

**Cortney Ingle**

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**From:** Nick Hershenow <nhershenow@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 15, 2019 12:25 PM  
**To:** Cortney Ingle  
**Subject:** Comp Plan comments

Dear Okanogan County Planners,

Here are a few comments on the County Comprehensive Plan.

Considering the challenges – economic, social, and environmental – that face Okanogan County, the proposed Plan seems to fall short in a number of ways, failing to adequately – or even minimally – address a number of critical issues.

As a general approach, I would like to see the Plan advance policies that concentrate growth near towns and services, which would have many benefits, among them easing transportation problems, increasing fire resiliency, protecting farmlands, forests, wildlife corridors, and reducing conflicts between urban and rural residents.

Also it seems to me that the concept of sub-area planning makes a lot of sense, given the diversity of cultural and physical geography within our county.

Other specific issues I would like to see the comp plan address more completely and thoughtfully:

Critical Areas Ordinance, especially as related to water: Apparently the CAO and shoreline master plan have not been adequately updated to address our current situation. This would seem to be especially critical as applied to wetlands, groundwater recharge, and instream flow requirements. The quality and quantity of our water is our greatest wealth, vital to our economies and well-being; given growth pressures and the likelihood of a warmer climate with diminished snowpack, we need to be more proactive in managing, protecting, and conserving our water.

Ridgetop development: I would like to see a provision in the Plan allowing for an ordinance that places limits on development along sensitive ridgelines, both to enhance fire protection and to protect the public viewshed.

Dark Skies: One of the often unrecognized but increasingly rare and valuable qualities of our landscape is our dark night skies. The County has an opportunity to be proactive here, by enabling community-based ordinances requiring development to adopt lighting ordinances that are Dark Sky compliant.

Road access/wildfire: The county should retain rights of way on all roads that provide for for critical wildfire escape routes and access to public lands.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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