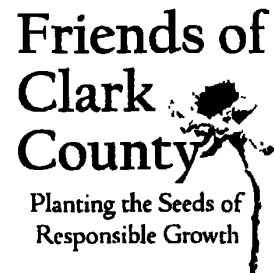


Friends of Clark County
O. Box 513
Vancouver, WA 98666
friendsofclarkcounty.org

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CP16#0464



NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Community Planning Comprehensive Plan Alternatives

PO Box 9810 Vancouver, Washington 98666-9810

Subject: Comments on the 2016 Comprehensive Growth Management Plan Update Alternatives.

Sent via email to: comp.plan@clark.wa.gov

Please submit these comments to the record.

Jear Sirs and Madams,

I am a rural resident of Clark County. I own 70 acres, much of which is timberland. I have been raising organic vegetables and fruits for many years, selling produce in the farmers' markets and directly from the farm. I have 5 wells on the property. One puts out an adequate supply of water for my food production for now, one has dried up completely, 2 are very marginal, meaning they run out of water easily, and one is adequate for residential use.

Although I own many acres, only 4 are suitable for food production. Food production requires relatively flat land, electricity available for processing, roads for harvest and transport, and sunlight. Soil is also a major factor, but modern agriculture can amend many soils by means of organic compost and cover crops.

As most people realize, ample water is essential for food production here. Farmers cannot afford to buy water from a utility and expect to remain in business very long. Their well water is essential. Many studies reveal that the water table in Clark County is very limited. [Here is a statement from Focus on Water Availability Lewis River Watershed, WRIA 27 p. 1 \(Publication Number: 11-11-031 August 2012\) accessed on Nov. 12, 2014](#)

Factors affecting water availability

There is limited water available for new uses in WRIA 27, especially given that river levels need to be maintained to ensure adequate water quality and fish migration. Additionally, PacifiCorp has senior water rights to maintain reservoir levels in Lake Merwin and Yale Lake, and as a result, much of the water in the Lewis

River Watershed has already been spoken for. Increased demands from population growth, low summer and early fall streamflow levels, and impacts from climate change add to the challenge of finding new water supplies in WRIA 11, especially during the summer months.”

I’m concerned that this is not being given adequate consideration when the county is planning to add more residential lots to rural areas.

I heard one argument submitted by Carol Levanen, of Clark County Citizens United, that water availability is not an issue in Clark County since “PUD supplies 93%of water to county residents already. I have looked into this matter since it didn’t seem to ring true to me.

Clark Public Utilities has 185,000 customers in Clark County. We can assume that that means the amount of homes and businesses that use electricity. They supply water to 31,000 customers. Adding up water supplied by the cities, Washougal, 5000, Camas, 7,652, Ridgefield, 2081, and Vancouver, 68,000, that comes to 113,733 on public water systems. The remaining 71,267 must be private wells.

It’s those private wells that will be in jeopardy if the county allows as many as 1000 more wells to rural areas. Who will be responsible when the wells start to go dry? How will farmers grow food for our community?

Water availability is certainly the most important problem that adding more home sites to rural Clark County will bring. Poor county road maintenance is another...already many roads are not wide enough to stripe so that residents can see the center line in winter months.

The schools, especially in Battle Ground, are already stretched to their limits with added students, with no plans to house the new influx of children. [The Columbian just ran an article about that.](#)

Tim Trohimovich of Futurewise has submitted a letter explaining many other reasons for limiting rural expansion. I hope you will take his advice seriously and choose to stay with Alternative 1 – no action.

Thank you,

**Val Alexander,
Board member
Friends of Clark County**

O'Donnell, Mary Beth

From: Bianca Benson <bianca@friendsofclarkcounty.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 8:53 AM
To: Cnty 2016 Comp Plan
Cc: 'Coyote Ridge Ranch'
Subject: Comments on the 2016 Comprehensive Growth Management Plan Update Alternatives
Attachments: Alternative comments by Val.docx

Please review and submit attachment to the record.

Sincerely,

Bianca Benson
Executive Director
Friends of Clark County
503.701.9203
[visit our website](#)