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Superintendent
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Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

March 21, 2017

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to voice our continued support for the reintroduction and restoration of grizzly bears into the North Cascades wilderness. As you may be aware in 2008 the Whatcom County Council passed a resolution (attached) calling for this grizzly bear recovery plan to move forward. We are glad it has, and we would like to take this opportunity during the EIS comment period to once again voice our support for this effort.

Whatcom County is blessed with some of the most spectacular national park, forest and wilderness areas in the world. While these areas help provide clean air and water, and preserve habitat for important species, they also provide incredible world-class recreational opportunities that draw thousands of people to our area producing significant economic returns and possibilities. We believe that the careful restoration of grizzly bears in the North Cascades will strengthen the ecosystem as well as the recreational economy we benefit from.

The North Cascades ecosystem appears to be too isolated for grizzly bears to make a recovery on their own, so active restoration efforts are needed. These efforts will take decades to be successful, so the sooner we get started the better. After reviewing the alternatives provided in the EIS we support alternative C, which would provide a good balance between active restoration to meet the needs of the bears, while considering the concerns of local residents.

On behalf of the Whatcom County Council, thank you for your efforts and this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Barry Buchanan, Chair
Whatcom County Council