

## Herb Troxel Comment

**From:** Herb Troxel <herbt@nwi.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 12, 2014 10:46 PM  
**To:** SEPADesk2 (DFW)  
**Subject:** Comment on SEPA No. 13082

*“WDFW’s mandate is to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and their habitats, and to maximize sustainable wildlife-related recreation. The Colockum, Quilomene and Whiskey Dick Wildlife Areas were purchased specifically to provide big game winter range and upland game bird habitat, and also to provide diverse wildlife-related recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing.”*

I strongly support the closing of wintering areas to protect wildlife. I do not understand why a road would be left open through the middle of the area. I understand many people like to watch wildlife, as I do. If you are going to allow wildlife viewing on the winter range, why not do it on the periphery of the area? Maybe allow it in areas wildlife traverses to reach agricultural areas. This would tend to move them back into the areas where they belong. The Colockum Tarps fire burned a large percentage of the winter range. This is a poor year to put additional pressure on game. The low snowpack this winter makes it easier on the elk, but is also increases access to roads in the area. One of the major problems with vehicular use in the Whiskey Dick (or any other area) is travel beyond the closed signs due to ineffective enforcement. This travel would increase pressure on the elk to disperse to other areas.

If you are planning a use (wildlife viewing in the heart of the area) that will make the elk disperse I do not believe you can justify a finding of insignificance. Vehicle-elk collisions on I-90 and around Quincy, agricultural depredations, WDFW damage compensation costs, herd health reductions, and reduced recreational hunting opportunities are a few negative impacts I can think of. Of course damage to roads with resultant costs and increased siltation of waterways would also be a negative impact.

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