

Linda Ann Kuller

From: Ellen Winter <ellenbwinter@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 4, 2017 11:05 PM
To: Comp Plan Update
Subject: Water Resources: A Key Issue for San Juan County

Dear Erika Shook and County Councilors.

The Washington State Supreme Court's October 2016 ruling [<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/WR/wrac/images/pdf/91475-3opinion.pdf>] has set a precedent that

"counties must ensure there is enough available water before issuing permits for new development in rural areas".

As a result, several counties, including Whatcom County, have stopped accepting building permits in rural areas.

Our 2018 Comp Plan Update needs to include a thorough analysis of current water availability in rural areas and evidence that the local water supply can support the proposed development.

A 2008 San Juan County Groundwater Monitoring Report concluded key issues for San Juan County:

- Very low recharge to aquifers,
- Seawater intrusion,
- Water right allocations by the state that exceed water available,
- Areas where current use of water exceeds aquifer capacity,
- Water development that is occurring primarily via exempt wells,
- Failure of many individual and community wells during summer months,
- Lack of capacity to serve areas designated by the county's GMA process for growth,

- A gap in responsibility and authority between state and county agencies,
- Lack of comprehensive monitoring and assessment of water resource capacity, and
- Lack of coordinated, cooperative resource management.

Please consider in the next county plan that before

permits are issued for new developments in rural areas that the county can ensure that there is enough available water on the site.

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Compose:

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