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OKANOGAN COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

1177 Pine Creek Rd.  
Tonasket, WA 98855  
June 5, 2014

To: Perry Huston  
Okanogan County Planning Director  
via e-mail: [phuston@co.okanogan.wa.us](mailto:phuston@co.okanogan.wa.us)

Subject: SEPA and general comments on 2014 version of the County Comprehensive Plan

Dear Sir:

*I write this letter fully understanding that it is yet another exercise in futility. For years now I and other citizens who want responsible and sustainable land use in this county have struggled to make our voices heard by joining advisory groups, writing letters, and attending numerous hearings and meetings. And all to no avail. The county administration continues not to hear our voices and continues to offer up the same kind of plan. Although it purports to protect the custom, culture and economic stability of the county, little attention is paid to protecting the environment and the county's land and water resources as well as the clean air, open space and rural lifestyle many of us hope to enjoy. A few examples of this failure include:*

*The fact that the Interim Zoning Map designates as Rural One many areas currently in agriculture or forestry with parcels of 20 acres and higher. The Plan states that high density rural will be located adjacent to urban areas and areas that demonstrate an enhanced ability to provide services. But the map shows high density rural development will be permitted in many areas that are remote and far from services. Many of these now are in open space agriculture or forestry which requires at least 20 acres or more. They should be zoned as such.*

*The fact that 17.21 OCC permits in all three Rural designations, numerous uses that are incompatible with the definition of rural, including airport hangars, service stations, light manufacturing (factories), etc. makes it necessary to evaluate their effect on the rural quality of the land.*

*The fact that there are no specific measures to ensure adequate water supply will be available for the high density it envisions, and no specific protection for groundwater resources from the permitted and conditional uses. ( Since conditional uses have been routinely permitted by the county they should be included in aquifer protection measures).*

*The fact that the lands designated as resource lands for agriculture and forestry aren't shown on the Interim Zoning Map. Or is it assumed that the low density rural is sufficient to cover protection of these lands as required by law? If so, how are 20 acre parcels supposed to be sufficient for these uses? As an example: Upland grazing areas require hundreds of acres to provide adequate forage for large numbers of cattle.*

*Given the questionable aspects of the current draft as regards protection of land and water resources, the decision by you as Planning Director that the Plan does not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is egregious. This decision should be revoked, and an independent contractor hired to facilitate a fair and complete analysis of the environmental impacts of this plan.*

*Sincerely,  
Jessica McNamara*