



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: Whatcom County Fire District 19 – Glacier Solid Waste Site Lease Agreement
DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2025

Attached is an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Whatcom County Fire District 19 for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

This agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities for Whatcom County Fire District 19 (District) for leasing a 2.26-acre, County-owned property, located at 9186 Mt Baker Highway. The property previously operated a solid waste drop box facility, which closed in April 1990 due to rising operational costs and minimal use. The site has a permitted septic system and an unpermitted well, is currently valued at \$67,800. The County does not anticipate using the site for any regular solid waste handling activities.

The District serves the community of Glacier and Mt Baker Highway until just east of Maple Falls. The District has expressed interest in acquiring the property, which is 2.2 miles west of Station 96, to use for storage of equipment and training purposes, as their current property, at just over one-third acre, is too small for their current operations.

The site has potential to serve as a location for temporary debris management in the event of a debris-causing disaster affecting the areas of Glacier and Maple Falls, such as an earthquake or volcanic eruption. However, the population that could feasibly be served by this site is small; Glacier has a population of under 300 people. While the Kendall community has a larger population, the distance to the Glacier Drop Box Facility property is more than 10 miles, and its size would potentially limit the amount of debris that could be stored there.

This request has been brought to the County's Property Maintenance Committee for discussion and recommendation. The Public Works Department has no immediate or identified future need for the property. The Parks Department assessed the property's potential to support the Bay to Baker Trail, and found that it would not be useful. The Committee supports the County leasing the property to the District for its immediate needs to better serve its community and the Solid Waste Advisory Committee approved the language in the lease at their December 4, 2024 meeting.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

The District will pay the County an annual rent payment of \$1.00. All real property lease agreements require Council authorization, per WCC 3.08.100

Please contact Jennifer Hayden, Environmental Health Supervisor at 360-778-6036 (JHayden@co.whatcom.wa.us) if you have any questions.

Encl.