

MWC Master Plan Comments
172 Pembroke Rd | Concord, NH 03301

August 31, 2022

Mount Washington Commission,

I would like to submit written comments (2 pages) on the Draft Master Plan (Draft 4, 7/5/22) prepared by the Mount Washington Commission. I'm a full time resident of Carroll County, New Hampshire.

The summit of Mount Washington is clearly suffering from high visitation that is overwhelming the facilities and impacting the unique flora and natural resources in the alpine zone.

Buildings, Structures, and Impacted Land

- I would like to see the current footprint of buildings (and parking lots) kept as is and not increased.
- If possible, I would like to see structures such as fuel tanks removed or re-sited so they don't have a negative visual impact and don't cause environmental degradation.
- Consider moving communication equipment off the summit, thereby rendering the Yankee Building and towers not needed. Other states and areas of the country operate without the need for communication buildings and towers in sensitive mountain areas.
- Please remediate areas of the alpine zone that have been affected by development and return them to their natural condition.
- I would like to see the operation of the current summit facilities continue without the need for further development in the alpine zone (on or off NH state property).

Food/Beverage Services

Whether they arrive by hiking trail, train, or road, visitors to the summit are there to experience the environment, weather, and views. While it would be expected to provide some food or beverages, the summit doesn't need a full service kitchen. Please consider moving food production off site for two reasons:

1. It will provide more room that is clearly needed for other visitor services.
2. It will reduce the strain on the wastewater and other associated systems.

I realize that members of the commission will consider this a radical change, but it should be considered. Alternative food/beverage ideas:

- Have a full service food production facility off the mountain and transport food/beverages to the summit as needed.
- Only sell simple non-perishable food (trail mix, bars, etc.) and beverages on the summit, thereby not needing a full service food production facility on or off the summit.
- Visitors can experience full service food options off the summit before or after their trip at the Auto Road base, Marshfield Station, and Pinkham Notch.

Light Pollution

As the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA, www.darksky.org) states: *The night sky, filled with stars, is celebrated and protected around the world as a shared heritage benefitting all living things.* Please make the summit of Mount Washington "dark sky friendly" so that users on and off the mountain can enjoy the relatively dark skies of the White Mountains. I would encourage the summit partners (Auto Road, AMC, The Cog, Obs, USFS) to use dark sky friendly lighting at all of their facilities, whether on or off the summit. The AMC has experience with dark sky friendly lighting and would be a good summit partner to consult about this improvement.

Summit Capacity Limits

Language in the deeds giving summit property to the state of NH may prevent limiting visitors to the land on the summit, but I would like to see summit partners look into limiting visitors, either voluntarily or through guidelines put in place by the Mount Washington Commission. I applaud the commission for including this language in the draft master plan: ***Recognizing that there will always be a physical limit to the number of people on the Summit at any given time, the Auto Road and the Cog Railway should investigate ways to limit their visitors in order to contribute to the long range success of the Mount Washington experience. Similarly, the AMC, N.H. State Parks, and the U.S. Forest Service should investigate ways to limit the number of hikers or associated impacts.***

Thank you for reviewing my comments and taking them into consideration,

Brian Post
Jackson, New Hampshire