

## Adam Zack

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**From:** Stephanie Buffum <stephanie@sanjuans.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 16, 2018 4:28 PM  
**To:** Comp Plan Update  
**Subject:** Vision Comments - Friends of the San Juans 2\_16-18  
**Attachments:** PC\_vision\_public hearing cmt letter Friends of the San Juans 2\_16\_18.docx

Dear San Juan County Planning Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement update. FRIENDS of the San Juans ("FRIENDS") is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 1979 to protect and restore the San Juan Islands and the Salish Sea for people and nature. We represent over 2,000 members and use science, policy, law, education, and citizen activism to protect, preserve, and restore the land, water, and sea of the San Juan archipelago. Our members live, work, and recreate in the San Juan Islands.

As Islanders, we share fundamental goals to our island life, present and future.

- To preserve and protect the unique amenities and natural environment of the San Juan Islands for the benefit of Island residents and, generally, for residents of Washington State and the Salish Sea.
- To recognize the importance of the marine environment and preserve a marine oriented community and island atmosphere.
- To provide environmental stewardship strategies, to be followed by residents and visitors alike, that recognize societal responsibilities, as well as the rights of property owners.
- To minimize the Island's contribution to global climate change.
- To establish a land use pattern which places high priority on environmental and social factors.
- To manage growth in a way that it is conditioned by the natural environment and respects social and economic diversity.
- To be inclusive by welcoming residents with varying income levels, lifestyles and age groups.
- To ensure a healthy community, with residents working together to improve the quality of life.
- To ensure that a balance is maintained between community well-being and the rights of individual property owners.
- To foster the creation and maintenance of local employment in island-based sustainable activities.
- To recognize our environment is the economic heart of our Islands, and to provide for the expansion of commercial, residential, and community and cultural uses that will contribute towards a pleasant, walkable villages, appropriate in form and scale to a small community.
- To engage other levels of government and non-governmental organizations to accomplish the objectives and policies of the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan.

With over 8 million residents in the Salish Sea, the visitor Population of the San Juan County was estimated to be 813,000 visitors, who spent approximately \$203 million in 2015. The San Juan County 2017 Comprehensive Landuse Plan Population projections Technical Memorandum shows that approximately 125,000 visitors stay with resident friends or relatives. If accurate, this represents a 40 fold increase in our base population during peak season.

2016 marina statistics from the Port of Friday Harbor reported:

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Visitors are attracted to our islands for many of the same reasons as our full and part-time residents and they are a vital part of our economy on our major ferry served islands. Many visitors enjoy our state parks and national trails that are only accessible by boat. How we plan and manage for visitor use of our islands, and their increased use of local trails, drinking water, septic and sewer use, farm, forests, housing and recreation is a major topic for planning and one we have never taken on in the past 17 years.

Several local, state, federal and non-governmental organizations manage parks, protected areas, or recreational facilities, have formed a Cooperative Action Plan to manage visitor use to protect and enhance visitor experiences. They have formed the Visitor Management Workshop and Assessment with summary statistics being presented later this month. I encourage all of you to attend these meetings on your islands.

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## Edits to the VISION STATEMENT

### PREAMBLE

1. Add “fragile.” The abundance of island resources cannot be taken for granted. There has been a decline in wildlife populations and a reduced quality of some of their habitats (e.g., SRKWs, salmon species, eelgrass, etc.) An ethic of self-reliance, which underpins decisions where conserving land, air, water and energy reduces our ecological footprint.
2. Add “stewardship of our common resources.” Stewardship is necessary to preserve the ‘extraordinary treasure of natural beauty’ and other priority resources identified below (e.g., water and natural resources).
3. Change 2020 to 2038 or 2040?

### Basic Human Need

1. Add “quantified, monitored.” In order to ensure that our drinking water is clean and adequate and conserved, it must also be quantified and monitored.
2. Correct word choice? One would not be limited by ‘access.’ Change “access” to “barriers”

### Economy

Retain “resource’ and add “land.” We cannot support the traditional industries of forestry and farming without the resources and resource lands upon which they depend.

### Governance

1. Add, “Our county borders the Province of British Columbia, including the Gulf Islands, and several Washington State counties. Our elected officials and government institutions communicate with and collaborate in our areas of

mutual interest.” Additional language needed to address the importance of engagement and advocacy for our economy and resources beyond our county borders.

2. What is meant by “accessible?” ADA? Available?

3. Add “sufficient.” If ‘sufficient’ is used to quantify the variety of housing types, it should also be used to quantify “housing for people of all incomes.”

#### Housing

In order to ensure that there is sufficient housing for people of all incomes, affordable housing development should not be limited (e.g., to the initial homeowner(s), a 20-year affordability requirement, etc.). Housing that is affordable to certain income levels which then converts to market rate can require the replacement of those units in addition to the need to meet the on-going demand for affordable housing.

#### Climate Change

1. Add an “s” to “island.” Our community is comprised of many islands.

2. Add, “and enacts incentives and regulations.” If we are serious about addressing climate change, our vision statement must do more than just encourage voluntary efforts such as:

- Reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Community energy planning
- Corporate carbon neutrality
- Feasibility of an on-island composting facility
- Mitigation of and adaptation to water shortages
- Transportation alternatives
- Support for community-based initiatives related to climate action
- Other emerging climate-related issues

3. Add “and climate resiliency planning in all aspects of governance.” Building climate resiliency is the key to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

In this next section, the same edits mentioned above, are inserted the body of the Vision statement as comments:

### A DECLARATION OF VISION AND COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF SAN JUAN COUNTY

#### PREAMBLE

WE THE PEOPLE of San Juan County recognize that these rural islands are an extraordinary treasure of natural beauty and fragile abundance, and that independence, privacy, and personal freedom, and stewardship of our common resources are values prized by islanders. Being a diverse people bound together by these shared values, we declare our commitment to work towards this vision of the San Juan Islands in 2020 A.D.

#### COMMUNITY

We envision a community that is primarily rural, made up of islands of varying character, each with its own unique qualities. The islands are places of peace and mutual tolerance, where citizens of differing backgrounds and beliefs respect each other's dignity, privacy, and freedoms. We communicate effectively and openly and work together toward goals identified as being for the common good. We foster a sense of neighborliness, of self-sufficiency, and community pride that has long been a part of our island character.

#### BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

Our islands are places where all citizens can safely walk or play, day or night. The drinking water supply is clean, and adequate, quantified, monitored, and conserved as a vital resource. Health care, elder care, and help in time of need are accessible and affordable. The supply of affordable housing is adequate to meet the needs of our diverse population. Making a life here is possible for all people and is not limited by access to basic human needs.

#### EDUCATION

Learning is a continuing lifelong process which that is encouraged and aided by the community. A partnership of families and community creates a supportive and challenging environment founded on academic excellence and artistic expression. This educational environment produces ethical, self-directed, compassionate, responsible world citizens, alive with the love of learning.

## ECONOMY

We support a pattern of economic growth and development which serves the needs of our community, and which recognizes the rural, residential, quiet, agricultural, marine and isolated nature of the islands. Our economy comprises a wide spectrum of stable, year-round activities that provide family wage employment for islanders. The workforce is able to live, work, and thrive locally. We support and encourage traditional industries including forestry, farming, aquaculture, construction, fishing and tourism without jeopardizing the resources resource lands and natural environment on which they depend. We have home occupations and cottage industries which enterprises that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. We encourage new ideas and new technology for improving the quality and profitability of our goods and services. Advanced interactive communication systems are encouraged support our economy. Value-added activities are encouraged. Environmental conservation and sustainable development are balanced.

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Our islands have exceptional natural beauty and healthy diverse ecosystems surrounded by pollution-free marine waters. The air is fresh and clean, the water quality is excellent, and the soil is uncontaminated. As careful stewards of these islands, we conserve resources, protect our shorelines and critical areas, preserve open space, and take appropriate action to assure healthy land and marine environments. The natural environment is central to the ecological health, quality of life, and the economy in the islands. Native plants and animals of the islands thrive, and are identified, appreciated and conserved.

## LAND USE

Neighborhoods, hamlets, villages and towns are clearly defined so as to conserve agricultural, forest, mineral resource and environmentally sensitive lands critical areas. These areas define our heritage and sense of place, provide providing for commerce and community activities without losing their small scale and attractive island ambiance. There is housing for people of all incomes. The unique character of our shorelines is protected by encouraging uses which that maintain or enhance the quality of the shoreline environment. Through innovative land use strategies, our citizens and institutions balance and protect private property rights, public rights, and our natural environment.

## TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

We have water, land, and air transportation systems commensurate with our island culture. On-island circulation is by means of a system of scenic rural roads with automobile, bicycle and pedestrian ways functioning without conflict. In some places, the roads are unpaved, narrow, and winding, and care is taken to maintain a rustic quality in public signs. Transportation plans equally consider cyclists, pedestrians, automobiles, public transportation, and rural character. Expansion or new construction of basic public transportation facilities occurs only on the basis of demonstrated local public need. Advanced interactive communication systems are encouraged.

## ENERGY AND RESOURCES

Our community fosters resource and energy conservation. Energy independence is encouraged. Drinking water resources are managed to meet the needs of our community and the natural environment. Recycling, solid waste, and sewage treatment are managed both within the confines of each island and Countywide in an environmentally sound manner. Renewable natural resources are used on a sustainable basis. Nonrenewable resources are conserved wherever possible and practical.

## ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION

Our community nurtures the expression of its creative talents and supports diverse cultural and entertainment activities. Our cultural facilities such as libraries, museums, and theaters are focal points of activity and community support. Well-managed parks, trails, and shoreline access, where appropriate, provide islanders with recreation with due regard for both the rights of private property owners and the natural limitations of each site.

## HERITAGE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Our community is enriched by a strong sense of identity, tradition, legacy, and continuity, where past and present freely mingle. We recognize the contributions to our rural and maritime heritage made by indigenous peoples, explorers, and island pioneers, and encourage the preservation of that heritage. We encourage preservation of historic sites, heritage, structures, and traditions for the enjoyment of all.

#### GOVERNANCE

We are self-governed by informed citizens. We are equally represented by elected officials who conduct the activities of government in an ethical, fair, impartial, responsive and open manner which that recognizes the independent, self-reliant nature of its citizens. Our county borders the Province of British Columbia, including the Gulf Islands, and several Washington State counties. Our elected officials and government institutions communicate with and collaborate in our areas of mutual interest. Our government institutions balance responsibility with resources and costs, consolidate services where practical, manage prudently, provide reliable data, are service-oriented, and perform in a timely manner.

#### HOUSING

The supply of accessible and affordable housing is adequate to meet the needs of our diverse population. There is sufficient housing for people of all incomes. Funding provided for the development of affordable housing prioritizes perpetually affordable housing. There is sufficient variety in housing types to accommodate diverse households. Raising a family, having a good quality of life, and economic opportunities are not limited by access to housing.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Our islands community sets an example with its response to climate change. We proactively address the effects of climate change like sea level rise and drought. Our community encourages voluntary efforts and enacts incentives and regulations to reduce our carbon footprint and climate resiliency planning in all aspects of governance. Preparations to mitigate these affects are made in advance before they become crises.

#### OUR COMMITMENT:

AS FORTUNATE CITIZENS OF THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WE COMMIT ourselves individually and communally to a future for ourselves and our children that reflects this vision. To this end, we, the undersigned individuals dedicate our time and our talents.

Stephanie

Stephanie Buffum  
Executive Director  
[stephanie@sanjuans.org](mailto:stephanie@sanjuans.org)

FRIENDS of the San Juans  
P.O. Box 1344 | Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
Office: 360.378.2319 | cell:360.472.0404 | skype: stephanie3782319

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*Protecting and preserving the San Juans and Salish Sea for people and nature since 1979.*



## Friends *of the* San Juans

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February 16, 2018

### Public Testimony – San Juan County Comprehensive Land Use Vision Statement

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*protecting and restoring the San Juan Islands and the Salish Sea for people and nature*

With over 8 million residents in the Salish Sea, the **visitor** Population of the San Juan County was estimated to be 813,000 visitors, who spent approximately \$203 million in 2015. <sup>1</sup> The San Juan County 2017 Comprehensive Landuse Plan Population projections Technical Memorandum shows that approximately 125,000 visitors stay with resident friends or relatives.<sup>2</sup> If accurate, this represents a 40 fold increase in our base population during peak season.

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<sup>1</sup> San Juan County Comprehensive Landuse Plan Population projections Technical Memorandum states a report from Dean Runyan and Associates model, 2017, page 36.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Runyan Associates for the Washington Tourism Alliance, 2015.

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**Commented [M12]:** •Add, "and enacts incentives and regulations." If we are serious about addressing climate change, our vision statement must do more than just encourage voluntary efforts such as:

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- Reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
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