

[Lawsuits against Tulip Valley Farms wrapping up](#)

Two lawsuits filed against Tulip Valley Farms in 2023 appear to be winding down.

A lawsuit in which Skagit County alleged code violations in August 2023 was partially dismissed Tuesday, and a lawsuit filed in March 2023 by Tulip Town alleging deceptive practices may be dismissed Aug. 9.

The county had sought injunctive relief and to abate a nuisance being maintained on the 8-acre property west of Mount Vernon.

Injunctive relief is a remedy that restrains a party from doing certain things, in this case using farmland for a nonfarming use and not having the necessary permit to use shipping containers as buildings.

According to the complaint, Tulip Valley Farms co-founder Larry Jensen and Tulip Valley Farms “constructed and developed a significant retail and hospitality operation that unlawfully converted approximately eight acres of agricultural land.”

During the 2023 Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, these 8 acres included land that served as a parking and on which three shipping containers served as ticket booths.

The court documents state Tulip Valley Farms set up the parking lot and used the shipping containers without approval from the county, including a building permit, floodplain development permit, environmental review, special use permit for a temporary event, fill and grade permit and a county road access permit.

Several changes were made at Tulip Valley Farms during the 2024 festival, including not using stacked shipping containers as ticket booths and planting flowers along the parking rows.

On Tuesday, Superior Court Commissioner Mary Crandall granted a motion filed by the Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office to partially dismiss the lawsuit.

The dismissal is for everything other than those issues related to the failure to obtain a fill and grade permit, floodplain development permit, critical areas review and a county road access permit.

Tulip Valley Farms co-founder Andrew Miller said this lawsuit may mark a change in enforcement levels throughout the county.

“They better be ready to enforce (fill and grade permits) at every other farm,” Miller said. “This is the beginning of a massive enforcement undertaking.”

However, he said he is happy the case is moving forward and that the county has chosen to dismiss parts of the lawsuit.

The lawsuit filed by Tulip Valley Farms competitor Tulip Town just days before the 2023 Skagit Valley Tulip Festival alleges deceptive practices on the part of Miller, who was once part of the Tulip Town ownership group.

The suit alleges that while Miller was working for the ownership group he was also working to form Tulip Valley Farms 1,000 feet from the driveway of Tulip Town.

According to court documents, Tulip Town had been initially seeking to bar Tulip Valley Farms from doing business.

On Aug. 9, a motion will be heard in Skagit County Superior Court in which Tulip Town asks that the lawsuit be dismissed.



Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District
Peter Browning, Second District
Lisa Janicki, Third District

December 8, 2022

Superintendent Striker
North Cascades National Park Service Complex
810 State Route 20
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

RE: 2022 North Cascades Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan/EIS

Dear Superintendent Striker,

As County Commissioners, we would like to provide comment on the National Park Service (NPS) and C.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (t:SFWS) preliminary proposal on how best to restore grizzly bears to the North Cascades Ecosystem (NCE).

We support a 10G) experimental population approach to restoration of grizzly bears to the NCE, which would provide land managers with greater management flexibility in the event of human-bear conflict situations and other issues that may arise due to their reintroduction.

With that said, we are eager to review the proposed plan in entirety when it is made available, as well as the Environmental Impact Statement. It is crucial that both documents address the concerns of all those who may be impacted by the grizzly's reintroduction.

Particular consideration should be made for private property owners, whom-in Skagit County-have voiced a spectrum of both support, as well as concern. The Restoration Plan must detail the specific allowances and restrictions private property owners will have if a grizzly bear enters onto their property or causes safety or environmental issues, including the depredation of livestock. We hope that the plan will elaborate on what removal and relocation would actually look like, perhaps providing examples or case studies from other ecosystems that have undergone similar restoration projects.

It is also important that our citizens have a clear and efficient way to communicate with the NPS and its partners if, or when, issues arise. Will the NPS ensure that each affected county be issued a liaison who is tasked with responding to public comment and/or concerns? Having a specific liaison who the public can reach out to would go a long way in building confidence and trust in the restoration process.

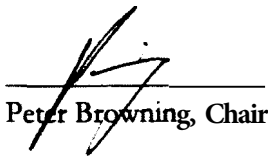
Lastly, we hope that tracking and data monitoring will be addressed in detail in the plan. We understand that all bears brought into the NCE will be tracked using a collar. Will the bears be monitored daily, with their whereabouts tracked on an ongoing basis? Will communities be notified if/when a bear comes into proximity of a town,

campground, or other area where humans frequent? Communication and transparency will play a h_u_g_e role in ensuring that those living and recreating in the NCE continue to feel safe.

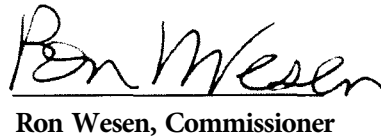
We appreciate the time and effort that has been put into soliciting public input throughout the beginning stages of this process. Our staff were able to attend your scoping meetings and found these to be enlightening and well facilitated. We look forward to reviewing the proposed plan when it is published and would very much appreciate if our comments above are addressed in your draft documents.

Sincerely,

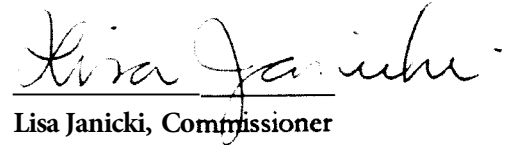
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Peter Browning, Chair



Ron Wesen, Commissioner



Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

*Your comments were successfully submitted at
December 14, 2022 11:04 AM Mountain Time*

Park: North Cascades National Park Service Complex
Project: 2022 North Cascades Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan/Environmental
Impact Statement
Document: Public Scoping Materials

Name: Skagit Commissioners
Address: 1800 Continental Place
City: Mount Vernon
State: WA
Postal Code: 98273
Email
Address: commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us
Organization: Skagit County
Keep My
Info Private: No

Comments: Dear Superintendent Striker,

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a town, campground, or other area where humans frequent? Communication and transparency will play a huge role in ensuring that those living and recreating in the NCE continue to feel safe.

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Sincerely, Board of Skagit County Commissioners

Comment ID: 2283986-124399/6000



Transportation Building
310 Maple Park Avenue S.E.
P.O. Box 47300
Olympia, WA 98504-7300
360-705-7000
TTY: 1-800-833-6388
www.wsdot.wa.gov

Dear Candidate:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) wishes to take this opportunity to advise political candidates about the placement of campaign signs and placards along state highways.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.42, the Highway Advertising Control Act, regulates signing on Interstate Highways, primary highways, and highways that are part of the Scenic and Recreational System. **Signs erected on private property that are adjacent to these highways must comply with the Highway Advertising Control Act, rules contained in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 468-66, and applicable local agency sign codes.**

In accordance with WAC 468-66-050, *Sign Classification and Specific Provisions*, temporary political campaign signs are identified and regulated as a type of on-premise sign intended to express a property owner's endorsement of a political candidate or initiative. Prior to placing signs, WSDOT recommends checking with the property owner for approval and to determine property line locations. Campaign signs are allowed under the following regulations:

- 1) **Temporary political campaign signs are limited to a maximum size of thirty-two square feet.**
- 2) Temporary political campaign signs must be removed within ten days following the election.
- 3) Sign installers must have permission of the underlying property owner prior to placing signs.
- 4) Temporary political campaign signs are subject to all other applicable provisions of RCW 47.42 and WAC 468.66 that pertain to Type 3 on-premise signs.

In addition to the above restrictions, **the erection of temporary political campaign signs within the right-of-way of all state highways is prohibited. Accordingly, signs placed within the right-of-way of any state highway are subject to removal by the Washington State Department of Transportation.**

Also, RCW 47.36.180(1) states in part that it is unlawful to erect any structure, sign, or device visible from a city street, county road, or state highway that simulates any directional, warning, or danger sign likely to be mistaken for such a sign. Therefore, a campaign sign cannot be designated in a manner that resembles an official traffic control sign.

If you should have any questions about placement of campaign signs along state highways, please contact Tanya Joblonski at 360-705-7294 or email at outdooradvertisingcontrol@wsdot.wa.gov.

We sincerely hope that candidates for public office will observe the laws and regulations enacted to limit driver distraction, and protect and preserve the roadside beauty of our state. Thank you in advance for your courtesy in this matter.

Washington State Department of Transportation