

Schroader, Kathy



From susan rasmussen <sprazz@outlook.com>
Sent Friday, September 11, 2015 2:13 PM
To Cnty 2016 Comp Plan
Cc Carol Levanen
Subject Fw: Clark County has always supported small scale agriculture

Please be so kind as to include these comments in the draft SEIS for the 2016 comprehensive plan update

Sent from Windows Mail

From susan rasmussen
Sent Friday, September 11, 2015 2:01 PM

Clark County has traditionally supported small-scale agriculture activities by ensuring a variety of various parcel sizes. The 1994 county Comprehensive Plan changed that policy.

Large scale commercial agricultural operations continue to decline, however, changes in agriculture activities to vineyards, nurseries, berries, organic produce and equestrian facilities have been evolving. In the 1970's, Clark County was home to over 300 dairy farms. In 2015, the county has 4-5 Dairy farms. Dairy farms require a large mass of land. The migration of the dairies out of the county was already happening when the 1994 plan was being proposed. By 1994, the county was down to ~ 20 dairies. Our resource lands haven't ever been adjusted to accommodate this shift in a major agricultural industry. Lewis County (2007) successfully recognized the massive migration of the dairy industry out of the county in their comprehensive plan. The Courts supported the county in recognizing the, "needs of the industry," and, "not all land is capable of being farmed."

This agricultural shift reflects the larger changes happening throughout the entire state. Many of the new agricultural activities can and are occurring on smaller parcels (reference Census of Ag, 2012). Indeed, Clark County has always been a haven supporting small-scale farming (Census of Ag, 1950). The long-term changes in agricultural operations will be influenced in large part by the economic and market demands (per 2012 Census).

It is Clark County's tradition to provide for a wide variety of farming opportunities whether they be commercial, hobby farms, or equestrian related activities. Clark County has the distinct title of being #1 in the state for the horse population. The Clark County Fair demonstrates a vital and robust 4-H community that supports many youth programs from alpacas to robotics. A variety of various parcel sizes ensures this tradition carries forward.

In 2006, the Washington State Supreme Court clarified the definition of "agricultural land"

"It was not 'clearly erroneous' for Lewis County to weigh the industry's anticipated needs above all else. If the farm industry cannot use the land for agricultural production due to economic, irrigation, or other constraints, the possibility of more intense uses is heightened."

Lewis County v WWGMHB, 157 Wn 2d 488, 503, 139 P 3d 1096 (2006)

Farming profile of Clark County per USDA Census of Ag 2012

74,758 acres were farmed in 2012, down from 78,359 in 2007
28,986 acres total cropland, 24,099 harvested cropland, 3,721 irrigated acres
44% of the 1,929 farms have 1-9 acres (851 predominance of small farms)
1,780 farms (92%) had sales values below \$24,999
\$2,398 net cash farm income of operation
\$1,243 average per farm
1,247 (65%) of the farm operators relied on non-farm occupational income

Thank you for your attention,
Susan Rasmussen for CCCU, Inc
Sent from Windows Mail

From susan rasmussen
Sent Friday, September 11, 2015 10 05 AM

CCCU recently attended the land use forum presented by the Clark County Food Systems Council Mr Tom Trohimovich, the attorney representing Futurewise, was one of the speakers He said that the agricultural industry contributed \$52 million dollars to the local economy, and there are 1,929 farms However, he failed to elaborate and recognize a trend The historical perspective tells a different story

According to the latest USDA Census of Agriculture (2012), Clark County does have 1,929 farms and the main agricultural operations include milk, fryers, and berries The farmgate value is the total value of crops and livestock produced in the county

The farmgate value of agriculture in Clark County is \$51.8 million from the 2012 Census, but in the 2002 Census of Agriculture it was \$54.4 million this figure describes the trend Dips also occurred in associated area counties Cowlitz was \$29 million in 2012, and \$30.5 million in 2002 Skamania was \$6 million in 2012, but \$11.5 million in 2002

By comparison, Yakima County had \$843.8 million in 2002, but increased to \$1.65 billion in 2012

In the associated food processing sector of food, Clark County's 2013 state Dept of Revenue reported gross sales of \$357 million

Please be so kind as to include this in the comments for the draft SEIS
Thank you,
Susan Rasmussen for CCCU, Inc
Sent from Windows Mail

From susan rasmussen
Sent Friday, September 11, 2015 9 42 AM
To susan rasmussen

Sent from Windows Mail

Sent from Windows Mail
Testimony of September 10, 2015
Kindly include in the comments for the draft SEIS

The mistruths and absent data in the draft SEIS are tools, used by the writers, to facilitate the downfall of alternative 4. These tools actually advance CCCU's values by exposing misconduct to the public eye and facilitating dialogue on issues of considerable public interest. "Who is really navigating public policy on land use issues?"

There are rules that apply when writing an EIS. If these rules aren't respected by the writers and consultants tasked with the job of writing an unbiased draft for proper analysis, how are the Councilors supposed to make important informed decisions? How are competing interests in this case the private property rights of rural citizens, supposed to get our voices heard? CCCU is now tasked with going through the draft with a fine-tooth comb.

What are the motivations of the writers of the draft? By taking it upon themselves to provide their analysis, one would think that Alternative 4 proponents are vigilantes that only want to carve up the county, crowd the highways, deplete water resources all for self serving purposes. On the other hand, you have the cities all wanting to lay claim to the future designs of our large lot properties that they have locked up and secured for their future use. Where do private property rights enter into the equation?

Purpose of the authors is a big factor for consideration, and interpretation. Motivation becomes really important in the decision-making process of the County Councilors. The county's various comprehensive plans are lawfully supposed to serve the entire breadth of all the diverse communities. That has never happened for the rural communities. For nearly two years, CCCU has literally been here week after week demanding attention to insure inclusion. The draft clearly illustrates the poor conduct of the writers, an exclusive process collaborating with the cities, and the environmental communities. The end result is a draft riddled with gaps and faults. Unfortunately, the writers have employed this practice before. CCCU's court decision speaks directly to the faulty process.

When engaged in an activity of the entire public's interest, private interests of the writers and consultants need to be set aside. The public's right to honest data outweighs purely private interests.

What the writers failed to realize is that farmers and foresters are operating businesses that are in the public's interest to keep viable. Many counties recognize this. In particular, Chelan County. Chelan recognizes the needs of the agricultural industries, the importance of options for private property, rural culture, and the importance of property rights. Their ordinances enable the county to maintain an economically viable agricultural industry.

Clark County Citizens United respectfully requests that the Clark County Board of Councilors take control of this comprehensive plan.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan Rasmussen for CCCU, Inc

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