

## Adam Zack

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**From:** Kristin Fernald <kferald.home@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 26, 2021 10:43 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation rentals on Lopez Island

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Dear Commissioners,

I have lived on Lopez Island for almost 40 years. I have, of course, seen many changes in our island life over that time. What I have always treasured about Lopez is the balance in our community of valuing and respecting the year-round residents and the diversity of who we are and what we contribute to keeping our island a healthy functioning community for all ages, and the summer tourist scene. We used to have a "Take Back the Rock" party in the village at the end of Labor Day weekend, a time for locals to gather and celebrate having the island back to its usual pace of our day to day lives. Everyone had their way of getting through the summer tourist season, and whether it was a time of avoiding "town" or helping serve the summer visitors in a variety of island businesses, it was something we accepted as a fact of our island life. We knew things would quiet down in the fall and we would enjoy this unique community and beautiful island that we moved here to be part of.

Over the past 10 years, this balance has gradually become increasingly off kilter. We are all stressed by the numbers of visitors coming to the island. Businesses our at their max (or beyond), the land is over-used, the ferries are near impossible to get on from Lopez, and housing for families and individuals who live and work here year-round is scarce. Then there are concerns of water usage and sewage limits. I am deeply concerned about the trajectory of increasing the capacity to house visitors through vacation rentals on this island. We are at risk of losing what makes this community so special and vital: families and young people. We need to be DISCOURAGING vacation rentals and ENCOURAGING year round rentals. Any increase in vacation rentals without further consideration of what this does to the balance of life on this island jeopardizes the health and wellness of our community. Unchecked growth has hurt us already. My request is that you not only cap vacation rentals where they are, but that you come up with incentives for home owners that do not live here to offer year-round rentals.

I appreciate all that you commissioners do, and know that this particular process of managing vacation rentals in the islands in general is not an easy job. I would make one final request: consider the well-being of our ferry workers and business workers who are absolutely maxed out with the numbers of people on the island demanding their services. As a licensed mental health counselor I am very concerned about the ongoing stress these valuable individuals are experiencing, with no break for months. We must listen to their distress calls: please do not add any more stress to the system! We need to figure out how to better manage what we have now, not add more.

Thank you so much for listening and for your service to our island communities.

Sincerely,  
Kristin Fernald  
98 Salmonberry Lane  
Lopez Island

Sent from my iPad