

D-64

Cortney Ingle

From: Mark Wolf-Armstrong <mwolfarmstrong@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2019 12:59 PM
To: Cortney Ingle
Cc: Andy Hover
Subject: Mark Wolf-Armstrong comments on current draft of Okanogan Comprehensive Plan
Attachments: Mark Wolf-Armstrong Comments on Okanogan County Comp Plan.pdf

Ms. Ingle – please find attached my comments on the Draft Comprehensive Plan.

I would appreciate receiving acknowledgment of this submission.

Here is the full text:

Mark Wolf-Armstrong
P.O. Box 1147
Twisp, WA 98856
mwolfarmstrong@gmail.com

September 16 2019

Dear Ms. Ingle, Ms. Hubbard, Members of the Planning Commission and Okanogan County Commissioners,

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the Draft Okanogan County Comprehensive plan and related Environmental Impact Statement. I am an Okanogan County resident and a landowner on the Twisp River. My wife and I have a small farm on 46 acres, producing hay crops and supporting two young farm families doing commercial agriculture. Every day, we realize how very fortunate we are to live in a place where people value a sense of community and have a deep regard for the land that sustains us.

The Comprehensive Plan under your consideration is a great opportunity to set our course for the future. The creation of a viable and durable Comp Plan is a daunting task. It is of utmost importance that the Comp Plan lay out clear guidelines for how we manage our lands and waters and enable growth to occur in appropriate locations and at a pace in keeping with this rural landscape. In particular, I'd like to call out the critical importance that the Plan adequately address clear trends we are facing in this County, notably:

- the increasing risk of wildfire
- diminishing water availability and other impacts of our changing climate
- rapid growth in our recreation economy

I respectfully submit that the current draft of this Comp Plan is inadequate in a number of respects:

- **The Plan does not meet the basic standards required by law.** It is entirely missing a **Land Use Element**, needed to guide zoning and permitting. It is also missing an **Economic Development Element**. Nor does it adequately address **recreation** as a hugely important and growing part of our economy.

I SUPPORT: The inclusion of provisions which

- Direct growth to existing towns and near existing towns
- Distinguish between rural and residential areas by creating different designations for each
- Support local agriculture
- Will enhance recreational opportunities
- Safeguard wildlife, with special focus on migration corridors
- Recognize risks from natural hazards such as landslides, more frequent as a result of large scale wildfire
- Take fully into account the layout of our county road system and plan accordingly

- Provide guidance to achieve and maintain dark skies

- **On the all-important issue of wildfire,** the Plan includes no meaningful protections for people and property

I SUPPORT: Provisions in the plan which will keep development out of the path of wildfire as much as possible.

- **On water:** The Plan provides inadequate provisions to protect water quantity including senior water rights holders, farms and ranches, fish and wildlife, and recreation. It is also out of step with the instream flow rules for watersheds in the county with and state law.

I SUPPORT: An approach which recognizes that water supply will be much more limited in the future.

IN ADDITION: The current draft could be greatly improved with several structural changes. These include:

- **A much more thorough analysis of the Alternatives:** This should include an analysis of the Alternative 4, developed by citizens to aid the County in this process.
- **The use of sub-area planning** which enables consideration of the wide variation in the geography, history and culture of Okanogan County. Local advisory committees could add enormously to the richness of the Plan.
- **Inclusion of the entire Methow Watershed within the Methow Valley More Completely Planned Area (MVMCPA)**

I fully support the request that the County engage a qualified professional to assist in drafting the final Comp Plan and EIS. The additional investment now will pay great dividends for the future. I also endorse the extensive comments submitted by the Methow Valley Citizens Council, with detailed recommendations and specific suggestions for the creation of a credible Comprehensive Plan. These recommendations represent many hours of effort, largely by volunteers, with the intent of helping to create the best possible product possible.

Thank you again for this opportunity to engage in an all-important effort on the part of the citizens of Okanogan County to plan for a bright and prosperous future. It is my hope that years from now we may all look upon the result with great pride.

Mark Wolf-Armstrong
Twisp River resident

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Mark Wolf-Armstrong

Twisp River Resident

