. Respondents also requested disclosure of all documents. Some respondents were concerned about a perceived lack of federal/provincial review coordination. There was also concern regarding the composition of the PAC. First Nations concerns included the need to clarify the main goals of the First Nations and the lack of participation by the Sinixt (a group claiming to be descendants of the Arrow Lakes Indian Band).
<b>Project viability</b>	Respondents were concerned that the Phase 1 development would be too small to attract visitors. It was requested that concerns about the Project's viability be addressed by determining the present and future market for summer skiing, acquiring summer and winter snowfall data, compiling a complete report on costs to taxpayer, and exploring alternative resort locations. Respondents also expressed an interest in how the resort would be decommissioned if it failed.

#### II Specific Project Design Issues

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<b>Project Plan/Description</b>	There was a request for a detailed project plan description. As well, several respondents expressed concern that the project study area did not address areas of impact beyond the Resort Development, including: a wilderness corridor connecting the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy to the north; wildlife that range further than the proposed park boundaries, the area west of Jumbo Pass, the Glacier Creek, Tenise Creek and Horsethief Creek drainages, and the Lake of the Hanging Glacier.
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<b>Access/Utility Corridor</b>	It was perceived that the avalanche hazards along the access road and utilities transmission routes were understated. Also, respondents were interested in the extent to which the existing access and utilities corridors would be modified, and requested that the width be kept to a minimum.
<b>Specific Technical Resort Design</b>	Concern was noted for perceived ice loading, wind exposure, snow creep and avalanches on lift line towers. As well, respondents raised the potential requirement for special carriers for water, food, fuel and garbage.
<b>Water and Waste Management</b>	Respondents requested that the potential nutrient impact be assessed for the entire project, including equestrian activities and the golf course, in order to address concerns about the potential for nutrient runoff into local water supplies. Waste management concerns centred around the environmental impacts associated with the potential need for a larger landfill, and potential problems with bears attracted to the waste management site. It was requested that fuel storage sites be identified and that a spill contingency plan be developed. Respondents asked that consideration be given to sewer requirements for the entire project rather than Phase 1 alone. Also of concern was the Project requirement of sourcing 20l/s of water.

### III Environmental Management Issues

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<b>Air Quality/Climate Change</b>	Respondents noted their concern about the burning of fossil fuels associated with resort operation and road transportation. The potential for an increase in greenhouse gas emissions was also raised, as was the validity of ski resorts given global warming. Respondents requested that consideration be given to the potential production of PM <sub>10</sub> and banning the use of wood burning stoves and fireplaces.
<i>Cumulative effects</i>	There was a concern about the perceived absence of a cumulative effects assessment of the Project. Concern focused on the potential impacts to wildlife, plants and communities, as well as the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy.
<i>Grizzly bears</i>	Concern for Grizzly bears included the potential loss of habitat, reduced population, weakened genetic viability, restriction of movement, and conflicts with humans. It was requested that a minimum three-year Grizzly bear study be undertaken using a cumulative effects assessment. Included with this request was that the specifications for this study coincide with the priorities identified by the province's Grizzly bear strategy. Also of concern was the perceived unmonitored authority granted to the Proponent in determining the scope of studies and mitigation extent with regard to Grizzly bears.
<b>Fish and Wildlife Resources</b>	General concerns noted for both fish and wildlife included potential habitat modification from changes to the natural landscape and a concern for species sensitive to human disturbance. It was requested that baseline inventories be implemented, including field studies of federally and provincially listed species of concern. It was also requested that the Proponent document the experience of other resorts with regard to fish and

wildlife management.

Concerns specific to fish included the potential impact to blue-listed species habitat, particularly the Bull trout and Westslope Cutthroat trout populations in the Jumbo drainage, the potential impact on fish spawning in the Purcell Mountain creeks and the potential impact on winter habitat from water demands and snowmaking.

Wildlife concerns included: the perception that the wildlife study area was insufficient; potential destruction of habitat leading to reduced populations and low genetic diversity; potential impact from an increase in human activity; perceived insufficient analysis on small mammals and birds; and, a perceived absence of new wildlife studies and acceptable habitat mitigation plans. It was requested that provincial authorities govern the direction of wildlife management and that the Proponent be required to properly document wildlife enhancement plans and provide a quantitative analysis of potential wildlife impacts.

#### IV Social and Economic Issues

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*Socio Economic Impacts* Requests were made for an ecological-economic-social total cost assessment of the Project, including future developments and the potential cumulative impact with the Panorama expansion. Of particular concern was the perceived need to consider infrastructure costs. Employment issues of concern included the proportion of direct employment by local and regional people and the potential burden on the accommodation supply in the Columbia Valley. There was also a concern about the potential impact of the Project on backcountry wilderness associated businesses and the perceived impact on the integrity of the guiding territory in the Toby and Jumbo drainages. It was felt that consideration should be given to the strong mountaineering interest in the area such as the climbers who use the Farnham Creek headwaters. It was requested that potential noise impacts beyond the Project study area also be addressed.

#### **Other Related Issues**

There were a number of issues raised that do not reflect the scope of this comment period (i.e., review of the Draft Project Report Specifications) but are consistent with those raised and documented in the previous public comment period for the Application. These related issues fall under the following categories:

- decision-making context
- proponent-led studies
- land use plan management objectives
- intervener funding
- snow management on the glacier
- glacier impact
- wildlife (Grizzly bears, Mountain goats)
- legible communication materials
- market assessments
- wilderness character of the area
- costs to taxpayers
- impacts on Columbia Valley communities

- project viability
- expansion of study area
- air transport noise/volume
- safety
- emergency risk analyses (e.g. fire and ambulance services)
- waste management
- water quantity and quality
- impact on local economy and business opportunities
- project feasibility
- access road costs

### 2.1.2.5 Petitions

While the vast majority of submissions were letters, e-mails, etc. received from individuals or families, five of the submissions were petitions. Four of the petitions indicated opposition to the project, and contained 1,490 signatures. One report, signed by 78 students from Selkirk College (which, due to the numbers of signatures, is being reported as a petition), while taking no formal position on the project, was generally positive with respect to the prospects for development.

The content of each of the five petitions was as follows. No effort was made to identify duplicate signatures. Signatories are self-selected and trusted to provide information that is complete and accurate.

*“...We, the undersigned, do not want the provincial government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort...”*

**294 signatures**

*“...We, the undersigned, are completely opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Resort proposed for the sensitive alpine of the Purcell Mt. Range in southern interior BC, Canada. We will not use, or support in any way, the proposed mega city which will destroy the wild habitat - home to grizzlies, mountain goats, wolverines, woodland caribou, Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Bull Trout and the declining Harlequin Ducks to name just a few. The entire area is extensively used by low impact, non-intrusive recreationalists and we insist the government say NO to the proposed resort...”*

**484 signatures**

*“... We, the undersigned, do not want the Provincial Government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort. 2. We, the undersigned, are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Development...”*

**572 signatures**

*“...We, the undersigned, oppose resort building and heli recreation in the Jumbo Creek Valley and the entire Jumbo/Glacier area including...Monica Meadows, the Horseshoe Glacier, the McBeth Ice fields and the Tenise Creek drainage...”*

**140 signatures**

The report submitted by Selkirk College students focused on three main points - fair consideration, comprehensive analysis, and legitimate analysis of the project. The report noted that:

- the Project should be given fair, objective and careful consideration, and should be judged on the basis of its physical feasibility as a ski area and its financial feasibility;
- the developers should show what the Project will create, how it will create this, and how BC will be affected;
- the draft specifications are comprehensive, and will address this;
- there is concern that the specifications have the potential to go beyond reasonable limits;
- there is concern that tourism development will be discouraged if the EA process goes well beyond judging a project on its own internal merits;
- the approval process for a project should not be a forum to address environmental and philosophical concerns that occur across our society;
- some opponents may well oppose the project, no matter how strenuous are the reporting requirements, and no matter how beneficial the project might be; and
- the process should not serve a narrowly focused coalition of anti-development groups.

**78 signatures**

### **2.1.3 Public Comments on the Project Report (February 13, 2004 to April 13, 2004)**

#### **2.1.3.1 Background**

On January 27, 2004, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) accepted for review the Project Report that contained the additional information required to complete the assessment of potential environmental, economic, social, heritage and health effects of the Project, as outlined by the Final Project Report Specifications.

Upon receiving the Project Report on February 5, 2004, the EAO had up to 180 days to complete the review. Specific review activities included:

- the technical review of the Project Report by government agencies and First Nations, primarily through the operation of a Technical Advisory Committee to advise the assessment of potential effects;
- the operation of Technical Working Groups to assist with the assessment of specific issues;
- public notification and access to review material;
- a public involvement process including open houses and a 60-day period for public comment on the Project Report, and the preparation of a *Report on Public Views and Interests*;
- the preparation and submission of official responses to the Project by regional and local governments (the *Local Government Response Documents*); and
- the Proponent's responses to comments received, and to technical issues raised that fall within the scope of the assessment; and the preparation of an *Assessment Report* for Ministers.

A 60-day public review and comment period on the Project Report occurred between February 13 and April 13, 2004. The document was made accessible to the public through the EAO electronic Project Information Centre (*ePIC*) accessible through [www.eao.gov.bc.ca](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca). The Project Report was also available at libraries in Invermere, Cranbrook, Nelson and Argenta, as well as at the Government Agent's Office in Kaslo and the municipal office in Silverton.

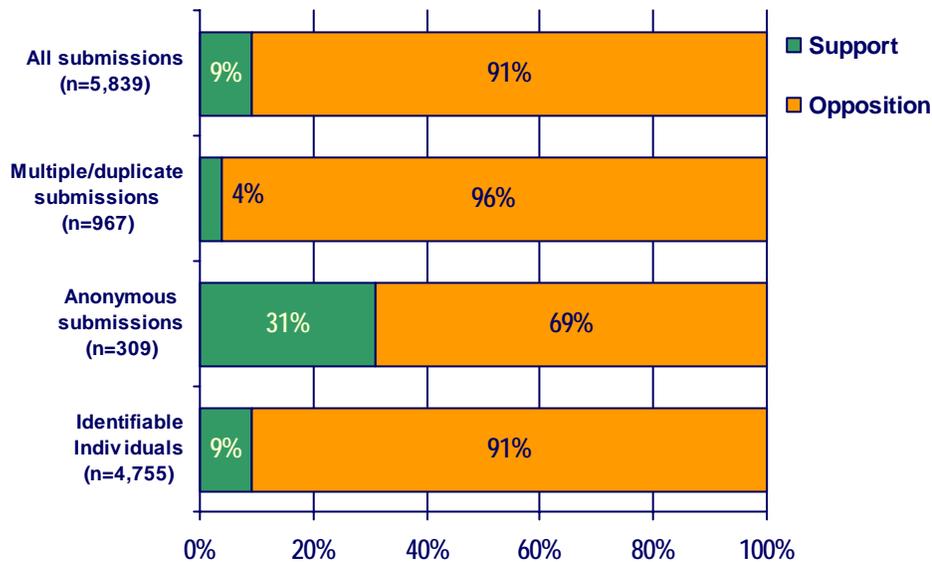
Public open houses were held in Invermere (March 10, 2004) and Nelson (March 11, 2004) in conjunction with the 60-day public comment period established for the Environmental Assessment Review. The purpose of the open houses was to effectively communicate the Project to the public so that they have a clear context within which to prepare comments.

### 2.1.3.2 Number of Submissions

The EAO received 5,839 submissions from 4,755 identifiable individuals (excluding petitions)<sup>2</sup> (Figure 3). Submissions included original letters, 11 different form letters, public open house comment forms, postcards, and 3 petitions (see 2.1.3.5 Petitions).

The EAO received 967 submissions that were duplicates or multiple submissions from the same identifiable individual. In addition, there were 309 anonymous submissions which were excluded from the analysis.

Figure 3. Overview of public views on the Project stated in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004). The number of submissions that expressed project support or opposition should not be considered to represent polling or survey data. Such data has no statistical validity or measurable levels of confidence associated with the degree of project acceptability.



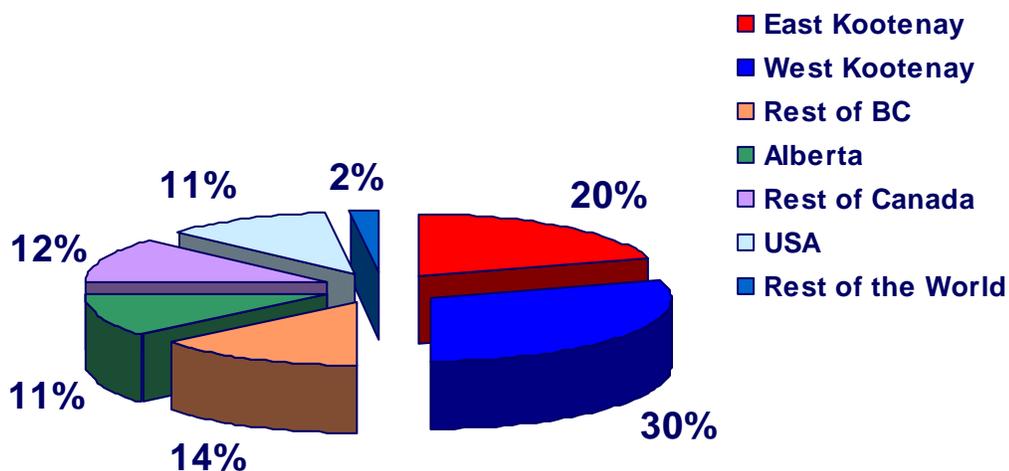
### 2.1.3.3 Geographical Distribution of Submissions

Written submissions were received from the following locations (Figure 4).

- 954 (20%) from the East Kootenay;
- 1,457 (30%) from the West Kootenay;
- 647 (14%) from the rest of BC; and,
- 1,737 (36%) from the rest of Canada and the world.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this analysis, an identifiable individual is one for whom the first name (or initial), last name, and place of origin (city, country) is known.

Figure 4. Geographical distribution of identifiable individuals (n=4,755) who submitted written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during the formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).



#### 2.1.3.4 Public Views and Interests

There was a high level of public interest in the Project during the review of the Project Report, as reflected by the attendance at public open houses in Invermere and Nelson (380 and 890, respectively) and by the number of written public comments received. While some submissions contained comments on material presented in the Project Report, many submissions were form letters and/or expressions of project support or opposition. Of the 4,755 identifiable individuals who responded to the invitation to comment on the Project Report, 414 (9%) expressed support for the Project while 4,339 (91%) expressed concerns or opposition (Figure 3). While this represents a relatively large number of submissions during an EA review process, it also represents a smaller percentage of opposition than is typically experienced (the EAO usually receives very few if any letters of support for projects under review).

Of those who expressed support for the Project, 39% were from the East Kootenay, 11% were from the West Kootenay, and 22% were from other parts of British Columbia (Figure 5). Of those who expressed opposition to the Project, 18% were from the East Kootenay, 33% were from the West Kootenay, and 13% were from other parts of British Columbia (Figure 6). The highest level of support for the Project was from the East Kootenay (17%), compared with 3% in the West Kootenay and 14% in other parts of British Columbia. This is likely due to the potential for local socio-economic benefits from the Project (Figure 7).

The preceding percentages of submissions expressing project support or opposition should not be treated or considered as a referendum or to represent polling or survey data. Such data has no statistical validity or measurable levels of confidence associated with the degree of project acceptability. At best, this type of information is only indicative of the general nature and extent of public views and interests of those who responded to the EAO's invitation to comment on the Project Report. In order to put this information in context, it has been analyzed in terms of the response rate of the East Kootenay (Figure 8), the West Kootenay (Figure 9), and the local communities of the District of Invermere (Figure 10) and the Village of Radium Hot Springs (Figure 11).

Figure 5. Geographical distribution of identifiable individuals who expressed support for the Project (n=414) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during the formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).

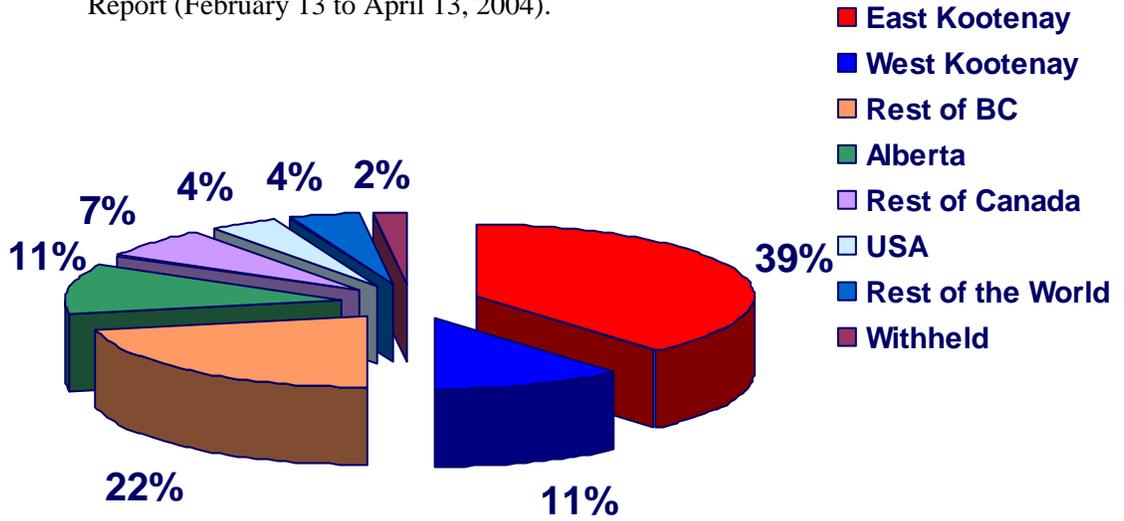


Figure 6. Geographical distribution of identifiable individuals who expressed opposition to the Project (n=4,339) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during the formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).

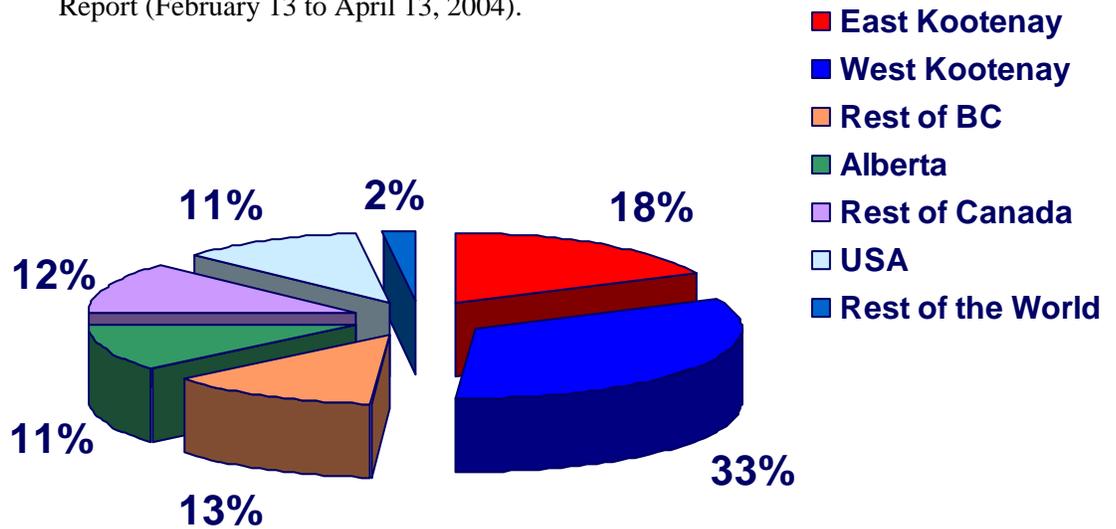


Figure 7. Regional summary of public views on the Project stated by identifiable individuals within British Columbia (n=3,100) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).

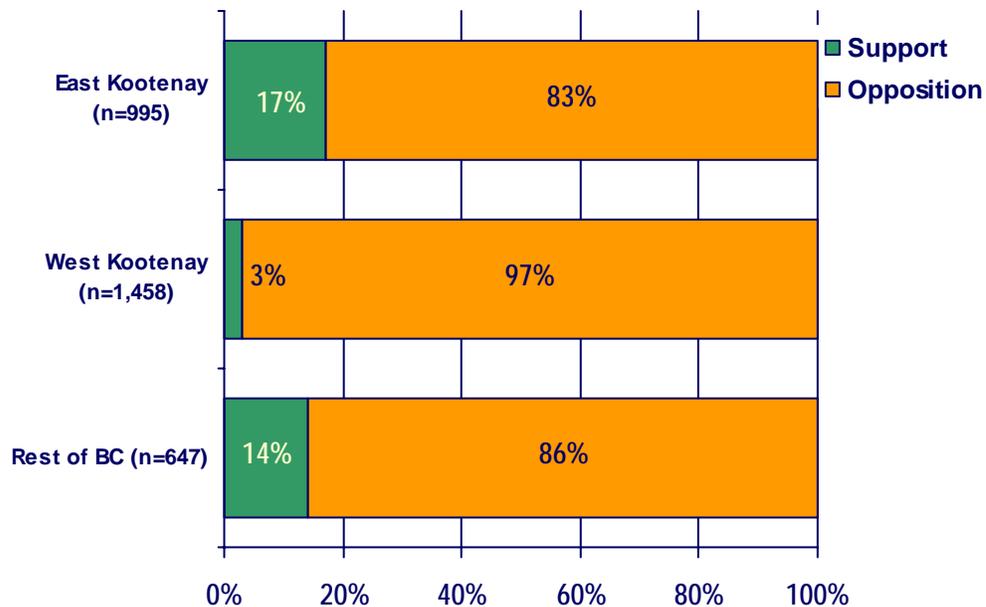
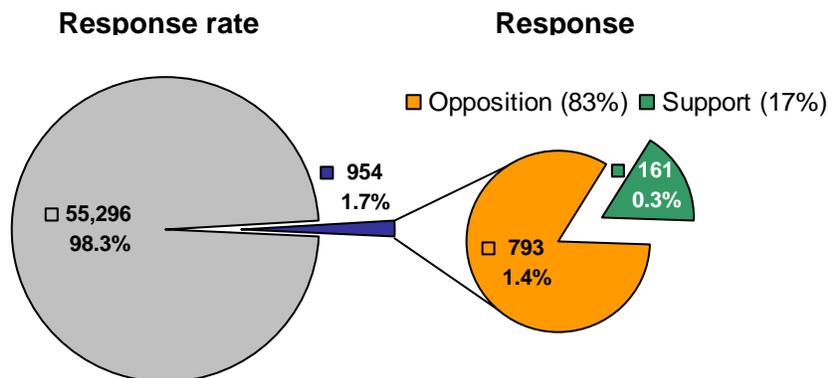


Figure 8. East Kootenay (population 56,291<sup>3</sup>) response rate (1.7%) and summary of public views on the Project stated by identifiable individuals (n=954) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).



<sup>3</sup> 2001 Census figures for the Regional District of East Kootenay.

Figure 9. West Kootenay (population 88,862<sup>4</sup>) response rate (1.6%) and summary of public views on the Project stated by identifiable individuals (n=1,457) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).

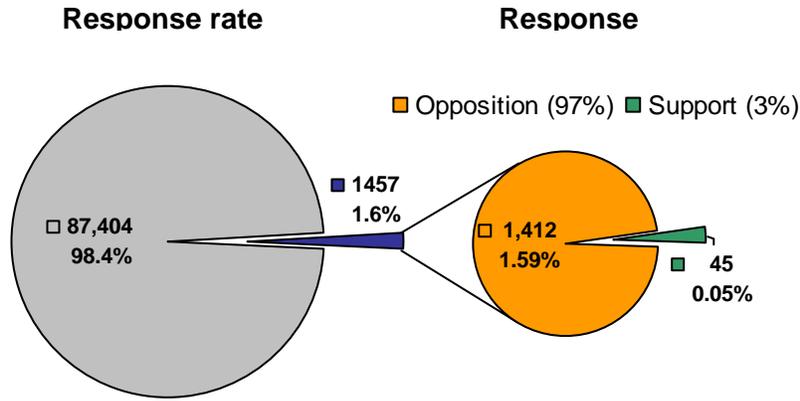
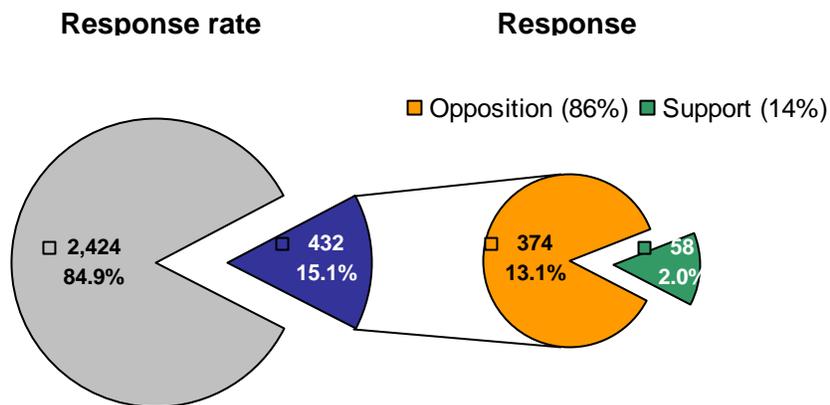


Figure 10. District of Invermere (population 2,858<sup>5</sup>) response rate (15%) and summary of public views on the Project stated by identifiable individuals (n=432) in written public submissions (excluding petitions) received during formal public comment period established for the review of the Project Report (February 13 to April 13, 2004).



<sup>4</sup> combined 2001 Census figures for the Regional District of Central Kootenay (57,019) and the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (31,843).

<sup>5</sup> 2001 Census figures for the District of Invermere.



### Local Government Response Documents

Local governments were invited to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee establish to advise the EAO, as well as to submit an official response to the Project. The District of Invermere (DOI), the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK), and the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) submitted review comments that were considered as part of the technical review process. Local Government Response Documents were received from the DOI, the Village of Radium Hot Springs, the RDEK, the RDCK and are presented in Appendix D of the Assessment Report. The responses they provided reflect differing viewpoints:

- the DOI is opposed;
- the Village of Radium Hot Springs is in favour;
- the RDEK decided not to comment on the Project in order to avoid compromising its objectivity on future land use decisions; and
- the RDCK expressed concerns about the Project if motorized access restrictions in adjacent drainages were required to mitigate impacts on grizzly bears. No such restrictions are being pursued.

### Key Issues

A summary of public comments received on the Project Report is presented below. There has been no attempt to substantively revise or correct (where inaccurate) the manner in public issues have been represented. Specific issues raised in submissions were considered as part of the technical review process as documented in the Assessment Report.

### Part A. General Reporting Requirements

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#### *Scope of the Project and its Review A.1*

Several technical professionals commented on the data sources and research methodology comprising the scientific bases for the Project studies. Reference was made to the socio-economic (e.g. employment statistics), environmental and technical studies (e.g. avalanche control estimates) that were perceived to use insufficient data for the development of mitigation measures. There was a concern that the Report inadequately interpreted data and failed to include more current studies that are available with respect to the Project area and potentially affected adjacent areas. Also of concern was the use of minimal sampling and aggregate data which may have resulted in inaccurate ecological interpretation. A comprehensive re-examination of proposed mitigation options was recommended.

A number of respondents were concerned that the scope/size of this Project will grow beyond the projected bed capacity noted in the Project documentation. From the public's perspective, there will be a need for the provincial government to enforce ongoing compliance and extensive monitoring of the Project for the long term to ensure the Proponent adheres to its stated commitments.

#### *Complying with the Project Report Specifications A.6*

One respondent commented that the Proponent's strategy of mitigating the science (evidence) before it is applied to the assessment of impacts is clearly at odds with a scientifically sound, objective, and transparent public impact assessment process. Other respondents were concerned with perceived inadequacies in documentation associated with the Jumbo Project.

*Land Use and Land  
Use Planning A.7*

There was a strong desire expressed to have the Project planning linked with the Regional District of East Kootenay's planning processes, given the complexities of the Project and the private company interests. It was further noted that the Proponent and the Province should be addressing local community interests in order to best derive the regional economic benefits prior to Project approvals being sought.

Many respondents referenced the recommendations of the Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan as well as the CORE Regional Land Use Plan and the need to adhere to such planning process findings. There was a request that a backcountry recreation land use plan be implemented before any tenures were issued. One individual raised the concern that the proposed development is incompatible with the spirit of this area's Special Management Zone designation that he believed precludes high intensity human development.

*Public and First  
Nations  
Consultations A.8*

***Public Consultations***

There were mixed reviews received on the format of the open house events. Some respondents liked the format and found the resource people to be very helpful and informative. Others would have preferred a public meeting with a presentation followed by a question-and-answer period. A few respondents were interested in knowing if the public input received during the comment period would be publicized.

There was some minor confusion at the events in terms of public understanding of the roles of the Proponent and the EAO. For future events, it was suggested that name tags be used to readily distinguish the Proponent from the government agencies present.

Some questioned the credibility of the process and felt that the outcome of this Project had already been determined. To address the issue of public approval many respondents suggested that a referendum be held at the local government level.

It was felt that the Proponent had not addressed its commitment to identifying and meeting with stakeholders in the West Kootenay area. Some respondents felt that their questions remained unanswered and expressed a desire to be kept informed on the progress and status of the process and findings. A few respondents inquired about applicable measures that they could take to stop the Project.

***First Nations Consultations***

A number of respondents questioned the extent of the consultation process involving the First Nations. It was perceived that the First Nations had not been consulted in a meaningful manner and that land claims – for which there was strong support – needed to be resolved prior to Project approval. There was also interest in knowing the

responses that had been received to date from the Shuswap Tribal Council as well as the Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council. The public was interested in knowing the extent of ongoing dialogue that occurs with Ktunaxa First Nations and the Sinixt group. As well, it was requested that the traditional use study and the First Nations socio-economic study be made available for public review. A recommendation was made that an Elders Advisory Group be established as part of the First Nations consultation process.

## Part B. Commercial Alpine Ski Policy (CASP) Process

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<i>Formal Proposal Review Under CASP Process and its relationship to EA Process B.2</i>	The ownership of the land occupied by the proposed resort and ski areas, as well as the maintenance roads remains unclear to some respondents.
<i>Assessment of Project Feasibility B.4</i>	There was a perception that the socio-economic impacts were not adequately addressed in the Project Report. Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the economic sustainability and feasibility of such a large-scale development in the area, given their belief that there had been a decline in the use of the existing local ski hills. The feasibility of a proposed four season operation was questioned by a number of respondents given skiing for the majority is a winter sport only. It was their view that the region could not sustain another ski development without further negative impact to existing ski areas. A number of respondents questioned the economic viability of the Project with reference to the findings of the Sno. Engineering economic feasibility report.

## Part C. Specific Technical Resort Design and Management Issues

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<i>Glacier Ablation Public Safety Glacier Management</i>	A number of respondents expressed interests in glacier ablation, public safety related to crevasses as well as glacier management.
	Concerns were raised by a number of respondents regarding the potential impact of climate change (i.e. glacial melt) on the proposed Project's viability. A concern was raised regarding the cumulative impact on the environment from excessive use of the glacial ecosystem. A number of respondents felt that more extensive study of glacier ablation was warranted. A few respondents questioned the science behind the Climate Change Fact Sheet (EAO). (C.1 – Snow Wastage and Glacier Ablation)
	Many local respondents felt that Commander Glacier would be difficult and dangerous to manage for skiing. (C.1.1) It was further emphasized that avalanche control was essential and the funding allocated by the Project Proponent was inadequate to meet these needs.

The need for sound glacier management was frequently stated as a

requirement. (C.2 Glacier Management) Specifically, concerns were expressed regarding the proposed use of snow cats and blasting techniques. Maintaining the integrity of the glacier was a key concern. A few respondents raised concerns regarding the threat of avalanches at the resort location and the need for an avalanche control program. (C.3 – Avalanche Control at the Resort). As well, the need for safety measures to protect the resort community as well as the wildlife population from avalanches was raised. (C.3)

In addition to the above issues, a number of respondents were concerned about public safety in the event of a wildfire at the resort given there is only one access road (C.4 – Wildfire Control at the Resort) Furthermore, there was reference to BC’s 2003 fire experience as well as the predictions for climate changes including drier periods and intensive fire seasons. The need to identify the responsible body for protecting the resort from such fires was articulated.

*Ski Lift Location and Design C.5* An alternative to the proposed mountain plan was submitted to reduce impacts on the core operating requirements and costs.

#### Part D. Environmental Management, Resource Management and Technical Issues

<i>General Environmental Concerns D.0</i>	Concerns were expressed regarding the need for rigorous ongoing mitigation efforts on behalf of the Proponent to protect and restore this ecologically sensitive area.
<i>Solid Waste D.1 (A)</i>	Establishing appropriate parameters for solid waste disposal was identified by a few respondents. There was concern that the lifespan of the Columbia Valley landfill site would be significantly reduced with the proposed development in place. As well, there was some concern that non-recyclable waste would be transported to the existing landfill site. It was noted that every effort should be made by the Proponent to minimize waste, through reuse and recycling.
<i>Liquid Waste Treatment and Disposal D.1 (B)</i>	Respondents raised several issues with regard to wastewater management. A specific concern was the disposal of suspended solids from the sewage treatment plant that are presently being trucked away. Respondents expressed an interest in how the suspended solids were being removed and were concerned about potential health impacts due to the proximity of sewage disposal fields to water courses. Respondents questioned the procedures that have been used to address sewage management from the perspective of the government’s ability to enforce compliance for wastewater treatment, and whether alternatives for disposal had been explored. It was requested that the Project address the residence time of both supply aquifers and aquifers that will receive wastewater. A broader concern was raised regarding the Project’s downstream impacts on the valued Columbia Wetlands and the development of a Spill Contingency Plan was recommended.

<i>Special Wastes and Fuel Storage Sites</i> D.1 (C)	There was concern that the use of explosives for avalanche control would leave toxic residues in extremely sensitive areas.
<i>Water Quality Issues</i> D.1 (D)	A number of respondents raised water quality issues from an environmental management perspective. There was concern that the proposed development would contribute significant amounts of effluent to the aquatic ecosystem of Toby Creek, in particular. As well, it was noted that the runoff, erosion and sedimentation from disturbed surfaces could be of concern during construction and operations. The potential use of salt at the resort was raised a number of times with regard to its potential impact on local water sources. A recommendation was made to conduct a soil survey in order to enable complete impact identification of road placements on riparian areas.
<i>Air Quality Issues</i> D.1(E)	A number of respondents raised concerns regarding the potential increase in air pollution as a result of the access road traffic.
<i>Water Supply</i> D.2 (A)	<p>Concern was expressed regarding the proposed level of groundwater extraction and how that potentially could impede the flow levels in streams, especially during winter, used by species such as the Westslope Cutthroat trout and Bull trout. A few respondents were concerned about the resort's water usage and the potential impacts on future water supply. Another concern was raised about the absence of information in the report about the linkage between ground water extraction, water quality due to waste water production and fish production.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Project Report address water demand estimates and groundwater impacts during maximum visitor capacity. It was also recommended that mitigation measures identify where the Project will source additional groundwater extraction, or other water.</p>
<i>Hydrology</i> D.2 (B)	<p>Respondents questioned the practice of discharging effluent into the ground, and expressed concerns about the volume of effluent exceeding the natural capacity of local soil conditions and local hydrology to accommodate the discharge.</p> <p>It was recommended that the Proponent ensure that mitigation measures provide for settling ponds for storm water runoff storage and treatment from a two-year storm event in light of soil and terrain conditions at the site.</p>
<i>Fisheries Resources</i> D.3 (A)	The quality of the fish and water assessments was questioned by a number of respondents, including environmental organizations, who noted the need for a comprehensive monitoring study for mitigation purposes. It was felt that the Proponent had not adequately detailed measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate all potential effects on fish

and fish habitat in accordance with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's "no net loss" policy. For example, it was noted that sampling procedures are incomplete, there are inconsistencies in fish data and there has not been any Project-specific fisheries resource work completed. It was also noted that the fisheries resource data is outdated, rudimentary and there are perceived inconsistencies, inaccuracies and omissions in the reporting of the data. It was requested that the Proponent conduct a detailed and comprehensive assessment to provide accurate, up-to-date information on densities, population abundance and structure movement, and habitat quality, especially for blue-listed species such as Bull trout, Westslope Cutthroat trout and the Yellowstone Cutthroat trout.

Concern was also expressed for maintaining the natural environment for specific fish species, including the Westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout. A general concern was raised regarding the overall impact of resort development on the fisheries resources in the adjacent river systems.

*Wildlife Resources  
D.3 (B)*

The impact of the proposed development on local and regional wildlife garnered considerable input. Some respondents requested that further field inventory be undertaken to stricter standards in order to document species-specific abundance and seasonal habitat use, to arrive at reliable measures of protection. It was also requested that these studies, and proposed protection measures, be made available for public review. Furthermore, it was suggested that potential mitigation issues be further evaluated using a cumulative effects assessment, and that detailed adaptive management and monitoring issues be addressed.

A few respondents noted the need for an assessment of potential impacts on the wolverine and the Least chipmunk as well as the Townsend Long-eared bats. It was noted that the Project Report failed to account for the potential impacts on reptiles and amphibians.

A concern regarding Mountain goats was raised with regard to disturbance and winter usage being underestimated in the Project Report. Also of concern was the potential for a decrease in the moose population due to roadkill and displacement from preferred habitat.

The preservation of the environment for other wildlife species such as wolverines, lynx, Mule deer, elk and Mountain caribou was also of interest. One comment referred specifically to the measures that would be taken to preserve all wildlife movement corridors in the Jumbo Valley.

*Grizzly Bears D.3  
(C)*

Many respondents wanted to ensure protection of the Grizzly bear for future generations. Furthermore, many felt that the stability of the bear population was already in question due to existing logging and

local development. The impact of the proposed avalanche management and future road traffic on denning bears were of concern. A number of respondents questioned the size of the Grizzly bear study area and felt that existing Proponent reports did not adequately address the overall status of the Grizzly bear habitat/population within the region and that the scientific study needs to be based on long-term collected data to be valid. Of specific concern was the current state of the regional Grizzly bear population fragmentation and the potential impact of the Project on the north-south connectivity of Grizzly bears in the central Purcell Mountains. There were inquiries made as to what measures the government would put in place (e.g. monitoring programs in perpetuity) to ensure there is no net loss of Grizzlies as a result of the development. It was recommended that probable “net impacts” to a viable Grizzly bear population and undesirable impacts to present and future resource users be addressed. Many respondents noted that access restrictions as a result of action taken to mitigate Grizzly bear impacts are unacceptable, given that it is the development that is the source of negative impact.

*Birds D.3 (D)*

A few respondents were concerned that the bird studies were not complete and noted that they were not convinced of the estimated impact that the development would have on bird populations. As well, it was noted that it was unclear whether adequate or appropriate surveys were conducted to conclude the absence of several species such as the Swainson’s hawk. A member of the public noted that there have been Peregrine falcon sightings in the Jumbo Valley as well as Northern Goshawk. Specific interest was expressed in protecting Spotted owls and the female Harlequin ducks. Overall, there was interest in protecting the Columbia River wetlands.

Concern was expressed about the late submission of the bird inventory work and felt that the public was being denied a reasonable window of time to review and comment on its findings.

Also of concern was Spruce grouse and Northern Goshawk habitat modification or loss from deforestation. Some respondents felt that the Proponent’s claim that no active nests would be disturbed by clearing was not valid as many bird nests are undetectable and occur at relatively high densities. Therefore, it was requested that no clearing or construction take place during the breeding season (early May to early July) to ensure that nests remain undisturbed.

The potential increase in corvids (jays and crows) from the increasing human presence and disturbance in the area was of concern as these species are nest predators that could depress the nesting success of local breeding birds.

*Threatened or  
Endangered Wildlife*

A number of respondents were interested in the identification of species at risk within the study area. There were questions regarding

<i>D.3 (E)</i>	the thoroughness of the fieldwork that had been completed in the Project area to determine the presence or absence of species at risk. It was noted that the Proponent had failed to comment on the Western toad, and that surveys had not been completed for the Least chipmunk and the Red-tailed chipmunk. Some respondents felt that there were too many threatened species to consider future development. It was also mentioned that there was too much reliance on B.C. Conservation Data Centre for listed species occurrence records to determine presence/absence and it was suggested that ground-level field surveys be undertaken.
<i>Wildlife Impacts of Utility and Access Corridors D.3 (F)</i>	The increased use of the access road was of concern to many respondents from a wildlife perspective. It was suggested that the road be closed from 10:00 pm to 5:00 am to protect wildlife movement. It was suggested that the existing wildlife connectivity corridors be maintained to restore Mountain caribou and other threatened species.
<i>Potential Human Conflicts with Wildlife D.3 (G)</i>	There was some anticipation the there would be an increase in human conflicts with wildlife, particularly bears. The need for an aggressive and mandatory bear awareness program was suggested in order to protect the bears.
<i>Impacts on Alpine Vegetation D.3 (H)</i>	Interest was expressed in obtaining additional information on the survey methodology used for identifying rare and endangered plant communities. Some respondents were concerned that the increased traffic from hiking and mountain biking by the clientele of the resort could result in further destruction of Monica Meadows.
<i>Forest Resources D.4</i>	It was noted that the Project Report does not mention the Engelmann Spruce Sub-alpine Fir (ESSF) biogeoclimatic zone that is reported to occur in the Jumbo valley.
<i>Harvestable Timber Impacts D.4 (A)</i>	Some questioned the accuracy/credibility of the Slocan Forest Products' statement that the impact of the Project on available forest land would be minimal. It was noted that forestry has been ongoing in the Project area and in adjacent areas for many years. As such it was questioned if the loss of revenue to the local economy has been determined - including the substitution of high income forest sector employment for low income tourist sector employment - if the forestry operations are curtailed.
<i>Mineral Resources D.5</i>	Concern was expressed with regard to the Project destroying access into an area where further mineral exploration could lead to many new mines and local employment opportunities.
<i>Agricultural</i>	There was some concern expressed that the proposed Project would

*Resources D.6*

alter the historical use of the area by ranchers, as well as trappers and local recreationalists. There was some concern that the proposed development would result in increased land prices region-wide which would affect the ranching communities' ability to lease or purchase land for expansion.

## Part E. Socio-Economic and Community Issues

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*Enhancing Local  
Socio-Economic  
Benefits E.3*

There were mixed responses received as to whether the communities would or would not benefit economically from the proposed development.

A number of local residents noted the social and economic benefits of bringing a year-round resort to the area. The residents acknowledged the employment opportunities for the local residents and the increases in the tax base that would contribute to the overall local economy. The need for sustaining the local economy was of interest to the Invermere business community.

*Economic  
Development  
Impacts E.4*

A number of local residents expressed concern with the development of a 'mega' resort – as it is perceived – that would not result in significant local economic activity and/or benefit. There was concern that this proposed Project would lead to further future development in the Jumbo area either by the Proponent or another developer.

There was some interest expressed in ensuring that the proposed resort utilized and purchased "Canadian" materials, equipment, supplies and goods for the construction and operational phases.

It was perceived that the current funding formula for regional district services is already inadequate to meet seasonal peak demand for services. It was further noted that this type of development demands a major investment in infrastructure and commitment to ongoing maintenance.

*On-Site and  
Adjacent Outdoor  
Recreational Use  
E.5 (A)*

Considerable concern was expressed related to the proposed access closures to accommodate the development. There was a strong perception that the access closures would not be welcomed by the local communities as this area offers unique mountaineering opportunities. There is concern that access closures may not be realistic given the large number of other tenures (e.g. mining resources) and public uses in the subject area.

The possibility of restricting access to Monica Meadows to compensate for Grizzly bear habitat reduction at the resort was perceived as a significant loss for the West Kootenay. Future access and encroachment on other adjacent recreational areas, such as Lake of the Hanging Glacier, Glacier Creek and Jumbo Pass were also of

concern to many respondents from the West Kootenay.

Many respondents voiced reservations regarding the loss and destruction of their wilderness experience. It was commented that the central Purcells would be severely compromised if the Project is allowed to proceed. The concern is that the size of the proposed development is not complementary to the area's existing natural strengths and character, its "greatest economic asset". There is a strong belief that tourists, particularly Europeans, and local residents use this area as an alternative to commercial resort development. It was felt that a commercial resort would have a negative visual impact.

*Use of Purcell  
Wilderness  
Conservancy  
Provincial Park E.5  
(B)*

A number of respondents were concerned that this Project would adversely impact on the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Provincial Park as a protected area.

*Visual Impacts of  
Development  
E.5 (C)*

The potential viewing of a ski resort, including the gondolas, buildings, and parking lots in the pristine wilderness was of concern to a number of respondents.

*Noise Impacts of  
Development  
E.5 (D)*

There was concern expressed that there would be significant noise and light impacts on the neighbouring backcountry areas with the development of a resort.

*Commercial  
Tourism E.5 (E)  
Size of the Project  
Implications for  
Other Tourism  
Businesses in the  
Region*

It is felt that the size of the Project does not reflect or balance with the local values and interests.

The question of the viability of another ski development in a region where there are already significant ski resorts (throughout the Purcell Mountains and Rocky Mountains) was raised on numerous occasions. It was further commented that many of the ski resorts are currently not operating at capacity. Suggestions were made that the government should focus more on the preservation of the wilderness areas and continue to promote eco-tourism as a revenue generator.

Environmental sustainability of the region was expressed as a priority by many respondents. It was noted that the long-term provincial tourism strategy could potentially fail if not matched with a long-term province-wide wildlife management plan.

There was a perception that this proposed development could seriously impact existing businesses in the region that rely on the pristine nature of the environment and consequently damage the provincial business climate by impacting the stability of existing land tenures (e.g., R.K. Heli-Ski).

In contrast, a number of respondents felt that the new development would have no impact on the nearby communities as it is too far away

and would be self-sustaining. It was perceived by some respondents that the proposed resort would generate revenue but the economic benefits would not be realized by the affected communities.

It was suggested that a recreational cumulative effects assessment be undertaken to determine the feasibility of this development. There was some concern expressed that other recreational areas may have to be closed to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development.

*Commercial and  
Non-Commercial  
Fish and Wildlife  
Recreation E.5 (F)*

There is concern that the proposed method for mitigation for Grizzly bears lost within the resort area will be to reduce hunting opportunities in adjacent drainages. Concern was also expressed for the existing low impact backcountry businesses that may be negatively impacted by this proposed development.

With regard to the guide/outfitting and trapping tenures, there was concern that this Project would undermine the stability of existing tenures.

*Implications for  
R.K. Heli-Ski  
Panorama Inc.'s  
Operations E.5  
(G)*

Given the conflicting tenure interests involving the Project and R.K. Heli-Ski Panorama Inc., the displacement of R.K. Heli-Ski's operations was a significant concern to respondents. It was strongly perceived that R.K. Heli-Ski would be put out of business by the Project's use of most of their tenured terrain. It was recommended that the Proponent, government and R.K. Heli-Ski work together to protect this ecological tourism business. A few respondents noted that adequate compensation should be provided to R.K. Heli-Ski and that an arbitrator may be of assistance in determining value. One respondent noted that if R.K. Heli-Ski is not accommodated then the value of each ski area and commercial recreation licensee in the province would be seriously compromised. It was felt that it was the Proponent's responsibility to resolve this issue prior to the issuance of any new permits by the government. Furthermore, two associations in the ski industry stated that they would not support the Jumbo application until there is a written agreement between Jumbo and R.K. Heli-Ski.

The Proponent's suggestion that R.K. Heli-Ski move their operations to Glacier Creek was not perceived as a viable alternative as the terrain is neither safe nor reliable.

Also of concern was the Proponent's use of outdated information to support the Project in *Section 6.3.7 Impact on R.K. Heli-Ski* of the Project Report.

*Jumbo Pass  
Highway Proposal  
E.6 (A)*

There was considerable interest in ascertaining whether or not there would be a highway developed through Jumbo Pass.

<i>General Public Use of the Access Road E.6 (B)</i>	There was considerable interest expressed in ensuring that the existing forestry road access from Jumbo Pass to Glacier Creek side remain intact.
<i>Access Road Upgrading Requirements E.6 (C)</i>	There was some interest in fencing being mandatory along the roadside funded by the Proponent. A few individuals were concerned that the resort development would result in increased traffic congestion and accidents as well as an overall reduction in privacy.
<i>Avalanche Hazard Along the Access Road E.6 (D)</i>	The avalanche hazard along the access road was a concern for a number of attendees. There was a perception that winter access to this area is high risk given the numerous avalanche chutes that exist on the road. The potentially high cost of maintaining access given the winter conditions, was pointed out. A number of respondents questioned the cost variance in the avalanche program outlined in the Proponent's studies.
<i>Wildlife Considerations in Access Road Design E.6 (E)</i>	A number of individuals, including the Ministry of Forests pointed out that the Jumbo Valley has potential for rapid fire spread and the proposed development is limited to only one access road for moving people.
<i>Transmission Line E.6 (F)</i>	It was noted that the Project Report did not adequately address the power requirements of the proposed development. Some respondents were concerned that a new transmission line would be required to meet the energy needs of the resort.
<i>Specific Infrastructure and Service Requirements E.7</i>	<p>The ability of the local and regional governments to meet the infrastructure and service requirements of the development of this Project was questioned by many respondents. The concern was the anticipated influx of people to this area and the associated impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health services at Invermere Hospital</li> <li>• education and schooling services in the area</li> <li>• police services</li> <li>• fire fighting services</li> <li>• search and rescue services</li> <li>• outdoor recreation services and management</li> </ul> <p>The resort demands for the provision of emergency medical services in particular was expressed as a major concern. As well, the Proponent's proposal for offering a volunteer fire department at the resort was questioned from a reliability and training perspective.</p> <p>Inquiries were made regarding how the necessary local services would be provided by the area. A few respondents felt that this Project would provide a positive opportunity to explore shared community services within the region, citing fire and ambulance services as examples.</p>

Specific to the resort, the need for appropriate medical facilities being on-site was considered a priority, given the possibility of road closures due to avalanches. E.7 (A)

*Access Road  
Upgrading and  
Funding  
Responsibilities  
E.7 (M)*

Considerable discussion took place related to the proposed access road upgrading. A number of respondents sought clarification on responsibility for funding road construction and maintenance including long-term maintenance of the two existing bridges (Columbia River and Toby Creek). There was some confusion evident in defining what aspects the Proponent would be responsible for and which areas would fall within the provincial government's mandate. As well, a number of respondents asked for clarification on the road alignment.

There was concern that the upgrading costs would be higher than predicted and that the financial burden for the long term maintenance would be passed on to the provincial taxpayer, not the Proponent. As well, a number of respondents felt that the road upgrade would result in the need for additional speed limit enforcement. The addition of bicycle lanes on the new alignment was suggested by a number of respondents.

With respect to maintenance costs, many respondents were concerned about the costs of clearing the road given that the area is subject to falling blocks of ice and snow as well as avalanches. The impacts of road upgrading and maintenance (e.g. use of salt) on the creeks in the area were raised as a concern by a number of respondents.

*Infrastructure,  
Government  
Services and  
Revenue Impacts  
E.8*

Many concerns were raised regarding the accountability of the Proponent and the Government to ensure Project commitments are met, maintained and monitored. The potential impacts on local and provincial taxpayers to sustain such a resort development in the region was raised by many. Areas of specific concern were: health care, road maintenance, water supply, sewage treatment and avalanche control. Many respondents noted that the Kootenays have recently experienced significant government cut-backs. Furthermore, some respondents requested that the Proponent should provide accurate estimates of all infrastructure costs, as well as a binding commitment to financial arrangements and responsibilities.

There was some concern expressed that the private residences at the development may stay in their homes on an extended basis and further impact on community services. The question of commercial versus residential taxation on these residences also was raised.

Some concern was expressed as to what happens if the Proponent experiences bankruptcy. It was suggested that a bond be posted by the Proponent in the eventuality of bankruptcy.

<i>Accommodation Requirements E.9</i>	A few respondents were concerned that there was no residential allowance on site for either the construction or the operational phases of the proposed development. It was noted that the Proponent should allocate 15% of all development costs to be placed in an employee/affordable housing authority.
	It was suggested that private residential dwellings at the resort should be subject to sustainability measures such as water conservation and alternate energy requirements.
<i>Demographic and Social Effects E.10</i>	It was questioned as to how the Project can be contained to its proposed footprint of only 600 to 700 permanent residents. It was further questioned as to how a resort of only 600 to 700 permanent residents can develop a real sense of community.
<i>Lifestyle Impacts E.11</i>	Concern was expressed that this proposed development would negatively impact on the existing cultural and rural lifestyle values of the area as well as on the existing peace and tranquility presently being experienced in the Purcell Mountains.

#### Part F: Resort Administration Issues

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<i>Local Governance Issues F.2</i>	One respondent suggested that a more appropriate governance model to a Mountain Resort Association would be the establishment of a Resort Municipality that would contain the local Valley communities, e.g. Edgewater, Radium Hot Springs, Jumbo Glacier Resort, Windermere, Fairmont, as opposed to excluding them from a Mountain Resort Association.
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#### Part H: Canadian Environmental Assessment Act Issues

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<i>Cumulative Environmental Effects H.2</i>	There was concern that the individual impacts associated with the Project amount to a cumulative risk that is too great to justify, regardless of the purported economic benefits. Furthermore some respondents felt that any proposed mitigation measures would be unable to reasonably address the environmental impacts on species that require the maximum protection possible.
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#### **Project Support**

Although there was opposition expressed by many respondents, a level of community support for the Project exists, primarily due to the potential socio-economic benefits. To some, the Project is perceived as an economic driver which will strengthen the local economy.

In addition, a number of respondents expressed a willingness to support the Project providing the following conditions were met:

- ongoing government monitoring to ensure compliance through all phases of the Project;
- sustainable development, based on environmental and social values;
- provision of skiing incentives for local residents;
- opportunities for year round employment for local residents; and

- guaranteed restrictions on future development of the resort.

#### 2.1.3.5 Petitions

While the vast majority of submissions were letters, e-mails, etc. received from individuals or families, three of the submissions were petitions. One petition submitted during the comment period contained 219 signatures collected between May 4 and September 14, 2002. Since these signatures were collected before the start of the public comment period, the EAO is reporting these results in 2.2 Other Written Comments.

The content of the other 2 petitions was as follows. No effort was made to identify duplicate signatures. Signatories are self-selected and trusted to provide information that is complete and accurate.

*“We the undersigned express our continuing opposition to the proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort”*

**40 signatures collected by  
the West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild**

*“We, the undersigned, do not want the Provincial Government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort”*

**378 signatures collected by  
the West Kootenay Ecosociety**

### 2.1.4 Public Comments on the Project Report Supplement (July 1 to 9, 2004)

#### 2.1.4.1 Background

The Executive Director of the EAO ordered a time limit extension (until July 15, 2004) for the Proponent to provide the results of bird studies identified in information requirement D.3(D) of the Final Project Report Specifications.

The EAO accepted Project Report Supplement (Migratory and Non-migratory birds) for review on June 28, 2004. In anticipation of its submission, the EAO issued public notice of a formal period for public review and comment on the Project Report Supplement on June 22, 2004. The notice was distributed to a list of individuals who had previously expressed interest in reviewing the additional information (collected at public Open Houses in March 2004). In addition, the notice (and the Project Report Supplement) was posted on the EAO's electronic Project Information Centre (*ePIC*) and distributed to local information outlets at libraries in Invermere, Cranbrook, Nelson, Argenta and Silverton, as well as at the Government Agent's Office in Kaslo.

The 9-day public comment period began on July 1, 2004 and closed on July 9, 2004.

#### 2.1.4.2 Number of Submissions

In total, 2 submissions were received during the formal public comment period on the Project Report Supplement (Migratory and Non-Migratory Birds).

### 2.1.4.3 Geographical Distribution of Submissions

One submission was received from Windermere (East Kootenay) and one submission was received from Argenta (West Kootenay).

### 2.1.4.4 Public Views and Interests

Public comments received were focussed on the methods and conclusions of the bird studies conducted. Specific issues raised in submissions are considered as part of the technical review which is documented in the Assessment Report.

## 2.2. Other Written Comments

The EAO received 1,634 unique submissions from identifiable individuals (including 12 petitions) during periods outside formal public comment periods.

### Petitions

The content of each of the 12 petitions received was as follows. No effort was made to identify duplicate signatures. Signatories are self-selected and trusted to provide information that is complete and accurate.

*“We the undersigned are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Development.”*

**2,004 signatures collected by the  
Jumbo Creek Conservation Society between  
September 29, 1995 and March 10, 1996**

*“We, the undersigned, favour the existing Environmental Assessment (Review) Process guidelines for environmental assessment of proposed developments on Crown land which allow all the time that’s deemed needed and necessary to assess the impacts (potential) of each proposal. We are opposed to changing the process to include a fixed time line for the environmental assessment procedure.”*

**29 signatures collected by the  
West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild  
submitted May 6, 1996**

*“We, the undersigned, do not want the Provincial Government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort.”*

**959 signatures collected by the  
West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild  
during the summer of 1996**

*“We, the undersigned, oppose resort building and heli recreation in the Jumbo Creek Valley, and the entire Jumbo/Glacier area including (but not limited to) Monica Meadows, the Horsheshoe Glacier, the McBeth Icefields and the Tenise Creek drainage. We are in favour of habitat preservation and propose non-motorized recreation with visitor limitations.*

**140 signatures submitted on October 21, 1996**

*“We, the undersigned, do not want the Provincial Government to grant a permit to Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort or any other ski resort to use the Jumbo Pass area as a ski resort.”*

**56 signatures collected by the  
West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild  
submitted February 6, 1997**

*“Our valley needs quality economic development that meets environmental guidelines. I support the land use decision that allows Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort to proceed. Let Jumbo fly!”*

**115 signatures collected by  
Ian McKenzie (Panorama, BC)  
submitted May 1998**

*“We, the undersigned, are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort development.”*

**163 signatures  
collected by the JCCS  
in May 1997**

*“We, the undersigned, are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort development.”*

**77 signatures  
collected by the JCCS  
in December 1998**

*“We, the undersigned, are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort development.”*

**329 signatures  
collected by the JCCS  
from April to September 1999**

*We, the undersigned, are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort development.”*

**513 signatures  
collected by the JCCS  
from July 22, 2000 to September 12, 2001**

*“We the undersigned are opposed to the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort Development.”*

**219 signatures  
collected by the JCCS  
between May 4 and September 14, 2002**

*“We are writing to register our opposition to the Jumbo Glacier Resort proposal, and to urge you to reject it immediately. ...Like thousands of others who oppose the Jumbo Glacier Resort, we believe that the economic, social, and environmental costs of the project far outweigh the benefits. We are strongly urging you to reject the resort proposal for Jumbo immediately.”*

**23 signatures  
collected by the St. Saviour’s Anglican Church (Nelson, BC)  
submitted April 16, 2004**

### 3. Conclusion

The Project is located in one of the few areas in the East Kootenay that provides easy motorized access into the Purcell Mountains and is a popular backcountry area for hunting and recreational use such as hiking and picnicking in the summer months. The area, and the Project, have been the subject of ongoing land use debate for over ten years, despite the Kootenay/Boundary Land Use Plan allowing resort development in the area. As a result, the context of the EA review is one in which there is local public, political and First Nations division on the Project.

There has been a considerable and sustained level of interest in the Project since the EA review began in 1995. The best indicator of the nature and extent of public views on the Project is represented by the feedback received during the 60-day formal public comment period on the Project Report during which the EAO received 5,839 written submissions from 4,755 identifiable individuals (see 2.1.3). The EAO solicits public comments on the substance of project applications. In the case of this EA review, most of the comments received were not on the Project Report itself, but rather expressions of opposition to, or support for, the Project. The analysis of these submissions indicates that:

- 432 people (15.1 %) of the approximately 2,858 population of the District of Invermere, the area closest to the Project area, made written submissions (374 opposed and 58 in favour);
- 13.1% of the population of the District of Invermere submitted written comments expressing opposition to the Project;
- the number and percentage of submissions from the broader local region was small compared to the total population (West Kootenay: 1,457/88,862 or 1.6%; East Kootenay: 954/56,291 or 1.7%);
- 50% of submissions were from outside the Kootenays;
- the level of public interest was consistent with the 1995-1998 review period;
- 91% of submissions were expressions of opposition to the Project; and
- the organized campaign of opposition did not result in the same level of international interest as has been seen in other campaigns in British Columbia.

Besides basic land use opposition, key issues identified by the public include: project feasibility; effects on local heli-ski operator; effects on Grizzly bears (including the related issue of possible motorized access restrictions in adjacent drainages to mitigate Grizzly bear impacts); global warming and the integrity of the glaciers; water quality; adequacy of groundwater supply; waste management facilities; and costs to taxpayers.