

January 4, 2019

Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission

Attn: Lead Staff Member Michael Dotson and Lead Filing Staff on Docket #180677

I am writing to you today to express my concern regarding the commercial ferry application for Backcountry Travels LLC. As a resident of Chelan, I believe that the granting of a public convenience and necessity permit for Colter Courtney's business would be detrimental to the current ferry service that operates on the lake.

The proposed business would interfere with the existing ferry company that has always provided outstanding service. This family-owned and operated business has provided Stehekin residents and visitors alike with the luxury of comfort, convenience and safety by maintaining two large, fully-functioning vessels that provide service all-year-round. Allowing the launch of a competing ferry on Lake Chelan would hinder economic prosperity to both Chelan and Stehekin.

Another reason the proposed commercial ferry application would be detrimental to the overall financial state of the two small towns is the fact that the owners of the local businesses in Stehekin have refused to provide adequate operations in the winter. The opening of another service, with nothing to do in Stehekin in the off-season would impede with the financial prosperity of both businesses as well as those in Stehekin. Tourism provides substantial profit only in the summer months when the Stehekin businesses are open, because of this, there is no need for a new transportation service.

Colter argues that there has been a gap made in the accommodation of transportation for the tourism industry in Stehekin since the closing of the seaplane service. The closing of the seaplane service did not leave a void in transportation options. The current service provided by the Lake Chelan Boat Company gives tourists and residential commuters a multitude of trip choices that accommodate to the vast variety of year-round scheduling. Because of this, the opening of another ferry service is not necessary.

Those that are in favor of opening a new ferry service simply do not understand the ramifications of the changes that are to come in the existing service. For example, there would be nothing to prevent the Lake Chelan Boat Company from incurring a loss in the off-season. They would have to cut service drastically in order to remain financially stable. The Lake Chelan Boat Company provides Stehekin residents with a multitude of accommodations. Grocery and business freight delivery, personal freight delivery, commuter discounts, mail services and packaging services. A thirty two passenger boat would not be able to provide such accommodations and therefore would impede with existing business. I am confident the right decision will be made by the WUTC and its ability to continue to regulate the services that are provided only by the Lake Chelan Boat Company.

Sincerely,

Ledale S. Fry

Retired Manson Orchardist and Resident of Orondo, Washington