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Wild Steelhead Coalition

May 13, 2019

Mr. John Cooper, Planner/Geologist  
Skagit County Planning & Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mt Vernon, WA 98273

Re: Kiewit Infrastructure Proposed Marblemount Quarry (PL19-0032, PL19-0033, PL19-0047, and BP19-0070)

Dear Mr. Cooper:

As conservation and recreation organizations with supporters who live, work, recreate, and care deeply about the Skagit River valley, we wanted to briefly share our concerns with the proposed project submitted by Kiewit Infrastructure Co. on March 14 to Skagit County to expand an existing quarry near Marblemount from 20 acres to 80 acres.

This proposal sits in the heart of the Wild & Scenic Skagit River System, with the Skagit River, Cascade River, and Illabot Creek, all within the immediate surrounding area. This region is an important natural resource for both residents of the valley and those who visit the area to enjoy the fishing, boating, wildlife viewing, hiking, and foraging, and is the gateway to the North Cascades National Park and numerous surrounding wilderness areas. Additionally, this site and the surrounding lands have been identified by both the Swinomish Tribe and Upper Skagit Tribe as an important area with cultural significance to the tribal community's way of life, including usual and accustomed hunting and gathering and traditional practices. A quarry of this significance must go through the proper environmental reviews and zoning processes.

First, we believe that a project of this scope warrants a Determination of Significance under WAC 197-11-330 and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be required, as this project and the cumulative effects to the local environment for up to 100 years, will likely have a significant adverse impact. This includes the associated blasting, traffic, noise, infrastructure, and visual impacts to the landscape, wildlife, and Endangered Species Act-listed Chinook salmon, bull trout, and steelhead, and the overall water quality in the Skagit River basin.

Second, we believe that Kiewit's application for permits is misleading and does not adhere to current zoning and use. Kiewit's current application for a Mining Special Use Permit (BP19-0070) includes about 60 percent of the proposed permit area that is not currently zoned through the county for mining (MRO). Kiewit must have all areas within their application be designated MRO through the Skagit County

Comprehensive Plan, including for forest conversion and road construction. It is out of order to approve these permits in advance of proper zoning use.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide additional input to this proposed project and we, the undersigned, appreciate Skagit County's consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Stumpf  
Associate Director, Puget Sound & Columbia Basin  
American Rivers

Thomas O'Keefe  
Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director  
American Whitewater

Mitch Friedman  
Executive Director  
Conservation Northwest

Mark Sherwood  
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