

## Adam Zack

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**From:** Lynda Guernsey  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 17, 2021 11:42 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** FW: Letter against vacation rental caps

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**SAN JUAN COUNTY**  
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**From:** Joe Thoron <joethoron@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 17, 2021 11:42 AM  
**To:** San Juan County Council <councilvm@sanjuanco.com>; Lynda Guernsey <LyndaG@sanjuanco.com>  
**Subject:** Letter against vacation rental caps

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Dear County Council and Planning Commission:

I'm writing to express my concerns with capping the number of vacation rentals in the County.

As background, I am a 20 year resident of Orcas Island. I have lived in affordable rentals on Orcas (under \$800/month, both with and without rats). My wife and I rent out an ADU on our property as a long-term rental. We own and operate a vacation rental on an adjacent property.

Also as background, our vacation rental property was a long-term rental for a decade or so before we bought it. It had no working potable water; the tenants had allowed the water catchment system to fail and had plumbed the fixtures with pond water. The septic system had presumably failed as well, because it had to be rebuilt before the sale.

My primary reason for objecting to caps is that it's not clear what problem they will actually solve.

The Vacation Rental Working Group has articulated many different reasons for limiting vacation rentals, including water use, noise, changing character of neighborhoods, affordable housing, summer workforce housing, and overtourism.

Some of these, e.g., water use and noise, have been disproven.

Other issues, e.g., workforce housing and affordable housing, have multiple factors including rising real estate values, demographic changes, land use policy, etc.

As Steve Smith has articulated in his "Proposed Vacation Rental Motion," caps are not likely to solve the housing problem in the islands. (p. 18)

Let's work to define the real problems and craft solutions that will address them without bringing on a raft of unintended consequences. If the County really wants to do something about affordable housing and workforce housing, putting caps on vacation rentals seems to be more of a distraction than a solution.

Joe Thoron  
Orcas Island