

I write this in opposition to the proposed Church of the Woods (COTW) project. My position is informed by my past professional education and career. I have a B.S. degree in Wildlife Biology and graduate courses in wetlands analysis. For sixteen years before moving to Lake Arrowhead in 2006, I was employed as a Certified Professional Wetland Scientist, administering Massachusetts environmental law. A main duty was analyzing impacts of construction projects on wetlands and waterways. During that time, I reviewed over 2,000 projects, from single family homes to commercial construction projects impacting hundreds of acres.

Of all the projects I ever reviewed, none were as poorly conceived, nor as potentially threatening to the environment, as the COTW project! The CEQA analysis and proposal submitted to the County Planning Commission was grievously flawed. It was replete with inaccuracies, omissions, distortions, misinterpretations and assertions unfounded upon any legitimate substantiation. Plans were lacking in detail, with depictions and plans on scale that made informed analysis of impacts impossible.

One of the main flaws was failure to address the impacts of massive clearing and construction adjacent to very steep slopes leading down to Little Bear Creek (a tributary of Lake Arrowhead). Research clearly shows that such alterations, without significant buffer setbacks, will cause serious water pollution and destruction of wildlife habitat. EPA guidance and even the County's General Plan calls for buffer setbacks. This was ignored. The Planning Commission should never have accepted, nor approved, the application. The Board of Supervisors should reject it.