
Mt. Baker Ski Area

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Bellingham, Washington



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A ski area enhances environmental protection with new and upgraded onsite wastewater infrastructure.

SERVICES

Water Systems

Located in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, the Mt. Baker Ski Area (MBSA) is one of few remaining independently operated ski areas in the U.S. When the MBSA Heather Meadow onsite wastewater system was declining, potentially threatening the surrounding environment, they turned to Biohabitats for help.

Originally built in the 1970s and permitted by Whatcom County, the system included gravity collection, a wastewater treatment plant, and a dispersal drainfield. In 2019, the drainfield experienced failure, and it was determined that oversight by the Washington Department of Health's Large On-Site Sewage System (LOSS) program would be prudent. Biohabitats helped MBSA upgrade its system to meet LOSS permit requirements and better protect the surrounding environment.

Biohabitats began by conducting a water audit to examine all contributions to the wastewater system and evaluating treatment and dispersal equipment. Biohabitats helped repair the failing drainfield, preserving an existing asset, and added 12 new drip dispersal areas. Biohabitats also designed replacement of outdated treatment, new controls, and monitoring equipment. With guidance and supervision from Biohabitats, MBSA has been operating the system and managing their LOSS permit successfully. Ongoing monitoring of system performance and variability show improvements in both performance and environmental protection. Biohabitats and MBSA continue to work together to operate and monitor infrastructure, and look for additional opportunities for system upgrades.