

1. Adding camping sites would be a good feature for people who want to visit Seattle but not want to stay in hotels, including cross country cyclists and hikers. It would also be a good place to introduce people to camping who have not tried it before. 2. Adding floating gym would make the off-shore area better used for recreation and reduce the amount of boating traffic near the swim areas. 3. Having rental boat racks for rowing shells and kayaks but not having indoor rowing, meeting or motor launch facilities would be a good use of the space near Tibbets Beach for people who want human powered boat access but no place to store their craft at their apartment. 4. The park headquarters area seems to be very spread out and lightly used. This area could be changed to consolidate park service facilities and possibly provide an alternative for the Issaquah Fire Department location. 5. While soccer, football and baseball fields are desirable features for many, they are not what one should consider to be part of the State Parks mission simply because the state park has a wide amount of open space. These facilities should be moved out of the park and into county and city owned properties where they rightfully exist.

Hi Nikki...it's very encouraging to see the LSSP master plan coming together. The potential opportunities will be a significant improvement to the state park and our community. As discussed previously, Issaquah Parks adopted a Parks Strategic Plan last year and is underway with implementation. Collaboration between the state and city park systems is a great opportunity. Currently, Issaquah Parks is working with a consultant to develop a master plan for the Issaquah Creek corridor that ranges from the south end of the city to the state park. A great opportunity exists to extend the corridor all the way through the state park to Lake Sammamish. In addition, the Issaquah Arts Commission has contracted with a local interpretive artist (the same artist that installed the Marie Louie Exhibit at Tibbets Beach) to develop an interpretive arts strategy for Issaquah Parks. It would be nice if the LSSP master plan could incorporate a cultural heritage element to showcase the state park's great history and collaborate with Issaquah Parks ongoing efforts of incorporating interpretive public art. Thank you for all your hard work to develop an updated master plan for LSSP. You have my ongoing support.

I agree with your plans to restore Issaquah Creek & Laughing Jacobs creek for better spawning potential. I think the Ropes Course is inviting injuries & lawsuits. I think the parking garage is going to require you to offer shuttle services to outlying areas. I think your urban camp ground is too big. I think the Waterfront Activities Center should be scaled back. I think you should consider having a one way entrance and a one way exit, especially during peak periods.

I am writing to provide support for the Multi-sports athletic fields. There is a very large and growing demand in the Issaquah community for additional, lighted multi-sports turf fields that can be utilized year round. There are new turf infill products in the market that are not made from recycled tires that are much cleaner and doesn't require storm water treatment to clean the infill run off. LED light technology has improved such that the light cutoff is significantly better than products from the 2000's. The light cutoff can be very sharp and directed. This project would be a revenue generating opportunity for the City of Issaquah in being able to provide year round and night field space. There could be large economic benefit to Issaquah

from tournaments, leagues and other events held at the turf fields. I believe that all environmental impacts from building on the existing site can be mitigated. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

- 1) Entrance to parking for soccer fields conflict with the smooth flow of traffic on Sammamish Rd. The entrance and exit should move west and a driveway along the South edge of the Soccer fields would lead to parking, or entire parking area should also be moved further West.
- 2) The area along Sammamish Rd west of the main entrance to the park is unsafe for pedestrians access to the park. A strip of land parallel to the road should be improved for safe pedestrian traffic.

The prior master plan for Lake Sammamish State Park included a vision that the park be a natural area within the increasingly urban area of the Puget Sound region. With this as a guiding point, I would like to make the following comments about the scoping for the EIS for the master plan update.

ENDANGERED SPECIES As I am sure is routine, the ESI should detail impacts on any of species on the state or federal of concern. Loss of habitat is one of the primary pressures on these species. Based on eBird, a data base maintained by Cornell University, 192 species reported including nesting and migrating birds. Of that list the following birds are listed on the Threatened and Endangered List on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (wdfw.wa.gov) have been sighted within the park. Vesper Sparrow (Oregon subspecies?) Peregrine Falcon Pileated Woodpecker Sandhill Crane Vaux' Swift Clark's Grebe Western Grebe Bald Eagle White Pelican Other endangered or threatened species could potentially include the Western Pond Turtle, Orange Spotted Frog, or other reptiles and amphibians in addition to butterflies and moths. In addition to maintaining habitat, throughout the park artificial lights at night should be minimized to avoid disturbing migrating birds. This would include even LEDs aimed downward. Please note that the current paved trails and boardwalk along Issaquah Creek provide an accessible birding opportunity and should be maintained.

CABINS It is important that our state lands provide recreational benefits in addition to habitat. Lake Sammamish State Park is somewhat unique in being in such close proximity to a large population center. This makes the conservation of wildlife habitat doubly important but also increases the opportunity for recreational use. I have a friend whose disabled son loves being outdoors but finding recreational options for an adult who requires an electric wheelchair can be a challenge. We are also have an increasing number of older citizens who often need more accessible accommodations. A quick look at the Washington State Park website indicated very few accessible cabins are currently available within the park system. With respect to the plan for adding cabins/camping options, I would like to recommend considering adding fewer cabins all with accessible features. Issaquah is not too distant from numerous recreational areas in the Cascades. Most individuals would want to escape the urban landscape for a camping experience would likely choose to go a little further. However, the added convenience of proximity to an urban area would be of great benefit to those of limited ability. Acknowledging that accessible cabins may have to have a larger footprint I would still feel this is the optimal use of cabin facilities. Also, limiting the number of cabins would allow more native plantings between each structure so that even for those who might find it difficult to venture far from their porch could still have a chance to experience nature close up. The park already features a number of paths that are paved so that simply adding an accessible path around a small group of cabins would offer enough options for outdoor activities.

FIRE STATION In regard to the fire station, my primary concern is

whether there would be any toxic chemical required on site. Also, could it be located on an already disturbed site perhaps nearer the ball fields or at the current entrance to the maintenance yard to minimize environmental impact. WATER GYM I am very concerned about the impact on water edge development on wildlife especially birds and salmon. The area currently sited for the water gym is in excellent bird habitat which would be significantly impacted. With increasing heat waves due to climate change on the horizon, perhaps a water feature in more urban/suburban area could afford a cooling facility closer to residential area. The water gym does not require natural area to be enjoyed. In fact, most water parks are not in natural settings. ROPE COURSE The proposed location of the rope course is in a field where sparrows and other bird species observed. It is also near a proposed restoration of Tibbet's Creek which could add to the habitat value of that section. Understanding that the master plan is being developed to encourage use of the park, I would like to suggest changing the rope course to a viewing tower instead. It could be a small destination for both birders and others since everyone like to have an elevated view and it would also include some physical activity. Perhaps the field could be converted into a wildflower meadow to help support native pollinators. Again, I feel this sort of facility is better suited to a more urban park. STRUCTURES The current proposal siting new structures on already disturbed sites is key to lessening impacts. With climate change looming as a major risk, please consider how development of the park will be planned to limit greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration including the following. - Transit to conference center, ball fields - Tree removal - Tree planting - Net zero energy buildings The prior master plan had discussed the park as an educational opportunity for environmental concerns. Having a net zero energy building especially for the Confluence structure could afford an excellent demonstration project. CAFÉ The addition of a café in the park would be convenient and would likely increase park usage. Could this be put on the top of the garage or other structure to minimize impact and eliminate degrading another site? If built for instance on top of the parking structure it could provide vista point. CONFERENCE CENTER On hearing about the addition of a small conference center I had originally thought this was a good idea. After reading the remarks from the Conservation College in prior public meetings I now have questions about the proposal. Could a facility be built that would not impact the 2 bear dens or the bobcats? Adding an underpass for access to the now separated areas of the park sounds like it could be beneficial to humans and wildlife. We in Washington State are extremely fortunate to live in such an area with such outstanding natural recreation areas. Our state parks are an essential part of providing access to these recreational opportunities. I appreciate all the efforts made to serve a diverse community.

I have concerns with the Multi-Sports-Athletic-Fields section of the Lake Sammamish Master Plan Update. Most turf fields use recycled tires for the infill to save on costs. I would not want turf fields with crumb rubber as the infill and be concerned with its environmental impact, not to mention potential impact to players on the turf. I would hope a more environment friendly infill is a requirement for these fields, not just an option.

Hello! As a long standing member of the community living and working both in Issaquah and Sammamish, I wanted to advocate for consideration of adding a multi sport athletic facility to this park. We have two boys ages 7 and 11, and there never seem to be enough fields to support the growing community. We were thrilled when the Issaquah Highlands added a turf field, and not a day goes by that we don't see so many families and teams using those fields for

play and sport. With our short days in the winter, lighted fields are key. The grass fields at Lake Sam now are great but using the same footprint, improved turf fields would be such an enhancement and possibly also reducing water needed to keep the fields green. New turf product options make it easier than ever to install, and there are lots of options that are very clean and friendly to the environment. I am sure lighting is a concern - there have been many improvements in the past 10 years that offer very sharp light cutoffs to reduce expose to the surrounding areas. Having these fields open year round also offers the opportunity to bring in additional revenue to the surrounding areas and businesses. Thank you so much for taking my comments into consideration.

I am writing to you to give you my feedback and comments regarding the master plan updates to the Lake Sammamish State Park. My family and I use the park regularly and year-round, but mostly in the summer/fall months at the fields for soccer. My kids have been playing soccer in those fields for many years now and during the season we are there many times a week. We walk/bike to practice, eat dinner nearby or take our sandwiches to the playground and eat by the lake. I love this park and everything that it has to offer.

That being said, I would love to have the “soccer season” continue past October and make it year-round. I have always said that by having the fields turf and not grass, the number of opportunities for tournaments and expanded for regular use would so beneficial for local business and our community.

My family loves to bike and walk around Issaquah and we stop coming to the state park around October, not because of the rain, but because soccer has been moved in the complete opposite direction from our home. If the fields at LSSP had turf and were made for year-round use, we would continue to use all the amenities included the playground and the businesses in the surrounding areas.

There is no doubt that Issaquah is growing. We can't argue that, however, by growing with the needs of our community the year-round usability of the fields could bring additional revenue to the park, and support surrounding regional urban population.

I am really excited about the possibility of what the multi-sport activity fields can do for the Issaquah area and the new revenue opportunities that could come with it (tournaments, year-round usage, etc). I hate seeing this lovely space only being used for half of the year, especially when it comes to the rainy season. I realize that there are environmental concerns that come along with taking out the grass and making it a turf area but from the research that I've seen, there are more benefits than negatives (LED lights or solar even, more environmentally friendly turf infill, etc).

As an avid lover of green space and natural development, I don't believe this development would go against the WA State Parks mission but rather support it: "State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide memorable

recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives." Considering the proposal is really using the existing footprint, the trees, blackberries, and grassy fields can remain!

I know my family would enjoy, appreciate, and proudly support the multi-sport activity fields.

I've heard about the potential plans to add turf fields to the current soccer field locations as a part of the master plan efforts. I just wanted to share that I would be supportive of such an effort knowing that today's turf options are much more environmentally friendly. I think moving forward with something like this would enable us to use the fields on more of a year round basis and add a lot in terms of the use of the area and the park. Please do all you can to explore these options.

The Lake Sammamish Master Plan is a tremendous step forward for hundreds of families in Issaquah and the surrounding cities. Having grown up in the area, we have enjoyed all this park has to offer including the beach and the fields, but in my lifetime I don't recall any significant updates. Furthermore, as a father of two who play soccer year round, the current state of the fields are sub-par relative to what we should expect in Issaquah. Not only do they take regular maintenance to accommodate multiple sports but the fall and winter weather leave them unplayable. By fall, our entire family is covered in mud after one soccer game or practice. And even with regular maintenance the quality of the fields are less than other communities including surrounding Bellevue and Preston. For some teams that practice in Issaquah in the summer, they are forced to drive to the Highlands during the fall and winter months because of the state of the fields plus lack of light, which puts undo traffic pressure on the Highlands and unnecessary miles on local roads.

As the Master Plan undergoes the EIS, there are some points worth considering:

Irrigation needs would be cut considerably

Maintenance would be decreased dramatically, and carbon rich lawn mowing would be reduced to zero

Technology related to new turf fields are environmentally better than ever before

No further footprint is needed. Simply use the existing space but make it more available for more sports

In addition:

The fields would be accessible throughout the entire year bringing further opportunities for local businesses

The updated fields would likely attract new year round tournaments further attracting people from outside cities, who may not visit otherwise, to come to Issaquah

New LED lighting would provide more time in the day for kids to play in a safe and lit environment. The LED technology is as efficient as ever

The Lake Sammamish Master Plan is a wonderful step in the right direction in continuing to transform Issaquah into a city of the future - one that can accommodate family togetherness, safety, and health through sports. This Master plan if not followed through would be a huge loss for the families that utilize the fields and would keep Issaquah State Park in a state that hasn't changed in a lifetime.

I fully support the redevelopment of LSSP to multi use turf recreational center. Eco friendly turf products have been developed that are equal to and in some cases surpass natural grass in their environmental impact. Irrigation and the subsequent run off of soil and chemicals can be eliminated.

The city of Issaquah has for better or worse embraced urban density housing. It is now incumbent upon the city, state, and park system to provide increased opportunity and usability of recreational facilities. Multi use turf fields do this by providing year round access to multiple sports and activities. It would be irresponsible and outside the mission of the state of Washington and Park system to not maximize the use of LSSP through the development of a multi use sports complex at LSSP. It is my hope that leaders will listen to and act upon the wishes of the community on this issue.

A multi-sport athletic field complex, with turf fields would be highly beneficial to this community. Having the ability to host multiple events throughout the entire year, not just during the "dry" months would bring in lots of revenue. Both of my children have played soccer with ISC Gunners and we are always excited when we switch over to the Central Park turf fields, as the mess in the car and uniforms drops dramatically. The usability of turf fields is year-round and I feel like the grass fields don't get used much at all during October through May. Having the ability to host tournaments at Lake Sammamish with turf fields would bring in a ton of business to all the surrounding areas. I am also a teacher and I've seen many school districts, Bellevue included, switch their play fields over to turf, for the safety and usability of the students. The kids need a place to play where they are worried about grass holes where they walk away with sprained knees or ankles and a place they can play year-round.

Full support the development of the multi-sport athletic fields the ISC Gunners have submitted for development. This will allow for the populace expansion as well as continue to provide economic sustainability through events and tournaments year round.

I am in support of the new multi-sport athletic fields at Lake Sammamish State Park. The newly redesigned fields will be an asset to our community with years of benefit provided. The ability to play sports year-round in the park will encourage families and visitors alike to be more active and utilize our park. I also support updating the lights to LEDs and reducing watering/irrigation costs will not only help our local natural resource but also provide a desirable place for sports of all kinds to be played year-round.

I support including turf fields in the master plan at LSSP. While I can include all the reasons that this may have been rejected in the past that have changed (improved turf options, improved lighting options, etc.) I see one reason most compelling - use.

What is the utility of a park if no one uses it. A switch to turf fields allows this space to be utilized by the community. This can drive resources not only to the park service but the surrounding community. I understand that one must way the environmental aims of the park service with the use desires of a community but I this they can be mitigated in this project.

I live within a few miles of the park for the past 18 years. I have visited the park about 5 times for non-soccer activities in those 18 years. I am at the park 3-4 times a week when the soccer fields are in use and I often also use the parks trails and amenities while my child is playing on the fields. It would be a huge advantage to the park service and this community to be able to use this resource year around.

I support a year-round lighted, turfed athletic field complex at Lake Sammamish State Park.

Lake Sammamish State Park is an urban park and has been the home of organized youth soccer for 40 years.

Benefit to the area:

There is significant unmet demand in Issaquah for field space for youth sports and the demand is increasing.

Lighted athletic fields will facilitate year-round use. Tournaments and other activities will create positive economic impact for the Park as well as area businesses.

A field complex will compliment the larger Lake Sammamish State Park Master Plan and serve the community for generations to come.

Alleviating environmental concerns:

Newer turf products are so clean they don't require an enhanced stormwater treatment process.

Newer LED lighting products are extremely sharp, lighting only the intended area.

Reduced irrigation needs results in less water demand and use.

The athletic complex would not require an increase in field space and can be created on existing footprint.

Existing wetlands impact can be mitigated safely.

Creating a lighted, turfed athletic complex at Lake Sammamish State Park is the best use of that space and will positively serve the community in multiple ways for generations to come. It will also compliment the urban Park's master plan and increase visitors and utilization.

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Thank you.

Disc Golf Course Development:

I have noted previous comments advocating for disc golf course development from phase 1 of the master plan update for the Lake Sammamish State Park, and I want to use this comment both to provide a general sense of support for the previous comments and consideration of a

disc golf course on the site and to provide some further ideas in terms of how and where such a development could fit within the master plan.

Disc Golf is a long-standing activity with particular popularity in near-urban areas and among those who are seeking opportunities to engage in walking recreation combined with appreciation of unique landscapes (particularly wooded or watery landscapes). The existing walking paths and redevelopment areas that this park offers are exactly the sort of location that would attract disc golfers. Although courses are usually free to play, the discovery pass and/or day parking fees from disc golfers would be a revenue benefit for the park.

Disc Golf has minimal development costs and minimal environmental impact. The primary features of a disc golf course are the trees, brush, and creeks of the area. Development of a course includes installing single-pole baskets as targets (the same dimension as a single pole for chain-link fencing), along with tee pad signage (similar to the signage along interpretive trails) and some sort of tee pad marker in the ground. Many of these are concrete pads, while others are as unobtrusive as single marked paving stones. Players throw plastic discs (smaller but similar to recreational frisbees) from the tee pad towards the basket in as few throws as possible. Typical recreational courses will have 9 to 18 holes with each ranging in distance from the teepad to the target. Some of the shortest holes are under 200' while most are from 300' to 500'. On more advanced courses, there may be alternate long teepads developed to make holes with 500' to 1200' distances. While such extreme distances are rare, they do offer the opportunity for international touring professional events (pdga.com runs these tours and events). In all cases, players walk the entirety of the course, retrieving and carrying their discs with them throughout play. It is a violation of rules to alter the course by impacting the natural features of the course, and other than moving dead/fallen twigs/leaves/cones, players do not interfere with vegetation. Since play is in the daytime, and geared towards clearings within denser areas of vegetation, animal life is similarly undisturbed.

The walking paths from the swim beach towards the soccer fields and/or the Tibbets creek interpretative would be ideal areas to install a disc golf course to maximize parking revenue, minimize development costs and environmental impact, and possibly expand retail partnership via a pro shop or rental disc space at the swim beach multi-use building.

Thanks for your consideration, and please let me know if I can provide further clarification on these comments or be of use in providing research or examples of similar park developments in this area or across the nation.

I'm a huge advocate for supporting our local environment and our local community. There are many reasons for allowing the development of our current LSSP fields into multi-sport turf fields but two higher-level reasons really stand out for me such as keeping our environment footprint low and supporting the growth of our children.

It is important to support our natural environment. The master plan is to maintain the current field square footage and footprint. The complex is not increasing in size. The same natural environment is still available to the same natural wildlife both before and after the project. Natural grass has large maintenance needs. With artificial turf, there will be reduction in maintenance needs. For example, the exhaust from large industrial maintenance vehicles for mowing and taking care of the grass can be harmful to the environment for both humans and the natural wildlife. Also, there is no need for fertilization, weed and pest control. Artificial turf has none of these negative impacts. It remains in the same predictable quality all year around. Recently, there have been studies that show fertilization run-off can affect the natural environment. Seasonal chemicals can be very impactful for natural grass.

Additionally, better control of drainage during heavy rain can help direct water appropriately to better support all forms of wildlife better. These areas help ensure our environment is in a better place with turf. In addition, there are cleaner 'black bits' that can be used. There is no longer a need for recycled tires and all the negative impacts from chemicals that are associated with them. Finally, newer LED lighting can be used which helps with light refraction and keeps the harmful impact of light at a minimum. All of this information helps ensure this effort of building a multi-sport turf field is a win-win both for our environment and for our community.

However, supporting our children is probably the most important reasons. We need to support the growth of our children. Our children are developing into young adults quickly. Our kids need a safe place to grow up and mature into young sports-driven adults while staying healthy and out of harm's way. It is widely known that kids involved in sports have a positive impact on the local community and surrounding areas. New artificial turn fields can yield new opportunities for our children involved in sports. This helps engage our community in productive ways as their friends also contribute to the positive impact. Also, the current grass fields are spotty with many divots or pockets of holes in the grass. My main concerns for our children in soccer is a twisted ankle. Artificial turf reduces the risk of sports injuries for turned ankles as the turf is consistent in texture.

Having a fire station nearby can help ensure safety of our children and can help if there are any situations where heat exhaustion may occur. Controlled permanent restroom facilities help ensure cleanliness. Also, this multi-sport facility can better support the hosting of other special activities such as season carnival and summer soccer kickoff.

I believe it would be irresponsible to not build the new multi-sport turf fields given all the advances we have made. We should preserve our natural wildlife with the latest advances in technology for cleaner 'black bits' and better LED lighting. We should reduce our fertilization, weed and pest control footprint to reduce the chemicals released in our natural environment. Our ability of having a minimal impact in our environmental has never been lower. We need to act now for our future.

Also, developing our current fields into multi-sport turf fields is not only needed from a maintenance, cost, economic, environmental but also from a cultural perspective. Our children also need a safe and supportive environment to remain as healthy as possible as they continue to grow into mature adults. We need to give our children more opportunities to engage in sports related activities.

Please allow the building the of the multi-sport turf fields to support our environment and our community.

Our community has a desire and need for more multi-port turf fields and the current Lake Sammamish State Park (LSSP) fields are the perfect location to redevelop in a responsible manner that addresses the environmental impact statement (EIS) as follows:

There are now available newer turf infill products that are not made from recycled tires and are much cleaner.

Certain turfing products are so clean it doesn't require the enhanced stormwater treatment to clean stormwater runoff that the older infill products require.

The field improvements at LSSP can be made with no net increase of field space, meaning it can be the same footprint as it is now, but just a better facility.

The newest LED field light technology is even better at light cutoff than the products that came out in the 2000s.

The light cutoff can be made very sharp.

Irrigation needs could reduce water demands.

The year-round usability of the fields could bring additional revenue to the park, and support the rapidly growing surrounding regional urban population.

The opportunities for tournaments and expanded regular use will bring economic benefits to local businesses.

A field complex can be integrated into the larger park redevelopment plan in ways that are complementary and supportive of WA State Parks mission.

It's likely that all impacts related to the field development can be mitigated

As a resident of Issaquah (and South Cove), I am writing to provide my support of the project to improve the Lake Sammamish State Park soccer field. The proposed improvements to the soccer fields will provide greater access (i.e. year round, longer hours and multiple sports) for Issaquah residents. Year-round use will bring in greater revenue and will benefit local Issaquah businesses. During tournaments for example, parents often go to local restaurants and stores in between games.

Turf product are now much cleaner and safer and allow for year round playing conditions which can bring additional revenue to the city. Storm water issues can be mitigated.

My family and I believe that providing additional year-round recreational sports opportunities is important to enhance our community, contributing to healthy year round opportunities to be mobile, play, and increase healthy outdoor activity. Lighted and turfed athletic fields at LSSP would be a huge enhancement by providing these opportunities, plus economic benefits to the surrounding communities for events like soccer, lacrosse, and/or baseball tournaments. A couple of other key benefits would be to the traffic patterns in Issaquah. Less use of the turf fields in the Highlands would drive more traffic to the valley floor which is more capable of handling the traffic. From an environmental standpoint, this make sense as newer Turf products are cleaner, and use low or no water allowing for fertilizer and chemicals to run off into the nearby lake and streams. Lights are much better now, meaning less spill and impact to animals. Plus they are typically shut down by 9:30 pm. The environmental impact is already done, as the fields have been there a long time - this is simply a conversion to a better more year round usage. Same field space. Finally it seems this is perfectly aligned with the mission of the parks to bring more people (through sports) to the park, so they discover more about LSSP, and other state parks in the system. Thank you for considering turfed and lighted multi-sport athletics fields at LSSP.

Thank you for considering the conversation of grass to turf / lit athletic fields at LSSP. Of all the projects being considered for LSSP, this by far, will impact the most people, and especially youth in a positive way by providing more space for organized and drop-in year round sports and ball fields. With the growth of our area, and a dearth of turf fields, this is a vitally important project to push through. The fields are already there, this is a conversation or enhancement to the existing fields. The results is even kids, more families coming to the park for various sports, and staying for the amazing amenities and also the opportunity to discover more parks in the system. The economic benefits are boundless in thinking about opportunities to host various events and tournaments in this space - Financially benefitting the park and the community in a highly impactful way. In addition, it could be argued that turf is MORE environmentally friendly than using irrigation and fertilization than grass currently requires. It seems there is space around the park where this land use can be mitigated. Already a jewel in our local landscape of parks, LSSP could outshine them a conversion of existing fields to multi-sport, turfed and lighted athletic fields.

More Field turf fields are drastically needed in the Sammamish and Issaquah territory. With the growing population and sports participants. Field space is extremely limited. The newer products make it less of an environmental risk and the fields are already their so it is an ideal spot to build 2 or 4 more fields. This also makes the area a spot to have more year around tournaments thus helping the economy of the city.

Lake Sammamish State Park Field turf and New Lights! Use less resources to maintain as Certain turf products are so clean it doesn't require water usage grass does and the water run off isn't harmful tot he environment. The newest LED field light technology is even better at light cutoff than the products that came out in the 2000's. So its less time to stat up and shut down and uses less power! The year round usability of the fields could bring additional revenue to the park, and support the rapidly growing surrounding regional urban population. The opportunities for tournaments and expanded regular use will bring economic benefits to local businesses. Win-Win!

I'm very excited about the proposed project to provide turf fields and for a multi-sports athletic fields near Ihop. In my opinion, this is way overdue because of the amount of teams crammed in to other facilities fighting for space and represents a safety risk. . From what I understand, the new turf options today are not harmful to the environment and wouldn't utilize any additional space. Modern technology has come a long way which has led to many more of these facilities throughout the country. This professional complex would reflect a very positive image on the city of Issaquah! I am very hopeful this project goes through.

Fire Station --> Is there any conflict with the Laughing Jacobs Creek Restoration Project? Also, what will the impact on wetlands be? How will this be minimized?

Swim Gym --> What will the impacts of a Swim Gym be on spawning or rearing fish? What are the impacts on water quality? How would a recreational amenity like this take away from the natural feel of the State Park?

Multi-Sports Athletic Fields --> What are the impacts of lights on bats and other wildlife? I also have some strong concerns on what constitutes a "naturally" synthetic turf material. These artificial surfaces have been connected to cancer (especially for goaltenders who dive and regularly inhale pieces of rubber). There is also emerging research showing the negative impact of rubber on Coho salmon. With the fields being so close to Issaquah Creek, is there any way to ensure there is no leaching of rubber material into the creek through groundwater? Also, I feel pretty strongly that lights and artificial turf do not fit with the natural or historical aspects of the State Park.

Waterfront Activities Center --> Would all development be outside of Critical Area buffer? If no need for CA or compensatory wetland mitigation, will there still be a loss of trees or other habitat? How will this be mitigated for?

Waterfront Activities Center/Confluence Center/Hans Jensen Retreat Center/Parking Garage/Fire Station --> While I think all of these projects have their merit, I think that they should not be viewed as just individual projects, but as a pretty dramatic increase of built environment within the State Park. If all projects are ultimately constructed, how does that change the aesthetic of the park? What are the cumulative impacts on wildlife habitat? Are there ways to combine some of the buildings and not need to have 5 large structures constructed?

Campground --> Will campers have access to the rest of the park at night when closed?

Ropes Course --> How does this location limit the ability to restore and improve both in-stream and riparian habitat along Tibbetts Creek?

Hi,

Adding multi-sports turf fields to LSSP should be part of the state park master plan.

There are many benefits to converting the current grass sports field at LSSP to turf.

Turf field means year-round usability of the fields and could bring additional revenue to the park, and support the rapidly growing surrounding regional urban population.

The opportunities for tournaments and expanded regular use will bring economic benefits to local businesses in Issaquah/Sammish area.

There are now newer turf infill products that are not made from recycled tires and are much cleaner.

Certain turfing products are so clean it doesn't require the enhanced stormwater treatment to clean stormwater runoff that the older infill products require.

Thanks

What a great plan to update Lake Sammamish State Park with a modernized sports court facility that would be widely used and enjoyed by so many in the area!

By utilizing the existing footprint of the fields and updating the area with environmentally friendly turf products and lighting, we'll conserve irrigation water, increase year-round usability of the fields (thus increase revenue), and increase the potential for this loved community-use area to compliment the State Parks' mission and intent to enhance the lives of residents through recreational and educational opportunities.

I think it would be great if you turned the current soccer fields into a multi-sport turf field. There are several reasons I feel this way. Right now, there is limited turf space in the City of Issaquah and as a parent of two soccer players, when fall hits the IHOP fields turn to mush and we are pushed up into the highlands or worse, out to Eastlake High School/Skyline High School in order to play soccer year round. With the traffic problems everywhere, to drive 30-40 minutes from my house is not convenient and disrupts my work and personal life.

Also, there are uneven spots in the grass fields that could easily cause injury to any child while practicing, which increases the parks liability. I can't think of a better way to reduce that risk then by making the field turf and evening everything out.

Finally, I can imagine you spend a lot of time and money, watering, fertilizing and maintaining the grass fields. The amount of money you could save would be tremendous. On top of that, it

will draw more tournaments to the area, helping the local economy, whether it be stores, restaurants or even the local hotels.

In planning out the updates to Lake Sammamish State Park, my family would love to see turf fields in the existing grass fields area (and possibly in the old baseball field area) so that LSSP could be used for team sports year round. There are so many youth sports opportunities in the area that would love to use that space and I believe we can make this happen with a minimal environmental impact using updated products (ex: newer turf infill that is not used from recycled tires). Building a field complex would be a big draw for teams and would open up many more tournament possibilities year round. This would mean more income for our town.

It is hard to provide an objective and thorough comment as there is not enough evidence this proposal given it is pre Environmental Impact Study. However I am also trying to understand why a multi-sport park is needed at LSSP and if it is the best use of the state park resources at this time.

We are in a full support of current proposal. We are part of the ISC Gunners soccer family and existing LSSP grass fields are quite outdated, require significant watering during summer time and are not used at all during winter time.

Prior to joining ISC Gunners, we were part of Crossfire and we have seen the benefits of great turf fields in Marymoor. These are more environmental friendly, drive more tournaments and participation from clubs and parents, and create better and nicer environment. The growth in soccer activities around the year also contributes to local businesses surrounding the area.

We are frequent users of lake Sammamish state park, mostly of the soccer fields. Having lighted turf fields opens up so many more days in the year for use. There is a huge need for fields in the winter months when grass is unusable. I really hope you can find a way to make the park more usable in the winter months.

Please consider putting in turf soccer fields at LSSP. There are not enough places around this area where kids can play all year round soccer. It will reduce the irrigation and save the environment of water. There are many types of clean turf nowadays if you are worried about environmental substances. The turf fields would benefit the community in generating revenue thru tournaments and for vendors around the area. The number of kids in the sport is huge!! We need more room!! Please consider this!

Thanks,
Soccer mom of 2

I am definitely in favor of multi sport turf fields. Sport turf fields are so beneficial to our community for so many reasons. Important details to remember when considering turf and the environment - there are now available newer turf infill products that are not made from recycled tires and are much cleaner than the older versions! Certain turfing products are so

clean it doesn't require the enhanced stormwater treatment to clean stormwater runoff that the older infill products require!

The field improvements at LSSP can be made with no net increase of field space, meaning it can be the same footprint as it is now, but just a better facility. Thank you!

I am very much in favor of the multi sport turf athletic fields for a number of positive reasons - there are so many. And important to remember when you think about the potential environmental impact is that there are now available newer turf infill products that are not made from recycled tires and are much cleaner. Also there are certain turfing products are so clean it doesn't require the enhanced stormwater treatment to clean stormwater runoff that the older infill products require. The field improvements at LSSP can be made with no net increase of field space, meaning it can be the same footprint as it is now, but just a better facility. Thank you - our community needs these for all of the benefits to our citizens.

We are writing to encourage the development of Lake Sammamish State park by upgrading the current soccer fields, using new turf available. We feel this will enhance current storm water treatment to clean storm water run off. We also believe this will conserve water for the park, as well as decrease maintenance. Not only will this improve things for all families, it will make the facility much more usable all year round. We as a family have our kids train at Sammamish, when the weather permits, but would love to see the park developed for soccer tournaments, with a complex like the Sounders field in Tukwila. We have nothing besides 60 acres on the Eastside, to host tournaments from around the country. Investing in the Park would benefit not only kids and adults, but would increase revenue to local hotels/motels/shops and restaurants. It is a huge opportunity with so many benefits for the surrounding residence! Please consider upgrading our fields and park for the good of the city!

We really need a sports complex that is a year-round usable of the fields that could bring additional revenue to the park, and support the rapidly growing surrounding regional urban population. The opportunities for tournaments and expanded regular use will bring economic benefits to local businesses.

Nikki,

We received the notice for the Determination of Significance (DS) for the Lake Sammamish Master Plan Update and the forthcoming EIS. The DS also includes a list of potential future projects that may occur at the park. With this in mind, we offer these comments:

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe's Fisheries Division has been involved in various efforts to restore salmon runs returning to Lake Sammamish, Issaquah Creek and Issaquah hatchery, Tibbetts Creek and other various tributaries. These salmon runs are a component of the Tribe's treaty-protected fisheries resources. When opportunities are available, the Tribe fishes in Lake Sammamish as part of its fisheries. Depending on the location and type of facility, project or their uses, there is significant potential for several of the potential Lake Sammamish State Park projects listed in the DS to affect the Tribe's treaty-protected fisheries resources and access to them. The future EIS needs to carefully evaluate the potential for these impacts in coordination with the Tribe, as well as have a larger coordination plan as individual projects are proposed or phased. In our experience, it is insufficient to rely on the SEPA process to effectively coordinate with the Tribe to ensure its treaty resources are adequately protected. Early communications, close coordination, and follow-ups will be needed.

It may make sense to have a meeting with MIT Fisheries and Cultural Resources staff to discuss the master plan and the EIS further before it is released for public comment. Please let me know if you would like to meet and I will work with MIT resource staff to set it up.

Thank you,

Karen Walter

Watersheds and Land Use Team Leader

Jessica,

Allow me to begin by expressing my appreciation for the process your organization is following to identify the next steps in this matter. The transparency and the background given attendants at the Pickering Barn meeting were excellent.

I would like to specifically and briefly list my priorities and concerns for this unique gem of a park.

* Protection/preservation of open space, undeveloped sections of the property:
When I think of my frequent visits to the "undeveloped" areas of the park, the word "tranquility" is always first and foremost. It defines the attraction of that open space for those who know of it, and for whom the simple awareness of its existence and its proximity to urban concentrations is of transcendent value.

* With what we have learned about salmon, orca and Puget Sound since the last master plan update, I believe it is critical to avoid any degradation of the park's riparian zones and to accelerate existing habitat restoration efforts as well as to expand educational opportunities with non-profits such as Friends of Lake Sammamish State Park and Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery.

* While I strongly support programs to get people of all ages outside and active, I am concerned about adding more athletic fields at the expense of undeveloped open space. I am particularly concerned about the effects of artificial lighting on wildlife and intend to follow this subject closely as the discussion continues. I welcome the addition of more infrastructure to support activity such as the "ropes course" so long as it is located in the already developed area.

* I am sorry to say that while I stay at State Park campgrounds several times a year, I strongly oppose the "urban campground" suggested for Lake Sammamish. I believe its addition would inevitably have a long term negative impact on the entire area with absolutely predictable bad behavior on the part of a small percentage of campers. And with staffing levels unlikely to increase to the point where enforcement would be uniform and constant, the odds of serious, chronic problems ranging from behavioral to sanitation are obvious and unavoidable.

* While I understand the quandary facing the City of Issaquah regarding an appropriate site for a fire station, I do not believe the noise and activity are compatible with its siting in or even close to the park.

To sum up, Jessica, I am encouraged by the openness and inclusiveness of these kinds of efforts. I do my utmost to encourage fellow citizens to attend meetings and communicate with government officials/entities at all levels. I've been a docent at FISH since 1995, served on the Development Commission for more than 15 years and now serve on the Planning Policy Commission. Individually, with family members and out-of-town company, visits to Lake Sammamish State Park are part of our life-style.

I fully understand that the agreement between the city and the state mean Issaquah municipal code will ultimately guide where and what kind of changes occur. It's a cliché to say it but "nobody is creating open space anymore" is the bottom line. I sincerely hope that "improvements" to come will, in fact, be just that and we will not discover that our efforts to polish the gem have instead diminished its value.

Hello All,

Something has been festering in the back of my mind since the Open House last week. I noticed that there was no specific project element for the restoration of Tibbetts Creek within the Park Boundary. Tibbetts Creek is one of the larger tribes of Lake Sammamish, supports kokanee and other salmonids, and is one of three important streams in the Park. I fear that if the restoration of Tibbetts is not included as a specific element in the EIS and Master Plan Update that any future restoration of the creek, its floodplain, and riparian buffer could be limited by potential development if not considered.

I also think there is a way to potentially bank mitigation credits for this restoration activity for the Park. I will explore this further.

Have a wonderful Holiday!

Thank you for organizing time to present all the potential changes to Lake Sammamish State Park (LSSP) as it pertains to the Master Plan. It was interesting to see some of the ideas that are on the table regarding updating and adding additional facilities. Below are some comments and concerns that I have regarding the Mater Plan.

In a general sense, I am concerned with the additional human traffic that these improvements will bring to the park. As you are probably aware, most remaining wetlands on Lake Sammamish are contained within LSSP as well as Marymoor Park. Wetlands provide critical habitat to a variety of flora and fauna. For example, we know that through the ebird reporting tool, over 190 species of birds have been sighted at LSSP. Wetlands also provide food and shelter for salmonids, the primary food source for endangered southern resident killer whales. I can't think of a situation where increasing human activity in terms of amenities and traffic has worked out well for the environment, and I don't imagine a different result with these improvements to LSSP. From my perspective, even though LSSP serves as a state park, it should first and foremost serve as a preserve to one of the last wetlands areas on Lake Sammamish.

Below are some comments specific to some of the amenities that I would like to call out.

Fire Station:

While I recognize the importance of a fire station and am sympathetic to the city of Issaquah's needs, I question the wisdom of this facility on state park property. In the 2018 Christmas Bird Count, Eastside Audubon observed barn owls and short-eared owls in an area just south of the proposed location. I am concerned about how the noise these, and other bird species around the fire station will be exposed to due to sirens, fire drills, maintenance, and other activities associated with having a fire station. What controls will there be to minimize chemical leaks from the station getting into the park?

Parking Garage/Parking Situation:

Currently, there are 1,850 stalls in LSSP. As I understand it, the purpose of the garage is to try to consolidate some of the lots that are spread out. However, of the three proposals for the garage, the maximum capacity only gets us to 1,250 lots. What is the plan for the park's overall parking situation? I would expect that these proposed improvements would increase traffic to the park. To accommodate increased vehicles, how do you address additional spots needed? Is building additional parking lots on or adjacent to existing wetlands something that would have to be investigated down the road as demand increases?

Harns Jensen Retreat Lodge and Confluence Center:

It seems like these are two big facilities with some overlap. For example, they both have offices and meeting rooms. We can shave off a lot of the footprint of one of the facilities by eliminating redundancies. I think a smaller footprint is needed for both projects. Are permanent cabins and yurts needed? I know that other state parks (Cape Disappointment comes to mind) have permanent structures but given that this park is more of an urban park, it

seems that a cabin retreat should be left to more secluded parks. We could investigate a more natural experience such as creating a tent campground and encourage the community to discover a more simplistic camping experience.

Issaquah Creek and Laughing Jacobs Creek Restoration:

I am thrilled to hear about the restoration efforts on both creeks. It would be interesting to engage the community on these projects. For example, would it be possible to post in the park and on the park website the number of salmonids and other species seen? What about comparing number of salmonids year over year so people can see the results of the restoration work? I would also like to see “community days” where people can come out and clean up garbage, count/view fish, help with other projects, etc. One thing I would ask to keep in mind is connectivity to the floodplain and wetlands as this is just as important as in-stream habitat work.

Athletic Fields

I am concerned with adding LED lighting to the fields. This will have an impact to birds, bats, and other nocturnal species as well as adding light pollution to the park. Games played within the park boundaries should take into consideration daylight hours as to not disturb nocturnal activities by various other species.

Swim Gym:

Human activity (splashing, playing, laughing) in the water off of the LSSP shore raises concerns about noise impacts to fish and birds. I am also concerned about the additional trash (i.e. water bottles, snack wrappers) that could end up in the water. How would people get to the platform? Is a dock going to be required? Are the users going to need to swim out and back (after getting exhausted from playing at the gym)?

Waterfront Activities Center

I am a proponent of non-motorized boat recreation on the lake and in general. I have some concerns about this structure as it doesn't seem to align with the minimalist experience that comes with these activities. Is such a large structure right on the water truly needed? I support a public storage facility and hope that the state promotes this for all citizens and not just the wealthy inhabitants around the lake. I do not think a clubhouse and workshop are needed. Rather than taking up space for a café and dining area, you could look to partnering with food trucks as they have gained a lot of popularity and are a temporary, mobile structure.



July 12th, 2018

Nikki Fields
Parks Planner
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
PO Box 42650
Olympia, WA 98504-2650

VIA EMAIL TO: nikki.fields@parks.wa.gov

RE: Lake Sammamish State Park Master Plan Update and EIS Scoping

Dear Nikki Fields,

On behalf of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, please accept the following comments on the proposed Lake Sammamish State Park Master Plan Update and EIS Scoping. The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe—*sdukʷalbixʷ* in our Native language—is a federally recognized tribe in the Puget Sound region of Washington State. Known as the People of the Moon, Snoqualmie tribal members were signatories to the Treaty of Point Elliott in 1855 and have inhabited the shores of *sqaʷx̌ x̌aču* (Lake Sammamish) for thousands of years. The lake and surrounding area continue to be a core location for the Tribe's traditional and cultural activities, including preparation for the annual Tribal Canoe Journey practiced by the Tribe along with other indigenous people across the region. The presence of our ancestors is still felt along the shores of *sqaʷx̌ x̌aču*, as the names of a number of tributaries to the Lake still bear the family names of Snoqualmie Tribal members to this day.

We encourage the park redevelopment alternatives to prioritize avoiding and minimizing any further impacts to the ecology and archaeological resources of Lake Sammamish in general and specifically within the park boundaries. Specific suggestions and requests are below.

Hans Jensen Retreat Center and Laughing Jacobs Creek

Hans Jensen Retreat Center should not expand beyond its existing footprint into sensitive areas. Opportunities for restoration of Laughing Jacobs Creek and its riparian buffer should be maximized. Please fully assess the effects of various alternatives on stream ecology.



Issaquah Creek Restoration

Restoration of Issaquah Creek should be approached aggressively in terms of maximizing channel complexity, reintroducing natural channel-forming processes, and reconnecting the alluvial aquifer with existing groundwater resources. Riparian buffer width should be maximized to support water quality and habitat services and processes. Expansive refuge areas should be preserved with limited formal public access. The Lakeshore Esplanade element of the current Master Plan should be eliminated due to its high impact to Issaquah Creek and Lake Sammamish ecology. Please evaluate effects of increasing public access to this area.

Swim Gym/Overwater Coverage

New overwater coverage should be minimized due to its negative effects on lake ecology. NOAA/NMFS data indicate that overwater coverage on Lake Sammamish continues to increase at a rapid pace. State Parks should not contribute to even greater increases and if it does, must fully evaluate it in the context of other cumulative impacts.

Transportation and Parking

Existing facilities should be retrofitted to meet and ideally exceed current stormwater treatment standards. New facilities should exceed minimum standards. Parking and transportation impervious areas should not be a net expansion within the Park.

Other Impervious Surfaces

Impervious surfaces within the park should strive for 100% on-site treatment and infiltration.

Invasive Plants

Invasive Plants should be aggressively and logically eliminated to the extent practical, and areas formerly occupied by invasive plants should be restored with a diverse mix of site-appropriate native species. Species with high wildlife and Tribal cultural value should be prioritized. We can provide further input on this at later planning stages.

Swimmer Safety and Boating Conflicts



In order to increase swimmer safety, we recommend employing land-based and boat-based lifeguards at Sunset Beach. This would create permanent seasonal employment as opposed to temporary employment related to construction. Lifeguards in boats at the waterward edge of the swimming area could monitor and regulate boating/swimmer conflicts as well as observe swimmers for safety. Land-based lifeguards could communicate with water-based lifeguards and also observe swimmers for safety. This method is used successfully at a number of other popular public swimming beaches in the Puget Sound area, such as on Lake Washington. Other potential measures to increase swimmer safety include excluding boats from a buffer area around the swim area, and posting and enforcing these rules. We encourage the use of less impactful, less permanent techniques to influence boater behavior, such as swim area float lines, wave attenuators, buoys with flagging, signage, etc.

Boat Grounding at Wetland Mitigation Sites

State Parks selected the mitigation sites near Sunset Beach and implemented the mitigation projects there. It is State Parks' responsibility to ensure the success of those sites. We suggest that a combination of rules contained in Conditions of Use of the State Park, posting of those rules through signage, deploying land-based and boat-based lifeguards, and increased enforcement could address this issue without building additional large, permanent overwater structures in Lake Sammamish.

Other Swim and Water Activity Features

Diving platforms seasonally anchored offshore and within the swimming area can accommodate swimmers who wish to dive and require deeper water in order to do so more safely. Wave attenuators and float lines and other techniques discussed above, including lifeguards and enforcement, can create a safer environment for while minimizing impacts to the ecology of Lake Sammamish near the mouth of its main tributary (Issaquah Creek), which is a high use zone for migrating imperiled salmonids. We do support upgrading accessibility features for boating at the park. We suggest that this can be accomplished by upgrading or adding small additions to existing facilities at Sunset Beach and/or the boat launch.

Hydrology and Increased Withdrawals

Alterations of the lake shoreline, basin land cover, and high levels of development and resulting withdrawals have resulted in impacted hydrology at Lake Sammamish State Park.



The increased use of the park and its corresponding impact to hydrology in terms of both shallow and deep aquifers, should be evaluated and mitigated.

Culture

The shoreline of sqaʷǰ̕ ǰ̕aču was home to one of the last remaining Snoqualmie longhouses before it was burned down to make way for Euro-American encroachment. To honor our long standing use of this location, the Snoqualmie Tribe has held many traditional gatherings and ceremonies at the Lake, especially within the past 20 years as we continue to reclaim our traditional practices at our sacred locations after we were for so long forbidden to do so. Two of the defining characteristics of the sqaʷǰ̕ ǰ̕aču are its natural aesthetics and ease of water access. This project, as proposed, will greatly reduce the Lake's natural and traditional beauty which many people, both within and outside of the Tribe, have strived to maintain through various habitat restoration projects in the area. Most of the creeks and streams around the lake have also long been associated with Tribal stories, traditional practices and most had multiple living dwellings along them.

It is also worth noting that this location is the home of one of the most sacred animals to Snoqualmie people, ǰ̕aǰ̕ʷəlaʔ (bald eagle.) A large dock that encourages more human activities on the water could impact their behavior and their available food sources (which, as we have pointed out many times, are already being negatively impacted by the proliferation of overwater structures and shoreline development all around the Lake).

Conclusion

The ecology of Lake Sammamish is in peril. An extremely concerning symptom of this is the fact that the lake's native kokanee, which are a traditionally sacred food source for the Snoqualmie Tribe, are clearly in danger of extinction. Development in the watershed continues at a rampant pace. Docks and other overwater structure construction, which we know have numerous negative effects on fish movements and behavior as well as other aspects of lake ecology, continue to proliferate, making protection and restoration of fish species increasingly difficult. Stream and lake hydrology continue to be imperiled. Lake Sammamish State park is sited adjacent to the mouth of Lake Sammamish's main tributary, Issaquah Creek, an important spawning tributary for many of the lake's remaining wild salmonids, not to mention the migratory pathway for hatchery smolts released from the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery. The State Park has been and continues to be an important cultural site for the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. Please avoid and minimize further impacts on natural and cultural resources within the Park.



Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Baerwalde", followed by a long horizontal line.

Matt Baerwalde
Water Quality Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Mullen-Moses".

Steven Mullen-Moses
Director of Archaeology & Historic Preservation



Eastside Audubon
P.O. Box 3115
Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

July 11, 2019

Jessica Logan
Environmental Program Manager
Washington State Parks & Recreation
1111 Israel Road SW
Olympia, WA 98504-2650

Dear Ms. Logan:

I am writing to comment on the Lake Sammamish State Park Master Plan Update as it was presented at the Issaquah open house. Five members of Eastside Audubon were present that evening and several of them have submitted comments regarding the project. This letter represents the views of Eastside Audubon.

Eastside Audubon is a chapter of the National Audubon Society and it serves East King County from Lake Washington to the Cascade Crest and from the Snohomish County line to just south of I-90. The chapter has 1,100 members. Lake Sammamish State Park is within our service area and our chapter members have led a monthly bird walk in the park for many years. Eastside Audubon has concerns related to many of the proposed infrastructure projects in the state park. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the project.

Data on bird sightings during these walks and historical data beginning in 1971 have been entered into eBird, a database of bird observations managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. A summary of those observations indicates that 192 species of birds have been observed in the park. The park supports breeding birds, both winter and summer migrating birds, and more rare visiting birds.

The park also preserves some of the last remaining wetlands on Lake Sammamish. These wetlands are productive habitat for salmonids as well as birds. Where there are shady, natural shorelines, salmon find good habitat in the cooler water. A large variety of ducks, grebes, some shorebirds, migrating and nesting warblers and other songbirds use the wetlands and woodlands of the park.

The mission of Eastside Audubon is to protect, preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people. The following comments reflect this mission.

Issaquah and Laughing Jacobs Creeks Restoration and Tibbetts Creek Park Entrance

The Issaquah Creek and Laughing Jacobs Creek Restoration proposals look very good. Overall, they should improve the environmental health of both creeks and provide improved habitat for salmon. We know how important it is to assist Chinook salmon recovery and these creeks are very important for salmon spawning. Laughing Jacobs Creek is also essential spawning habitat for Kokanee salmon. We would like to see more data regarding the current runs of salmon in these creeks so we can observe trends in the numbers of returning salmon. The addition of events such as a “community day” when people could help with a park project including counting fish would help with involving local residents.

The Eastside Audubon members present at the open house were told that the Issaquah Creek will be allowed to find its own route to the lake, and we agree with that approach. This minimalist approach to the restoration will allow the steep banks caused by erosion to remain. The steep sandy banks of the creek provide nesting habitat for burrows used by Belted Kingfishers and Northern Rough-Winged Swallows. The gravel creek bed is used by Spotted Sandpipers which breed in the park. The riparian areas along the creek are a refuge for breeding Rufous Hummingbirds, Yellow and Wilson’s Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats in summer. The riparian areas along the banks of the creek should be enhanced with plants that are suitable for birds as well as for salmon.

We support moving the park entrance to open more of Tibbetts Creek. The restoration already in place appears to be doing well and extending that success to more of the creek within the park boundaries would be a positive change. We also support the previous plan to extend the restoration to Tibbetts Beach on Lake Sammamish.

Waterfront Activities Center and Swim Gym

The waterfront at Lake Sammamish is another important area for birds. The cove at Tibbetts Beach is home to a Bald Eagle nest and is a common roosting area for eagles. Although fewer ducks use the area in summer, from October through March this lovely cove provides wintering habitat for many species of ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, American Coot, and some Western Grebes, which also spend time in deeper water. The riparian area south of the beach is good habitat for migrating and resident songbirds and this will be enhanced by extending the restoration of Tibbetts Creek from the newly restored area all the way to Lake Sammamish.

An increase in human activity in this area will undoubtedly disturb birds and other wildlife and be detrimental to the land and shoreline use. More activity in the area could also mitigate against the benefits which could be realized by the plan to extend the Tibbetts Creek restoration to Lake Sammamish.

Eastside Audubon hopes that human activity in the Tibbetts Creek and Beach area can be kept at its current level. A building the size of the proposed Waterfront Activities Center will overwhelm the area and should not be constructed. We would support a modest improvement to the restrooms and watersport rental area. The Swim Gym would be out of place here. In addition to the noise from water play and active people, the shuttling of people out to the gym, and the addition of three lifeguards will increase the number of people in this small area and would promote overcrowding. Our goal would be to keep the area available for simple and quiet forms of recreation.

Old Ballfield Ropes Course

The placement of the Ropes Course at the old ballfield would be disruptive to wildlife and birds along Tibbetts Creek. This riparian area has recently been improved and provides habitat and cover for many birds. Green Herons frequent this area and the small wetland next to the trail. Green Herons are secretive birds and especially sensitive to human activity and their habitat needs are quite specialized. We are fortunate to have habitat in the park used by Green Herons. Their favored habitat is freshwater marsh and streams with heavy vegetative cover. With so much development along the shoreline of Lake Sammamish habitat for Green Herons has been lost. Maintaining it in the park would provide a clear benefit.

In keeping with our comments regarding Tibbetts Beach, limiting loud activities and large groups would also be beneficial in the creek area. As an alternative to the Ropes Course, the ballfield could be allowed to return to natural habitat by removing the baseball backstop and allowing the grass to grow. The park has some other grassy areas, but they are limited and abut the existing sports fields. That area is potentially threatened by a new field #10 in the proposed Master Plan. Preserving the old ballfield for a grassland habitat would provide habitat for Killdeer and sparrows. Bullock's Orioles, Western Tanagers, and a variety of woodpeckers can be found in the black cottonwood trees along the creek.

Fire Station

The land swap of one acre of state park land for the fire station in exchange for 46 acres of steep slope land across the street and adjacent to the Hans Jensen Retreat Center sounds like a positive trade on first hearing. However, the area proposed for the new fire station has some beautiful trees which frame the entrance to the park and are frequented by Red-breasted Sapsucker and Yellow-rumped Warblers. It is also close to the grassy field to the south where Short-eared Owl and Barn Owl can be seen at dawn, usually in winter. Street and boating noise is already a concern regarding birds and other wildlife in the area and the addition of more noise from a fire station should be taken into consideration when planning for any construction at the boat launch area.

Multi-Sports Athletic Fields

We are opposed to further expansion of the existing athletic fields. There are currently nine athletic fields within the park. The proposed expansion to the north would remove the last remaining bit of grassland habitat from that area of the park. The grass fields in the area are home to Savannah Sparrows and wintering Golden-crowned Sparrows and sometimes Lincoln Sparrows. The previous Master Plan acknowledged that the existing sports fields are not compatible with the purpose of our state parks, but they will be allowed to remain. New fields should not be built.

We also hope the park does not introduce LED lighting to the fields. Additional lighting will be detrimental to nocturnal birds and other wildlife. Light pollution is a problem in urban parks like Lake Sammamish State Park, and we do not want to exacerbate the problem further with even brighter lights. The installation of LED lighting in sports fields is advocated by those who want to use the fields at night, but these lights have led to opposition and division in many communities. They are excessively bright, detrimental to wildlife, and unwanted by neighbors of parks.

Confluence Center, Urban Campground, and Parking Garage

The addition of the Confluence Center, the Urban Campground, and the new parking garage will all attract more people to the park. We understand that WA State Parks is concerned about decreasing attendance at the park and wants to make it more attractive to people. Nevertheless, the addition of these structures will alter the park and make it more like the urban area surrounding it. Lake Sammamish State Park is a refuge from the urban environment and keeping to the goals of preservation and recreation will help it maintain its status as a refuge. A smaller-sized education center would be more appropriate.

Before any additional structures are constructed in the park, an assessment of the already completed improvements to the restrooms and showers and the landscape changes at Sunset Beach should be conducted to determine if they have already helped increase attendance.

A small campground in the area of the ranger station office would be compatible with this state park. We doubt there is a need for permanent yurts, cabins, or tents in the park. It would be beneficial to obtain information on how similar plans have been received in other parks before adding these amenities.

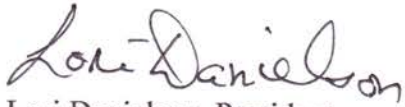
The currently used 1,850 parking stalls appear to provide enough parking for the park users. The new garage with a maximum capacity of 1,250 stalls would help consolidate the parking and a significant number of open lot stalls could be eliminated to allow the land they are on to return to a more natural wetland environment. However, at least 600 existing stalls would need to be retained to maintain the current number of 1,850 and the location of those that will remain has not been determined. Depending on the number of the proposals that are adopted even additional parking may be needed, but we hope any parking can remain in the least sensitive area.

Hans Jensen Retreat Center and Confluence Center

Renovations or additions to the structure of the retreat center should be coordinated with the Laughing Jacobs Creek renovation and the preservation of the area around it. Combining aspects of the two buildings such as offices and meeting rooms could reduce redundant functions and the footprint of buildings in the area and this should be considered.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Lake Sammamish State Park Master Plan Update.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Danielson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lori Danielson, President