



**NORTH CASCADE
HELI-SKIING**

North Cascade Heli-Skiing
17798 Highway 20
Mazama, WA 98833

tel: 509.996.3272
fax: 509.996.3273
e-mail: info@heli-ski.com

CQ573

September 23, 2002

NEPA Task Force
PO Box 221150
Salt Lake City, UT
84122
FAX: (801) 517 1021

RE: Comments on NEPA Task Force's Improvement and Modernization of NEPA Analysis and Documentation

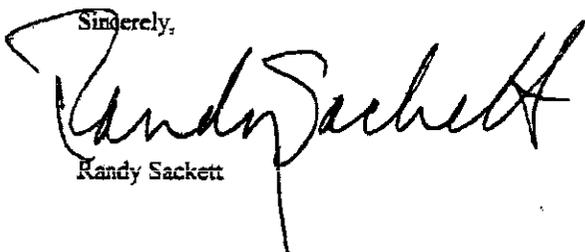
Dear NEPA Task Force,

We respectfully submit these comments in response to CEQ's Notice and Request for Comments published in the *Federal Register* on July 9, 2002 on the NEPA Task Force's efforts to improve NEPA analysis and documentation. We also wish to register our support for specific comments submitted by the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) in its letter to you of July 31, 2002.

North Cascade Heli-Skiing has operated under a special use permit administered by the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests since 1988. We are currently experiencing the NEPA process through the renewal of our latest 5-year permit. This process has taken three years and cost us and the Forest Service hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars, and we still do not have our new permit, simply because small but vocal groups know how to abuse the process. Unfortunately, NEPA has evolved from a public disclosure process into a decision making process, which is only a precursor to the more definitive action that takes place in our courts. The results are very burdensome and unfair for small, family-run businesses like ours, even though the intentions of the act are good.

Through our experience, it has become abundantly clear that the Forest Service wishes to make the right decisions in its application of NEPA, but the mere threat of litigation ends up controlling the process. As an example, the Forest Service's recent decision to re-issue our permit, based upon an environmental assessment prepared under NEPA, is being appealed by groups who simply don't agree with the decision. However, because we cannot afford the legal fees to intervene, we can only sit by and watch as the process drags on, in this case for years. Living from one 1-year permit to the next is no way to run a business. Reforms need to be put in place to better reflect the reality of such circumstances, to level the playing field, and to provide finality.

Sincerely,


Randy Sackett

CQ573



**NORTH CASCADE
HELI-SKIING**

North Cascade Heli-Skiing
17798 Highway 20
Mazama, WA 98833

tel: 509.996.3272
fax: 509.996.3273
e-mail: info@heli-ski.com

FAX COVER SHEET

Date: 9/23/02

Time: 10:30 P.M.

To: NEPA TASK FORCE

Fax#: (801) 577-1021

From: RANAY SACKETT

Special Instructions:

- Per Your Request
- Confidential
- Urgent
- Reply
- For Your Information

Message: COMMENT LETTER RE: TASK
 FORCE'S IMPROVEMENTS AND MODERNIZ-
 ATION OF NEPA ANALYSIS AND
 DOCUMENTATION.

Number of Pages: 2
(Including Cover)