

January 9, 2008

David Stalheim, Director  
Whatcom County Planning & Development Services Dept.  
Northwest Annex  
5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097

WHATCOM COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

JAN 09 2008

RECEIVED

Re: SEP07-181, 2007 Draft Foothills Subarea Plan

Dear Mr. Stalheim:

Please accept this letter in response to the recent Determination of Significance regarding the above-noted 2007 Draft Foothills Subarea Plan ("Draft Plan"). I attended a majority of the Subarea Committee meeting in 2006 and 2007 and have reviewed the Draft Plan submitted by the majority, as well as the Minority Report submitted by three of the Committee members.

I believe that the Draft Plan fails to sufficiently address a number of environmental issues, including the impact of the proposed population projections on roads and water quality, especially in the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area. I think that the population projections proposed in the majority Draft Plan are higher than necessary and the County should instead adopt the population projections proposed in the Minority Report. I am also concerned about the potential impact of the Draft Plan on local streams and the fish population.

I am pleased that County Planning recognizes that adoption of the proposed Draft Plan will have a significant impact on the environment of the foothills and other parts of Whatcom County and that said impact needs to be addressed via an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"). I understand that the EIS will address land use, traffic, public facilities and utilities, and water quality.

However, I believe a new EIS is required in relation to the Draft Plan, and that the County should not rely on the findings of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan EIS. Please change the Determination of Significance to require that the County prepare an EIS specifically in association with the Draft Plan, taking into consideration current regulations and the current environmental situation.

Thank you for ensuring that the community's concerns regarding environmental issues are addressed and properly mitigated prior to the adoption of the proposed Draft Plan.

Yours truly,



Karen Reich

PO Box 635  
Deming WA 98244