

CLEARANCES	Initial	Date	Date Received in Council Office	Agenda Date	Assigned to:
Originator: Elizabeth K. Olsen	EKO	5/21/99	<b>RECEIVED</b>  <b>JUN 08 1999</b>  <b>WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	6/15/99	Introduction
Division Head: Sylvia Goodwin	SG	5/21/99		6/29/99	P & D / Council
Dept. Head: Michael Knapp	MK	5/21/99			
Prosecutor David Grant	DMG	6-4-99			
Purchasing/Budget:					
Executive: Peter Kremen	PK	6-7-99			

**SUBJECT:** File Reference: ZON99-0001ZT: An Ordinance to amend the text of Title 20, the Official Whatcom County Code, Chapter 20.42 to allow meeting facilities for natural resource-based educational purposes; related uses will include rental cabins or other lodging structures, cooking and dining facilities, retail sales of meeting supplies and gifts as a conditional use, in the Foothills Subarea, South Fork Valley Subarea, the Newhalem Exclave and the Baker Lake Exclave.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Agency Report  
Proposed Ordinance,  
Excerpt from Draft Planning Commission Minutes, May 13,1999

Should Clerk schedule a hearing? ( ) Yes ( ) NO  
Requested Date:

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

This ordinance, in response to a request by Whatcom County Council, expands the conditional uses allowed in the Rural Forestry zone district to allow meeting facilities for natural resource-based educational purposes; related uses will include rental cabins or other lodging structures, cooking and dining facilities, retail sales of meeting supplies and gifts as a conditional use, in the Foothills Subarea, South Fork Valley Subarea, the Newhalem Exclave and the Baker Lake Exclave.

The Director of Planning and Development Services recommends Council adopt the proposed ordinance.

**Distribution Request**

Indicate those who should receive a copy after Council action.  
List specific names to the right.

ADS Facilities Management	
ADS Finance	
ADS Human Resources	
ADS Info Services	
Assessor	
Auditor	
Cooperative Extension	
District Court	
Executive	
Health	
Hearing Examiner	
Jail	
Juvenile	
Parks	
Planning	Michael Knapp
Prosecutor	
Public Works	
Sheriff	
Superior Court	
Treasurer	
Other	

**COUNCIL ACTION TAKEN:**

1999 - 215 6/15/99: Introduced  
6/29/99: Adopted 5-0, Imhof, Nelson absent Ord. #99-031

Related County Contract #:

Related File Numbers: ZON99-0001ZT

Ordinance or Resolution Number  
(this item):

**ORD. #99-031**

SPONSORED BY: Planning

PROPOSED BY: Planning

INTRODUCTION DATE: 6/15/99

ORDINANCE NO. 99-031

**AMENDING THE OFFICIAL WHATCOM COUNTY CODE, TITLE 20, CHAPTER 20.42, TO ALLOW MEETING FACILITIES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES; AND RELATED USES INCLUDING RENTAL CABINS OR OTHER LODGING STRUCTURES, COOKING AND DINING FACILITIES, RETAIL SALES OF MEETING SUPPLIES AND GIFTS AS A CONDITIONAL USE, IN THE FOOTHILLS SUBAREA, SOUTH FORK VALLEY SUBAREA, THE NEWHALEM EXCLAVE AND THE BAKER LAKE EXCLAVE**

**WHEREAS**, The request is a text amendment to Title 20 of the Official Whatcom County Zoning Code, Section 20.42.155 ; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to RCW 36.70.590 legal notice was published in the Bellingham Herald on Thursday, April 29, 1999; and

**WHEREAS**, the Deputy SEPA Official issued a Determination of Nonsignificance on May 6, 1999; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment on May 13, 1999, considered all testimony, and recommended approval of the text amendment; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council held a public meeting on June 29, 1999 to consider this matter and approved the Planning Commission recommendation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council found the amendments in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council has adopted the following Findings and Conclusions:

**FINDINGS**

1. The Whatcom County Council has determined that expeditious reviews of amendments to Title 20 are necessary to support the economic well-being of the County.
2. There is a provision in allowed conditional uses in the rural forestry zone which allows bed and breakfast and camping facilities but not rental cabins.
3. Forestry education centers provide a valuable contribution to rural economies.

4. The economies of the Foothills Subarea, South Fork Valley Subarea, the Newhalem Exclave and the Baker Lake Exclave have been depressed due to a reduction in timber harvest.
5. Several current grant offerings depend on expansion of a forestry education center.
6. The 20 percent lot coverage maximum in the Rural Forestry zone will prevent conversion of parcels to non forestry uses and in addition requirement that development be on no more than 50% of the lot will discourage inappropriate conversion of productive forest land to incompatible non-forest uses, as set forth in Policy 8E-7 of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan.
7. At the regular meeting on May 13, 1999 the Planning Commission voted to approve the proposed zoning text amendment.
8. Conditional use criteria in 20.42.902 will ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment and addresses traffic impacts.
9. Section 20.80.212 of the Whatcom County Code, Supplemental Requirements, provides for written findings for approved adequate levels of services of development for subdivision, commercial or conditional uses.
10. Educational facilities with associated uses will not create impacts greater than those which would occur under 20.42.154 including traffic, water, sewer/septic, viewsheds etc.
11. Whatcom County envisions the development as a small scale project compatible with a rural setting.

## CONCLUSIONS

That the proposed text amendment in the Rural Forestry District will create economic growth in the foothills regions of Whatcom County and enhance understanding of forestry, natural resources and wildlife through education.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that:

Section 1. The Official Whatcom County Zoning Ordinance, Title 20, is hereby amended as shown in *Exhibit 1*.

Section 2. Adjudication of invalidity of any of the sections, clauses, or provisions of this Ordinance shall not affect or impair the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof other than the part so declared to be invalid.

ADOPTED this 29 day of June, 1999.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON



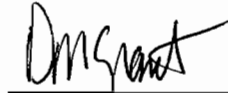
Dana Brown-Davis,  
Clerk of the Council



Marlene Dawson, Council Chair

APPROVED as to form

Approved     Denied



David Grant, Civil Deputy Prosecutor



Pete Kremen, Executive

Date: 7-2-99

## EXHIBIT "1"

*The proposed RURAL FORESTRY DISTRICT text amendment is:*

20.42.155 The operation of facilities intended to provide education related to forestry, natural resources and wildlife and the purpose of this district, including but not limited to demonstration forests and conservation laboratories, educational meeting facilities and related uses including rental cabins or other lodging structures, cooking and dining facilities, retail sales of meeting supplies and gifts in the Foothills Subarea, South Fork Valley, the Newhalem Exclave and the Baker Lake Exclave provided the following standards are met:

- (1) Density shall not exceed one sleeping unit per one gross acre or a maximum of 50 beds for the entire development.
- (2) Each cabin shall have a maximum of three sleeping units.
- (3) Must be located with vehicular access fronting on paved County road or private road improved to County standards.
- (4) Front yard setback shall be 75 feet, with 100 feet side and rear yard setbacks to adjacent properties.
- (5) Lot coverage for all facilities, including the rental cabins, shall not exceed 20%, clustered on no more than 50% of the property.