

Mount Spokane ski area expansion stalled by state Supreme Court ruling

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The Spokesman-Review

Sat., July 22, 2017, 11:05 a.m.



Former Spokane County Commissioner John Roskelley addresses a crowd that includes Spokane Tribe members during a rally in January 2016 opposing expansion of skiing on Mount Spokane. The Washington Supreme Court issued a temporary injunction Friday blocking logging until the court has decided whether it will hear the case. (Jesse Tinsley / The Spokesman-Review)

PARKS -- The Washington State Supreme Court on Friday issued an order preventing logging that would clear new ski runs on Mount Spokane until after a legal challenge brought by conservationists is decided.

After years of effort, Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park [received its first permit for construction](#) of new runs and lifts in January 2016 but has been unable to proceed

because of legal challenges. About that time, [the Spokane Tribe asked Gov. Jay Inslee to block the expansion](#) because of the potential disruption to wildlife.

Here's the rest of the story on the latest development, or non-development as it is, by S-R reporter Kip Hill:

The order follows court rulings in Thurston County Superior Court and the Washington Court of Appeals, District 2, upholding an expansion of the ski area authorized by the Washington State Park and Recreation Commission. The Spokane Audubon Society and the Lands Council filed a legal challenge seeking to protect 279 acres of a proposed 800-acre expansion of the ski runs, arguing the areas contained old-growth forest and logging would disrupt wildlife habitats.

The expansion has also been opposed by the Spokane Tribe of Indians, [which sought intervention from Gov. Jay Inslee to block expansion plans](#). The resort argues the proposed expansion will minimize the disturbance to surrounding plants and wildlife.

Mount Spokane has received all permits to begin logging on the site as early as Aug. 1. The groups sought an injunction earlier this month to delay any work until the Supreme Court decides whether it will hear the case. The court is also scheduled to make that decision Aug. 1.

“Since this temporary injunction may last no more than one day, no security is required at this time,” wrote Walter Burton, acting commissioner for the Washington Supreme Court.

More background on the ski area expansion controversy follows:

- [Bill Jennings: Despite obstacles, Mt. Spokane looks ahead to future](#), March 19, 2015
- [Environmental groups ask for review of Mount Spokane decision](#), March 19, 2015
- [Let's name Mt. Spokane's new downhill ski runs](#), Nov. 21, 2014
- [Mt. Spokane Ski expansion approved after 5-2 vote](#), Nov. 21, 2014
- [Editorial: Mt. Spokane expansion deserving of approval](#), Nov. 16, 2014
- [Op-ed: Help preserve Mount Spokane: Oppose ski expansion](#), Nov. 15, 2014
- [Op-ed: Expansion of ski area is best for all](#), Sept. 27, 2014
- [Landers: Mount Spokane ski park plans may be nearing finalization](#), Sept 14, 2014