

## Adam Zack

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**From:** seraphim at rockisland.com <seraphim@rockisland.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 5:34 PM  
**To:** Comp Plan Update  
**Subject:** Vacation Rentals

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To: San Juan County Council  
From: Cynthia Dilling, Lopez Island  
Subject: Vacation Rentals

18 July 2021

Dear San Juan County Council,

I think it was former San Juan County Commissioner Eleanor Howard who said: " You have to be more careful with an Island."

It is time to take these words seriously. I went into Lopez Village yesterday (Saturday July 17) and was stunned to see hordes of people, no parking places, out of state license plates everywhere, speeding cars in 25 mph roads and lines of people at two different restaurants. It was like a continuation of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Two comments:

1. **We need to immediately stop advertising the "beautiful, peaceful San Juans" as a vacation get-a-way.**  
We are over advertised.
2. **Increasing vacation rentals on Lopez is an atrocity.** I've lived on Lopez since 1976. A consistent comment from visitors and residents is: they love the beauty of the islands, but they want to live or be here because of the community. The direction we are going is driving both younger and older families out of our community because they cannot afford to live here. Vacation rental owners who live off-island are profiting entirely at the expense of our island community. Lopezians who rent second homes or cabins as airbnbs could choose to provide year-round housing for locals and still make a sizable yearly income. Adding 34% (44 more homes) to the existing 130 vacation rentals on Lopez, will change our community.

If we continue to encourage more visitors, we risk losing what we treasure about living here. We will become a destination for the wealthy. The folks who raise families here, run businesses, serve as EMT's, work in the markets and shops, teach the children, repair and service our homes, and basically keep the islands running will have to live somewhere else. Is this really what we want?

As a County Council person, I would hope that instead of following the trail of "more visitors equal more money" you will STOP before we have lost what we love about this beautiful place we call home. I cannot speak for San Juan or Orcas Island - but as a Lopez resident for 45 years -

**I ask you not to add a possible 44 rentals to the existing 130 vacation rentals on Lopez.**

**I would encourage you to consider freezing or lowering the current numbers of vacation rentals and ban non-residents running airbnb's. Or, immediately place a moratorium on the question and let the people who live here vote and make this decision for their own islands.**

Special interests should not be making this decision.

I appreciate that you have a challenging job. Your decisions will shape our future. Who is pressuring the County Council to allow more vacation rentals? Put this to a vote of the residents of each island.

This is a time to pause and carefully consider our next steps. We DO have to be more careful with our islands.

Thank you for your consideration,

Warm regards,

Cynthia Dilling

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