

Attachment #1

Growth
Pl Com
Staff-3
DPA

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PROTECTING OUR LAND, AIR AND WATER

October 27, 2006

Sent by mail and fax

Commissioner Jim Hagen
Chair, Jefferson County Planning Commission
621 Sheridan St.
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Dear Commissioner Hagen:

Thank you for your invitation to participate in the Planning Commission's recently formed Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Committee. I apologize for any delay in responding to you. We are a relatively small organization with a wide geographic scope so a commitment to weekly meetings through April 2007 cannot be undertaken without serious discussion among staff and members of our board.

Having evaluated our current resources, we are unfortunately unable to join the Committee's efforts at this time. Washington Environmental Council is presently consumed with defeating Initiative 933 as well as pursuing several state policy campaigns. After the election, we will be deeply involved in legislative issues ranging from protecting Puget Sound to conserving habitat and promoting parks.

Still, we do appreciate that citizens in the community are heavily engaged in this round of planning. When we agreed to a settlement with the County in January 2006, we hoped simply to create a broad framework that would allow wide latitude to develop ordinances that would comply with the Growth Management Act. In that respect, we were dismayed to see that our interest in assisting area farmers by allowing for voluntary agricultural plans as a substitute for mandatory buffers was portrayed in such a negative light.

We believe that the settlement provides a good general roadmap, and we hope that the CAO Committee can help recommend suggestions for ordinances that are appropriate for the interests of Jefferson County. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional thoughts or concerns.

Sincerely,

Joan Crooks
Executive Director, WEC

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